1. Local Area Information:

Kilfinan Parish (PA21 postcode area) is located on the Scottish West coast mainland in South Cowal, accessible by the A82 trunk road into the Cowal Peninsula, or a short ferry crossing across the Clyde. Despite the relative closeness to the central belt, the area is remote and rural. Until the introduction of the Caledonian MacBrayne ferry service linking the Cowal penninsula with Kintyre in 1994, the area suffered from the peninsula's relative isolation. The area has benefitted from the opening of crucial arterial ferry services. However, it has been noted by many businesses this summer that tourism is now seriously suffering from a lack of reliable high speed digital connectivity.

BT broadband is available in the two main villages offering very basic speeds. Properties further from exchanges have either no service or speeds less than 1Mbps. Many remote premises also suffer from a lack of mobile reception.

Population is 792 of which around 60% are estimated to be retired, a high figure relative to the national average of 20%. There are 737 premises, of which again, approximately 60% are holiday homes or part time homes wishing the ability to work online during weekends and holidays when required.

In recent years, PA21 area fell 1000 places on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, a shocking figure. In 2012, PA21 2AH ranked on the SIMD 2999, compared to 2004 SIMD 3873.

PA21 Kilfinan Parish is essentially a peninsula covering an area of 13,674 ha (33,763 acres). It is approx 23.3 km (14.5 miles) long and just under 9.5 km (6 miles) at its widest point.   The topology is rolling rather than mountainous, reaching just under 460m (1500 feet) at its highest point. The coastline is around 48 km (30 miles) in length. The landscape with its many dips hidden dells, and the length of the designated area due to the coastal nature of the area, pose many challenges for the successful provision of high speed broadband with line of sight wireless connections.

The main settlements of the parish are Tighnabruaich, Kames, Ardlamont, Millhouse, Portavadie, Kilfinan and Otter Ferry, stretching the full reach of the PA21 parish.

Since the 1950's, the number of young families and children in the area has greatly reduced due to a significant contraction of the local jobs market and availability of affordable homes.

There are few job opportunities for those wishing to move to the area.

Tighnabruaich Primary School current roll is 30 pupils.
Kyles Medical Centre.
Tighnabruaich and Kames have a Post Office.
Kames and Kilfinan have a Church.
Local marketing group has 25 members, all active and wishing to improve digital infrastructure.
Tighnabruaich District Development Group galvanising support throughout the area.

2. BT exchange service:

Exchange name: Tighnabruaich
exchange code: WSTIG
postcode: PA21 2AD
serves: 477 residential premises and 48 non-residential premises
ADSL: Yes enabled 6/7/2005
ADSL max status enabled: 31/3/2006

Exchange name: Kilfinan
exchange code: WSKIF
postcode: PA21 2EP
serves: 96 residential premises and 12 non-residential premises
ADSL: Yes enabled 7/11/2005
ADSL: Max statis enabled

3. Existing Broadband Services:

BT is the sole provider of fixed broadband services. Some premises have had to revert to a satellite service which has its limitations.

4. Mobile performance data:

Vodafone operates a patchy service in the area which is often disrupted by weather.

5. Mobile mast sites:

Name of operator: Vodafone
Operator site ref: 5453
Station type: Macrocell
Height of antenna: 28.5 m
Frequency range: 900 MHz
Transmitter power 18.3dBW
Max licensed power: 32 dBW
Type of transmission: GSM

Name of operator: Airwave
Operator site ref: STR1280
Station type: Macrocell
Height of antenna: 10 m
Frequency range: 400 MHz
Transmitter power: 21 dBW
Max licensed power: 25 dBW
Type of transmission: TETRA

6. Local Demand:

Recent survey published this year by the Tighnabruaich District Development Group produced an excellent response rate of 40% of the population.

86% agreed the area should be 'Working to improve broadband provision'.

90% agree we should be 'Attracting more shops and businesses' to the area - this must go hand in hand with reliable broadband provision.

5% of respondents have satellite broadband provision.
69% have ADSL provision.
64% were unhappy with the speed and reliability of the internet provision.

In addition to the above relevant survey information, we undertook a more in depth survey of the community's broadband. To enable quick results in the spread out rural area, it was deemed that a survey that could be completed online was the best course of action, along with notices and questionnaires in local shops to reach those who could perhaps not manage to connect online.

