



Modern-Eyes

Working together
WITH visually impaired people
FOR visually impaired people

THE MAGAZINE

Sharing news, views, comments,
information and technology

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EDITORS' NOTE

We are now pleased to announce that the Modern-Eyes website is now up and running – not a bad way to celebrate the end of our first year!

On the site you will find out all about Modern-Eyes, archive copies of past magazines – in Word, pdf and webpage formats – news about what we're up to and any publicity we have had as well as a page of useful links you might like to visit. There is also an 'Information' page where you can find useful info and there is a set of easy instructions for the Portset talking typewriter and one of the earlier versions of the Portset scanner/reader – produced after a user was finding the manufacturer's instructions difficult to follow.

Once again, thank you to everyone who has sent in a donation towards the costs of producing the Magazine. We are applying to various sources for funding and we will let you know how we get on!

So, on with the Mag ...

Viv and Sue

THAT TRIATHLON!**SUE'S TRIATHLON**

The date and venue have now been set

Date: Monday 28 October

Time: 11.00 am

Place: Resolutions, Stratford Park Leisure Centre, Stroud

So, you know what's coming next! Sponsor forms are being sent out with this magazine. If you receive the magazine by email, there will be an extra file which you can print out. You will also be able to download a form from our website

Website:

www.modern-eyes.co.uk

Please try and get a few sponsors for us. All money raised will go towards the costs of producing Modern-Eyes: THE MAGAZINE.

For more information contact Sue or Viv – details on cover or on the website.

*TECHNO NEWS FROM
SIGHT VILLAGE 2002*

STAND-ALONE SCANNER

Modern World Data have introduced a stand-alone scanner called PRONTO, made by Robotron.

The unit allows you to scan up to A4 sheets. It does not require a computer to use it. The scanner uses a modified version of the Decktalk voice.

You can move around the text by a word, character or line at a time. There are no storage facilities but you can attach a tape recorder to record the text to tape.

The scanner automatically recognises columns and there is an auto orientation facility. This is a simple, no frills scanner. If you want floppy storage, internal storage and a link to a PC then the next version is the GALLILEO.

Costs:

PRONTO – £999

GALLILEO – £2,025

A free of charge, no obligation demonstration can be arranged.

FRANKLIN MS1840 TALKING DICTIONARY

This is a half-million word Thesaurus linked dictionary with clear fine-tuned pronunciation. It includes games, crossword puzzle solver, calculator and metric currency converter.

Several other models are available and prices range from about £100 to £125.

The MS1840 costs £99 and all are available from Haggar

Telephone: 01462 677 331

Email: haggerelec@aol.com

SPACE SAVING COMPUTERS

If space is at a premium you may be interested in two new models available from Force 10.

The M-series could be the smallest computer yet. It is contained in a small box, 16 cm square and 4.5 cm deep. This internet and media ready PC uses a wire free mouse and keyboard and should meet all your needs.

The Elite II is built into a standard keyboard. It has a CD reader/writer or DVD, serial and parallel ports, 4 USB ports, modem, Ethernet and S-video connectivity.

With the latest flat screen technology, either computer offers a good, compact alternative to other, larger standard desktop PCs.

Telephone: 01483 762 711

Fax: 01483 756 303

Email: sales@forcetenco.co.uk

Website: www.forcetenco.co.uk

*COMPUTERS, GAMES
and the INTERNET*

TEST LAUNCH FOR 'A-SITES'**(E-Access Bulletin, July 2002)**

A new online library of accessible web sites has been launched by the National Library for the Blind

Website: www.nlbuk.org

The 'A-sites' portal

Website: www.a-sites.org

has so far listed 153 accessible sites under 40 different categories, ranging from government to food and drink, with an accessibility rating for each and a facility for users to recommend other accessible sites.

Each site is user-tested and assessed on a broad range of criteria, including compatibility with magnification and audio software and Braille keyboards.

After an initial test phase, only sites which are 70% or more accessible will be linked to the portal. So far, just under half the sites tested make the grade. A cut-off of 80% was tried initially, but the NLB had to lower the barrier when it found less than a third of sites complied.

The Canadian National Institute for the Blind

Website: www.cnib.ca

Currently earns the highest rating so far at 99%. The producers hope to have found 1,000 A-sites by the portal's launch in October 2002.

SOFTWARE TALK**(E-Access Bulletin, July 2002)**

A 'Speech recognition grammar specification', allowing voice-based application authors to create rules describing what users are expected

to say after listening to prompts, has been released by the World Wide Web Consortium

Website: www.w3.org

According to the standards body, this will benefit people with visual impairments, and is the first of a series of voice-based software trials

Website:

www.w3.org/TR/speech-grammar

PROBLEMS WITH WINDOWS MEDIA PLAYER and INTERNET EXPLORER MESSENGER APPLICATIONS

There are more warnings about some security problems with Windows Media player. There are a series of flaws in the program which could allow a malicious hacker to hijack your system and perform a variety of actions.

The flaws affect Media Player for Windows XP and Media Player v6.4 and v7.1.

Microsoft rates these problems as critical – the most severe rating – and is urging users to immediately download the patch from the Windows site. This patch will also fix previous problems with the software.

Microsoft has also admitted that there are critical flaws in its Internet Explorer Messenger applications. The flaws involve an old internet standard which could allow a hacker to take over your computer via the internet.

A user can be unwittingly directed to a dangerous site simply by following a link on a webpage or from an email.

There is a set of new patches to rectify this problem. You will need to download the patches for MSN Chat, MSN Messenger and Exchange Instant Messenger.

The patches and updated versions can be found at

Website:

www.microsoft.com/technet/treeviewdefault.asp?url=/technet/security/bulletin/MS02-022.asp

If you have Windows Update automatically set to update it should find the patches for you!

