

Beech Broadband — Project Update

Prepared for Beech Parish Council and the Beech Broadband Working Group.

Summary of items for Beech Parish Council meeting on 21st September 2026

To improve our residents access to FTTP we ask the council to:

1. Agree that we will write to our MP, Damien Hinds asking for his assistance in securing a more precise statement on the planned availability of Openreach FTTP for our residents
2. The council will budget £325 to pay Cerberus Networks for a detailed estimate for the cost of implementing a Fibre on Demand solution for a group of 20 households.

Background & project scope

High speed, reliable broadband is becoming increasingly critical to our community and economy.

Beech residents currently have access to 4 options:

1. Residents in ‘upper’ Beech, approx. 30 houses at the top end of Medstead Road and Kings Hill have Fibre to the Property (FTTP)

The other residents of approx. 180 houses, have 4 options:

1. Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC) and then overhead copper wires that deliver 10 – 15 Mbps download but with some reliability issues innate in copper connections on pole.
2. StarLink satellite connection
3. Wait for FTTP
 - a. OpenReach deployment
 - b. [UK government Project Gigabit](#)
4. Pay a network provider (eg Cerberus Networks) to deliver a service

Broadband service comparison:

	Download speed	Upload speed	Latency	Reliability
FTTP (Fibre to the Premises)	150 Mbps to 1.8 Gbps (1,800 Mbps)	20 Mbps to 1,000 Mbps	Very low, usually under 15 ms	Highest; glass fibre all the way inside means distance and weather do not affect speed.
FTTC (Fibre to the Cabinet)	30 to 80 Mbps BUT local evidence is 10 – 15 Mbps	8 to 20 Mbps	Low, typically 10 to 20 ms.	Medium; uses copper wires from the street cabinet to your home, so speed drops the further you live from that cabinet
Starlink UK	50 to 250 Mbps (median around 100–150 Mbps)	10 to 35 Mbps	25 to 50 ms (much faster than old satellite, but higher than fibre)	Good for remote areas lacking fixed lines, but speeds can dip during peak evening hours or heavy weather.

Status of broadband deployment

1. Approximately 31 Beech homes have the option of FTTP, we don't know how many have adopted it.
2. Around 180 homes in lower Beech currently have Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC), reached from the cabinet by existing poles and overhead lines.
 - a. These residents have been waiting for FTTP deployment for over 5 years based on a rolling commitment from Openreach to deploy within the next 2 years and UK government rural broadband programmes and vouchers.
 - b. Of the 180 houses
 - i. A small number, maybe up to 10 have contracted for Starlink.
 - ii. 100 are currently in the Openreach list of FTTP planned for the next year.
 - iii. 70 are in the Openreach list of FTTP planned but with no outlook of when.
3. Even if full fibre (FTTP) is available not every household will take it up
 - a. We do get feedback of poor reliability and performance BUT some users are very happy with the service and value for money.
 - b. Estimates and experience from other projects suggests that even with a 'competitive' FTTP option the take up is likely to be in the range of 25 to 50% ie 35 to 70 potential FTTP users.
4. UK government funding for rural FTTP projects has stalled.
 - a. The Hampshire project with CityFibre is being rescope from 50,000 of the 200,000 Hampshire homes without full fibre to 29,000 and Beech was probably not in the original scope.
 - b. The UK government website lists 105 Beech properties that are 'Planned' for full fibre services and 61 that are 'Not planned'.
5. OpenReach have had a public plan to upgrade Beech FTTC to FTTP in the next 2 years for at least the last 5 year.
 - a. They have recently changed the plan to: 'We'll be building in this area in the next year' for 111 Beech homes.
 - b. Whilst the outlook of 'the next year' sounds better than previous plans of 2 years, we have experienced over 5 years of a 'rolling 2 year' commitment from Openreach with no change.
 - c. In addition, they list 71 homes where full fibre is 'Planned' but no outlook.

