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## **“Brighton Unwired”: The Brighton Metranet goes live with Brighton & Hove City Council and The University of Sussex**

Metranet Communications, the company which pioneered free wireless internet in Brighton's cafés, bars and public spaces under the [www.looseconnection.com](http://www.looseconnection.com) brand, is announcing the launch of the Brighton Metranet [www.metranet.co.uk](http://www.metranet.co.uk), one of Europe's first WiMAX Wireless Metropolitan Area Networks. This is a massive wireless broadband infrastructure which covers over 90% of the City and has a range of around 10km. This announcement follows the completion of the test phase which began in November of last year.

Working closely with the Head of ICT & eGovernment for Brighton & Hove City Council, Metranet Communications planned for over a year to solve critical problems of connectivity to primary schools in the area. Likewise, the system also feeds hundreds of off-campus students of The University of Sussex with high bandwidth internet access.

“Metranet Communications presented us with a real opportunity to solve key issues of internet connectivity to schools in areas difficult to reach with conventional broadband technologies through the use of WiMAX technology.” said Bill Parslow, Head of ICT & E-Government. “This has saved the people of Brighton & Hove a considerable amount of money whilst offering the potential for the strategic ability to connect mobile workers to the Council's infrastructure in the future.”

Roger Horlock, Client Account Director believes that the Brighton Metranet provides a solid working case study for all local government authorities to reference. “Local authorities are presented with an exciting and unique opportunity to build their own wireless broadband infrastructures making massive savings through use of, for example, internet connectivity between council offices, VoIP or wireless CCTV. At the same time, building a bridge between a local authority and a university greatly enhances the take-up of e-learning initiatives.” Metranet Communications is very well placed to help other councils make significant operational savings, such as eliminating their internal phone bill, using WiMAX and their experience of integrating with legacy systems.

The establishment of the Brighton Metranet also means that very few businesses in Brighton & Hove will not be able to get substantial internet connectivity and nobody is reliant upon the major telecommunications providers any more. Over this coming year Metranet Communications will build the network to ensure complete coverage of the City and have already planned their next base station sites. The Brighton Metranet delivers carrier-class internet connectivity where conventional providers can't, offering leased line performance at DSL prices. Similarly, as the network is entirely independent, the system can provide a complementary alternative to other networks offering you true resilience.

“It's a very exciting time for our company” says Matthew Ryan, Technical Director. “At the moment we are competing with leased lines from BT or NTL, so, if you are a business which requires a robust network for mission critical applications, such as running your own email system or small business server, VoIP or VPN then Metranet can help you. And if you move offices you can take our connection with you, something you can't do with a leased line. In the near future, smaller WiMAX compliant devices will come out onto the market allowing customers to access their data from anywhere in the city.”

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