

NEWSLETTER 9 – JUNE 2013

Northamptonshire Next Generation Strategy published in June

The County Council will publish the Northamptonshire Next Generation Strategy this month. It heralds the completion of the first key milestone for the superfast Northamptonshire Project – *securing BT as the County Council's preferred telecoms co-investment partner for the first phase of the Project*. The Strategy sets out proposals to extend Next Generation Access to premises across the remainder of Northamptonshire by 2017. This approach was approved by Cabinet on 11th June 2013.

Next Generation Access (NGA) refers to fibre based broadband networks. NGA opens the door to a new world of superfast broadband services capable of providing access line speeds of 30Mbps or more; much faster than traditional copper networks. NGA is changing the way we live, work, play, learn, access healthcare and do business. It is a key driver for the global digital economy and therefore is critical for Northamptonshire's economic growth.

Strategy Objectives

The Next Generation Strategy supports two key objectives:

- *Maximising the roll out of the superfast broadband network:* securing the physical infrastructure to provide NGA for premises across the county by 2017
- *Maximising the impact and benefits that access to superfast broadband services can provide:* raising awareness and providing help to understand how broadband technology can be applied and provide access to services, particularly in support of business growth.

The Next Generation Strategy will be available at www.superfastnorthamptonshire.net or request a copy by emailing bigidea@northamptonshire.gov.uk

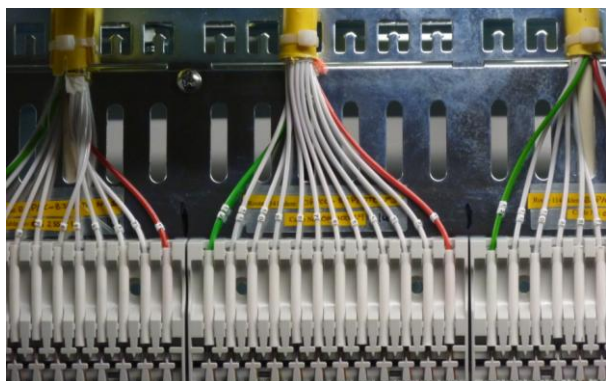


What's in this Bumper Edition

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2. Next Generation Strategy- Roll Out
3. Expected Superfast Broadband Deployment Map
4. Partnership with BT gets underway
5. Local and Rural Community Projects
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Next Generation Strategy – Roll Out

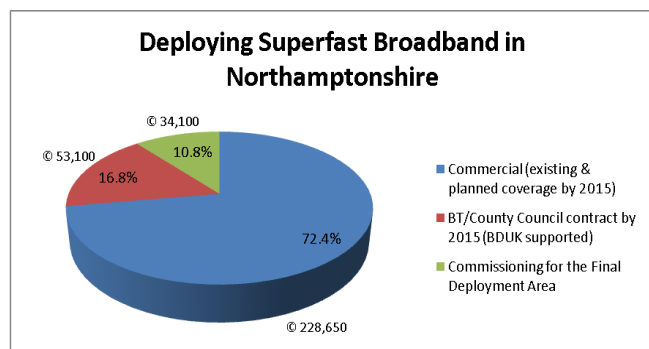


Achieving Full NGA Coverage by 2017

A number of elements will contribute towards our aim of providing access to superfast broadband for all by 2017:

- The existing footprint and commercial plans by network suppliers in the market should enable around 73% of premises (circa 228,650) in the county to access superfast broadband by 2015.
- The County Council's partnership with BT will extend this deployment to cover around 90% of premises by 2015 (a further circa 53,000).
- From 2014 to 2017, solutions for the final premises (circa 34,100) will be provided through the next phase of the Next Generation Strategy.
- Encouraging the provision of fibre based broadband infrastructure for all new premises, including through the planning system.

The figure below shows the anticipated provision of superfast broadband in the period up to 2017. It represents the position at June 2013 and will be subject to change.



The final deployment area includes around 34,100 homes and businesses located across the county. These final premises can be categorised within four themes and consist of PARTS OF:

- the town centres of Northampton, Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough
- the Northampton Enterprise Zone
- a number of Business Parks/Industrial Estates
- the remaining hardest to reach rural areas

Solutions for this final phase will be developed in parallel to the mobilisation of the BT Contract to ensure coverage is deployed at the earliest opportunity.

