

## R100 in the Islands

Update meeting with Duncan Nisbet, R100 Stakeholder Director

The Reaching 100% (R100) programme is a Scottish Government commitment to enable every home and business in Scotland access to superfast broadband of 30 Megabits per second (Mbps). While telecoms is a reserved matter to Westminster, R100 aims to deliver a future-proofed, national fibre network, and make Scotland one of the best connected places anywhere in Europe and underpinning its future economic growth.

The R100 programme focuses on the final 6% - and most often hardest to reach - properties in Scotland and is delivered through three strands of activity: R100 Scottish Broadband Voucher Scheme, the £600m R100 contracts and commercial investment. The R100 contracts are divided into three lots and are being delivered by BT. Lot 1, the North lot, includes northern Scotland and the islands. Earlier this year we circulated a [briefing paper](#) to members with background and a progress report on R100. At the time, the full roll-out plan for the North lot had not yet been published. Below, are the key points taken from a recent update meeting:

### Update on R100 in the Islands – key points

- The phased roll-out plan for North is now available. Households and business premises can check if they are included in the main contract, part of the commercial build or eligible for the voucher scheme at: <https://www.scotlandsuperfast.com/>
- The North lot (£384 million) will deliver full fibre broadband capable of up to one gigabit per second download speeds. This is more than 30 times faster than the original commitment to deliver 30 megabits per second.
- The Scottish Government signed the R100 North contract with BT in December 2020 following a 12 month delay due to a legal challenge over the awarding of the contract. BT's delivery partner, Openreach, was then asked to conduct a complex remodelling exercise to account for changes in commercial coverage, ensuring that the contract remained compliant with State Aid legislation.
- Build work started in September 2021 and is due to be delivered in phases through to 2026/27. More than 220km of subsea cables will ensure 15 more islands across Argyll and Bute, Highlands, Shetland and Orkney are connected to fast and reliable broadband. Engineering work to install these cables is scheduled for Summer 2022. Further information is available at: <https://www.gov.scot/news/superfast-broadband-subsea-work-to-start/>
- To get a better understanding of the phased roll-out across your community or island, visit the online address checker. **Your community council or community development trust can also contact the R100 programme team to request the data for your area.**
- The R100 interim voucher is available to all homes and businesses with speeds less than 30Mbps and where superfast broadband roll-out is planned, but unlikely to be delivered until after 31 December 2021. More than 60 suppliers have registered to date and a range of different technologies including fibre to the premise, fixed wireless, mobile or satellite are available. **The deadline for applying for the interim voucher, through a supplier, is 31 March 2022.**
- Properties that are not expected to receive a superfast connection through either the R100 contracts or planned commercial investment will be eligible for a £5,000 main voucher. Applications for main vouchers will continue to be accepted after March 2022.

- Clusters of premises not included within the main contract, but who are eligible for a voucher, can apply for a Community Fibre Partnership (CFP) with Openreach as one of the many suppliers available under the scheme. Openreach will work with the local community, pooling together individual vouchers, to arrange a customised installation plan that may make gigabit capable connections more affordable.
- To find out more, and to check the status of your property, visit:  
<https://www.scotlandsuperfast.com/>