

This publication was withdrawn on 18 September 2025.

This document has been withdrawn because it is no longer current.
General broadband statistics can be found within the Statistical Digest of Rural England publication: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistical-digest-of-rural-england>.



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

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Premises with the potential to receive superfast broadband, as a result of Rural Community Broadband Fund investment in England, 2013/14 to 2014/15

- Based on contracted projects, between 2013/14 and 2014/15 a total of 3,269 domestic, business and other premises in hard-to-reach rural areas are anticipated to have the potential to receive superfast broadband as a result of Rural Community Broadband Fund (RCBF)¹ investment in England.
- These premises are within five community projects which have been approved for funding from the RCBF.
- The RCBF had an original target of up to 70,000 premises to have the potential to receive superfast broadband by mid 2015. However the scope of the projects covered by these statistics has been revised. An explanation is given in the 'Target' section of this statistical release.

Background to the RCBF

The indicator reports on a key impact of the RCBF, that is the number of domestic, business and other premises in hard to reach areas that have the potential to receive a superfast broadband service that would otherwise only have the potential to receive standard broadband. (Note the indicator refers to potential because it is up to the occupant to decide if they want to connect their premise to and pay for a broadband service.) This is based on premises "passed" by superfast broadband as a result of RCBF funding.

The Government's £530 million investment to support the roll out of broadband in rural areas is managed and delivered by Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK)² within the Department for

¹ www.gov.uk/government/news/government-boosts-hill-farm-and-upland-communities-support
(for more details see rdpenetwork.defra.gov.uk/funding-sources/rural-community-broadband-fund)

² www.gov.uk/broadband-delivery-uk

Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), and aims to bring superfast broadband to 90 per cent of premises in each county.

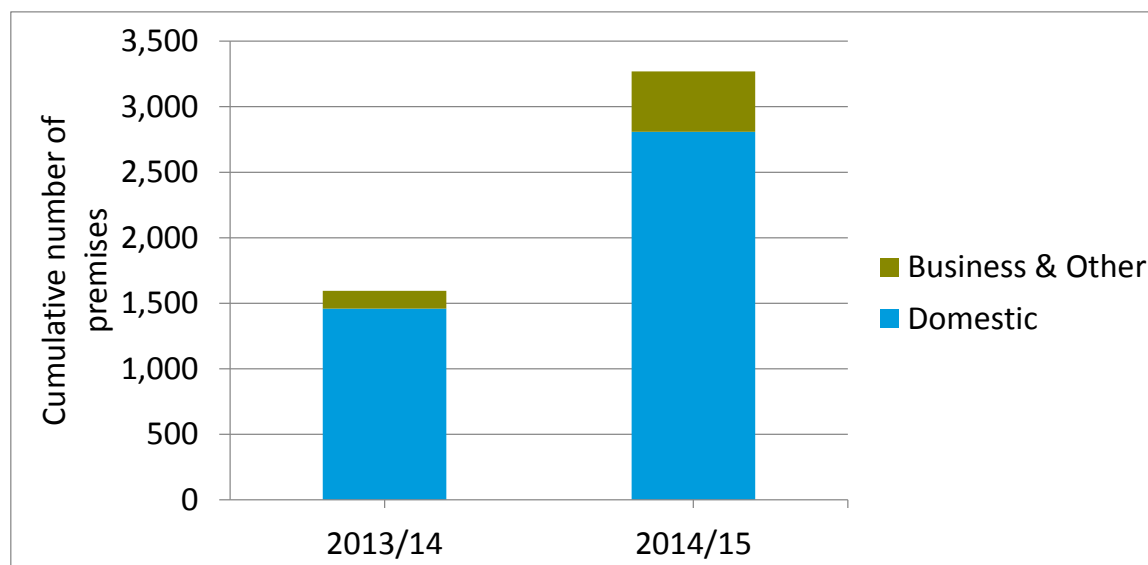
The remaining 10 per cent of premises are regarded as being in “hard to reach areas” - in the more remote or sparsely populated areas. Through Phase 1 of the BDUK programme such premises will have the potential to receive standard broadband with a minimum speed of 2Mbps (Megabits per second). Phase 2 of the BDUK programme will now deliver superfast broadband to 95% of UK premises by 2017.

However, the joint Defra/BDUK £20 million Rural Community Broadband Fund has allowed some communities in these hard-to-reach areas to secure funding for projects that will give them the potential to receive superfast broadband (with a minimum speed of 24Mbps), so that they are not disadvantaged. The RCBF is being delivered through the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE)³ within Defra, and comprised £10m European funding and £10m Exchequer funding from BDUK. The Fund is now closed as the current RDPE is coming to an end on 31 March 2015.

