



December 2015 update



Make the Switch!

To discover what fibre can do for you, you must opt-in by contacting your ISP

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/>

A roundup of what's been going on in the programme

If fibre broadband is not yet available to order...

There are several options available to people wanting to improve their broadband speeds whilst waiting to access fibre broadband. Alternative options include 4G Mobile, Wireless and Satellite broadband. If your current broadband speeds aren't fast enough, these alternative solutions offer an alternative until fibre broadband become available. For more information, go to: <http://connectingshropshire.co.uk/2015/12/you-can-boost-your-broadband-speeds-with-alternative-options/>

Shropshire Council is introducing a Basic Broadband Subsidy Scheme, which is a national initiative designed by Broadband Delivery UK to provide access to a satellite broadband service for the homes and businesses that are unable to receive broadband download speeds in excess of 2 megabits per second (mbps), and are not currently planned to benefit from the superfast broadband roll out. We'll publish more details about this in the New Year.

Case Study: Corve Barn Farm

We recently visited Corve Barn Farm (<http://www.corvebarnfarm.co.uk/>) in the Corvedale near Much Wenlock to hear how access to a wireless broadband service has transformed the lives of the Davies family:



The dish provides wireless broadband with speeds of up to 30mbps

Corve Barn Farm is no longer a working farm. Chris and Margaret have been providing holiday accommodation since 2008. They have 5 barns and 8 caravans, which can accommodate up to 55 people at any one time.

Margaret said: "We did have broadband down the copper wire, but it was intermittent at best. The speeds were slow, often around 0.2mbps and the connection would drop out altogether. We now get 30mbps (download) and 4mbps (upload), so it's much faster."

"The fitting of the system was all done in one morning and caused minimal disruption. It was very very quick. It's been fantastic for us, and it's going to change our work life, home life, everything."

To read the full case study, go to: <http://connectingshropshire.co.uk/2015/12/case-study-wireless-broadband-in-the-corvedale/>

Free digital awareness workshops on offer for Shropshire women

Women & Broadband Challenge

digital know-how made easy



As reported in the October update, the Women and Broadband project (funded by the Government Equalities Office) is back for a second time; delivering free digital technology workshops for women across Shropshire, Staffordshire and Telford & Wrekin. To find out more about the project, simply visit www.wirechallenge.org and book for free!

Make the Switch campaign

The Connecting Shropshire roll-out has put 45,000 homes and businesses within reach of a fibre broadband service. To date, only around 20% of those premises that are able to connect to the new fibre optic network have actually chosen to do so. We think this is partly because people wrongly assume that, once fibre broadband has been 'switched on' in their area, they'll automatically get faster speeds without having to do anything. But that's not the case. To help explain the process, we've launched a campaign explaining how to make the switch to fibre broadband.

Step 1: Check availability - confirm that fibre broadband is available to your property by using our online checker at: <http://connectingshropshire.co.uk/when-and-where/>.

Step 2: Find the best deal - we recommend that you shop around to get the best deal for you by using a comparison website, such as: <https://www.cable.co.uk/connectingshropshire/>.

Step 3: Place your order - contact your chosen internet service provider to place your order. Be sure to mention that it is fibre broadband you want.

Here is a link to a news story on our webpage with more information:

<http://connectingshropshire.co.uk/2015/12/make-the-switch-and-start-enjoying-faster-broadband/>.

ISP review article on the uptake of fibre broadband services

This recent article gives an independent view of the latest take-up figures for each local authority. Commenting on the take up percentages, Mark Jackson at ISP Review (<http://www.ispreview.co.uk>) says "Some of the other factors that can impact take-up include higher prices for FTTC/P services (less attractive), consumers being locked into long contracts with their existing ISP (can't upgrade yet) and a lack of general availability awareness (locals don't know it exists) or interest in the new connectivity (if you have a decent ADSL2+ speed then you might feel less inclined to upgrade right away). To read the full article go to: <http://www.ispreview.co.uk/index.php/2015/12/uk-bt-bduk-fibre-broadband-uptake-figures-q3-2015.html>.

Connection Voucher Scheme – now closed





More than 130 businesses in the Shropshire Council area took advantage of the government's Broadband Connection Voucher scheme to enable them to get a faster broadband connection. The scheme, which is now closed, was promoted by Shropshire Council and funded by central government.

Season's Greetings

The Connecting Shropshire team would like to wish all readers of our newsletter a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Please note that the office will be closed from 3pm on Wednesday 23 December to Monday 4 January. We will respond to all communications received whilst the office is closed as soon as we can in the New Year.

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