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

**MP witnesses latest broadband roll-out in Grendon Underwood**

Members of the [Connected Counties](http://www.connectedcounties.org/home) project, which is supported by [Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership](http://www.buckstvlep.co.uk/) (BTVLEP), today demonstrated the technology behind the roll out of super-fast fibre broadband in Grendon Underwood to John Bercow, MP for Buckingham.

The MP visited the most recent fibre broadband street cabinet to ‘go live’ in the village to find out more about the roll-out and the benefits it will bring the local community.

The new network now passes more than 240 premises in Grendon Underwood thanks to the Connected Counties project, a partnership involving Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire County Councils, Herts and Bucks Local Enterprise Partnerships and BT.

Rt. Hon. John Bercow, Member of Parliament for Buckingham and Speaker of the House of Commons, said: “I was delighted to witness first-hand the technology behind the roll-out of super-fast fibre broadband today in Grendon Underwood, which will enhance the on-line lives of local people in the area. I am encouraged by the momentum of the roll-out of super-fast broadband across Buckinghamshire and hope this continues for the next phase of activity.”

**more…**

**MP witnesses latest broadband roll-out in Grendon Underwood: 2**

Navin Sankersingh, 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.”

Martin Tett, Leader of Buckinghamshire County Council, said: “High speed broadband is an essential, not a luxury, for modern life. Not just for businesses but for almost every resident. That is why Buckinghamshire County Council, working with the Local Enterprise Partnership, has made it one of its top priorities.”

Andrew Campling, BT’s regional director said: “This exciting technology is transforming the opportunities for communities across Buckinghamshire and the UK as a whole.

“BT’s multi billion pound investment in superfast broadband through its involvement in partnerships, such as the Connected Counties project and its own commercial programme has already made fibre broadband available to more than 300,000 households and businesses in Buckinghamshire – and the number is continuing to grow rapidly. Successful broadband partnerships are creating a lasting legacy, which will play a key role in the future prosperity of communities for many years to come.”

This month saw the 189th green roadside cabinet going live, making fibre broadband connections available to order for an additional 43,508 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.

**more…**

**MP witnesses latest broadband roll-out in Grendon Underwood: 3**

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.   
  
In the past few months, new high speed fibre broadband roadside cabinets are now live in locations including, Grendon Underwood, Edgecott, Little & Great Horwood and Marsh Gibbon.

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>

**Ends**

**Note to editors**

**Openreach**, BT’s local network business, is primarily deploying fibre-to-the-cabinet (FTTC) technology, where the fibre runs from the exchange to a local roadside cabinet. FTTC offers download speeds of up to 80 megabits per second (Mbps) and upload speeds of up to 20Mbps and could deliver even faster speeds in the future.

At home, fibre broadband enables a family to simultaneously download a movie, watch a TV replay service, surf the internet and play games online all at the same time. A whole album can be downloaded in less than 30 seconds and a feature length HD movie in less than 10 minutes, whilst high-resolution photos can be uploaded to Facebook in seconds.

BT’s network is available on an open, wholesale basis to all companies offering broadband services.

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.

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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