Understanding the indicator

The numbers of premises reported are a combination of actual and predicted or anticipated premises, and are presented cumulatively year on year. Some 1,595 premises were predicted to be “passed” by superfast broadband in 2013/14, with a further 1,674 in 2014/15 (see Chart 1).

Chart 1: Cumulative number of domestic, business and other premises in hard-to-reach rural areas that have the potential to receive superfast broadband as a result of Rural Community Broadband Fund investment in England, 2013/14 to 2014/15



Note: The numbers of premises reported are a combination of actual and predicted or anticipated premises, and are presented cumulatively year on year. For all years the numbers of premises are initially those anticipated or predicted by communities in approved and contracted projects. However, as milestones in the delivery of projects are reached these are updated with actual premises. Some premises numbers for 2013/14 are predicted as the actual delivery has not yet been verified.

³ www.gov.uk/rural-development-programme-for-england

For all approved projects, the indicator initially reports the numbers of domestic, business and other premises predicted or anticipated by the communities to be passed by superfast broadband as a result of the works to be funded by RCBF investment.

Once projects begin delivery, the indicator is updated with actual numbers of premises - namely the number of premises that have been passed as a result of the work undertaken. (See Table 1.)

Table 1: Cumulative premises in hard-to-reach areas anticipated to have the potential to receive superfast broadband through Rural Community Broadband Fund investment in England, 2013/14 to 2014/15

	2013/14			2014/15 cumulative: including previous years		
	Domestic premises	Business premises	Other premises	Domestic premises	Business premises	Other premises
Total actual premises	934	123	0	934	123	0
Total predicted or anticipated premises	525	13	0	1,874	337	1
Total all premises (actual and predicted or anticipated)	1,459	136	0	2,808	460	1

Note: The numbers of premises reported are a combination of actual and predicted or anticipated premises, and are presented cumulatively year on year. For all years the number of premises are initially those anticipated or predicted by communities in approved and contracted projects. However, as milestones in the delivery of projects are reached these are updated with actual premises. Some premises numbers for 2013/14 are predicted as the actual delivery has not yet been verified.

The indicator records the potential to receive superfast broadband (determined by premises being passed), rather than premises connected as it is up to the occupant to decide if they want to connect their premise and pay for a broadband service.

Data are based on the approved applications and subsequent monitoring of the projects. The numbers of premises are verified using household data from the Census and registered business data, and projects are subject to site visits as part of the monitoring of the RCBF. There are currently five contracted community projects, the details of which are shown in Table 2 and the location in Map 1 below.

Target

The RCBF had an original target of up to 70,000 estimated premises. At the time the RCBF was launched in November 2011, it was envisaged that the maximum amount of grant the RCBF would normally provide per premise would be based on a benchmark of up to £300 (excluding VAT). This meant that if the RCBF of £20 million was fully utilised then 66,666 premises would be given the potential to receive superfast broadband by mid-2015. It was recognised at the time that the final target figure could be lower depending on the average costs per premise and grant rate approved. In the event, the costs per premises passed in the

final hard to reach areas have proved to be significantly higher than originally anticipated, and this has been a factor in reducing the numbers of premises capable of being passed under the Fund. Applications submitted to the Fund are expected to result in approximately 20-22 projects, passing between around 20-25,000 premises, for areas not in scope of the broadband projects under the main Government rollout programme. Seventeen of these projects are led by Local Authorities and are due to be delivered as extensions to existing Local Authority contracts under the main rollout programme. As such these 17 projects will be reported by DCMS as part of the DCMS Broadband Performance Indicator on superfast broadband, rather than through this RCBF indicator.

Table 2: Total premises in hard-to-reach areas anticipated to have the potential to receive superfast broadband through Rural Community Broadband Fund investment in England, by community project in year, 2013/14 to 2014/15

	<i>2013/14 in year</i>			<i>2014/15 in year</i>		
Community project	Domestic premises	Business premises	Other premises	Domestic premises	Business premises	Other premises
Rothbury	1,430	107	0	0	0	0
Fell End	29	29	0	0	0	0
Northmoor & Bablockhythe	0	0	0	518	4	1
Tove Valley	0	0	0	423	173	0
Fibre GarDen	0	0	0	408	147	0
Total all projects	1,459	136	0	1,349	324	1

Note: The numbers of premises reported are a combination of actual and predicted or anticipated premises in year. For all years the number of premises are initially those anticipated or predicted by communities in approved and contracted projects. However, as milestones in the delivery of projects are reached these are updated with actual premises. Some premises numbers for 2013/14 are predicted as the actual delivery has not yet been verified. The numbers of premises are those given the potential in a given year, not the cumulative total as in the summary table and chart.

Map 1: Locations of communities in hard-to-reach areas that have the potential to receive superfast broadband through approved Rural Community Broadband Fund investment, 2013/14 to 2014/15

