Agenda Item No:

Report To:	Cabinet
Date:	28 September 2023
Report Title:	Update on the Broadband and Digital Infrastructure improvements in the Ashford Borough
Report Author:	Tom Jenkins, Economic Development Manager
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Noel Ovenden, Leader of the Council

Summary:

Ashford Borough Council has been very pro-active in the approach to improving broadband and digital connectivity across the borough for a number of years. ABC has built a reputation as a council that providers and developers can work with.

Over the past 12 months officers have been working on the following:

- Worked with the Digital Enablers Group to bring forward key activity for improving digital infrastructure
- Liaising with KCC on activity in the county and in the borough, particularly in relation the Government's Project Gigabit
- Supporting Openreach and Netomnia with delivery of FTTP to ABC's housing stock
- Engagement with providers including Openreach, Virgin Media O2, Lightning Fibre and Netomnia

This report sets out the actions recommended moving forward and updates Cabinet on the progress made within the last 12 months particularly:

- Increasing Superfast broadband coverage (30 Mbps or higher) to 93% of premises in the Borough.
- increasing FTTP coverage by 27% to nearly half of the Borough's premises.
- an increase of 2% in the number of premises covered by 4G from all four MNOs to nearly three in four premises in the Borough.
- a reduction to 0.4% of premises unable to receive 10Mbps download speed (Universal Service Obligation).

Key Decision:	NO
Affected Wards:	All Wards
Recommendations:	**Cabinet are asked to:-**

      I.   **Note the content of this report and the Broadband work undertaken in the past year.**

     II.   **To note that the delivery of broadband is, and**

should remain, a key priority in the council's Corporate Plan.

    III.   Approve the actions set out in section 38 of this report.

Policy Overview: Within the Ashford Borough Council Corporate Plan 2022-2024, the importance of improved digital infrastructure is highlighted in Objective TG2 under Targeted Growth "Enable the improvement of digital infrastructure to support the growing needs of business, voluntary sector and residents". The document explains that fast, reliable digital connectivity across the whole Borough is critical for businesses and residents to trade and access services. Some areas of the Borough are disadvantaged because of poor digital connectivity. A lack of digital connectivity can stifle innovation and business growth.

The Ashford Local Plan (Adopted in February 2019) also identifies the importance of great telecommunications infrastructure through the adoption of Policy EMP6 – Promotion of Fibre to the Premises (FTTP).

Each of these strategic documents prioritise the requirement for improvements to the existing telecommunications infrastructure as well as future proofing where necessary.

Financial Implications: It is not proposed that ABC take on direct financial endeavours relating to broadband provision. Cabinet approved the creation of the Digital Enablers Group last year which is delivering on the work programme required to deliver the Corporate Plan actions. This report will update on progress to date and seeks to continue this agreed programme. There is therefore no further resource implication apart from ongoing staff time for officers that attend the Digital Enablers Group.

Legal Implications: N/A

Risk Assessment Please see Section 39 within the report.

Equalities Impact Assessment A fundamental priority in improving affordable reliable broadband and mobile access for residents and businesses within the Borough, is to reduce social exclusion and rural isolation. The aspiration to level up access across the Borough will look to reduce the current inequalities in access, highlighted since the Covid-19 pandemic.

Exemption Clauses:

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Agenda Item No.

Report Title: Update on the Broadband improvements in the Ashford Borough.

Purpose of the Report

1.   To report to Cabinet on the latest activity undertaken by officers regarding broadband and digital infrastructure improvements in the Borough, provide an update on Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) and Superfast broadband coverage and outline plans for ongoing work.

Issue to be decided

2.   Cabinet to take note of the update on the latest position and approve the priority and proposed actions for improved broadband as set out in section 38 of this report.

Background

3.   The Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) has been responsible for delivering the government's policies on increasing economic growth and productivity through improved digital connectivity. Central to this is the Government's target of rolling out gigabit-capable infrastructure capable of download speeds of at least 1000 megabits per second (Mbps) to at least 85% of UK premises by 2025 through Project Gigabit. Gigabit-capable broadband, such as full fibre, can provide speeds of over 1,000Mbps, fast enough to download a High-Definition (HD) film in seconds.

4.   The Government has allocated £5 billion to rolling out Project Gigabit by 2025. While commercial suppliers who are expected to deliver up to 80% of the UK's coverage where profitable, the public sector needs to provide support to build gigabit infrastructure in the remaining 20% of less commercially viable areas. In order to achieve this, DCMS supported a series of programmes including: "outside in" deployment of FTTP in areas unlikely to be commercially viable; FTTP via schemes such as the Local Full Fibre Networks (LFFN); Rural Gigabit Connectivity programmes for the final 20%; and a Gigabit voucher scheme.

5.   Over 72% of UK premises now have gigabit-capable networks available to them. The main way to deliver gigabit capable broadband (>1000 Mbps) is using Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) cabling, however, other technologies may need to be used to deliver in harder-to-reach areas, such as Satellite or Fixed Wireless Access (FWA).

6.   Ashford Borough Council has been pro-actively supporting the rollout of superfast broadband across the Borough for many years and is recognised by Government as one of the best case studies of Local Authorities taking the lead on broadband improvement. The major development in this sector has been ABC's inclusion of Policy EMP6 (Promotion of Fibre to the Premises) in its Local Plan from February 2019, which requires nearly all new developments in the Borough to provide fibre broadband connections to the premises.

7.   The Economic Development team also co-ordinates the Ashford Digital Enablers Group, a cross-departmental ABC body set up to support broadband rollout within the borough. The Group meets on a monthly basis to ensure the public sector is supporting commercial providers efficiently and removing barriers to local Gigabit rollout.

8.   To support the understanding of this report, a glossary of terms has been incorporated in Appendix B to this report.

Ashford Borough broadband status

9.   The Ofcom Connected Nations Report explains in detail the digital connectivity under different technologies, different speeds and different areas. We have attached to this report as Appendix A the results from the latest report (2023 Interim). The following key measures can be identified for Ashford Borough:

Number of Ashford premises with Superfast broadband (>30Mbps): 56,159 (93.0%)
Ashford change since spring 2022: +1,302 (+1% overall Ashford coverage)
Superfast broadband UK average: 96%

Number of Ashford premises with Full Fibre (FTTP): 28,271 (47%)
Ashford change since spring 2022: +16,515 (+27.3% overall Ashford coverage)
Full Fibre UK average: 47%

Number of Ashford premises below Universal Service Obligation level (<10Mbps): 234 (0.4%)
Ashford change since spring 2022: -94 (-0.2% overall Ashford coverage)
Below USO premises UK average: 0.3%

Percentage of Ashford premises covered with 4G indoors by at least one Mobile Network Operator (MNO): 99.0%
Overall Ashford change in coverage since spring 2022: +0%
Average across all LAs in UK: 99.1%

Percentage of Ashford premises covered with 4G indoors by all 4 MNOs: 73.4%
Overall Ashford change in coverage since spring 2022: +1.9%
Average across all LAs in UK: 82.1%

10. The figures above need context alongside the comparative UK figures to explain what they mean for Ashford as a predominantly rural Borough and why they are like this. The Superfast broadband percentage of properties covered matches approximately population densities due to the required Return on Investment (ROI) by providers in reaching clusters of premises. The more rural an area, the lower the population density and the less percentage of premises are likely to be covered. This is evidenced by the fact that across the country, Tewkesbury (which has approximately the same population density to Ashford – 2.3 people per hectare) also has 93% coverage, Braintree (slightly higher population density – 2.6) has 98% SFBB coverage, while East Devon (lower population density – 1.87) has 92% coverage. Rural areas will always be an issue for commercial infrastructure builds which is why it is important for the council to lead, coordinate and lobby for investment.

