Welcome to the autumn edition of our Superfast Worcestershire Newsletter

Thank you for registering your interest in the Superfast Worcestershire Programme, as the first leaves of autumn start to fall we’re delighted to announce that over 60,000 premises can now sign up for fibre broadband as a result of the Superfast Worcestershire Programme. New cabinets are going live on a weekly basis so please keep checking the cabinet status page on our website for the latest deployment news.

As the nights draw in it’s a great time to plan how to make the most of your faster fibre broadband connection. Our e-newsletter keeps you up to date with latest news and developments, so please forward this newsletter to family, friends or colleagues who want fast fibre broadband.

- Already, one in three households and businesses have signed up for the faster services

- Target of 90% of Worcestershire businesses able to access fibre broadband achieved as a result of the programme

- The next phase of deployment is underway, the Superfast Extension Programme. A large number of cabinets are already being built and some have already gone live

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Target of 90% of county businesses able to access fibre broadband achieved

The number of Worcestershire businesses able to get high-speed fibre broadband has more than doubled in two years, thanks to the Superfast Worcestershire Programme. The County Council revealed it had achieved its ‘Open for Business’ target of making fibre broadband available to 90 per cent of businesses in the county in August, and this number will continue to grow as further fibre is deployed.

One of the businesses quick to take advantage of the new service at Strensham Business Park in Strensham is rural chartered surveyors, Carver Knowles. Andrew Troughton, Managing Director, said:

“Superfast fibre broadband is transforming our client relationships, making us more effective and saving us money. In a normal day’s work we have to send lots of emails with large file attachments and most planning applications are now done online so that means more large files to upload. We can update our own website and do everything online we need to quickly and effectively to offer our clients the standout service they need – and we want to provide. As far as broadband is concerned we now have everything we need to make the business run smoothly.”

To read more about Carver Knowles, and other people and businesses who are benefitting from superfast broadband, visit the case study page on our website.

More areas scheduled to go live in Worcestershire

Roll-out is progressing well and we have moved into the next phase of deployment, the Superfast Extension Programme. A large number of cabinets are already being built and some cabinets have already gone live. Locations going live include homes and businesses served by Ombersley, Fernhill Heath, Wolverley, Inkberrow, Pershore, Severn Stoke and Bromsgrove telephone exchanges.

Check out the cabinet status page on our website to see estimated go live dates for cabinets across the county. This list is updated as and when cabinets go live, or if they are moved in the roll-out plan. Please help us spread the word about our programme by encouraging friends and family in Worcestershire to register for updates via our website, and keep an eye out for our banners highlighting when superfast broadband is available in your area!
Superfast Worcestershire boosts business in rural Strensham

Advantage Chemicals, based at Strensham Business Park (one of the latest areas to benefit from faster fibre broadband) recently upgraded to the new service. Company director, Eilish Harman, explains how complicated life used to be before her company enjoyed reliable, superfast broadband service.

“I used to have to go home to update our online product factsheets, or to do anything with a spreadsheet that needed downloaded information – it was really frustrating trying to do that in the office. For that matter, uploading material to keep our website up-to-date was also a pain – so I ended up doing that at home as well. Goodness knows how much time the business has lost as a result of poor broadband service. Definitely not the best way to run a small, ambitious business!

“But what’s really exciting about this superfast connection is that we can now think seriously about offering new services based on our website – expanding our successful business and building a broader appeal among our customers by giving them more. So we’re now looking afresh at how our site works, and a redesign is a distinct possibility. We simply wouldn’t have considered it as a possibility before we had this fibre link.”

— Advantage Chemicals

Good News for Dave!

It’s always good to hear from people who are benefitting from faster speeds once they have upgraded to fibre broadband, especially after a long wait. Dave Yates from Naunton, who is connected to Cabinet 3 off the Upton-upon-Severn exchange, contacted us to say:

“The local cabinet went live a week or two ago. I didn’t believe it would work. We have been on 750kbps for as long as I can remember. Everyone said we were too far from the thingy, and lots of old copper wires down country lanes meant we would forever be on pigeon mail. Nevertheless, I took the risk. I paid for the fibre upgrade. An engineer phoned today, he said he was switching it on. I got home and Voila!!! 20Mbps!”

