

# Edinburgh MP sees for herself the new broadband



## BT SHOWS SHEILA GILMORE MP NEW FIBRE NETWORK IN EDINBURGH

*More than 95,000 local homes and businesses can now benefit from BT's £2.5 billion roll-out. Local communities encouraged to get connected*

BT demonstrated the technology behind its roll out of super-fast fibre broadband in Edinburgh to local MP Sheila Gilmore.

The MP for Edinburgh East visited Abbeyhill telephone exchange this week to find out for herself how the technology works and why it's essential for Scotland's economic future.

She urged local people to reap the benefits of BT's investment in high-speed fibre broadband throughout the city.

More than 95,000 homes and businesses in the capital are now able to join the high-speed revolution. By the end of next spring, more than 178,000 local homes and businesses will be able to benefit from BT's £2.5 billion fibre broadband roll-out.

During the visit, BT's senior engineers Stephen Quinn and Chris Wilson showed Ms Gilmore how to 'splice' a fibre cable – join sections together – to light up connections.

The MP said: "Super-fast broadband is an essential tool for local businesses, but it is very much a necessity for families in the 40,000 households across Edinburgh East. Residents in my constituency are looking forward to seeing the continued

rollout of fibre broadband and I'm pleased BT is working hard locally to deliver fibre broadband.

"I've also received enquiries from local residents looking to set up small businesses from home, who are eagerly awaiting fibre broadband to be turned on in their street. There's no doubt this investment will create jobs for local people in Edinburgh East.

"A quality broadband service will bring a real boost to local residents and employers. Improvements to communications infrastructure speeds up operations and facilitates new ways of working.

"It was fascinating to see how these powerful connections are carried across the city. I look forward to further local upgrades across Edinburgh East and hope that BT will progress its ongoing works to provide improved broadband in my constituency as swiftly as possible."

The Abbeyhill fibre broadband roll-out will cover around 13,500 local homes and businesses when it is complete.

BT is also working with the Scottish Government and local authorities to extend the technology beyond the company's commercial roll-out. The £264m Digital Scotland partnership will help take total fibre broadband coverage across Scotland to around 95 per cent by the end of 2017.

BT's network is available on an open, wholesale basis to all companies offering broadband services.

Louise Humphrey, BT Scotland head of public affairs, who hosted the visit, said: "With the expansion of fibre broadband so firmly on the Scottish political agenda, it's great that Sheila Gilmore has spared the time to come and explore the inner workings of the technology.

"Local people may have noticed our green street cabinets being

installed around Edinburgh. This everyday street furniture is where the magic happens.

“As more than two million UK households and businesses have discovered, fibre broadband opens up a whole new world to internet users.”

Research carried out for BT by Regeneris Consulting suggests that in the next 15 years super-fast broadband could give the economy of a typical city a £296 million boost, create around 430 new jobs and 320 new start-up businesses<sup>1</sup>.

BT's fibre footprint currently passes more than 17 million UK homes and businesses. It is expanding all the time and is due to pass two-thirds of UK premises – around 19 million premises – by the end of Spring 2014, around 18 months ahead of the original timetable.<sup>2</sup>

Openreach, BT's local network business, is primarily deploying fibre-to-the-cabinet (FTTC) technology, where the fibre runs from the exchange to a local roadside cabinet. FTTC offers download speeds of up to 80 megabits per second (Mbps) and upload speeds of up to 20Mbps<sup>3</sup> and could deliver even faster speeds in the future.

Openreach has also started to make fibre-to-the-premises (FTTP) technology, where the fibre runs all the way to the home or business, commercially available on demand<sup>3</sup> in certain areas where fibre broadband has been deployed, and plans to expand access in due course. FTTP-on-demand offers the top current download speed of 330Mbps<sup>3</sup>. According to the regulator Ofcom, the current average UK broadband speed is 14.7Mbps.

At home, fibre broadband enables a family to simultaneously download a movie, watch a TV replay service, surf the internet and play games online all at the same time. A whole album can be downloaded in less than 30 seconds and a feature length HD

movie in less than 10 minutes, whilst high-resolution photos can be uploaded to Facebook in seconds.

For further information on Openreach's fibre broadband programme visit [www.superfast-openreach.co.uk](http://www.superfast-openreach.co.uk)