

# Connecting Cumbria

through superfast broadband



As you will probably already be aware, on 29 November Cumbria County Council signed a contact with BT Global Service that will deliver the infrastructure to make the availability of superfast broadband services across Cumbria a reality. Under the contract 93% of properties will have access to superfast services (30Mbps) with the remaining 7% receiving a minimum of broadband speed of at least 2Mbps

Intensive work has gone on behind the scenes to deliver a contract that we believe will secure the maximum benefits for Cumbria. We are now finishing off details with central government which will give the project a green light in the new year.

We have undertaken extensive consultations with Partners on the priorities for Strategic Roll-out and cabinet will consider the final proposals in January. This will show the coverage that will be in place by the end of the project in 2015. Once this is agreed we can move into detailed planning, when the long awaited, and I know eagerly anticipated, information on the services to be offered and the timetable for delivery will become available.

I am delighted that we are now rapidly moving towards a position where we can move forward with detailed delivery planning. This is in no small way a testament to the commitment of all the stakeholders involved in the project so far. Our challenge moving forward is to increase the momentum to keep pace with the roll-out programme.

The Connecting Cumbria project has been highlighted by central government as a great community driven model. 2013 will be a very busy but immensely exciting time for the Connecting Cumbria Project including our community partners. We are all looking forward to seeing the first cables laid and the first customers connected. In the meantime work continues with our partners to ensure that we are ready for the challenges that will inevitably come as we move forward.

2013 to 2015 will see delivery of the project and throughout this period we will continue working with Partners, communities and BT to ensure as many individuals and businesses as possible benefit from being at the leading edge of broadband technology.

As we look forward to a great 2013 may I take this opportunity to wish you all the very best for Christmas and the new year.

## Councillor Elizabeth Mallinson

Cumbria County Council's Cabinet Member for Organisational Development and ICT portfolio holder



## Contract signature: what next?

On Thursday 29th November on a beautiful Cumbria day against a fabulous backdrop of Ullswater, the contract with BT Global Services was signed to deliver the infrastructure necessary to fulfil the Connecting Cumbria Strategy.

### So what happens now...?

- 29th November contact signature.
- State aid approval imminent.
- January 2013 – Cabinet considers recommendation for Strategic Roll-out.
- Feb-March 2013 – detailed roll-out planning phase. Initially a high level, exchange by exchange plan will be released, with more detailed local plans following as roll-out progresses.
- Spring 2013 – Work on the ground begins.
- 2013 – 2015 Project delivered across Cumbria.

Thorough 2013 -2015 work will be ongoing with communities, businesses and partners to increase awareness and stimulating demand for the service, understanding and investigating the opportunities for the improving the service offered.

More details about each of these stages will be available in early 2013.

# Dispelling the Myths

## Myth 1

**93% coverage means we know the actual properties that are going to be delivered.**

- With 140,000 properties to deliver and based on previous experience, BT have committed to offering Super Fast Broadband to 93% of the properties in Cumbria.
- BT Global Services need to carry out detailed on site investigation to confirm what will be offered where.
- Information on what we expect each property to get will be available from March 2013. This information will be published with big health warnings, even this will be subject to alteration when we actually start the work on the ground.

## Myth 2

**The County Council now holds a detailed plan including a complete list of properties.**

- The County Council is currently working on the strategic plan for roll out. As noted above – the detailed plan will not be known before March 2013, pending detailed planning stage.
- The detailed plan will be our best estimate of the likely outcome for each part of Cumbria.
- In the first instance, a high level plan will be released. Detailed plans will be follow periodically as roll out progresses.

## Myth 3

**The 'plan' is already set by the County Council.**

- CCC are working up details of the strategic plan in liaison with Members and key Stakeholders including BT.
- Details of BT Global Service's contract with CCC remains commercially confidential, but as much information as possible around roll-out and delivery options, as outlined above, will be communicated wherever possible.
- At this stage, we can confirm that the aim is 93% of the county will have access to superfast broadband by the end of 2015.
- In addition there are restrictions that are imposed by the funding and challenging timeframes for delivery of the ERDF in particular.

## Myth 4

**'Once agreed with BT the 'plan' cannot be changed'.**

- The "plan" is the County Council's determination of the best outcome for the whole of Cumbria.
- There will be winners and losers. It cannot be avoided.
  - For areas where Super Fast Broadband cannot be delivered the County Council will work to provide the best outcome possible with the funding allocated. Local activists have a role in this.

## 2g Mobile Coverage

As part of the wider Connecting Cumbria Strategy the project team continues to liaise with BDUK over an initiative to infill masts to complete the 2g network across Cumbria. Whilst this is voice only and already out of date, it provides a strategic boost to our aim in establishing a 4G pilot in Cumbria. A further update will be provided in a future edition of the newsletter.



**Would you or someone you know like to automatically receive each edition of this newsletter as soon as it is published?**

If so, please contact us to be added to our mailing list. Email us at [info@connectingcumbria.org.uk](mailto:info@connectingcumbria.org.uk)



## New Face in the Project Team

We have a new member of the Connecting Cumbria Project Team.

**Lynn Singleton** joined us in October from the County Council's Allerdale Area Support Team as the Project Manager for Communication & Engagement.

Lynn says 'I have worked in the County Council for the last 8 years, latterly as an Area Engagement Officer in the Allerdale area. I have many years experience of working with communities and partner organisations towards improving local circumstances and finding solutions to the problems that affect communities. Working within the Connecting Cumbria project provides an exciting opportunity for me to work across the county to assist in the delivery of a project that will bring great benefits throughout Cumbria. Our aim is to ensure that everyone is aware of the opportunities and benefits that Superfast broadband offers and can make informed choices about services provision.'

Lynn is available to advise on strategies and methods of engaging differing sections of the community and promoting broadband and the benefits it offers.

Lynn can be contacted via the Connecting Cumbria Office, email **lynn.singleton@cumbria.gov.uk** or mobile **07976978124**.

## Rural Community Broadband Fund (RCBF) Update

**Do you live in Bootle, Braithwaite, Culgaith, Holmrook Shap or Threlkeld? If so we need your help.**

Earlier in the year an Expression of Interest was submitted to this funding stream which has now been accepted. We have now been invited to make a full application which must be submitted by April 2013. This is to secure funding to facilitate the delivery of superfast broadband in these areas, which are likely to be within the 7% of the county that will not be delivered by the contract by virtue of the remote nature and geography of the areas. It has been agreed with RCBF that the County Council can make a submission on behalf of the 6 areas but the bid must be able to demonstrate strong community support and commitment to the project.

We are now working with local Hub Co-ordinators and Broadband Champions in each area to collect information that will support the application on your behalf. Over the next 6 weeks or so data collection will take place locally and we would ask that you support this process as much as possible. Although there is no guarantee of securing funding, the bid will stand a much better chance of success if we can demonstrate that there is strong community support as this is an integral part of the process.

### Stay connected!

There are lots of ways to get in touch with us and stay up to date with what's going on.

**By phone: 01228 221128**

**By email: [info@connectingcumbria.org.uk](mailto:info@connectingcumbria.org.uk)**

**Online: [connectingcumbria.org.uk](http://connectingcumbria.org.uk)**

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