

Connecting Devon and Somerset

Summary: A strong alliance of Somerset and Devon local authorities backed by our Local Enterprise Partnership will make a compelling bid for vital Government funding **to provide superfast and better broadband to over 300,000 businesses and households**. This will ensure **better broadband for every home and business in Somerset and Devon – and superfast broadband for the vast majority**. If successful the bid will transform the economic prospects for the heart of the South West, driving inward investment, helping retain and grow businesses, deliver rural and digital inclusion and help the public sector change the way it does things, bringing it closer to people and communities. Our approach will:

- **deliver for the South West** and demonstrate a **Local Enterprise Partnership in action:** Before our LEP is formed this is our business community getting together to deliver their no.1 priority,
- be **joined up:** Local Authorities (Devon, Plymouth, Somerset and Torbay) working in partnership, putting in substantial resources, with support from key local stakeholders.

What's the current position? Over 75,000 of businesses and households in Somerset and Devon have no or very slow access to the internet – as shown in the first attached map. It is a brake on business growth and competitiveness across Somerset, is a barrier for our rural communities and slows the essential transformation of public services. Private sector suppliers acting alone will not deliver the coverage our economy and communities need: the second attached map shows the size of the areas that the market will not deliver to even by 2015 – the costs are simply too great for the market to do this without support.

Why is this achievable now? Government, through Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) has made available £530m of funding to ensure that the UK has the best broadband network in Europe by 2015. Somerset will be bidding in April for a significant amount of funding from these funds. In addition, the local authorities are putting in substantial amounts of funding and has the team in place to deliver. If our bid is successful then we will be able to secure a telecoms partner to start building a broadband network in 2012 and have it delivered by 2015. It is vital to Somerset's economy and communities that we are successful in our bid.

Our goals for 2015:

- Significantly faster broadband (at least 2Mbps broadband) for everyone
- Superfast broadband for most (at least 85% over 20Mbps)
- At a fair price and through an open network
- Rural communities are key: no cherry picking
- Supporting businesses and the public sector to realise the benefits
- Supporting communities: delivering digital and rural inclusion

The third map (attached) gives an indication of what superfast for 85% and better broadband for all might mean across our area. This is not a picture of what will be delivered, simply an indication of the scale of the challenge. **As our plans progress we will work with businesses, communities, across the public and voluntary sector and with council members to ensure that our plans meet local needs.** This may include some communities working with us to ensure that they get the best network possible – ‘community hubs’.

What this means for business:

- better broadband everywhere, at competitive prices and from a choice of providers
- superfast broadband for most: with our intervention targeted to ensure we are delivering what business needs and where it needs it
- a future-proofed approach: upgraded as technology improves
- supporting businesses to make the most of this opportunity

Timetable: The deadline for the bid itself is April 18th and a decision is expected by the end of May. If our bid is successful then delivery would start in early 2012 and be complete by 2015.

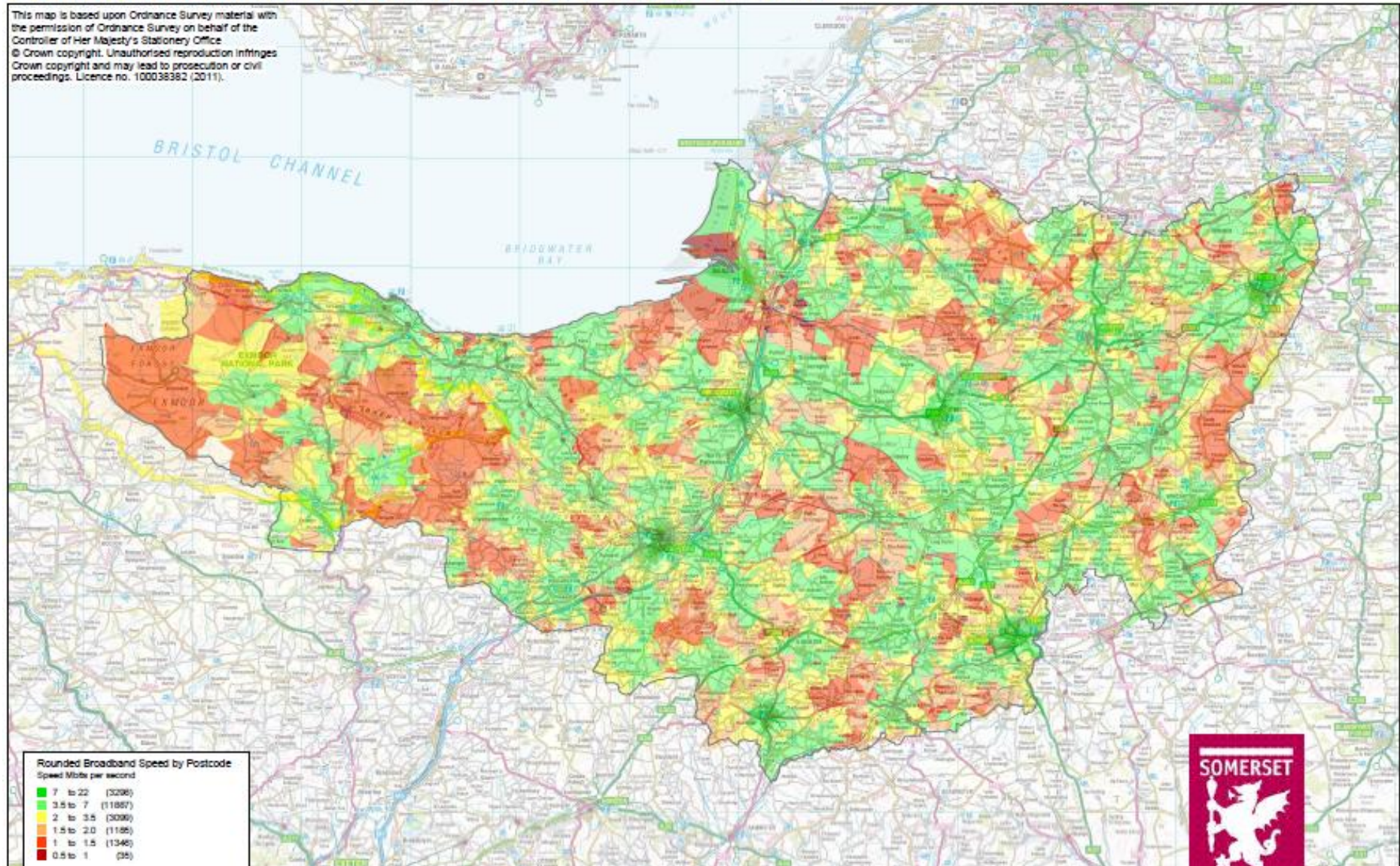
How businesses can help:

- **Help us make the best case for why this is so important by completing the demand survey on www.connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk**
- **Help us demonstrate to Government the local consensus behind our plans by emailing somerseteconomicdevelopment@somerset.gov.uk or DEVON ADDRESS if you support our plans, setting out briefly how this will help your business. Let us know if you are content for us to publish this on our Connecting Devon and Somerset website.**
- **Encouraging your colleagues to fill in the survey**
- **Keep up to date on our plans through the Connecting Devon and Somerset website – we will need your help throughout this project to ensure our plans deliver what you need.**

For further information and to arrange briefings please email somerseteconomicdevelopment@somerset.gov.uk

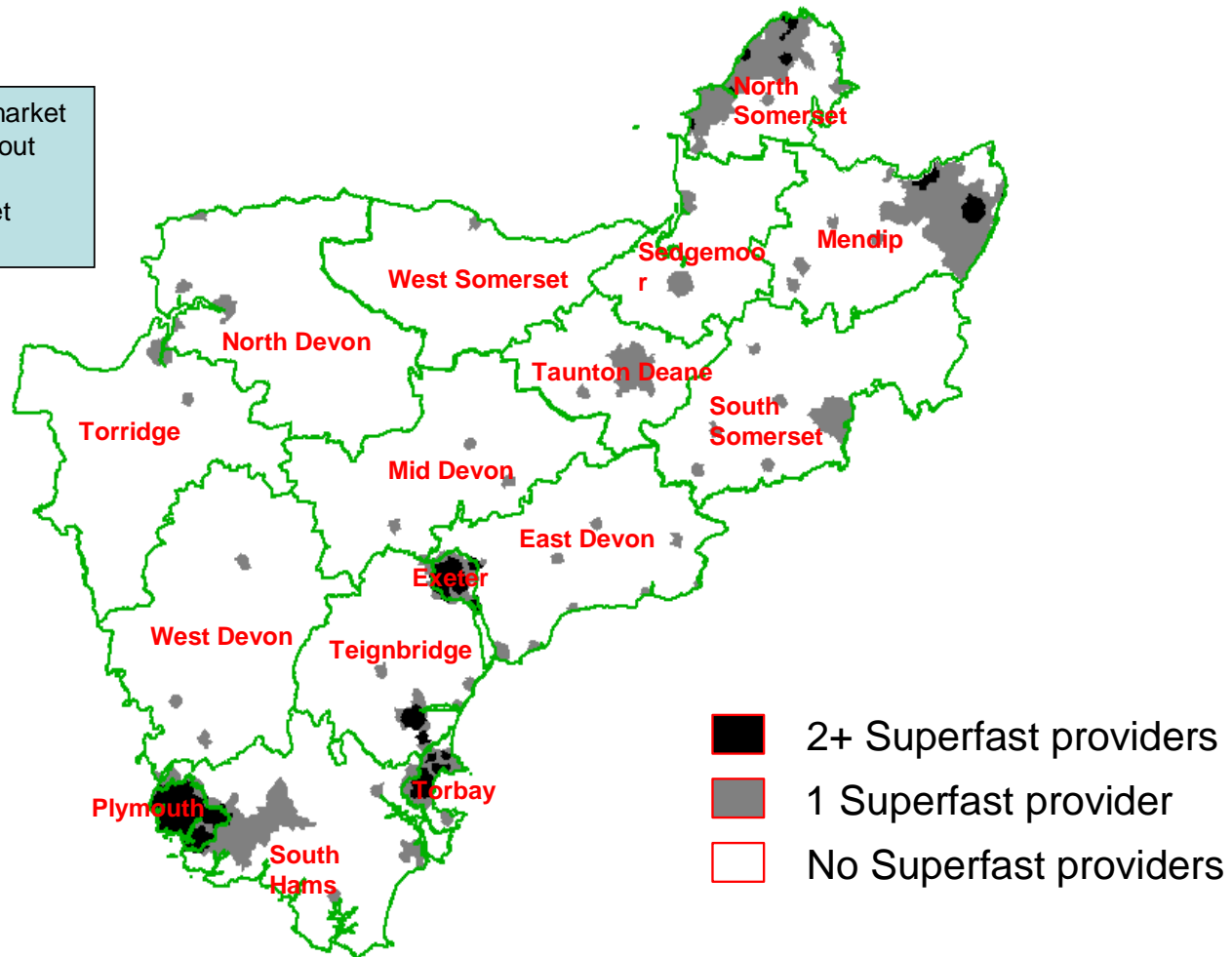
SOMERSET BROADBAND SPEEDS - SUMMER 2010

