

December 6, 2010

New transmitter extends and improves BBC national digital radio coverage to London and the South East.

BBC Radio is pleased to announce the launch of a new national digital radio transmitter in Wrotham, Kent.

The new transmitter will be a key part in the transmission network for London and the South East. It adds around a hundred and thirty three thousand people to the coverage of the network and improves coverage for some 7.6 million people across the whole of London, north Kent and Surrey

Digital radio listeners can now tune in to the BBC's portfolio of digital-only stations – 1Xtra, 5 live sports extra, 6 Music, Radio 7 and the Asian Network – as well as the BBC's existing national radio stations – Radio 1, Radio 2, Radio 3, Radio 4, Radio 5 live and the World Service – and enjoy the benefits of digital audio broadcasting (DAB).

“The BBC is committed to broadening the availability of digital radio and we are delighted to further expand and improve coverage in the South East and London.”, said Mark Friend, Controller, Multiplatform & Interactive, BBC Audio & Music. “We hope more listeners will discover the range of programmes offered over DAB including ball-by-ball commentary of The Ashes on 5 live sports extra and some great festive highlights on Radio 7, 1Xtra and 6 Music over Christmas. “

The BBC is investing in the DAB network and fulfilling its commitment to reach around 92% of the UK population by the end of next year.

Notes to editors

The BBC has five digital-only radio networks, all launched in 2002:-

- 1Xtra – Radio 1Xtra - playing Xtra RnB, Xtra Hip Hop,
- 5 live sports extra – the home of live sport with exclusive coverage of live events,
- 6 Music – celebrates the alternative spirit in popular music, from the sixties to current day,
- Radio 7 - the best of BBC comedy, drama and books from the archive,
- Asian Network – the sound of Asian Britain

Listeners can also receive Radios 1 to 5 live (and World Service) on DAB, along with more than 30 of the BBC's English local radio and nations services.

- The BBC's national digital radio coverage currently stands at more than 88% of the UK population.
- There are now more than 11.5 million DAB sets in the UK (GFK).

- Digital radios are available that offer users the opportunity to record and rewind their favourite programmes. Some DAB radios also offer an EPG letting users select and record their favourite programmes when they want.
- Digital radio offers improved reception and does not suffer from the interference and fading that can happen with AM and FM radio.
- Digital radio is a more efficient means of broadcasting. More networks can be transmitted, offering more choice for listeners.
- Digital radio can transmit text and data with the audio signal. A small screen on digital radios carries rolling text telling listeners what music they're listening to, who's being interviewed, and giving phone numbers and e-mail and website addresses.
- DAB digital radios are available from £25 from a range of retailers.
- Digital radio can also be received via digital television (satellite, cable and Freeview) and the Internet.
- Listeners are advised to check their coverage by visiting www.bbc.co.uk/digital

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