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**N E W S R E L E A S E**

**A fibre-optic light at the end of the tunnel!**

The [Connected Counties](http://www.connectedcounties.org/home) programme, which is supported by [Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership](http://www.buckstvlep.co.uk/) (BTVLEP), has shone a fibre-optic light on the village of Stoke Hammond, following requests from residents for super-fast broadband.

One resident in particular, Dean Jackson, a telecoms engineer by profession, has been vocal in campaigning for an upgrade to the broadband supply to the village of Stoke Hammond, which suffered from low internet speeds.

Dean was successful in getting Connected Counties involved, and through Chris Rawson, who leads the Buckinghamshire Connected Counties project, was pleased to learn that the village was due to be upgraded as part of the planned fibre-optic rollout.

Dean said: “Thanks to Connected Counties and with the support of BT, who recognised that our service was impaired by the electrified lines of the nearby railway consequently making our broadband sub-standard, we are now going to enter the 21st century! It was practically impossible to download data or watch videos via the internet, but all that will change with the arrival of super-fast fibre broadband.”

**more…**

**A fibre-optic light at the end of the tunnel!: 2**

Chris Rawson, who works with Buckinghamshire Business First leading the Connected Counties project, said: “We are very happy to be able to provide access to the superfast broadband that the village clearly needs. It’s also pleasing to know that similar outcomes are benefitting many other communities across the Vale.”

In addition, this month saw the 187th green roadside cabinet going live, making fibre broadband connections available to order for an additional 43,034 Buckinghamshire residents and businesses as part of the £18.06 million Connected Counties project.

[Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership](http://www.buckstvlep.co.uk/) and Buckinghamshire County Council gave £3.7m to support the installation of high speed broadband in areas of the county that commercial operators aren't serving, through a consortium of LEPs, BT and Herts County Council.

The deal, signed with BT in June 2013, aims to achieve 90% coverage - around 45,000 homes and businesses in more than 200 locations - with broadband speeds of up to 80 Mbs (megabits per second).

A second phase of the programme, which aims to take coverage in the county to 95% by 2017, has been approved by the BTVLEP Board who, along with the district authorities in Aylesbury Vale, Wycombe and Chiltern, are investing a further £2million and unlocking a further £2m Government digital investment for Buckinghamshire.

The latest areas in Buckinghamshire to be connected under the project included communities such as Aylesbury and Marsh Gibbon. In the next few months, new high speed fibre broadband roadside cabinets are scheduled to go live in locations including, Edgcott, Grendon Underwood, Little Horwood and Mursley.

To keep up to date on progress of the Connected Counties project please look at the 'rollout update' section at <http://www.connectedcounties.org/home>

**more…**

**A fibre-optic light at the end of the tunnel!: 3**

Buckinghamshire is the Entrepreneurial Heart of Britain where, for well over a decade, more businesses have started here than anywhere else in the UK. It is no accident that we are the Birthplace of the Paralympics at Stoke Mandeville, the creative film engine for James Bond and Star Wars at Pinewood Studios, and the joint home of the Silverstone Grand Prix Circuit.

**Ends**

The [**Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership**](http://buckstvlep.co.uk/) (BTVLEP) is a business-led ‘partnership of equals’ between local government and the private sector, building the conditions for sustainable economic growth in the County.

[**Buckinghamshire Business First**](http://www.bbf.uk.com/) (BBF), is the Growth Hub for Buckinghamshire and is backed by Buckinghamshire based entrepreneurs, thousands of SMEs and Local Authorities.  BBF provides the link between public policy and the business community in Buckinghamshire and works with partners to create a dynamic business environment in the Entrepreneurial Heart of Britain.

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