

Bury Free Press: News

Joy for broadband campaigners 01 August 2003

DESPAIR has turned to joy for broadband campaigners in Elmswell and Woolpit after beating seemingly unreachable BT trigger levels in record time.

BT set a trigger level of 500 for the area's telephone exchange, meaning 500 people had to say they would sign up for broadband high-speed internet access if it was available.

Campaigners, who had expected a trigger level of around 350, were shocked when BT announced the true figure two weeks ago – but this just made them work harder.

Geoff Hayward, a member of the broadband action group, said: "We are delighted to have reached the target so quickly. "We just went into overdrive when we heard the high trigger level BT had set and we must thank everyone involved for helping us get there."

Emma Littlejohn, a media manager for BT, said: "It is amazing that they have managed to get the numbers so quickly and we would hope to give them a firm date for connection within two weeks – usually it will be done within three months."

The East of England Development Agency (EEDA) last week announced those areas which will receive funding for broadband connections.

Garboldisham Broadband Initiative and Link Suffolk – which is centred around Wetheringsett – were successful in their bids for funding.

Campaigners in Hopton, Bildeston, Bacton, Cockfield, Stanton, Stonham Aspal, Old Newton, the Lark Valley area and Mid-Suffolk Broadband Group failed to receive funding.

Colin Hilder, project director for Lark Valley Broadband, said the group would now try to work with other broadband campaigners to bring a new, wireless technology into unconnected villages.