

Better Broadband for Nottinghamshire



Frequently Asked Questions – Better Broadband Subsidy Scheme

1. What is the Better Broadband Subsidy Scheme?

The Scheme has been developed by the UK government to ensure that every household and business in the UK can access an affordable basic broadband service. We define an affordable service as one that costs no more than £400 a year which includes installation, equipment and a monthly fee.

2. Who is eligible?

Any household or business who cannot access an affordable basic broadband service with a download speed of at least 2Mb per second.

3. How do I check if I'm eligible?

First check that you cannot access superfast broadband speeds (Download speeds of more than 24Mb per second) at www.gov.uk/gosuperfast. If your premise is not listed as benefitting from the roll out of superfast broadband use the BT ADSL checker on www.dslchecker.bt.com to find out your current broadband speed.

- If the speed checker identifies that your premises already benefits from speeds greater than 2Mb per second you **ARE NOT** eligible for the subsidy scheme.
- If the speed checker identifies that your broadband speed is under 2Mb per second you may be eligible for the subsidy scheme.
- If there are plans in place to bring superfast broadband to your premises within 12 months you will not be eligible for the subsidy scheme.
- If there are no plans to bring superfast broadband to your home **and** your current speed is confirmed as less than 2Mb per second you will be eligible for the subsidy scheme.

4. What help can I get if I'm eligible?

You can get help with the cost of the installation and any equipment needed to access a basic broadband service at an affordable price.

5. What costs are not covered?

The subsidy scheme does not cover the cost of monthly subscriptions. Monthly fees vary depending on the amount of data and speed of broadband connection you opt for.

6. What quality of broadband can I expect to receive from the scheme?

This will depend on several factors which include the type of broadband package you choose to buy and whether you decide to take up a satellite or wireless broadband service, should they be available in your area. **Satellite Broadband** can deliver speeds of 10Mb per second (or more) however the speed is not guaranteed throughout the day and the packages are usually subject to monthly data caps. It is important to consider how much data you are likely to require and the monthly costs of different packages. Some satellite packages will allow you to transfer data overnight (off-peak hours) without adding to the monthly costs. There will also be a short time delay with satellite broadband due to the technology involved which requires the signal to travel from your premises, to the satellite, and back to earth. This change may take some getting used to. **Wireless Broadband** performs in a similar way

to broadband which is delivered over the telephone network but the quality of service will vary dependant on the product selected. Wireless broadband is only available in certain parts of the country.

7. How do I apply?

You can apply by completing an online application form which is available at: <http://betterbroadbandchecker.culture.gov.uk>. A household or business will select their preferred supplier from the list on the scheme website and request a new service which is supported by a Better Broadband Scheme voucher. It is then the supplier's responsibility to check that the applicant is eligible for the scheme and they will request a voucher on their customer's behalf. We recommend that you opt for a broadband package which best suits your requirements. It is important that you research other options available from other suppliers (including those not registered under the scheme) as in some cases you may have access to a better offer. Ex. You may be offered better terms (higher monthly data caps, lower monthly subscription costs) by electing to take out a longer contract than what is available under this scheme.

8. Do I have to take out a contract?

Yes. You are required to sign a contract with a chosen supplier for a minimum of 12 months. If you want to terminate the agreement within the first year you may be subject to a termination fee payable to the supplier in addition to repaying the subsidy you benefitted from to facilitate the installation of your service and equipment required.

9. When is the scheme open until?

If you are eligible for the scheme you can apply until the end of December 2019.

10. Are there other options if my broadband speed is less than 2Mb per second?

Yes. You may also be able to get:

- A basic broadband service from a 4G mobile broadband supplier. You can check availability by using the Ofcom mobile coverage checker at www.ofcom.org.uk/mobile-coverage
- A wireless broadband service in some areas. Information on available operators and network providers can be found by using an online search engine.
- A superfast service in the future.

11. Can the subsidy be used to support fibre broadband?

One of the suppliers offering services through the scheme is BT; via its Community Fibre Partnership scheme. The subsidy can be used to support coverage delivered through a Community Fibre Partnerships project, but the project has to be ready to go live at the time when the code is provided (within 28 days of voucher being issued to supplier). If these parameters are not reached then the subsidy scheme would not be providing access in a timely way to an improved service.

12. I am in a superfast rollout area but will not be upgraded for a long time and my speed is currently less than 2Mb per second. Am I eligible?

You may be eligible for a subsidised broadband connection as an interim fix if the planning to bring superfast to your property has not yet started. You will not be eligible for the scheme if you are included within superfast plans of the next 12 months.

13. Superfast broadband is planned to be delivered to my area. Why do I have to wait rather than get a subsidy now?

There are strict rules concerning spending public funding to support the delivery of broadband services. The government cannot publicly fund two solutions to the same property within the same 12 months.

14. Who is the scheme managed and funded by?

The Better Broadband Scheme is managed by The Department for Culture, Media and Sport.