

North East



BT – Working in partnership to make a difference to local people, local business and local communities

Within each of the nine English regions and in Scotland and Wales, BT has a regional board led by a regional director and comprising representatives from across all BT lines of business. These regional boards working together with a dedicated regional manager for each area, are uniquely positioned to work in partnership with key regional and national agencies, stakeholders, businesses and community organisations to focus on the success and growth of regional economies.

The innovative £10 million project with One NorthEast to establish the region as a flagship for Broadband Britain has been a resounding success. The challenge now is to urge and encourage North East communities to explore the economic opportunities that broadband can offer them. BT is working with partners to ensure small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in particular are encouraged to take advantage of the ways in which broadband technology can help them to compete more effectively and efficiently. Some are already benefiting and know the advantages broadband brings but more need to embrace information and communications technology (ICT).

In an initiative supported by the Northumberland Strategic Partnership, One NorthEast and BT, over 70 SMEs across Northumberland have become more efficient and productive by identifying their core e-business needs. By signing up to the pilot, businesses were able to take advantage of a free six month trial of up to 14 different applications. Across the region and thanks to Catalyst, a partnership scheme managed by the North East Regional Portal, supported by One NorthEast, funding has been available to North East businesses to stimulate business growth. Grants from £500 to £3,000 help SMEs improve their use of IT to enhance communication and productivity, increase sales and improve the bottom line.

In partnership with Newcastle City Council, local people are now benefiting from BT's 'Wireless City' initiative which offers wide area wireless broadband access across the city centre. Newcastle 'Wireless City' was launched in October 2007 and latest statistics revealed



Bringing it all together

that Newcastle is one of the fastest growing provincial 'wireless city' in the UK. This wireless initiative brings together the very latest technologies and applications for use by public services, business and people. The network can be accessed on the move, from a range of devices for entertainment, education and communications such as email, video and voice calls.

BT – An active player in the region

- BT directly employs over 4,500 people in the NE
- BT makes a financial impact of over £203 million a year in the region
- BT spends over £15 million a year with local suppliers
- BT has major research contracts with universities in Durham and Newcastle
- BT's direct and in-kind spend on community activities in the North East region amounted to over £950,000 in 2007-2008
- 32 BT Community Champions received awards with a value of £8,010 for their work in the local community in 2007-2008
- During 2006-07 local communities in the North East region were awarded 110 multi-media internet-ready PCs with a value of £129,000 as part of the BT Community Connections scheme
- 15 nominations in the North East region for the BT Primary School Teacher of the Year 2008 as part of BT's sponsorship of National Teaching Awards
- 81 BT people work as community volunteers in the North East region and a further 24 are school governors

Investing in the North East

The North East is up to speed with broadband

High speed broadband access to the internet has transformed lives with more than 99% of homes and businesses in the UK having access to broadband. Indeed, BT has brought ADSL broadband to every exchange in the North East region.

BT's Contact centres

BT's investments in its flagship contact centre and its systems integration team, both based in Newcastle, together with the Sunderland and Middlesbrough contact centres, have made a significant positive impact on the region, financially and in terms of employment.

Super-fast Broadband

A £1.5 billion pound BT plan to roll out fibre-based broadband will result in a range of speeds up to 100Mb/s becoming available to up to 10 million UK homes by 2012. And it will be those areas showing the greatest eagerness to use the new services which will benefit first.

BT is working closely with One North East and other public sector bodies in the region to grasp this opportunity. It will focus investment in places where there is a strong public sector interest in partnering with BT and using the new services.

The investment – the largest of its kind ever seen in the UK – forms part of BT's wider strategy of delivering next generation broadband services nationwide. Much of the UK is already set to receive advanced new copper-based broadband services of up to 24 Mb/s – up to three times the headline speeds currently available for most homes and businesses. This is a big opportunity for the North East, with urban and rural areas alike benefiting for this latest investment.

North East



21st Century Network (21CN)

BT's recently announced network transformation project 21CN is set to have a significant impact on the North East. BT is putting the UK at the cutting edge of innovation and providing industry with a real competitive advantage through a multi-billion pound investment in the world's most radical next generation IT network.

In the North East this means the migration of nearly 1 million customer lines to provide increased customer choice and control of a new generation of converged communications services. BT's investment in 21CN in the North East will underpin the delivery of One North East's strategic objectives, stimulating growth and innovation in technology, knowledge-based industries and international trade. Visit www.btplc.com/21cn for more information.

Corporate & Social Responsibility – Helping People Locally

Last year BT invested more than £20 million in activities with a communications focus in communities across the UK. BT's direct spend on this corporate and social responsibility (CSR) activity in the North East in 2006-07 was over £440,000 and in-kind contributions amounted to over £490,000.

BT believes it has a responsibility to champion the role of improved communications for all sections of society. BT's social investment is firmly based around areas where it can use its expertise and technology to make the biggest impact possible.

The BT Schools Awards and BT Community Connections offer opportunities for people in the region to enhance their communications skills and actively engage in society rather than watching from the sidelines as information and opportunities pass them by. For example, the South Sunderland Swim Club in Tyne and Wear has recently benefited from a BT Community Connections award. The club, was established for swimmers with a disability. It has been able to create its own website to market itself and uses the PC for accounting and swim meet needs.

During 2006-07 27 employees in the region received awards via the BT Community Champions scheme with a value of £6,420 and local communities in the North East region were awarded 110 multi-media internet-ready PCs with a value of £129,000 as part of the BT Community Connections scheme.

Digital Inclusion

Access to ICT can improve people's lives, opening doors to education, jobs, entertainment and personal contacts but there are some people in the region that for one reason or another have neither the opportunity nor the necessary skills to use technology.

BT's digital inclusion campaign demonstrates how communications can help improve society. Walker in Newcastle upon Tyne was one of the first UK Everybody Online projects, helping local people to access the internet, learn new skills and find out how technology can improve their lives. **Everybody Online** – run by UK-based charity, Citizens Online – aims to ensure that those people disadvantaged by location, lack of skills or economic factors do not miss out on the benefits of new technology.

BT's 'Crossing the Digital Divide' project is looking at how internet novices across the UK are setting out to cross the so-called 'digital divide'. Jeanette Winspear from the North East has been provided with computer equipment and one-to-one lessons arranged by BT and delivered in partnership with Everybody Online to help them get to grips with the technology and start to overcome the mental barrier of going online.



BT has also worked with the Royal British Legion Industries(RBLI) on an innovative project called Ngage which is a three day motivational training course for long term unemployed local people to help with their motivation, self esteem and also give them access to ICT and hopefully help them get work.



If you would like to find out more about what BT is doing in the North East region, visit <http://www.bt.com/btregions>