

Assynt Community Broadband Survey

Supported by Community Broadband Scotland, Highlands & Islands Enterprise

Assynt Community Association
The Mission, Lochinver January 2016

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Scoping Overview

1. Local Area Information

Population

Parish of Assynt 2011 census 1,021 including Elphin

Dwellings / Houses (dispersal) 2001 census 442 households with 304 1st homes and 128 2nd homes

Schools / Public buildings

Lochinver Primary School (Roll = 45); **Stoer Primary School (Roll = 4)**
Highland Council Offices & Service Centre

GP & Dentists surgery

Assynt Medical (& Dental) Practice, Lochinver

Health

Community Care Assynt; Highland Council Social Work Dept

Post Office

Main Street, Lochinver

Churches

Church of Scotland; Assynt Free Church of Scotland; Assynt Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland all in Lochinver; **Assynt Free Church of Scotland Drumbeg**

Hotels & Restaurants

Inverlodge Hotel, **Kylesku Hotel**, Albannach Hotel, Caberfeidh Dining Pub, Culag Hotel, Lochinver Larder & Riverside Bistro, An Cala Café, Lochinver Mission, Peets Restaurant; **Glencanisp Lodge; Drumbeg Hotel; Inchnadamph Lodge; Inchnadamph Hotel**; Numerous Guest Houses and B&B's incl **Ruddyglow Park, Loch Assynt & Loch Assynt Lodge**

Manufacturing

Highland Stoneware, Lochinver

Marine

RNLI Station; Coastguard Station; Highland Harbours; Lochinver Chandlery & Hardware store; EuroScot Fishing; Penfro Peche Fishing; Scottish Fisheries Protection Agency

Retail

Spar Lochinver Stores & Petrol Station; Inverpark Costcutter Stores; Village Green; Rockpool; Greenlees Butchers; Lochinver Landscapes; **Achins Bookshop; The Rock Shop; Drumbeg Stores; Little Soap & Candle Co.**

Other

Assynt Learning Centre; Lochinver Police Station; Lochinver Village Hall; ; Culag Community Woodland Trust; Coigach & Assynt Living Landscape Project; **Stoer Village Hall; Drumbeg Village Hall; Assynt Foundation; Assynt Crofters Trust**

General terrain type

Remote, rural & coastal. Rocky & wet

Red = Organisations receiving <2Mbps speed at present

This list may not be fully comprehensive – apologies if there are any omissions

2. BT exchange(s) service

ADSL

Drumbeg UAX RS NSDBG	IV27 4NW	88 residential; 6 business premises
Assynt NSASS	IV27 4HL	52 residential; 7 business premises
Scourie NSSCO	IV27 4TQ	158 residential; 16 business premises

ADSL Max

Lochinver NSLVR	IV27 4JY	337 residential; 41 business premises
Stoer Radio Stn NSSTE	IV27 4JE	138 residential; 2 business premises

Known telecoms supply issues

Rocky terrain has limited distribution of telecom lines & encouraged wireless transmission (although the electricity network serves almost every property)

Information on line length to proposed target area(s)

Approx 23 miles between fibre optic cables which serve Lochinver (proposed) to Kylesku (installed)

The major problem elsewhere is that the backhaul fibre optic cable goes right past communities (which have lower than 2Mbps speeds) without serving them including, Inchnadamph & Kylesku/ Unapool

3. Existing broadband services

All services via BT copper cable ADSL and ADSL Max

4. Mobile performance data

EE, Vodafone, O2 & Three

2G from all masts with 3G sometimes available in Lochinver

5. Mobile Mast Sites

Lochinver Harbour:	97964 T-Mobile / IV0092 Three
Lochinver:	HGH7043 Orange
Stoer:	HGH7042 Orange
Stoerhead:	6439 Vodafone
Strone:	NOR131A Airwave / 6438 O2 / HGH 0046 Orange / 6438 Vodafone
Kylestrom:	NOR1230 Airwave / 6411 O2 / HGH0114 Orange / 6411 Vodafone
Ledmore:	6431 O2 / HGH 0048 Orange 6431 Vodafone
Knockan Crag:	6465 O2/ HGH0100 Orange / 6465 Vodafone

6. Local demand

Do you have a survey that confirms market demand, or any other form of commitment from the local community? Yes

Are you able to indicate what percentage of the community are unable to obtain at least a 2Mbps standard broadband service? 27%

Identify project target area(s), in which the majority of premises are unable to receive a standard broadband service of 2Mbps See map enclosed

Description of target area(s) boundaries, terrain etc.

