

FRONT COVER: **GOUDHURST BECOMES FASTEST CONNECTED CHURCH IN BRITAIN**

St Mary's Church in Goudhurst may be medieval, but the new technology on its tower certainly isn't. Following work to install high speed broadband aerials in the church tower, St Mary's can now boast what is believed to be the fastest church internet connection in the UK. At speeds of 1GB per second, the new aerials allow the local community to access superfast broadband for the first time, and for the church to pick up the signal as well.

The superfast broadband was launched to coincide with the unveiling of www.gkchurch.org.uk the church's new website. To celebrate the church's move into the 21st Century, the whole congregation accessed the site through their phones and tablets during a Sunday service in July.

The Vicar, Reverend Hugh Nelson, said: "This is good news for local people, who can now access very fast broadband, and for the church which has a new way to tell people about everything that we're doing.

"Access to high speed broadband is very patchy in rural areas, despite its importance to local people and businesses. Call Flow, a Kent based Telecoms



company, who specialize in providing telecoms to rural areas approached us after doing similar projects with a couple of other churches in the area (Rolvenden for instance). There is a small group of local people who had also been working to increase the availability of Super-Fast broadband in the village, and they worked closely with Call Flow on the project."

The church applied for a faculty for the work, which Hugh described as 'relatively

straightforward' thanks to the help offered by the Diocese.

Hugh concluded: "I would strongly encourage other churches to take this opportunity if they have a suitable building. The Diocese is very supportive and this type of project provides benefits to everyone - the church receives an income and a Wi-Fi link and the community benefit from much faster broadband."