

Chapter 6

Table of Contents

Casterton.....	270
Barbon and Middleton	276
Killington.....	284
Firbank.....	289
Howgill and Lowgill	291
Marthwaite	292
Sedbergh 1	296
Milthrop and Frostrow	300
Sedbergh 2 - into the town	302
Cautley	304

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Casterton / Barbon and Middleton / Sedbergh / Killington / Firbank / Howgill and Lowgill / Marthwaite / Millthorpe / Frostrow / Cautley

Casterton

Following on from the previous chapters, thanks to the core route reaching Overtown and Leck, there was a route possible for FibreGarDen, but Casterton was not in the plan. A young lad who was 9 years old desperately wanted a good internet connection. He wrote to B4RN but was told there was not enough interest expressed by the villagers (many of whom were already on FTTC), so there was not a project planned unless someone could inspire them. There was no help from the government in those days, and every village had to raise the money to get to every property in the parish. This was a formidable task, but doable if the community worked together. It was impossible without the commitment. Nobody would listen to a 9 year old. William tried his parents, who understood the problem and agreed with him, but they were far too busy to run the project themselves. William did the most sensible thing. He asked Grandma to help.

It was Spring 2016, both Marjorie and Richard were retired, and having been the local vet, Richard knew the local landowners. There was no escape for them. Retired people are the lifeblood of B4RN. They care about their communities, and also are putty in the hands of their grandchildren. So, William's grandma, Marjorie, set to and found out more.

She sent Richard out to visit his old farmer clients to find out if they were interested. He came back with the news that a farm at the top of the parish was on the core route to Dent, and it was going to bypass the village because there was no interest to get B4RN. Time was of the essence if William's dream was to come true. He asked his parents if they would host a meeting at his house to discuss with the landowners how to proceed. At that meeting a decision was made to invite B4RN to give a presentation to a gathering of the village at Casterton Golf Club. Over seventy folk attended and from those numbers a committee was formed on 23rd May 2016. Marjorie says, 'Every committee member became a valued and committed member, working together through varied skill levels, to drive the project forward. No one ever missed a meeting, There was 100% commitment, and without all of them I doubt whether we would have succeeded. After the routes were mapped by Richard and Dave Ryall of B4RN, Duncan Hamlett worked tirelessly with the contractor to roll out the connections throughout the village. Richard and I salute each and every one of them, and all the volunteers too'.



Map of the area covered in this chapter.



Richard and Marjorie get their MBE B4RN spade awards.



Chris Dodd, Ron Bulman, William Mawdsley, Fred Dodd, Gary and James Mawdsley.



Trenching for connection to centre of Casterton village.



Steve Wilman digging through rocky terrain.



William levelling the bottom of the trench.

She found a stalwart in Michael Bryant, who agreed to help her with a newsletter and to be the editor. They also created their own website. Most of the photos in this story came from the newsletter posts, which kept the community informed, the majority of whom got on board. They opened a bank account, organised a fundraiser at Casterton Grange, received donations, ran a raffle and raised £1,000 to help with flyers, posters and basic equipment for taking the ducting to properties. A new branch on the B4RN tree was growing.

When they posted for volunteers Marjorie ‘shook the sieve’. They all wanted to help, but when called up were on holiday, had visitors, had arranged something else or were poorly. She just shook the sieve again until she had enough. She ended up with about 30 regulars, including William and his family, and they met up on a Saturday and dug the house duct from the boundary where the core duct was, into every single property who requested it. They found a contractor, who B4RN would pay at £1.50 a metre to put the core in.

An excerpt from the great newsletter, sent out regularly by Michael Bryant and written by Marjorie: ‘A spell of fine weather was forecast for this last week, making it possible for Steve Wilman to dig a trench, from the chamber serving the group of properties at Chapelgarth, to the boundary wall of one of the converted farm buildings on his land.

‘How times have changed. Owned by the Wilman family for several generations, Chapel House Farm, once one of the largest dairy farms in the area and, even further back in time, the watering and stabling facility for the Royal Hotel in Kirkby Lonsdale, is now a mixed beef and sheep farm and its original stone buildings have been converted into lovely contemporary houses with all modern facilities. One could say a fusion of the traditional with the best of the new technology! The building of this final spur will enable three properties to take B4RN hyperfast



Rosie Jones, Cath and Steve Wilman and Richard Murray.



Richard Murray and Chris Benson meet under a wall.



Alkathene used for extra protection.



Rocks replaced carefully on top of the sod.

broadband now or in the future'.

The route was over rocky ground and could not be mole ploughed but had to be carefully trenched. After two days digging by Steve Wilman, the trench was ready to have the ducting placed within it, done carefully to ensure that it was protected from compression by heavy boulders and rocks that might be present in the backfill. The ground was so uneven that the bottom of the trench had to be cleared of rubble before the ducting was placed there. The duct was then covered with soft turf to protect it from any heavy stones which might be in the earth when it was back filled. Rosie Jones, Cath and Steve Wilman and Richard Murray placed turf on top of the ducting. Stones were carefully replaced, by hand, to reduce the risk of damage to the ducting.

The boundary wall was eventually reached and now the challenge for Richard Murray and Chris Benson was to mine under the wall. Chris Benson successfully found the way through and a blue protective sheath was fed through to provide a safe route for the ducting. Marjorie watched every bit of the dig, both to take photos for the newsletter and to keep an eye on the work. Every property had a duct left close to their boundary by the contractor, and if the owner wanted to take the B4RN service volunteers met every week to dig it in.

Frank Brown came over to assist with house installations. Marjorie says, 'Frank is a gem of a guy, spending hours passing on his knowledge to our



Frank coming to do house installations with a boot full of tools.



William Mawdsley scanning the garden at Ghyll Cottage with a CAT.



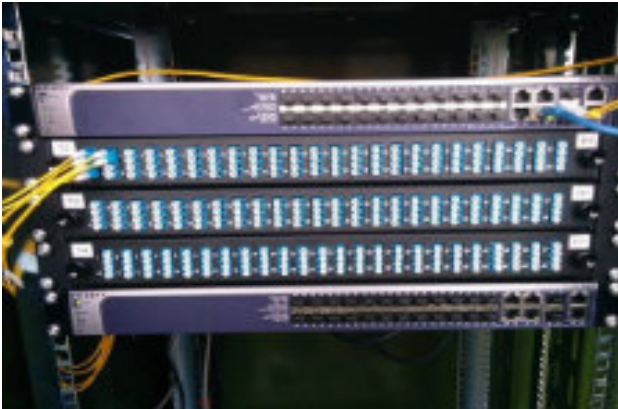
Chris Fawcett duct wrangling.



Multiple ducts in the mole plough.



Martin Coombes and Laura Mawdsley threading four 7mm ducts down a 32mm pipe.



And the lights come on.



William Mawdsley with his photo picture.

team. So very generous in time and spirit - thanks Frank.'

Duncan Hamlett did all his side of the village and by the time the fibre came, they were all ready to go live. Marjorie and Richard, despite being the major activists, were the last to be made live, as Marjorie insisted that nobody should plug her connection in at the cabinet until the rest of the community was done.

Tom Rigg from B4RN was able to tell us, 'I have just connected the Casterton cabinet to the core network. It is now live and ready to provide service to customers.' William plugged the very first connection in at the cabinet on 1st Oct 2016. It was his own, swiftly followed by several others. He was presented with a photo picture signed by all the B4RN staff as a thank you once Casterton was complete. A fitting tribute to a boy with Grit. He and his family had spent all their spare time for 16 months digging and trenching their neighbours and left gran to get on with the organising.

Marjorie talked to her friends in the next village, Barbon. They soon took up the baton. Barbon owes a lot of its success to Richard, Marjorie and Duncan in Casterton and Frank and Will from nearby villages.