Parish of Assynt excluding Elphin

Remote and rural, rocky & wet

7. Usage

What would users like to use broadband for (home use and business use)?

72% Home Use 28% Business Use

What is the required level of speed?

More than 6Mbps but even more important is the reliability of the service

8. Technical studies/review

Has anybody undertaken or commissioned any technical studies/reviews for broadband delivery to the project target area? No

9. Funding sources

Are you able to identify any possible sources of funding? - No

10. Outcomes

In addition to the CBS outcome (improved digital connectivity in remote and rural communities), which all CBS funded projects will be required to report against, identify between 2 and 4 project specific outcomes for your community.

Community Scoping Map

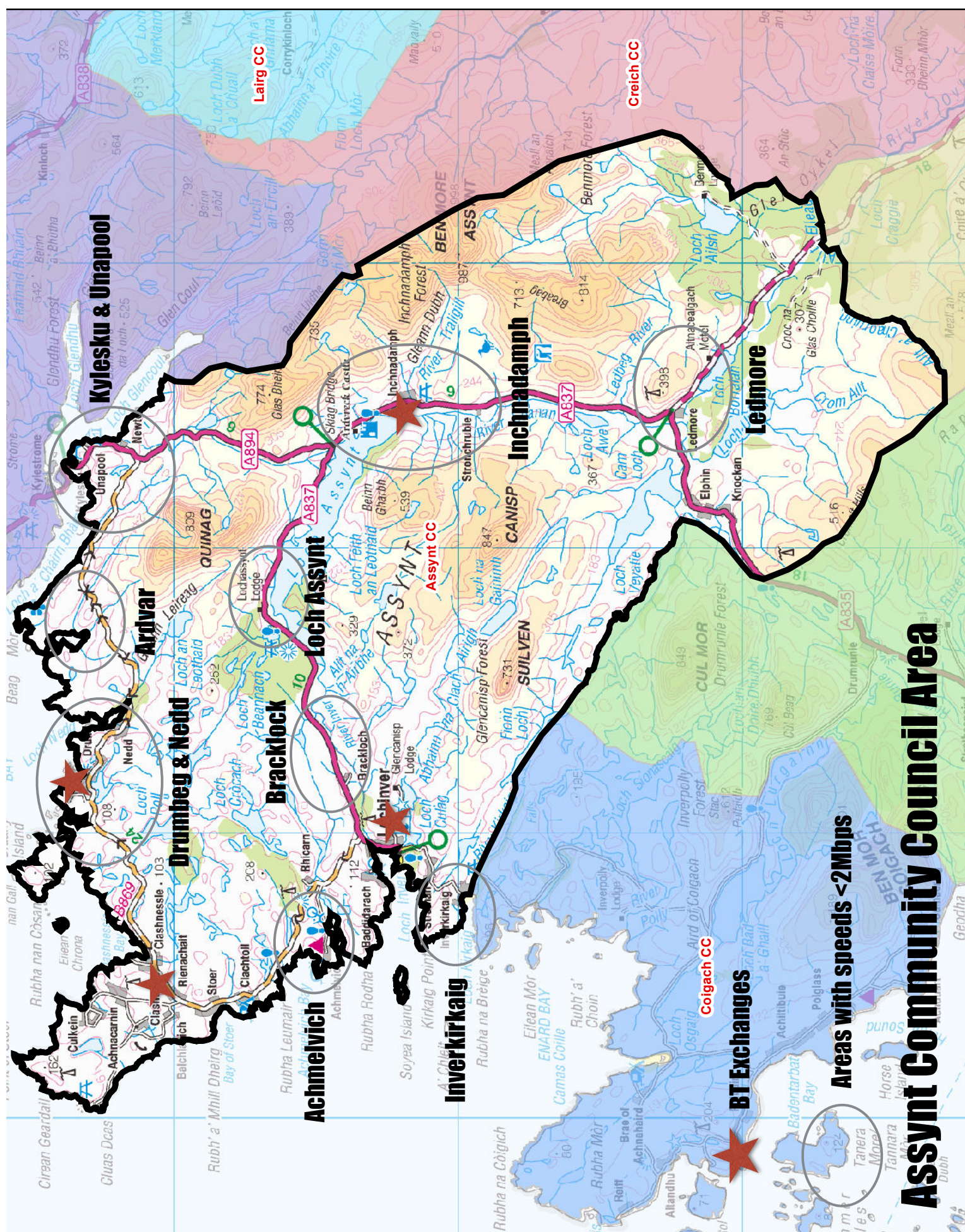
The map should define the project target area as accurately as possible. It shows the areas where the majority of premises currently receive less than 2Mbps.

