



Newton  
& Ferrers  
Parish  
Council

9 December 2016

Dear Sirs,

**Re: Additional broadband requirement under CDS voucher scheme.**

This letter is to notify potential broadband service providers that at least 32 residents and business have applied to Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) for vouchers to upgrade or, to have access to a viable broadband service. Whether vouchers will be awarded or not is up to CDS, but we only encouraged those to apply if they were outside the Phase 1 Superfast scheme and their existing speeds were below 3Mbps.

We know of local businesses which are currently hampered by slow or non-existent broadband, constraining their productivity and capacity for expansion. To this end, we understand South Hams District Council may have further funds available to assist with improved connectivity.

In addition, there is huge uncertainty in parts of Noss Mayo and the western part of Newton Ferrers, who have existing speeds above 3Mbps, as to whether they will be covered by CDS Phase 2 roll-out in 2017. There is a real risk they will be left in limbo.

It will be up to individual vouchers holders to work through CDS approved contractors to find a solution that suits them, however we are aware that a number of west country communities have benefited from a pooling of vouchers to provide a better and more affordable service for everyone. With the uncertainty over Phase 2, we are sure a number of those who do not qualify for vouchers will buy-in to an improved service, so long as it is affordable and reliable.

Whilst the Parish Council is constrained as to what it can contribute to a new service, we are willing to do all we can to assist parishioners in achieving the best outcome. To this end we are proposing to hold a public information session where interested



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suppliers can inform us of their preferred solutions to our deficiencies. This will take place on **Tuesday 24 January 2017** at the W.I. Hall, The Green, Parsonage Road, Newton Ferrers, PL8 1AT starting at 6pm and you are warmly invited to attend. A free sales pitch so to speak.

In order to assist in your planning we have attached a technical map (Appendix 1) indicating the opportunity for a wireless solution to outlying premises. (It is thought the map on the Connecting Devon & Somerset is inaccurate relating to coverage.) However, we are not constrained in our thinking and we are open to any practical, affordable and reliable suggestions you may have. Please note however, our mobile coverage is primarily supplied by Orange (EE) and is an old 2G service. The transmitter has been down since the end of October and is unlikely to be working until mid-January. It has a two year history of long-term service failure. The Vodaphone coverage is very patchy in Noss Mayo, but may be better along the coast.

Whilst we have indicated a radio solution might be suitable for the more remote premises, suppliers should note that the unserved properties on Stoke Road, Revelstoke Road and in Membland have power and telephony distributed over wooden poles. Given the inherent electrical safety of fibre optics, potential contractors are invited to consider a hybrid solution of wireless and fibre to the premises (over existing poles) in more densely packed districts. Such an above ground fibre optic distribution would be relatively inexpensive to install, and is likely to be the only long term way forward across the UK.

Appendix 2 shows the information we sent out to residents and provides a brief concerning our Parish.

If you are willing to consider providing a timely pooled service, to comply with the CDS voucher scheme, would you kindly contact our Parish Clerk as quickly as possible. We hope to have settled on a way forward by the end of January 2017, but are willing to move more quickly if required.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Shona McDonough  
Clerk to the Council