

Broadband Champions Update - November 2013

Superfast broadband is here!

Superfast broadband has arrived with the first new green cabinets going live with fibre this month under the Connecting Cambridgeshire programme – and more on the way.

Connecting Cambridgeshire celebrated the first of many new fibre broadband cabinets to go live by unveiling a new green cabinet in the rural village of Grafham on Monday 25 November.

The roadside cabinet is one of ten new cabinets around the county to be connected to the fibre network. New cabinets have also gone live in parts of Buckden, Cambridge (Coleridge and Queen Edith's), Offord D'Arcy, St Ives, Somersham and Whittlesey - extending the existing fibre coverage delivered under BT's commercial plans - with more to follow over the coming months.

More than 1500 homes and businesses linked to these cabinets will be able to receive faster broadband speeds of 24Mbps and higher before Christmas by upgrading to high speed fibre broadband with a wide choice of internet service providers. [Read the news release here.](#)

Cutting the ribbon, Leader of Cambridgeshire County Council, Councillor Martin Curtis said: "We know many people have been eagerly anticipating the first phase of the roll-out since the signing of the contract with BT in March. I am delighted that we have achieved our promise to see our investment start delivering fibre broadband for homes and businesses before the end of this year. "

Huntingdonshire MP Jonathan Djanogly said: "This is a historic occasion which is going to make a significant difference to my constituents' lives; for busy households and families, and for local businesses' profitability...it is another step towards the re-vitalisation of our rural communities."

Bill Murphy, Managing Director of Next Generation Access for BT, said: "We learned early on in this project that Cambridgeshire is very ambitious for its people and its businesses. We were challenged to go far and go fast; we are ahead of schedule although it is a huge engineering task. The broadband champions tell me people in this village are going from 4 Mbps broadband to superfast speeds up to 79 Mbps and that's what it's all about."

Broadband Champions praised

All the speakers at the launch event praised our Broadband Champions for their fantastic support - the Connecting Cambridgeshire programme



Going Live at Grafham: Broadband Champions Alastair Brydon and Chris Bulow celebrate one of the first cabinets to go live with Huntingdonshire MP Jonathan Djanogly and Bill Murphy, Managing Director of Next Generation Access

Cambridgeshire County Councillor Ian Bates, Cabinet Member for Growth and Planning, said: “This event is an opportunity to thank many of the people who have worked together to bring superfast broadband to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. They include County, District and Parish councils, BT, Openreach, and Broadband Delivery UK and our partners in business, health and education, as well as the Connecting Cambridgeshire team.

“I would particularly like to thank our Broadband Champions for their support for the programme, which has made all the difference. We now have over 100 champions across the county who will be helping people to realise the benefits of superfast broadband as the roll-out gets underway.”

Grafham Broadband Champions Alastair Brydon and Chris Bulow provided ‘case studies’ of local businesses and families willing to talk to the media about how they will benefit from upgrading to superfast broadband, as well as being interviewed themselves. The dynamic duo have kept residents informed through regular updates and Q&As on the village website and will be hosting a Connecting Cambridgeshire display and ‘superfast surgery’ at the Grafham Christmas Fayre on Saturday 7 December.

Spaldwick Broadband Champion Mark Heath took excellent photographs and made a video of the launch event, which can be seen on his [website](#).

Thanks also to broadband champions and Twitter followers for your messages welcoming the news.

Spreading the message

The launch of Connecting Cambridgeshire’s first fibre cabinets to go live attracted wide media coverage by television, radio, newspapers, broadband websites and on Twitter. This helps to let people know that the Connecting Cambridgeshire superfast broadband roll-out is now underway across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and stimulates interest in the programme.

You can support this by encouraging people to visit the ‘my area’ pages on the Connecting Cambridgeshire website to find out when they can expect to get superfast broadband in their area. We’ve added a map showing where cabinets have gone live with fibre broadband and a ‘How to get superfast broadband’ page with advice about upgrading and some useful superfast Q&As.

Our Connecting Cambridgeshire display stand with posters, postcards and balloons is available for community events to highlight the arrival of superfast broadband and explain what happens next.

Look out for our Openreach vans

Openreach has several teams of engineers working around the county in a concerted effort to get the fibre roll-out underway before the winter sets in. Look out for the new Openreach vans with Connecting Cambridgeshire ‘Fibre broadband is here’ stickers on the back.

Over the next two years, BT’s local network business Openreach will extend the fibre network by upgrading over 100 exchanges, installing around 500 new green cabinets and hundreds of miles of fibre optic cables.

Capturing new cabinets on camera

More and more new green street cabinets are appearing ready to be linked to the new fibre network. Our broadband champions are keeping a close eye on the latest activity in their areas and we are inviting everyone to send us photos of the new cabinets and roll-out work to share.

Please email your photos to contact@ConnectingCambridgeshire.co.uk, or via Twitter @connectingcams These will be added to the excellent photographic record of installation work

around the county being maintained by Broadband Champion and telecoms expert Mark Heath at <http://www.markheathphotography.com/Galleries/Cambridgeshire-broadband>

Destination Digital is on the way

Destination Digital has been chosen as the name for the new business support project within the Connecting Cambridgeshire programme.

This exciting project launches at the end of January 2014 and will support small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough to achieve better connectivity, be more innovative, adopt broadband-enabled technologies, and boost productivity – with over £4.5m funding available.

Businesses can [register their interest](#) now and be the first to receive more details of how to apply for funding and invitations to forthcoming events.

Broadband boosts the UK economy

An [expert report](#) has revealed that for every £1 the Government is investing in broadband, the UK economy will benefit by £20.

The UK Broadband Impact Study – Impact Report, by analysts SQW (with Cambridge Econometrics) says the Government's investment in superfast broadband will deliver a major boost to the UK economy and will also make a real impact on the way we live - from working at home to watching TV online.

The study is the most in-depth and rigorous examination of the impact of broadband in the UK, and looks at the economic, environmental and social benefits of superfast broadband.

As well as the return on every £1, key findings include: significant short-term boost to the UK economy as the network construction adds around £1.5 billion to the economy; adding £0.5 billion and about 11,000 jobs in 2014 alone; long-term growth to the UK economy with public investment increasing annual GVA by £6.3 billion and causing a net increase of 20,000 jobs in the UK by 2024; household savings of £45 million a year by 2024 made through people being able to work from home more.

Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Maria Miller said: "What this report shows us is that as well as superfast broadband being good for economic growth it will make even more of a positive impact on the way we live, helping us work more productively and get online faster.

Keep in touch – and send us your cabinet photos.

The Connecting Cambridgeshire team

The Connecting Cambridgeshire team can be contacted by email at contact@connectingcambridgeshire.co.uk if you have any further queries.