



**Titel**  
**14.08.2008**

# **OFCOM Case Study**

**28/06/08**

**Tim Anderson**

**Norfolk County Council**



**European Community  
European Regional  
Development Fund**



**Interreg North Sea Region**

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## **PART A - IDENTIFICATION**

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**1 - Name of the case**

Consultation on UK Next generation Broadband

**2 - Acronym of the case**

CUB

**3 - Case Presentation URL**

<http://epractice.eu/cases/CUB>

**4 - Case Logo**

**5 - Web address of the case**

[www.dc10plus.net](http://www.dc10plus.net)

**6 - Type of initiative**

Broadband, regulation, digital inclusions

**7 - Country of the case**

England all regions

**8 - City/region**

Norfolk

**9 - Start date 01/09/07- End date 01/02/08**

**10 - Date on which the case became operational**

Not applicable

**11 - Case Abstract**

Please provide a brief abstract of the case (Max. 300 words)

Prior to the introduction of ADSL services, Broadband only existed in major urban areas in the UK. Virtually all rural areas and most small and some medium sized cities had no broadband services at reasonable cost. Initially ADSL only rolled out to medium and small cities and coverage in rural areas was patchy or non-existent. After pressure from central government, action such as the East of England's Demand Broadband Campaign and direct action in Wales, Scotland and some parts of England, industry responded by rolling out at least ADSL to 98% of the population. However there are still "not spots" in parts of rural areas such as Norfolk, and urban areas still have higher average speeds available than smaller cities and rural areas.

There has been national debate in the UK about the need for next generation high speed broadband – speeds in excess of 10mb per second. The Broadband Stakeholder Group report "Pipe Dreams" identified that roll out would be similarly patchy unless there was firm action by government, regulators and industry and OFCOM, who regulate telecommunications, issued a consultation document in the winter of 07/08 on the best way to achieve this.

## **PART B - DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE**

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**12 - Case domain**

**13 - Topic**

**14 - Tags**

**Broadband, regulation, digital inclusions**

**15 - Sector**

Please identify the sector within which your case operates.

Multiple choices are allowed. Hold down the Ctrl key to add choices to your selection or to remove choices from the selection.

**16 - Policy Context and Legal Framework**

The UK Broadband Strategy exists within the EU frameworks for Telecoms and public sector procurement

**17 - Target Users or Group**

General

**18 - Description of Target Users or Group**

The target group are all potential users of broadband services in businesses and residential homes as well as public sector institutions

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**19 - Scope**

**20 - Status**

Completed

**21 - Language(s)**

English

## **PART C - PROJECT SIZE AND IMPLEMENTATION**

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**22 - Type of initiative**

**23 -**

Norfolk County Council is a member of the DC10+ network which has at its core the 10 regional finalists of the Digital Challenge competition. It also works closely with the East of England Development Agency in a number of ways – as a sub regional economic partnership, as the deliverer of key projects such as Norfolk Open Link, Digital Content Marketplace and EPIC, and as a member of the regional ITC strategy group. It also managed the Demand Broadband competition for EEDA with their PR agency.

As part of this work it co-ordinated the responses from the DC10+ group and the Regional Development agencies to give a consistent response to OFCOM and worked with DC10+ on lobbying ministers on the issue.

**24 - Description of the way you implement and manage your initiative**

The work was managed via the PRINCE2 variant adopted by DC10Plus on the Huddle shared workspace supervised by the Next generation Broadband workstream and the DC10Plus board.

**24a - Technology choice**

The main technology used was the Huddle Shared workspace platform.

**24b - Technology solution**

n/a

**25 - Funding source**

Department of Communities and Local Government

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**26 - Implementation**

**27 - Yearly cost**

n/a

## **PART D - IMPACT, INNOVATION AND RESULTS**

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**28 - Please provide indications of real or expected impact and benefits; if possible with figures**

Manchester Digital Development agency commissioned Clicks and Links to draw together the DC10+ response to OFCOM. Norfolk and other DC10+ members contributed their experiences in projects like Norfolk Open Link including legal issues faced and some of the solutions. This report – which is available on the BIRD website – concluded that access to high speed internet was vital not just to urban areas but also rural ones like Norfolk from the point of view of not only economic development but also social inclusion (people in rural areas suffer double deprivation because of physical isolation), sustainability (the ability of broadband to reduce travel by businesses and citizens in rural areas) and the development of new public and private sector content and services.

Its key recommendation was the production of “digital masterplans” which would enable public and private sectors to plan based on real understanding of current and future demand and give a clear justification for public sector intervention where there is market failure. This is being developed further as part of the DC10+ Connected Neighbourhood Forum which Norfolk is a member of.

EEDA led the response to OFCOM on behalf of all of England’s Regional Development Agencies and their joint response is also on the BIRD website. Their conclusions were also that a new model needs to be developed to encourage private sector investment including the creation of Infrastructure Companies with a universal service obligation for broadband which would put telecoms infrastructure on a par with Water, Gas, and Electricity as public utilities with a consequent longer term (20-30 years as opposed to 5) investment structure.

OFCOM are now consulting on regulation to make new residential and industrial developments broadband ready as part of planning rules.

**28b - Economic effects**

Because of the scale of impact the work could have an accurate figure is impossible. However there are some economic effects detailed in the body of the response.

**29 - Track record of sharing**

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The work has been shared via the DC10Plus network and the Connected Neighbourhood Forum as well as being published as a response by OFCOM.

### **30 - Lessons learnt**

The evidence developed for the DC10+ response is a useful base when looking at Broadband roll out across Europe as well as in the UK. Key recommendations for Europe would be:

- Both public and private sector need accurate information on current and future demand in order to make investment decisions
- A definition of acceptable levels of service is needed but this may be at two levels: the minimum universal service level which is likely to be in excess of 10mps, and a local level which should be sufficient to meet potential local need and demand for the next 5-10 years based on commercial, residential and public sector needs
- Broadband should be an essential public utility in the same way gas, electricity, water and basic telecoms are
- Local authorities should take the lead in mapping local demand and working with private sector companies including developers to draw up a digital blueprint.



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