11.   It is also worth noting that most FTTP rollout nationally is being driven by commercial deployments which, as mentioned above, require Return on Investment (ROI) for the providers. That leads the providers to mostly install FTTP where it is more cost-effective to do so, with schemes like Project Gigabit aimed at making connections in the more rural parts of the country more viable.

12.   We would note that the introduction of Local Plan Policy EMP6 has contributed to a high level of superfast broadband coverage, meaning that FTTP coverage - which stood at 7.8% in 2021 - has now risen to 47% in 2023. Without Policy EMP6 it is likely the figures in 2023 would have been lower. EMP6 will also have enabled additional infrastructure which is currently being upgraded, meaning FTTP can be delivered quicker in these early stages. Overall, there has been a large increase in planning applications where an EMP6 condition has been applied.

13.   These latest figures from Ofcom show that Ashford's FTTP coverage is now in line with the UK average coverage (47%) which should be welcome news and shows the considerable progress made considering the factors set out above.

14.   Mobile coverage has not significantly changed across the UK since last year (with no reported change in the percentage of premises covered by at least one MNO). Densification of mobile coverage has taken place, with an increase nationally and locally in the number of premises covered by all four MNOs.

Gigabit Voucher schemes and Project Gigabit update

15.   The responsibility for coordinating digital infrastructure improvements nationally has recently been passed to the new Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT). To date there has been no indication that the scope of programmes already in place will change.

16.   The Economic Development team has been working closely with KCC to ensure that the Government's vouchers schemes have been publicised and that communities across the Borough are able to improve their connections. The Gigabit Voucher Scheme was closed in May 2020 and the Rural Gigabit Connectivity scheme was replaced by the UK Gigabit Voucher (UKGV) scheme in April 2021. To avoid duplication of government subsidies in areas targeted by Project Gigabit procurement, UKGV (including any Community Fibre schemes) was paused in September 2021. It is anticipated that UKGV scheme may be resumed after the procurement for Project Gigabit is complete.

17.   For Project Gigabit, Building Digital UK (BDUK) – an executive agency of DSIT - have allocated Kent & Medway £112 million to deliver gigabit-capable connections to areas that are not expected to benefit from telecom providers' own upgrade programmes. This would cover 72,000 premises in the region. BDUK is currently in the procurement process for a single contract that will be established to deliver these new connections across Kent. Kent County Council's broadband team has been asked to partner with BDUK and support the local delivery across Kent.

18.   As part of the pre-procurement work, BDUK has identified the areas that were not commercially viable through Open Market Review (between 12 August 2021 - 13 September 2021) and Public Review stages (between 4 February 2022 - 4 March 2022). BDUK has published the outcome of the Public Review and provided postcode level data. BDUK will only provide subsidy to target premises that have been designated 'White' in the review. From the data published, the Ashford Borough has approx. 6,400 premises in 860 postcodes designated as 'White'. A map in Appendix D shows the postcodes across Kent that are in scope for this project.

19.   Procurement is currently underway from BDUK to identify a provider that will undertake this project for Kent. The outcome of this procurement was due to be November 2023 but an announcement is likely to be made in early 2024.

20.   Beyond fixed broadband, the Government has published its Wireless Infrastructure Strategy, aimed at delivering 5G connectivity to all populated areas by 2030, as well as investing in the next generation of connectivity. The strategy reaffirms Government's commitment to extending 4G coverage to 95% of the population and deliver 5G to all populated areas by 2030. This strategy provides the vision and framework for improving wireless connectivity. Officers at Ashford Borough Council will ensure the Wireless Infrastructure Strategy is considered as part of our approach to Mobile and Wireless infrastructure moving forward.

Council-focussed work update

21.   Members will be familiar with the fact that Ashford Borough Council has implemented the first Local Plan policy in the country which requires developers to install Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) on most new developments in the Borough. Whilst there are exceptions, this policy is proving effective in ensuring that residential and commercial properties in the Borough are future-proofed. Following the approval by Cabinet last year of the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Policy EMP6, the Economic Development Team have continued to provide support to colleagues in Planning with regards to the implementation and conditioning of the policy when possible.

22.   Following guidance from Government aimed at supporting Local Authorities provide leadership and create a strategy, the Economic Development team has established a cross-organisational Ashford Digital Enablers Group of KCC and ABC officers who are 'digital enablers' who can work from within their departments to further the digital connectivity ambitions of the council. Key objectives of the group so far have been the creation of flexible wayleave agreements, supporting the rollout of FTTP to the council's housing stock and monitoring the application of Local Plan policy EMP6.

23.   Ashford's Digital Champions (Portfolio Holder and Deputy Chief Executive) and Digital Infrastructure Coordinator (Economic Development Manager) also support this work, which form part of the duties required of the relevant Member and officers and as such is not considered to require additional resource or time.

Provider updates

24.   Openreach has concluded its main build in Tenterden. Not all premises connected to the Tenterden exchange are covered under this rollout, with premises upgraded being in close proximity to the High Street and town core up to parts of St Michaels. Tenterden's FTTP coverage can be seen in Appendix C.

25.   Virgin Media O2 (VMO2), which is present in the Ashford Urban Area and parts of Bethersden, are upgrading their infrastructure to gigabit speeds but these won't go live until the majority of the UK network is upgraded. The whole network should be upgraded to fibre by 2028, covering 15 million premises across the UK.

26.   Openreach and Netomnia have been progressing their FTTP rollout across the Ashford Urban Area. This includes approx. 35,000 premises, with Netomnia rolling out to an additional 20,000 premises, including businesses. Both providers have been rolling out extensively in the Ashford area as can be seen on the map in Appendix C.

27.   Openreach has also announced that in Biddenden, High Halden, Hamstreet, Sevington, Wye, Chilham, and Charing exchanges are due to be upgraded to FTTP however the only one planned soon to be complete in the next 12 months is Sevington. Please see the maps in Appendix E to see Openreach's planned FTTP rollout for the Ashford Borough.

28.   Lightning Fibre are rolling out FTTP to 4,000 homes and businesses in Tenterden, with the build period due to end by December 2023. This represents the first Kent build for this AltNet provider and will be a base for further expansions across Kent.

29.   Kent-based Trooli have also started to deploy their FTTP network in Charing. No further details are available at present and officers will continue to attempt to engage with the company.

30.   The Borough has also seen 5G being installed across Ashford town centre with three of the four main MNOs reportedly being able to provide 5G coverage (see attached maps in Appendix C). The coverage according to Ofcom's data seems to have widened since last year, covering the majority of the Ashford Urban Area and some of the hinterland as well as Wye and some villages to the north of the borough.