Seeking views on the proposed approach

Over the next couple of months, the County Council will be seeking views from the market and key local stakeholders on the approach set out in the Next Generation Strategy. This includes proposals to develop a portfolio of investment models which could be aligned with a Next Generation Investment Fund to tackle barriers to market investment.

Programme for the Final Deployment	
Next Generation Strategy published focused on commissioning approach for final deployment area	June 2013
Strategy Consultation closes	Aug 2013
Research & analysis to understand final deployment area characteristics	→ to Autumn
Community and business demand registration surveys	→end Sept 2013
Progressing funding, resources & portfolio of investment models	→ Autumn & beyond
NGA Prospectus published – Market Day & Soft Market Testing	Autumn 2013
Open Data Bank launched providing intelligence to the market	Autumn 2013
Outcome of Soft Market Testing reviewed	Winter 2013/14
Commissioning & procurement	2014 →

Feedback will help to inform the development of a NGA Prospectus to be launched in the autumn. This will provide a focus for Soft Market Testing prior to formal commissioning and procurement in 2014. The outcome will support further deployment in the period up to 2017.

The first task will be research and analysis to fully understand the characteristics of the final area. This includes density and location of premises, socio-economic data and proximity to existing network infrastructure and connectivity. This information will contribute to the creation of an Open Data Bank to help inform the case for market investment and deployment solution options.



The County Council will also be progressing work with Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership over the summer to investigate **business demand** within the final deployment area.

A number of key business locations in the final deployment area currently have poor connectivity which is stifling business growth. Securing solutions for these areas will be a key priority for the next phase of the Project.

Self Fund opportunities for business groupings could also be explored. This is where clusters of like-minded businesses wanting superfast connectivity can club together to procure the network upgrade necessary to support it e.g. by providing the gap funding to make the case viable for BT to upgrade the serving cabinet (if certain factors are in place) or for another supplier in the market to provide a network solution to support superfast services.

Expected Superfast Broadband Deployment Map

The map overleaf sets out the high level plan for the deployment of superfast broadband in the period up to 2017 as currently envisaged. This will be subject to change over the lifetime of the project.

There are a number of reasons why deployment plans will change including the need to take into account the outcomes from survey and planning work; the changes in speed and coverage capabilities as technology improves over the lifetime of the project; and the need to take into account any changes following further consultation with the market on their commercial plans – this will take place by 2015 and will ensure that public sector investment remains targeted on areas of the county which will not otherwise receive a service.

The map shows the expected commercial coverage to be delivered by 2015 by various suppliers in the market e.g. BT, Virgin, IFNL and others; as well as BT's deployment plans in partnership with the County Council - together these plans should provide for around 90% of premises in the county by 2015. It also shows the target area for the final phase of the Project which is being progressed through the Next Generation Strategy.

