Newsletter

BRINGING YOU UP-TO-SPEED WITH YOUR BROADBAND

Sept 2014

Staffordshire County Council

SUPERFAST STAFFORDSHIRE

Welcome to the September 2014 edition of the Superfast Staffordshire Newsletter

This edition is packed full of information telling you what's been happening over the holiday period.

If you know of anyone else who could benefit from receiving a copy, please let us know and we will add them to the distribution list.

Contact: superfast@staffordshire.gov.uk

An introduction from Mark Winnington

Cabinet Member for Economy, Environment and Transport.

The holiday period has been a time of considerable activity for the Superfast Staffordshire project, with much to report on in this issue.

This newsletter contains information about the number of homes passed by the Superfast Staffordshire project and the numerous cabinets that have gone live in Rugeley, Colton, Blackshaw Moor and other parts of the County.

We have two business assist programmes running including one, specifically targeted at women – see inside for further information.

Whilst many people are confident at using the internet and all that it has to offer, many people can feel confused and isolated by the way information and services are bought and communicated. We are therefore very grateful to the people who give up their time to help their community overcome such difficulties. See inside for information about our Digital Campion Induction Event and how you can book onto one.

An Update from Openreach

Openreach is the network division of BT Group responsible for the planning and delivery of the new fibre network.

After a lot of hard work and planning we're very pleased to report that we rolled out high speed fibre broadband to 7,111 homes and businesses between April and June, exceeding our initial target.

We now estimate the total number of homes passed to be around 12,000, with the figure rising all the time!!

In Rugeley, 30 new fibre broadband cabinets are now live and ready to take orders from people wanting to upgrade. In total, the Rugeley area has accounted for approximately 5,350 of the total homes passed. Take a look below for more information.

30 New Cabinets for Rugeley

Rugeley and Colton have become the latest communities to benefit from the Superfast Staffordshire programme.

An additional 5,350 premises in the Rugeley area now have access to faster fibre broadband as a result of the project. Openreach engineers had to work across a deep water stream off Bellamour Way and overcome other challenges in order to lay the 13km of fibre optic cable needed to connect more than 250 homes and businesses in Colton onto the new network.

Openreach Engineer Ashley near Rugeley Power station

An additional 23km of fibre optic cable has been laid in Rugeley itself and 30 new street-side fibre cabinets have been installed so far, which will enable local people to access fibre broadband. Work in the town centre was coordinated with the Council's highways department to minimise disruption to local traders, residents and motorists in the Horse Fair area.

Focus on the Moorlands - Blackshaw Moor

The village of Blackshaw Moor has become one of the first communities in the Staffordshire Moorlands to benefit from the Superfast Staffordshire programme.

In August we were able to announce that about 150 premises in the Blackshaw Moor community were able to access fibre broadband.

Local county councillor and Staffordshire's rural affairs leader Gill Heath said:

"It's pleasing to see that Blackshaw Moor properties can now access faster broadband speeds. There are a number of businesses in the area which will benefit, as well as hundreds of residents. This is a real step forward for the village."

Openreach Engineer Anthony works outside The Three Horseshoes Inn, Blackshaw Moor.

Optimising Business Broadband

The OBB project is full steam ahead with FREE events planned in Staffordshire and Shropshire to get businesses signed up to a free programme of advice and training in the use of internet-enabled technologies.

OBB offers information and advice and is totally free of charge. There are 12 events, organised to promote how internet-enabled technologies can vastly improve your business. Furthermore, OBB offers up to 12 hour business assists in areas such as improving customer relationships, increasing turnover and improving productivity – all in all, giving your SME a chance of growing by up to 25%.

The first event was held in Leek on Thursday 27th August with positive feed back from businesses, who said,

"Excellent event, especially easy to understand" and

"Thought Provoking – Content will help shape our future IT strategy"

The next Staffordshire events are:

1. Digital Marketing Masterclass with Grant Leboff, Monday, 29th September, Staffordshire County Showground, 8.00-11:45am.
2. Optimising Business Broadband Workshop, Wednesday, 22nd October at Chasewater Innovation Centre, Brownhills, 8.30-11.30am.

