Welcome to the Winter edition of our Superfast Worcestershire newsletter

With Christmas nearly here we’re delighted to announce that our programme is going further with a multi-million pound new investment which will help make the county ‘superfit’ for the 21st century. The £6.2 million expansion is expected to extend the superfast broadband roll-out to more than 5,300 further Worcestershire homes and businesses.

“The County Council’s continued commitment to improving the level of broadband coverage in Worcestershire shows that we recognise access to high-speed broadband is crucial for residents and businesses alike. We recently announced that we are expanding in order to connect an additional 5,300 premises, which proves that we are determined to be one of the best connected counties in the UK. I’m delighted that our programme is going further.”

Cllr Ken Pollock, Cabinet Member responsible for Economy and Infrastructure

Currently around 250,000 premises in Worcestershire are able to connect to fibre broadband. Of these, over 69,000 premises are able to connect as a result of the Superfast Worcestershire Broadband Programme, and the number continues to rise.

Superfast broadband makes a great gift for Christmas and the good news is it’s becoming available to more and more homes and businesses across Worcestershire every week.

Please keep checking our website for the latest deployment news

In this edition of our newsletter, find out:

• How we’re making Worcestershire ‘superfit’ for the 21st Century with our latest expansion

• Why you should make your Christmas superfast

• How we’re supporting communities in obtaining a superfast broadband service through two new schemes

...and much more!
Multi-million pound Superfast Worcestershire expansion will help make county ‘superfit’ for the 21st century

A £6.2 million expansion is expected to extend the superfast broadband roll-out to more than 5,300 further Worcestershire households and businesses. Worcestershire County Council has signed a new contract with co-funding partner BT Group, which extends the Superfast Worcestershire programme into a third phase, to reach some of the county’s more remote communities. When work is complete, more than 96% of Worcestershire homes and businesses will be able to access superfast broadband.

Superfast Worcestershire is part of the Government’s Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) programme. The latest phase of the roll-out includes around £1 million funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), £3.7 million from BT Group and £1.5 million from BDUK.

One of the reasons we chose Blackminster Business Park for Lift UP Gym, aside from our rural community focus, was wi-fi availability. We offer our members and class instructors free wi-fi - something people increasingly expect when out and about. Having a fibre connection is helping to grow our customer base and allows us to market our new gym and exercise classes online easily and efficiently. It’s good news that now even more people will be able to access fibre broadband.”

Engineers from Openreach, the business responsible for Britain’s largest phone and broadband network, will begin work on the new phase in early 2018 and upgrades are due to be completed in 2019. It builds on the two earlier stages of the programme.

Openreach will be using a mixture of technologies, including Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) technology capable of delivering ultrafast download speeds of up to 1 Gigabit per second (Gbps) and upload speeds of up to 220Mbps.

The roll-out will focus on increasing speeds to local businesses, in line with Worcestershire County Council’s commitment to being ‘Open for Business’. Around 90 per cent of structures completed in the third phase will be FTTP.

Councillor Ken Pollock, Worcestershire County Council Cabinet Member Responsible for Economy and Infrastructure said: “The County Council’s continued commitment to improve the level of broadband coverage in Worcestershire shows that we recognise access to high-speed broadband is crucial for residents and businesses alike. These new contracts prove that we are determined to be one of the best connected counties in the UK, and I’m delighted that our programme is going further.”
Broadband voucher scheme for Worcestershire businesses

If you run a business and aren’t able to benefit from superfast broadband, our upcoming voucher scheme could help you get connected. Vouchers up to the value of £1,500 will be allocated to eligible businesses that aren’t in our (or commercial) roll-out plans, and want to upgrade to at least superfast speeds.

Once the scheme is up and running, we will be in touch with businesses that have completed our past surveys.

If you are not sure if you are on our list please get in touch: superfast@worcestershire.gov.uk. Please visit our website for full details and eligibility requirements.

New scheme to help communities not able to access superfast broadband get connected

For those communities that are currently unable to access superfast broadband, and won’t benefit from our or commercial deployment, we are launching a Local Body Partnership Scheme. This scheme will support communities in obtaining a superfast broadband service.

The scheme has been set up to complement the Openreach Community Fibre Partnership initiative and support local communities by providing financial support to bring superfast broadband to a community. The community will need to register an interest on the Community Fibre Partnership website in order to get a quotation for the required upgrade work. Please visit our website for full details and eligibility requirements.

Keep your finger on the pulse with our interactive map

See at a glance which parts of Worcestershire will benefit from the next phase of our roll-out.

Our deployment map has just been updated to show the areas covered by our latest expansion. Please encourage friends and family to find out if they can upgrade to superfast broadband by visiting our website and contacting an Internet Service Provider. Anyone who can’t yet upgrade can register their interest in superfast broadband via our website.

