

CSW BROADBAND LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

The current rollout of superfast broadband across Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire is progressing well with 68 new roadside cabinets installed and operational by the end of August. This means that even more communities can now benefit from broadband speeds of at least 24Mbps. In fact, not only is the programme currently 2 months ahead of schedule, but demand on the first cabinet to be enabled, at Snitterfield in south Warwickshire, was so high that additional capacity has been put in so that even more people can connect to the new fibre network. It is anticipated that by the end of the current CSW Broadband project almost 45,000 properties will be receiving superfast broadband – and that is in addition to the coverage provided by the commercial providers.

However, we always knew that the money available to the current programme would not be sufficient to reach everywhere. BDUK, the Government body responsible for funding, has offered a further £3.68m and Warwickshire County Council has agreed to match that sum. Additionally there is a further £6m on offer from BDUK and Solihull Metropolitan Council has agreed match funding to the sum of £380,000. The project is therefore about to issue an Invitation to Tender for a confirmed total of £4.06m. CSW Broadband are also actively seeking additional match funding so that the full BDUK offer can be utilised. It is expected that a contractor will be appointed in January and coverage under the new funding should be available in the spring of next year, and that rollout under the second block of funding will be complete by end 2017.

This is an exciting time for households in our area. In a relatively short period of just 3 ½ years from the start of the superfast broadband rollout many thousands of households and businesses will be able to benefit from high speed Internet connectivity and the benefits that can bring in terms of education, employment, sustainability, competitiveness for businesses and generally reducing the need to travel. For more information visit <http://www.cswbroadband.org.uk>