Response rate relative to the number of households in the area was 14.5%. However, given that 60% of households are deemed to be holiday homes, it would only be fair to use the actual homes occupied full time. This gives a very decent return rate of 36% of households (similar to the return rate for the TDDT).
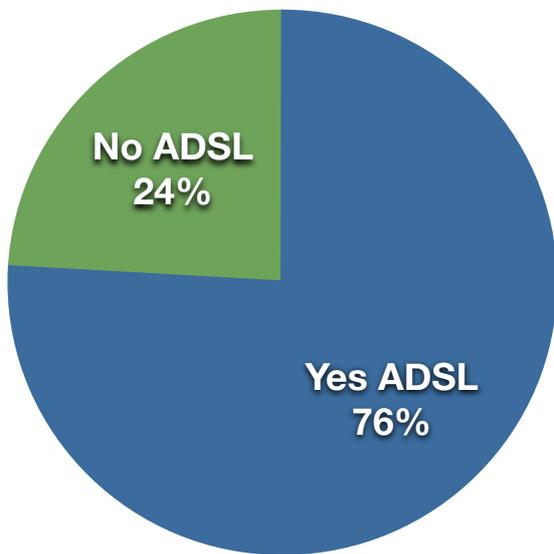
In summary, the results were as follow:

• 76% of households have ADSL
• 44% had a download speed of less than 2Mbps
