

## **Westcott 5G Resilient Communications Centre**

The Satellite Applications Catapult, supported by the Buckinghamshire & Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership, is establishing a 5G Resilient Communications Centre at the Westcott Venture Park in Buckinghamshire. The Centre will give platform and applications developers access to the latest 5G equipment without having to make a substantial upfront investment in expensive infrastructure, allowing them to rapidly prototype and commission new services and applications under representative real-world conditions ahead of market roll-out. The Westcott Centre will work closely with the 5G Innovation Centre based at the University of Surrey to ensure strategic alignment and adoption of common standards.

A key feature of 5G will be the seamless integration of terrestrial and satellite communications networks to provide a continuity of user experience, be it in a crowded city apartment block or out on the open ocean. The ubiquitous nature of the 5G service will open up a range of new applications, including those involving safety critical systems and real-time control applications. The Westcott centre will have a specific focus on mobile applications and the control of autonomous vehicles, including UAVs, providing a controlled environment within which to verify safe and reliable operation under a variety of real-world conditions. The Westcott site is ideally suited for this, providing a secure, controlled open space within a 650-acre estate and a significant variety of local geographical features that can be used to validate novel concepts of operation and operational technology.

The Westcott 5G Communications Centre is planned to be open to commercial customers by the fourth quarter of 2017. It is one of a series of planned developments on the site designed to create a pool of high-tech, multidisciplinary skills in a centre which is well networked regionally, nationally and internationally. These include Catapult-led initiatives to create an Innovation Centre and Incubation Centre that will support the creation of new companies at Westcott. The Westcott ecosystem will accelerate innovation, serving as a prime site for verification and test activities within the broader portfolio of Catapult-led activities that rapidly convert R&D into market impact.