

Bringing faster broadband to our rural areas

Project Update December 2016

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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.

344 structures live to date

Over 56,000 properties able to connect to the fibre network

Topics in this edition:

What a year that was!

Get set for smart TV

BT ordered to split legally from Openreach by Ofcom

Cybercrime Survey

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Questions and Answers

What a year that was!

2016 was quite a year for the CSW Broadband team: over the year we have:

- Commenced the rollout of Contract 2, Part 1
- Upgraded 113 structures (33% increase)
- 13,000 additional properties connected to the fibre network
- Increased our take-up from 24% to 38%
- Launched the [Better Broadband Subsidy Scheme](#) for premises with less than 2Mbps
- Seen our first Exchange Only (EO) lines go live
- Submitted an application for £4.3m Local Growth Deal funding to the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (awaiting decision)
- Run the Public Consultation for Contract 3 (now closed)
- Submitted a bid for £5.8m ERDF (EU) funding (awaiting decision)
- Requested modelling for an additional £2m from BT. This will form Contract 2, Part 2

- Assisted residents at Westwood Heath with their Community Fibre project, and helped them to get funding through the Better Broadband Scheme

In the next few weeks we should be receiving the results of our two funding bids, launching the procurement for Contract 3, and receiving the results of the modelling for Contract 2, Part 2 – as well as continuing the rollout of the existing programme.

Get set for smart TV

We've had Black Friday and Cyber Monday, and soon we'll be getting the Christmas/January/(most of the year?) sales. Many people will be buying or upgrading a smart TV, but one thing that often gets overlooked is that no matter how good the TV, if the signal is poor then you will never get the best performance.

According to Which? "Some 96% of UK households now have access to digital TV according to the 2016 Ofcom survey. The way that we use and access media is changing, with older generations more likely to watch live TV and under 25s to use catch-up, streaming or video-on-demand services.

"We want to watch what we want, when we want it – but for homes built before the digital revolution, delivering modern media through old-fashioned wiring is a tall order."

Whether you receive your signal through a TV aerial, extension point or WiFi, this article from Which? on how to [improve your aerial performance and get set for smart TV](#) has useful information that you should consider.

BT ordered to split legally from Openreach by Ofcom

You may have heard in the press recently that Telecoms regulator Ofcom has ordered BT to separate legally from its Openreach division, which runs the UK's broadband infrastructure, saying that Openreach should become a distinct company within the BT group.

For more information [see this article on the BBC website](#).

This announcement is not expected to have any impact on the current CSW Broadband contracts with BT, since we are contracted with BT Group which is the umbrella holding company for all BT enterprises.

Cybercrime Survey

This year, a new [cybercrime survey](#) is being run by the Warwickshire Observatory and inviting people to share their experiences of online crime and, through a series of questions, asks how safe people feel online.

This latest survey will seek to examine how the picture has changed across Warwickshire over the past 12 months and whether residents are more aware of the dangers that may be posed online, and the things that we can all do to minimise these risks.

The survey is also running across West Mercia, West Midlands and Staffordshire policing areas which will allow the Observatory to assess the scale of the problem across a wider region.

Copy for your own website or newsletter

We regularly produce updates of around 350 words that can be used on your own website or in newsletters. There are a selection of articles available for download and you can select the most appropriate depending on where your particular area is in the rollout pipeline. Copy can be found at: <http://www.cswbroadband.org.uk/about-the-project/copy-to-use-on-your-own-website-newsletters-or-flyers/>

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.

Wouldn't it make more sense to upgrade all cabinets connected to an exchange?

This is not as straightforward as it may appear. Not all cabinets were due for upgrade during Contract 1, or even under Contract 2 Part 1. This may be because some are harder to reach than others, or because they do not score highly on our benefits index. This was developed at the outset of the project and prioritises areas across the whole project area.

The priorities for the project are to:

- ensure a network deployment that contributes the most to the underlying fibre infrastructure across the sub-region
- remove the barrier of connectivity for businesses to do business in the sub-region
- develop a mechanism that ensures that local outcomes reflect the amounts contributed
- benefit the maximum number of citizens.

The key one of these priorities is to get the fibre as far as possible, therefore not all infrastructure off a single exchange will be upgraded at the same time.

Why can't residents piggy back onto commercial leased lines?

Leased lines are private fibre connections that are installed by companies who need to have good connectivity. They cost many tens of thousands of pounds to put in and carry a premium monthly rental charge. Therefore any company that is prepared to incur these costs for a premium product would not expect to find it being shared with the local community.

Imagine that you had bought yourself a top-of-the-range car. You have taxed and insured it and made sure that it is fully roadworthy. You would not expect your neighbours to come round and demand to use it for taking the children to school, to do their shopping or to take their rubbish to the tip!

How is it that some premises will get fibre but not superfast?

Some premises will be connected to the fibre network, but still have speeds of less than 24Mbps due to a number of factors, including the distance to their street cabinet. Additionally, some premises connected to fibre will have speeds in excess of 24Mbps as FTTC (Fibre to the Cabinet) delivers speeds of up to 80Mbps.

It should be noted that in some areas people have been advised that there is an issue with the condition of the existing copper telephone lines. As many of these were installed many years ago and were not intended for data transmission this is hardly surprising. If this applies to you then the matter should be taken up with your telecoms provider, as it is outside the remit of this project.

BT has a product called [Unlimited Faster Broadband](#) that offers up to 18Mbps. Availability will depend on you being able to connect to a fibre cabinet, but your predicted speed being below superfast levels. The availability is likely to depend on the infrastructure between your home and the fibre cabinet.

We have had reports that some residents have experienced difficulties in ordering this service, but we have been assured that the BT sales teams should now be up to speed (pun intended!) with this service. So, if you do experience any problems please let us know and we'll pass the information on to BT.

Sky is also trialing a product called Sky Fibre Lite, which also offers up to 18Mbps, although this is not yet generally available. This is also fed from the BT Openreach fibre network so does depend on you being connected to a fibre cabinet.

More frequently asked broadband questions can be found on our website at: <http://www.cswbroadband.org.uk/faq>

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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