NEWSLETTER 15 – March 2015

£1.2n cash injection boosts Superfast Broadband plans in the County

Almost 3,300 homes and businesses in parts of the Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone, Grange Park and Northampton town centre are all a step closer to having access to superfast broadband (download speeds above 24Mbps) thanks to an extension of the Superfast Northampton Project.

Over the past few months, the County council has been working with BT on the extension of plans being delivered as part of the first stage of the Superfast Northamptonshire project. Work to plan and build the new fibre network is underway and will be completed by the end of March 2016. More than 880 properties in Grange park and 2,400 in the Northampton are set to benefit including 180 (c. 85% superfast coverage) in the Waterside Enterprise Zone.

A £1.2m boost to investment was secured by the County Council in 2014 and includes public funds of £614,000. BT is also contributing £613,000. It brings the total value of the County Council's first contract with BT to £12.8m including £4.08m from the County Council, £3.9m from BT and £277,000 collectively from South Northamptonshire Council, Northampton Borough Council and Grange Park Parish Council.

What is in this Edition?

DEAR READER This is **a PLAIN TEXT VERSION** of our Newsletter. There are no photographs, illustrations, maps or graphics within it – it just contains the latest news in a simple format for anyone who has trouble downloading or printing our **FULL PUBLICATION VERSION** and for those Readers who may have difficulty reading text in colour. There may be some variances in content between both editions.

Grange Park was previously part of BT's commercial roll-out plans but the discovery of T-PON technology (Telephony Over Passive Optical network) changed the viability of a commercial solution. T-PON is not normally compatible with the fibre to the cabinet technology BT uses to roll out superfast broadband services. This meant that public funding was needed if an upgrade was to e built. BT has already started the planning and survey work required to determine the best solution for Grange Park.

Securing access to superfast broadband in the Enterprise Zone is strategically important for the county's economy and to maximise inward investment, growth and business retention in the area. Having access to superfast speeds of above 24Mbps (and speeds up to 80Mbps for those premises located closest to the new fibre cabinets) will help businesses to become digitally efficient and enhance business growth.

The Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone is the largest urban enterprise zone in the UK. It is made up of more than 20 sites stretching along the River Nene from Sixfields in the west, right across the town centre, it comprises global brands sitting alongside thriving small businesses, and will include the University of Northampton which has made a £330m commitment to relocate it's campuses to the Zone's eastern section.

Cllr Andre Gonzalez De Savage, County council cabinet member for Strategic Infrastructure and Public Protection, said:

"This is more great news for the county and takes superfast plans secured with public investment to over 73,850 premises. When combined with commercial coverage this means that 95% of premises in the county are expected to have access to superfast broadband once delivered".

"Securing connectivity for business is critical to support their success and the Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone continues to be a key focus for infrastructure investment for the county and borough councils".

Steve Henderson, BT's Regional Director of Next Generation Access said:

"More and more small businesses are now trading far beyond just their local area so a fibre broadband connection is a key part of a successful future for the Waterside Enterprise Zone. Equally, those living in Grange Park will be pleased to have access to superfast speeds and the many entertainment and learning opportunities it brings".

The County Council has set an ambitious target to secure countywide coverage of superfast broadband by the end of 2017, working with Government, local partners and telecoms providers. These latest plans take us another step closer towards this.

When and Where

Since Superfast Northamptonshire marked the launch of the first fibre cabinet delivered by the project in February 2014, 161 new fibre cabinets have been stood, connected and have gone 'live' to support superfast broadband services. This has involved planning and laying over 250km of new optical fibre to extend the broadband network.

Fibre coverage built through the project has now reached 39,000 premises (as of January 2015) of which over 35,700 should have access to superfast broadband (download speeds above 24Mbps). Without public funding from the County Council and BDUK, channelled through the Superfast Northamptonshire project these premises would not be benefitting from access to faster broadband services. Since our last newsletter in December the communities of Aldwincle, Charlton, East Haddon, Eydon, Hinton, Lower Boddington, Newbottle, Thorpe Manderville, Upper Boddington and Woodford Halse have gone live.

Getting superfast broadband is not automatic if you are in an upgraded area. You need to contact your internet service provider to ask

about an upgrade or go online to compare offers available by different providers who are selling services in your area. To be able to buy a fibre broadband service you normally need to have a minimum access line speed of 15Mbps.

