

We're Connecting Cheshire
www.connectingcheshire.org.uk

February 2016

Halton speeding ahead with over 96% fibre broadband coverage

Connecting Cheshire has now reached more than 7,500 additional home and business premises across Halton with access to fibre broadband, making it one of the best digitally connected areas in the UK.

Investment has been made throughout the borough, covering Runcorn, Widnes and more rural areas such as Hale and Moore.

Leader of Halton Council, Cllr Rob Polhill (pictured right) said: "The additional broadband coverage we have brought to Halton, is already making a big impact and helping to keep our businesses competitive, including Astmoor Industrial Estate.



"More coverage is coming soon in our phase two roll-out so that we can reach even more premises, especially those in our industrial areas, I urge everyone to check their availability and upgrade to superfast broadband as it offers many fantastic benefits for your home or business, and it could well be cheaper as the market is very competitive."

Welcome to the fibre fast lane...

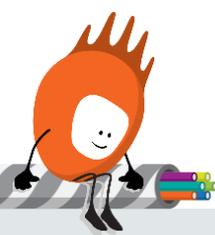
Astmoor Industrial Estate Runcorn, Birchwood, Lach Dennis, Rudheath and additional coverage in Ellesmere Port and Padgate.

Check out if you are in a superfast area or progress on the cabinet fibre journey [here](#)

Application for further EU funding submitted

We have recently submitted an application to the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership for their European Structural & Investment Funds Committee. Our proposed Digital 2020 Project will hopefully unlock over £11m for the Cheshire & Warrington LEP area. It will improve the quality, speed and reach of digital infrastructure and boost the use of digital technology by businesses. The project will strengthen Cheshire's competitive potential, help develop new products and services, and ensure businesses exploit e-commerce opportunities to access new markets. Digital 2020 has four complementary strands:

- Not Spots: extending superfast broadband to under-served areas
- Connection Vouchers: helping businesses access and exploit ultrafast broadband
- Science Parks: better connecting business across our research centres to innovate
- Digital Support: advice and guidance to secure digital-led business growth



Paper case becomes a cloud base as Topwood boosts business and staff

High speed fibre broadband has transformed Topwood, a specialist document management and storage company based near Malpas, and has changed their whole business model. Now, uploading and downloading documents can be done superfast and authorised clients can easily access their documents through the Cloud from anywhere in the world. So you could say the paper chase has become a cloud base.

Tom Gilruth, Topwood's MD said: "Since the launch of our Electronic Document Management solution just a few months ago, we have already managed to secure three pieces of new business. Without the ability to offer the benefits of cloud based electronic document filing, only possible since we have had superfast fibre broadband, we would not have been able to win this new work. We will soon be recruiting administration staff from the local area to service the extra demand taking us from 1.5 to 3 admin employees, a 100% increase in this area. It has transformed our business!"

Antoinette Sandbach, MP for Eddisbury, said: "I am delighted Topwood have been able to realise the benefits of faster broadband so effectively. Fast, reliable and competitively priced broadband is essential to all businesses in the 21st century and I look forward to a time when all the businesses in my constituency are connected."

Watch

Young people now spend more time playing and socialising on the internet than they do watching kids' TV, according to a [study](#) from research agency Childwise

"Children are now seeking out the content of their choice. They still find traditional TV programmes engaging but are increasingly watching them online."

Play

For many, the arrival of New Year marks the start of a healthy new lifestyle. Getting fit is always a challenge, but these days there are endless [online resources](#) to make it that little bit easier.

Safety

Keeping up to date with what your children are doing when they're online can seem daunting. Technology is constantly advancing and sometimes parents feel that their children know more about the internet than they do. Here's some [simple, practical and easy advice](#) on the steps you can take to keep them as safe as possible.

Reaching the final 2%

On 28th January Connecting Cheshire invited ISPs and suppliers to Alderley Park to encourage them to work with us, and communities, to help reach those areas outside the current Connecting Cheshire roll-out plans. We shared our achievements to date, in particular the fast and high take-up rate of services across the 80,000+ homes and business we've already reached, in the hope to stimulate new technology approaches that could be used to complement the BT Openreach FTTC and FTTP methodology.

Ten alternative broadband suppliers attended and we were pleased to welcome Antoinette Sandbach MP who spoke passionately about the need for greater coverage in rural areas in particular.

Eveolution

We are pleased to announce further **free** events and workshops as part of Eveolution, the digital skills programme for female entrepreneurs.

Upcoming courses include learning about advertising with Google, troubleshooting your social media issues, making the most of LinkedIn and taking control of your online presence. [See all upcoming events here.](#)

