



Bringing faster broadband to our rural areas

Project Update January 2014

**Please forward this email to your contacts –
we need to spread the word!**

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

Sign up to receive this e-newsletter direct to your inbox: <http://www.cswbroadband.org.uk/contact-us/subscribe-to-email-newsletter>

Topics in this edition:

State Aid approval finally received

Additional funding - details still awaited

Big build video on website – text version of the script

Warwickshire's Rural Growth Network (RGN)

Coventry Voucher Scheme

Questions and Answers

State Aid approval finally received

CSW Broadband has finally received State Aid approval for the additional £750,000 that was brought into the project during the procurement process. This means that we are able to intervene in the areas that qualify as "white" – i.e. as having no planned commercial provision of superfast broadband. The map that was posted to the website in November still stands, and will be updated as we gain greater certainty over which area will be receiving superfast broadband.

Additional funding - details still awaited

The Government has announced that an additional £250m funding will be made available to bring superfast broadband coverage in the UK up to 95% by 2017. However, no details have been released yet as to how the money will be allocated. We understand that there will be a match-funding requirement but it is unclear as to how that will be met, especially given the national state of Local Authority finances.

CSW Broadband is working with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) on the development of the Strategic Economic Plan, which will set the priorities for action over the next few

years. We are also working with the LEP on the European Structural Investment Fund Strategy, which we hope will enable us to attract EU funding to help with the broadband rollout. In the meantime, 2017 is getting ever closer and the sooner we are able to get on with planning further rollout the sooner we will benefit from economies of scale as we can run that provision as part of our current project. The longer we have to wait the higher the costs will be.

Text of The Big Build video

We have an excellent video on our website which explains how the network will be built and rolled out. However, not everybody is able to see the video, so in response to requests here is the text:

The big build to bring superfast broadband to the UK is complex and it takes time for a town or telephone exchange area to be upgraded. Here's how it works in a typical exchange area:

The broadband many of us have today travels on copper lines from the telephone exchange, usually via a Green Road side cabinet to your home or business. The first piece in the superfast broadband jigsaw is the installation of fibre to the cabinet or FTTC technology. This is where fibre optic cable is brought from the telephone exchange building to new green roadside cabinets.

From the cabinet it then travels over the existing copper line into your business or home. Download speeds of up to eighty megabits per second will be possible via this type of connection.

In some areas it will be possible to install another type of cutting-edge technology called fibre to the premises or FTTP. This is the second piece in the jigsaw. Here fibre is brought directly from the exchange into businesses and homes, bypassing the copper network completely. This will bring even faster download speeds up to 300 megabits per second.

Next will come solutions for exchange only lines. These connect premises which are very close by or perhaps much further away directly to the Exchange Building.

Finally there will be some places where it will not be possible to install a fibre optic connection. BT is trialling alternative technologies to bring faster broadband to these areas, such as wireless, satellite and TV white spaces. BT's advanced copper broadband Ethernet services will also play an important role as they continue to be rolled out across the UK.

Crucially BT's network is open to all communications providers. This provides customers with a choice of service providers, keeping competition high and prices low.

In reality each of the technologies that make up the jigsaw will become available in different areas at different times. Not all of one area will go live on the same day, and not every technology will be used in each area.

But when the jigsaw is complete the UK will have one of the best superfast broadband infrastructures in the world - which will last for decades to come.

We would strongly recommend taking a look at the video if you can as the graphics really do bring the build to life. It's available from our home page: <http://www.cswbroadband.org.uk>

Warwickshire's Rural Growth Network (RGN)

Warwickshire's rural areas have good business start-up rates. However, these businesses tend to remain small and fail to experience growth, so the Warwickshire Rural Growth Network has funded a number of partners and projects which aim to help existing rural businesses grow and is doing this by:

- Providing specialist coaching, mentoring and networking;
- Putting a focus on innovation and technology;
- Providing a range of finance opportunities and specialist advice to help businesses access the right one for them; and
- Creating a new Rural Innovation Centre at Stoneleigh Park, linked to further centres in north and south Warwickshire.
- The RGN is also providing support for new start-ups and there are specific targets for women-led enterprise in the start-up support, business growth, small business loan and micro enterprise grants activities.

The RGN estimates that these activities will result in: 400 businesses assisted, 120 new business start-ups and 500 new or safeguarded jobs by March 2015.

For more information on the activities of the RGN and the areas of Warwickshire included in the RGN area, please look at the website: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/ruralgrowthnetwork or call on 01926 412709

Coventry Voucher Scheme

This month Coventry City Council is launching a £2.6m scheme which is funded by BDUK under the Super Connected Cities programme. The project will offer superfast broadband connection vouchers to SME's in the City. This is a great opportunity for businesses to claim up to £3,000 (excl. vat) towards the connection costs associated with upgrading their broadband. This may involve a range of technologies including cabinet upgrades or fibre on demand (where available) or even wireless. It should be noted that under the terms of the funding this offer is only available to businesses located within the Coventry City Council area and that timescales are short since the project ends in March 2015. For more information visit <https://www.connectionvouchers.co.uk>

Questions and Answers

My area was to be covered under the commercial rollout by now but BT say they won't be doing it. What can you do to help?

Unfortunately the current funding does not cover this cabinet as it was stated as being covered under the commercial rollout. However, any information relating to a cabinet that is in a commercial area but not being upgraded is useful as it allows reclassification for inclusion into the project's intervention area. The availability of new money which is due to be announced shortly by the Government is designed to address issues such as this. As soon as we receive details of the new money we will be starting work to model where this can be spent.

When will the project be complete by?

The network deployment under the current funding is planned to be completed by Spring 2016

There is still a large area in the region that will not be included in the fibre roll-out either as part of this project or as part of the commercial roll-out and yet communities in these areas are crying out for improved broadband speeds. What plans if any do you have for addressing this?

This project is a stepping stone to the EU targets for 2020 of all Europeans having access to broadband above 30 Mbps and 50% connected to and using 100 Mbps. Additional government funds are proposed in the future to enable this to happen and we aim to increase the fibre footprint as soon as money is available.

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-gas>

Send this email on to all your contacts! We need to reach as many people as possible as quickly as possible. Please send this email to your contacts and encourage them to send it further. It's probably best to remove the contact details above our logo at the top of the email otherwise it could get to be a very long string before the email itself appears!

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. Logos have been removed to reduce file size for emailing.