

## CSW Broadband – Additional Coverage

As regular followers of the project will know, CSW Broadband are currently out to tender for additional coverage and anticipate contract signing by the end of January. The second contract will run alongside the current contract until that ends in March 2016 and will then continue to the end of 2017.

There is an interesting funding mix:

- £3.68m from BDUK (who later offered an additional £6m, provided the match can be found)
- £3.68m from Warwickshire County Council
- £380,000 from Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (matched by a similar amount to be taken from the £6m additional BDUK money)

CSW Broadband are therefore out to tender for an initial sum of £8.12m. Once the contract is signed the project can start to map the coverage under the second contract, and this will appear as additional Phases on the map, alongside the coverage for the first contract – so there will be lots of different colours! The coverage under the second contract can ONLY be used in areas where the commercial rollout and the current contract won't reach – so areas that are currently showing as white on the map could potentially be brought into the second contract.

There is still £5.62m available from BDUK that requires match funding and additional funding is being sought from project partners and other sources, and this can be introduced to the project through change control (which has been allowed for under the tendering process). The advantage of this approach is that if the Borough and District partners have areas that they consider to be a high priority, then we can target the coverage – although, as always, there will be a cost/benefit ratio to be considered as some areas may require costly re-engineering of the copper network.

CSW Broadband have gone to tender under the BDUK framework. The benefit of this is that it saves going through a full EU tendering process which, in turn, reduces cost and takes far less time. At the present time, the only provider on the BDUK framework contract is BT.

The ultimate aim of the project is to achieve the 2020 EU targets with each property receiving a minimum of 30Mbps (which is higher than the current highest target), and funding is actively being sought to help achieve that.