Analysis of full fibre (FTTP) deployment and plan by road

The table below maps the [OpenReach](#) and [UK government Gigabit](#) checker status by house and summarises this by road:

0 0 Total		3			3 Total	4			4 Total	Grand Total	
Row Labels	Available	Planned	Not planned	(blank)		Planned	Not planned	(blank)			
FTTC		55	45	11	111	50	16	5	71	182	
Basingstoke Road			2		2	3	1		4	6	
Medstead Road		16	6	2	24	46	10	4	60	84	
Snode Hill			1		1		5	1	6	7	
Wellhouse Road		39	36	9	84	1			1	85	
FTTP	31	31								31	
Kings Hill	23	23								23	
Thedden	8	8								8	
Grand Total	31	31	55	45	11	111	50	16	5	71	213

Notes:

1. UK government full fibre gigabit checker
 - a. Data was sourced from network providers in January 2026 and published in June 2026
 - b. Output is 3 states:
 - i. Available
 - ii. Planned
 - iii. Not planned

2. OpenReach full fibre status
 - a. Data is update 'regularly' bu OpenReach
 - b. Output now has 5 states
 - i. **(0)** Available to order now
 - ii. **(1)** Available to order soon
 - iii. **(2)** Building now
 - iv. **(3)** Building in this area in the next year
 - v. **(4)** Planning to build in this area
 - vi. **(5)** No plan
3. There are significant discrepancies between the UK government and Openreach datasets.
 - a. This may be due to timing as the UK government data is from January
 - b. This may be to detail ie the UK government dataset lists houses that are between 2 'Planned' houses as 'Not planned' which does not make sense.
 - c. Our working assumption is that if the connection between the Alton exchange and the FTTC cabinet is upgraded to enable FTTP, this will address the vast majority of properties in the village.

What is involved in the FTTC to FTTP upgrade?

Based on our discussions with Hampshire Community broadband we understand that the existing FTTC infrastructure is probably insufficient to support FTTP without upgrades in two places:

1. Local distribution — new fibre from the cabinet to each of the ~150 homes (can reuse existing poles).
2. Backhaul — additional capacity between the cabinet and the exchange, which is likely needed regardless of how the local distribution is done.

Reliable high-speed broadband (100+ Mb) depends on contractors providing:

1. A one-off infrastructure upgrade or new infrastructure (the backend from an exchange to a local cabinet)
 - a. Upgrade the Openreach infrastructure using a PIA authorised contractor
 - i. Openreach have not prioritised us in doing this.
 1. They do have a long term reason for doing this in terms of reduced maintenance costs for the copper wire infrastructure and convergence to a total digital infrastructure.
 - ii. The Cerberus model is based on paying for this
 - b. Or a contractor building its own network... this happens in cities and open countryside – we have no active interest from other service providers.
2. A contracted service to a consumer (via a network provider like Vodafone/BT/Gigaclear, or a community-based model).
 - a. Individual household connection
 - b. Ongoing service delivery (problem management and support)

Based on our discussions with Hampshire Broadband we identified [Cerberus Networks](#) as a potential contractor who would be prepared to work with us on this project.

What are our options:

1. Wait for OpenReach to upgrade existing FTTC to FTTP
2. Work with a contractor to pay OpenReach to upgrade our FTTC to FTTP
3. Find a network provide (Gigaclear, Trooli...) who sees a business case to build their own network
4. Wait for the UK government GIGABIT project to include Beech in scope of a government funded scheme

Project scope

1. Establish whether Beech can realistically get faster, more reliable broadband;
2. Understand what it would cost and who would pay for it; and,
3. If the numbers stack up, build enough community support to actually commission it.

This document tracks that work, background, current plan and status, then the supporting research and evidence behind it.

2. Plan and status

When	What	Actions
October	Community signup	
2-9-26	Beech Parish Council approval for spend of £325 for detail estimate	
By 15 th Sept	Desktop estimate	
TBA	Ask our MP, Damien Hinds to get a committed date for FTTP from Openreach	1.
		2.
15-8-26	Checked OpenReach website and they now now indicate 1 year plan to upgrade FTTC to FTTP.	3. We need help to assess if this will happen
14-8-26	Contacted Cerberus Networks and they provided detailed plan and link to their offering: Cerberus Fibre On Demand	4. KE completed and confirmed availability for our area 5. KE requested 'desk survey' for initial estimate of cost.
13-8-26	Kim and Nigel met with Hampshire Community Broadband (Martin and Carl), who shared their experience running community broadband/leased-line projects and suggested Cerberus Networks as an option worth exploring (full notes at Appendix	1. Martin will try and find references of other communities that have run successful community shared leased line projects. 2. Kim will make contact with Cerebus to explore the option of Cerberus contracting to upgrade our Openrach infrastructure to enable FTTP 3. We (Kim/Nigel/Ingrid) will explore the option of building a Beech community group who would be prepared to pay for infrastructure upgrades 4. Kim will explore the option of CIL funding to contribute towards the cost.

