

Superfast Staffordshire

Newsletter 1 5th June 2013

Welcome to the very first edition of the Superfast Staffordshire Newsletter!

This newsletter is for the benefit of:

- all those people who are working on the project, whether they work at the County Council, BT, BDUK or other organisation;
- any body who manages/works with the above people and feels they really ought to know a bit more
- Our County Councillors
- Our partner organisations

The newsletter aims to:

- Let you know “what’s occurin” on a reasonably regular basis
- Provide you with a point of contact for each work area

I (Katrina) shall be asking for regular contributions to the newsletter from those working on the project – I promise not to make it onerous – nobody wants to read long rambles anyway!

For those just reading this – if you know of anyone else who could benefit from receiving a copy, please let me know and I will add them to the distribution list.

**Contact: Katrina Manegold, 01785 277690,
katrina.manegold@staffordshire.gov.uk**

A Welcome from the Broadband Manager

It gives me great pleasure to announce the launch of the Superfast Staffordshire project. It is the result of a lot of hard work by the various members of the project development team over the last two years. I would like to say a big “thank you” to all of them.

Now the next phase begins, as we work with BT, BDUK and key stakeholders to deliver the physical infrastructure and more importantly the benefits for Staffordshire’s businesses, services and communities.



**Contact: Paul Chatwin, 01785 895935 or 07964 330420,
paul.chatwin@staffordshire.gov.uk**

The Contract is Signed

On 23rd May, SCC signed a contract with BT to extend the “fibre” network across the county, which, when combined with the commercial rollout (BT and Virgin) will provide access to high-speed broadband services to 97% of the premises (approx 472,000) by 2016. 95% are expected to be able to access speeds of 24Mbps or more. In addition the project will ensure that everyone gets access to a minimum of 2Mbps by 2016.

SCC will invest £7.83m, BDUK £7.44m and BT £12.47m over the lifetime of the project.

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The Partnership is Launched

Thanks to help from the Comms Team, the Partnership was officially launched at the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust on 23rd May very shortly after the real contract was signed.

Short but poignant speeches were heard from Steve Burrows, Philip Atkins, Mark Winnington, Bill Murphy and Chris Welch before everyone was herded outside on a wet windy morning for an official photo call and the ceremonial signing of a giant contract on a giant log somewhere in the middle of a damp field. Sam managed to get some great shots though.

The launch resulted in some great publicity:

- TV – BBC Midlands Today
- Radio – BBC Radio Stoke, Signal FM, BBC Radio WM
- Online – v3.co.uk, Light Reading – Europe, Recombu, Tech Week, Digital by Default news, Europe, IT Pro, Guardian online technology blog, techradar, Ashbourne News Telegraph, Express and Star, BBC Online News, teleography



- Press – Express and Star (lead story), Burton Mail (lead story)



This is the photo for the Christmas Party caption competition!

It was also a fab opportunity to get to meet other partners who will be helping to shape delivery of the project.

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The Partnership Structure

Attached to the email that accompanies this newsletter is a diagram showing the partnership structure and where known a list showing who the responsible officers are. If you're really interested you can read their little biographies!

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The Fast Start Process

BT is in the process of finalising their project delivery team and will be introduced to the SCC counterparts shortly.

In addition to the normal project set up related activities there will be a series of events that are aimed at informing and involving the key stakeholders, to ensure a smooth transition into the delivery phase.

Events are likely to include:

- Launch event

- Operational briefings to start the dialogue with the local planning authorities, highways and power distribution companies.

The purpose of these events is to ensure early engagement with stakeholders who can influence the delivery of the project.

Paul and Katrina attended the informative launch event held by Shropshire County Council recently and will be filching all their good ideas and reviewing how things can be improved upon for our own events.

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ERDF

In partnership with Shropshire County Council and Worcestershire County Council we have applied for £329,794 funding over a period of 2 years from the European Regional Development Fund. Should we be successful, the three councils will be match funding the project with an additional £329,794.

Called officially the **Optimising Business Broadband** project the plan is to support businesses in each of the three counties to exploit the improvements in broadband infrastructure to access the higher-level applications such as: value-chain and customer-engagement portals, collaboration tools, business intelligence, CRM, Software As A Service (SaaS) and distributed ERP – and stimulate demand in these new services.

We are expecting a decision on the application early in June and should we be successful you'll get more information as the project progresses.

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Branding

We would like to give Superfast Staffordshire a distinctive and recognisable brand and to that end Katrina has send out a brief to a number of companies with the requisite skills. They have been asked to submit a quote by 7th June and the successful bidder will be required to produce the ideas for the brand by 5th July.

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Demand Stimulation

Trying to prove that they can do more than eat Paul's biscuits, Katrina and Louise have been working hard on bringing together our plans for the future.

The first thing achieved is the production of a Demand Stimulation Strategy setting out what we want to achieve and how we plan to do it.

We plan to stimulate demand through a range of media including:

- Branding (see above)
- Specific website presence
- Awareness events
- Training events
- Social media
- Posters and fliers
- E-newsletters
- Broadcast media
- Bus back and bus shelter advertising

At the moment we are looking at the proposed phase 1 area and planning how the above communication types be applied in practice and during what timescales.

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As work progresses on with the project I will report on other work areas. One that comes to mind is the partnership working with utilities – Becky – you have been warned!

If there is any work area that you particularly want covered, please get in touch with me (Katrina) and I can add it in.