Location of exchanges

Drumbeg	UAX RS NSDBG	IV27 4NW
Assynt	NSASS	IV27 4HL
Lochinver	NSLVR	IV27 4JY
Stoer Radio Stn	NSSTE	IV27 4JE
Scourie	NSSCO	IV27 4TQ



Willie Jack 13th January 2016



Areas with speeds <2Mbps

Assynt Community Broadband Survey

Preliminary results

Surveys sent out		754	
Returned by Post Office		19	
Valid addresses		735	
Surveys returned		199	27%
Receive internet	Yes	170	85.00%
	No	29	15.00%
Current service Provider	BT	114	57%
	Satellite	18	9%
	Other	37	19%
	No answer	29	15%
Amount paid pm	Answered	134	£22.28pm average
Service received	Excellent	7	4.20%
	satisfactory	94	56%
	Poor	60	36%
	Satis to Poor	3	2%
	Not stated	4	2.40%
Download speed	<2Mbps	46	35%
132 answered	Average	4.57Mbps	
Upload speed	<0.39Mbps	107	84%
127 answered	Average	0.53Mbps	
Interested in faster broadband	Receive Internet Interested		
	Yes	Yes	142
	Yes	No	16
	No	Yes	15
	No	No	10
	No answer		16
		Yes	79%
		No	13%
		No answer	8%
Would pay £pm	£10-19	59	29%
203 replied	£20-29	57	28%
	£30-39	29	14%
	£40-49	9	4.50%
	>£50	9	4.50%
	No answer	40	20%
Home Business spl't			
176 answered	Home		72%
	Business		28%
Comments	99 answered		50%
Want to be involved	44		22%
Sponsor / other	22		11%
Gave Name	169		85%
Gave Phone number	158		79%
Gave email address	154		77%

Assynt Community Broadband Survey Comments from the survey carried out in September & October 2015

E25 is what I currently pay per month - would not be prepared to pay more

As 130 Clachholl is our holiday accommodation / second home, we don't have unlimited B/Band because we don't download or stream music or video. However I feel superfast B/B is essential in our community where so many work from home etc

At the moment our broadband goes off at least 4 times a day. We have to reset it which is not very good

Broadband reliability (availability) and robustness of the infrastructure and modem/ router are more important to us than outright speed. By robustness we mean tolerance to lightning strikes and lack of vulnerability due to unprotected telecoms cables just laid on the surface of the ground - not run in conduits, buried or marked in any way.

BT - Billing / statement - can NOT work out anything. Calls/ BB/ rebates etc. Unfathomable! Not set out in order of kind. Impossible to sort out what was what. BT customer service phone line - foreign - can not understand!!!