Comparing the options

This is the heart of what we're trying to evolve with our research: what residents get today, versus what Cerberus's FTTPoD could offer, and at what cost. Setting them side by side:

Option	Speed Mbps (down/up)	Monthly cost	One-off connection fee	Infrastructure build cost	Contract
FTTC (current)	~10-15 / ~1	£25-£35	£0 (already connected)	£0 (existing)	None (rolling)
Starlink (current)	~100-200 / ~10-20 ¹	£60-£70 ²	£299 (buy) or £0 upfront if renting (+£10/mo)	£0 (self-install)	None (rolling)
Cerberus FoD Basic	40 / 2	£38.00 + VAT	£1,040 + VAT ³	Variable — incl. £325 + VAT group survey ⁴ , shared across up to 20 linked premises; confirmed only after full survey ⁵	24 months
Cerberus FoD Plus	115 / 20	£46.50 + VAT	£1,040 + VAT ³		
Cerberus FoD Pro	300 / 50	£60.00 + VAT	£1,040 + VAT ³		

¹ Starlink speeds are variable and address/weather/congestion-dependent; figures shown are for the Residential 200 tier, from public pricing pages, August 2026.

² £70/month reflects Starlink's Residential 200 plan (£60/month service) plus its optional £10/month kit rental; alternatively the £299 kit can be bought outright and the service run at £60/month with no rental fee.

³ Combined one-off connection fee = BT Openreach connection charge (£495 + VAT) + Cerberus connection charge (£545 + VAT), both quoted "per order", i.e. per household. Not yet confirmed whether this is discounted for Linked Orders.

⁴ The £325 + VAT site survey fee is, per Cerberus's email, a single charge covering the whole linked group. It's treated here as part of the shared infrastructure build cost — split equally across however many premises join the group, up to 20 — rather than as a per-household connection charge.

⁵ This is the true cost driver: the £325 + VAT survey fee above, plus Openreach's confirmed fibre-build charge once the survey is complete — both split equally across the linked group. The build charge itself can range from near-£0 up to £10,000+ per premises depending on distance/route difficulty, consistent with the £170,000-£525,000+ total planning range in the Detail section below.

Note: Cerberus/Openreach figures are quoted excl. VAT (standard B2B pricing); FTTC/Starlink consumer prices shown are VAT-inclusive, so add 20% to the Cerberus figures for a like-for-like comparison.

What stands out

- Cerberus FTTPoD is the only option that gets Beech genuinely ultrafast speeds — even the entry tier (40/2) matches or beats typical FTTC today, and the top tier (900/115) is an order of magnitude faster than anything available locally. But it comes with a materially higher, less predictable cost: just over £1,000 + VAT in known upfront connection charges before any fibre is laid, a 24-month lock-in, and an infrastructure build cost — including the £325 + VAT group survey fee — that can't be fully quoted until survey.
- The infrastructure build cost is the number that will actually decide this, and it's currently unknown. The desktop survey Kim has just submitted is free and narrows it at zero financial risk, regardless of whether the village ultimately proceeds.
- Given the meeting's own estimate of only 25-50% take-up across ~150 homes, FTTPoD's viability depends heavily on organising meaningful Linked Order groups (up to 20 premises each) to bring the per-household build cost down — which is exactly what the October campaign, below, is designed to do.

