



Bringing faster broadband to our rural areas Project Update March 2018

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we need to spread the word!

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Over 61,000 properties able to connect to the fibre network

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BT asked to model an additional £1.9m coverage

First surveys for Contract 3 to start shortly

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BT asked to model an additional £1.9m coverage

Regular readers will recall that Contract 3 has a potential maximum value of £20m, and that last year's Invitation to Tender carried a value of £15m. Following an extremely rigorous procurement process, BT won all three Lots.

As these bids represented excellent value for money and came to a total of less than £15m, we have now asked Openreach to model an additional £1.9m of coverage to bring the value of the current contract back up to the original £15m.

We expect to receive the return any day now, and the data team will then begin the laborious task of checking the data and creating the new maps. This work will take several weeks, and we hope to be able to publish new maps showing the additional coverage in May/June of this year.

First surveys for Contract 3 to start shortly

Residents in some areas will shortly see survey activity taking place. This is the initial stages of the work for Contract 3. It is likely to be a few months yet before we see the first structures going live. Contract 3 is different from Contracts 1 and 2 in that we have the information down to property level, and this is displayed on our map, where yellow stars denote Contract 3 work. Contract 3 is due to complete at the end of 2019.

Local Full Fibre Networks Challenge Fund (LFFN)

We are still awaiting the outcome of our LFFN bid. It is believed that there have been a number of projects from across the country who have lodged bids for Phase 2 of the fund. This bid is very different from what has gone before.

The project requirements are to connect public sector buildings to the full fibre network (i.e. FTTP) with Gigabit-capable connections. The idea is that by taking full fibre out to public buildings, the successful contractor will then connect homes and businesses along the fibre route and in the vicinity of the newly-connected public buildings.

Our data team have compiled a compelling case, but of course we do not know what other projects may have submitted. We hope to hear the outcome of this bid in the next couple of months. If successful, the work will be very different from what has gone before, since we will be carrying out a public-sector procurement rather than commissioning a wholesale network (which is what the BDUK project has done thus far). As always, we'll continue to publish information in the newsletters as we receive it.

EAFRD

Because the EAFRD bid can only go to rural areas where there is no planned coverage, we are eagerly awaiting the return from Openreach for the modelling of the additional £1.9m mentioned earlier in this newsletter. This will give us a clearer indication as to where the EAFRD bid might be able to reach. The EAFRD bid is similar to the LFFN in that it targets specific premises, but in this case we will be looking at those hard-to-reach rural businesses that otherwise would not stand a chance of getting superfast connections.

The funding will be brought into Contract 3, so the requirement will be for a wholesale access superfast network offering a minimum of 30Mbps. We will have to prove evidence of need, so will be contacting businesses in the relevant areas once these have been identified. The requirement is for us to provide the network, not to monitor whether a service is taken up.

Once, again, we'll publish more information as we receive it.

Changes within the team

After many years of stability, we have seen some significant changes with the structure of the team. Our Project Executive, John Parmiter, has retired after almost 20 years working for Warwickshire County Council. John started his career as a teacher, and later became a schools' inspector. He then ran a project to bring ICT to Warwickshire's schools. Later John was involved in bringing Internet connectivity to schools throughout Warwickshire.

He was involved in the BDUK project (which became known as CSW Broadband) from its earliest days, and provided excellent leadership and strategic direction to the project. John's role has been taken over by Richard Hopkins, who comes from a strong technical and contracts management background.

Gurprit Basran, who has been Project Administrator since 2012 is also moving on to pastures new. Gurprit has been the unsung hero of the team, working behind the scenes to ensure that we have all documentation in order and that the systems are running as they should. Gurprit has been a massive support to all of us and will be sorely missed.

As far as the day-to-day running of the project is concerned, there should be little outward evidence of the changes, although we will all miss these two key members of the team and wish them both every success in the future.

Copy for your own website or newsletter

We have [short articles of around 300 words that can be downloaded](#) to use in your own newsletters or on websites. These are updated monthly.

Questions and Answers

Here are some of the Q&A's raised recently. Our website has a full set of Q&As, which are regularly updated.

Once my new fibre cabinet is connected to the exchange (or FTTP is enabled), what then?

That is entirely up to you. We are installing a wholesale network, which means that once your cabinet has gone live (or FTTP has been enabled) any Internet Service Provider (ISP) can offer you high speed broadband (subject to availability) and there are a wide range of packages available.

Do check though that you are able to actually achieve the speeds that are advertised as the geographic issues mentioned on our website will apply in cases where a new cabinet is involved. You can check which structure you are actually connected to by using the [BT DSL checker](#). Our handy '[How to use the BT Line Checker](#)' webpage will help you make sense of the DSL Checker results.

For the best results you will need to be able to enter a BT landline number for your property. If you do not have this then you can use your address, but it may be less accurate. Do not use the postcode checker as that covers too wide an area to be of any use.

Don't forget that you will need to upgrade to a superfast broadband package through your chosen ISP. The access is on a wholesale basis, which means that any ISP can use the infrastructure to provide their services.

Don't forget that you will need to check out broadband packages carefully to get the one that is right for you. For impartial advice go to the [Money Saving Expert](#) website.

We have leaflets that can be distributed to every property that is connected to the upgraded cabinets. To find out more please visit our [Become a Community Champion](#) web page.

My phone line is connected to a cabinet that is not upgraded. How can I get it moved to a fibre-enabled cabinet?

It is an operational matter for BT as to which cabinet they connect your landline to. There is a legal obligation to provide a copper telephone connection, but not for a fibre broadband connection. In some areas, BT are carrying out CuRE (Copper Re-Arrangement) work, which does involve moving lines from one cabinet to another. In other areas we are seeing FTTP (Fibre to the premise) installations, in which case the cabinet is irrelevant.

You can check which structure you are actually connected to and what speed is available to you now by using the [BT DSL checker](#).

For the best results you will need to be able to enter a BT landline number for your property. If you do not have this then you can use your address, but it may be less accurate. Do not use the postcode checker as that covers too wide an area to be of any use.

To see if anything is planned in your area for the future, either through this project or from commercial providers, use our [unique property checker](#), which shows the currently planned status (down to property level) up to the end of 2019.

The information was largely derived from the Open Market Review and Public Consultation that we carried out in preparation for the Contract 3 procurement. If the coverage has been promised by the commercial provider, then we are bound by commercial confidentiality and cannot give further details. However, if the upgrades are planned through the CSW Broadband project then you can see the status on our [latest map](#) and on the [Rolling 12-Month Plan](#).

You can find more [frequently asked broadband questions](#) on our website

Help us to spread the word!

We need to reach as many people as we possibly can. You can help us by emailing this to all your local contacts and encouraging them to email it to all their contacts.

Why not join the CSW Broadband conversation on social media!

To keep up to date on what we're doing and to have your say on how the project develops:

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For **newsletter** enquiries, please use: broadbandnews@cswbroadband.org.uk

For **all other enquiries**, please use: broadband@cswbroadband.org.uk

So that you don't miss out on any important news updates from the CSW Broadband team, please ensure that these are enabled in your firewall.

To find out more about the project, please visit the [CSW Broadband website](#).



CSW Broadband is a partnership between Warwickshire County Council, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Coventry City Council, BT and Department for Culture Media & Sport.