BT claims to be unable to provide me with existing broadband as they say there is insufficient capacity in the Assynt exchange

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Can't get faster broadband as all equipment is full in area

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Cannot effectively work from home due to VPN (security) so doing far more travel to and from work. Monthly costs is almost prohibitive and first engineer visit will be cost prohibitive. Could well result in a move away from West Comraich as a holiday home that we use ourselves but also rent out as a self catering holiday cottage (I do not tend to have much occupancy over the winter months) Increasingly access to the best possible internet connection is important not just personally but also for our guests

Connection depends on the weather. If it runs then it's good. Most time there do not run. Will cancel the contract this year

Consider upgrade mobile transmitters to 5G + increased coverage to access fibre-optic speeds. The Lochinver-Drumlog-Kyleku phone line needs connected right round and upgraded.

Consistency (lack of)

Consistency (lack of)

Current provider also includes phone services. Need to ensure provider flexibility maintained. Would not want to be forced to use any old ISP. Left BT for very good reasons!

Detrimental to business. Hotels offer WiFi, we can't

Do not have internet connected a yet moved in. Use internet at Assynt Centre

Extremely slow and drops out at busy periods

For research email and browsing the current connection is OK. I do not download films etc and only occasionally watch iPlayer. Further south where fibre is available it can be had for bout £10 more than standard connection. Not of course BT!

Frustrating to know that the new fibre optic cable runs within feet of the local exchange but will not be connected to the exchange - no doubt cost involved!

Good service from the village of Rodelsgjov Park

Had line problems

Have no real need for faster connection at the moment for the domestic / home use we have but would probably be interested if it were available. It would be far more useful at work premises - medical practice in Lochinver

Have to switch on and off to obtain a signal a few times a day. Very much a part time service

High quality internet for us is BT's responsibility as the have a de facto monopoly of infrastructure. We should be holding them to account and get political support to get them to meet their responsibilities

Higher upstream bandwidth would be an excellent start. We regularly have acceptable downstream speeds unless the camp/caravan park is at full capacity! This overloads our already oversubscribed exchange

Holiday

Holiday

I am very sceptical about a community organisation having the responsibility of providing broadband services for the area. I believe it is the responsibility of SG & service providers and they are just passing the buck.

I can't always get on the internet - presumably because its too slow. However it is much improved lately + even through the summer. It's good enough for my use at present

I don't have a computer or a landline

I feel the poor internet connection we have is due more to the poor condition of the lines than the provider

I filled this in but it's probably not relevant as we can only get Satellite broadband

I have investigated this in some detail and it appears that we are an exchange only connection = no street cabinet. THIS IS IMPORTANT - in order to connect they will need to run a separate fibre from Scourie in addition to the main one. Must be fed at teh same time as main fibre is fed to save cost

I have not answered Q7.1 because I think remote areas should not have to pay more than elsewhere in the country for services such as broadband. Electricity, delivery costs etc

I may shortly move my base from Glasgow to Assynt and will want local broadband better than a BT hotspot - but probably not a superfast connection

I use my smartphone to use internet with O2, but experience constant problems with O2 signal due to 'mast' issues. I have no plans for telephone line connection

I would be interested in and pay up to £19pm for a more reliable internet. Service reliability is more the issue as weather can affect cables + connections causing drops on the line and greater speed variability

I would pay the same as the people in Lochinver will pay on average for their upgrade. We need to be able to do Skype video calls for work, and this is not possible with these speeds. Very frustrating

I would like to see the village of Rodelsgjov Park

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If speed cannot be increased providers should reduce the cost

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In this day and age access to broadband is more or less essential - lack of it excludes people from all kinds of information and opportunities

Interesting that BT's download check says I get 6.01, upload 0.35 - but what size file are the tests calculated on? Smaller the file - quicker the speed etc

Internet is constantly turning off. I feel it is absolutely ridiculous that faster broadband has been getting installed in most places in highlands now & we're not!!!