European Regional Development Fund
Investing in your future

To register and find out more…
Call: 01785 827600 and ask for the OBB team
Website: www.optimisingbusinessbroadband.co.uk

Email: obb@winningmoves.com

Women and Broadband Challenge

Staffordshire County Council has been awarded £67,000 after Superfast Staffordshire made a successful bid for funding to Broadband Delivery UK and the Government Equalities Office.

The grant is to run a Women and Broadband Challenge project in the Superfast Staffordshire rollout area between now and March 2015. The Women and Broadband Challenge will target both existing business women and women who are thinking about going into business and will give them the skills to maximize the business opportunities that fibre broadband offers.

Women in Rural Enterprise (WiRE), based at Harper Adams University, has been appointed to run the project. WiRE will be working closely with other local delivery partners at the Chamber of Commerce and Simply Staffordshire.

Polly Gibb, WiRE director said:

"This is a great opportunity for women of all ages to come along, learn new skills and boost their confidence in using online technology. You don't have to be a business owner already – you might be considering starting a business or thinking about returning to work after a career break. We want everyone to feel welcome and we will be encouraging everyone to ask questions and have a go in an open and friendly environment.

We'd encourage all local women to join the broadband challenge and book to attend the launch conference on Tuesday 30th September or one of our many training seminars on offer. Simply visit www.wirechallenge.org and book for free!"

Email: challenge@wireuk.org
Website: www.wirechallenge.org/

Digital Champion

Induction Morning

On Wednesday 25th June we held our very first induction session at Lichfield Library, with six of our first Digital Champions.

This event was a good opportunity for us to meet the Digital Champions and for them to meet each other. They were given an overview of the Superfast Staffordshire project before discussing how they might fulfill their role. We're very grateful to them for coming along and look forward to working with them over the next few years.

Thanks must also go to Tim Keeling, from Adult and Community Learning, who helped us enormously with this.

Evaluation of the morning was very positive and we will be having further induction events at different locations around the County. The next date will be Thursday, September 25th at Leek Library.

Our first Digital Champion Induction Event

To find out more about becoming a Digital Champion, please go to:

http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/community/Volunteer/Connectivity-(Broadband-Digital-Champions)-.aspx

If you would like to book onto our event at Leek Library, please go to:

http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/superfast-staffordshire-digital-champions-induction-training-event-tickets-10182294517

Or email: superfast@staffordshire.gov.uk

What's my

Exchange and

Cabinet number?

Here's an easy way of checking where your exchange is and which cabinet number you're connected to. You can also check whether or not you can access fibre broadband.

A simple way of checking is by using the following link to the BT Broadband Availability Checker.

http://www.dslchecker.bt.com/adsl/ADSLChecker.TelephoneNumberOutput

Enter your telephone number or postcode where directed and it will tell you which exchange and cabinet you are connected to.

If you are still unsure about whether fibre is available in your area, please email your postcode to superfast@staffordshire.gov.uk

Please remember that your broadband service will not be upgraded automatically. You'll need to contact one of the many fibre broadband suppliers to find out what they're offering.

For information about how to order your fibre please see the following link:

http://www.superfaststaffordshire.co.uk/how-to-get-superfast

Where else has fibre broadband gone live recently?

In addition to Rugeley, cabinets have also being going live in other parts of Staffordshire.

For a comprehensive list of all the live Superfast Staffordshire cabinets, please see this link:

http://www.superfaststaffordshire.co.uk/assets/CRFS_WEBSITE_LIST_1.pdf

… and where next?

We have now updated the map on the Superfast Staffordshire Website to show you which areas will be going live by the end of 2014. Please follow this link to view the map:

http://www.superfaststaffordshire.co.uk/where-and-when/where-and-when/

We hope to be able to update the map in October, to let you know what we plan to deliver in the first three months of 2015.

The superfast target: how many premises have we set free on our mission?

| 0k | 5k | 10k | | 15k | 20k | 30k | 40k | 50k | 60k | 70k | 80k | 90k |

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