Exchange Area	Cabs Now Live (Ref No.)	Premises passed by fibre	Superfast broadband now available to most premises in these communities *
Adderbury	5,6,7	1191 premises	Charlton, Kingsutton, Newbottle
Blisworth	1,2	578 premises	Blisworth, Milton Malsor
Bozeat	1,2,3,4,5	1169 premises	Bozeat, Grendon
Braunston	1,2,5	601 premises	Barby, Braunston
Brixworth	1,2,3,5,6,11,12	1890 premises	Brixworth, Pitsford
Broughton	1,2,4,6,7,8	1661 premises	Broughton, Mawsley Village
Burton Latimer	13	165 premises	Burton Latimer
Byfield	1,2,5,7,8,10,12	1867 premises	Eydon, Hinton, Lower Boddington, Upper Boddington, Woodford Halse
Clopton	2,6	188 premises	Aldwincle, Thorpe Waterville
Cogenhoe	3,6,7	807 premises	Cogenhoe, Little Houghton
Corby	41	126 premises	Parts of Corby
Daventry	48,51	606 premises	Parts of Daventry
East Haddon	3	321 premises	East Haddon
Finedon	1,3	413 premises	Finedon
Great Oakley	15	143 premises	Parts of Corby
Irthlingborough	3	132 premises	Irthlingborough
Kettering	16,47,62,63,80,82,94	614 premises	Barton Seagrave, Kettering, Warkton, Weekley
Kingsthorpe	1,3,5,11,14,16,19,26,34,38	1181 premises	Kingsley Park, Kingsthorpe
Kislingbury	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,10	2508 premises	Bugbrooke, harpole, Kislingbury, Rothersthorpe
Long Buckby	1,2,4,5,6,7,8,9	1980 premises	Long Buckby, Long Buckby Wharf, Watford
Middleton Cheney	1,2,3,5,7,8,9	1779 premises	Farthinghoe, Middleton Cheney, Thorpe Mandeville
Northampton	5,11,17,18,30,37,41,66,68,81,87,91	1822 premises	Parts of Northampton
Oundle	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,	2744	Barnwell, Oundle,

Exchange Area	Cabs Now Live (Ref No.)	Premises passed by fibre	Superfast broadband now available to most premises in these communities *
	9,10,11	premises	Polebrook
Pattishall	1,4,5	551 premises	Litchborough, Pattishall
Paulerspury	1	289 premises	Paulerspury
Raunds	21	182 premises	Ringstead
Rothwell	2,3	294 premises	Parts of Rothwell
Silverstone	1,3,7	573 premises	Silverstone, Whittlebury
Sulgrave	3,4,5	718 premises	Culworth, Helmdon, Sulgrave
Thrapston	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,11,12,13,14	4090 premises	Islip, Lowick, Thrapston, Titchmarsh, Woodford, Woodwell
Towcester	2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,18	4861 premises	Duncote, Greens Norton, Tiffield, Towcester, Wood Burcote
Weedon	1,3,4,5,6,7,8	2350 premises	Flore, Nether Heyford, Weedon Bec
Wellingborough	36,49,56	408 premises	Wellingborough
Yardley Hastings	1	280 premises	Yardley Hastings
TOTAL	**161 Fibre cabinets**	**39082 premises passed**	**74 communities**

*To get a faster broadband service, contact your internet service provider to ask about an upgrade. Please go to the Roll Out Page for more information about live coverage. www.superfastnorthamptonshire.net/roll-out-highlights/

What's coming next?

Further upgrades are now at the planning and survey stage, involving an additional 89 new fibre cabinets in 41 different exchange areas across the county and there's more to come. By the end of March 2016 over 53,400 premises in Northamptonshire will have access to superfast broadband involving the deployment of around 300 new fibre cabinets.

Cabinet Locations	No. Of cabinets to be surveyed
Blakesley	1
Brackley	1
Byfield	2
Cranford	1
Chipping Warden	1
Clipston	1
Corby	1
Crick	5
Desborough	2
Duston	2
Earls Barton	3

East Haddon	1
Elton	1
Finedon	1
Guilsborough	1
Hackleton	1
Hardingstone	5
Harrowden	1
Husbands Bosworth	1
Irthlingborough	5
Kettering	5
Kings Cliffe	1
Kingsthorpe	2
Middleton Cheney	4
Morcott	1
Moulton	2
Northampton	6
Raunds	1
Roade	7
Rockingham	5
Rothwell	3
Rushden	5
Sulgrave	1
Towcester	1
Weedon	1
Walgrave St Peters	4
Wansford	2
Welford	1
Wellingborough	1
Weston Favell	1
Yardley Gobion	2
TOTAL	**89**

NOTE: Exchanges cover a wide area. A single exchange will include many cabinets which serve different communities and premises in the exchange area. When an exchange is upgraded this does not mean that all cabinets within that exchange area are upgraded. Please refer to our interactive When and Where map to see which areas the cabinets listed above are expected to serve (yellow). Not all premises in yellow will benefit from this particular solution.

