

Alncom Success Story

College Valley Hybrid Broadband

Catherine and Stephen Crees live and work with their two children in the beautiful and remote College Valley that lies within the Northumberland National Park, more than 25 miles from Alnwick. Stephen is the manager for College Valley Estates, an upland estate where forestry, farming, conservation and tourism are the main activities. Catherine works part-time for the estate on events in the village hall and on lettings for the four holiday cottages and bunkhouse.

At one end of the valley, fixed broadband was poor with speeds well under 0.5Mbps whilst further along fixed broadband was non-existent and some of the properties had resorted to satellite connections where the signal could be intermittent, affected by poor weather and with limited data packages. The valley also has no mobile signal.

In the summer of 2019, Catherine and Stephen learned of a government scheme to support installation costs for gigabit-capable broadband in rural areas through the **Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme (GBVS)** and were able to approach Alncom to access the funding. Gigabit-capable broadband was installed along the valley through a hybrid system of full fibre and wireless connections.

The scheme went live in November 2019. There were no installation charges, the new monthly costs are more than 100% cheaper and all connections have an unlimited data allowance.



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During the Covid lockdown period Catherine was able to continue to work from home whilst her children could access online lessons and teaching materials.

Catherine said: "The new internet is brilliant! It is very fast and there is no difference if four or five people use it at once. We also don't have mobile phone signal here so now have our phones on 'Wi-fi calling' and the quality of the calls is superb - and it has also saved us a fortune on phone bills. I must say that home schooling during lockdown would have been very difficult without it and it got the seal of approval from my children who can now use the internet to maintain contact with friends and there is no longer any lag for my son when gaming."

Yet again, Alncom prove that we simply **'Get it Done'**

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**GIGABIT BROADBAND
VOUCHER SCHEME**