

DIZ Matters



New Year Edition January 2019

Digital News and Views from around the Essex and Hertfordshire Digital Innovation Zone

Voluntary Service Partners Secure Significant Government Funding for Smart Living - DIZ partners the Council for Voluntary Service Uttlesford (CVSU), Rainbow Services Harlow and Voluntary Action Epping Forest have been awarded [£143,000 in funding by DCMS](#) (Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport) to develop a scheme of Digital Buddies and to explore Smart Living At Home. The partnership led by CVSU will create a new programme across rural West Essex training older people. The aim of the project is to help older people become more tech confident and retain their independence for longer. This will be achieved through the creation of four Smart Homes across the area, creating live 'showcases' of the ways in which digital devices can make life easier, help people to retain their independence and be entertained. Visitors to the homes will be supported to develop their tech skills by a bank of sixty volunteer 'Digital Buddies' who will provide training sessions and coaching. Partners on the DIZ Board will look closely at how they can support the programme and use the outcomes to inform changes to their own service delivery.

Sold Out Smart Places Seminar Hears Ideas for Smarter Garden Towns - In December, around 70 delegates gathered at Chesterford Research Park for the latest in the series of the Smart Place Seminars that the DIZ has been delivering. 'Future-Proofing Garden Towns Through Digital' had sold out long before the day and proved to be the most in-demand seminar the DIZ had delivered so far. With speakers from Arup, Gigaclear, Princess Alexandra Hospital, Harlow and Gilston Garden Town and Nesta (formerly the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts) delegates received a powerful combination of presentations that set out some of the challenges and opportunities that face the DIZ and its constituent local authorities as they develop these new communities over the next few years. An energetic interactive workshop session saw a wide range of recommendations emerging that will feed into the Garden Town section of the emerging DIZ Digital Innovation Strategy.

Digital Innovation Strategy Nears Completion - As mentioned above, the seminar feedback will feed into the Gardens Town section of the DIZ Digital Innovation Strategy. This is the last piece of work to be completed for the strategy and once complete it will be published for consultation with an official launch event. Developed in conjunction with Arup the strategy will set out the vision, ambitions and work programme for the DIZ over the next few years and will set out a road map for the DIZ to become the best connected place of its type in the UK.

Save The Date - Next Smart Places Seminar To Address Digital Inclusion - The next Smart Place Seminar is scheduled to take place on Friday 5th April. This event, 'Digital Inclusion: Ensuring No-one is Left Behind' will examine in detail how digital can support, encourage and enable increased social inclusion. Through digital, opportunities are emerging in work, leisure, social interaction, wealth creation, art, health and wellbeing, collaboration and so much more. Digital touches every aspect of modern life but it is crucial that in doing so it helps to bring communities together, extends opportunities to those who were previously excluded and positively impacts on issues such as loneliness and isolation. This seminar will put the spotlight on this important issue and explore what success might look like for digital inclusion in the DIZ. If you are interested in attending email Mike Warr at mwarr@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

New DIZ Website Launched - The recent Garden Towns Smart Place Seminar was also the official launch for the new DIZ website www.diz.org.uk The website will act as a landing point for all partners involved with or interested in the DIZ and its work programme and will act as a resource for those partners as they develop their own digital approaches to service delivery. Having gone live, partners want to continue to develop and evolve the site and are interested in what you think so please do send us a message through the [Contact Us](#) page.

Nesta Launch Share Town To Explore Smarter Communities - Nesta have recently launched their Share Town initiative, a future townscape that explores the changing relationship between citizens, technology, and local government. In this future, local government plays a number of roles, working closely with local people to understand their needs, how these can best be met and by whom. Provided with new opportunities to connect and collaborate with others, individuals and households are free to navigate, combine and contribute to different services as they see fit. To find out more about the project visit www.nesta.org.uk/blog/welcome-sharetown/

DIZ Plans First 'Digital Census' - The DIZ is seeking funding to commission the first 'Digital Census' of some of its residents in the next few months. The census, which we hope will be undertaken by a leading market research organisation, will be the first attempt to capture what technology and digital means to people across the DIZ. It will explore people's attitudes and aptitudes towards technology and how they feel about the increasing use of technology to deliver and provide access to services, whether they are delivered by local authorities, health providers, voluntary groups, educational institutions or businesses. It will also explore how digital is affecting work-life balance and patterns and what barriers exist that prevent even greater adoption of technology at home.

Gigaclear Kick-off Next Phase of Ultrafast Broadband Delivery in the DIZ - Gigaclear plc is continuing to deliver, on behalf of Superfast Essex, extensive fibre broadband capacity to some of the most rural parts of the DIZ. Having already delivered Fibre-To-The-Premise (FTTP) broadband to around 4,000 properties in the east of Epping Forest district, it is now underway in the next phases of that project which will deliver FTTP broadband to around 8,300 properties in Uttlesford district and a further 2,100 in Epping Forest district. These programmes represent an investment in the DIZ of around £20 million. To find out more about the Superfast Essex programme visit www.superfastessex.org/

DIZ Invited to Submit Funding Proposal to DCMS for Full-Fibre Network - Having previously submitted an Expression of Interest, the DIZ has been invited to submit a full proposal for funding from the DCMS Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN) programme. Focusing its proposal on delivering a full fibre broadband network to every one of the two hundred plus GP practices in the DIZ this would greatly extend the availability of full fibre broadband and equip GP practices with the capacity to explore the potential of digital tech to transform the ways that we access health care, advice and support.

**** Just In: 'Which' Survey identifies DIZ Partner, Broxbourne Borough Council as the fastest local authority area in the country for broadband speeds with an average 32.5Mbps **** For more info go to: press.which.co.uk/whichpressreleases/are-you-living-in-a-broadband-black-spot/

To find out more about the Digital Innovation Zone Board, its members and its work please contact Mike Warr, Lead Officer for the DIZ Work Programme, at Epping Forest District Council.

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