

**PRESS RELEASE**

## **More Properties in Rural Northamptonshire to Benefit from Gigabit Capable Broadband**

**7,000 homes and businesses across rural Northamptonshire are set to benefit from ultrafast-fibre internet.**

Gigaclear, the rural broadband provider, has announced plans, in partnership with Northamptonshire County Council and Building Digital UK (BDUK), to expand its full-fibre-to-the-property network for the Superfast Northamptonshire project. This latest public investment will support an additional 700 rural properties. It takes the coverage due to be delivered by Gigaclear for the project, to 7000. When combined with Gigaclear's substantial commercial plans in the county, as many as 30,000 homes and businesses in rural Northamptonshire will have access to the fastest fibre broadband available.

The communities set to benefit from the extension include parts of Blatherwycke, Braunston, Flore, Grafton Underwood, Nether Heyford, Oundle, Silverstone, Stanwick, and Upper Heyford.

The funding for the work is a combination of public and private investment, totalling £15.7m, dedicated to installing a gigabit-capable full-fibre network in Northamptonshire. This includes a £4.5m contribution from Northamptonshire County Council, £2m from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (managed by Defra's Rural Payments Agency), £3.5m from BDUK, along with over £5.7m from Gigaclear.

The announcement supports Northamptonshire County Council's local target to reach 40 percent full-fibre coverage across the region by the end of 2023.

Jason Smithers, Cabinet Member for Highways and Place says: "This extension of our plans with Gigaclear will bring massive connectivity benefits to more people, young and old, living and running businesses in rural Northamptonshire. Poor networks in these areas are a massive frustration to many. Our investment in full fibre networks will ensure that we not only address the data demands of today but can also meet those of tomorrow.

"Businesses in particular need support to bounce back from the economic impact of COVID-19. Access to symmetrical gigabit capable broadband can be the tool to open up worldwide opportunities. It can also be transformational in the home for those suffering poor speeds; for school children and

those people needing to work or access services from home. Simply providing a means to connect with family, friends and social groups can change people's quality of life. I am delighted to be able to do more through our partnership with Gigaclear."

Catherine Warren, Regional Manager for the East Midlands at Gigaclear, says: "We've already helped to bring full-fibre coverage in Northamptonshire to over 14 percent and we're really pleased to be expanding our network in the county.

"COVID-19 has highlighted just how vital ultrafast connectivity is to modern life, which is why we're determined to reach communities left behind by other providers.

"Connecting rural areas to ultrafast internet isn't easy and there are plenty of civil engineering challenges to overcome, but the end result is worth it. The extra homes and businesses set to be connected to our network have been suffering from internet speeds as slow as 1Mbps, making even simple online activities impossible. We'll be providing speeds of up to 1Gbps – as fast as the internet in Silicon Valley."

Digital Infrastructure Minister, Matt Warman, concludes: "As home to Silverstone, I'm thrilled that broadband speeds worthy of Formula 1 will soon be coming to more rural homes and businesses in Northamptonshire helped by a £3.5 million government investment in full fibre.

"In cooperation with local councils and brilliant broadband firms like Gigaclear, it is our national mission to level up communities across the UK with next generation connectivity that will improve lives and boost the economy.

"We'll soon announce how we will spend a further £5 billion to make sure the benefits of better broadband are felt in every corner of the country."

To see if your property can be connected to Gigaclear's ultrafast FTTP network, visit, <https://www.gigaclear.com/buy>.

**-ENDS -**

For further information, please contact Energy PR on 01993 823 011 or email [Gigaclear@energypr.co.uk](mailto:Gigaclear@energypr.co.uk)

For further information about Superfast Northamptonshire visit [www.superfastnorthamptonshire.net](http://www.superfastnorthamptonshire.net).

#### **About Gigaclear:**

Gigaclear designs, builds and operates a full fibre, ultrafast broadband network in rural areas across central and southern England. Established in 2010, our network now reaches more than 200

communities across 20 counties – and continues to grow. We are working hard to provide rural residential and business properties with the UK's best broadband. Gigaclear's full fibre ultrafast network transforms communities by allowing everyone to benefit from fast, reliable broadband speeds in an increasingly online world.

Gigaclear invests hundreds of millions of pounds to provide underserved communities with the best communications infrastructure available. In some areas we are working with Local Bodies under the Building Digital UK (BDUK) scheme which subsidises the build for the hardest to reach properties. Gigaclear Ltd is principally owned by Infracapital, a leading European Infrastructure investor.

### **About Superfast Northamptonshire:**

The Superfast Northamptonshire project is supporting the achievement of the County Council's target to see superfast<sup>1</sup> broadband available to more than 99% of premises by March 2021<sup>2</sup>. It also supports the Council's latest ambitions to see coverage levels of 75% gigabit-capable, and 40% full-fibre, available across Northamptonshire by December 2023.

The multimillion pound project is funded by Northamptonshire County Council, the government's Building Digital UK, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development managed by Defra's Rural Payments Agency, and local partners.

---