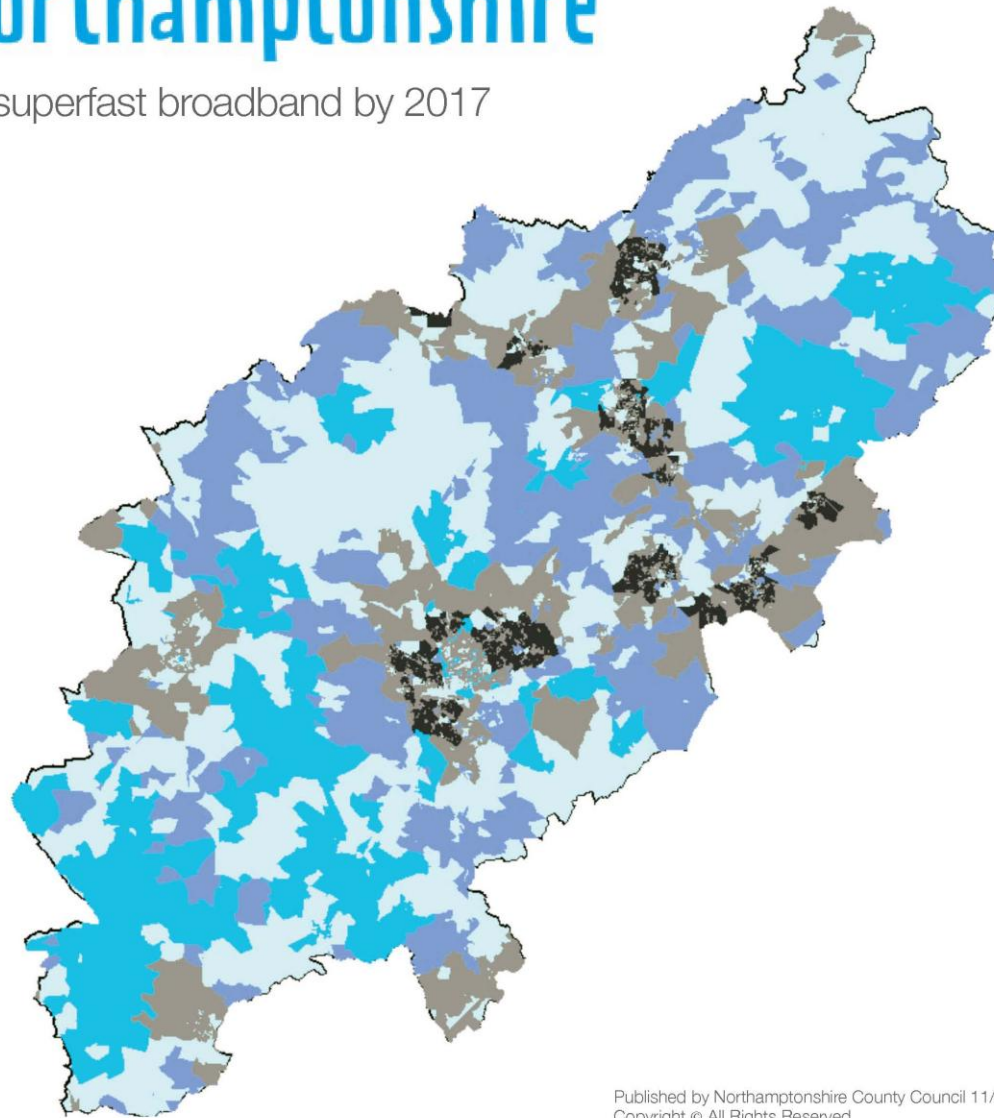


Superfast Northamptonshire

Expected deployment of superfast broadband by 2017

Purpose

- This map shows an overview of the expected roll out of superfast broadband in Northamptonshire including proposed commercial plans by 2015 and expected deployment in the Project intervention area up to 2017. It is based on information known at June 2013.
- This map is high level only. It is not accurate at premise or postcode level and should not be interpreted as such.
- The superfast Northamptonshire Project is at an early stage. Expected deployment plans as currently shown will be subject to change as further work is progressed including surveys and planning.
- Phased 'go live' announcements will be made on the Project website when confirmed. Visit www.superfastnorthamptonshire.net
- Your frequently asked questions are answered on the Project website
- The next edition of this map providing an update on deployment plans will be available by December 2013.



Deployment expected:

-  To start in 2014
-  To start in 2015
-  Target completion by 2017

Existing and expected commercial coverage* of superfast broadband up to 2015

-  One superfast broadband supplier
-  Two superfast broadband supplier or more

**Information on commercial coverage collated through an Open Market Review and Public Consultation undertaken in 2012 (to be re-tested in 2014/early 2015)*

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 Northamptonshire
County Council

Partnership with BT Gets Underway



Newsletter No.8 issued in February 2013 announced the appointment of BT as the County

Council's preferred supplier and co-investment partner. This arrangement will support our interim 2015 target for superfast broadband deployment. The appointment followed a procurement process managed under the Government's Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) Infrastructure Framework.

The £16m contract secures a significant investment from BT, with a commitment of £4.08m from the County Council matched under the BDUK Rural Broadband Programme. This represents the first key milestone for the superfast Northamptonshire Project and has secured the county's place amongst the front runners under the BDUK Framework.

Newsletter No.8 (click) set out the headlines in terms of speed and coverage which the partnership with BT will deliver by 2015. This includes extending superfast broadband access to around 90% of the county when combined with the markets commercial deployment plans; providing access to around 3,000 businesses; and providing all premises with minimum access line speeds of 2Mbps.

Since the contract with BT was signed on 14th March 2013, the County Council and BT have set up a joint team to mobilise the project and establish contract governance arrangements.