Digital connectivity work going forward

31.   Broadband has been a growing priority for many, with technology evolving constantly and social trends changing at an increased pace. Residents and businesses in the Borough's communities rely on this technology and we need to ensure the future-proofing of infrastructure to enable better digital connectivity. The Coronavirus pandemic further highlighted this need, with vulnerable residents in isolation and working from home continuing to be widely adopted. Digital connectivity remains a top priority for the council in the Corporate Plan 2022-2024.

32. The work undertaken to date has ensured that the Ashford Borough could reach the levels of coverage seen today because without Policy EMP6 it is likely the figures in 2021 would have been lower, meaning the current figures would also be lower. With a Local Plan Review being undertaken in the coming year, officers in the Digital Enablers Group will support this work with the inclusion of digital infrastructure policies to support the council's ambitions for improved coverage.

33. Ashford Borough Council has been one of the first councils to introduce flexible wayleaves, allowing providers to agree the rollout of FTTP to our housing stock under one wayleave document. This has led to efficiency within the council with much less officer time needed to review legal documentation and agreements. As the council has now signed two flexible wayleaves, officers in the Digital Enablers Group will support the rollout to the council's housing stock over the coming year.

34. Whilst there are positive signs with increased levels of investment being seen in the borough, there remains a higher than average proportion of premises below the Universal Service Obligation (USO; i.e., having poor broadband below 10Mbit/s download speed and 2Mbit/s upload). There has been a decline from 0.6% in January 2022 to 0.4% in 2023, however this is the highest level in Kent and slightly above the 0.3% UK average. See Appendix A for a table of this data. Focus for improvements will therefore continue to be needed in the final 10% of hard-to-reach premises in rural areas. The increased investment now being seen in the urban areas of the Borough provides a starting point from which network expansion into rural areas can start. The Government's Phase 2 Gigabit Programme and subsequent funding for KCC to deliver improved broadband to those commercially unviable premises in rural parts of the county presents a key opportunity to support this. Officers will continue to liaise with KCC and BDUK to ensure the Ashford premises identified as being in scope for Project Gigabit are delivered within this programme.

35. During the procurement phase of Project Gigabit, the Government's Gigabit Voucher scheme (UKGV) has been paused for Kent. As soon as the UKGV is available to Kent again, officers will continue to promote these and related community projects as alternative support for rural connectivity improvements.

36. Mobile coverage in parts of the Borough is known to be an issue, with approximately 1% of premises not being able to access 4G indoors and some premises having issues with 2G and 3G. Mobile coverage is part of the essential digital infrastructure needed by residents and businesses especially following the Covid-19 pandemic. The Economic Development team will increase engagement with mobile network operators to support investment in the borough in appropriate locations. The siting of mobile masts can be a controversial issue due to them needing to be located in specific areas to maximise coverage, but also needing to be sensitive to the environment and location in deciding where they are best sited. Taking forward improved communication with mobile operators will help to find the best locations for new infrastructure.

37. To date the Economic Development team, together with colleagues across the council, have managed to attract investment from providers, create a

policy which will future proof developments and continued to promote ways for broadband improvements to take place. The work is undertaken across a number of teams but coordinated by the Economic Development Manager, with support from the Head of Economic Development and the Assistant Economic Development Officer. The Economic Development Manager normally dedicates approximately 20% of their time to this activity, and the work undertaken over the past year has included:

i. Working with Planning colleagues on implementing Policy EMP6 as conditions for applications
ii. Light touch engagement with providers known to be building or have plans to build in the Borough
iii. Engaging and coordinating the Openreach and Netomnia rollout for Ashford town centre, particularly working with the providers and colleagues in Housing on deploying FTTP to ABC's housing stock
iv. Continue working with the cross-departmental Ashford Digital Enablers Group to barrier-bust internally

38. Broadband is a key priority in the Corporate Plan and the work being undertaken so far by all parties is delivering much-needed improvements. Officers at ABC recommend that this work should continue in the following year:

i. Continue the cross-departmental officers group to ensure the council has clear and pro-active processes across departments that allow providers to engage and invest easily and with more confidence
ii. Continue to work with broadband providers to support improved connections and increase investment
iii. Continue the coordination of the Ashford urban area FTTP rollout and ensure other planned rollouts are continuing at pace
iv. Continue to support the rollout of FTTP to the council's housing stock, particularly in Ashford and Tenterden
v. Proactively engage with Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) and Mobile UK to seek improved mobile connectivity in the borough
vi. Support the Local Plan Review with evidence and the development of policies relating to digital infrastructure improvements needed during the lifetime of the new Local Plan
vii. Support KCC in their involvement in the Government's Phase 2 Gigabit Programme and the delivery of this significant government investment in future years and to seek maximum coverage within the Ashford Borough through this investment
viii. Support the promotion of UK Gigabit Vouchers (UKGV) and related community projects to deliver digital infrastructure improvements in rural areas.

Risk Assessment

39. The main key risks currently identified are:
a. Lower levels of access to broadband and mobile networks will impact on the economic aspirations for the Borough to target more knowledge based businesses and employees.

b. Lower levels of access will impact residents' employment opportunities where employers are increasingly likely to require them to work from home, particularly following the pandemic.

c. Lower levels of access will impact students within the area with their increasing need to access online education and training resources.

d. Lower access impacts resident's levels of social inclusion and isolation from services, and have the potential to increase inequality.

e. The Council's, residents and businesses digital transformation plans will be impacted by the levels of broadband and mobile access throughout the Borough.

Options Considered

40. In considering the options for Ashford Borough Council to act, the principle objective has been to maximise the opportunities for residents and businesses within the Borough to access affordable ultrafast broadband and mobile telecommunications.

41. The chosen option has been to dedicate officer time, where possible, to attract investment, work with partner organisations and support improved broadband rollout across the Borough. The scope and prioritisation of this work stream is widening to include mobile coverage and future technologies as well.

Next Steps in the Process

42. If approved by Members, officers will continue to work on the key actions in section 38 to deliver Objective TG2 of the Corporate Plan 2022-2024.

43. Officers will provide updates to the Portfolio Holder and key stakeholders on a regular basis and continue to provide a yearly update to Cabinet on progress of Digital Infrastructure improvements.

Conclusions

44. Ashford Borough Council is one of the few local authorities to have dedicated officer time to improving broadband within Kent. Successes such as the implementation of Policy EMP6 (Fibre to the Premises) in Ashford's Local Plan and the agreement of flexible wayleaves in 2022, have placed Ashford as a leading authority on broadband improvements. However, it is clear that more can be done and should be done to improve digital connectivity for residents and businesses in the Borough. The Borough is seeing significant investment coming forward, especially in the form of Openreach and Netomnia providing FTTP for existing premises which will boost Full Fibre and Gigabit-speed broadband significantly to at least 55,000 premises as part of their current rollout. Beyond this commercial investment, the Government's Phase 2 Gigabit Programme and allocated funds to connect Kent's commercially unviable premises presents a great opportunity for the Borough over the coming months and years.

