



Bringing faster broadband to our rural areas Project Update December 2018

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

If you would like a Word version of this newsletter please email: broadband@cswbroadband.org.uk

[Sign up to receive this e-newsletter](#) direct to your inbox and for information about progress on your cabinet or exchange-only line.

Over 65000 properties able to connect to the fibre network

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Over 65,000 premises now able to connect to the fibre network

Over 65,000 households and businesses are now able to get high-speed broadband across the Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire sub-region thanks to the work of the CSW Broadband Project over the last four and a half years.

This is a real step-change and shows that this public investment is making massive improvements to our local infrastructure in areas that would not have been reached through commercial providers' broadband roll-out plans.

While CSW is pleased with this progress, we realise that there is still a great deal of work to do in the remainder of Contract 2 and Contract 3 as we take the fibre network even further.

Now that we are reaching out into more challenging areas and using technologies that are more complex, some delays to the advertised programme outlined on our [Rolling 12-month Plan](#) webpage are, unfortunately, inevitable.

Wherever possible, the **Contract 2 – Delayed Upgrades** table on our [Rolling 12-month Plan](#) aims to give residents an overview of the reasons for any delays along with the dates that Openreach expect the work to be completed by. We will obviously update this information should any further delays occur to try and keep you in the loop.

Superfast Take-up funding secured

The CSW Broadband Project recently submitted a bid to DCMS – The Department of Digital, Culture, Media & Sport - for a slice of their Superfast Take-up Fund. The purpose of this funding is to help projects like ours ‘spread the word’ about the availability of superfast broadband so that residents are able to take full advantage of these services for both business and home use.

We have now received confirmation that we have been successful in our bid. We will be using this funding to target areas that already have superfast broadband but where take-up of these services has been lower and slower than expected.

Although our project is already performing well above the national average, we believe that these targeted activities will help to drive take-up of superfast broadband services even more, bringing more gainshare back into the project for re-investment, enabling us to extend the network in our area even further.

Superfast broadband in your area - information for parish council websites

Once a cabinet goes live, we aim to inform as many people as we can within that community who will be able to benefit from that upgrade. However, despite an extensive database of over 11000 contacts across the CSW region, we need further help to ‘spread the word’ about where superfast broadband is available.

A relatively cheap and effective way of doing this is to collaborate with local parish councils by providing customised content, which they can upload to their website. Through January and early February, we will therefore be emailing each parish council where the CSW Broadband Project has extended the fibre network, outlining the benefits of broadband as well as providing information on:

- The name of the cabinet / structure that has been upgraded and the area served by the upgrade
- How residents can find out if they have benefited from one of the upgrades in their area
- What residents and businesses need to do to order a superfast broadband service

Better Broadband Subsidy Scheme & Gigabit Voucher updates

The Better Broadband Subsidy Scheme that was set up by the UK government to provide access to a subsidised broadband installation to homes and businesses that were unable to access a broadband service with a download speed of at least 2Mbps and who weren't going to benefit from the superfast broadband rollout, is due to end on 31st December 2018.

As it currently stands, applicants can apply for vouchers up until 31st December but no applications will be accepted after this time. However, discussions about the future of the scheme are currently ongoing and we will update residents of any decision that is reached regarding this in our next newsletter.

In November, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport also made changes to the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme, meaning that the maximum amount that can be claimed for a business voucher was reduced from £3,000 to £2,500 to make sure that the scheme reaches even more people with full fibre connectivity.

Residents are still able to benefit from the scheme with a voucher worth up to £500 if used as part of a group project. To find out more about the Gigabit Broadband Voucher Scheme visit <https://gigabitvoucher.culture.gov.uk>

Free support and advice on IT and broadband for businesses

Businesses across Coventry and Warwickshire are being urged not to let slow broadband or outdated IT stand in the way of growth and to tap into free advice and support.

The [Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce](#) says that sluggish broadband speeds and a lack of knowledge of which technology can help a business to grow is holding back hundreds of companies from expanding.

The Chamber is offering free, impartial advice and support to businesses across the region to help them make better-informed decisions about finding the right systems and about the funding available, depending on eligibility, to increase broadband speeds.

Neil Batchelor, a Chamber ICT advisor said: "Better IT and faster broadband can boost a business's bottom line – it's just important to understand what steps to take to ensure you are investing in the right technology, not just for growth now but for the future."

This activity forms part of the Project: 'Extending superfast network and building SME ICT capability across Coventry and Warwickshire'. If you want to upgrade your broadband or IT systems but are not sure what to do next, contact the Chamber on 024 7665 4321 or email ict-advisors@cw-chamber.co.uk

How to save money shopping on Amazon

Amazon is the biggest name in online shopping and most of us have shopped with them at some point because it is often so cheap and convenient. However, Money Saving Expert's recently

published [Amazon Deals Finder](#) guide gives 23 tips to help slash prices and save even more money when you shop with them.

The link above will also take you to the Amazon Discount Finder Tool, which finds secret 75%+ off bargains on electronics, clothes, beauty products and more. It also provides details on how you can track price reductions and beat delivery charges – ideal if you are looking for some last minute Christmas bargains.

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.

What is FTTP on Demand?

We have had many enquiries recently where the [BT Broadband Availability Checker](#) suggests that a product called 'Fibre on Demand' is available to residents, offering speeds of up to 330Mbps.

This is NOT the same as the native Fibre to the Premise, (listed as WBC FTTP on the BT Broadband Availability Checker) that is being installed to many areas through the CSW Broadband Project. Although these two solutions function in identical ways, their cost, contract and deployment methods have tended to be very different.

With the WBC FTTP that we are installing, the fibre optic cable will have been installed outside your property (e.g. down your street), which makes it fairly cheap to get connected.

By comparison, Fibre on Demand is designed to be requested '*on demand*', in Fibre to the Cabinet (FTTC) capable areas. Residents requesting this service will then pay for the installation of fibre from the cabinet to their property, which can prove to be extremely expensive.

Because of the high costs involved (and often the requirement for a much longer than standard contract), very few providers actually offer Fibre on Demand. [Cerberus Networks](#) and [FluidOne](#) are two that we are aware of but there may be others as well.

Fibre on Demand is therefore likely to remain a niche product for those who are prepared to pay the additional installation charges and a higher ongoing monthly cost.

Will I automatically get a superfast service once the new fibre cabinet is connected to the exchange (or is FTTP enabled)?

No. To take advantage of superfast speeds, you will need to order a superfast broadband package through your chosen Internet Service Provider (ISP). This is what we suggest you do.

First of all, enter your landline or address into the [BT Broadband Availability Checker](#).

If superfast is available, either 'VDSL Range A & B' or 'WBC FTTP' will be listed under 'Featured Products' with the speeds you are likely to achieve. Our [How to use the BT Broadband Availability Checker](#) webpage will help you make sense of these results.

We then suggest that you use an impartial comparison site such as [Money Saving Expert](#) or [uSwitch](#) to find and order a superfast package, which meets your usage requirements.

If you are able to order an FTTP service as a result of the upgrade work that has been carried out in your area, our [Fibre to the Premises \(FTTP\)](#) webpage will provide you with more information on this process.

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:

Follow us on [Facebook](#)

Follow us on [Twitter](#)

Join us on [LinkedIn](#)

Email us!

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.