

Getting a Basic Broadband service

A guide for those who may wish to apply to benefit from the scheme

If you currently experience poor broadband speeds the Government will help provide you with access to an alternative broadband service that will offer speeds of at least 2Mbps, by providing you with access to a subsidised satellite broadband connection.

This helps fulfil a Government commitment (known as the Universal Service Commitment or USC) first made in December 2010, when the Government announced public funding to extend Superfast Broadband beyond the reach of commercial deployment to 90% of UK premises. Further public funding was made available to raise the target for Superfast Broadband coverage to 95% of UK premises by the end of 2017. The commitment was to offer a service providing broadband speeds of at least 2Mbps for anyone yet to benefit from Superfast Broadband by the end of 2015.

What are my other options for Better Broadband?

You may already be able to access Superfast Broadband services. You can check current and planned availability of Superfast Broadband services in East Sussex and Brighton and Hove on this website:

www.eSussex.org

Alternatively, you can check Superfast Broadband availability on the Government's website:

<http://gosuperfastchecker.culture.gov.uk/>

You may be able to get a 4G mobile broadband connection. You can check current availability of 4G mobile broadband services at the Ofcom Mobile Coverage Checker:

<http://www.ofcom.org.uk/mobile-coverage>

Some parts of East Sussex and Brighton and Hove are covered by local wireless broadband service providers. You can check whether they cover your area by entering 'wireless broadband services' into an Internet Search engine such as Google or Yahoo.

How will we help?

We will check the available services at your premises and if you are eligible you will be provided with an eligibility code which can be used with one of a selected number of **service providers** to obtain a subsidised satellite broadband service

The code will cover most of the cost of installation and commissioning of your satellite broadband service. You will be responsible for paying any remaining costs (if any), for choosing the features of the service you require, and for paying the monthly subscription with any VAT.

The code does not have a specific fixed value, but when used to obtain a satellite broadband service from one of the selected retail service providers, the use of the code will reduce the total cost (i.e. installation and commissioning costs plus 12 monthly subscriptions) by around £350. The code has no other value, and cannot be redeemed in any other way than through the scheme.

Where can I find more information about the scheme?

More information on the national scheme can be found on the DCMS website at: www.gov.uk/dcms.

More information on the operation of the scheme in East Sussex and Brighton and Hove can be found on the Broadband Programme website at:

www.esussex.org

How do I decide whether to apply?

You can obtain information on the scheme by reading this guide and from the DCMS and eSussex websites (links above), which should help you to decide whether to apply to benefit from the scheme.

When can I apply?

The scheme is now live in eSussex and will open until 31st December 2017. Satellite broadband services provided under the scheme will be available to use until (at least) 2022.

Update November 2017. The Government has announced that it is extending the scheme, which will now continue through 2018.

How do I apply?

You can apply to benefit from the scheme by completing a simple online application form at www.esussex.org or by pasting this link into a web browser

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/12DxqpVNXPSlhN16NlgMzsY4fepesOQUslW0h_rebLI/viewform?usp=send_form

You will need to provide:

- Your postal address, including your post code
- The main line telephone number at that address, if you have one
- Your name and other contact details such as mobile phone number, email address, etc.
- You will need to confirm that you are the owner or occupier at that address (we cannot accept applications from anyone that is not the owner/occupier).

Will I be eligible to benefit from the scheme?