An article at the time in the Westmorland Gazette read:

“FAST speed broadband has reached one of the most remote destinations in the north of England due to the determination of local volunteers.

The group Broadband for the Rural North (B4RN) raised £91,150 locally to bring the fibre optic network to Bullpot - headquarters of the Red Rose Pothole and Caving Club - within the parish of Casterton. They also received a £9,950 loan from the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority at a special event to celebrate the arrival of broadband along with an £8,000 grant from the Rural Sustainable Fund to allow the pothole and caving club to build a library.

Local contractor Tony Swidenbank laid duct from Barbondale to Bullpot, and two other properties beyond, while volunteers connected fibre into the new caving club library. More than 45 volunteers in Casterton helped build the network locally and place fibre into peoples' homes.

Permission for laying duct was given by Natural England across Barbon Low Fell and by Aygill which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The caving club now has a robust telecommunications system to contact emergency services in case of accidents.

Previously isolated homes now have modern telecommunications and broadband and rural businesses have the technology enabling them to expand. Gary Mawdsley, who runs Casterton-based Anzen Data, a technology business associated with databases and security of data, was on BT fibre before B4RN arrived. ‘The analogy I draw is that BT is the horse and cart and B4RN is the Mercedes Saloon. It is that marked’, said Mr Mawdsley, whose business has the backing of the world’s largest data company, Oracle, based in the USA. ‘B4RN gives us the capability of almost being in Phoenix next to the machinery we are using whereas on the BT network we would always feel we were remote because of the fragility of the system.’

In Casterton almost 70 per cent of houses have connected to the B4RN service. All new housing developments in the village will be connected to the service in the future.

Casterton dug over 17 kilometres of trench.



Beyond the Book:

[The Westmorland Gazette story](#)



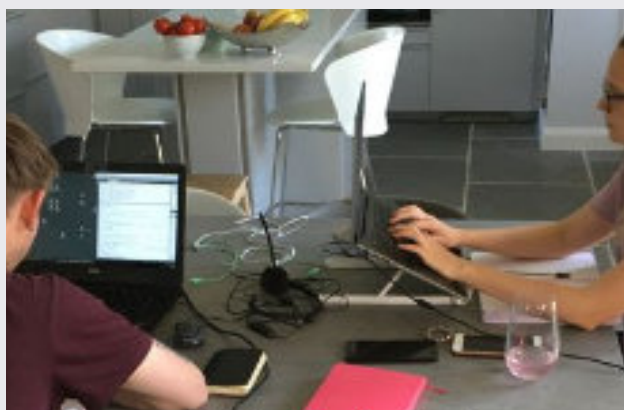
Photos by Westmorland Gazette, taken at Bullpot, headquarters of the Red Rose Pothole and Caving Club .

B4RN Beats The Lockdown

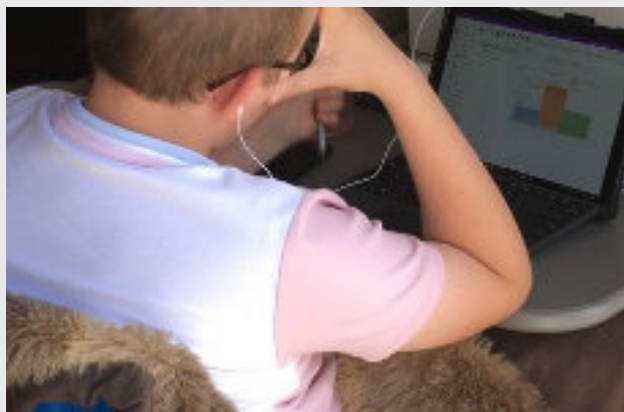
Simon Drakeford describes his family's experience locked down in Casterton, and playing 'musical rooms'!

"Even before the 'Lockdown', I knew that the bandwidth of B4RN was fantastic. It easily handles streaming movies, my 13-year old's online gaming, playing radio through my SONOS system and other bandwidth hungry activities.

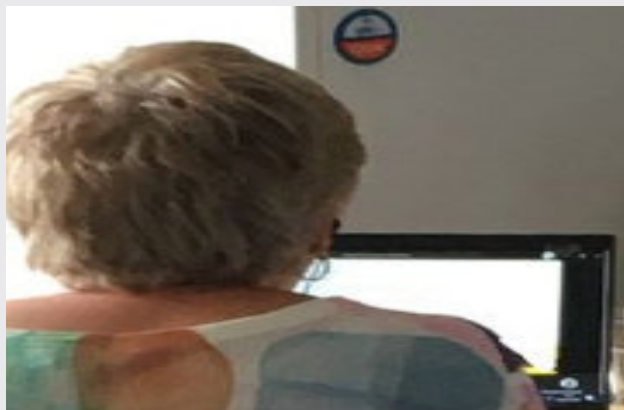
However, even the new circumstances we find ourselves in, with a lot of extra internet activity, have been absorbed by the bandwidth with no noticeable slowing down.



Becky Drakeford and boyfriend occupy the dining room.



Matthew Drakeford working in the 'snug'.



Gillian Drakeford working from home in her son's bedroom.

During lockdown, not only have we had to ensure that our son was able to access his remote school lessons, that Gillian was able to work remotely online attending numerous video conferences, and my more moderate requirements could be met, we also had our daughter and her boyfriend locked down with us. Both were fortunately able to work remotely but also needed to join online group chats and conferences.

At certain times in the day, four people needed to work remotely at the same time without any concern that the line would drop.

Just as importantly, because the mobile phone signal is totally unreliable, we rely heavily on the Vonage landline for non-mobile phone calls. So far, we have experienced no problems with the much increased demands.

Perhaps inevitably, we participate in a weekly family quiz using 'House Party'. It is clear that within my wider family we have the best internet connection. So far, we haven't yet dropped out of the family's get together, whereas almost all of our external family have had access problems at some point during the evening. My brother who lives in a remote village in Somerset is constantly struggling to use the video function, reinforcing how lucky we are to have such a literally world class service right here in South Lakeland.

Simon Drakeford



Visitors at the showtell day watching a fibre blow at Casterton.

Marjorie also talked to friends far and wide, and 9 years later another big B4RN project came about from those conversations, Kirkwhelpington in Northumberland! From tiny acorns...

The Casterton project hosted a visit from other communities at one of the B4RN showtell days. Visitors from far and wide came to these events and learned how to plan networks, blow fibre and splice the joins.

Barbon and Middleton

This was the next parish after Casterton, and most people there had not been interested a few years ago when they first heard about the B4RN project, as BT were doing FTTC (Fibre To The Cabinet) in the village, but once they saw what Casterton were doing, they started talking about it. The FTTC meant that many outlying farms and homes still had a very poor connection because their phone lines were too long, though the ones near the BT cabinet in the village had a better one, but nothing like a real fibre connection.

At first it was just a few chaps having coffee at the Churchmouse at Barbon, but they soon formed a tribe.

Two diverse but linked communities in the Lune Valley. Middleton is very dispersed with very poor broadband speeds from BT (2 Mbps down to 0 Mbps); Barbon had BT FTTC from Autumn 2015, but some residents wanted 'future proof' connections, plus because it came through old phone lines, many found they still had poor broadband. David Stamp kept everyone informed with newsletters and a website and kept records, which we are using in this story.

The project's first meeting was at the Churchmouse on March 11, 2016, and a steering group was formed.



The first meeting in the Churchmouse.

The public launch meeting was held at Barbon Village Hall April 27, 2016 (80 attendees); £130,000 was the estimated project cost. To start the project they also all chipped a bit of money into community fund. After they had the green light they had a few fundraisers for the kit they needed, and the main volunteers did all the house installations. The Fund Raising Social September 24, 2016 raised nearly £7,000 for tools and supplies. A Yorkshire Dales Social Development Fund loan of £9,900 was received in January 2017 for the Barbon + Middleton cabinet.



Duncan and Raymond got their JFDI spades.



