



Connecting Devon and Somerset Briefing, September 17, 2021

Joint Programme update

Airband contracts in Somerset

Summary

- Broadband connections for 58,128 homes and businesses in Devon and Somerset in total have been delivered or are in plan including new full fibre contracts.
- Anticipated completion of all contracts between now and September 2024
- Construction gets underway in communities across Somerset in September (see below).
- Survey and design work underway in several communities (see below).
- Airband's [website](#) includes a list of the new contract community areas, anticipated completion dates and a map* of the coverage area.
- Airband is developing an online premise level checker for communities covered by CDS contracts which will be published later this month (September).

** The map shows the CDS contract areas that Airband is working in. However, please note this does not mean all premises in these areas will be connected through these contracts. Although CDS seeks to connect as many homes and businesses without superfast* broadband (minimum 30Mbps download) as possible not every premise can be included within the public funding available. Premises to be covered will be confirmed following survey.*

Introduction

On December 23rd Connecting Devon and Somerset, with support from Government, signed new contracts with Worcester-based **Airband** to deliver full fibre broadband to **40,154 homes and businesses** in earmarked areas of Somerset and Devon and require the construction of an estimated **2,419 miles of fibre network**. Delivery will be in phases **between 2021 and 2024**.

Progress

Airband will be installing fibre broadband in communities in Somerset in the coming weeks as part of the ongoing CDS broadband rollout.

Construction is due to get underway this month (September) in parts of Somerset including **Adsborough, Bathpool, Cheddon Fitzpaine, Monkton Heathfield, Staplegrove, and West Monkton**. Work was expected to start in the Staplegrove to West Monkton area in July, however this has been rescheduled to this month (September) due to some redesign work to reduce the number of required wayleaves.

Airband anticipates these delays will not affect the overall completion of contracts. CDS and Airband will keep stakeholders updated on progress.

On the ground activity is continuing in areas across Somerset earmarked for coverage. These investigations will enable Airband to confirm the best build route and timescales for the installation of Gigabit capable fibre broadband.

Network design is currently progressing well in **Bicknoller**, phase 2 of **Lydeard St Lawrence, Stogumber, West Bagborough, Combe Florey, Elworthy, West Quantoxhead, Sampford Brett** and **Spaxton**. Construction is currently on target to begin in these areas in early November subject to securing the necessary wayleaves.

Survey work is currently underway for a second group of communities in **Ash Priors, Bishops Lydeard, Cotford St Luke***, **Lydeard St Lawrence, Norton Fitzwarren**, and **Tolland**, with construction due to start in December, two months behind schedule. This is the knock on effect from the delay to work starting in the first group of communities referred to earlier.

Network design for the Taunton area has started and design work for **Neroche** will start this month (September) as scheduled. Additional design resource has been brought on board by Airband to ensure these areas will not be impacted by the delays experienced in the earlier communities.

**NB It was incorrectly stated in the CDS/Airband joint update in March that construction at Cotford St Luke was due to start in July.*

Further information:

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*Connecting Devon and Somerset
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