



Mobile WiMAX makes UK debut

Maidstone will host the UK's first mobile WiMAX network. The pilot system will go live in April and will be used to conduct multi-application user tests such as mobile VoIP, real-time high-quality video streaming and live broadcasts. It will also trial Wi-Fi-to-WiMAX handover and advanced charging systems to support any services that may be launched commercially.

The Mobile WiMAX Acceleration Group (M-WAG) will deliver the 2.5GHz network which will cover a 7.5km² zone around the town centre. Three base stations and three sectors will be

deployed in the area, each delivering data upload speeds up to 2Mbps and download speeds up to 10Mbps. M-WAG member companies – which include Alvarion, Nortel, Quiconnect, *et al* – will be providing all the network equipment (conforming to IEEE Standard 802.16 where relevant) and service integration.

Mobile WiMAX has a greater range than Wi-Fi and can offer up to 10Mb data transfer speeds over two to eight kilometres. It is also said to be more affordable than existing wireless services, enabling traditionally fixed-line only applications to become mobile. ■