True North filming the fusing process.

John Barnes had bought a mole plough, Jim Huddleston had a digger, and he and Will Dehany did a lot round the village with it, and the sight of them stimulated more interest and investment. By November they had raised the money in investments and dug to their hub at the village hall and to the Churchmouse. True North did a television project and came to film the B4RN crew blowing the first fibre to the houses. The first filming of B4RN fibre blowing + house installation (Churchmouse) for 'The Yorkshire Dales & The Lakes' More 4 series in November 2016, was broadcast in 2017.

David, one of the original activists, got his JFDI spade outside the Churchmouse. Duncan and Raymond got their JFDI spades too, pictured at the village hall in November 2016 where the main B4RN hub was situated. Barbon and Middleton chamber and Cabinet (switch) had been installed at the Village Hall June/July 2016 - it was dug in by John Barnes and Jim Huddleston.



John Barnes and Jim Huddleston installing the Barbon chamber and cabinet.

The chamber where the filming was taking place was the first one dug in Barbon, outside the Churchmouse. When they were digging it, they struck metal where none was expected. It turned out that it was the original lead water pipe that the vicar and parishioners had dug in to bring water to the village from the fells in the 1870s, many years ago. What a coincidence that Barbon was going to dig back up to the fell to help the FibreGarDen project, one community helping another one.



David Stamp with his JFDI spade.



The first chamber where they found the old water pipe.



The Magnificent Barbon 7, Jim Huddleston, Mike Openshaw, John Barnes (B4RNY), Peter Anstiss, Will Dehany, Ian Hale, Ian Dodsworth.



The 'Middleton 4'. Steve Rogers, Martin McHugh, Garry Lancaster, Will Dehany.



The handover between the two villages.



Will blowing fibre.



Will fusing the house fibre.

A major helper at this time was Will Dehany from Middleton. He had fixed up a wireless mobile solution to his property, and several locals had asked if it would work for them. Will tried it at their homes, but sadly it did not. Will lived quite high up and could see the mobile mast, while they could not. Will had been told that when Barbon telephone exchange was upgraded that Middleton would benefit, too, but time proved that would not be the case. He ended up deciding to join the B4RN tribe, and without him, many of the surrounding villages would still be waiting for Openreach. By helping Casterton, it got the fibre closer to his community, and he had learned the 'ropes', so he put it all into practice in Barbon.

The 'Middleton 4' and Barbon Volunteers started installing main B4RN fibre duct with their JCB mini-digger. They had completed all the core work before village installs started. Mike Kingsbury kept all the records, and Merlin Hibbs did a lot of the house installs. Merlin also did a lot to help the village hall connection and helped users get sorted with their hyperfast connection. He helped with wifi issues and VoIP (Voice over Internet, i.e. phone calls) choices.

Will worked tirelessly with all the digging teams and then worked with Frank to get fibre into the ducts and connect people. At first he resisted fusing as it was too fiddly but soon realised he could get more people connected if he JFDI himself. He was a quick learner and was soon doing installations himself, from digging through the gardens, connecting



Sub ducted under a wall.



James Will and Frank blowing core fibre.



James Taylor, Frank Brown, Sam Robson at blockage, blowing core fibre.



Pete Daniels prepares a protective alkathene pipe (helped by the indefatigable Raymond Gott).



The garden dig to Michael Robert's house.

house kits, and blowing fibre, and fusing the house and the bullet. He often blew fibre himself for short blows, but called on Frank if there was a lot or if it needed Frank's big compressor. He ended up working for B4RN full time for a few years but has reverted back to contracting now as he can get more people connected rather than doing paperwork. Will was, and is a true JFDI volunteer, but now with professional skills which he passes on to others.

Tony Middleton and Tony Swidenbank were contractors for some of the digs, but most were done by locals. The field duct install started at same time - John Barnes (aka 'B4RNY') for mole ploughing and Jim with mini digger. Tony Swidenbank did the moles under lanes and walls, and the B4RN civils team did the road crossings.

David adds: "This joint 'two villages' B4RN project brought both sets of villagers closer together with a common aim. Something that villagers have always done through time - JFDI ."



Roger and Stephen digging the 80 metre spur to Ullathorns.



Graham from TS Trenching with the DitchWitch.



Liam from TS Trenching with the mole to go under walls and lanes.



Will with the cobra getting through a duct.



A very neat dig to a chamber and the reinstatement.



A dig round the bog.



Barbon road crossings with the civils team.



Road crossing ready to join the core dig with subduct.



Frank Brown and Bruce blowing core fibre.



Tony Middleton moleing.



Tony Swidenbank and Graham.



Rob Staveley, one of the B4RN core team, fusing a bullet.

From David:

‘In just over two years our group of volunteers and the community spirit in both villages had dug and installed over 32 km (20 miles) of B4RN fibre optic duct from Casterton to Middleton with many volunteers employed in different ways. They planned for and installed duct to nearly all 219 property boundaries in both villages (a few buildings are ‘future conversions’ so not being fibre connected yet). Both villages raised £150,000+ by residents investing in B4RN

In June 2018 we were approaching project completion for nearly all 219 properties: 74% (161) ‘in service / connected / awaiting final splicing’; remainder to/near boundary

813 days From when they started 11 March 2016 until 2 June 2018 - 2 Years and 3 Months “

Barbon and Middleton dug over 40 kilometres of trenches.

Will and his cohorts then took the duct further up the valley to Sedbergh and Firbank, with Frank and Bruce bringing the blowing kit when needed.

By this time Will had learnt to fuse, as he had got the bug - seeing the customer light up in the cabinet. He had also learned how to patch them in.

Will, like Bruce, had become a ‘one stop shop’ and could do every single part of installation, from digging to the final patching. He is a JFDI hero.

Like Bruce and Frank, Will appears many times throughout this book, including the next story from Merlin Hibbs.

Merlin Hibbs, one of the Activists, tells the Barbon story:

Coming from an engineering and computing background, I was always interested in anything that improved internet connectivity. Being very practical, I would always be happy putting a spade in the ground or drilling a hole through someone's wall, so they could take a fibre optic service with its enormous growth potential for data transfer. So when B4RN was working its way up the Lune Valley, I could not wait to be involved! In fact the early times were very frustrating because I wanted to get on and the plans were not yet in place.