• 68% described their level of service as poor
• 98% would like to see faster broadband in the area
• 51% would use broadband for both home and business
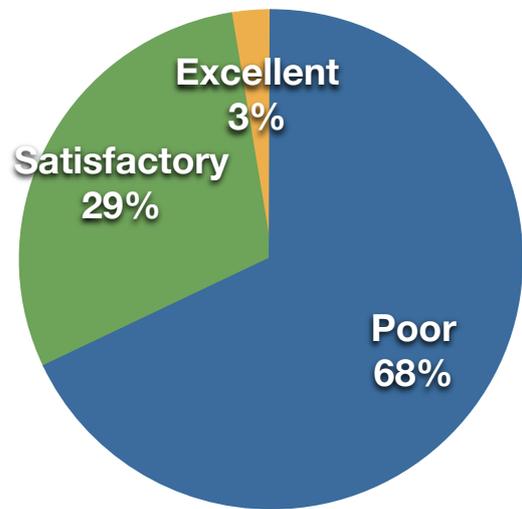
Please see charts below for further information.
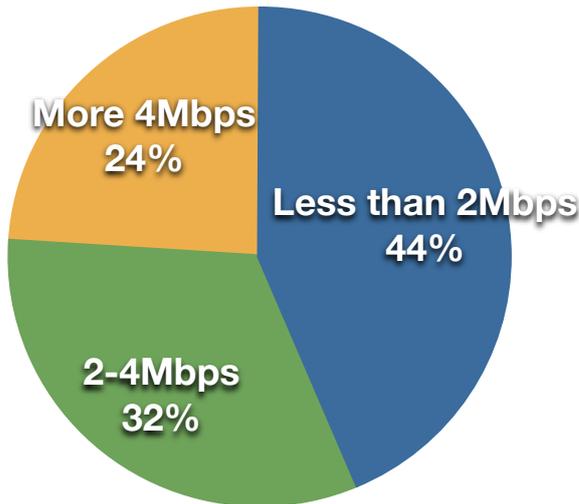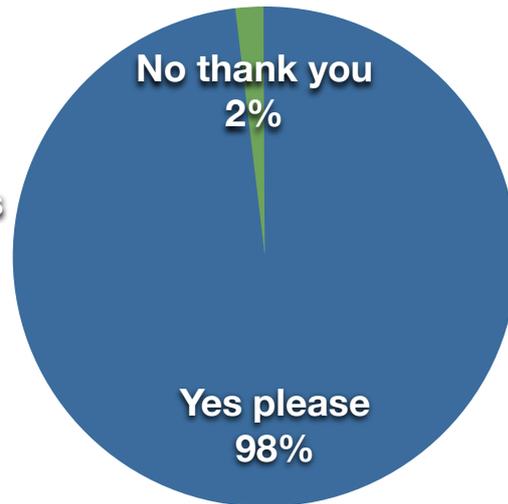
Household Download Speeds
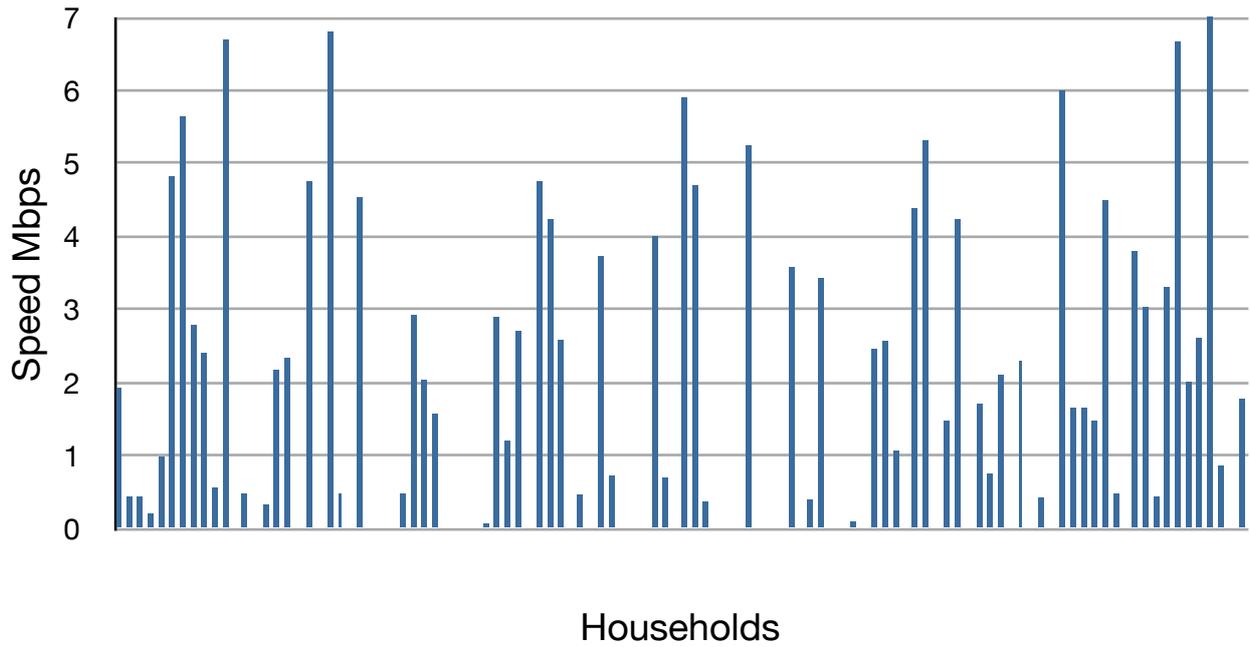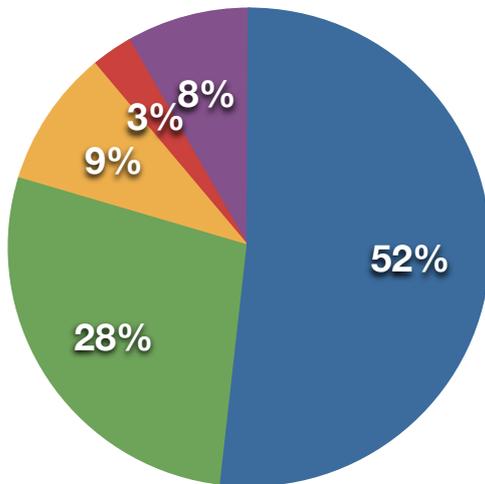