Cerberus status

15-8-26	<p>We have submitted your request for pricing and will be in touch within the next 28 days. Your reference for the FTTPoD Request Quote is : DE15160 Address: 67 Wellhouse Road Beech Alton Hampshire GB Beech</p> <p>If you have any queries in the meantime, please contact our sales team on 0345 257 1333</p>
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Open questions for Cerberus

- Is the £325 + VAT survey fee charged once per linked group, or once per household within a group?
- Is the £1,040 + VAT combined connection fee reduced at all for Linked Orders, or fixed per household regardless of group size?
- What's the exact formula for apportioning the confirmed build cost across a linked group — equal split, or weighted by each household's route cost?
- Are villagers tied to Cerberus for service after the initial 24-month term, or free to switch to another Openreach-network ISP? Does re-grading to standard FTTP pricing happen automatically?
- Does Cerberus (or anyone) hold PIA rights to build directly, or does every FTTPoD build route through an Openreach-assigned project manager regardless of ISP?

Funding required: Parish Council approval, September 2026

Recommendation: that the Parish Council approve payment of the £325 + VAT one-off site survey fee at the September 2026 meeting. This is the next concrete step that turns the biggest unknown in the table above — the infrastructure build cost — into a firm, group-wide number from Openreach. It carries no further commitment beyond the survey itself, and the cost would in due course be shared across everyone who joins the linked group, up to 20 premises.

Community campaign — launching October 2026

To reach a meaningful group size and gauge genuine appetite before committing further, the working group plans to launch a village-wide campaign in October 2026: a two-sided flyer delivered to every household in lower Beech, explaining the problem and the options, and inviting residents to register their interest (see the companion flyer, delivered alongside this update).

- Goal: gauge how many households want to join, and build towards a Linked Order group close to the 20-premises maximum (with further groups possible if demand is higher).
- Method: door-to-door flyer with a simple way to register interest, followed up by the working group.
- Timing: flyer designed and printed in September, delivered village-wide in October, with sign-ups feeding directly into the Linked Order process described above.

Immediate next steps

- Await the Cerberus/Openreach desktop survey estimate — submitted, response pending.
- Secure Parish Council approval of the £325 + VAT site survey fee at the September meeting.
- Finalise and print the household flyer; deliver to every home in lower Beech in October.
- Collect sign-ups/interest to form one or more Linked Order groups (up to 20 premises each).
- Once approved and a group has formed, commission the paid on-site survey.
- Continue in parallel: CIL neighbourhood-portion enquiries with the parish clerk/district council, and Martin's research into comparable community broadband projects.

3. Detail: supporting research

The sections below capture the research behind the plan above, for anyone who wants the full picture.

Research: Cerberus

Cerberus Networks is a UK business ISP whose relevant product is "Fibre on Demand" (FTTPoD) — but the physical build is carried out by **Openreach**, not Cerberus; Cerberus places and manages the order rather than holding its own PIA duct/pole rights. They have a "Linked Orders" mechanism suited to Beech's situation: neighbouring premises order together and are surveyed as a group, so shared civils costs get apportioned across the group (lowering the per-household charge as more neighbours join), plus a small extra discount (£50+VAT/premises) for linked orders. Each household still places and pays for its own order individually — there's no single shared "village pot."

Two things aren't fully confirmed by their public materials and are among the open questions above:

- Whether villagers would be tied to Cerberus for ongoing service afterward, or free to choose another Openreach-network ISP (BT, Sky, Zen, etc.) — since the built fibre becomes standard Openreach wholesale infrastructure once complete.
- Whether Cerberus (or anyone) holds PIA authorisation to upgrade infrastructure themselves, versus everything routing through Openreach.

Cerberus looks like a good fit for **service delivery** via a community-style commercial arrangement, but a weaker fit for actually **being the infrastructure-upgrade contractor** — that part would still run through Openreach.

Research: CIL funding

The Community Infrastructure Levy is a charge district/borough councils can levy on new development. The most promising route for Beech is the parish/town council "neighbourhood portion": parishes receive 15% of local CIL receipts (25% with an adopted Neighbourhood Development Plan), and — critically — this portion has a broad spending test: "infrastructure, or anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on the area," not a narrow fixed list. This is plausible enough to be worth pursuing, but depends on (1) how much CIL has actually accrued for Beech parish, (2) whether Beech has an adopted Neighbourhood Plan, and (3) the district's own CIL spending policy.

