

# A WEEK IN THE LIFE of a CBS adviser

In this article, CBS adviser for Caithness, Sutherland and Shetland  
Sarah Marshall, shares with us her typical working week.



## MONDAY

AM: An enquiry came through over the weekend from a lady in rural Sutherland who is a volunteer director of a local development trust. She was keen to talk about improving broadband in her community and how CBS could help. I spent some time with her on the phone, discussing the current connectivity in her area as well as options to deliver solutions to the parts that are not in the fibre programme including CBS support, a satellite or BT's Community Fibre Partnership.

PM: I made sure that I was prepared for this evening's meeting by looking at postcode data to see if a community broadband project would be potentially viable given the number of premises in areas which will not be served by the fibre roll out - making sure that projects are financially sustainable in the long-term is so important.

This evening, I met with a local community council and went through the key stages for developing a CBS project. Agreed to support them with board governance training, business planning and a technical optional appraisal so that they can start moving forwards.

Exciting!

## TUESDAY

I met with CBS technical advisers 'Atkins Farrpoint' to evaluate the technical design of a proposed CBS project in Cairngorm before feeding back our findings to the community organisation. Very useful to have access to this advice, it's a great sounding board for project ideas.



PM: Put together an appraisal paper for an application for funding, which will allow a group to build a community broadband network, before submitting it to the CBS director, Zoe. Updated CBS management records to ensure compliance for European funding.



Busy at my desk

## THURSDAY

AM: Travelled from Inverness to a community in rural Caithness, which provided a good opportunity to think about what's coming up today and tomorrow!

PM: Together with CBS technical and legal advisers, I sat in with a community broadband company as they began the procurement of an operator for their network, always very exciting when a group gets to this stage!

Evening: Returned to Inverness.

## FRIDAY

AM: I visited a network that has been operational for a number of years now and reviewed their business plan with them, discussing potential means of capitalising on the improved connectivity in the area. After all, CBS support doesn't stop when the network goes live! We discussed potential ways that HIE could help them to grow their business, e.g. moving into a consultancy business, potentially extending their network or leasing some of their mast infrastructure to mast operators.

PM: CBS Team meeting to discuss progress and agree key tasks for next week. Processed several claims for payment, making sure all necessary evidence and receipts are in place - a nice easy task to end the week!

## WEDNESDAY

AM: Worked on a reply to a local politician about the progress of CBS projects in their area. Also responded to an enquiry that had come in via Facebook whilst regularly monitoring my email inbox.

PM: Reviewed tender responses for the procurement of a network operator in preparation for tomorrow's meeting in North West Sutherland.



Caithness



Team CBS