

Digital Connectivity Grant – Briefing Note



West Sussex Business Parks, Business Estates, Business Clusters could be eligible for a gap-funding grant of between £10,000 and £25,000 to enable a superfast broadband connection.

£225,000 is being made available as part of a pilot grant project to improve connectivity for groups of businesses in West Sussex that are without access to superfast broadband and not included in any commercial (e.g. BT or Virgin) or publicly-funded (i.e. WSCC/BDUK) rollout.

ABOUT THE GRANT

Business estates or clusters in West Sussex have until 5pm on 15 January 2016 to apply to the new Digital Connectivity Grant Programme. The programme provides up to 40% of the capital costs of getting connected with grant funding available of between £10k and £25k.

The funding comes from the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership Local Growth Deal under their 'Growth is Digital' priority project. The programme has been developed by Rural West Sussex Partnership, South Downs National Park Authority, Gatwick Diamond Initiative and Coastal West Sussex Partnership supported by West Sussex County Council. The programme has secured £450k of funding out of which this first tranche of £225k has been allocated to the first phase of digital connectivity grants.

Grant applications will be assessed by the programme panel, who will assess value-for-money, economic impact and deliverability.

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE?

Eligible groups of business include business parks, trading or industrial estates, farm diversification schemes, clusters of businesses in a common location and single business locations with high economic impact. The programme is not open to residential applicants but clusters of home-based businesses in a common location potentially could apply. Applicants and locations must be within West Sussex.

To be eligible, businesses must not be included in the planned delivery of the publicly funded roll out by [Better Connected](#), a partnership of West Sussex County Council, BT and BDUK (the government department responsible for broadband delivery).

WHO CAN SUBMIT AN APPLICATION?

The application can be made by a lead business representing a group of businesses in a common location, or by landowners, land agents, estate managers and facility managers, for example.

WHAT WILL THE GRANT COVER?

The grant is a **capital** only grant to a maximum of 40% of the total project cost. The applicant must provide a minimum of 60% of the total project cost, which can include any revenue costs. The project must incur the full costs by 31 December 2016. Full guidance notes are available on the Coast to Capital website.

Generally the applicant will select and procure the best technology for their location: fibre, wireless and hybrid solutions will be considered, but it must provide certified speeds of a minimum 30Mbps.

WHERE TO FIND OUT MORE

Coast to Capital website <http://www.coast2capital.org.uk/helping-business-growth/grant-funding>

If you have any questions, please email broadband@southdowns.gov.uk