

Rural life in the fast lane

INTERNET

An internet network has been developed which offers remote communities a faster broadband connection than in most cities.

By using the internet at the Gaelic College (Sabhal Mòr Ostaig) on Skye as an original source, a wireless relay network has been created to serve the Small Isles of Eigg, Rum, Muck and Canna, as well as other remote parts of the main-

land. The technology was developed by communities with help from experts at the University of the Highlands and Islands and the University of Edinburgh through a collaborative research project called Tegola.

Local company HebNet has also helped extend the provision to other communities in the north-west Highlands.

The connection from the system is said to be faster than in most cities, reach-

ing speeds of up to 20 megabits per second (Mbps).

Many rural communities are too far from a telephone exchange for high-speed broadband to work and satellite broadband has been shown to be slow and expensive, researchers say.

However, they believe their method could provide a solution for these places and it is hoped the scheme will be rolled out across several other communities showing interest.