Gigaclear's roll out of ultrafast broadband begins in rural Northamptonshire

Over 5000 residential and business premises in rural Northamptonshire villages will soon be able to benefit from broadband services up to 1000Mbps as Gigaclear builds its first fibre networks in the county.

Gigaclear is an independent telecoms provider that specialises in building and operating pure fibre broadband networks supporting gigabit connections to rural communities. This Fibre to the Premise technology brings fibre all the way to your property and does not rely on the existing copper network. Gigaclear is investing £5m in Northamptonshire through its commercial plans, without the need for public funding. The company currently expects to serve as many as 30 villages across the county.

The installation of the new "ultrafast broadband cabinets" has begun in West Haddon, Guilsborough, Coton and Ravensthorpe, where four cabinets in total will boost download speeds by 70 times the rural average. In this area of Northamptonshire the plan is to reach 2500 premises across these villages and Hollowell, Creaton, Scaldwell and surrounds.

Ravensthorpe parish councillor David Herbert is thrilled at the prospect "It will move us from the digital dark ages" he said. "It will be a remarkable improvement and it means we will be able to access all kinds of facilities required for modern life".

"Joe Frost, Gigaclear's Sales and Marketing Director, said "We are very grateful for the support from Northamptonshire County Council and the local Parish Councils, especially David, a local parish councillor and broadband champion".

Another 2 cabinets have been installed in the villages of King's Cliffe and Apethorpe in East Northamptonshire. Local residents and businesses here will be able to take up ultrafast broadband services by May. Gigaclear expects to complete its installations across 20 villages in the county during 2015 and plans to extend further where there is clear demand for ultrafast services from the local communities.

Heather Smith, Deputy Leader of Northamptonshire County Council said: " I am delighted to see the work that Gigaclear is undertaking to bring ultrafast broadband to King's Cliffe and Apethorpe. This is great news as current broadband speeds are very poor. Attracting commercial investment by telecoms providers is critical if the county council's ambitious target to see full coverage by the end of 2017 is to be met. Gigaclear will provide these villages with vital ultrafast connectivity which will bring significant benefits to small local businesses, residents looking to work from home and also other social uses such as iPlayer and Smart TV's.

If you want to find out more about Gigaclear please visit www.gigaclear.com

Satellite Experience for Glapthorn Farmer – One Year On

A year ago Bruce Wilkinson, who farms almost 500 acres at Glapthorn, near Oundle in East Northamptonshire had his slow and unreliable broadband service transformed by Avonline Broadband. Bruce won free installation and supply of a new satellite broadband system as the prize for taking part in a Broadband Survey carious out by Northamptonshire County Council, working in partnership with the national Farmers Union (NFU) and Avonline Broadband.

A satellite dish was installed at Bruce's farm in just a few hours, giving him immediate access to much faster download speeds over the internet. Satellite is not classed as a 'Next Generation' broadband technology but it can provide speeds of up to 22Mbps download and 6Mbps upload speed. Avonline Broadband is one of a number of satellite service providers in the UK.

Bruce said, "Now Defra* files, that used to take an age are downloaded in seconds and can be returned just as rapidly. Complying with online return requirements simply have not been a problem since we had satellite broadband installed. It has been totally reliable, and is simply there and easy to use at all times."

Bruce, and his wife Liz, who runs an agricultural training business from home were so impressed with the improvements to their broadband speed that they have renewed their subscription. It made an impression on Bruce's son too.

"My son was told by his service provider that because of where he lives he is unlikely to be receiving any better internet access – so now he has got satellite broadband too".

Satellite broadband can be accessed in almost every location in the UK – on top of a mountain, in the middle of the countryside, in a small isolated village or a city street. Services can be affected by tree cover and bad weather.
It has proved popular with the agricultural industry where properties are located more remotely from fibre broadband networks. Avonline has connected over 2000 farming related properties across the country, including 150 in Northamptonshire.

Further information is available at www.avonlinebroadband.com or calling 0303 303 3131.

You can find out about satellite broadband providers and compare services by searching online using sites such as www.uswitch.com/broadband

*Defra is the Government Department for Environment, Food and rural Affairs.

