

Uffington Broadband survey - analysis of results

There were 49 valid responses to a 10-question survey of Uffington area residents shared via Facebook and Village news and carried out during November 2020.

Main messages:

Internet Use. Responses to the Survey shows the importance of internet connection for professional and business services - 20% respondents using internet to run a business, and more than half for working from home with 44% respondents indicating that this was COVID-related. While long-term trend here, especially post-Covid, has yet to be determined, research suggests that a majority of workers want to retain a hybrid remote-office working model which will often demand more reliable and capable internet connections.

Speed and Reliability. While the majority of respondents (82% in each case) agreed that existing broadband reliability and speed were always or usually sufficient and were within contracted limits. Only 6 (12%) commented that the speed was rarely sufficient and 9 (18%) that reliability was rarely sufficient.

Potential Uptake. The same proportion, 40 (82%) indicated that they were interested in upgrading further to a full fibre service with 22 (45%) respondents ready to switch at any time, a further 10 (20%) ready to switch within 12 months, and 6 within 24 months. This suggests a core group of around 40 households keen to advance a project to upgrade their internet over the next 2 years.

Costs. A key issue affecting uptake is likely to be the extra cost of a monthly contract with the majority of comments (15 out of 28) clearly indicating that only a £5-10 monthly increase was likely to be acceptable. While few people were outright opposed to pay a one-off cost for connection, half of respondents indicated that this was something they would possibly consider dependent on cost but clarity would be needed about how any one-off costs would be calculated (e.g. shared equally or paid individually).

Other points:

- More than half of respondents are with BT - suggesting a loyalty to the long-established national provider. Final comments also indicated that some respondents preferred a large provider e.g. "BT looks the better option" or "Prefer the waiting until a mainstream provider can provide the upgrade, i.e. BT"
- A final factor raised in one comment was the possibility of providing a service to shared spaces such as the church and village hall - these likely to be included within government grant guidelines as eligible sites.
- Mapping the households most likely to take up a faster broadband indicated no specific area(s) of the village most interested and there was only one response from each of Woolstone and Baulking.
- We understand that there is no current project to include any of the important village amenities such as the school, shop, village hall.
- Whilst we did not ask in the survey, we understand that some residents would be concerned about the possible need to maintain a separate land phone line connection, at an extra cost, in addition to a full fibre broadband connection.