

**March 30th 2016**

**BROADBAND SPEEDS SET TO ROCKET AT SOUTH YORKSHIRE BUSINESS PARKS AND ENTERPRISE ZONES**

- ***More than 20,000 homes and businesses now able to access fibre broadband thanks to Superfast South Yorkshire***
- ***Latest multi million pound investment will take fibre broadband coverage in South Yorkshire to 99 per cent***

Firms based on key business parks and enterprise zones throughout South Yorkshire will soon experience first-hand why faster broadband is good for business.

More than 30 business parks and enterprise zones in South Yorkshire, including Sheffield Business Park, Templebrough, Decoy Bank and Ashroyd, are set to be upgraded to fibre-to-the-premises (FTTP) technology - providing ultrafast broadband speeds of up to 300Mbps - thanks to the multi-million pound Superfast South Yorkshire programme. Work has already begun and the first businesses are expected to start using the technology in parts of the Lower Don Valley during July this year.

Natalie Ward, programme manager for Superfast South Yorkshire, said: "We understand the needs of local businesses and for several months we have been working to secure additional funding of £4.8 million to ensure that business parks and enterprise zones throughout South Yorkshire can benefit from ultrafast broadband. This additional work will have the knock-on effect of extending the reach of fibre broadband to 99 percent of South Yorkshire which is also fantastic news.

"Businesses are the engine room that power local economies so we have worked hard to make this happen. Faster broadband breaks down the barriers to doing business in the digital world like online trading, which helps to empower small businesses to find new markets, sell new products, try new business models and compete on an equal footing with larger businesses, not just in the UK but globally."

The advantages of having fibre broadband speeds are considerable for businesses. For example, recent research indicates that highly digitised small businesses (SMEs) tend to grow at a faster rate than less digitised SMEs.<sup>1</sup> However it's vital that individual businesses understand how they can apply the technology in a way that brings them the biggest benefits.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://businesshelp.lloydsbankbusiness.com/downloads/LB\\_UK\\_Business\\_Digital\\_Index\\_31\\_03\\_14.pdf](http://businesshelp.lloydsbankbusiness.com/downloads/LB_UK_Business_Digital_Index_31_03_14.pdf)

One business set to benefit is plastic mouldings business, Plascompo Ltd. Grant Hopkinson, director at the Sheffield-based firm, said that ultrafast broadband would be a key enabler for the company to achieve business growth. He added: "Having ultrafast will ensure we can guarantee our customers a reliable connection – something we can't do with currently available speeds, but it is something our customers now expect.

"We are currently working on the development of a new website to promote our business and having ultrafast would open up a host of possibilities in terms of what we can do with it in terms of interactivity and ease of use for our customers.

"With ultrafast broadband we would also be able to start new email marketing campaigns, and would also reduce our admin time when processing orders, which in turn will increase efficiency within the business."

Tom Keeney, BT's regional director for Yorkshire and the Humber, said: "This is great news for hundreds of businesses across South Yorkshire who will be able to build their business and tell their story across the UK and beyond, supported by faster connectivity.

"While the Superfast South Yorkshire project team have been hard at work making this happen our engineers have been continuing to work at pace. In just three months, they have doubled to 20,000 the number of homes and businesses able to benefit from the Superfast South Yorkshire fibre programme.

"When an area has 'gone live' with fibre broadband people then need to contact a service provider to arrange the upgrade. Because the network is 'open', they have a choice of fibre broadband providers, with more than 140 now operating in the UK."

More than 476,000 households and businesses in South Yorkshire now have access to high-speed fibre broadband as a result of Superfast South Yorkshire and BT's own commercial fibre broadband programme.

Fibre broadband at home means everyone in the family can do their own thing online, all at the same time, whether it's downloading music in minutes or watching catch-up TV; streaming HD or 3D movies in a few minutes; or posting photos and videos to social networking sites in seconds.

Benefits for businesses include faster file and data transfers, better access to cloud computing services and software, more sophisticated web-based contact with customers and support for more flexible working.

Superfast South Yorkshire was formed in September 2014 as local authorities joined forces with BT in a £22 million deal to extend the availability of high-speed, fibre broadband. A further £4.8 million in additional funding has been secured, which will extend the reach of fibre broadband to 99 per cent of South Yorkshire. The project is jointly funded by Sheffield City Region LEP, the Government's Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) fund and BT.

For further information on the Superfast South Yorkshire programme visit  
<http://www.superfastsouthyorkshire.co.uk>