

BRIEFING SHEET

Development Projects and Renewables

Topic/Issue Title	MAKI Community Planning meeting (JUNE 2013) <i>Broadband and mobile phone coverage UPDATE</i>
Background:	
Broadband:	
<p>Highlands and Islands (HIE) have announced that BT have been appointed as the contractors who will deliver the £146 million pound Next Generation Broadband (NGB) project in the Highlands and Islands region. This is the first phase of the NGB rollout which ultimately aims to provide 100% NGB coverage by 2020. This phase aims to provide 84% NGB (<i>speeds of > 24Mbps+</i>) coverage levels in the Highlands and Islands area by 2016. Currently there is only 21% coverage levels across the HIE region.</p>	
<p>Exact details of the extent of the improvements in Argyll and Bute have not been issued yet. Maps released by HIE via their website indicate that there will be a number of infrastructure improvements in Argyll and Bute with new fibre optic cables replacing the existing cables in the mid Argyll area and new subsea cables to Kintyre, Islay and Jura. As the details emerge these will be made available on the HIE web site.</p>	
<p>For the 16% that will not receive NGB broadband this time round they will be able to contact Community Broadband Scotland (CBS) to register their interest in looking at a community scheme. Whilst it is still unclear which communities will not receive NGB as part of the first roll out phase, CBS will be able to help explain the alternative options that may be available.</p>	
<p>Community Broadband Scotland has just appointed Campbell Cameron as their representative for the Argyll area. Campbell will be based in the HIE office in Lochgilphead and his contact details are:</p>	
<p>01546 605 415 / campbell.cameron@communitybroadbandscotland.org</p>	
Mobile Phone Coverage	
<p>UK Governments £150 million Mobile Infrastructure Project (MIP) has been awarded state aid approval and recently (13th May 13) procured the firm Arquiva to carry out the upgrades to 10 roads in the UK. The A82 trunk road is included within the MIP project and is expected to benefit from improved coverage levels as part of the upgrades. Details of the MIP plans are on the Department for Media, Culture and Sport website including a map of expected improvements to mobile not spots coverage. The works will include the provision of additional phone masts across the area although full details of the actual locations have yet to be released. The project is expected to be completed in 2015.</p>	
<p>In the report to full Council on Mobile Signal coverage by Gerry Wilson in December 2012 it was noted that Vodaphone and O2 will be initiating a mast sharing programme that will improve coverage and quality of signal in Argyll and Bute. Vodaphone have since stated that the project completion date has been delayed from December 2013 until December 2014.</p>	

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Actions:

Continue to liaise closely with HIE, BT and Arquiva to ensure that the most up to date information is available in regard to the proposed works within Argyll and Bute to allow a full understanding of the extent of the provision of Next generation broadband as well as the improvements to the existing mobile phone coverage .

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

DATE	18/06/13
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