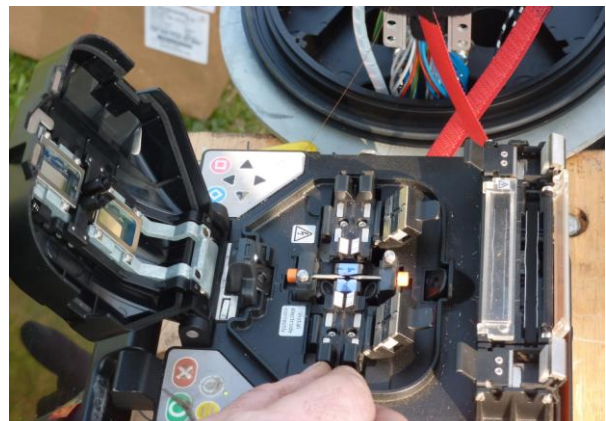
BT Openreach is now commencing work on the first phase of surveys, planning and network design (Milestone 0). This can take 6 to 9 months to complete with network build and customer connections taking place thereafter. Further phases will follow.

Activity under Milestone 0 involves some on site investigations of network infrastructure to identify any issues which may affect the deployment plans as currently envisaged. For example, the discovery of blocked or collapsed ducts may cause delays and increase costs. Changes to the proposed deployment plan may arise following Milestone 0 as a result. This is why at this early stage of the Project, the map setting out expected deployment plans only shows a high level programme.

Updates on the deployment programme will be announced through future editions of this Newsletter. Information will also be made available on the Project's website. This includes more detailed information as and when specific phases are confirmed and 'go live' dates can be announced. The first such announcement is expected to be made by December 2013.

Current BT Deployment Programme

- ❖ Project Mobilisation from April 2013
- ❖ Surveys, planning and network design work (phased) from June 2013
- ❖ Physical network build commences in phases from January 2014
- ❖ First premises passed i.e. customers connected from quarter four of 2013/14
- ❖ Completion of BT's roll out of fibre by September 2015
- ❖ All premises provided with access to a minimum of 2Mbps by December 2015



Local Rural and Community Projects



Tove Valley Project

In March 2013, we were delighted to learn that Tove Valley had been successful in its Rural Community Broadband Fund (RCBF) bid to DEFRA¹. This was one of the first projects in the UK to receive confirmation of grant funding.

This community project is led by Abthorpe Broadband Association (ABbA); a well established local business that has been operating for over 10 years. The bid was supported by the County Council.

The Tove Valley project will uplift ABbA's current broadband service to deliver superfast broadband to around 450 premises in the south of the county. This includes the villages of Abthorpe, Slapton, Wappenham, Lois Weedon and Weston.

The project has ambitions to move towards a wholly fibre network to deliver NGA speeds to its customers and is currently preparing to go to tender to appoint a chosen supplier to carry out their works.

More details are available at www.tovevalley.net

Other RCBF Project News

In addition to supporting the Tove Valley project, the County Council has previously submitted or supported five other RCBF bids to DEFRA. Northamptonshire has been one of the most active areas in the country in this respect.

At the time, the areas covered by these bids were thought likely to be within the final 10% of the deployment plans for the county i.e. the hardest to reach areas. This is a key criterion for RCBF eligibility. Since then, the expected deployment plans to extend superfast coverage to around 90% of the county have been confirmed through the County Council's contract with BT. This has provided a clearer picture of where the final deployment area lies.

Three of the RCBF bids have been partially impacted by BT's deployment plans i.e. some of the postcodes/premises which were included in the original bids will now be served by BT. These are:

- Rockingham
- Welford
- Kings Sutton, Newbottle and Charlton

A revised and combined bid has been submitted to DEFRA in support of the residual premises from the above bids which do not form part of BT's deployment plans to 2015. These residual premises remain eligible for RCBF as part of the 'final 10%'.

Should the Expression of Interest be successful, the County Council will seek BT's support for a full application to serve these premises. RCBF Round 3 closes on the 17th June 2013.



¹ Government Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Village Broadband

Village Broadband Ltd (VBB) is a Northamptonshire based business which provides a fast and resilient Wireless Broadband service for Wollaston and its surrounding villages.

