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## **BROAD CHALKE LATEST COMMUNITY TO RECEIVE MOBILE COVERAGE WITH VODAFONE RURAL SURE SIGNAL PROGRAMME #ROSS100**

- Vodafone UK lights up rural Wiltshire not spot with reliable 3G coverage for the first time
- Broad Chalke is the latest community to be connected in Vodafone's Rural Open Sure Signal programme
- Part of approximately £2 billion Vodafone is spending on its UK network and services across 2014 and 2015

Vodafone UK has announced the beautiful rural community of Broad Chalke (Wiltshire) as the latest community in a rural mobile not-spot location to receive 3G coverage with Vodafone's Rural Open Sure Signal programme.

Situated in the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Broad Chalke has until now suffered from unreliable mobile coverage and slow network speeds. The Vodafone Rural Open Sure Signal programme uses Vodafone's innovative Sure Signal technology, to bring high quality 3G voice services and much needed access to the internet via mobile devices to communities in some of the UK's most beautiful or remote areas.

The Rural Open Sure Signal programme is a national initiative by Vodafone UK to provide reliable mobile access to up to 100 rural communities in mobile not-spot locations. Launched in July 2014, with support from local MPs, councils and rural action groups, the programme received an overwhelming response, with applications from communities across the country from the Shetland Islands to Cornwall and from the mountains of Snowdonia to the Norfolk coast. Vodafone's programme has now seen the connection of three communities in Wiltshire, with Winterslow and Cranborne lit up last year.

Mobile connectivity plays a vital role in keeping communities in touch and helps support local economies. However, rural and remote locations often miss out on advantages provided by modern communication tools, due to the complexity of delivering network coverage. This can be because of the geography of the area or difficulties with planning permissions in places of outstanding natural beauty. The Rural Open Sure Signal programme uses innovative

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'femtocell' technology to provide an alternative solution to bring 3G mobile access in locations where it isn't possible for networks to provide coverage through traditional means.

As part of the ROSS programme, Vodafone teams have now surveyed each of the 100 communities which were added to the programme at the end of last year. The surveys included physical ground assessments by Vodafone engineers as well as detailed fixed broadband speed checks as ROSS requires a high-speed. The teams have also drawn up plans for viable communities to illustrate where the equipment will be sited. The process saw some of the initial communities having their implementation postponed until their community broadband speeds and availability have improved. Communities who were on the reserve list for the programme, have now been surveyed, with communities in Kent and Cambridgeshire now added to the programme.

Jorge Fernandes, Vodafone UK Chief Technology Officer, said: *"I am delighted that Broad Chalke has joined our Rural Open Sure Signal programme. Mobile connectivity is an essential service for communities and businesses to thrive in today's digital world and support local economies. As part of the Rural Open Sure Signal programme, we are committed to investing in our network to provide access even in remote locations where it is otherwise almost impossible to reach. I am excited to see the transformation for Broad Chalke and other communities which has been successful for this pioneering programme."*

John Glen, MP, Salisbury and South Wiltshire said: *"I am delighted that Broad Chalke has become the latest village to get a Vodafone 3G mobile signal through the rural open sure signal programme. It is the second village in my constituency to benefit from this programme which has only been made possible because both local communities rolled up their sleeves and worked in partnership with Vodafone to bring mobile coverage to their villages for the first time."*

Stephen Whitmore, Village champion for Broad Chalke commented: *"Broad Chalke Parish Council is grateful to Vodafone for installing the ROSS equipment in the village. It will make life easier for visitors and residents alike, and will encourage rural enterprise in our thriving village"*.

As well as using Rural Open Sure Signal to plug rural "not-spots", Vodafone is spending around £2 billion on its network and services across the country over 2014 and 2015. This includes the provision of HD (High Definition)

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# news release



Voice technology on its 3G network and the extension of its 4G coverage to 564 cities and towns and thousands of smaller communities across the UK.

Further communities will be announced over the few months. For more information on the programme, visit

[www.vodafone.co.uk/rural](http://www.vodafone.co.uk/rural).

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## Notes to editors:

- The programme involves the use of innovative 'femtocell' technology. Vodafone UK has pioneered the use of this technology with Vodafone Sure Signal. Launched in 2009, Vodafone Sure Signal is used by hundreds of thousands of people across the UK every day to boost their in-building 3G coverage. It plugs straight into a home broadband line. For more information visit [www.vodafone.co.uk/suresignal](http://www.vodafone.co.uk/suresignal)
- Coverage predictions are based on a number of factors including that Vodafone can obtain planning permission to build sites, access to land or buildings to place equipment and backhaul to connect sites.
- Launch event photos available on request.

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