

So when ARE we going to get faster broadband?

Many will be aware that faster, fibre broadband has been promised for some time, some may have heard of the Connecting Devon and Somerset initiative (CDS) and may have even been contacted by a company called Gigaclear. So just what is happening and are we going to get it?

On behalf of Stawley Parish Council, Maurice Stanbury and I set about finding out what is going on. So far, we have attended a meeting of the Somerset County Council Scrutiny Committee and another with CDS. Here is a summary of the current situation as it applies to Stawley Parish:

1. Gigaclear has a contract with CDS, funded by Government, to install fibre networks in our area. Once the networks are installed, householders and companies will be able to arrange for connection to their premises, either by Gigaclear or by another Internet Service Provider (ISP) of their choice*.
2. The networks will be completely separate from the BT telephone system and should deliver a download speed of some 30 Mbps.
3. By going on to the Gigaclear website postcode checker you can find out if your property is in line for connection:

<https://www.gigaclear.com/postcode-checker/>

Enter your postcode, then look for your address in the drop-down menu – if it is there you **will** be able to connect to the new fibre network once installed.

Click on your address and on the next page **register interest**.

4. If you want to explore further, you can, but the current information is that Gigaclear will be designing the new network this autumn and installing it in **the first six months of next year**.
5. Expressing an interest with Gigaclear does not commit you, but it will help us all by exerting pressure on Gigaclear to stick to their timetable. **So please register! It will help us all.**
6. We have checked the property list for Stawley Parish and it looks as though virtually everyone is in line for connection to fibre if they want it. Please let me know if this is not the case for you.

Please note that we have not looked at the situation in Ashbrittle or Bathealton.

Clive Wall

**Footnote:*

Connection to a Gigaclear network is to be on a competitive commercial basis. In addition, it is already possible for some to get faster broadband via 4G or via a microwave link to a nearby location on a fibre network.