Recent experiments by the VBB Technical team have led to confidence in being able to provide up to 40Mbps download speeds on any new wireless nodes that VBB erect. There is the potential for a new node in the Cobbs Lane area of Wollaston as well as plans to update the current nodes to new faster transmission equipment by December 2013. New links are also under investigation to expand the service within Great Doddington and into Grendon.

New investment is driven by local demand. VBB continue to invest all earnings back into the company to enhance their offer and increase customers' average speed across the network.

For further information please visit www.villagebroadband.com



Growing Importance of Superfast Broadband

Ofcom is the independent regulator and competition authority for the UK communications industries. It has produced information regarding the key drivers for broadband usage today. This is driven by rapid developments in consumers use of communications services.



Some of Ofcom's key headlines include:

- Between March 2010 and March 2012 Smartphone usage had **doubled**
- Since Quarter 1 of 2011 Tablet usage has increased from **2% to 16%**
- In November 2012 the average UK fixed residential broadband connection was **12Mbps**. This is the same as the average speeds for Northamptonshire in 2012 (Ofcom.org.uk)
- Between November 2011 and November 2012 take up of "30Mbps and higher" packages has increased from **5% to 13%**

Ofcom report that in 2012, broadband usage was driven by:

Social Networking	55%
Banking & paying bills	39%
News websites	34%
Downloading music	25%
Online shopping	22%

The consumption of broadband services is increasingly reliant on faster upload and download speed capabilities. Infrastructure being delivered now through superfast Northamptonshire may support very different drivers for consumers in the future.

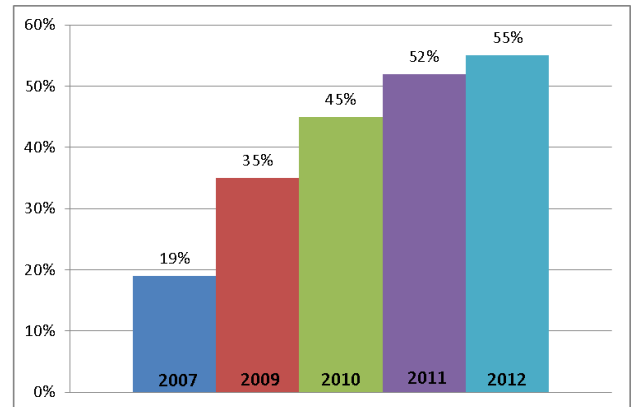
The Benefits of Superfast Broadband

Having a superfast infrastructure in Northamptonshire will make our county one of the best connected locations in the UK and this opens up vast benefits for all.

Broadband for business

Superfast broadband will have a massive impact on the way we work, whether in an office, at home or elsewhere – it will change our lives.

- **Online file sharing** - Get instant access to shared online workspaces and take collaborative working to a whole new level.
- **'Cloud' based services** providing a host of benefits including increased capacity, server storage, saving costs, and enabling business to interact more efficiently with customers
- **Media-heavy files** - You won't have to wait ages to download massive, media-heavy files.
- **Increase efficiencies** including reducing the need to travel through tele or video conferencing
- **Increase innovation** – through applied technology
- **Access new domestic and global markets** through website and internet enabled marketing, promotion and data transfer
- **Social media** - Accounts such as LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook are used for everything from organising events to product promotion or market research. Social media has the ability to connect people and brands around the world, creating a huge global network.



Source: Ofcom research, fieldwork carried out by Saville Rossiter - Base in September to November 2012

A recent survey by the **Institute of Directors** reported the following²:

- Faster internet speeds would improve productivity of 82% of IoD member organisations, encourage 56% to offer more flexible working opportunities to employees and encourage 13% to hire more staff.
- Businesses based in rural areas were particularly likely to perceive benefits to their organisations from faster broadband. 73% expected both productivity and competitiveness gains, compared to 58% of urban business directors.

Broadband for Education

- **Open learning** – Learning material readily available wherever you are i.e. Virtual Learning Environments (VLE)
- **Development of IT skills** creating benefits for future employment
- **Future opportunities** – Equip children and young people with skills for the future
- **More creative learning environments** – inspiring imaginations and learning through more interactive packages

² Institute of Directors 'Big Picture' report Spring 2013

Broadband at Home

Superfast broadband lets you make the most of all the entertainment on offer on the internet.