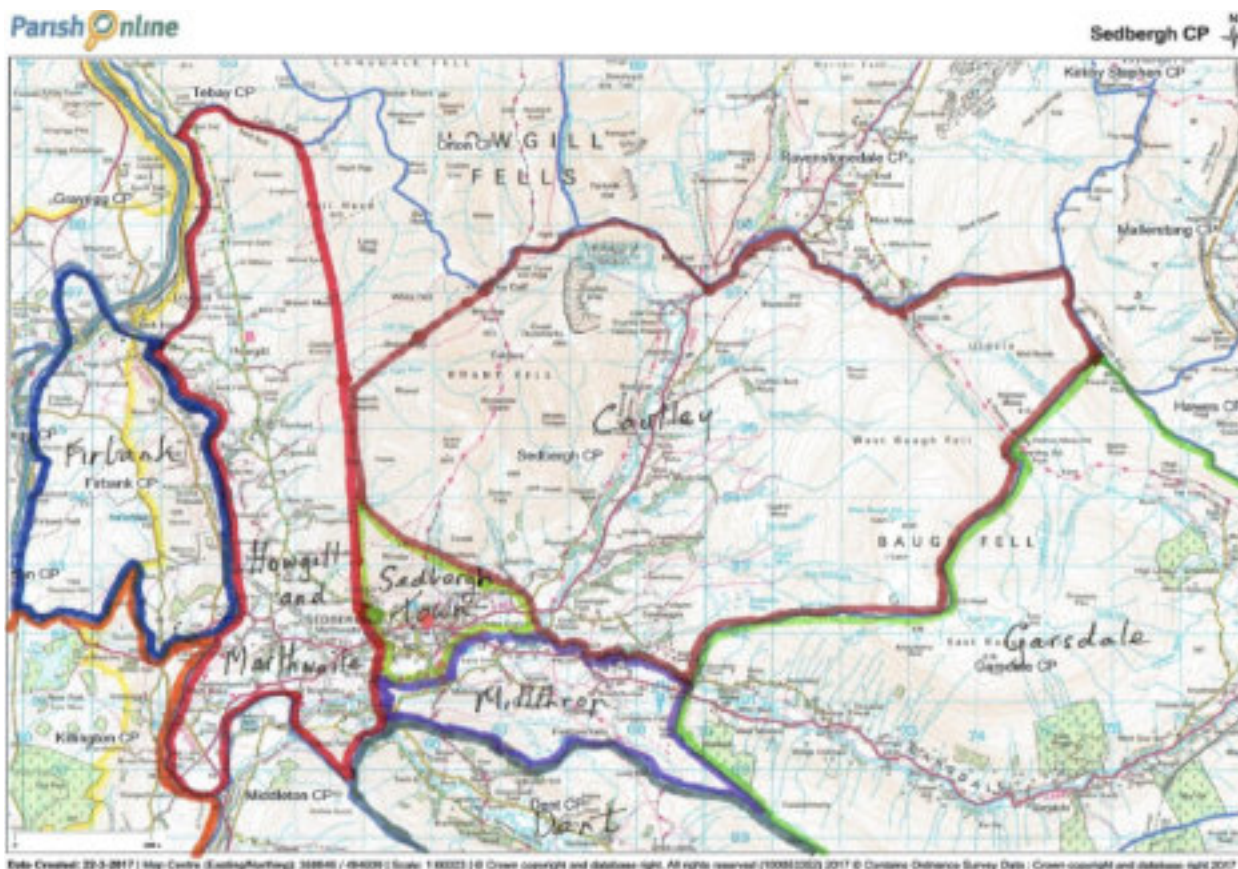
Eventually we did get plans and costings and very quickly organised the share capital to fund B4RN to Barbon. David Stamp led on the publicity and public relations side. My Dad, Helier, was kept busy organising the meetings and writing up the minutes and, although, he was not able to dig, he was always there supporting the work. Mike Openshaw did a great job in sorting out the wayleaves. Mike Kingsbury ran the bank account for all the extras we needed - particularly blue alkathene water pipe. Will Dehany kept us all on track, particularly in planning the work. The main routes were dug and we organised working parties for Saturday mornings to put in chambers, dig up gardens and fit house kits. I do not remember the garden digging as particularly exciting but when there were two of us, we just got on with it and got it done. I do remember digging with Will Dehany and with Jem Kiernan. I should also mention Peter Anstiss, Ian Dodd, Ian Hall and Kevin Taylor who also supported us in many ways including fund raising.

Will Dehany and I fitted the majority of the house kits in Barbon and then Middleton. When you do a job in any unfamiliar setting you always want to start slowly whilst you understand where you are working but with house kits you cannot do that. Once you have decided where you are mounting the kit, the very next thing you have to do is drill a hole right through the wall of someone else's house - easily the most stressful part of the job. Am I sure that there are no cables or pipes? Am I going to burst through the plaster or render and knock a big chunk off? Is the wall full of loose stone and my hole is going to be blocked as soon as I take the bit out? All very worrying things! It was comforting to know that B4RN did provide insurance cover for its volunteers. Once the hole in the wall was done, the rest of the job was always straight forward.

B4RN has been wonderful for us as a family. We already had the house wired for ethernet (we have a 48 way patch panel) and bringing B4RN into that gave us fantastic connectivity. I never cease to be amazed how quickly large video files (400 MB) for online Church services can be uploaded.

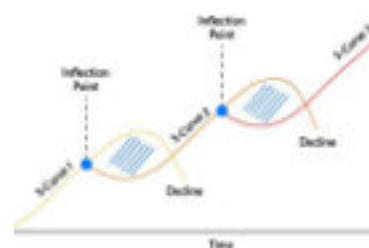
I have also been heavily involved with getting B4RN to the north and west of Kirkby Lonsdale including to St Mary's Church and to the Fairbank Society. It has provided a fantastic service to both of them.

Sedbergh, and the surrounding area of Killington, Firkbank, Marthwaite, Howgill, Lowgill, Cautley, and Mallerstang come next on this branch of the B4RN tree.



Casterton, Barbon and Middleton geographically led north to the Sedbergh parishes. You can see from the map above that they also led to Dent, with a secondary route into Dent from Milthorpe and Garsdale. The branches of the tree were starting to interlock and provide more resilience in the network. It would be easier if the branches grew in straight lines and in order of planned phases in a systematic way, but that was not typical of trees that grow naturally of their own accord.

In the years between 2015 and the present (2025), B4RN was morphing from a JFDI community enterprise into a professional Internet Service Provider (ISP). A bit like climbing a mountain or multiple sigmoid curves, you climb one peak and are faced with another. Digging to Dent was the physical example in the previous chapter, but as a business, we had to be ready to scale again and face a new challenge. At this point in history great changes were happening, new premises, more staff, code powers, new management systems for planning and still the ever-present bureaucracy. No more EIS benefits. Vouchers, then no vouchers. Dig grants to householders, then no dig grants when vouchers stopped. Then even more staff. Even more communities needing our help. Community dig pots started, enabling payback for volunteering, benefitting the community resources (think landscaping, defibrillators, etc.). During this period it is fair to say we had at least three such curves, having climbed multiple ones previously, and the reasons become apparent when reading about the communities and their amazing achievements and their inspiration, which all nourished the tree and made it stronger.





Killington

Killington was part of the Mansergh project, but because it led on to Firbank, it is in this chapter.

There were quite a few businesses and families in Killington that were suffering from very poor internet access and they were brought together to do their own project inspired by what they had seen in Middleton, just across the river, and talking to Will Dehany.



Steph and Stuart Lefrak.

Steph Lefrak and Linda Allen agreed to speak to Sara Smyth from the Daily Mail and help raise awareness of the problems they had. Sara visited on the day the houses were due to come live and Will was there helping Frank to blow the fibre in. The B4RN fusers were there to fuse it, and the whole day was amazing,

Sara saw the job from start to finish, apart from the digging! We did tell her all about that though, and the reason communities had to do it for themselves..



The view from Steph's house.

Article from the Daily Mail by Sara Smyth.
November 2017

Like thousands of families in rural Britain, Steph and Stuart Lefrak have been shelling out £85 a month for a miserably slow broadband connection that gives them only a limited amount of internet usage each month.

When they moved to Drybeck Farm in rural Cumbria last April, they were forced to get this expensive connection - via a satellite dish - because BT said their farm was too remote for normal broadband. No other supplier serviced their area. Their connection was so limited that Steph, who works from home as an IT adviser, was on the verge of losing her job.

Just 100 yards on from Drybeck, the Allen family at Beck House hope the B4RN technicians manage to finish the job today. They just about have a BT



Sara interviewing Steph and Stuart and Will Dehany installing fibre.



Stuart and Steph being interviewed by Sara.



Linda Allen being interviewed by Sara.



Sara looks at Linda's work and products.



A bonny family.

broadband connection. But with snail-like speeds of 1Mgb, (sic) it's negligible.

Sheep farmer Neil, 41, is out in the yard while his wife Linda, 44, works on a laptop by a roaring fire in the kitchen.

She runs a photography business from home and regularly uploads content onto her website.

The Allens pay £80 a month for their BT service and £22 for an EE internet dongle. But putting 20 pictures online can take Linda up to eight hours.

'I often leave it running overnight. But the connection drops out so when I come to check in the morning, it's stalled and I have to start again.

