

Boosting broadband in rural areas – we need your help

Dorset Council is appealing to town and parish councils to help spread the word that help is available to boost broadband in rural areas.

Never has reliable and fast broadband been more important – during the Coronavirus crisis it has helped keep businesses alive and loved ones in touch with each other. And that's why it's more crucial than ever to help those rural communities whose broadband is still too slow.

We have topped up the government's gigabit rural voucher scheme to enable even more communities to receive faster broadband. If a household or business receives broadband speeds of less than 100 Mbs (megabits per second) and they are in rural postcode (as defined by the Office for National Statistics) they are eligible for a voucher.

With just the government scheme alone each household could claim £1,500 and a business £3,500 towards receiving a faster broadband service. But now, with the Dorset Council top-up, this has been boosted to £2,500 per residential household and £6,000 for businesses. More funding means more communities could potentially get enough vouchers together to fund a community fibre scheme.

For a scheme to get up and running, it requires many households and businesses in a parish to apply for their vouchers. And that's where you come in – we need your help to spread the word in your communities. Throughout the remainder of this year Dorset Council will be making direct contact with parishes we have identified as being most in need and suited to a community fibre scheme to tell them the benefits of faster broadband and to encourage them to apply for vouchers.

We would also like to hear from individuals who have an interest in digital, technology and telecommunications to act as voucher ambassadors in their communities. Although Dorset Council has identified specific areas to target, we would still like to hear from communities that could be eligible.

If you think your community could benefit from a community-led voucher scheme, or if you are interested in becoming a voucher ambassador, please email

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