45.   Covid-19 and ongoing working from home trends have highlighted the issues that affect rural communities in the Borough that do not have decent digital connectivity. However rural premises are also in areas that will likely be left until last to be connected due to the commercial nature of FTTP rollouts. It will be important for the next 12 months to ensure the current planned commercial investment is delivered successfully, including through the continued support of the Ashford Digital Enablers Group. However the main focus should be to support the Kent & Medway Project Gigabit procurement and facilitate the ongoing private provider rollout, while also promoting UK Gigabit Vouchers for rural community-led rollouts. Finally, the impact seen with the inclusion of Policy EMP6 in the current Local Plan demonstrates the need to review the requirements for the new Local Plan to ensure these facilitate future investment and improvements. Digital Infrastructure activity will also need to be considered in any review of the Council's Corporate Plan 2022-2024.

Portfolio Holder's Views

46.   "This excellent report highlights where the borough is provisioned regarding broadband and what we are currently doing to improve connectivity in both urban and rural settings.

        I would draw colleagues' attention to paragraphs 38 & 39 in particular. These describe the vital work that should be continued in the following year and the risks that inadequate broadband pose"

        Cllr Noel Ovenden, Leader of the Council

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Appendix A: Current Coverage and Situation (Connected Nations Report 2023 Interim)

Local Authority	All Premises	All Matched Premises	SFBB availability (% premises)	UFBB (100Mbit/s) availability (% premises)	UFBB availability (% premises)	Full Fibre availability (% premises)	Gigabit availability (% premises)	% of premises unable to receive 2Mbit/s	% of premises unable to receive 5Mbit/s	% of premises unable to receive 10Mbit/s	% of premises unable to receive 30Mbit/s	% of premises below the USO	% of premises with NGA	% of premises able to receive decent broadband from FWA
ASHFORD	60356	60314	93	67.8	66.1	46.8	65.1	0.3	1.2	2.3	6.9	0.4	98.8	34.9
CANTERBURY	74598	72546	92.9	46.6	46.6	46.6	46.6	0.2	0.5	0.9	4.3	0.2	96.9	14.7
DARTFORD	51041	51035	98.2	77	75.6	42	74.2	0.1	0.2	0.3	1.8	0	99.4	0
DOVER	56680	56646	95	65	65	39.3	65	0.5	0.7	1.2	4.9	0.1	98.7	32.9
FOLKESTONE AND HYTHE	55291	55074	94.5	62	61.8	36.1	61.8	0.7	1.2	2	5.1	0.1	97.8	12.5
GRAVESHAM	46151	46055	97.3	82.9	80	53.4	76.3	0	0.3	0.4	2.5	0.1	98.9	0
MAIDSTONE	81083	80929	94.3	75.7	72.1	42.4	69.2	0.4	0.8	1.3	5.6	0.3	98.3	28.7
MEDWAY	124169	124062	97.7	87.5	85.4	54.2	82.9	0.1	0.4	0.8	2.2	0.1	98.8	2.8
SEVENOAKS	53893	53861	95	66.8	66.7	44.5	66.6	0.2	0.4	0.8	4.9	0.1	99.5	0
SWALE	68874	68671	95	74	72.1	56.7	70.4	0.2	0.6	1.3	4.7	0.1	98.9	29.3
THANET	74326	74155	97.6	64.2	64.2	64.1	64.2	0	0.6	0.9	2.2	0	99.4	24.5
TONBRIDGE AND MALLING	58213	58162	96.3	76.8	75	45.9	73.4	0.1	0.5	1	3.6	0.1	98.8	8.5
TUNBRIDGE WELLS	53931	53899	95.6	75.2	73.3	59.1	70.4	0.1	0.5	1.1	4.3	0.3	99.2	0.1

Appendix A: Current Coverage and Situation (Connected Nations Report 2023 Interim) (Cont'd)

Local Authority	All Premises	All Matched Premises	Number of premises with SFBB availability	Number of premises with UFBB (100Mbit/s) availability	Number of premises with UFBB availability	Number of premises with Full Fibre availability	Number of premises with Gigabit availability	Number of premises unable to receive 2Mbit/s	Number of premises unable to receive 5Mbit/s	Number of premises unable to receive 10Mbit/s	Number of premises unable to receive 30Mbit/s	Number of premises below the USO	Number of premises with NGA	Number of premises able to receive decent broadband from FWA
ASHFORD	60356	60314	56159	40931	39872	28271	39277	160	715	1398	4155	234	59611	21065
CANTERBURY	74598	72546	69338	34777	34776	34777	34777	132	377	672	3208	119	72302	10975
DARTFORD	51041	51035	50100	39299	38573	21441	37891	58	104	144	935	12	50737	0
DOVER	56680	56646	53866	36835	36835	22258	36835	276	398	674	2780	67	55927	18635
FOLKESTONE AND HYTHE	55291	55074	52265	34257	34196	19971	34196	363	650	1123	2809	50	54097	6923
GRAVESHAM	46151	46055	44905	38277	36923	24628	35228	21	130	178	1150	48	45652	0
MAIDSTONE	81083	80929	76422	61356	58421	34404	56102	302	622	1056	4507	248	79688	23260
MEDWAY	124169	124062	121361	108693	106030	67317	102898	84	465	946	2701	75	122646	3512
SEVENOAKS	53893	53861	51207	36013	35935	23984	35892	96	216	410	2654	69	53641	0
SWALE	68874	68671	65464	50957	49642	39061	48512	155	431	877	3207	74	68089	20189
THANET	74326	74155	72545	47750	47750	47655	47750	13	456	701	1610	28	73879	18211
TONBRIDGE AND MALLING	58213	58162	56061	44709	43631	26732	42730	73	265	572	2101	80	57515	4920
TUNBRIDGE WELLS	53931	53899	51569	40564	39508	31873	37976	44	265	598	2330	158	53474	78

Appendix B: Notes for Connected Nations Report 2022 Interim figures

ACRONYMS:

SFBB – Superfast Broadband

UFBB – Ultrafast Broadband

USO – Universal Service Obligation

WISP – Wireless Internet Service Provider

FWA – Fixed Wireless Access

NGA – Next Generation Access (incl. Fibre-to-the-Cabinet)

Column Header meanings (the same definition applies to percentage and number figures)

| Current headers	Note
All premises	Count of all premises, in scope, based on Ordnance Survey AddressBase® Premium Epoch 81
All matched premises	Count of all premises matched to operator records with a nonzero recorded coverage. Unmatched premises are unclassified
SFBB availability (% premises)	Percentage of premises that have Superfast Broadband (30Mbit/s or greater) coverage from fixed broadband
UFBB (100Mbit/s) availability (% premises)	Percentage of premises that have Ultrafast Broadband (100Mbit/s or greater) coverage from fixed broadband
UFBB availability (% premises)	Percentage of premises that have Ultrafast Broadband (300Mbit/s or greater) coverage from fixed broadband
Full Fibre availability (% premises)	Percentage of premises that have coverage from a full fibre service from fixed broadband
Gigabit availability (% premises)	Percentage of premises that have Gigabit capable services from fixed broadband
% of premises unable to receive 2Mbit/s	Percentage of premises that do not have access to services above 2Mbit/s from fixed broadband
% of premises unable to receive 5Mbit/s	Percentage of premises that do not have access to services above 5Mbit/s from fixed broadband
% of premises unable to receive 10Mbit/s	Percentage of premises that do not have access to services above 10Mbit/s from fixed broadband
% of premises unable to receive 30Mbit/s	Percentage of premises that do not have access to services above 30Mbit/s from fixed broadband
% of premises below the USO	Percentage of premises that do not have access to download speeds at or above 10Mbit/s and upload speeds at or above 1Mbit/s including non-matched records and zero predicted speeds from fixed broadband, WISPs and Mobile FWA
% of premises with NGA	Percentage of premises with Next Generation Access from fixed broadband
% of premises able to receive decent broadband from FWA	Percentage of premises with Decent Broadband from WISPs