Next step: ask the parish clerk / district council for the current CIL balance held for Beech, whether Beech has an adopted Neighbourhood Plan, and the local CIL spending policy document.

Full detail and sources: research/cerberus-and-cil-funding.md

Research: cost estimates

Planning-level estimates only — no Beech-specific survey exists yet. Assumes running new fibre along existing poles to ~150 homes, plus a separate cabinet-to-exchange backhaul upgrade.

Local distribution (cabinet → 150 homes via existing poles)

Reusing existing poles avoids civils (the most expensive part of any fibre build). Openreach PIA pole/duct access charges are a small recurring cost (roughly £11-20/pole/year), not the main capital outlay — the real cost is materials, aerial labour, drop cable and termination per home.

Reference points:

- UK/US aerial fibre construction data: ~£1,000-£2,600 per premises passed for rural aerial builds using existing poles (2-3x cheaper than underground on the same ground).
- Openreach's own "hardest-to-reach final 10%" estimate: ~£4,000/premises — a worse-case blend including underground, so Beech's aerial-only case should sit below this.
- UK Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme's own assumption: £1,500/residential premises (up to £3,500/SME) gap-funding need.
- Real UK comparison at similar scale: F4RN (Nottinghamshire, ~150 subscribers) built its own network for ~£150,000 total (~£1,000/premises) via community share investment — a self-build rather than using Openreach poles, but a useful sanity check.

Planning range: £1,000-£2,500/premises, i.e. £150,000-£375,000 total for 150 homes.

Cabinet-to-exchange backhaul upgrade

The harder, more variable half — and likely the bigger cost risk, as suspected. Depends almost entirely on the distance to the exchange and whether Openreach already has spare duct/fibre capacity on that route.

- If spare capacity exists: plausibly low tens of thousands of pounds (cost dominated by cable/splicing, not civils).
- If new trenching is needed: £15-£40+/metre in typical rural ground, e.g. a 1km trenched route could run £15,000-£40,000+ in civils alone; longer or harder routes could exceed £100,000.
- Individual leased-line "excess construction charges" for remote sites (a different but directionally useful reference) commonly run £500-£10,000+ for a single connection.

Planning range: £20,000-£150,000+. This is the number a real Openreach/PIA-contractor survey (checking existing duct/fibre occupancy on the specific route) would most usefully narrow.

Combined picture

Component	Rough planning range
Local distribution (150 homes, existing poles)	£150,000 - £375,000
Cabinet-to-exchange backhaul upgrade	£20,000 - £150,000+
Total, before any subsidy/voucher offset	roughly £170,000 - £525,000+

Two things that could reduce the real number: realistic take-up (25-50% of 150 homes, i.e. 38-75 households, if local distribution cost scales with actual orders rather than being spent on all 150 up front — though backhaul is a fixed cost regardless of uptake), and the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme if still applicable in Hampshire (£1,500/home, up to £3,500/business).

Full detail and sources: [research/cost-estimate-pole-build-and-backhaul.md](#)

Appendix A: Meeting with Hampshire Community Broadband — 13 August 2026

Notes from the meeting between Hampshire Community Broadband and the Beech working group. Moved here from the main body to keep this document focused for Parish Council review.

Attendees: Martin, Carl (Hampshire Community Broadband); Kim, Nigel, Ingur (Beech). Thank you to Martin and Carl for sharing their experience and insight.

Agreed actions

1. Martin — find references of other communities that have run successful community shared leased line projects.
2. Kim — make contact with Cerberus to explore contracting them to upgrade Beech's Openreach infrastructure for FTTP.
3. Kim / Nigel / Ingur — explore building a Beech community group prepared to pay for infrastructure upgrades.
4. Kim — explore CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) funding to contribute towards the cost.

Full meeting notes: [meeting-notes/2026-08-13-hampshire-community-broadband.md](#)

Appendix B: Cerberus Networks — email response (received 15 August 2026)

From Neil Enoch, Account Manager, Cerberus Networks Ltd, replying to Kim's enquiry. Reproduced in full.

Hi Kim- Thanks for your email and apologies for a late response, I have now picked this up.

We are an ISP (Internet Service Provider) we do not manage or own our own network however we work with Openreach to deliver broadband services across the UK.