ADSL

Level of Service
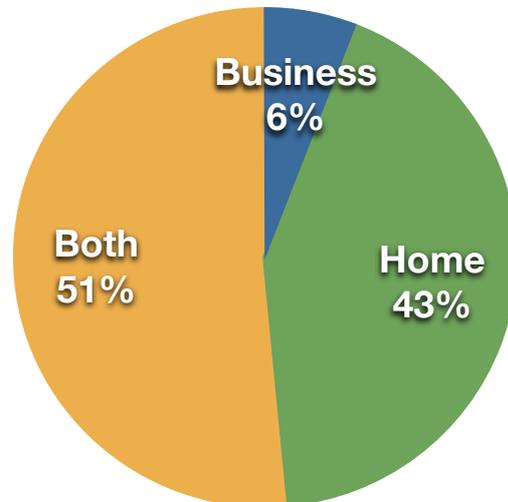
ADSL Download Speed

Would you like faster broadband?

How much would you pay?

Broadband Use

● £10-19 ● £20-29 ● £30-39 ● £40-49 ● £50+

7. Usage:

What is apparent from our survey is that there is demand for both home and business use. With 98% wishing to access faster broadband speeds, it would be reasonable to assume that we would like to aim higher than the UK average of 14Mbps.

8. Technical studies/review:

None we are aware of.

9. Funding Sources:

In addition to the capital grant funding offered by CBS, 4 potential private partners have been identified with previous commitments to community initiatives. The 25 members of the Kyles Marketing Group have also indicated they would consider financial support of a NGB initiative, however it is noted that the majority of the businesses are very small and would have a limit to their funding input.

10. Outcomes:

Provide high speed reliable digital broadband to remote areas of our community currently unable to achieve 2mbps and the significant number unable to receive any ADSL broadband.

Serve households who currently achieve a 2mbs download speed with a faster speed and reliable service.

Much needed boost to the tourism in the area which was perceived to have suffered this year due to lack of connectivity. Expectations in the general population have increased exponentially relative to the connectivity in the area.

Tighnabruaich District has a fragile economy. It must not be underestimated what role NGB can or should play in communities as an economic engine. The 25 members of the Kyles Marketing Group would directly benefit from increased economic activity with an improved broadband service, and would potentially attract new business to the area, which is currently an unlikely outcome with poor connectivity.

Attract new home based business, bringing young families into the area, boosting population, school numbers and local economy.

Encourage youngsters to stay in the area. It goes without saying that without a decent broadband service, the younger generation with expectations of connectivity will leave the area as soon as possible if they see a barrier to accessing information.

Improve educational outcomes for children in the area.

Community Scoping Maps

Map 1: PA21 Boundary and survey results
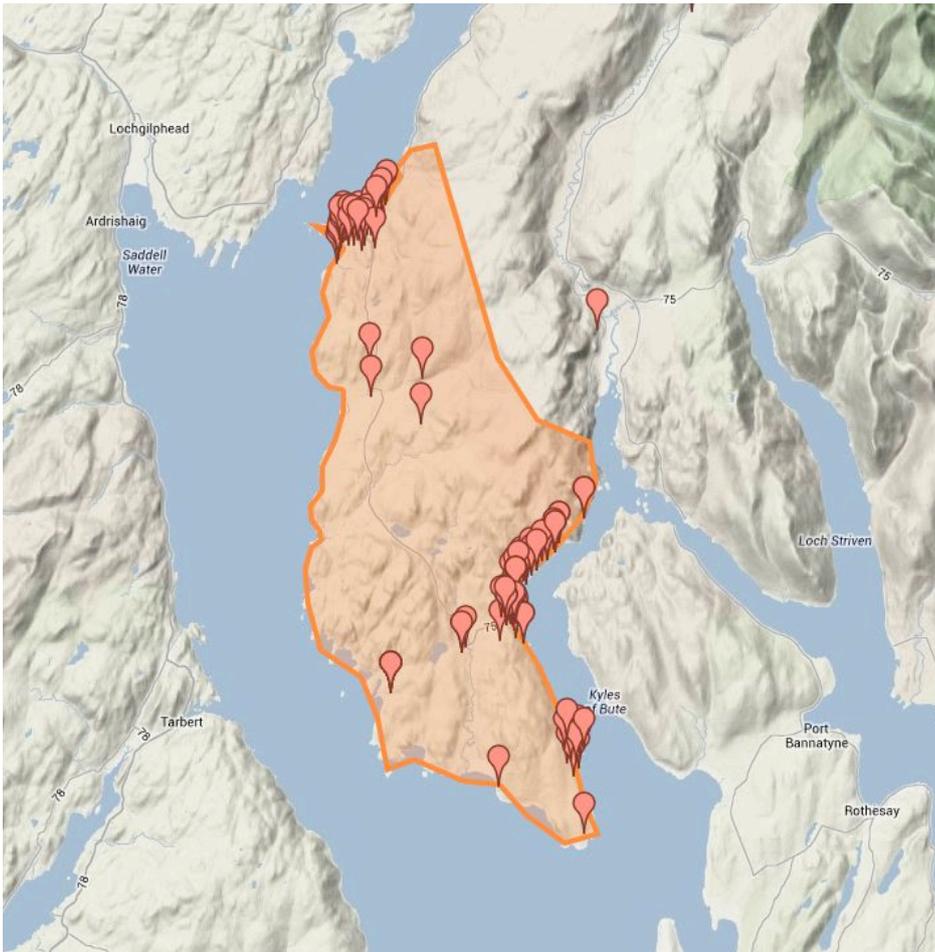
Map 2: Key Business locations and exchanges.