COVENTRY · SOLIHULL · WARWICKSHIRE
SUPERFAST broadband

Bringing faster broadband to our rural areas
Project Update October 2016
Please forward this email 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.

334 structures live to date
Over 53,000 properties able to connect to the fibre network

Topics in this edition:
Wave 4 announced
Contract 2, Part 2
Contract 3 – public consultation starting soon
Additional funding – update
Copy for your own website or newsletter
Questions and Answers

Wave 4 announced
We have now announced Wave 4 of Contract 2, Part 1, with 49 structures on the list. Areas that will benefit from a straightforward fibre to the cabinet upgrade, meaning that we have information about which areas will be covered are:

- Alcester 10, 14 & 15 – Covering parts of Alcester itself
- Alcester 18 – Covering an area around Arrow, to the south west of Alcester
- Astwood Bank 9 – Covering parts of Sambourne
- Moreton Morrell 3 – Covering parts of Moreton Paddox

However, the remaining 41 upgrades are to exchange-only (EO) lines. This is more complicated (and more expensive) as there are greater engineering challenges. For instance, because EO lines don't have the copper lines routed through a copper cabinet (PCP) there is no aggregation point to which we can connect the fibre cabinet (DSLAM). Therefore, we often have to install two cabinets and this creates additional

challenges in terms of location, in addition to the ones that we face for all DSLAMs with regard to the availability of power, avoiding existing services, road safety issues etc. These cabinets are shown on the rolling 12-month plan as FTTC EO (Fibre to the Cabinet, Exchange Only).

Another type of Exchange Only upgrade is when we install Fibre to the Premise (FTTP). This offers a potentially much faster connection, but does entail even more work since the fibre actually has to be routed to each individual premise. These are shown on the rolling 12-month plan as FTTP EO.

The decision whether to install FTTC EO or FTTP EO is taken on engineering logic and value for money, and is not something that we can influence.

Contract 2, Part 1, includes a considerably higher percentage of exchange only lines, and a lot of the more challenging locations that could not be brought into Contract 1. It should be noted that because of the nature of the installation, it is not until the exchange only lines have actually been connected and services are available that we will know which properties will be able to benefit from superfast broadband. This creates challenges for us in terms of giving people advance notice that superfast broadband will be available. It also means that we are unable to change the colours on the map to show that work is ongoing. In fact, you may know before us when the work has started since you will see the vans in your area!

So, what can you do to see if you are included in the upgrade?

1. Check the map to see the colour status of your area
2. Check the rolling 12-month plan to see if there is anything planned in your exchange area
3. Check the BT DSL checker to see if the service is live yet
4. Register for updates and we will let you know when you can achieve superfast speeds

Contract 2, Part 2

We are awaiting the modelling from BT for a further £9.5m coverage. This could form Contract 2, Part 2. Once we have the data it will be checked and verified prior to a Change Control being agreed to bring this into the contract. Assuming all goes well we should be able to map the additional coverage later this year.

Contract 3 – public consultation starting soon

We are making good progress on the pre-procurement work for Contract 3, which will extend the superfast broadband coverage still further. Contract 3 is very different from what has gone before because it is being run under different procurement rules, and we will no longer be using the BDUK framework agreement.

This offers real opportunities, as it means that we can now open the work up to a wider range of suppliers who will offer different technologies. We have had some really positive engagement with suppliers, some of whom will use the same technologies as BT, and others who offer wireless or purely fibre to the premise solutions. We need to understand how the market works and what the benefits and disbenefits of each solution are, so that we can be truly informed clients as we move towards tendering and evaluation.

Another difference this time around is that we will be breaking the area up into smaller lots, so as to make them more attractive to different suppliers. As far as possible, the lots will be determined to fit with the geography that is best suited to different technologies. We don't have a completely free hand in this, however, as we do need to keep the number of lots to a manageable number – probably 5 or 6 lots in total. This should mean that we will end up with 5 or 6 contracts, with a number of suppliers, providing the best possible solutions for each area. We'll give more information on lotting as the situation evolves.

In the next few days we shall be issuing a Prior Information Notice, which will alert suppliers to the upcoming opportunity, and at the end of October we shall be running a supplier day to explain our strategy to suppliers and to receive their feedback.

We are also about to start the **public consultation.** We have already asked suppliers where they plan to roll out their superfast broadband networks over the next 3 years. The data is being checked for compliance, and will be mapped in good time for the public consultation. This will give all suppliers, and members of the public, an opportunity to comment on the areas that are claimed to be covered. After the public consultation we will apply for State Aid approval, and then the areas where there is no planned commercial coverage will be eligible for intervention under Contract 3.

Once the consultation is launched, you will be able to check your area on our [Contract 3 web site pages](#) to see what the commercial suppliers have said about your area. The consultation is due to run from 5th October to 5th November 2016.

Additional funding – update

We recently received confirmation from the Department for Communities and Local Government that our outline application for European funding has been accepted, and we were invited to submit a full bid. This came shortly after the announcement that the Government would underwrite EU funding that is contracted before the Autumn Statement in November.

We have therefore been working on a very detailed application, which was submitted before the deadline, and we now await the outcome. If we are successful, this additional funding will form part of Contract 3.

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.

There is lots of jargon involved in broadband – where can I find out what the terms and abbreviations mean?

Go to the '[Jargon Buster](#)' section on our website.

How do I know which BT cabinet I am connected to?

To check which cabinet you are connected to and what speeds you might achieve visit the [BT DSL checker](#). For the best results you will need to be able to enter a BT landline number for your property. If you do not have this then you can use your address, but it may be less accurate. Do not use the postcode checker as that covers too wide an area to be of any use. It should be noted that once the service is live you are not restricted to buying a service from BT and that you can go to any Internet Service Provider (ISP). For impartial advice about ISPs visit: http://www.moneysavingexpert.com/phones/cheap-broadband

What if I am connected to the upgraded cabinet but can't get superfast speeds?

If you are some distance from the upgraded cabinet then you may not achieve superfast speeds. This is because the broadband signal degrades rapidly over a copper connection. 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:

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.

If you no longer wish to receive our updates, please click UNSUBSCRIBE.

To find out more about the project, please visit the CSW Broadband website.