

Marrying medieval with 21st century to deliver broadband across Hereford



“Broadband accessibility is a real issue for thousands of homes and businesses across the county so this is huge leap forward for us. This is a local company taking on a local problem, with a simple yet workable and effective solution - our residents and we're thrilled with the results,” Anni Holden, Director of Communications at the Diocese of Hereford.

SITUATION

Herefordshire-based allpay Limited set up allpay Broadband as a commitment to its local community. With 57% of Hereford's postcode areas having the potential to receive broadband (up to 2Mbps), the company knew it could make a difference and tackle the digital exclusion in the county head on. Realising that allpay Broadband could help communities across Hereford access fast and reliable wireless broadband, it looked to provide a solution that that was easy to deploy, while being economical. Having previously worked together on a similar project in Tuscany, allpay Broadband enlisted the help of Cambium Networks.

SOLUTION

allpay Broadband and the Diocese of Hereford worked collaboratively to initiate an innovative Common Licence scheme that would enable antennae to be fitted onto church towers across the entire region. With the support of the Chancellor of the Diocese and a forward-thinking approach, the Licence created a streamlined planning and application process for every church in the Diocese.

The solution works using PMP 430 Access Points on each

side of the church structure, in addition to a PTP 500 antenna which receives the allpay Broadband signal. A subscriber module is then installed, and using a wireless link, reliable broadband speeds of up to 35 Mbps are delivered. allpay can upgrade its network to enable 90 Mbps capacity, supporting the broadband delivery UK requirements for NGA speeds.

RESULT

The network was launched in January 2012, providing access to over 400 churches. Since then, over 100 churches have already registered their interest in the solution and currently there are already 17 Access Points covering 13 villages. Residents and businesses can now access a super-fast, highly reliable internet service that connects them to the rest of the world.

The project has been officially recognized as award-winning after triumphantly taking the 'Rural Leadership and Community Development' Award at the NextGen Challenge 2012, which acknowledges achievements in developing and deploying better broadband in the UK.

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Encompassing Herefordshire, South Shropshire and parts of Wales and Worcestershire, the Diocese of Hereford is the most rural part of England and the lack of a reliable broadband infrastructure puts the region at a significant disadvantage compared to its UK counterparts. The Diocese is roughly 1660 square miles with a population of about 285,000 with many of its church buildings registered as historic and part of the heritage of the country.

