

Community Case Study

Graham Mellish

Rainow Broadband Group

Rainow, near Macclesfield



3 miles north-east of Macclesfield
1,300 residents

Rainow Broadband Group

- **Established in 2010, article in Parish magazine**
- **Local exchange in Bollington was upgraded in 2011**
- **Community campaign via local paper, radio station and events**
- **Group enlist MP, local Councillor and Parish Council to lobby BT**
- **May 2012 – problems with site of new cabinet causes delay**



Success!

- Cabinet goes live
September 2012
- Now over 45% take-up
double Cheshire average
- But outer reaches of the
village remain a challenge

People Power can work!

Campaign nets life in fast lane

STUART GREER

A COMMUNITY is set to be connected to superfast broadband after a successful campaign against telecoms giant BT.

BT caused outrage among residents and businesses in Rainow in March when it pulled the plug on plans to upgrade its internet service. Telecoms bosses claimed installing new broadband equipment breached high-ways regulations and was too expensive.

The village turned to Macclesfield MP David Rutley and the Express for help.

Now after two years of setbacks and delays, the service is finally set to be installed, taking speeds from 1kb to 60MB.

Graham Mellish, from the Rainow Broadband Group, said: "I am ecstatic that work is finally going ahead. This has been a team effort by the Rainow Broadband Group, Rainow Parish council, Cheshire East council, David Rutley MP and the Macclesfield Express."

Mr Rutley said it was



Switched on villagers celebrate the arrival of 'superfast' broadband!

THE community of Rainow is celebrating the arrival of superfast broadband with the first villagers already connected to the new network.

This development comes after the community worked with BT and other local organisations to overcome a number of unusual technical challenges and planning issues.

They have been supported by MP for Macclesfield David Rutley, the Connecting Cheshire Partnership and local Cheshire East councillor Hilda Gaddum. The new technology will enable villagers to access download speeds of up to 80 megabits per second (Mbps) and upload speeds of up to 20Mbps.

The Rainow Broadband Group has been campaigning for better broadband and worked with the local authorities to help BT find the right location for the

road-side cabinet that houses the new fibre-optic equipment. Graham Mellish of the Rainow Broadband Group said: "The whole village got behind our campaign, with more than 600 local residents involved, the parish council and local businesses - everyone played their part. Working together we got the job done. "People power does work. Now we're all looking forward to exploiting the benefits."

Mike Blackburn, BT's regional director for the North West, said: "Our rollout of the largest engineering projects anywhere in the world.

"It's progressing at a terrific pace and the technology is now available to around 241,000 homes and businesses across Cheshire, which will rise to more than 327,000 when all the current planned upgrades are completed."

NEWS

macclesfield-express.co.uk

MACCLESFIELD EXPRESS

Village campaign gets up to speed

RHIANON MCDOWALL

A RURAL village finally has superfast internet access after months of campaigning. The Rainow Broadband Group started a campaign to bring broadband up to speed

Partnership, will provide speeds up to 80Megabits per second for faster streaming, downloads and uploads.

Campaigner Graham Mellish said business and residents will benefit with better internet services.

Apar councillor Hilda Gad-



Group join with installation



Celebrating the big switch on are: Andrew Arditti, Connecting Cheshire; Trevor Perry, of Rainow Broadband Group (RBG), Mike Blackburn, BT's regional director north west; Pat Mellish, Aubrey Ironmonger and Graham Mellish - all of RBG - and Councillor Hilda Gaddum; (front, crouching) John Allen (RBG), with David Rutley MP for Macclesfield and Fiona Hutchinson, BT Openreach engineer.

Was it worth the wait?

- From 0.5 to 65mbps
- Now have a smart TV, a laptop, TV catch-up and a tablet
- It has transformed our use of the internet
- Download files and films in minutes rather than hours
- Grandchildren can do their homework online
- You soon get used to it, quite a shock when you go back to a slow connection!