

Briefing paper for Parish Liaison Meeting, 19th February 2014

Wansdyke launched ultrafast broadband in rural NE Somerset on Feb 7th 2014

On Friday Feb 7th Wansdyke showcased its fibre optic demonstration services into Newton St Loe. The initial properties served are in the heart of this 18th century conservation area village and have been connected to Wansdyke's fibre optic backhaul directly all the way to the London internet exchange. They are now enjoying ultrafast speeds, both upload and download, in excess of 700Mbps. This is some two hundred and fifty times faster download than the speed available in the village from the incumbent supplier. In the upload direction, the speeds are even more impressive at some two and a half thousand times faster than currently available.



Jacob Rees-Mogg MP, and David Bland of Wansdyke Telecom CIC, launch ultrafast broadband in NE Somerset

In launching the service, Jacob Rees-Mogg, MP for NE Somerset, commented: 'The lifeblood for rural communities over the next 100 years is how we communicate with the outside world. This demonstration is real progress. Wansdyke are enabling businesses and homes in the region to access the high speed communications that are currently only available in cities. It is going to preserve the welfare of rural communities, and allow us to lead the lives we want to lead.'

Wansdyke's David Bland: 'Newton Farm shop, here in Newton St Loe, is now clearly the fastest farm shop in the west! Customers can now access ultrafast broadband speeds whilst they sip their coffee or buy local produce. We're demonstrating what a rural business can achieve with a truly high quality, really fast broadband connection. We will be hosting further events for both businesses and residential customers, as well as potential investors.'



Demonstrating what ultrafast speeds could achieve in the home, guests were able to chat via Skype with Chris Conder from another people-power broadband company, Broadband for the Rural North, which has been an inspiration to Wansdyke and others. The call lasted throughout the evening, and allowed both sides to feel as though they were in the same room.

Wansdyke's Matt McCabe: "We've been streaming 4K video as part of our demonstration, which has blown everyone away. The picture quality is so good, and that's not TV we're talking about, it's ultra high definition video streamed from the internet. This is something that residents of rural NE Somerset could only have dreamed of until now. It's certainly not something I can manage at home. This is the future of home entertainment as well as home communications. I can see I may have to get a 4K TV once I'm connected to Wansdyke!"

Wansdyke Telecom intends to build out from its current base around Newton St Loe, out to the most rural communities in NE Somerset. Jacob Rees-Mogg: 'This is a real community effort. People coming together as a community can make things happen. This is going to preserve our wonderful countryside, not as a rural theme park but as a real place of business, prosperity and profit. I wish Wansdyke every success.'

The public demonstration site at the Newton Farm Shop is available seven days a week and is free of charge. Parishes and individuals are welcome to bring their own laptops, tablets or smartphones, or may access the service from the iPad air provided. Tailored demonstrations for interested parishes can be laid on at any time in the Rickyard by contacting David Bland on 07785 360326. Additionally there will be demonstrations and presentations for parishes and interested potential investors on Friday of this week – at 0800 for breakfast, at 12.30 for lunch, and at 1930 in the evening. There will also be a brunch session starting at 11.00 on Saturday 22nd.

Wansdyke is also presenting its plans to individual parish councils and village communities on an on-going basis and this will continue throughout the balance of February and March, as well as conducting individual parish or village surveys. Wansdyke will announce its full range of products and pricing in March, with public roll-out of services starting September this year. Our plans, subject to achieving the necessary investment, are to roll out to all rural homes and businesses across the whole of North East Somerset by the end of 2015.

Wansdyke Telecom CIC is a community interest company, which means that the network will be owned in perpetuity by its local investors. It has received no government or local government funding, but is a sound financial investment giving shareholders an on-going dividend stream (currently limited by government rules to 20% per annum). Profits in excess of dividends are required to be used for other projects within the community under its constitution.