Internet keeps dropping at this address. Was with BT and now Scottish Hydro is the same problem on both providers

It is satellite for which I had to pay for both kit up and price of the service

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Managing with internet at moment albeit expensive. I would always support better in the area as feel that Scotland as a whole gets left behind in particular with phone receptions (ie mobile) also

My biggest gripe is that the speed is so variable. The lowest I've seen is 0.41Mbps. I contacted BT - they said they would "reset" something and the speed went up to over 6. Then over a period of time it dropped down again

My connection is unreliable with frequent 'dropping out'! In a remote area reliable broadband is an economic necessity for local businesses

My current broadband is an internet/ phone/ sport package at a promotional rate which is what I would look for plus more if superfast BB became available

Not connected to the phone network at present as the internet is too poor to justify the price as the home is used as a weekend home as I am unable to work here as I need good broadband

Not happy with Talk Talk. If connection goes here BT have to sort it out which takes at least three days from the provider alert. Nope! Too old for all this!! Good for you though. Many will be glad of your initiative

Not if it cost more. At present the property is a second home + used 25% of the year

Not interested

Nothing much more to say Current service barely allows email and certainly cannot stream/ download video content etc

Only use occasionally + family visits

Our address is a holiday let/ 2nd home but we would love to be able to get internet access for ourselves & guests

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Over the years I tried AOL, BT + Planet. The problem is the state of the line and the distance from the exchange. I now have satellite broadband

Phone line was so slow we could only send simple emails & could not work on our website - had to go to friends. Hence we use SATELLITE BROADBAND

Please note - I am hugely supportive of your efforts but unable to offer voluntary time due to health issues. Sorry about that

Possibly but we are not full time residents of Unapool so may not always be available to help

Regardless of speeds recorded over the page, they tend to vary very considerably

Satellite is OK, but strict data limits and slow initial response. And expensive

Some days very slow and time wasted waiting

Slow & poor. Shared with 50+ guests so even slower. And they dug up our drive for the fibre cable

Speed tests in afternoon is much less - 5.2

Speeds not consistent

Speeds not consistent

The BT service is pretty good and reliability. Speed tests do not reflect times when it is not working

The property is a holiday home

The service is very poor. The link unreliable. The support is non-existent

The worst aspect of our current service is the variability of speeds; sometimes it's acceptable (if not that great) but often it dips to a crawl. Also on my iPad, it is particularly slow, who knows why, often speeds lower than old dial up speeds, or even worse

There is no internet signal on the phone line (7.5 mis from exchange)/Satellite connection is the only option

This is a holiday home with no phone or broadband

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This is a property which is let in the summer when I'm not here. Holidaymakers are increasingly demanding a good internet speed

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This is our holiday home so I wouldn't choose to pay for a faster connection

Upload speed low, does not always work. Usage restricted unless on expensive package.
Very important to have reliable fast broadband to enable everyday life as better down + UP loading (this is currently very slow). Variability of current speeds is very frustrating and wasteful of time + personal costs
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We are attached to Kylesku Hotel where our guests use the internet constantly. Currently only in public areas but we are being asked everyday for internet in bedrooms. Also internet is a major factor in recruiting good staff members due to remoteness and lack of mobile signal
We are interested in finding an alternative supplier as our costs keep increasing for a basic service. We don't download much because of a poor speed. If it was possible to have a better service for a fair price then we would think about this
We currently use satellite which is slow and capped & therefore unsuitable to offer to our guests. Our upload speed via the phone line was 2Mbps & not fit for purpose
We did put in BT broadband for the tourists but it was so slow/ stop that we had it removed
We do not have a telephone connection for the address Lochside Cottage, 178 Storr. Might consider in the future
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We understand new fast broadband would be within 2km of exchange. Where we live it is just outside distance - I am sure unless you are in the village will be of no use - broadband is satisfactory in morning but late afternoon onwards very slow
What happened to fibre optic roll out
Wish to retain my FS Net email address. Considering what benefits the BT/ EE tie up might mean
With 2mb being the suggested speed for streaming, then a speed of 0.48mb is not fit for purpose
With all the inquiries I made about ADSL or Broadband, all said they could offer it, but actually they couldn't, though I do have a phone line
Would like at least 15 GigaByte monthly limit

Willie Jack
Project Co-ordinator
Assynt Community Broadband
Assynt Community Association
The Mission, Lochinver, IV27 4LE

September 2015

**Jack House, 610 Stoer, Lochinver, LAIRG,
Sutherland, IV27 4JE**

Dear friend,

Assynt Community Broadband Survey

Please find enclosed a survey which Assynt Community Association is undertaking in partnership with Community Broadband Scotland, part of Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE).

