

SEBERGHAM PARISH COUNCIL

BROADBAND UPDATE (January 2017)

Cumbria County Council, through its subsidiary Connecting Cumbria (CC), is responsible for delivering the Government's commitment to provide Superfast Broadband (SFB) to properties in the county. Although SFB is increasingly being rolled-out in urban areas, it has still reached few rural areas, many of which continue to have only 1Mbps or less, or even no broadband at all.

The eastern side of Sebergham parish (Churchtown area) has previously been categorised as an 'intervention area' for which State-Aid funding is available, and this will enable delivery of faster broadband to many properties via a fibre network. BT undertook surveys during the latter part of 2016 with a view to postcode areas CA5 7HS & CA5 7HR being brought on line with 'superfast broadband' in the first half of 2017, and this is progressing, with installation of equipment currently awaited. Areas adjacent to these postcodes are likely to see an improvement in broadband speeds, although these may not be 'superfast'.

The western side of the parish including Welton has until January 2017 been excluded from State-Aid funding because Solway Communications Ltd had registered a claim that it could provide a superfast wireless broadband service to properties in that part of the parish. Following representations & evidence produced by the Parish Council, supported by pressure from Rory Stewart MP, Cllr Duncan Fairbairn, and a number of local residents, the postcode areas eligible to utilise state-aid funding for broadband have been revised.

The welcome result is that ALL of Sebergham Parish is now classified as being eligible for state aid (thus allowing funding for BT land line delivery), and the 'wireless broadband' constraint no longer exists. CC/BT will now model coverage & undertake surveys utilising the newly available funding and deployment is expected within the existing 2017/18 Phase 2 programme.

This of course doesn't mean that every premise will be provided with 'superfast' broadband for a number of reasons, but it is expected that those who do not receive the full 'superfast' should still see an improvement in service.