

Welcome to update 6 of the Kilmeston, Cheriton & Bramdean campaign for Fibre to the Premises (FTTP)

Beauworth goes live!

There is some other progress also.

On the morning of 20 September, we met with the Openreach Chief Engineer responsible for our area and he turned out to be a very impressive chap from South Africa called Luellin. We got the distinct impression that, at long last, we are in touch with someone who knows about the technical realities on the ground and is sympathetic to our cause.

We were able to confirm that there is now fibre from a cabinet at Cheriton crossroads, that goes south along Kilmeston Road to the double bend, then across the Corbetts' land into Beauworth and thence across the Saunders' land to Down Farm on the Kilmeston-Milburys road. Since last week 57 of the properties in Beauworth were connected to fibre and are functioning - and the fibre is within 800 yards of the centre of Kilmeston. Luellin has pointed out that there are plenty of poles in this part of the patch, which should reduce the trenching cost. We don't yet have any more useful updates for the south of Cheriton and the west of Bramdean.

Astonishingly, although Luellin is in regular touch with Chris Priestley (the Openreach Rural Engagement Officer) he had received very little information about our application or the local geography, so we gave him an Ordnance Survey map overlaid with the boundary of our patch. When I spoke to him yesterday, Luellin had received the latest list and the initial plan. He is working on a new price that should be passed to Openreach next week and reflect the fact that there is now fibre around our patch where there was none before. We are cautiously optimistic that this will result in a significant reduction in the Openreach quote and thereby secure the viability of the project.

Finally, will any of us live long enough? The holdup is, you guessed it, the government. Openreach claim to be waiting for the say-so from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. Whether a scouser like Nadine Dorries will be interested in this bit of Hampshire remains to be seen but we have been writing to Flick Drummond ([flick.drummond.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:flick.drummond.mp@parliament.uk)) at regular intervals to see if we can goad anyone in to action, so far without result. Do feel free to add to her inbox.

One thing is certain, it's not going to happen in 2021 but, given the government's renewed enthusiasm for working from home, we will need it sooner rather than later.

Kind regards

Graham Cresswell

for Cllr Jason Bridgen, Guy Hornsey, Tom Hays David Annette (Cheriton Lead)