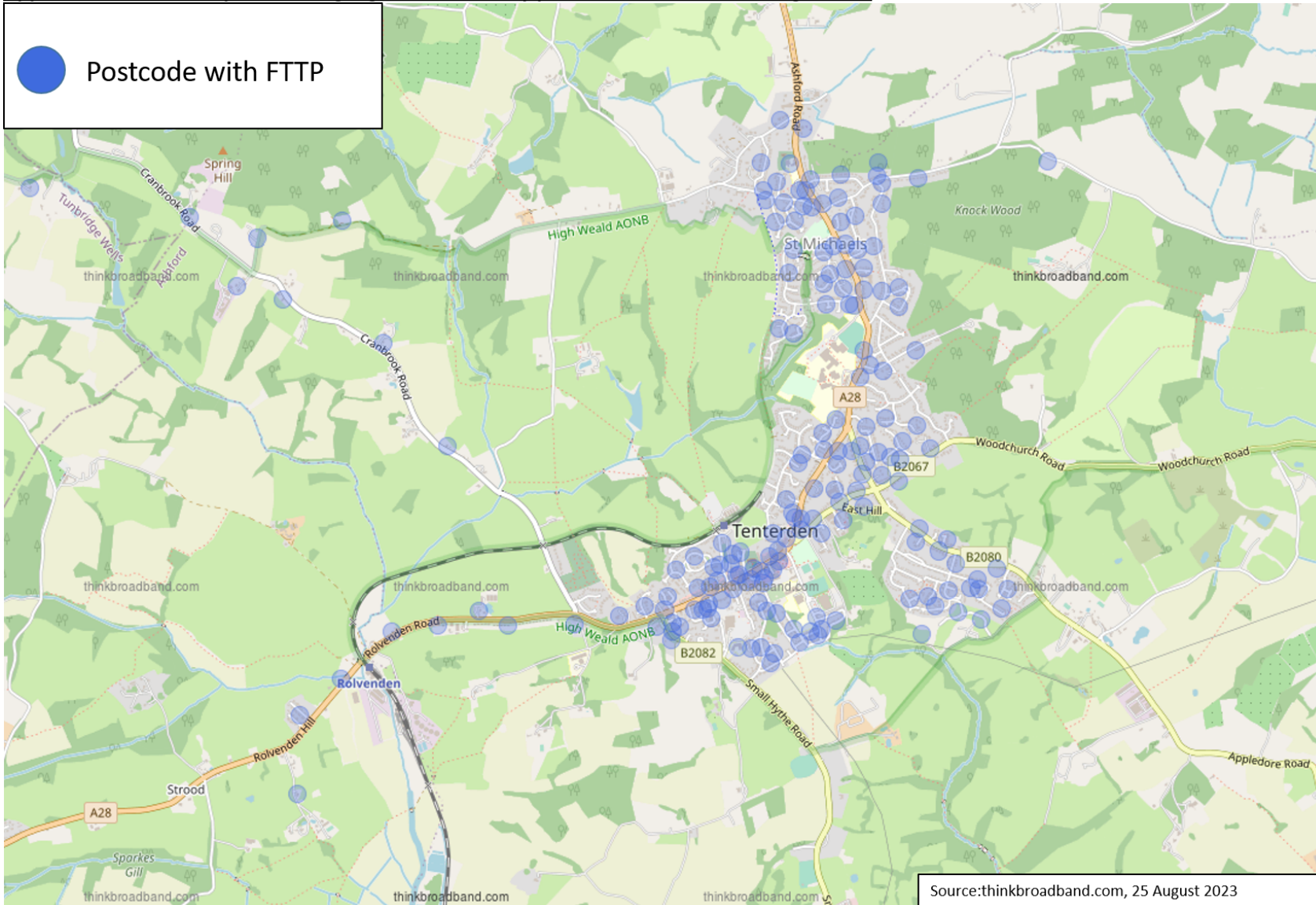**Appendix C: Maps indicating digital connectivity provision across the borough, 2023**
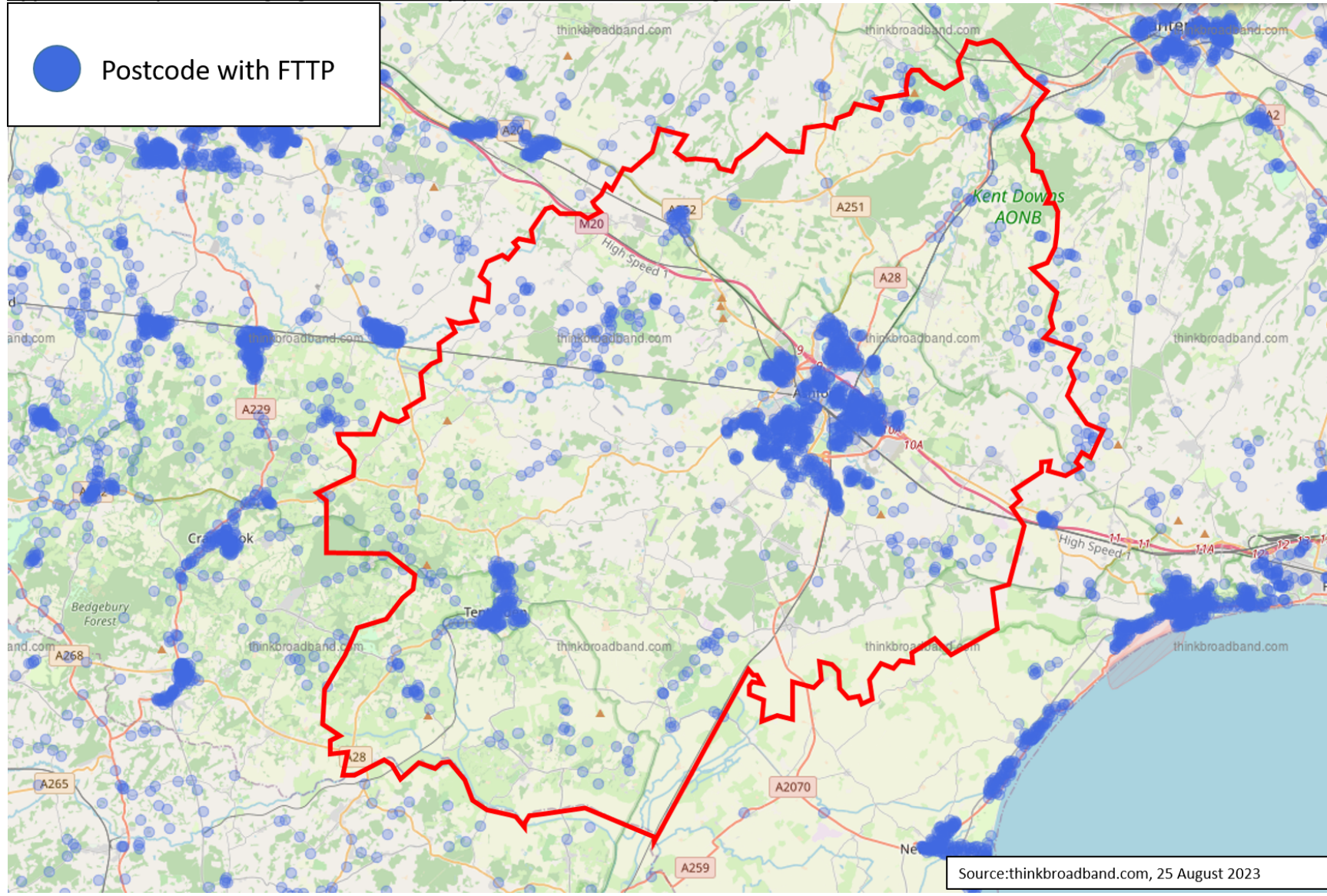
Postcode with FTTP

