A quarterly update designed to keep you up-to-speed with our work and links to further information.

December 2023

Connecting Cambridgeshire Members Update

Hosted by Cambridgeshire County Council and led by Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority, with additional investment from the Greater Cambridge Partnership, our programme works with local councils, government, telecoms suppliers and network operators to improve digital connectivity for all.

CONTACT US

Contact the team if you or your constituents have any queries or concerns:

EMAIL

connecting.cambridgeshire@cambridgeshire.gov.uk - please include details of the location and postcode, if relevant, to help us investigate and respond as soon as possible.

CALL

Leave us a message on 01223 703293

POSTCODE CHECKER

Use our postcode checker to find out if gigabit broadband is already available in your area, if you might be included in Project Gigabit, or to check eligibility for Gigabit Broadband Vouchers.
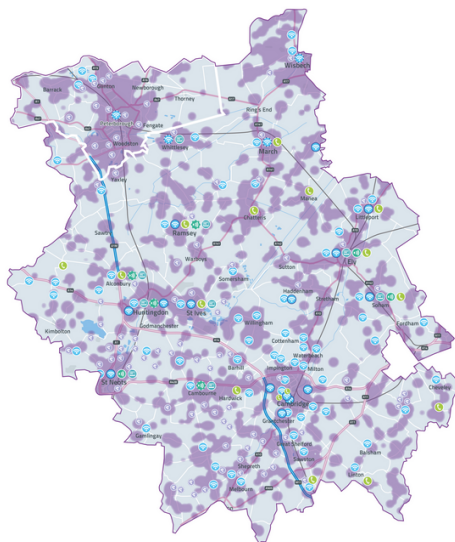
5G investment for the region

It was announced in November that Cambridgeshire will become part of a new 5G Innovation Region called England's Connected Heartland (ECH) after Oxfordshire County Council secured £3.8 million of funding from the government to accelerate 5G-enabled innovation and boost advanced wireless connectivity for our area.

Connecting Cambridgeshire supported the region's funding bid to DSIT to drive the adoption of 5G and other advanced wireless technologies to create a more inclusive, competitive and innovative digital economy.

The fund was set up to help local and regional authorities test and adopt the networks across a wide range of sectors, including public services, sustainable farming and road safety.

We're looking forward to seeing the initial results of the ECH project which will create repeatable business models to drive 5G digital transformation. The money it generates in the future will go into a fund to support more 5G networks and enhance collaborative innovation across the ECH region.

❯ **Find out more about the 5G Innovation Regions**

England's Connected Heartland Announced as 5G Innovation Region

CONNECTING CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Members Update

District Digital Overviews

Connecting Cambridgeshire works closely with city and district councils to keep Members and officers updated on the progress of the digital infrastructure strategy and any digital connectivity issues for their area.

District Digital Overviews provide a one-page summary of digital coverage data for each area to support local digital strategies and help to define digital priorities. The latest versions are available to view on the Connecting Cambridgeshire website.

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Project Gigabit

CityFibre has completed its first Project Gigabit set of survey and design activities for Cambridgeshire. Although this is still awaiting approval it is expected soon - with the initial build set to commence immediately afterwards. The first connected premises are expected to be mid-2024. BDUK hasn't confirmed when the Rural Gigabit Voucher Scheme will be un-paused within Cambridgeshire - so we'll keep members updated when we know more.

> **Read the latest Project Gigabit progress update**

Supporting Flex-5G

Connecting Cambridgeshire, on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council, is a supporting partner for the **Flex-5G Consortium** – a recent Government-funded Future RAN Competition (FRANC) winner. Our role was to facilitate a use case to demonstrate the capabilities of a new technology called Open RAN 5G while utilising Flex-5G which is a 5G network in a box, being developed by AWTG.
An Augmented Reality (AR) education experience was decided upon as a use case, and with Connecting Cambridgeshire's help, an AR immersive education experience was set up at a local village college in collaboration with another project partner.
The Flex-5G 'network in a box' acts like a private network, making sure certain places (like schools or hospitals) get the best service possible as it adapts in real-time to traffic demands. Over 100 students and their teachers got to try out the immersive experience in mid-December while learning about the benefits of 5G. While we can't divulge the content of that experience, as the project moves forward we'll keep you updated on all the exciting things happening in the world of Flex-5G.

Digital Inclusion

Work is progressing well to deliver a State of Digital Inclusion report, analysing past and present digital inclusion work across the county. The report will help to determine recommendations for a long-term, sustainable digital inclusion strategy for the programme. It will consolidate and complement work already being delivered by partners and work to minimise any gaps in provision – making sure those who are acutely digitally excluded and have complex or additional needs are being reached.

> **Our 'Help to get online' page has Digital Inclusion advice**