



Our community broadband project has ended

The advice that we have received from the experts at B4RN is that, despite the efforts of our group of volunteers, and the support of some in our community, the obstacles hindering the progress of our project are too great for us to be able to successfully fund and build our own full-fibre gigabit broadband network. Those obstacles are:

- the reluctance of large parts of our community to apply for Gigabit Vouchers
- the difficulty in raising community funding through the sale of Community Shares
- the reluctance of a small number of key landowners to grant permission for ducting to be laid on their land
- the encroachment of Virgin Media and Gigaloch into parts of our project area

Our group of local volunteers have worked hard over the last few years to bring the best possible broadband service to our community, but we have not been able to generate the level of community support needed for the project to be successful.

We would like to thank all those members of our community that have supported our project by applying for Gigabit Vouchers, buying Community Shares (as well as making pledges), and granting wayleaves. Unfortunately, there were just not enough of us. We would like to give a special thank you to the primary school in Mollington and the Hospice in Backford for their support for our project and for agreeing to host the cabinets that would have been the hubs from where everybody else would have been connected.

For residents who have applied for a Gigabit voucher, B4RN will cancel these vouchers. This means that members of our community will be able to apply for vouchers with an alternative provider if and when one becomes available. There are a few people in our community that have bought Community Shares that may wish to redeem their shares now the project is no longer going ahead. With this in mind, a proposal pending approval by B4RN is that there will be a one-time opportunity to redeem Community Shares that have been held for less than three years on the 1st April 2022. To take advantage of this offer contact B4RN at sharesregistrar@b4rn.org.uk. People who wish to keep their investment in B4RN can continue to do so under the original terms.

Our team of volunteers has been shocked and saddened by the decision by B4RN to end our project, but we are very aware of how difficult it has been to generate the support the project would have needed to be viable as well as the increasing build cost caused by the reluctance of some landowners to grant us permission to lay the ducting on their land. Building our own fibre broadband network with B4RN was an opportunity for our community to do something very special. Unfortunately, this option is no longer available to us.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact us at ask@b4svh.org.uk