Appendix C Cont'd: Maps indicating digital connectivity provision across the borough, 2023

Sub 10 Mbps postcode

Sub 2 Mbps postcode

Appendix C Cont'd: Maps indicating digital connectivity provision across the borough, 2023

Postcode with FTTP

Appendix C Cont'd: Maps indicating digital connectivity provision across the borough, 2023


Legend: ● Postcode with FTTP
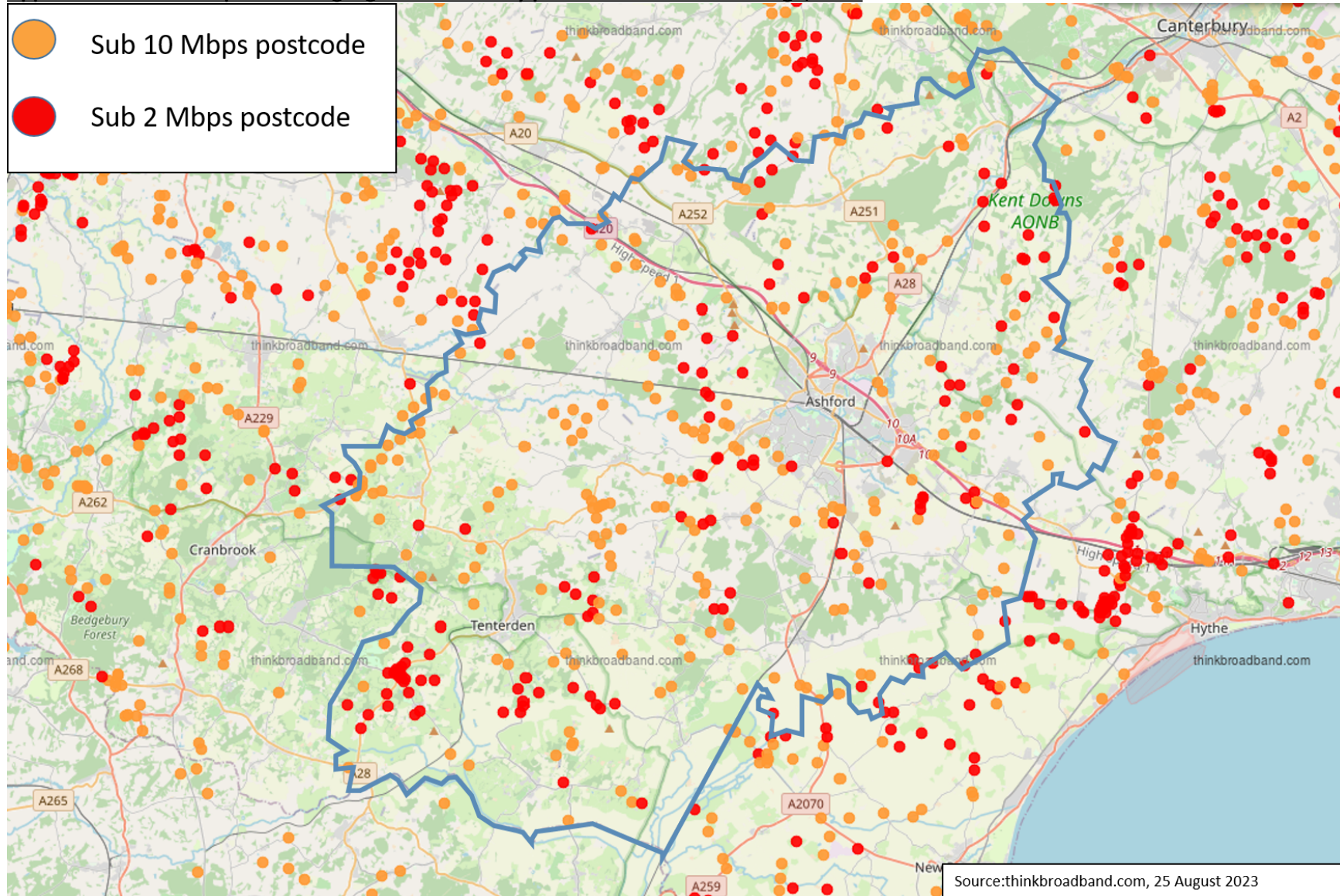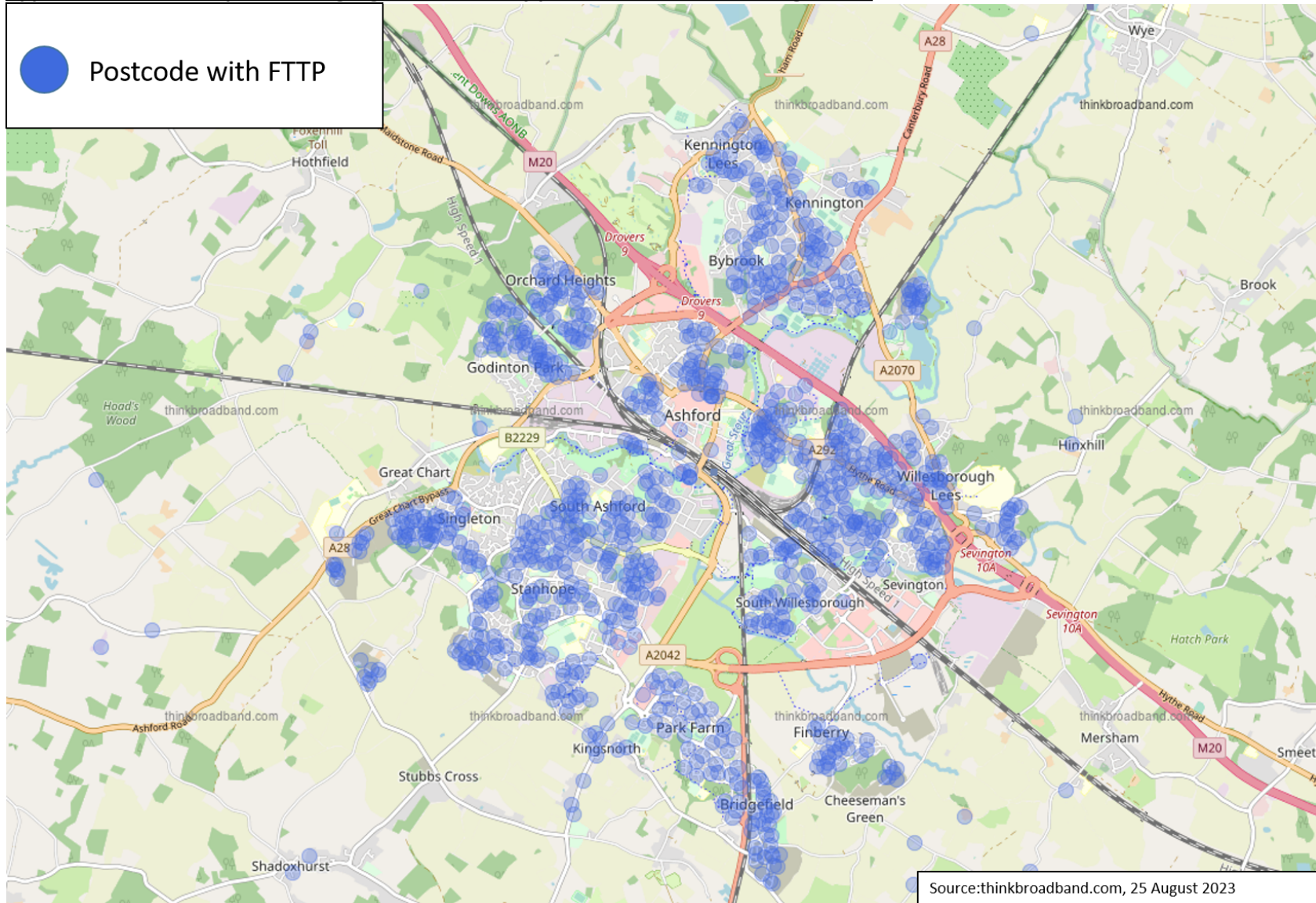
Appendix C Cont'd: Map indicating digital connectivity provision across the borough, 2023
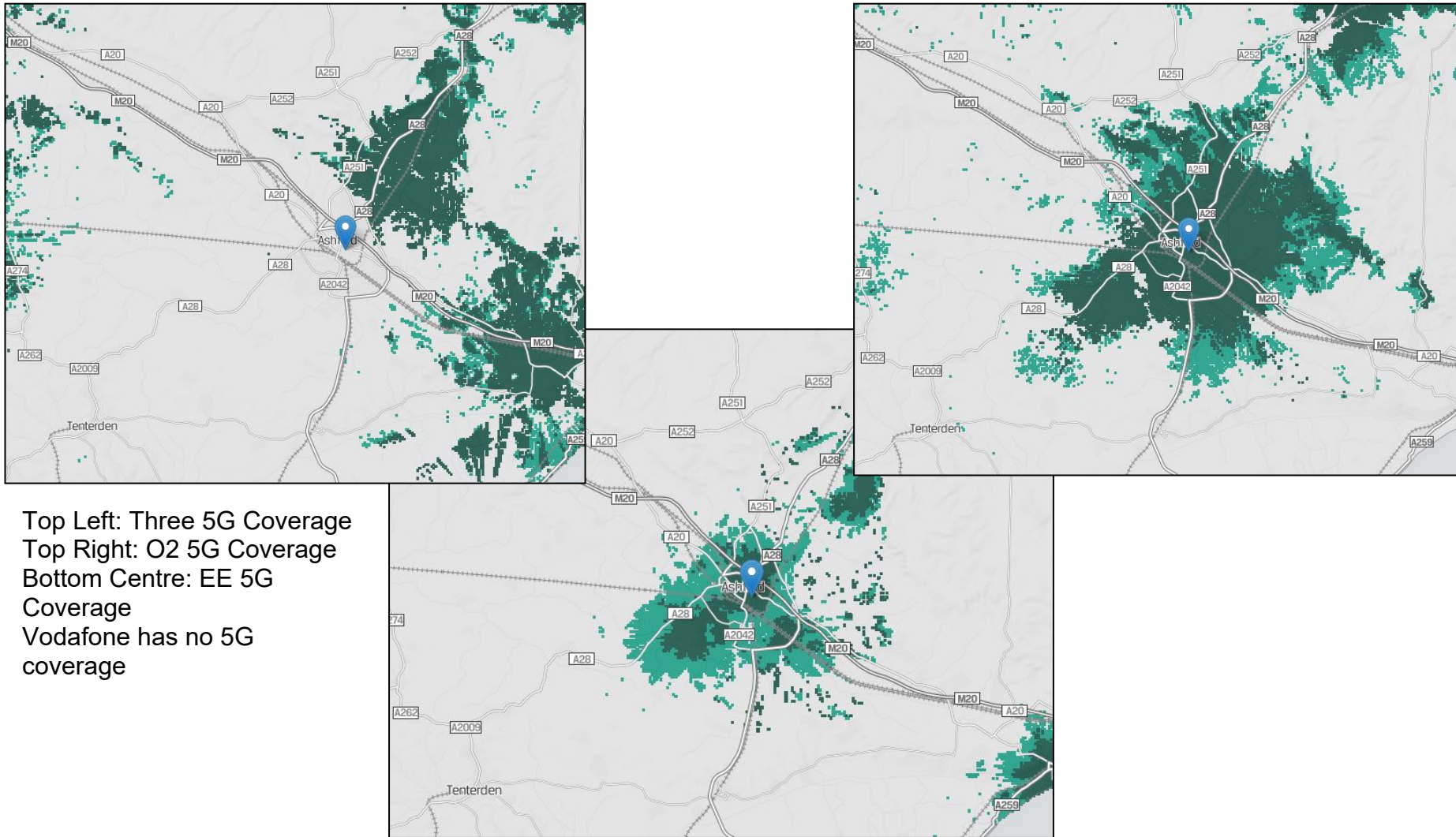
Top Left: Three 5G Coverage
Top Right: O2 5G Coverage
Bottom Centre: EE 5G
Coverage
Vodafone has no 5G
coverage

*Ashford Borough 5G coverage map,* Ofcom Mobile Coverage map as of 25 August 2022