'We do not expect a perfect service but there is no discount for rural people. BT know we do not get anywhere near the advertised speed, yet pay the same as in London. It does not seem fair.'

Steph and Linda both helped galvanise the menfolk to dig. At the time of the interview Will Dehany had gotten a connection to Middleton Church, which was across the valley, and Linda used to drive over to it with her laptop and upload work from there. She also said that the children knew exactly how much data a film used up and self-rationed themselves so the dongle would not run out of data. They really struggled with schoolwork and research. The farm struggled if the kids had used the data or the line was down. Garry, her brother-in-law, dug from Killington to Mansergh, which was their nearest cabinet, and would be part of the route that reached Firbank, which was where the majority of the Killington customers would feed off. The join would take a while, so Steph and Linda pushed to get a temporary connection to the Mansergh cabinet.

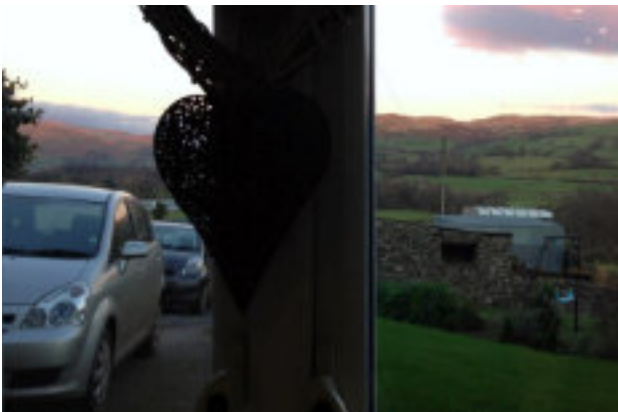
Steph and Stuart had relocated from London to have a new life with their family in a beautiful area. Stuart was a policeman and wanted out from city crime, and



Andy Newbold got his B4RN spade when the fibre reached him.



The family farm.



The view from the farm office.



Frank and Will blowing the house fibres.

Steph could continue her work from home. They had not reckoned on the scarcity of rural broadband, and with the way the world was going, Steph knew they had to Do Something.

Andy Newbold, who ran a business and magazine company (and a small farm) had heard about B4RN a few years earlier when it was just starting up, but it was too far away to dream it could help him. His company had been contacted by B4RN when they started up regarding Health and Safety procedures, and he was impressed. Then he heard it was getting closer and had gone off piste, so to speak, by heading to Hutton Roof and Mansergh, so it was getting closer and becoming a possibility.

He and Ian Dawson, the chair of the Parish Council, approached B4RN and the plan to reach Firbank was drawn up. They both agreed to 'get stuck in'. The whole of Killington could not be fed from Mansergh, so their first quote was quite reasonable and just for duct and fibre etc., but they knew they should share the cost of the Firbank cabinet as most of them would be fed from it, so they got busy getting wayleaves, planning the best routes and raising shares.

They held a village meeting in the village hall. They knocked on every door to let people know what was going on, and got the help of several splendid farmers.

Garry, John, and Peter had moles and diggers, and Matt, Steph, John, Tricia, Andy and Oliver mucked in to help too. They laid about 10,000 metres of duct. Will Dehany 'kept an eye on them' and advised them on different tips and tricks for getting the duct in safely. Unlike all the BT cables lying across fields or in hedge bottoms, they wanted their network done properly.

Their worst problem was the weather, but it helped bond them into a group who 'all got mucky together'. The householders who could not dig looked after them, bringing warm cups of tea to keep



Frank showing how the fibre feeds through the machine.



Frank asking Will if he's got the fibre yet...



All the fibre in the chambers so the fusers get going.



Paul still working to complete the connection.

them going. On working days they had Jacob's Join and partied as well as working. Steph says they were 'lovely days out, meeting all sorts of people and making friends'.

Andy, Ian and Will did most of the house installs, and 'Frank the Blow' was summoned to blow the first few houses who could be fed from Mansergh. The first five came live, and that got everyone higher up the valley motivated to dig further.

Steph, who worked in IT, helped all the older folk convert to VoIP and also helped them set up meshes in their old houses so the wifi was in every room. She also did newsletters and kept everyone updated on progress. Andy and the team dug all the house connections in the village and got the duct through to Firbank.

Steph and Linda got their connections to Mansergh in November 2017, once the bullets were fused, and Sara from the Daily Mail patched them in, with Will showing her what to do at the cabinet.

Andy says he has watched B4RN through a natural progression, from a small JFDI startup into a professional telecoms company and he says B4RN is the greatest. He never has to give it a thought, 'it just works'. He was interviewed by the BBC and there is a link to the video in the blue 'Beyond the book' box, as well as a link to Linda's 'Bonny' website.



James Taylor and Will Dehany sorting out a blockage in a duct.



Fusing Steph's bullet, Paul Parsons and Matt Mercer.



Sara patching the houses at Mansergh cabinet with Will.



Cleaning a patch lead.



Paul nearly finished fusing, very cold night.

Steph says: In today's world, access to reliable broadband internet is more than just a luxury; it's a necessity, especially in a remote area.

Working from home – as an IT consultant and an admin assistant, having rural broadband, has made this easy and reliable. With data being in the cloud, along with phone systems this has been essential to work.

The COVID-19 pandemic fundamentally changed how children experience education and daily life. At the time our children were in Year 1 and Yr 5. With schools closing and social distancing measures in place, the internet became a lifeline, providing them with the ability to continue their studies, engage with peers, and access essential services.

Also during this period my work changed dramatically as people became remote workers quickly, embracing virtual offices and digital communication tools. Having B4RN made this easy. The family became dependent on this and it never failed us. We could all work at the same time.

In an increasingly connected world, remote living has become more feasible and appealing, thanks in large part to the internet and the rise of online shopping. Living in a rural area has been made simple, the ability to shop online has made it easier to access goods and services that would otherwise be difficult to obtain.'



Beyond the book

[Killington BBC interview](#)

[Bonny sheep website](#)



The road sign at Firbank.



Firbank is one of our very rural parishes.



Photo from the *SundayTimes*. Will Dehany, Tanya Hoare, Brian Hoggarth, Edmund Hoare, Elaine Horne and Tim Moore - the Firbank team.



Digging near Moss Foot, looking towards Barbon.

Firbank

Firbank lies to the west of Sedbergh and was mostly a locally led project. Initially the plan was to use the Sedbergh cabinet, but an opportunity to use a more southern route became available. Nevertheless the link to the Sedbergh cabinet gave useful security to the network. (We like at least two feeds into each cabinet for resilience).

The Firbank area itself did not get any vouchers and they self-funded it all, but then vouchers came in and Howgill, Marthwaite and Lowgill came on board and fed into the west end of Sedbergh parish. They worked for two years on their project, with the services going live in 2019.

Ed Key did a lot of the mapping for the area, and he recalls that: ‘Alan Tattershall was the lead volunteer for our parish - i.e. Round the cabinet, route 2 and route 3. Gordon Chivers and Elaine Horne were the other main people (also parish councillors). Tanya and Edmund Hoare hosted a lot of meetings. John Armistead did a lot of digging (local farmer) and Mike Robinson did a lot of digging for shares.’

Ed subsequently was employed by B4RN and is now a senior planner, helping other communities benefit from his ‘hands on’ experience.

There was a lot of hand digging with the volunteers between the church and the Firbank cabinet to join onto the mole plough trench in the fields.

‘Tidy’ Mike Robinson and the volunteers did the digging near Birchfield, using a sub duct in heavily trafficked gateways.

Firbank cabinet now feeds Firbank itself, and other villages and dales in the area. They came live in 2017, and the Killington project was fed back from it once it came live. Its position to the south of



John Armistead digging and Ed labouring.



'Tidy' Mike Robinson and the volunteers digging near Birchfield.



Hand digging with the volunteers between the church and the Firbank cabinet to join onto the mole plough.



'Tidy' Mike Robinson.



