

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

August 2015

Cheshire hits 80,000 premises milestone

Our first phase roll-out is nearing completion with over 80,000 premises now reached with fibre and over 470 new cabinets installed. It's been a huge engineering task and we'd like to recognise the hard work and dedication of the hundreds of BT Openreach engineers, and their contractors who have made this possible. Over the summer we've been busy across Cheshire holding switch-on events and spreading the good news that fibre is here! Plus further remaining areas within Phase 1 will be reached over the summer and look out for our forthcoming announcement about our Phase 2 roll-out expected in September.



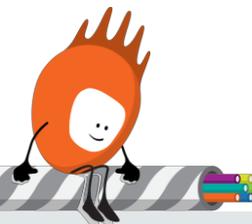
Welcome to the fibre fast lane...

Bunbury, Culcheth, Dodleston, Faddiley, Little Budworth, Marton Heath, Penketh, Prestbury, Smallwood, Stockton Heath, Thrapwood & Wistaston

RHS Garden Success

We were delighted to receive a Silver medal at the RHS Tatton Flower Show for the Connecting Cheshire Garden. Garden designer Janet Leigh produced a stunning interpretation of our project with a colourful garden featuring pulsating LED lighting and a series of illuminated pathways to represent the 900 miles of fibre optic broadband we've rolled out across Cheshire.

The garden was judged to be among the best in the 'Back to Back' category at the RHS Show which attracted over 80,000 visitors and was featured on BBC 2's coverage of the show. We also ran a competition with primary schools for the opportunity to 'recycle' the garden after the show, won by Pikemere School in Alsager. See more [here](#) and BBC's coverage [here](#) (approx. 11 minutes into the programme).



Getting out of a broadband pickle!

What have a drummer, an actress and lots of chillies got to do with Connecting Cheshire? Well that's the mix behind Bongo's Rock & Roll Pickles based in Norley run by Manny and Debs Elias. Unfortunately slow broadband was really holding back the business, with less than 1 Mbps download they were rarely able to update their website or maximise social media.

However Connecting Cheshire came to the rescue, firstly their local exchange was upgraded to fibre in February 2015 resulting in a 30 fold increase in speed, and Debs was also able to access a package of support via the Superfast Business programme. Now the business is expanding and Debs has been able to set up an e-commerce shop on their website, develop their social media presence with blogs, videos and customer reviews. See Debs at food markets across Cheshire or buy online at:

www.bongosrockandrollpickles.co.uk



Connect

66% of UK adults now use a smartphone, up from 39% in 2012, and spend almost 2 hours online per day. Over 70% of internet users have a social media profile, up from 22% in 2007.

Learn

By 2016 98% of organisations are predicted to use video as part of their training strategy, and 50% are predicted to use games and complex simulations as part of their E-Learning strategy.

Watch

During May this year, there were 276m BBC iPlayer requests, up 20m on last year. The most popular programme has been Peter Kay's Car Share. Mobiles and tablets are the most popular devices with users.

Play

The value of the global PC and console games market is expected to peak at \$46.5bn and fall to \$41bn by 2019.

Shop

UK online shoppers spent an average of £1,071 last year, making us the biggest online spenders in Europe.



Further business boost for female entrepreneurs

The Connecting Cheshire Partnership has won almost £90,000 from the government's Equalities Office towards a second phase project to help female entrepreneurs exploit Superfast broadband and digital technology.

Building on the success of the Phase 1 project which saw over 300 female-led business benefit from support, the second phase will see Cheshire partner with the Greater Manchester Business Growth Hub to deliver an inspirational '#Eveolution' programme to support entrepreneurs and businesses via a range of free workshops, masterclasses, 1-2-1 support and e-learning. The project will run from this autumn through to March 2016. For more details see:

www.eveolution.org.uk

