



WILTSHIRE & SWINDON SMARTPLACE PROGRAMME END PROJECT REPORT

Project name eSeymour

Version 1.0

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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.

2. The programme comprises five themes: Business Development, Learning & Skills, Community Capacity Building, Broadband Infrastructure, and Marketing. Each of these themes will be implemented by means of a series of individual projects which, when taken as a whole, will realise the aims and objectives of the programme. This project forms part of the Community Capacity Building theme.

3. Seymour was selected as one of these pilot sites for the following reasons:

3.1 Seymour is a priority area for community capacity building at this time and is being supported by multiple agencies from both voluntary and statutory bodies. Seymour is the third most deprived ward in the county.

3.2 There are already community champions operating from the estate

And these are utilised on the estate in support of the project.

- 3.1. Seymour Community Access Facility had an opportunity to combine funding from other organisations such as Trowbridge Town Council, West Wilts Housing Society, Wiltshire County Council and resources from the Primary Care Trust. There would also be links with other parts of the Smartplace Project such as: e Trowbridge, Trowbridge Connecting and Experience Centre.
- 3.2. Seymour is an area with low basic skills where people need to be encouraged to use ICT. A successful project here could be rolled out across the county to other similar estates.
- 3.3. Low income on the estate means that residents are unlikely to spend money providing themselves with training or have the ability to spend money on purchase of equipment.

4.

Project Objectives

The objectives are:

- 4.1 To develop a pilot for community capacity building on the Seymour estate in Trowbridge.

4.2 To create a resource facility for the estate and for the town this will be accessible to local residents, which they can take ownership of and will allow them a focal point for community activities.

4.3 To provide an opportunity to develop basic I.C.T. skills as a basis for potential learning programmes as made available through other Smart place projects.

4.4. The SCAF project will meet the objectives of the Capacity Building aspect of the Smartplace Project.

5. The Smartplace objectives

6.

Project Deliverables

The project deliverables were:

6.1 A community access facility on Seymour which will provide 3 broadband enabled terminals in a combined Smartplace / SCAF centre and offer an additional meeting place focal point for all community activities including Seymour Tenants and Residents Association (STARA).

6.2 The facility will be developed with the local STARA and other partners to meet the needs of local residents on an on going basis. Through the STARA people will be encouraged to use the centres I.C.T. capability as the first step towards further learning in business, vocational opportunities and just for fun.

6.3 We will be able to show measurable outcomes against numbers attending the facility, other activities which take place in the facility, and those people who have moved on to more formal types of education or training.

7.

Achievement Against Objectives & Deliverables

8. The project was delayed for 2 years due to difficulties in obtaining a suitable location, and finally getting planning permission granted for the site. Eventually a suitable location was found, that was agreed by the local community.

9. The Portacabin has been installed and furnished, with 4 PC's with Broadband access, as agreed with STARA.

10. 53 users have been reported since the opening last month.

11. Polish speaking users are accessing the IT facilities.

Conclusions

12. Due to a very late start the project outcomes are low but it is clear that this will improve with time.

13. Finding appropriate locations for this type of centre (Portacabin) can be difficult, obtaining planning permission can often delay a project.

14. The Tenants association have worked very closely with eTrowbridge facilitators to make this project happen, this is evidence of community capacity building.

Recommendations

15. Seymour is the 3rd most deprived area in Wiltshire, and the need for a project in this area is great indeed. Projects where there are political, and planning permission difficulties, can become costly and take time to develop. Forward planning is essential, if future projects of this type are to prove successful.
16. Access to Free Broadband and ICT facilities, is essential to helping bridge the digital divide and enhance social inclusion in this deprived area of Wiltshire.
17. 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 Seymour community.