- **Download movies** in a matter of minutes.
- **Online gamers** gaining an advantage with improved response times.
- **Stay in touch** with friends and family across the globe – see and hear each other on line

Whatever you're into, fibre will make it quicker and easier. It's not just about doing one thing online much faster; it's about everyone in the household being able to do their own thing online all at the same time.



Understanding Demand: Get Involved

Part of the above work will be to identify demand hot spots in the final deployment area. Many parish councils have already used the County Council's questionnaire to survey demand for superfast broadband in their local communities.

We want to build on the information provided by you to date. The questionnaire is available for more local communities to use – a copy can be requested from bigidea@northamptonshire.gov.uk. You are invited to coordinate your own local survey and to send the results and completed questionnaires through to the Superfast Northamptonshire Project Team.

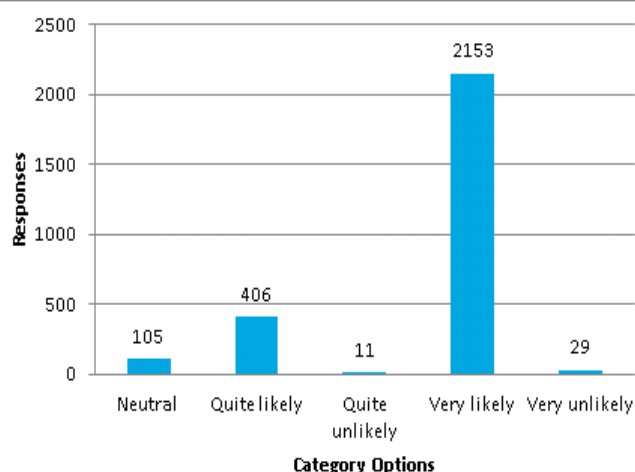
The deadline for this round of surveys is 30 September 2013.

Parish Broadband Surveys

The information you provided us with is vital to highlight 'hot spots' of demand within the county. This will be important information for our final deployment area proposals as well as informing BT and other commercial suppliers who may be looking for new investment opportunities.

To date the County Council has received **2,896** responses through parish surveys.

Analysis has also shown that **74%** of people who responded would be 'very likely' to take up a superfast broadband service if it was made available.



As part of the survey, local residents were asked:

'If your internet connection was faster, which of the following would you use your internet connection for?'

Some of the findings which are of particular interest are shown below:

- 401** People would consider starting a business
- 1,581** People would take up home learning/study
- 1,802** People would work from home
- 809** People would access/engage in remote healthcare services (online consultations)

Current Top Ten Local Parish responses (June 2013)

Rank	Parish	No. of responses
1	Wollaston (NN29)	313
2	Brixworth (NN6)	213
3	Whittlebury (NN12)	165
4	Helmdon (NN13)	146
5	Welford (NN6)	100
6	Maidwell with Draughton (NN6)	98
7	Woodford Halse (NN11)	97
8	Pitsford (NN6)	90
9	Loddington (NN14)	81
10	Harrington & Thorpe Underwood (NN6)	79

Business Broadband Surveys

The forthcoming business demand survey referred to earlier in this Newsletter will build on a baseline business survey undertaken by the County Council through Cognisant Research in 2012. This showed:

- **28%** of business respondents indicated that they would 'Definitely' be interested in signing up for the superfast service
- **93%** of respondents indicated that their business used the internet for e-mail, with 89% of businesses indicating they used the internet to access information.
- **Over 55%** of participating businesses used the internet at work for online purchasing (67%), updating their website (59%) and the transfer of files (56%).
- **40%** of respondents indicated that more flexible working would benefit the business and over a third (35%) of respondents indicated that their business would benefit by providing better customer services

Get Involved

If you would like a copy of the Parish Council questionnaire to co-ordinate your own survey please request a copy via

bigidea@northamptonshire.gov.uk

A survey for business will be available shortly. Please register your interest to participate via the 'bigidea' email address or by post (addresses below) – please entitle your message '**business demand survey**'.

How to stay in touch

To keep up to date with the latest news on the Next Generation Strategy and other information regarding the superfast Northamptonshire project please visit the project site at

www.superfastnorthamptonshire.net

Or for further information please email

bigidea@northamptonshire.gov.uk

Or by post please contact:

Superfast Northamptonshire Project Team
Northamptonshire County Council
Room 272 County Hall
Northampton
NN1 1DN

