



Under strict embargo to: 00.01 hrs Wednesday 17th August, 2011

CRANBROOK IN KENT IS UK'S WORST BROADBAND BLACKSPOT

- Cranbrook has average download speed of just **1.32Mb**, five times slower than national average^[1] and 14 times slower than UK's fastest town, Leamington Spa^[2]
- Kent & Sussex worst counties for broadband speeds
- North/South speed divide – majority of UK's 20 slowest towns situated in South^[3].

With an average download speed of **1.32Mb**, Cranbrook in Kent is now the town with the slowest broadband in the UK, according to the latest data from independent price comparison and switching service, uSwitch.com. Figures from the [uSwitch.com Broadband Speed Tracker](#), based on almost 400,000 speed tests conducted between May and July 2011, also show evidence of a new North/South speed divide, with more than half of Britain's 20 broadband 'blackspots' situated in southern England^[3].

Residents of the medieval town of Cranbrook in Kent are proud of its gentle pace of life and wooden windmill, which is still grinding corn after nearly two centuries. Unfortunately their broadband connections move at roughly the same speed. At **1.32Mb**, it would take them approximately 45 minutes to download just one music album and a frustrating 12 hours to download a movie from the internet^[4].

Things are barely any better in Tregaron in Ceredigion. The birthplace of a 16th century outlaw often dubbed the Welsh Robin Hood, today the Mid Wales town has a broadband speed of just **1.48Mb**, over four and half times slower than the UK's average download speed of **6.8Mb**^[1].

Also spare a thought for the people of Lavant in Sussex. The series of villages near Chichester saw their train station close 20 years ago. Now they are firmly in the sidings of the broadband revolution, with a download speed of just **1.65Mb**.

From a county perspective, Kent and Sussex are the nation's worst broadband blackspots with three villages/towns apiece featuring in the top 20 list of Britain's slowest towns and villages.

And from a national perspective, when it comes to broadband, it's good - not grim - up North. The tracker reveals a clear North/South divide in broadband connection speeds, with the vast majority of Britain's broadband blackspots located in southern England. While two Welsh and one Scottish town feature in the list, none of the top 20 worst villages and towns are located in Northern England^[3].

The following table lists the slowest villages, towns and cities in the UK in terms of average broadband connection speeds:

Britain's Broadband Blackspots		
Location	Type	Ave Download Speed (Mb)
Cranbrook, Kent	Town	1.32
Tregaron, Ceredigion, Wales	Town	1.48
Lavant, Chichester, Sussex	Village and Civil Parish	1.65
Charlton Down, Dorset	Village	1.69
Malvern, Worcestershire	Town and Civil Parish	1.79
Oswestry, Shropshire	Town and Civil Parish	1.81
King's Lynn, Norfolk	Market town	1.82
Lowestoft, Suffolk	Town	1.82
Basingstoke, Hampshire	Town	1.94
Nuneaton, Warwickshire	Large town	1.95
Lampeter, Ceredigion, Wales	Town	1.96
Pulborough, Sussex	Village and Civil Parish	1.97
Irvine, Ayrshire, Scotland	Town	1.98
Yeovil, Somerset	Town and Civil Parish	2.01
Grantham, Lincolnshire	Market town	2.01
Ashford, Kent	Town	2.17
Eastgate, Norfolk	Village	2.24
Hastings, Sussex	Town	2.25
Dover, Kent	Town	2.26
Burton upon Trent, Staffordshire	Town	2.45

Source: uSwitch.com Broadband Speed Tracker, August 2011

According to the uSwitch.com tracker, Leamington Spa in Warwickshire has the fastest average download broadband speed in the UK at **18.87Mb**, more than 14 times faster than Cranbrook^[2].

Ernest Doku, technology expert at uSwitch.com, comments: "This is black and white evidence that thousands of homes are making do with download speeds well below the national average and suggests that the British broadband is still failing to deliver. Fast broadband

speeds should be available to everyone, not just for those people living in heavily urbanised areas. These latest figures highlight that, despite considerable investment, many areas of the UK are still living in the broadband dark ages.

“Intense competition among broadband providers means that companies such as BT and Virgin Media are rolling out super-fast fibre optic networks as a priority. We hope that this will convert into faster broadband for people in every area of the UK, whether urban or rural — and however low the population. In the meantime, home broadband users should test their broadband speed to check that they are getting the best possible service for where they live.”

Test your speed at <http://www.uswitch.com/broadband/speedtest/>

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Notes to editors:

The study - almost 400,000 speed tests were conducted through the [uSwitch.com](http://www.uswitch.com) website between May and July 2011. To feature in the Worst Broadband list, each, town, village or city had to have a minimum of 80 broadband speed tests carried out during this period.

1. A study by the telecoms regulator Ofcom found that in May 2011, the average broadband speed in the UK was 6.8Mb.
2. The following list shows the top 10 fastest broadband villages/towns/cities in the UK:
Leamington Spa, Warwickshire **18.865**
Welling, Greater London **18.426**
Herne Hill, London **17.897**
Kidderminster, Worcestershire **17.369**
Northwich, Cheshire **17.219**
North Shields, Newcastle-upon-Tyne **16.984**
Oldbury, Worcestershire **16.923**
Broxbourne, Herefordshire **16.699**
Morden, Greater London **16.584**
Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire **16.379**
(Average download broadband speeds are in Mb)
3. Classification of towns as being in the 'north' and 'south' based on Wikipedia interpretation of the existence of a divide: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North%E2%80%93South_divide_in_the_United_Kingdom
4. uSwitch.com calculation.

About us

[uSwitch.com](http://www.uswitch.com) is a free, impartial, online and telephone-based comparison and switching service, helping consumers compare prices on gas, electricity, water, heating cover, home telephone, broadband, digital television, mobile phones and personal finance products including mortgages, credit cards, current accounts and insurance. In 2010 uSwitch.com celebrated ten years of saving customers money.

uSwitch.com is the first comparison website to achieve the Plain English Campaign's Internet Crystal Mark, which is recognised as a standard that a website has clear language, is accessible and easy to use, and has been tested on a sample of its users.

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