

Peter Peacock

Scottish Labour Regional MSP for the Highlands and Islands

News release : 17 January 2008

When is Broadband reaching Us All, asks Highland MSP?

Peter Peacock, Highlands and Islands Labour MSP, is calling on the Scottish Government to spell out how it plans to bring broadband services to all households and businesses in Scotland.

The Government's registration period for anyone not receiving broadband closes today (Friday) – and Mr Peacock has tabled questions to find out what happens next.

"The 'broadband reach project' says that the Scottish Government aims to provide broadband for everyone who has registered with the scheme, at home or in business, who has tried to get broadband and not been able," said Mr Peacock.

"My former colleague Maureen Macmillan campaigned tirelessly to see access improved in the Highlands and islands and the expansion of ADSL services to all exchanges in Scotland has increased the availability figures substantially over the last two years.

"But for those living and working in the Highlands and Islands who can not receive broadband this is increasingly an economic and social disadvantage.

"It's almost impossible to use dial up for many basic internet activities.

"Even worse, some internet service providers are starting to phase out their dial up service completely.

"I am keen to find out when those who have registered will be told how they can receive broadband.

"Also, how the government plans to prioritise the introduction of broadband and if there are funds in place to support the various alternative technologies which may be necessary to allow certain areas to receive a broadband service.

"I would urge anyone who has not registered through HIE or on the Government site to do so today," he said.