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NEW £17 MILLION DEAL WILL TAKE ULTRAFAST BROADBAND TO SOME OF CORNWALL'S MOST REMOTE AREAS

Cornwall strengthens its place as one of Europe's leading rural digital economies

High-speed technology already created or safeguarded more than 6,500 Cornish jobs

A new £17.6 million¹ deal was announced today to take ultrafast broadband to thousands more homes and businesses in some of Cornwall's most remote places.

The third phase of the Superfast Cornwall programme will see the latest Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) technology - capable of delivering speeds up to one gigabit per second (Gbps) – rolled out to more than 7,000 premises by the end of 2019.

The first locations to benefit are expected to be announced on the www.superfastcornwall.org website before the end of 2017.

The new phase builds on the multi million pound first two phases of Superfast Cornwall, which have already made Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly some of the best digitally-connected rural areas in Europe.

Latest independent research shows that the high-speed technology is delivering huge economic benefits. The first phase of Superfast Cornwall has so far provided an estimated £275 million annual boost to the economy of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, creating 3,120 jobs and safeguarding 3,430. An estimated 16,150 businesses have connected to high-speed fibre broadband with the technology helping the creation of around 3,300 start-up businesses².

Funding for this new initiative comes from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) which will provide £8.5 million; BT £5.1 million; the Government's Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) programme £3 million; and Cornwall Council £1.1 million¹, and the programme will be managed by Cornwall Development Company.

The phase three roll-out is expected to reach the first premises by spring 2018.

Minister of State for Digital, Matt Hancock, said: "The transformation of the digital landscape in Cornwall to date has been tremendous, but there's still more to do. I'm delighted that Government investment is going to help take fibre connections right to the door of more than 7000 more Cornish homes and businesses, ensuring they can get the fast and reliable connectivity they need, both now and for the future."

Cllr Bob Egerton, Cornwall Council portfolio holder for economy and culture, said: "Our digital infrastructure is going from strength to strength, I'm delighted that this

latest investment from the European Regional Development Fund will further improve our position, particularly in geographically challenging areas. The importance of digital connectivity is far reaching. The positive impact it has had on our businesses is helping to create and safeguard jobs and is boosting our economy. We mustn't forget also the social benefits it brings as well. People can access jobs, skills and training, as well as their friends, all of which helps to improve quality of life for our people in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly."

Clive Selley, chief executive of Openreach, the local network business which is part of BT Group, said: "This major investment is a vital new chapter in the story of rolling out high-speed broadband across Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. A huge amount has already been achieved since our superfast broadband partnership with Cornwall Council started seven years ago – and we recognise there is more to do.

"As we reach further into the most remote areas, the challenge becomes greater, but we are committed to rolling out this exciting technology as far as possible.

"This third phase further strengthens Cornwall's position as a leader in the UK for ultrafast broadband and one of Europe's foremost digital economies in a rural area with a world-leading broadband network. The latest roll-out will run the length and breadth of the county to many of the remaining communities most in need of high-speed broadband."

The £132 million first phase of Superfast Cornwall saw superfast broadband speeds made available to 238,000 households and businesses, far outstripping the original aspiration of 205,000. The £7.6 million second phase, which is still underway, aims to bring superfast broadband to a further 8,000 premises by the end of 2017.

More than 90,000 households and businesses in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly have already connected to the fibre network through 60 different internet service providers – and the number is continuing to grow. Some areas have seen some of the strongest demand for the technology in the UK with up to 50 per cent of households and businesses already having chosen to take up the technology.

More than 84,000 Cornish premises now have access to the fastest form of fibre broadband, Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) – making it the leading county for FTTP in the country.

Among the rural companies benefitting from high-speed broadband is Rogers Space Heaters of Rosenannon, near Bodmin, which sells portable industrial heaters and spares to countries as far afield as the United States, Australia and Mongolia. The company now gets broadband speeds about 70 times faster than before it took delivery of fibre broadband.

Director Oliver Rogers said: "Superfast broadband has allowed us to increase our productivity significantly. We can focus on the customer and the job in hand, without having to worry about our internet connection. We can send and receive large files internationally and upload our instruction videos to YouTube, all at lightning speed. Now, anything at all we want to do, we can do. The sky is the limit."

Cornwall Council will announce details later this year of a grant scheme, which will help to provide faster broadband for the remaining premises not included in any planned fibre broadband programmes.

Separately, the new Superfast Satellite Broadband project, funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), provides eligible SME businesses not covered by these plans with broadband speeds up to 40Mbps. The scheme enables businesses to take up a service with subsidised installation and service charges. To find out more and grow your business visit www.avantiplc.com/cornwall

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¹Figures rounded to one decimal place.

²Figures provided by PFA Research for the Superfast Cornwall Baseline Summary Report April 2017 in accordance with the Market Research Society Code of Conduct.

About the latest phase of Superfast Cornwall

This third phase of Superfast Cornwall is part financed by the European Regional Development Fund Programme 2007 to 2013. The Department for Communities and Local Government is the managing authority for the European Regional Development Fund Programme, which is one of the funds established by the European Commission to help local areas stimulate their economic development by investing in ERDF Projects which will support local businesses and create jobs. For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/england-2014-to-2020-european-structural-and-investment-funds>.

About Openreach

Openreach is Britain's digital network business.

We're 30,400 people who connect homes, mobile phone masts, schools, shops, banks, hospitals, libraries, broadcasters, governments and businesses - large and small - to the world.

Our mission is to build the best possible network, with the highest quality service, making sure that everyone in Britain can be connected.

We work on behalf of more than 580 communications providers like SKY, TalkTalk, Vodafone, and BT, and our fibre broadband network is the biggest in the UK, passing more than 26.5 million premises.

We're also the platform for Britain's thriving digital economy, which is the largest in the G20. We're working hard to give people the speeds they need to run and enjoy their daily lives. Over the last decade, we've invested more than £11 billion into our network and we now manage more than 158 million kilometres of cable stretching from Scotland to Cornwall, from Wales to the east coast.

And we're continuing to take that network further - making superfast broadband speeds available to thousands more homes and businesses every week.

Openreach is a wholly owned and independently governed division of the BT Group, and it is a highly regulated business, with more than 90 per cent of our revenues generated from services that are regulated by Ofcom.

Any company can access our products under exactly the same prices, terms and conditions. For the year ended 31 March 2017, we reported revenues of £5.1bn.

For more information, visit openreach.co.uk

About BT

BT's purpose is to use the power of communications to make a better world. It is one of the world's leading providers of communications services and solutions, serving customers in 180 countries. Its principal activities include the provision of networked IT services globally; local, national and international telecommunications services to its customers for use at home, at work and on the move; broadband, TV and internet products and services; and converged fixed-mobile products and services. BT consists of six customer-facing lines of business: Consumer, EE, Business and Public Sector, Global Services, Wholesale and Ventures, and Openreach.

For the year ended 31 March 2017, BT Group's reported revenue was £24,062m with reported profit before taxation of £2,354m.

British Telecommunications plc (BT) is a wholly-owned subsidiary of BT Group plc and encompasses virtually all businesses and assets of the BT Group. BT Group plc is listed on stock exchanges in London and New York.

For more information, visit www.btplc.com

About Cornwall Development Company

Cornwall Development Company (CDC) is part of the CORSERV Group, the arms-length delivery company of Cornwall Council. CDC provides a business-facing economic development service, delivering significant elements of the economic vision and strategy for Cornwall through major EU, UK Government and CC funded projects including Superfast Cornwall. Further information is available at www.cornwalldevelopmentcompany.co.uk



European Union
European Regional
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Funded by
UK Government