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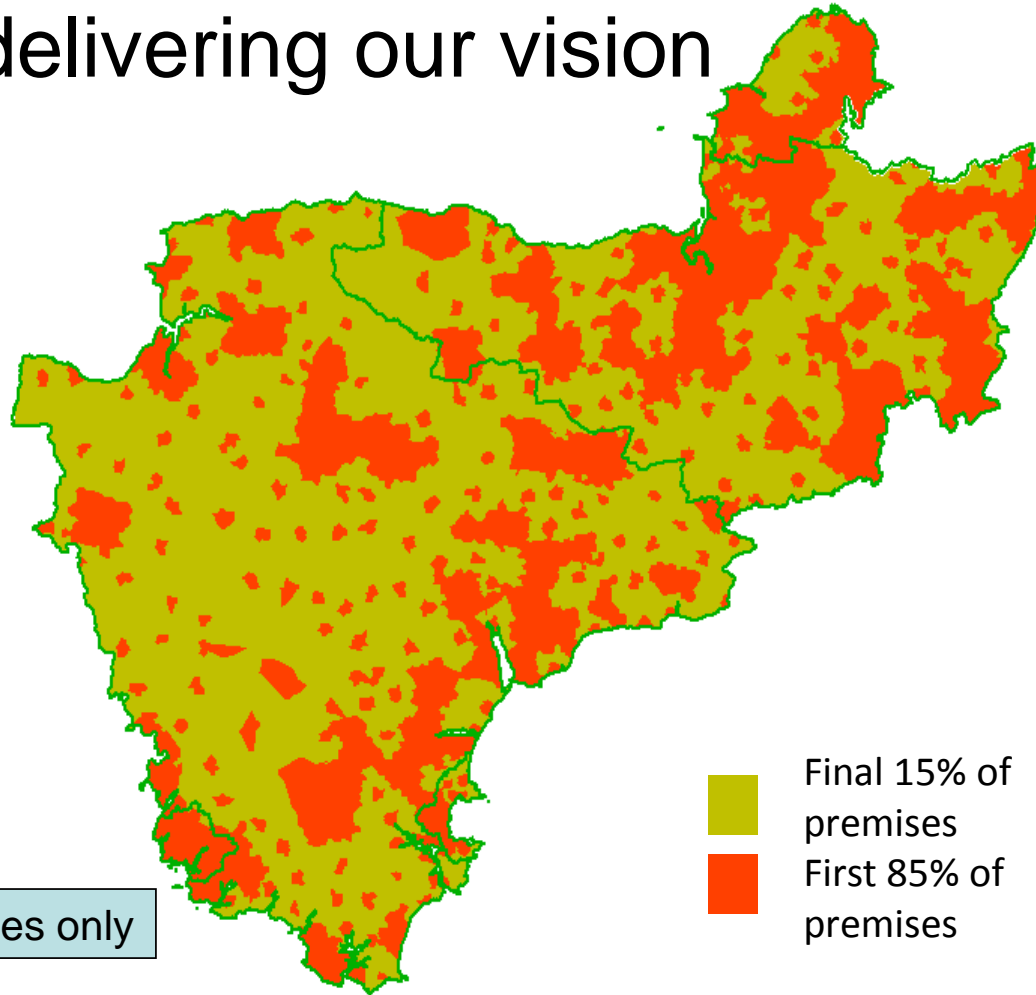
...leaving it to the market...

A forecast of what the market will deliver by 2015 without support from the public sector. Little of this is yet delivered or committed.



...delivering our vision

Our plans aim to deliver significantly better broadband for every home and business in Somerset, and superfast broadband for the vast majority – at least 85%. This map does not show which areas will receive superfast broadband and which won't – it simply gives an indication of the scale of the challenge we face – 15% of the County is still a large area, and we hope to deliver superfast broadband into much of this final 15%, potentially working with communities to support the development of community hubs.



For illustrative purposes only

Final 15% of premises
First 85% of premises