



October 2015 update



A round-up of what's been going on in the programme

60 exchange areas are now 'accepting orders' with one or more cabinets providing fibre broadband thanks to Connecting Shropshire:

The latest exchange areas where fibre broadband has become available are:

- Chirbury
- Clive
- Cressage
- Hodnet
- Lee Brockhurst
- Richards Castle
- Tenbury Wells
- Tern Hill

Free digital awareness workshops on offer for Shropshire women

Women across Shropshire are invited to sign up for free workshops to boost their digital business skills as part of the Women and Broadband Challenge, thanks to a partnership with Women in Rural Enterprise (WiRE). Now in its second year after receiving a further £146,000 from the Government Equalities Office and Broadband Delivery UK, the Women and Broadband Challenge will run until March 2016.



Clare Rowson
Clare Rowson Marketing
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Clare Rowson (pictured left), who attended some of the Women and Broadband courses previously, said, "I certainly benefitted from the social media workshops but for me the most useful was the video course. I have already been able to put this into use and have made videos for my clients. But the project was also great for giving women the opportunity to come together and network – to meet others in similar situations."

Tina Woodward, Shropshire Council's Deputy Cabinet member with responsibility for broadband, said: "These FREE workshops are a fantastic opportunity for women. The Challenge develops a greater

understanding, skills and the confidence required to enable women to benefit from the digital technologies that are not only in, and being enhanced, in Shropshire, but further afield. Owing to the success of Phase 1, I'd encourage women across Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin and Staffordshire to take advantage of the workshops whether they're in employment, a business owner or starting a new business."

To find out more about these events simply visit www.wirechallenge.org and book for free!

Artistic Shropshire pupil with designs on faster broadband wins poster competition



Artistic Josie Lawson, aged 8, has won a poster competition organised by Connecting Shropshire.

Josie and fellow pupils at St Andrew's Church of England Primary School in Nesscliffe were asked to design a poster to celebrate the arrival of faster fibre broadband in the village, and to raise awareness about its many benefits in the local community. To see the winning poster [click here](#).

Josie's colourful, imaginative design for fibre broadband, which she described as "fast as a flash of lightning", was picked from a shortlist of four fantastic entries and now adorns the new fibre broadband cabinet on the outskirts

of the village. It makes the new high-speed broadband service available to around 150 premises - including the school.

The cabinet is one of more than 200 that have 'gone live' as a result of the Connecting Shropshire programme. For more photos and to read the full story, go to: <http://bit.ly/1PLIDMF>

Broadband boost for 40,000 Shropshire homes and businesses

More than 40,000 homes and businesses across the county are now able to connect to faster fibre broadband as a result of the Connecting Shropshire programme.

The latest villages to benefit from the rollout of high-speed broadband include Ashford Carbonell, Chirbury and Wollerton. In addition, work continues in parts of Bishop's Castle, Prees and Wem, where faster fibre broadband is also starting to become available for the first time.

To read the full story, go to:

<http://connectingshropshire.co.uk/2015/09/broadband-boost-for-40000-shropshire-homes-and-businesses/>



Check availability and upgrade with your chosen internet service provider

Our online map and checker makes it easier for you to find out about the availability of fibre broadband in your area, and at an individual premises level. See: <http://connectingshropshire.co.uk/when-and-where/>

Fibre in Focus – The Old Rectory B&B

There was once a time when access to Wi-Fi was considered a luxury in hotels and bed and breakfast accommodation. However, as technology has developed and become central to many of our day-to-day lives, access to a good Wi-Fi connection is now expected. While many businesses benefit primarily from faster upload speeds and website maintenance, our recent visit to a local B&B has emphasised the variety of benefits a fibre broadband connection offers.







The Old Rectory in Broseley (pictured), a 5 Star B&B, upgraded to fibre broadband as soon as they learnt of its availability as part of the Connecting Shropshire programme. We met with owner, David Hoyle, who said: “During the 11 years we’ve been running, there has been a growing expectation from our guests of a strong and reliable broadband connection. Prior to upgrading, we were only getting speeds less than 8mbps so needless to say, we upgraded as soon as we had access to the network. Now we consistently average 38mbps”.

The Old Rectory enjoys scenic views and is ideally situated between the Shropshire towns of Telford, Shrewsbury, Much Wenlock and Bridgnorth. David explained: “Given our location, we’ve always liked to make our guests aware of the many nearby attractions, and an effective way for us to do this is online. For years it’s been essential for businesses to have an online presence. Now we’ve a reliable broadband connection, we’re able to do this much more effectively through our website, making our product offering more appealing and competitive”. To find out more, go to: <http://connectingshropshire.co.uk/2015/10/case-study-%e2%80%93-the-old-rectory-bb/>

DEADLINE - Connection Voucher Scheme for Shropshire businesses

So far, over 100 businesses in the Shropshire Council area have been awarded a connection voucher worth up to £3,000 to get them connected to faster broadband. However, the administrators of the Connection Voucher scheme, have said that the funding available for businesses is likely to run out in October and are starting to wind up the Scheme. So if you’re considering applying, we’d urge you to apply to Digital Birmingham as soon as you can. Further information can be found at <http://connectingshropshire.co.uk/connection-voucher-scheme/>

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