



Bringing faster broadband to our rural areas

Project Update February 2014

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we need to spread the word!**

If you would like a Word version of this newsletter please email broadband@warwickshire.gov.uk

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First communities to benefit from superfast announced

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First communities to benefit are announced

From Spring 2014, superfast fibre-based broadband will start to become available for the first time in parts of Alderminster, Fillongley, Henley-in-Arden, Kineton, Quinton, Long Marston, Snitterfield and Welford-on-Avon. In addition, fibre will also 'go live' in areas of Stratford-upon-Avon and Wellesbourne not already enabled by any commercial rollout.

CSW Broadband will connect around 40,000 additional premises in the project area to superfast broadband with download speeds of up to 80 megabits per second (Mbps) and uploads of up to 20Mbps.

Further updates about the rollout will be made in the coming weeks via our newsletters and the CSW Broadband website: <http://www.cswbroadband.org.uk>.

The combined commercial and CSW Broadband rollouts will result in 91 per cent of the area's homes and businesses being able to access superfast broadband. On completion of the CSW Broadband rollout, all premises within Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire will be able to access a minimum of 2Mbps, but in practice this could be up to 23.9 Mbps (above which it is classified as superfast).

We recognise that this project is a stepping stone to the EU targets for 2020 of all Europeans having access to broadband above 30 Mbps (which is above the current upper

threshold) and 50% connected to and using 100 Mbps, but additional funding will be required to make this happen (see below).

Additional funding

The government has announced funds of £250m to take superfast broadband coverage up to 95% (our current project will achieve 91%), but we do not as yet know when or how this money will be made available. In addition we are actively investigating any and all other funding sources, and have recently made submission through the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership European Structural Investment Funds Strategy for a total of £7.85m. We aim to increase the fibre footprint as soon as more money becomes available.

Release of more detailed information

We have been working for some time now to offer more detailed information so that residents can have greater visibility of what is planned. One of the main problems we face is that the data we are given is detailed by postcode, but telecoms infrastructure clearly does not follow postcodes. In fact, as the surveys progress we are finding that we have some postcodes that are served by a number of cabinets, and some cabinets that serve properties in more than one postcode. When you factor in the fact that some properties may be served by exchanges or cabinets that are several miles away you can see the difficulties.

The reason for this state of affairs is that when the original copper telecoms systems were developed it was often the big houses that had telephones first, and these were connected back to an exchange (which would have been manned by real people!) As more properties were built, cabinets were introduced at strategic points to enable better management of the network, and over recent years as more developments have been built so more cabinets have been installed. At the most extreme end of things we have a property in Stratford that is connected to the Rugby exchange, and in many cases two neighbouring properties may be served by different cabinets, with one of them being a considerable distance away.

Because voice transmissions are not sensitive to distance in the way that data signals are, the distance of a property from its supporting infrastructure was of little importance. However, with the advent of broadband this has all changed as signals can degrade over as little as 750m, meaning that superfast speeds will only be achieved by those properties that are closest to the cabinet.

We will soon be providing the means for people to check through the website which cabinet they are connected to, and therefore if they will benefit from the current upgrade programme. We can only do this for those cabinets where we are sure of the location (thanks to your fantastic responses to our previous requests), and so will also be showing where we still require further cabinet locations

Questions and Answers

Why have you gone to these areas first?

The aim of the programme is to achieve the best possible broadband coverage for the project area with the resources available and to achieve best value for money. The rollout strategy is based on engineering logic taking into account many factors including local geography, demographics and planning requirements, the existing engineering infrastructure and the availability of suitable technologies to provide a service. It's not possible with a programme of this size to plan every area at the same time so some areas will be enabled before others. We do try to work in one particular area for efficiency reasons but other than that there is no specific reason why we have chosen these locations first. You have to start somewhere!

So once my new cabinet is in place does that mean I can get superfast broadband?

Not immediately. Standing the cabinet is part of the story, it then has to be connected back to the exchange. Usually this is relatively straightforward, but sometimes there are issues such as blocked ducts. These are more common in the rural areas where the fibre runs back to the exchange are likely to be longer and where vehicles driving over grass verges can cause substantial damage to ducting.

Once my cabinet is connected to the exchange, what then?

That is entirely up to you. We are installing a wholesale network, which means that any Internet Service Provider (ISP) can offer you broadband 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 above will apply in all cases.

To see the list of ISPs visit <http://www.cswbroadband.org.uk/about-broadband/alternative-providers-and-isps>.

For the BT broadband availability checker visit: <http://www.dslchecker.bt.com/adsl/ADSLChecker.TelephoneNumberOutput>

Frequently asked general broadband questions can be found on our website at:

<http://www.cswbroadband.org.uk/the-project/frequently-asked-questions>

Questions about the contract or rollout can be found at:

<http://www.cswbroadband.org.uk/the-project/bduk-contract-qas>

CSW Broadband now on social media – come and join the conversation

We are now on the major social media channels and are already creating a buzz. Join in for up-to-date information and an opportunity to influence how the project develops

Facebook Page - <https://www.facebook.com/CSWSuperfastBroadband>

Twitter - <https://twitter.com#!/cswbroadband>

LinkedIn - <http://www.linkedin.com/groups/CSW-Superfast-Broadband-4403473>

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