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KINLOCHARD, IN STIRLING TEAMS UP WITH ANNE MCGUIRE MP AND VODAFONE UK TO LAUNCH A COMMUNITY-LED MOBILE PHONE NETWORK

- Community-led initiative brings much needed mobile coverage to the Scottish community
- Kinlochard was chosen over more than 170 other rural communities who put themselves forward for 'open femto' trials to provide Vodafone 3G mobile coverage to smaller rural communities

Kinlochard, in the centre of Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park, is to trial a 'community-led network' that is bringing much needed Vodafone coverage to homes and businesses in the area. Working with the community and local MP Anne McGuire, Vodafone has installed ground breaking 'open femto' technology in locations across the village of Kinlochard to provide 3G coverage throughout the community, where before there was little or no coverage from any network.

The 'open femto' technology provides a Vodafone 3G signal in areas which traditional mobile coverage of any kind has been unable to reach. The units, about the size of a small carry on suitcase, use existing broadband services to deliver a 3G mobile signal. They have been placed in a number of business and residential locations across the village to give a good spread of coverage, including Kinlochard Village Hall, Go Country Adventure Centre and Forest Hills Hotel.

Local MP, Anne McGuire, commented: "Lack of mobile phone reception has long been a problem in rural Scotland which has hindered economic development in several areas. Thanks to the hard work of the local community to ensure that it was part of this trial with Vodafone, Kinlochard is seeing the real benefits of having a strong mobile signal, enabling both voice and data connectivity through this innovative 3G open femto solution."

Fiona McEwan, the community councillor for Kinlochard, added: "We are really delighted to have been selected for this Vodafone trial and having a signal in the village brings benefits for both local people and our many visitors, who can use the signal to keep in touch. Importantly, we now have coverage for emergency calls in the village and on part of nearby Loch Ard. The facility has helped our Village Hall attract more hires from people who need to use their phones, and we've even found that the visiting mobile library service has improved, since it can now be connected to its base when it comes to Kinlochard."

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John McCracken, Vodafone's Regional Network Manager for Scotland added: "Kinlochard has shown how partnership can provide a solution to solving the challenge of how to bring mobile coverage to rural communities currently without any. Without the direct support and engagement of the local community and MP, Anne Maguire, this project would not have been possible. It's the latest area to benefit from our rural mobile coverage trials and we hope it will not only help keep people in touch but also boost the local economy."

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Notes to editors:

- Kinlochard was chosen from the over 170 communities who applied to take part in a trial, following Vodafone's call in late 2011 for rural communities to get involved in the 'open femto' project. For more information on the communities we have already announced please visit <http://blog.vodafone.co.uk/>
- Vodafone UK has pioneered the use of 'femto' technology with its Vodafone Sure Signal product. Launched in 2009, Vodafone Sure Signal is used by hundreds of thousands of people across the UK every day to boost the in-building 3G coverage of phones they register to use the device. For more information visit vodafone.co.uk/suresignal
- As well as using innovative 'open femto' technology to plug rural not-spots, Vodafone is also committed to increasing the scale of its existing network. In June, Vodafone UK and Telefonica UK announced plans to strengthen their mast sharing partnership and pledged to deliver indoor 2G, 3G and 4G coverage to 98% of the UK population by 2015. For further information on the announcement visit [the Vodafone media centre](#)