



Dear Powys Community,

We trust this update finds you well. We are dedicated to keeping you informed about recent events concerning our county's broadband connectivity. This update is a follow-up to our last notification from 2nd June 2023, which highlighted the administration status of Broadway Partners, an alternative internet service provider.

### **Broadway Partners Administration**

Broadway Partners Limited has recently entered administration, meaning it is facing severe financial difficulties. Teneo Financial Advisory Ltd took control of its affairs from 31st May 2023. During this period, Broadway Partners enjoys protection; creditors are unable to undertake legal action or claim assets without approval from Teneo or the courts.

Teneo, as the appointed administrator, will ensure that the business remains operational and services for existing customers are maintained. They are actively seeking a buyer for the company. Within the next 8 to 10 weeks, they will unveil their plan to preserve the business and attract new investors or a buyer.

### **Building Digital UK (BDUK)**

BDUK, the UK government's broadband expansion initiative, has opted to retain several of Broadway Partners' projects as VPA (Voucher Priority Area) eligible projects. This status indicates that they qualify for funding, even while Broadway Partners and Teneo seek support during the administration process. The objective is to ensure that the existing community partnership projects remain appealing for new investment, facilitating the completion of deployment for these communities. However, the associated vouchers will not be awarded unless or until residents confirm they have received a service and have a contract with a new supplier, which they endorse.

Concurrently, BDUK is planning to identify companies to deliver high-speed internet (gigabit broadband) to the wider region. This process has been momentarily delayed due to Broadway Partners' predicament. Broadway was contributing to a study (Open Market Review, or OMR) aimed at identifying properties with poor broadband access that were not slated for any upgrades in the next 2-3 years. Given Broadway's current status, the credibility of their input into the study is being reassessed, resulting in a slight delay.

By mid-summer, BDUK will launch an Open Public Review (OPR). This will allow interested companies to assess the package on offer for expanding broadband services. This package is likely to cover a large segment of Powys and parts of neighbouring Ceredigion. Another package that includes sections of southern Powys and Monmouthshire will likely be offered separately.

The remaining VPA projects from Broadway Partners will not be part of these packages. However, should the administration process fail to secure a new investor for these projects, they will be reassessed and potentially included in the procurement package. This is feasible as the total number of properties for the remaining project areas, likely constitutes less than 20% of the overall procurement package.

The procurement process may span 8 to 10 months. During this time, other broadband improvements might be carried out which could diminish the need for state-funded enhancements. As a result, the final package sizes may vary.

To clarify, the following projects will not appear in the initial procurement when it is first released for OPR:

Aberedw  
Dwyriw & Manafon  
Llangunllo  
Llanafan Fawr & Llanwrthwl  
Nantmel  
Paincastle  
Rhayader

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With respect to other former, Broadway projects, that unfortunately lost their VPA status earlier in May, we are expecting addresses in these communities to be included within the package's scope when it is first released for review.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions at [Broadway@Powys.Gov.UK](mailto:Broadway@Powys.Gov.UK)

### **Upcoming Full Fibre Broadband Expansion in Powys**

We would also like to share news about ongoing developments in Powys' broadband infrastructure. Openreach has been diligently working to provide full fibre broadband to homes and businesses across our county, notably in Builth Wells, where a commercial deployment is currently underway and is expected to conclude within the next 10 months.

Openreach has recently identified Tregynon, Llanbrynmair, and Kerry as potential candidates for further full fibre expansion. As you may have seen in the press, residents in these areas are being encouraged to apply for UK Government broadband vouchers, which will fund the infrastructure upgrades within their communities.

Although the current phase of this scheme doesn't cover all areas in Powys, we believe it's crucial to keep our community informed about these developments. This understanding can prevent potential confusion or concern regarding why certain areas are being targeted for upgrades and others not.

Please, keep in mind that this is an ongoing process, and areas not included in the current phase are likely to be considered in future expansions. Full fibre technology represents a significant step forward in internet connectivity, offering consistent speeds, fewer faults, and a future-proof infrastructure.

We anticipate more areas of our county being announced for expansion in the coming weeks and months. In concert with these developments, we are also consulting with Openreach, with particular focus on the project areas previously included in the deployment plans for Broadway Partners.

### **Introduction of SHE Technology**

Openreach's process for these areas is based on a new method of connectivity: Subtended Headend Exchange (SHE) technology. This innovative solution has been developed by Openreach to help extend the reach of its Full Fibre network, especially to more remote or hard-to-reach locations.

Traditionally, the fibre-optic cables that carry high-speed internet data connect to a main exchange building where the optical signal is processed and amplified. This setup can sometimes limit the network's reach, particularly in rural or remote areas where the distance from the main exchange is significant.

To overcome this, Openreach uses SHE technology, which relocates some of the signal processing and amplification equipment from the main exchange building to existing green roadside cabinets or small remote exchange buildings served by a main exchange. The SHE equipment installed in these locations allows new fibre-optic cables to be built out from these sites, thus extending the fibre network's reach to more homes and businesses.

The SHE technology utilises existing VDSL copper-based cabinet network to extend the reach of Openreach's new Full Fibre cables, essentially 'piggybacking' on the existing network to deliver full fibre connections to more premises.

This technological solution helps to reduce the cost and logistical challenges of bringing Full Fibre broadband to more remote or hard-to-reach locations. However, as this deployment method essentially upgrades areas with existing Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC), the projects originally targeted by Broadway do not readily lend themselves to utilising this new delivery method.

Nevertheless, we are in active consultation with Openreach, not least with respect to the communities that lost their VPA status, and we will continue this dialogue if there is no positive news for the remaining Broadway projects currently maintaining their VPA status. We will, of course, share any progress with you as soon as we can.

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We encourage you to stay informed about these and other developments in Powys' broadband infrastructure. We commit to updating the community as soon as we have more details to share.

Meanwhile, we invite residents with questions or concerns to reach out to us at [Broadband@Powys.Gov.UK](mailto:Broadband@Powys.Gov.UK)

Yours Sincerely,

Mike Lewis

**Community Broadband Officer/ Swyddog Band Eang Cymunedol  
Economic Development & Regeneration/Datblygu Economaidd ac Adfywio**

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[Broadband - enabling a Digital Powys - Powys County Council](#)

[www.growinpowys.com](http://www.growinpowys.com) / [www.tyfuymmhowys.com](http://www.tyfuymmhowys.com)

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