

Broadband for Surrey Hills or B4SH is bringing hyper fast fibre optic broadband to the Surrey Hills. Increasingly high-speed Internet access is perceived as an essential requirement. The Commission for Rural Communities calls it “the fourth utility”.

B4SH is a local, independent, not-for-profit Community Benefit Society, (CBS) established in November 2017, run for and by the community, largely by volunteers.

B4SH was born out of frustration with poor and unreliable broadband service throughout the Surrey Hills, especially in the more rural parts. Current providers didn’t seem to care so we decided to help ourselves.

With a clean slate and no legacy, the B4SH network comprises proven, state of the art technology. The service is optical fibre to the premises (FTTP) – no copper wires, no poles, no elderly cabinets, no reliance on yesterday’s hardware. With this entirely fibre network B4SH provides a 1 Gig up and down broadband connection. One Gig or 1,000Mb/sec is around 50 times faster than BT’s standard broadband and 25 times faster than BT Superfast service.

We are installing our fibre optic cable underground so there are no network performance issues associated with cables running overhead on poles. We are working with property developers and land owners to install ducting across their land and into their sites to expand the B4SH network to serve as many Surrey Hills residents and businesses as possible. We tend to reach properties from the rear, using a “soft dig” approach that avoids having to dig up roads with the inevitable disruption and cost.

As a CBS we are not-for-profit so any surplus must go back into the local community. Building and running the network is funded by monies raised from investors. Funding comes from the sale of shares. Anyone purchasing shares becomes a member entitled to vote at general meetings; one vote, irrespective of the number of shares owned. HMRC have also given pre-approval for Social Investment Tax Relief (SITR), meaning private investors can claim a tax rebate of 30%. Guildford Borough Council is investing in our project in support of their rural economy plan.

Hyperfast broadband access is creating significant interest within local rural communities. Today’s rural business can thrive only if communications are effective, reliable and affordable. B4SH provides tomorrows network to solve todays network challenges.

Learn more at <https://www.gigupanddown.net/> or email [enquiries@b4sh.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@b4sh.org.uk)