— Dave Yates – Facebook, July 2016

Could you be a broadband community champion?

We are looking for people to volunteer as broadband ‘community champions’ across the County to help raise awareness of the benefits of fibre broadband to people and businesses in our communities.

Champions act as the eyes and ears of the programme, alerting the programme team to local opportunities. This could be anything from telling us about a local event that you think we could attend, highlighting potential case studies, distributing leaflets or putting up posters in your school, village hall or place of work. You don’t need special technical knowledge, the most important qualities are enthusiasm and a desire to make a difference in your local community.

Could you be one of our community champions? If you are interested please drop us an e-mail using “community champion” as the title and we’ll send you an action pack containing all you need to spread the good news in your location. Click here to email us.
Wi-Fi sticker for businesses and their customers

MP Karen Lumley recently joined representatives from the Superfast Worcestershire programme at the Nevill Arms in Redditch, a business which is benefitting from fibre under the roll-out and now able to offer free Wi-Fi to customers. A glass was raised to toast the launch of a new sticker campaign to raise awareness of the availability of free Wi-Fi at businesses in Worcestershire, and to celebrate an increase in availability of fibre broadband for the county’s businesses.

More firms are now able to offer their customers free, fast and reliable Wi-Fi as a result of the roll-out of the technology. The sticker campaign is part of the programme’s continuing support for the growth and development of Worcestershire businesses. The new eye-catching stickers can be used by pubs, cafes and other businesses to highlight where free Wi-Fi is available.

Superfast Programme Team do a runner!

On 18th September the Superfast Worcestershire Programme entered a team of Worcestershire County Council and BT employees for the Worcester City 10k run. All funds raised are being donated to Acorns Children’s Hospice Trust, which is a registered charity offering a network of care for life limited and life threatened babies, children and young people and their families, across the heart of England. If you’d like to support this great charity please follow the link here to make a donation - over £700 has been raised so far.

‘Mole’ helps make light work of Superfast Worcestershire as fibre broadband roll-out ‘ploughs’ on

This may be an increasingly common sight as the Superfast Worcestershire roll-out of fast fibre broadband continues to extend to some of the more remote parts of the county. Using a mole plough allows fibre optic cable to be laid more easily and quickly, minimising disruption to motorists using the county’s narrow, rural lanes. The specialist machinery - seen here at work in South Worcestershire - creates a channel through the soil just big enough to enable engineers to lay the ducting, through which to pull the fibre optic cable through later.
BT crowdfund for community fibre partnerships

Around 5% of the UK isn’t covered in existing fibre broadband roll-out plans, if your home or business is in this 5% have you thought about exploring a privately funded fibre solution?

BT has a dedicated team focused on helping communities understand how they can help bring fibre to their local area. To date BT has worked with hundreds of different groups and a new co-funding model helps bring high speed fibre broadband to hard-to-reach communities, as well as smaller business parks.

This means that wherever fibre broadband is deployed, everyone can upgrade to the service via any provider, bringing plenty of choice to consumers and local businesses. BT can work with you to find out if a community project could be right for your area and provide you with the tools to understand and establish local demand. An added bonus is that there is no VAT for residential community partnerships!

For further information and to see some community fibre case studies visit: www.communityfibre.bt.com.

Keep your finger on the pulse with our interactive map

See at a glance which parts of Worcestershire have already been enabled for fibre broadband, and check whether you can get it yet! Thousands of people across Worcestershire are now able to order fibre broadband. Our Interactive Map is a fantastic tool that is updated weekly and allows you to keep your finger on the pulse of our exciting programme.

Please help us spread the word and encourage friends and family in Worcestershire to register via our website:

www.superfastworcestershire.co.uk

Hungry for fibre?

You can keep up to date with the latest news, developments and competitions on Superfast Worcestershire via the website, Facebook and Twitter. If you have general questions about the Superfast Worcestershire programme please visit our FAQ section at: www.superfastworcestershire.com/faqs or e-mail us at superfast@worcestershire.gov.uk.

Thank you for your interest in the Superfast Worcestershire programme.

Click Here to Sign Up Now. To discover faster broadband benefits – SIGN UP now