Superfast Worcestershire is a partnership between

European Union
European Regional Development Fund
Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport
GROWTH DEALS
Worcestershire County Council
Openreach
Seven reasons why you should make your Christmas superfast

It’s the Christmas gift that keeps on giving - a present that the whole family will love. And, what’s more, it doesn’t need batteries. Yes, superfast broadband makes a great gift for Christmas – remember to contact an Internet Service Provider to upgrade to the faster service.

One of the beauties of superfast is that it allows everyone at home to do their own thing online, faster, and all at the same time. So, for example, over the Christmas holidays it means the kids can be kept entertained with a festive film while mum or dad hit the New Year sales online or start looking at family holidays for next year.

But remember – superfast is not just for Christmas. You’ll never get tired of enjoying the benefits.

Here we offer seven splendid reasons why superfast broadband should be top of your family’s Christmas list.

1. **Be entertained in an instant**
   Superfast broadband gives you quick and easy access to all the entertainment you could want.
   For example, getting up to speed on the week’s TV with catch-up services like BBC iPlayer and 4OD is a piece of cake. You can stream movies instantly, using services like BT Vision or Netflix, or download HD films in the time it takes to warm up a mince pie.

2. **Bring your gadgets to life**
   If Santa’s left a new game or console in your stocking this year then the blistering speed of superfast broadband makes it the ideal partner. Play uninterrupted against opponents from around the world. Superfast means your games will run like clockwork giving you a fabulous gaming experience.

3. **It’s brilliant for kids**
   Apart from all the entertainment possibilities at their fingertips, your children can give their education a real boost thanks to superfast broadband. Researching assignments, accessing online resources, doing homework – it all becomes a doddle.

4. **Fancy an easy life?**
   Then superfast is for you. From managing bank accounts, to shopping for groceries to scanning YouTube for DIY tips, superfast broadband gives you the power to organise your life beautifully from the comfort of your own armchair.

5. **Working from home – it’s a breeze**
   The high-speed connectivity offered by superfast means working from home or anywhere remote from the office is always possible. Those faster upload and download speeds make accessing work documents hassle-free. So if you do have to check a few office files over the Christmas break – at least you don’t have to travel into the office to do it!

6. **It’s brilliant for business**
   Investment in superfast broadband in Worcestershire is expected to give the local economy a massive boost, creating thousands of new jobs and start-up businesses in the next 15 years.
   It will allow existing firms to operate more efficiently and to develop new products and services and make it easier for new businesses to get started through increasing use of innovations, such as cloud computing.

7. **It’s great to stay in touch**
   It’s easy to keep in touch with far-flung friends and family around the world that you won’t see in person this Christmas. Skype or Facetime calls over superfast broadband are as smooth as that first glass of mulled wine on Christmas Eve.
Taking broadband coverage further

Worcestershire County Council is committed to taking fibre broadband coverage further. We will be investing any underspend and other funds arising from earlier contracts, and we are in the process of securing other sources of funding to continue the expansion. More details on these projects will be announced soon.

How to obtain a better service if superfast broadband isn't available to you

Despite significant investment some areas of Worcestershire aren’t currently included in commercial or Superfast Worcestershire’s roll-out plans. Please be assured that we are doing all we can to ensure Worcestershire’s residents and businesses benefit from superfast speeds. Our aim is to ensure more than 96% superfast coverage by the end of 2019. If you aren’t able to upgrade to superfast broadband and currently receive speeds of less than 2Mbps, and if you aren’t going to benefit from our latest £6.2 million expansion, we have a guide to alternative solutions which outlines options to obtaining a better service. To find out what options are available to you, click here to read the guide.

Stay one step ahead of Santa’s sleigh this Christmas with superfast broadband

With all the benefits a fast, reliable connection can bring, superfast broadband is the perfect gift for homes and businesses this Christmas. On Christmas Eve Santa’s sleigh will be travelling at 650 miles per second, (with Fibre to the Cabinet, superfast fibre broadband offers download speeds up to 80Mbps and upload speeds up to 20Mbps) so with a superfast connection you will certainly stay one step ahead of Santa’s sleigh this Christmas. If you’re struggling with slow internet speeds visit our website to find out if superfast broadband is available to you. It’s important to remember to contact an Internet Service Provider to upgrade as speeds won’t automatically improve.

From everyone in the Superfast Worcestershire team: we wish you a fibre Christmas and a superfast New Year!

Thank you for registering your interest in the Superfast Worcestershire Broadband Programme. If you want to unsubscribe from this newsletter, please click here.

Do you have a story about how superfast broadband has helped transform your lifestyle or business for the better? Share it with the Superfast Worcestershire team at:

www.superfastworcestershire.com

@SuperfastWorcs /broadbandworcs

Superfast Worcestershire is a partnership between