The Evergreen Art Cafe: A local business trading globally thanks to superfast broadband

Simon Williams is the owner of the Evergreen Art Cafe in Daventry, a contemporary art gallery and a welcoming high quality cafe. Simon works hard at discovering and show casing the best UK contemporary artists. This relies on being able to download and upload large media files online to showcase artists' work to potential customers around the world. The Evergreen Art Cafe has now become on of the top 20 independent galleries in the UK.

The gallery can exhibit 120 pieces of art on its walls, but on the gallery's website and Facebook page Simon can display 1000s of paintings and prints. Access to superfast broadband significantly increases the scale of the business without having to incur the increased cost of a physically bigger gallery and can reach a much wider audience.

Fast and reliable broadband speed is vital to the Evergreen Art Cafe's business as over 60% of the sales are made online. Before the advent of superfast broadband it would take a long time to upload data due to the sheer volume and data size of images, this wasted time can be costly to a business.

Typically the gallery will show an image of the artwork presented together with a piece about the artist and a link through to their website. With superfast broadband speeds, the Art Cafe is now able to provide this high level of information and process finance applications and payments online in superfast time.

The Evergreen Art Cafe uses superfast broadband to sell its contemporary art to clients across the globe in countries such as France, China and Australia. Superfast broadband has played a key part in the success of this now international company based in a small Northamptonshire market town.

Go to www.superfastnorthamptonshire.net "Benefits" webpage to learn more about how local businesses are using superfast broadband to their benefit.

INV-ENT DIGITAL – Applications exceed expectations

INV-ENT Digital was launched by the County Council in November 2014. It is the latest initiative in support of the digital economy and offers grant funding to local SMEs (small and medium sized enterprises). It is targeted at ambitious SMEs looking to take advantage of enhanced digital capacity/capabilities to grow and transform their business. The first round which was reported in the December edition of the Newsletter has now closed.

SMEs were invited to apply for up to £10,000 on a match fund basis for investment in IT and digital related activities to support growth.

Businesses have applied to the scheme to enhance their online presence and capabilities, investing in new technologies such as software or hardware, accessing new revenue streams through e-commerce, up-skilling existing staff or securing new staff with digital capabilities. It is anticipated that applicants will be notified in March 2015 of the outcome.

The scheme has proved to be very popular, with over 80 applications received – and over £700,000 of grant funding requested from an available County Council fund of £187,000.

Free digital workshops and webinars for Northamptonshire businesses

A series of free interactive webinars will be run in March exploring the basics of cyber security, how to get started in social media and on digital marketing strategy. Key considerations for business growth such as tactics and approaches to customer interaction, how search engines work and data protection will also be covered. The sessions are being delivered by Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership (NEP) in association with Northamptonshire Growth Hub and will be available to all Northamptonshire Businesses.

Following the webinars, participants will have the opportunity to access further mentoring support either online or through a more formal mentoring programme. The webinars are part of NEP's programme of FREE digital support which also includes 'Digital Health checks' which are running until the end of March.

To book a workshop or webinar contact: www.northamptonshireep.co.uk/events

Women and Broadband:
Improve your Digital Skills for Business – Book Today!

The County Council has been running a series of free workshops designed to build confidence and skills and encourage women in Northamptonshire to take the first steps in setting up a business.

They are proving popular with nearly 60 women attending 9 workshops that were run between October and December 2014. The next available workshops are highlighted below:

Daventry Library

Self Employment – is it for me?
Thursday 5 March 10 am – 12 pm

Social media for New Businesses
Thursday 12 march 10 am – 12pm

Effective Websites for New Businesses
Thursday 19 March 10 am – 12pm

To book your place, email
answersplus@northamptonshire.gov.uk
Or call 01604 361447

The funding for the workshops has come from the 'Women and Broadband Challenge Fund' run by Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) who awarded the County Council £23,000.

The scheme is also helping to extend the reach of the County Council's Enterprise Hubs beyond Northampton and Wellingborough it no more rural libraries which have hosted workshops. It has also supported the production of a series of promotional films showcasing local women running small businesses who have been through the Enterprise Hub programme.

3 films are now available to view on:www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/Environ/economic/Paes/Women-into-Business

For further information about the workshops including dates and how to book, please visit the Events Calendar. (www.Northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/Environ/economic/Pages/Women-into-Business.aspx and click on Events Calendar).

How to stay in touch....

To keep up to date with the latest news on the Superfast Northamptonshire project please visit the project site at: www.superfastnorthamptonshire.net

Or fur further information please email: bigidea@northamptonshire.gov.uk

Or by post please contact:

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