

Update No 15 for Kilmeston, Cheriton & Bramdean FTTP project CFP 46126

I am sad to report that this update is about setbacks.

First of all, some of us received a notification on 30 April from the “Funding Platform” (funding.platform@notifications.service.gov.uk) to the effect that our pledges will expire in a month’s time. We have established with Openreach that we can ignore this message.

Second, we have a new engineering contact “on the ground” who is called Liam. All 5 of us have now met with him and it’s clear that he is on our side. However, he is constrained by a bizarre ruling by Scottish & Southern Electricity (SSE – part of OVO).

He has told us that SSE have thrown a spanner in the Openreach works by prohibiting them from adding anything new to the electricity poles that they currently share. It has been suggested that this is a “health and safety” requirement - you couldn’t make it up. The whole project is now being re-surveyed to account for it. Liam, and his assistant, Joe, were walking through Kilmeston today looking at where they might site additional poles and where they would have to bury the cable. They have already gone through this process in the southern part of Cheriton. Liam thinks that, in three weeks’ time, he will have a plan to present to us and other interested villagers. Obviously, if there are objections to additional poles, that will add to the delay. The more they have to bury, the longer it will take.

That said, Liam thinks that it can still be completed in 2023.

On the plus side, the fibre has reached the centre of Kilmeston and there is a Distribution Point just to the south of the Village Hall. We also know that it passes all the northern part of Kilmeston from the crossroads, across the entrances to Hopton’s Retreat and Greys Farm Close, as far as the double bend and then it continues on its way to Beauworth and back to the Distribution Point in Kilmeston. We’ve not received an update on Bramdean.

We will continue to be a pain in the neck to Openreach and we will continue to press our MP, Flick Drummond, to lobby on our behalf. (flick.drummond.mp@parliament.uk if you want to add your thoughts).

Yours in exasperation

Graham Cresswell

for

Jason Bridgen
Tom Haye
Guy Hornsey
David Annette (Cheriton Lead)