



DR DAN POULTER MP

Member of Parliament for Central Suffolk and North Ipswich

A few years ago, working with other Suffolk MPs, I helped lead the successful campaign to gain over £30 million of Government funding for faster broadband for Suffolk. The Better Broadband for Suffolk programme has already made significant inroads into ensuring superfast broadband is available across the county, but there still remains some way to go in achieving 100% coverage.

On a regular basis, I still receive letters, emails and phone calls from residents and small businesses owners asking for my help with poor broadband speeds. The need for better and more reliable broadband is important for every business, school and home in our area which is why achieving better broadband for all remains one of my top priorities as your MP.

Although there is much to celebrate so far, I remain concerned about the effect that poor or no broadband is having on those areas being left behind, particularly for those residents and businesses in the “not spots” that make up the remaining and final areas yet to benefit from better broadband speeds and reliability.

Superfast broadband is no longer a “luxury add-on” service, but for many people, it is now a vital utility in the same way as heating and power. It is essential deliver growth and investment into Suffolk’s local economy, not to mention providing reliable access for young people at school and university. With public services like the health service constantly looking for new and better ways to deliver care to patients, fast and reliable digital connectivity is absolutely essential.

The Government has recently pledged to deliver full fibre broadband across the UK and whilst this is welcome news, it is my opinion that much more has to be done to level up the digital divide here in Central Suffolk and North Ipswich. Our local businesses, students, farmers, public services and health settings all depend upon a fast and reliable broadband service – for accessing their customers, studies, service users or patients, but also for making the most of agri-tech equipment relied upon by our local farmers.

As we emerge from the pandemic, it is absolutely critical that our local businesses get all the help they need, and better broadband is essential. I am greatly encouraged by the Government’s commitment to deliver better broadband for all and I will continue to do all that I can to ensure that Suffolk remain firmly at the front of the queue.