



WILTSHIRE & SWINDON SMARTPLACE PROGRAMME END PROJECT REPORT

Project name eSwindon

Version 1.0

Date: 12th June 2006

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Document History

Version	Date	Summary of Changes
1.0		Original

Distribution

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Introduction

1. The Wiltshire & Swindon SmartPlace Programme developed from the decision in June 2002 by a range of public and voluntary sector partners in Wiltshire and Swindon to work together with BT to secure the benefits of broadband and related technology for the people and organisations of Wiltshire and Swindon. The programme aimed to maximise the benefits from ICT and broadband technology for businesses, learners and communities across Wiltshire and Swindon bringing benefits for all sectors, both public and private, and voluntary and community, in a holistic way, with particular focus on delivering long term employability.
2. The programme comprised of five themes: Business Development, Learning & Skills, Community Capacity Building, Broadband Infrastructure, and Marketing. Each of these themes was implemented by means of a series of individual projects which, when taken as a whole realised the aims and objectives of the programme. The eSwindon Project is part of the Community Capacity Building Theme.

Project Objectives

3. The objectives of this project were:
 - 3.1. To provide broadband access for Learning Ambassador working in the Parks and East Walcot, Central and Penhill areas of Swindon
 - 3.2. To provide each 21 Learning Ambassadors, with a home based connection with a wireless facility.
 - 3.3. To equip/upgrade one of the learning centres with PC's able to connect to the internet
4. The project would enable Swindon to:
 - Monitor the use of the broadband connection that each LA makes.
 - Communicate with LA's via the e-mail and will introduce notice board and chat room facilities.
 - Include the LA programme in the Swindon ILT /e-learning strategy now being submitted for approval by the National Learning Network.
 - Provide web based e-learning that LA's can undertake in their own home and share with other learners as part of the main project.

Project Deliverables

5. The project's deliverables were :
 - 5.1. To Give a high visibility presence for Smartplace within the Swindon Learning Ambassador project
 - 5.2. Provide Positive publicity for Smartplace on launch of the LA's
 - 5.3. Create 21 Broadband enabled Learning Ambassadors working in the community showing the benefits and advantages of broadband in a learning context.
 - 5.4. Upgrade the central learning facility with additional 5 PC's connected to Broadband

6.

Achievement against Objectives & Deliverables

- 6.1. Broadband access has been provided for 18 Learning Ambassadors working in the Parks and East Walcot, Central and Penhill areas of Swindon
- 6.2. 20 Learning Ambassadors, have been provided with a home based connection with a wireless facility. A further 7 are to follow before the end of the project, making a total of 27 Learning Ambassadors in all.
- 6.3. Drove School Adult Centre has been equipped and upgraded with 5 PC's connected to the internet, via Broadband.

7. The project has enabled Swindon to:

- Monitor the use of the broadband connection that each LA makes.
- Communicate with LA's via the e-mail and will introduce notice board and chat room facilities.
- Include the LA programme in the Swindon ILT /e-learning strategy now being submitted for approval by the National Learning Network.
- Provide web based e-learning that LA's can undertake in their own home and share with other learners as part of the main project.

Conclusions

8. The eSwindon Project will have achieved all of the Project outcomes before August 2006.
9. The Learning Ambassador program has proved highly successful, All the LA's have completed a volunteers course of which 7 LA's are multi lingual. This brings added value to the project, and builds on social inclusion and social cohesion within the Swindon communities.
10. Drove School Adult Centre has proved to be a growing success, demand for one on one tasters, is ongoing.
11. Free access to Broadband and ICT is helping to bridge the digital divide in the more deprived areas of Swindon.

Recommendations

12. The overall success of the eSwindon Project, the ongoing demand for one on one taster sessions, the continual recruitment of willing volunteers and e learning courses demonstrates that there is an overwhelming demand for Facilitator led ICT and e learning in the Swindon community.
13. Access to Free Broadband, and ICT facilities, is essential to helping bridge the digital divide in the more deprived areas of Swindon.
14. Consequently all efforts should be made to secure follow on funding so that initiatives developed as a result of SmartPlace can continue to benefit the Swindon communities.