

# COMMUNITY BROADBAND SCOTLAND

Connecting our communities





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SCOTLAND**

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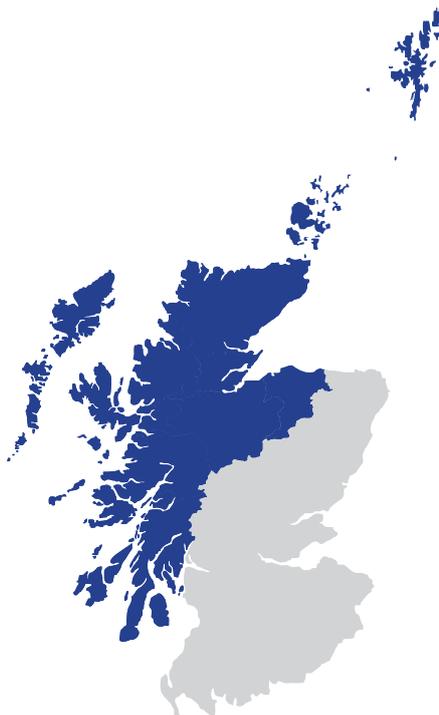
**HIGHLANDS  
AND ISLANDS  
ENTERPRISE**

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Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) is an ambitious organisation with a unique remit which integrates economic and community development to achieve sustainable progress in every part of our region.

As the Scottish Government's enterprise agency for the Highlands and Islands, our aim is to build an increasingly successful and competitive region in which people choose to live, work, study and invest. We achieve this through our approach which integrates enabling economic growth and strengthening communities across the Highlands and Islands.

With teams located in all parts of our region, we invest in, empower and enable our businesses, social enterprises and communities to grow, be innovative, and become resilient.



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**OUR PRIORITIES**

- Supporting businesses and social enterprises to shape and realise their growth aspirations
- Strengthening communities and fragile areas
- Developing growth sectors, particularly distinctive regional opportunities
- Creating the conditions for a competitive and low-carbon region

**OUR APPROACH**

Our approach to strengthening communities is threefold:

- 1** We invest in building community capacity, confidence and business skills
- 2** We empower communities to acquire, manage and exploit community assets for community benefit
- 3** We enable sustainable growth in the social economy through strong social and community enterprises



Community Broadband Scotland is an initiative to help kick-start community-led broadband projects in rural communities.

## COMMUNITY BROADBAND SCOTLAND

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Community Broadband Scotland (CBS) is a Scottish Government programme, led across Scotland by Highlands and Islands Enterprise. CBS is a partnership between the Scottish Government, Scottish Enterprise, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, COSLA, Scottish Local Authorities Economic Development Group, Carnegie UK Trust, Cairngorms National Park Authority and Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority.

Digital connectivity is key to our communities, and it is essential that all parts of Scotland are able to access high quality broadband as this is the foundation for continued economic growth and building stronger communities.

CBS works with those communities who will not be served by the Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband (DSSB) programme.

We help communities throughout the country gain access to faster broadband by creating and managing their own infrastructure.

### A DIGITALLY-CONNECTED SCOTLAND

We recognise that digital technology is a vital enabler for businesses, social enterprises and communities of all sizes, and across all areas of Scotland.

While public and private investment is delivering next generation broadband by fibre across most parts of the country, some communities

face particular challenges which put them beyond the reach of mainstream solutions. By supporting communities to lead and deliver their own digital solutions, we are working to ensure equal access to digital connectivity throughout Scotland.

CBS was created specifically to support these communities. We provide advice, expertise and funding which will assist local people in designing, owning and managing their own, often innovative, projects.

Digital connectivity can play an important role in growing and retaining rural populations, narrowing the gaps in digital participation and economic growth nationally. As the route through which people can work, learn and socialise from their homes or within their local communities, access to broadband also makes a substantial contribution to our transition to a low carbon economy.

Since forming in 2012, CBS has:

- Actively supported 81 community organisations, covering nearly 16,000 premises
- Invested in projects which currently deliver broadband services to over 500 subscribers
- Agreed funding for nine community driven projects across Scotland which will deliver access to faster broadband to over 1,500 premises.

### HOW WE WORK

CBS offers advice, guidance and financial support to communities across Scotland as they pursue a community-led broadband solution.

CBS can provide capital funding to enable communities to acquire the assets and digital infrastructure they need to achieve more equitable broadband provision, in a sustainable and robust way. Through our supply partner framework we provide access to and fund world class technical advice to the smallest of communities.

Our advisers cover all of Scotland, guiding and assisting communities through the various stages of their projects. Every community is different, and our services are flexible to enable each community to create sustainable, innovative solutions to meet their particular needs.

CBS has also developed an aggregated approach which builds 'communities of interest' to attract market solutions to areas of low and dispersed population which will not be served by the DSSB programme. The launch of our first aggregated project will take place in 2015.

## CASE STUDIES



### BLAIRLOGIE

We worked with residents of the conservation village of Blairlogie, near Stirling, to make a dramatic improvement to broadband speeds.

CBS advice enabled Blairlogie Community Heritage Trust to identify the most relevant technical solution and network design. Our grant funding of £21,000 supported the infrastructure build of a wireless network providing fast broadband to around 100 business and homes.

The University of Stirling also provides a backhaul connection – part of a research project to assess the impact of fast broadband on a small rural community.



### MEARNS INTERNET INITIATIVE

A team of community volunteers rolled out a pilot wireless network to four premises in Marykirk on the Aberdeenshire/Angus border to address poor broadband services. When this succeeded, the community approached CBS to expand the network to a wider area.

CBS awarded £21,000 grant funding in 2014 to the newly formed Mearns Internet Initiative Community Interest Company to develop a resilient and sustainable fast broadband network to serve over 100 properties.



### LOCHEILNET

The Locheilnet community broadband network is delivering transformational broadband speeds to the shores of Locheil, Loch Linnhe and Loch Lochy.

The fixed wireless network has been in operation for over a year and has helped more than 200 homes and businesses access faster broadband.

CBS funding of £91,500 enabled Locheilnet's dedicated volunteers to complete their network, connect customers quickly by hiring local tradespeople and build in significant resilience to the network ensuring the best possible service for their growing subscribers and businesses.



### APPLECROSS

Applecross in Wester Ross was the first community to receive CBS funding, in July 2013.

Our investment of £68,520 grant funding enabled Applecross Community Company to complete a funding package for an ambitious project which has more than doubled broadband speed in the village.

Applecross expects that improved broadband service will help attract new and start-up businesses to the area, help support the thriving local tourist industry, and encourage and retain young people to live, work and learn in this beautiful area.



### SLEAT, ISLE OF SKYE

Sleat Community Trust recognised that action was required to address poor broadband services in the most rural and scattered settlements of the peninsula. With our support, and the backing of 90% of local residents, they forged ahead – taking a lead from neighbouring projects such as Tegola (Arnisdale) and Hebnet (Small Isles).

We are now investing £122,169 to fund the infrastructure build of a faster broadband network and support a project officer. When the network is running, the Trust will work with a partner organisation to offer network and IT support to the community.



### STOBO AND DAWYCK

CBS supported the establishment of Stobo Dawyck Community Network to make faster broadband services available to around 75 premises in the Stobo valley, near Peebles in the Scottish Borders.

We awarded £13,300 grant funding during 2013 towards the infrastructure build costs of a wireless network that is managed and operated by the local community.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

You can find more information about Community Broadband Scotland and the work of HIE as a whole on our website. Click on the Support for Communities tab on the home page.

[www.hie.co.uk](http://www.hie.co.uk)

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