**Gigaclear**

**Gigaclear** appear to offer a range of introductory packages - which keep changing. The offer we took, with a £10 monthly payment reduction for and during an 18 month contract, included their level 3 package with 2 modems and 300mbps upload and download. At the time we set up our contract the price for the first 3 levels was the same and there was no connection fee. The latter included making a connection up 100 metres from the connection point. In our case we had an underground connection point at our drive entrance. Extra charges may arise if there are serious obstacles to overcome - they may need a prior survey.

**Gigaclear** offered us a connection/setup 14 working days after signing up. On the due date we were phoned to be given 15 minutes notice of arrival. Installation took 90 minutes and was done by a contractor team of two, very efficiently and neatly. After installation we were briefed on the setting up which was done for us.

The actual process involved linking the box (under a small manhole) at our drive entrance to a point outside our house, by the installation of a reinforced tube. An invisible cut across the lawn was done by hand and drillings were made with very long (~2 metre) drill bits to get under a path and the road at the other end. This resulted in there being one continuous tube, from our house to a roadside cabinet 150 metres away which had live fibre connections. Our fibre cable was then fed to the cabinet by a process involving compressed air pumped in to surround the fibre as it was pushed through. A simple connection was made at either end.

The wall mounted, small **Gigaclear** box inside the house needs a mains power connection and will necessarily also be the place where a **Vonage** phone unit (if desired) could be placed.

**Vonage** is an entirely separate company providing land line phone connection by fibre. We have signed up for this - £10 a month plus an initial fee. This gives unlimited UK calls and a facility to divert incoming calls to a mobile phone. **Vonage** operate primarily for business customers. We have been able to transfer (*port*) our local phone number to the **Vonage** service unchanged. A caveat here is that calls cannot be made if there is mains power failure. We no longer have a live landline.

We now have an Internet service in excess of 250 Mbps. Pretty quick! Overall, our costs have increased marginally. By good/lucky timing our Plusnet contract had recently ended and we had briefly reverted to a higher monthly rate, but only then needed to give 14 days notice to leave.

Vonage will supply as part of their package a modem type converter (needing a mains supply) which is then plugged into the Gigaclear modem. A standard conventional phone can then be plugged into the Vonage converter. The phone line operating by this means is also a considerable improvement.

The only drawback of this is the potential for a hornets nest of wiring so the location does need to be chosen carefully.