HIE are working with BT to introduce super-fast broadband to the Highlands & Islands. Phase 1 of this should result in Lochinver being connected by fibre-optic cable by mid 2016. As a result of this anyone living within 1Km of the fibre-optic exchange should be able to connect and receive speeds of up to 80Mbps while those between 1-2Km away could see speeds in excess of 10Mbps. At present most people in Assynt can only receive a maximum download speed of 6-7Mbps

There are no current plans to extend the fibre-optic cable south to Inverkirkraig or north to the Stoer peninsula. Despite the main fibre-optic cable going right through Elphin, Inchnadamph, Loch Assynt, Unapool and Kylesku, there are no plans to directly connect these communities straight into the network.

So for those of us in Assynt who live more than 2Km from the exchange we will likely see no benefit from the Phase 1 programme. For communities like ours HIE have established Community Broadband Scotland. CBS is looking to establish a community solution which will allow more remote & rural communities to connect to the super-fast network. The results of this survey are very important to us as they will be used to assess whether or not people in Assynt want to receive super-fast broadband and how much are they willing to pay for it.

The survey

Your post-code has been entered onto the form as that is vital in assessing different wants & needs across Assynt. It is anonymous unless you are happy to give your details in part 10.

When answering Q4 and Q7 - if you have your phone & broadband service through BT you will be paying line rental for the phone line (which is about to increase to £17.99 to £19.99 per month) together with a monthly charge for broadband. Question 4 asks how much you pay for your broadband only and not the line rental while Q7 asks how much you would be willing to pay for a super-fast service.

With Q6 – the Government have said that communities which currently receive a broadband speed of less than 2Mbps are the priority. There are several townships in Assynt that could fall into this category.

With Part 10 – if the results of the survey are positive then CBS will commission a technical evaluation survey. This will identify the likely options for introducing super-fast broadband across Assynt. We may find it useful to know who is interested in becoming more involved in helping with the programme.

Please can you return the completed survey to me in the pre-paid envelope by Friday 23rd October

Once the surveys have been returned, the results will be collated and will be publicised at a public meeting with CBS in Lochinver in November. If you give your email address on the survey I will let you know the day & time of the meeting.

Best regards



Willie Jack

Assynt Community Association
The Mission, Lochinver, IV27 4LE

Assynt Community Broadband Questionnaire

1. Name of village where you live and your postcode

2. Are you able to use the internet at this address? Yes / No

If unable to access broadband please proceed to Q7

3. Which internet service provider do you use? (ie BT, Virgin, Sky, etc)

4. How much do you currently pay for your broadband each month?

5. How would you describe your current broadband connection

☐ Poor ☐ Satisfactory ☐ Excellent

6. Speed Test – please run the speed test at www.speedtest.net and enter the results:

Download speed

Upload speed

7. Would you be interested in accessing a faster broadband network Yes / No

- 7.1. If Yes, how much would you pay per month for a fast broadband connection?

☐ £10-£19 ☐ £20-£29 ☐ £30-£39 ☐ £40-£49 ☐ £50 plus

- 7.2. Would you use this broadband for home and/or business use?

Home use%

Business use%

Assynt Community Association
The Mission, Lochinver, IV27 4LE

8. If you have any other comments related to your Internet service please tell us below:

9. Would you be willing to become involved or support a local community organisation seeking to deliver a high-speed broadband service?

- ☐ Interested in getting involved in my local area
- ☐ May consider offering sponsorship or other support

10. Please provide your contact details. These will only be used in relation to the provision of broadband services in your area and will not be disclosed to third parties without your consent.

Name			
Address			
Postcode		Phone	
Email			

Thank you for taking part in this survey, for more information relating to Community Broadband visit www.communitybroadbandscotland.org

Please return completed questionnaires to:

Willie Jack
Project Co-ordinator
Assynt Community Broadband
610 Stoer
Lochinver
IV27 4JE