

FTTP/H (fibre-to-the-premises /home): Openreach Trial

Preamble.

I'm using "I and my" to represent a Milton Keynes resident. "You, your" to represent BT plc.

It's been a couple of weeks since the announcement, and members are very interested in the forthcoming trial. We have prepared the following list of questions:

Questions for Openreach

1. What is the extent of the coverage area proposed by your Bradwell Abbey FTTP Trial? Please would you detail it down to street level? Would you cover areas served by other neighbouring exchanges? *The trial will cover parts of the Bradwell Abbey exchange area. The intention is to cover as much as economically possible. Areas that won't be covered are those areas that require costly additional infrastructure requiring significant roadworks. We won't know the exact extent of this until we undertake a detailed survey of the area early next year, and will be able to give a clearer picture then.*
2. Has Bradwell Abbey got enough backhaul to cope with the extra bandwidth? *Broadband backhaul is dimensioned by each of Openreach's communications provider customers in order for them to deliver the retail product they plan to offer on top of the Openreach service, and we would expect their plans to ensure that there is.*
3. Will you concentrate on "good areas" or problem areas that are distance limited with ADSL? *It could be both depending on the amount of civil engineering required as per outlined above in 1.*
4. How will I order a FTTP connection? *From one of the communications providers participating in the trial.*
5. How will I know that the trial is available in my street? *We will be working with those communications providers which choose to participate on information to potential end users.*
6. Is there a demand driven element to the trial? *No.*
7. What is involved in getting a connection installed? (As far as I need to be involved – for example does someone have to be at home when the termination is installed? Will you offer "time slots" when someone should be at home?) How long will it take to install? *Part of the trial is to establish in more detail exactly what is involved in providing the FTTP service. A range of 2hr appointment slots will be offered, rather than the usual choice of morning or afternoon so that you can plan your day better. Someone will need to be at home for part of the installation work as the fibre modem is situated in the home and some internal wiring may be required.*
8. What will it cost me to participate in the trial? *This will be a decision for the participating communications providers.*
9. Will I need to buy extra equipment? Can I use my existing hub/router/modem? *This will need to be determined by the communications provider offering the retail service.*
10. Can I choose any ISP? Or will I be locked in to only a few. *Only ISP's that participate in the pilot. We will not be sure of who is participating until early 2010.*
11. Is there a more accurate post code checker for FTTP than is available ADSL so that we have a clearer idea of what service to expect? *We expect to be able to provide a good indication of the FTTP Super Fast fibre Access speed on individual lines. We will make available a post code*

12. What are the expected upload and download speeds? Upload up to 15mb and download up to 100mb
13. What is the level of service during the trial? To be defined by individual communications providers.
14. Will these speeds be distance limited? No, FTTP signals will not be subject to distance limitations.
15. What are the timetables proposed by Openreach? To start the trial in early summer 2010.
16. What is Openreach doing to raise the awareness of this trial? With end users? With ISPs? Openreach is currently working with communications providers and Local Authorities to find ways of raising awareness with potential end users
17. Which ISPs are showing interest in participating? We have a trial working group of around 6 communication providers. We will not know until closer to the trial start date which of these communications providers will participate when.
18. Are all ISPs able to participate? Trials are open to all ISPs/communication providers that wish to participate.
19. How do I ask my ISP to enrol me into the trial? (Will they know what I mean by "FTTP/H Trial"?) You should approach one of the participating communications providers once this has been announced.
20. Will there be a telephony service as well? Will I be able to use an ordinary telephone? (At the same time? Will it eat up bandwidth? Will it be like an Internet "Skype" phone?) Will I be able to make emergency calls? The existing copper telephony service will remain in place.
21. Will the trial become a live service? The intention is that immediately after the trial, Openreach will provide a fully launched service.
22. Will the trial be entirely FTTP, or will there be Fibre To The Cabinet (FTTC)? Initially it will be FTTP only. Once the trial is underway consideration will be given to adding FTTC in those areas of Bradwell Abbey that are not economic for FTTP deployment.
23. Will the FTTP trial co-exist with the existing ADSL services? Yes it will.
24. How will we report any service problems during the trial? End users will contact their communications provider (ISP).
25. Will the FTTP/H support VPN connections? This will be determined by what services communications providers decide to offer by means of the Openreach product.
26. Will the FTTP/H "termination" be a Wi-Fi point? (That is an equivalent to a router that connects to my computer using CAT5, but uses Wi-Fi" instead.) End user connection to the Openreach termination point will be CAT 5/Ethernet. In addition, communications providers may choose to offer a Wi-Fi option.
27. When can Milton Keynes residents not on the Bradwell Abbey exchange expect to get connected? This will be shown as part of the Openreach Next Generation Access rollout plan.
28. If I participate in the trial will I have to sign a non disclosure agreement (as was needed for previous trials)? No, this is not envisaged at this time unless required by a participating communications provider which provides service to you.
29. What feedback mechanism will there be (i.e. comments from end users to Openreach)? End users may be asked to provide feedback to their communications providers as part of our evaluation of the trial.
30. The days of the analogue TV cable system is limited. Is this why Milton Keynes has been chosen for the trail? No, areas were chosen based on economics within our business case and where customer demand has been forecasted.
31. What are the goals of the trial? There is a wide range of information we hope to gain from the trial. This included information around technical, operational and customer service areas.
32. What focus is there on business, SME, and residential? The trial is expected to address business, SME and residential. However, it is down to the participating communications providers to decide what retail services they wish to offer and whether they will address all of these customer segments.