

Press release: Gigabit broadband voucher scheme boost for Wales

The UK's Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme is to be given a boost in Wales thanks to a new partnership between the Welsh and UK Governments. Ministers from both Governments are now urging Welsh businesses and communities to apply for the funding to get gigabit speeds.

The announcement follows an agreement between the UK and Welsh Governments, and reflects the higher costs of deploying fibre infrastructure in Wales, as a result of the country's topography and the location of premises.

The UK Government's Gigabit broadband vouchers – worth up to £2500 – are currently available to small businesses and surrounding local communities to contribute to the installation costs of a gigabit-capable broadband connection.

Under the new arrangements, the Welsh Government will provide an additional £3,000 for businesses up to a certain size and an additional £300 per residential property. This means that for group projects in Wales up to £5,500 is available per business, compared with £2,500 elsewhere in the UK. Up to £800 will now be available per residential property in Wales, compared with £500 elsewhere.

UK Minister for Digital Margot James said:

This exclusive scheme for Welsh businesses and communities is a vital part of our modern Industrial Strategy and build a Britain that is fit for the future. Working with the Welsh Government, together we can make sure that everyone in Wales has the connectivity they need for the digital age.

Deputy Minister for Economy Lee Waters said:

Although the vast majority of premises in Wales can now access superfast broadband, we are working hard on assisting the remaining five per cent that cannot access it and where commercial companies have no plans to reach. There is no one size fits all solution to reach the final premises, and the Gigabit Broadband Voucher scheme is an important part of a suite of measures to achieve this.

This voucher scheme can provide a vital funding source for group connectivity projects, and could be of great benefit to communities currently without access. I'm pleased we've been able to work with the UK Government to provide an enhanced scheme for Wales, taking into account the particular challenges we face here with geography and the location of premises.

The voucher scheme forms part of a package aimed at improving connectivity in Wales. The Welsh and UK Government funded £200 million Superfast Cymru programme has already taken superfast broadband speeds to more than 733,000 Welsh homes and businesses commercial companies had no plans to cover. The Welsh Government is also investing a further £22.5 million to reach an additional 26,000 premises and the UK Government is introducing a Universal Service Obligation that will make fast broadband a legal right for every home and business in Wales by 2020.

UK Government Minister for Wales Nigel Adams said:

Improved connectivity for homes and businesses in Wales is at the centre of the UK Government's efforts to strengthen our economy and support our rapidly expanding digital sector.

This voucher scheme will ensure more people in Wales have access to reliable broadband speeds, marking another significant leap forward in both governments' efforts to ensure Wales has a broadband network fit for the future.

Notes to Editors

- The enhanced Gigabit Voucher Scheme will replace the Ultrafast Voucher scheme in Wales, which provided an average of £4,300 per scheme.
- The Welsh Government also runs the Access Broadband Cymru scheme which can provide grant assistance for residents and businesses without superfast broadband to do so through different technologies
- Group projects are when two or more businesses get together – or businesses with residents – to combine their vouchers towards the cost of building the infrastructure for installation. Up to ten residents can get together with one business to create a group of community project.
- More information on the USO is available [here](#)