

# Superfast Broadband for Charleston

*Nowadays, broadband is no longer a luxury. The internet has become a part of all of our lives. Posting to Facebook, watching streaming TV, Skype for friends and business. These things are not enjoyed by residents of Charleston, who have to make do with internet speeds of barely 2mb/s – the absolute minimum the government required 10 years ago. The new minimum is 10mb/s, which is 5 times faster than what Openreach has made available.*



What do these speeds mean? It makes a difference between watching the latest series of Game of Thrones on Netflix, or watching the buffering wheel. Also, it is important when using Skype to speak to people, or when making calls over Whatsapp. Your kids can also use their PlayStation while you're watching the BBC iPlayer, without interrupting each other. With 4K and VR almost here, even faster speeds will be required.

The new housing scheme at Charleston was built with the promise of superfast fibre broadband to every house (up to 300mb/s). The ducting for this is already in place in the ground in the area. All that is required was for the fibre to be pushed through so superfast broadband can be utilized by the residents. Having completed most of the houses, the property developers have now washed their hands of it, blaming the current issues on Openreach. BT, on the other hand have stated that the premises were finished after they had completed their Commercial Plans and funding had been locked. Also the cabinets in the area were

not there in time to be considered for the BDUK (Scottish Government Plan). Also, in 2012 the Scottish Government defined Intervention Areas (IA's) for state funding to install fibre network infrastructure, and unfortunately the cabinet in the Charleston area was not ready then to be captured under this premise. There is also no known Commercial Deployment plan by any of the major providers. Moreso, nearby areas in Kincorth and Cove all have superfast broadband supply, with all these areas being provided by the same telephone exchange.

**There are number of options available to address this, which is not limited to:**

- 1. The local community can self-fund the upgrade to the cabinet through the Community Fibre Partnership (<http://www.communityfibre.bt.com/>) or (<http://www.homeandwork.openreach.co.uk/OurNetwork/CommunityFibrePartnerships/>)**
- 2. If more homes are being built to the cabinet the Developer may wish to support a Private Infill solution: (<http://www.newdevelopments-openreach.co.uk/developers-and-architects/Infill/>)**
- 3. There will be further rounds of funding from Scottish Government – potentially we can look to see we are captured in this.**

In order to better understand the needs of the residents, an online petition was set up by Tekena Fubara, and also Cllr. Stephen Flynn sent out a paper questionnaire to residents. Lots of feedback has been received and these are being looked at. These views would be used to approach the relevant authorities and bodies to ensure that an effective solution is arrived at and superfast broadband provided for the area soonest.