You will be eligible to benefit from the scheme, and will be issued with a code, if you currently experience poor broadband speeds (i.e. broadband download speeds of less than 2Mbps), providing that:

1. We determine that your home or business is not currently able to access a broadband download speed of at least 2Mbps;
2. there are no alternative affordable broadband services available to you, which would provide a broadband download speed of at least 2Mbps;

You will be asked to confirm on your application that to the best of your knowledge, there are no alternative affordable broadband services available to you, which would provide you with a broadband download speed of at least 2Mbps;

You will also be asked to confirm that you do not already have a satellite broadband service at your address;

We will check our records of existing and planned coverage of broadband services to confirm that there are no alternative affordable broadband services available to you, which would provide you with a broadband download speed of at least 2Mbps;

3. there are no plans to provide Superfast Broadband to you within 12 months of your application;

We will check our roll-out plans for Superfast Broadband to see whether you are likely to benefit within 12 months of your application;

If Superfast Broadband is likely to be available within 12 months of your application, you cannot be issued with a code under the national scheme rules. However, if you are unlikely to benefit from Superfast Broadband within 12 months of your application (i.e. Superfast Broadband availability is more than 12 months away, or not yet planned), you will be issued with a code under the scheme, assuming all other eligibility criteria are met.

If I apply to the scheme and take a satellite broadband service, will I still be considered for Superfast Broadband deployment?

Yes. Taking a satellite broadband service under the scheme has no effect on plans for further deployment of Superfast Broadband.

How will I know the outcome of my application?

A decision will be made on your application as quickly as possible and codes should be issued within one month of receiving your completed application). You will be advised of the outcome of your application by email.

If it is decided to issue you with a code under the scheme, you will be sent a unique code via email, together with the list of the satellite broadband retail service providers currently operating under the scheme, and their contacts details.

If it is decided not to issue you with a code under the scheme, you will be sent an email with the reasons for the decision.

Can I appeal against a decision not to issue me with a code?

If you are not satisfied with the decision not to issue you with a code under the scheme, and the reasons given for that decision, you may submit one appeal by email setting-out the grounds for your appeal, and why you believe you should have been issued with a code. The decision will be reviewed in the light of your appeal, and a final decision on whether or not to issue you with a code under the scheme will be made. Only one appeal in relation to any one applicant will be considered.

How do I use the code?

Once you have received a unique code, and the list of satellite broadband retail service providers currently operating under the scheme, you should review the products and prices available from each provider, to select the product that best meets your requirements and the amount of monthly subscriptions you are willing to pay.

You should then approach your chosen satellite broadband retail service provider to order the service you require, and provide them with your unique code. The satellite broadband retail service provider will confirm the features of the product you have chosen, and the costs involved in a minimum 12 months service contract, after the code has been taken into account.

The code will cover most of the cost of installation and commissioning of your satellite broadband service. You will be responsible for paying any remaining cost of installation and commissioning (if any), and paying the monthly subscription for the service you have selected, and for paying any VAT on the amounts payable.

Can I use the code with retail service providers that are not part of the scheme?

No, the code can only be used with satellite broadband retail service providers operating under the scheme. Other satellite broadband retail service providers may join the scheme after launch, and you will be advised of the list of satellite broadband retail service providers currently operating under the scheme at the time that you are issued with your unique code.

Other satellite broadband retail service providers not operating under the scheme may also offer services in your area, and you may choose to use such an alternative satellite broadband retail service provider, but you will not be able to use a code issued under the scheme with that alternative provider, and you will have to meet the full cost of installation and commissioning and using the service yourself.

Who operates the scheme?

The scheme to deliver the 2Mbps Universal Service Commitment (USC) is operated by a partnership between DCMS, BT, a number of satellite broadband retail service providers, and a number of satellite broadband platform providers. East Sussex County Council is administering the scheme in East Sussex and Brighton and Hove.

The national scheme is operated under a Framework Contract awarded to BT by DCMS.

DCMS has overall responsibility for implementing the Government's policy on the 2Mbps Commitment, working with BT to operate the national scheme, and with local Councils to ensure that the scheme is implemented consistently across the UK.

BT under its current local agreements will provide wholesale satellite broadband services on an open access basis, working with the satellite broadband platform providers, and satellite broadband retail services providers who have contracted for the subsidised wholesale satellite broadband services

Applications under the scheme and decisions to award codes in East Sussex and Brighton and Hove are made using a nationally agreed process and eligibility criteria, designed by Government.