It is possible and probable that a service called Fibre to the premises on Demand (FTTPoD) is available to you and the rest of the village and this may be an option to consider.

Cerberus can provide FTTPoD and one of only a few ISP's that continue to support it.

FTTPoD essentially requires us to get BT Openreach to undergo a completely one-off, bespoke, custom installation, build and provision of the Fibre network infrastructure that is required to deliver Ultrafast FTTP (speeds up to 900Mbps download) to you and/or your neighbours, this Fibre network is not in place today and your postcode area is not in any current plans under the UK Wide roll-out of Fibre broadband to be getting native FTTP anytime soon hence why it is showing FTTPoD as a possible option.

If you have other neighbours who may also be interested in getting FTTPoD this is what we call a Linked or Group Order and with FTTPoD this is suitable for up to 20 x premises in a Single Group project, so it would be possible to have several Group Orders underway to cover all those neighbours who would be interested.

You (and any neighbours who join) will effectively pay upfront for the Total installation charges to build the fibre network infrastructure, these charges will likely be in the several £000's BUT only a full site survey from an Openreach Fibre Surveyor will confirm what the Total actual cost of the network build is going to be.

There is a single one-off charge for the site survey of £325.00 + VAT payable upfront and non refundable.

If FTTPoD is something of interest then there is now a Mandatory 1st stage that you need to go through, this 1st stage is Free of charge and you are not making any commitment.

You firstly need to visit our website and the section we have here that is specific to Fibre on Demand.

There is a network checking tool here where you would input your postcode. This is an Openreach network checker tool and it will provide a list of premises, you need to select your house No and the checker will then confirm if FTTPoD is available.

The website will provide you with a box to Request a Desktop Survey/Quote. This is a Mandatory Free of charge 1st step and you need to select the desktop quote. This will send a request to the BT Openreach fibre team at Openreach and they undergo an initial desk based network survey to provide you with an ESTIMATED installation charge for providing FTTPoD.

Once the desktop survey comes back to us we will send this to you- the charges at this stage are now fairly accurate within a few % points of the actual build costs.

We provide a Click-Here link in this email, this will allow you to go online and place your order for FTTPoD- It will also ask if you wish to begin a Group/Linked Order.

Once you have placed your own order for FTTPoD we will send a confirmation this contains a specific WEB URL Address. If at this point you wish other neighbours to join with you in a Group Order then you would need to pass this WEB URL to each interested neighbour, they in turn can place their order for FTTPoD, our system will automatically link the orders together.

Once all the interested neighbours have completed their orders then you advise us and we will ask for payment of the single survey charge, once paid we ask Openreach to come and survey the whole Group of premises.

Openreach will then provide us with the Total confirmed installation network costs to provide the fibre network to ALL premises in the Group.

As part of the site survey, amongst other criteria, the fibre surveyor will assess your distance to the nearest BT Openreach full fibre aggregator node, any existing Fibre networking and if this is relevant to bringing FTTP to you, the method of and the planned route of delivery.

If you decided to proceed then the final confirmed build charges can be split equally amongst you, but these installation charges are payable upfront in advance.

Here is a link to the part of our website you need;

<https://www.cerberusnetworks.co.uk/connectivity-broadband/fibre-demand>

This section also provides you with full pricing for FTTPoD- so you can see the Monthly rental charges for each FTTPoD service.

FTTPoD is commercially different service to standard FTTP services. You would be contracting with Cerberus for the service on a 24 month contract term and the pricing is higher than normal FTTP.

Because FTTPoD is a custom build, delivery lead-times are not a few weeks, Openreach now assign a Project Manager to each FTTPoD deployment and it is their role to ensure that delivery of the network is completed within 12 months- however this timeframe does not factor for any 3rd party permissions that may be needed to complete the build- such as Traffic calming, road closures, tree felling etc.

I hope this is all useful

Kind regards

Neil

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(Cerberus FTTPoD pricing referenced in the Plan and status section — five speed tiers and connection charges — was taken from Cerberus's public Fibre on Demand pricing page, cerberusnetworks.co.uk, 15 August 2026, and is not part of the email itself.)