



September 30, 2010

Broadband investment will transform Cornish economy and the way it does business

A £132 million investment in superfast broadband infrastructure will transform Cornwall's economy and the way it does business, the South West RDA said today [September 30].

The Agency's comments came as it was confirmed today that Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly are set to become one of the best connected locations in the world under an ambitious project announced today by BT and Cornwall Council, and supported by investment from the Convergence European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), which is administered by the RDA.

The project will see the vast majority of businesses gain access to fibre broadband by 2014 with speeds of up to 100Mbps widely available. It will benefit tens of thousands of local businesses, create 4,000 new local jobs and protect a further 2,000.

The South West RDA has played a crucial role in securing up to £53.5 million of ERDF Convergence investment from the European Commission. BT is providing a further £78.5 million.

Theo Leijser, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Director for the South West RDA, said: "This puts Cornwall in the fast lane of the information superhighway and will make the far South West of England a magnet for bandwidth-hungry businesses who want to combine some of the best telecommunications infrastructure in the world with one of the best working environments in the UK. Make no mistake – this will transform Cornwall's economy and the way it does business."

For local businesses, the super-fast network will underpin the introduction of many new services and applications. Users will be able to run multiple bandwidth-hungry applications at the same time and send and receive large amounts of data much more quickly and efficiently. Computer processing and storage of files will also become more sophisticated and secure using 'cloud computing' technology. There will be faster back-up of computer systems and wider use of high quality videoconferencing within firms and between them and their customers.

The project will see a range of different broadband technologies deployed. Fibre broadband will be the most prevalent and will give between 80 and 90 per cent of local businesses access to super-fast speeds. The expectation is that approximately half of local businesses will also be able to enjoy fibre to the premise technology making Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly one of the best connected areas in the world.

Businesses outside the fibre footprint will also receive faster speeds than today through a mix of alternative technologies such as advanced copper, wireless and satellite broadband. These technologies are more suitable to deploy than fibre broadband in the remotest and hardest to reach locations.

The roll-out will begin immediately and run until 2014 with the first customers being connected early next year.

Ends

For more information contact:

Jason Clark, Deborah Clark Associates
Tel: 01208 77900
jason.clark@dca-pr.co.uk

Notes to Editors

1. The South West RDA works for and promotes a modern, stronger and more resilient economy across South West England. Our work involves creating better jobs, successful businesses, more prosperous cities, towns and villages within an economy that uses less carbon and will still be thriving in 20, 50 and 100 years time. Find out more at www.southwestrda.org.uk
2. BT will work closely with Cornwall Development Company, the council's economic development company, to plan deployments and will also engage with planning and highways departments. The scheme will be supported by a major marketing programme, skills programmes and support to ensure businesses make the most of the new technology.
3. The areas to benefit will be announced on a rolling basis and will be agreed by the project partners in consultation with other broadband service providers. The new

network will be available on an open, wholesale basis to all communications providers ensuring local businesses and homes benefit from a competitive market.

4. Cornwall has a strong reputation for pioneering initiatives, such as the actnow broadband project which was recognised by the EU as an exemplar project for e-business. Since 2002 actnow has helped more than 10,000 Cornish businesses make the most of broadband through marketing, grants, advice and technical support.
5. Local residents can find out more about the project at www.cornwalldevelopmentcompany.co.uk