Elaine helps John with the mole.

Sedbergh at Firbank was the perfect place for a feed from the Barbon end of the network, and the spider's web was growing. The Killington and Firbank projects were driven by determined individuals, without any help from government.

Then vouchers appeared. Vouchers are definitely a good thing, but have mixed blessings. Because the community does not have to raise as much money, the team spirit is not often as high, and a lot of people expect the job done for them.

More staff were taken on to help the communities and more contractors employed to do the digging. If a community could get vouchers, it was a lot easier to fund but a lot harder to administrate. Extra staff were taken on to cope with the vouchers and the complexity of it all.



Will showing a new employee, James Clapham, how to patch in the new cabinet at Firbank.



Property connection fused in the farm office.



Stef Masztalir.



Michael Jordon.



Getting the duct under the fence from the field dig.

Howgill and Lowgill

Stef Masztalir and Michael Jordon galvanised their communities into action and installed most of their homes where the householders could not do them. Stef says ‘we are so lucky to have got it when we did’. Getting the cabinet into Firbank meant that many other rural areas like theirs could be helped.

Howgill and Lowgill were also part of the Sedbergh area joining to Firbank, and these outlying communities could eventually join the Sedbergh cabinet to give resilience to both.

Stef says: ‘The act of running a community project brought out the best in people. As examples, you know there are many older people here and typically these are not heavy internet users, yet they enrolled to ensure the community had enough interest’.

‘The same was true of investments. The better off bought more than the minimum number of shares, and our impression was that this was in part for community reasons, not just personal financial ones’.

‘Marika and I worked closely with our neighbours to do the final part of the dig where the fibre would cross our joint lands. It was a lovely bonding thing and we turned it into an event: any excuse for drinks. I’m sure we were not the only ones.

‘On a personal level, both Mike and I were new to the



Digging the house ducts through the garden.



Placing the duct in the trench and back-filling.



Martin Stockdale (pictured with Underwinder in the background).



They had lots of meetings.

area when this started. Being involved with B4RN, and having to go door to door, allowed us to meet everyone in the valley, and for them to meet us. And the fact it was on an enterprise that everyone was supportive of, helped.

‘It turned out that the skills that were useful for this were ones that Mike and I already had, gained from our previous professional lives. Mike had worked on route planning for the National Grid, so was perfectly suited to doing the same here. I had worked on data processing (also for the National Grid, amongst others) so collecting and collating information was familiar. It meant that we were both comfortable with our tasks, which resulted in it being more relaxed and enjoyable. And led to a lasting friendship.

For me it was important to have a local champion like Martin Stockdale. He was so enthusiastic and knowledgeable. I did not have to understand every last technical issue, he had already done that. And if he was happy, then I could feel confident that the project was worthwhile, and in selling it to others’.

Mike was pleasantly surprised that landowners were happy for their land to be used for cabling, even though there was no payment.

Marthwaite

Martin Stockdale had been trying for a couple of years to get his community engaged, but the cost was so great for such a rural area, and a few had resigned themselves to the fact that the digital revolution was not for them. He, too, had lost heart that it would ever happen. The Marthwaite project had died.

Marthwaite at the time had an ‘adequate’ service from Openreach, but Martin knew it would not be adequate for long. This was an area with many people who were commuters or very elderly or holiday homes. Then with the advent of the business vouchers in 2019 it became a possibility. They had



Martin making plans.



Martin's duct maps.

he drew all the duct maps for him. The farmers had been reluctant to have 'any old digger person' on their land as they had heard stories from other areas where mess had been made, especially in bad weather, but once they saw Tony's equipment they agreed to let the digs through. Martin visited all 100 properties himself and explained what was happening, and reckons about 50% came on board straight away.

He made sure the duct was left for those who did not want a connection and got it as close to the house as he could, warning people that now was the time to do it or 'do not come to me later'. He got them all to sign up for vouchers. A lot of SMEs and farmers meant the business vouchers covered the residential properties, and he had no need to push for more investments, though some did subscribe to shares. He did not do newsletters but made appointments via email and organised everyone that way.

several farmers and businesses who would qualify for the vouchers. With this iteration of the vouchers it allowed 10 properties per business voucher, to claim the property voucher. There was no enthusiasm to do the work, everyone was too busy, but Martin started all the pre-planning and figured out ways of making it happen.

They were eventually accepted by B4RN once they got enough vouchers and started their campaign.

They employed contractors instead of using volunteers. The reason for this is because there were not enough of them, none were skilled, and the dig grants from B4RN had appeared by now, so people could pay someone to do it for them.

Martin studied the B4RN plans, re-routed where landowners advised, and drew detailed route maps for the contractors and volunteers. Each chamber had its own plan so that the right ducts would go into the trenches as they were dug.

Martin arranged for a contractor, Richard Hoggarth, to do the house fittings.

Martin Dawson, a business owner, was a tremendous help. He was planning for the future and was in the process of expanding his coal yard into industrial units. He laid ducting in the trenches he was digging so the B4RN duct could be pushed through.

Martin got Tony Middleton, a contractor, to do the main core dig which was mainly mole ploughed, and



Marthwaite was key to joining Firbank to Sedbergh, and its network was split between the two cabinets. The North and West parishes in this chapter are fed from Sedbergh and Underwinder is fed from Firbank.

There was the River Lune to cross, and this crossing was done on a private bridge with full permission. Special duct was attached to the bridges by the B4RN caving expert, Dave Ryall.

When the fusers came they were amazed by a couple of things; the views, which as usual were stunning, and the level of tech that was being built into some of the homes and businesses in readiness for B4RN.

B4RN had decided to do 'dig grants' about this time. This meant that £150 of the voucher was returned to the customer after they went live, to use to pay for whoever had dug their garden or installed the boxes on their houses. In theory, this seemed like a good plan. However, as with most plans they do not always go 'as planned'. Some people did their own installs and did them very well. But some did not, and they had to be done again.

The photos show a 'non standard' install. Basically there is nothing wrong with it. It is super protected and robust. The duct was encased in armour-plated electrical conduit and firmly secured, but then it went into further conduit into the property with the normal gas block. Technically it was ok, safety wise it was ok, but it confused the blowers, whose job it was to close the gas block after blowing the fibre.

This sort of thing had to be coped with. Training for volunteers was undertaken, but that did not always work either. Specialist staff were recruited from the existing volunteers to provide better training for the new ones.

This was another learning curve, and very important for later when the gigabit vouchers enabled a more professional approach to installations.



High tech cable network ready to plug into a hub next to the install.



Outside of the house install.



Under the lid of the install.



Walter Willcox assists with house router installs.



A cup of tea with a view.



The view from the office whilst house fusing.

Walter from Surrey was visiting at the time and assisted with the house installs and photographed the views.

The customers started coming on line in 2019. Some people ignored the voucher verification emails from BDUK to say they had gone live, so did not get the vouchers, and then they expired, so the project funding decreased. Volunteers and staff helped the elderly with the forms, though some slipped through the net. B4RN took on extra staff to cope. Another ‘S’ curve.

Getting an area authorised for vouchers was quite difficult, too, and BDUK came to visit B4RN to try to figure out how to make it better, but by the time they understood, they changed jobs and another group of civil servants had to learn how it all worked. This process is still ongoing. Three different changes in the last 6 years has meant that the best intentions of the government have often failed the groups they wanted to help. They obviously have their own Sigmoid Curves, too?

As the first voucher scheme ended, they announced ‘Project Gigabit’ but with the procurement process, it stopped quite a few communities joining on, as bigger infrastructure companies took all the low-lying fruit, leaving uneconomic areas to languish.

B4RN could help these communities as they have the skill to do it, but it would be so much easier if there was funding available. Some chose to go with the bigger companies, only to find their monthly rental is

much higher, and the customer support is not as ‘local’. Also, the bigger telcos do not get to the farmers, as they often live too far from the villages, so they are told to ‘use satellite or mobile’, which really is putting everything back to square one.

