

# Bakery's superfast boost for Aberdaron

Minister for Skills and Science Julie James today saw how, since the arrival of superfast broadband, the Becws Islyn bakery has been used as a hub to provide a wi-fi network for the centre of the village.

The pilot project was undertaken by Arloesi Gwynedd Wledig with members of the local community. As a result, locals and visitors to the village at the western tip of Gwynedd can now access a wi-fi network.

The system is analytics-enabled, which helps promote Aberdaron and its attractions to new and existing visitors. Five thousand email addresses used by people logging into the wi-fi have been collected. These visitors now receive regular information about Aberdaron, encouraging them to return to the village and helping to build relationships.

More premises in the village are due to get access to superfast broadband when further engineering work is carried out by engineers from Openreach, BT's local network business, on behalf of the Superfast Cymru the partnership between the Welsh Government, BT, UK Government and European Regional Development Fund, bringing faster broadband to areas which would otherwise not receive it.

Many parts of Wales, including the whole of Gwynedd, would not have had access to superfast broadband without the intervention of Superfast Cymru. As a result of the programme, 49,941 premises in the county now have access to superfast broadband, with more gaining access every day as the rollout continues.

Eight out of ten premises in Wales can now access superfast broadband compared with just over half two years ago. Wales has the highest availability of superfast broadband among the devolved nations.

The Minister said:

"It's been great to see how the community here in Aberdaron have taken advantage of the superfast broadband connection to Becws Islyn to create a wi-fi network.

"Superfast Cymru is about bringing faster broadband to areas which would not receive it, such as Aberdaron. Fast and reliable broadband is of increasing importance to all of us – businesses and households.

"We know there is more to do before Superfast Cymru comes to an end this year, and we're already looking at how to reach the final few premises in Wales once the project is over. It's encouraging to hear the positive impact of this kind of project as we look at those next stages."

Geraint Jones of Becws Islyn said:

“Everyone expects access to wi-fi now, even when you’re on holiday in a rural area like Aberdaron. It’s great that the bakery has access to superfast broadband, which in turn has been a hub for the community wi-fi.

“The feedback from visitors has been very positive and it has been a boost for the business encouraging more people to come to the bakery’s café.”

Becws Islyn has increased its number of full time employees from one to four, with part time employees totalling 14.

Ed Hunt, director for next generation broadband in Wales, said:

“It was a significant engineering challenge to make our fibre network available in Aberdaron due to its isolated location. We’ve worked hard to make this happen and we’re pleased to be part of such an innovative and forward thinking programme. It’s great to see villagers making full use of the technology. Fibre broadband is such an important part of everyday life nowadays and people expect to be able to access it even when they’re away from home. I’m sure visitors to the local area will be delighted to find they have access to a superfast connection and it’ll be a boost to local attractions now that people can easily look them up online.”

Jonathan Jenkin, Nuclear Decommissioning Authority Stakeholder Relations and Socio Economics Manager said

“Supporting this project has given a huge boost to the local businesses helping to mitigate the socio-economic impact of decommissioning Trawsfynydd and ensuring sustainability within rural communities. Expanding provision of free wi-fi will further strengthen rural infrastructure as well as attracting more visitors to the area.”

The wi-fi project was funded through the Welsh Government’s Rural Communities – Rural Development Plan 2014 – 2020, which includes Welsh Government and European funding for rural Development. It is also part funded by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and Gwynedd Council.