

# Wessex Internet – Report for Annual Parish Meeting

Wessex Internet arranged a meeting at the Village Hall on 27<sup>th</sup> April, 2023. The meeting was well attended and Chris Nelson, the Wessex Community Engagement Manager, explained at some length the methods by which they provide fibre to the premises in Lamyatt. Currently Wessex are the only provider scheduled to bring full Fibre To The Premises in Lamyatt and he suggested that the greater the number who registered for the service, the quicker they were likely to provide it.

Presently broadband to the village is supplied either over old copper lines with speeds ranging from 1mbps to 5mbps dependent upon the distance from the local exchange; a 4G supply, in the main from EE, with speeds of approximately 15mbps to 20mbps. The signal and speeds achieved by this method can be affected by weather conditions, time of day and the number of users sharing bandwidth. This became available to the village approximately four or five years ago and the installation costs were covered, in most cases, by the government backed Connecting Devon & Somerset voucher scheme. A supply from Voneus with a claimed 50mbps is also available which provides a fixed wireless access using their transmitting masts but again is liable to fluctuation from weather conditions and numbers of users. Chris explained the significant advantage of a fibre to the premises supply over these other broadband methods currently available. The Wessex fibre supply is not impacted by weather, or numbers of users, and benefits from increased speeds of between 100mbps to 900mbps, with either limited or unlimited data allowances dependent on the subscription taken. The subscriptions, for 12 months, currently range from £29 to £79 inc VAT per month. Wessex has recently reduced the cost of their 250mbps supply with unlimited data from £44 to £39 per month). Fibre installation costs are usually covered under the government backed Gigabit Voucher scheme, launched in 2021, and which Wessex arranges on behalf of the subscriber. There is a one-off connection charge of £49 when supply is activated. Chris further explained that, in rare cases where access to the property is unusually difficult, an additional installation cost might be incurred.

He advised that Wessex could also supply a VOIP telephone service which provides an alternative to an existing landline phone connection. BT are currently phasing out existing landline provisions by the end of 2025 and phone numbers can be transported to new providers.

Chris explained that the Wessex fibre supply has currently reached a point behind Wyke Farm. Although the distance to Lamyatt is relatively short, consents are required from a number of landowners/utility providers to lay the cables across their properties/utilise their poles and he explained these permissions are currently being sought. Some confusion arose on the likely timing for the installation of the supply with June, September and November all being suggested as potential dates. Further clarity has subsequently been sought from Wessex and November has been confirmed as the most likely date. Additional problems with some damage to main pieces of specialised equipment, adverse recent weather conditions, as well as the requirement for consents, in some areas, to be gained via a third party has delayed the installation.

For further information, or to register interest, contact Chris Nelson – [chris.nelson@wessexinternet.com](mailto:chris.nelson@wessexinternet.com) or Olivia Morris at [sales@wessexinternet.com](mailto:sales@wessexinternet.com). Further updates when provided by Wessex will be posted on Lamyatt Village Mail.

Romy Smallwood (May 2023)