The Sedbergh rural project for Marthwaite, Lowgill, Firbank and Howgill, leading on to the Sedbergh urban area, was done in the transition period as B4RN was morphing into a staff-led, professional telco. It makes clear the Good, the Bad and the Ugly side of government intervention.

In total, over 41 kilometres of duct was dug in the Firbank area, including Marthwaite, Howgill, and Killington.



Meetings galore.



More meetings.



After Covid lockdown, meetings in the sunshine. Still socially distanced.



Another sunny meeting.

Sedbergh I

The Sedbergh Town development is best viewed in two instalments. The first was bringing the fibre up to the cabinet in Sedbergh School's estate in the south of the town.

There was then a pause in the town while the installations went out in the rural areas around the town.

Later, a third of Sedbergh was connected.

Douglas Thomson was the organiser for Sedbergh. He had heard about it getting closer and approached the school to see if they wanted it and would host a cabinet. He says his main help was from Robert Lindsay, Mike Clarke and Martin Stockdale.

The Yorkshire Dales National Park gave Sedbergh a loan of £10k to help pay for the cabinet.

'Like all projects, meetings were essential if at times too many! Some inside and some outside

Will Dehany, helped by us and his friends, brought the ducting up to Jackdaw Bridge where we had a simple handover of the duct ceremony and a celebration.

British Gas claimed they owned this old railway bridge. They said they would consider us using it but needed many surveys done first. Hence we turned right and came through the golf course and up and over Plank Bridge (so called because in days of old it was just planks). We had permission to use this bridge for our duct. Dave Ryall, an expert climber, again used his special skills and fixed the special duct to the bridge for us.

Actually the route through the golf course was very helpful as from the course there was an easy connection to Millthrop. Douglas then contracted Tony Middleton to get it up to just south of the sports centre (Hirst Centre) at Sedbergh School.



Digging to Sedbergh.



Will Dehany and the Cobra in action.



David Ryall, the B4RN climbing expert.



Sedbergh tea and cakes meeting at Birks.



Douglas's meals on wheels Volvo.



Another site meeting with refreshments.



Douglas and the team celebrating another section completed.



Will Dehany hands over the dig from Middleton to Sedbergh.



Tony, Robert and Douglas planning the last stretch to Sedbergh cabinet.



The cabinet arrives.



Moving the cabinet to the plinth.



Putting the cabinet on the plinth.

Tea and cake was always welcome from the back of Douglas's Volvo whether in a field or hiding from the wind behind a wall. Once we had a nice break inside for tea and cake at Birks, and once we had champagne provided by Ann Dehany to celebrate another section completed.

The cabinet arrived at Dawson's yard with no means of getting it off, so Douglas called Martin Dawson from the coal-yard who arranged a team to get it sorted.

The cabinet would later provide a route back to Garsdale and Dent, with Milthrop and Frostrow on the way. Also routes to Marthwaite, Howgill and back to Firbank. The cabinet also brought other local areas on board, Cautley, and Lunds and Mallerstang via Garsdale. The cabinet came live in April 2019.

They had 32 volunteers helping, and they held many meetings at Douglas's house, and they went out canvassing and giving leaflets out.

All the properties on the way to Sedbergh got the connection, and they made inroads to the more populated area. They attended training sessions at Melling to learn about house kit fitting.

Douglas says: 'The Dent people, the first in the area, raised considerable money to install in Dent, Millthrop and Garsdale. Dent was supplied from Barbon through Barbondale. This was at a time when much work was done by volunteers. The plan was to come to the west end of Dentdale and then swing back through Millthrop and down Garsdale. In fact by the time they had got to the west end of Dentdale the Sedbergh cabinet was installed in the school in the south of Sedbergh and B4RN 'central' had taken over the command of the whole Sedbergh area. Hence Millthrop and Garsdale were run from Melling and they were fed from Sedbergh'.



The cabinet in its new home.



Jim Atkins, the chairman of the parish council, helps out.



Will Dehany sorting ducts to go in the chamber.



Martin and Robert searching for a broken duct.



Spreading the word.



Robert Lindsay instructed their latest recruit on HSE matters.



Publicity event.



Training session for fitting house kits for the A Team.



Peter Apps and his MBE JFDI spade award.



A Milthrop meeting.



Duct store.



A very well protected trench.

Milthrop and Frostrow

Peter Apps, Keith Birbeck and Dave Wilson were the activists at Milthrop and coordinated the area. They got all the hamlets on and the fibre to Farfield Mill, which is an artisan craft centre. The manager of the mill said to Peter ‘when are you doing it’ meaning the car park which leads to the mill and several houses, and Peter told him ‘tomorrow’. But in actual fact they did it that day, working well into darkness, and the next day came and the manager said ‘I thought you were coming to do the car park today, I cannot see it’ and Peter said ‘you are not supposed to see it’ - they had already done it! The manager was very impressed with the tidiness of their work.

Peter and the team of volunteers took on the Milthrop project when the main activist who had started it all fell ill. He got the landowners in Milthrop on board and Keith Birbeck talked to some he knew and got Frostrow sorted.

They had vouchers to sort out, which necessitated many visits and phone calls, and Peter and his team of about 15 did all the house installs and garden digs. Ross and Matt were a great asset for house digs, and they all volunteered to help their community. Peter did most of the house installs though.

Out of about 100 properties they brought 50 live within 6 months. He said ‘we worked hard and fast’.

He says it was a combined effort and they took the duct from the boundary wall at Sedbergh Golf course to the base of the fell at Hallbank farm, where the route split off for Dent in one direction and Cautley in the other.

Tony Middleton did most of the core network routes and they helped him. ‘The map is not the territory’ as Peter’s wife says, and they had to modify some of the routes to fit the multiple gullies and streams, but they made it work.



Volunteers getting the house ducts in.



Doing the house installs.



A hard dig.

Dave Wilson was friendly with a lot of landowners and they suggested better routes, and Derek Hartley did the mapping. Dan Garner walked the whole route to GPS track it.

The project was completed within a year.

The blowers and fusers arrived, and the houses came live very quickly.

His only regret was the fact that he let the householders decide where they wanted the routers, and with the knowledge he has now, he thinks he could have advised them better. A very small regret after such a marathon of great planning and work. Well done to the men of grit in Frostrow and Millthrop.

From the last houses in Frostrow the route was picked up by the people of Garsdale, who took it over the fell to their valley. 'The project galvanised local people to work together'. Peter said.



Cherry Hall fibre blow.



Dan Garner.