Appendix D: Project Gigabit Kent Public Review outcome map[1]
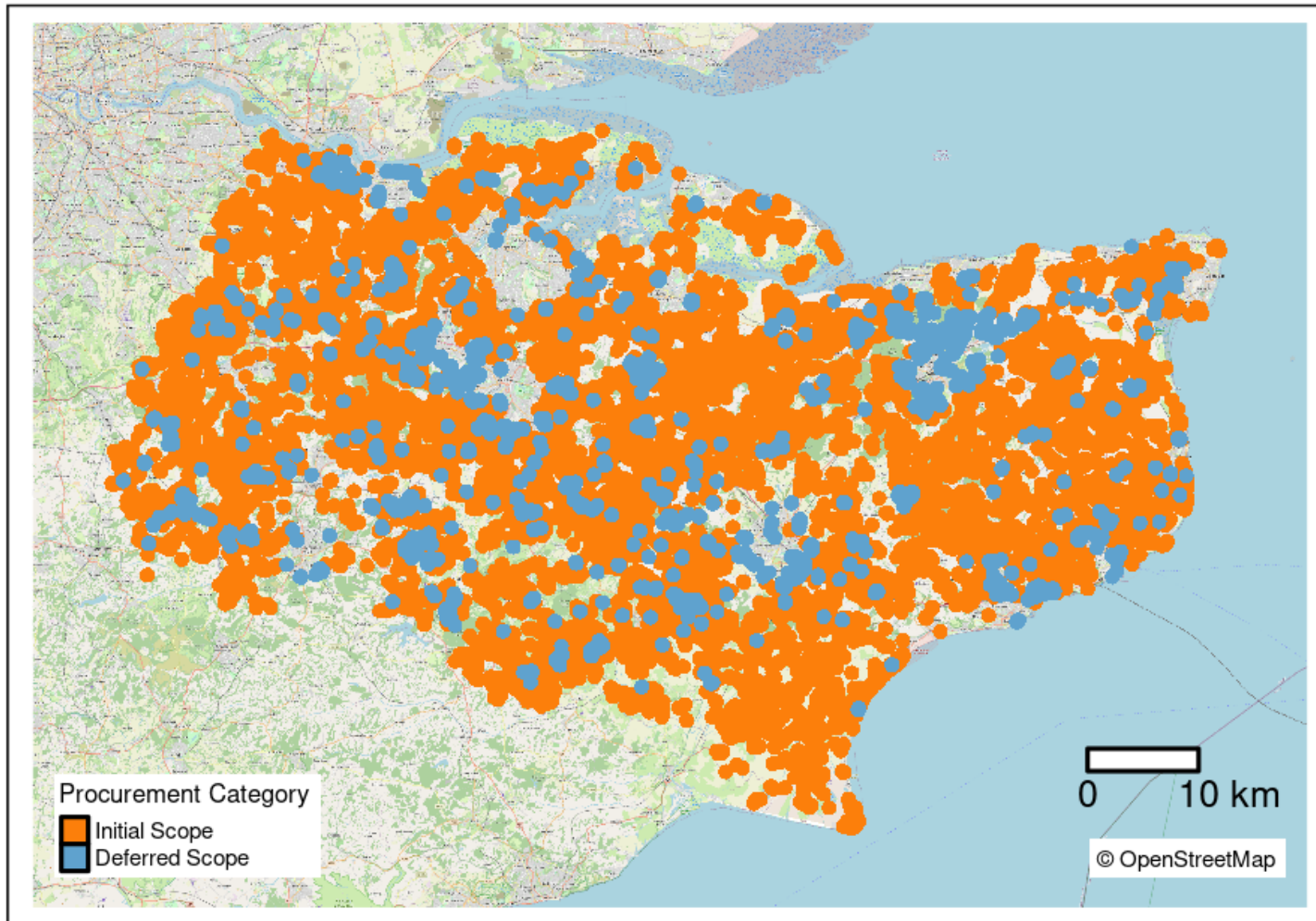
Project Gigabit Kent Public Review outcome postcodes map, gov.uk, Kent Public Review closure notice – 25 August 2023

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[1] 'Initial Scope' (orange) are premises that will be targeted for subsidy. 'Deferred Scope' (blue) are premises that will not be targeted unless they have been determined as eligible as part of BDUK's monitoring process.

Appendix E: Openreach exchanges FTTP upgrade map
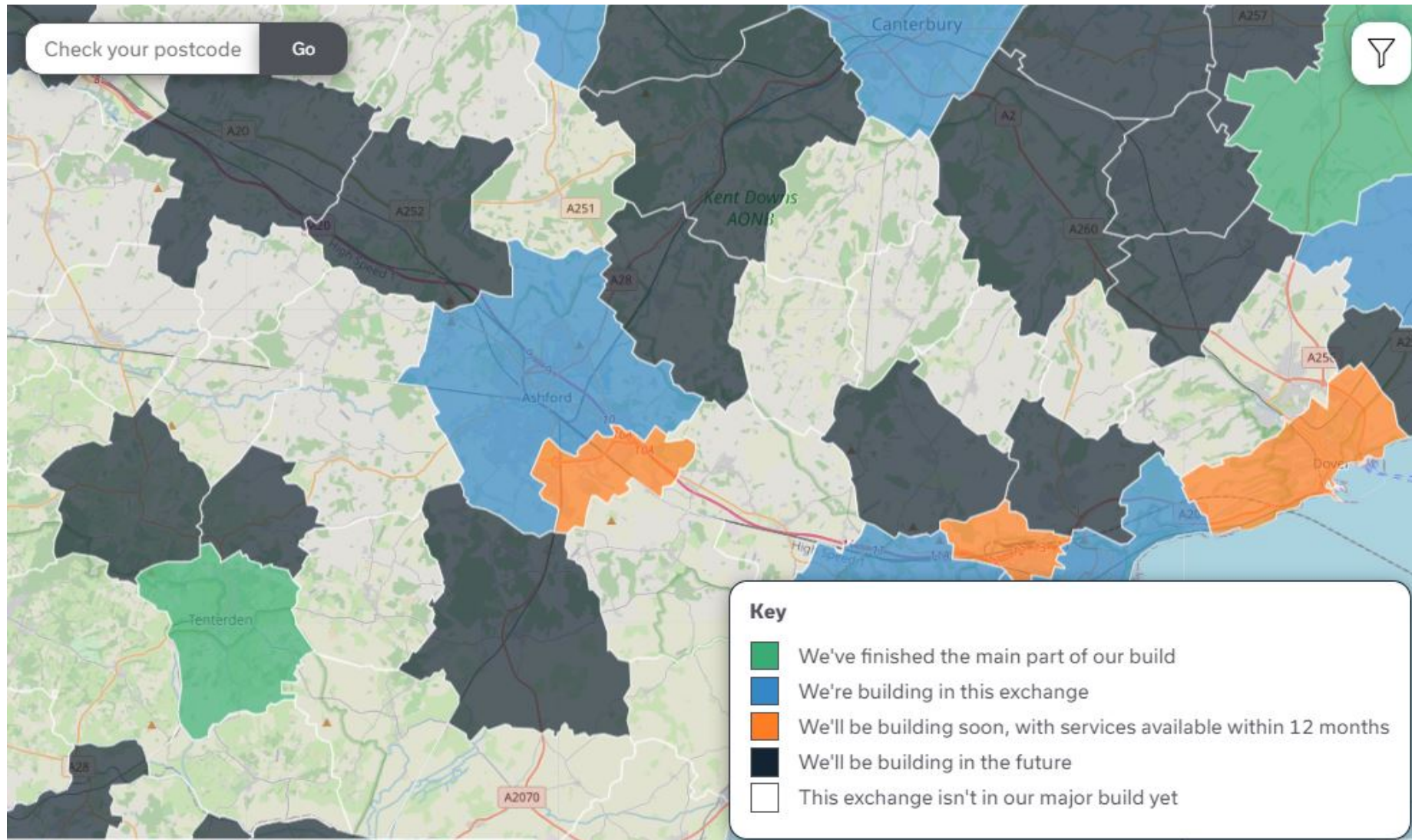
Openreach When and Where rollout plans, **Openreach – 25 August 2023**