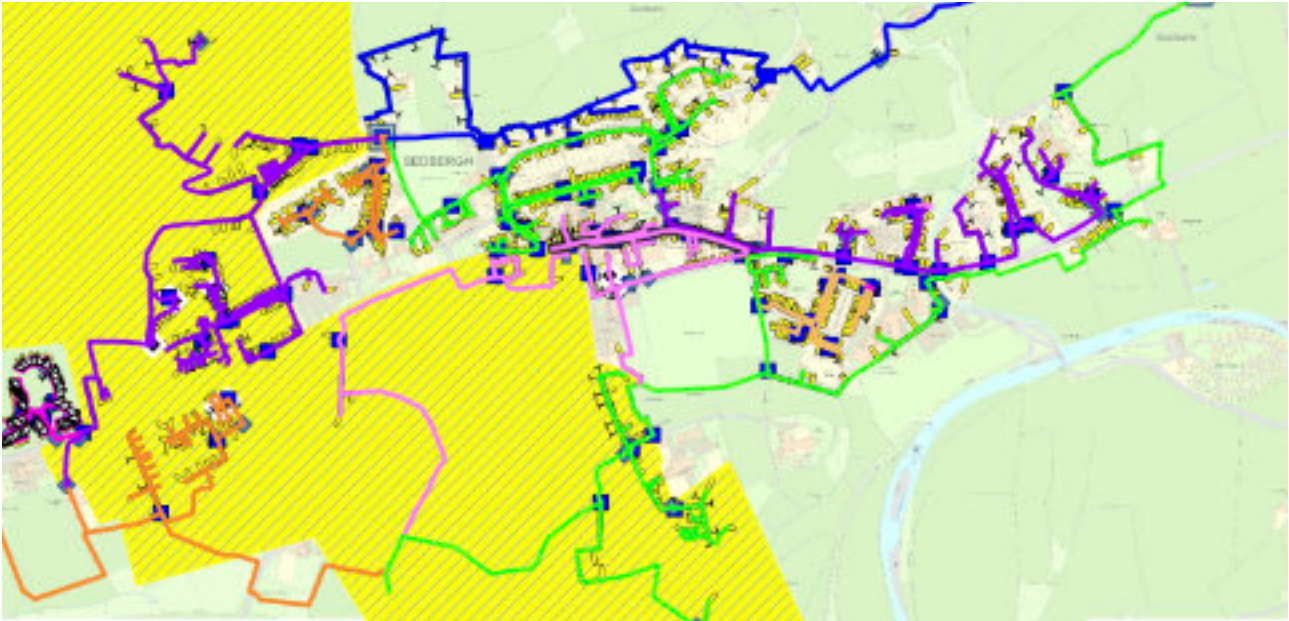
Keith Birbeck.



Dave Wilson.

Once the Sedbergh cabinet was in, it became much easier to go East and West around Sedbergh, linking to Garsdale, Dent, Cautley and Firbank. All good to see happen except that Sedbergh was always to be ‘done later’.

Sedbergh 2 - into the town



Douglas's map showing the different phases/routes for Sedbergh.

After a long pause work began to bring B4RN's service into the town itself.

Douglas Thompson recalls: 'Firstly a tad more on funding. As you know Dent (and Garsdale) raised sufficient funds through share purchase to do the Dent, Millthorpe and Garsdale area. What actually happened was that the routes out from the Sedbergh cabinet to Millthorpe and Marthwaite were labelled as SB (part of Sedbergh). This led to some of Sedbergh's investment being devoted to these areas. We, in Sedbergh, were not amused but these things happen. I suspect vouchers were also used in Millthorpe and Garsdale.

'In Cautley, Gina almost raised sufficient funds for the installation to go ahead. Then vouchers came in and there was then plenty of money for installation. Marthwaite was nowhere near raising sufficient money and Martin had almost given up when vouchers arrived and with so many farming businesses he could suddenly go ahead. I do not know but I guess Firbank would also be a combination of share purchase and vouchers'.

Douglas concentrated on Sedbergh town, but B4RN had problems getting the vouchers so would not give the go-ahead to the project until it was sorted. Sedbergh also already had reasonable broadband, so they were not really at the 'desperate' stage and could rock along a while longer.

It took him 7 years to finally get some vouchers and get going on Phase 1. Vouchers for Sedbergh Phase 1 also helped considerably. He did not have any farmers to help him, so he bought a trailer for his car and collected the duct in it.

By now B4RN had a civils team to do the pavement work, and Douglas speaks very highly of their



B4RN UPS team doing house installations.



Tony Swidenbank and the directional mole.



B4RN civils team duct laying in pavements and ginnels.



B4RN's civils team on pavement and road cuts.

workmanship and manners. Everyone was very impressed with their efficiency. 'They worked in all weathers with cheerful vigour. They managed to do 30% of the town before the government in their wisdom gave the rest of the vouchers to another company, and B4RN could not do anything about it'.

The new B4RN connections team did all the house digs and installs, but some of Douglas's team put the routers on, as they found people were often only available for house access after working hours, so it all worked well.

'All the work in phase 1 was done by contractors, UPS or B4RN's civil team, sometimes in adverse weather conditions. However, frequent supplies of homemade Sedbergh cakes helped greatly to keep spirits up!

'The B4RN civils teams did some road crossings, and sometimes they used Tony Swidenbank's directional drill.

'B4RN also dug to some of the houses, and Tony dug through the fields'.

SB (i.e. school, Millthorp, Frostrow phase) = 26.4km of duct dug in.

Where they could use soft dig methods in the village, they did, and the project ran very smoothly until the vouchers ended. BDUK allocated the funding elsewhere. It may come back one day and Douglas and his team could complete the town build.

Douglas Thomson's report talks about B4RN benefitting businesses:

'Businesses around Sedbergh are now benefiting from Broadband for the Rural North's hyperfast broadband service.

'Wholesalers JMP who have been connected for a year now have staff working some of their time at home - a double benefit during the coronavirus



Tony Swidenbank and Graham mole ploughing.



B4RN civils team.



B4RN's remote-controlled mole plough at work in Douglas's wildflower meadow.



B4RN civils team on pavement cuts.

outbreak. Manager Shaun Atherton said, "As more of our business goes online, it is important to be able to update large amounts of images online and having a hyperfast broadband connection is vital to the smooth running of the company and B4RN provides us with what we need".

'At Dawson's the arrival of B4RN has provided them with development opportunities. The whole yard has been 'ducted' in readiness for fibre when required. Michael Dawson commented "B4RN's broadband has allowed us to develop the site with confidence about our future".'

The Roofbox Company sells mostly over the internet and hence is heavily dependent on a good fast broadband connection. At 1 gigabit (1000 Mbps) both upload and download speed B4RN provides what is needed. Owner Martin Gray said "B4RN has been something of a godsend for us, especially as many of our team are working from home during the coronavirus outbreak, and some of us also have B4RN at home. We can work on our office systems, from home, as fast as if we were in the office, e-mailing and talking to suppliers around the world, and e.g. giving FaceTime support to customers."

Cautley

Douglas recalls: 'Gina wanted to lay a duct through a SSSI. Her request was refused. She came to me and asked if we could put together a paper explaining the effects, if any, to the SSSI if the work was carried out. Together we put together a paper. She did the engineering bit and I explained any effect on the soil and vegetation. I could manage a couple of reasonable biological qualifications after my name. Gina's engineering qualifications stretched right across the page and onto the next line! Still, it did the trick. The reply came back "OK, do it". Gina did not need to be told twice!'



Gina's Lindzey spade.



Gina.



Frank and Gina.



Frank comes to blow the fibre.

When all the Dent and Sedbergh work was going on, Gina Barney at Cautley was laying duct and fixing house kits all through the valley, and Frank and Will worked non-stop to help everyone.

By the time Gina was ready, the snow came, but she still got her fibre blown, thanks to Will and Frank. Finding where Gina had put the chambers in the snow meant she was indispensable on the blows too!

Gina also helped make sure the caravan site got its own bespoke feed, and she organised the fusers when the fibre was blown. She guided the house install team to every single property, and she accomplished every house fusing connection in two days. 66 properties took the service, nearly 100% of her parish.

The Cautley cabinet came live in March 2019.


She carried on helping other groups, showing that even in their 80s, people can still play a part. Gina also took on the Lunds project, supervising duct-laying, chamber placement and house kit fitting. Lunds was on the route to Mallerstang, and she really helped their project get going. She was interviewed and filmed and became a local hero. (The story of Mallerstang is in a later chapter).

Gina told her story to a DCMS media team - click the 'Beyond the book' link to view it. She was amazing.

Gina passed away in July 2023, but her legacy lives on.

The core route to Mallerstang comes from Garsdale via Sedbergh, and hopefully one day the loop will be completed back to Cautley.

Gina's team dug 23 km of trench in Cautley (and a lot more for Lunds).

Beyond the Book 
[DCMS video with Gina](#)



Gina, Will and Frank chamber hunting.



Will Dehany blowing house fibre for Gina.



'Over here Will',



Gina Barney.



Gina sorting a chamber for Lunds.