KURZWEIL 1000

The latest version of Kurzweil 1000 is due to be released this month. Normally, it costs £695 but from 1 July to 31 August 2002 the basic price will be £555.

If you buy Kurzweil 1000, you will be entitled to free upgrades for one year from the date of purchase. The new version is v7.0. New features include

- Scanning and reading enhancements
- Fine reader engine v6.0
- Grayscale recognition and thresholding
- Voice emphasis
- Viavoice now included
- Improved MP3 file creation
- Enhanced support for hardware synthesisers
- Photocopier application
- Fax application
- Enhanced format conversion

Sight and Sound

Telephone: 01604 791 870

Email: sales@sightandsound.co.uk

SUPERNOVA v5.10

Dolphin has released a new version of Supernova. New features include

- **Advanced colour changer – any colour in any application**
- **Colour smoothing – coloured text is clear and easier to read**
- **New monitor markers – watch the screen for changes and trigger new actions**
- **New hotkeys to read html table information, application notes, word formatting information**
- **Braille hooks for fast changing information**
- **Automatic system setup facility**

To upgrade from any version of Supernova costs £140 plus carriage.

If you are upgrading from v5.0x you will receive an upgrade pack including a manual and audio updates. If you upgrade from earlier versions you will receive a full box copy.

Telephone: 0845 130 53 53

Email: info@dolphinuk.co.uk

'READING'

ULVERSCROFT LARGE PRINT BOOKS

Ulverscroft produce hard and soft cover large print books, yet they are no different in size or weight to normal print books. There are many authors – Catherine Cookson, Agatha Christie and many more, including popular fiction and non-fiction. They also have classics – Jane Austen, Thomas Hardy, Charles Dickens and lots more.

For more information, contact your local library or Ulverscroft

**Ulverscroft Large Print Books Ltd
The Green
Bradgate Road
Anstey
Leicester
LE7 7FU**

Telephone: 0116 236 4325

**NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR THE BLIND – CAMPAIGNERS’
NETWORK**

The National Library for the Blind has a new Campaigners’ Network. They believe they can help make a difference by ensuring that the voices of VIPs can be heard. They are concerned that the current situation in the UK is unjust, with fewer than 5% of books available in alternative formats, with many public libraries providing inadequate services for VIPs and an often inaccessible internet environment. They ask for the participation of VIPs and invite members to become a part of NLB’s campaigning work by joining the Campaigners’ Network. NLB would like you to write to your MP or local newspaper, helping to promote campaigns or participating in national days of action.

Membership of the network is free. On joining, members will receive an information pack including a newsletter outlining current and future campaigns.

If you would like to register interest in involvement in the network please contact NLB

**National Library for the Blind
Far Cromwell Road
Bredbury
Stockport
SK6 2SG**

Telephone: 0161 355 2000

Email:

campains@nlbuk.org

FOR FOOTBALL FANS!

**(Welcome to a world of ..
August 2002)**

Keep track of this season's action with RNIB's braille football fixture lists. As well as all the fixtures for the 2002/2003 season and final league tables from last year.

Fixtures are now available for the following leagues:

- FA Premiership – Free of charge
- Premiership, Divisions 1, 2 and 3 and Conference League – £1
- Irish League – £1
- Welsh League – £1
- Scottish League – £1

Telephone: 08457 023 153 Minicom: 08457 858 691

Email:

cservices@rnib.org.uk

Website: www.rnib.org.uk

NON-PROFIT COPYRIGHT

(E-Access Bulletin, July 2002)

The Copyright (Visually Impaired Persons) Bill has successfully completed its passage through the House of Commons and is expected to proceed through the Lords and pass into law by the end of October. The Bill, a backbench measure which has gained government support, will legalize the limited non-profit production of accessible digital versions of copyright material.

The government has yet to name a timetable for subsequent introduction of the various sections of the Bill but RNIB is urging it to ensure full implementation by next Easter.

CONFERENCE NEWS

NFB CONFERENCE ON GENETICS

The National Federation of the Blind is organising a conference and social weekend in Eastbourne, at the Afton Hotel.

Dates: 8 – 10 November 2002

This year's subject will be 'Genetics', which should prove to be controversial and should encourage good debate.

**Costs: £75 – single occupancy
£65 – sharing a double room**

Ted Herbert

Telephone: 020 8908 0232

**RETINITIS PIGMENTOSA CONFERENCE AND SOCIAL
WEEKEND**

There is to be a Retinitis Pigmentosa Weekend held in the South of England next year. Many RP members will already know about the weekends held regularly in Blackpool.

The event will take place at RNIB's Palm Court Hotel

Dates: 29 – 31 March 2003

Cost: £80 per person – to include dinner, bed and breakfast for two and a buffet lunch on the Sunday

To book: contact the hotel directly. A £20 deposit will be required

Telephone: 01323 725 811

**RNIB Palm Court Hotel
15 Burlington Place
Eastbourne
East Sussex
BN21 4AR**

There will be entertainment and a structure to the weekend with the main emphasis on the social side of things. Any one with RP, families and friends are welcome.

More details will be available later in the year.

Carole Holmes

Telephone: 01253 404 194

***NEW SERVICES FROM
RNIB***

TALK and SUPPORT

Talk and Support is an innovative service from RNIB, giving people with sight problems the opportunity to socialise, learn, share information and support each other in groups over the telephone, in their own homes.

There are several services being offered as part of the Talk and Support scheme:

- **Telebefriending – regular social groups of up to six people who meet to discuss anything they choose to talk about**
- **Telesupport – essential information and support which is needed in every day life. The programmes take place in small participative telephone groups**

These services are new and RNIB is currently looking for volunteers – VIPs or sighted people – to help set up the service. So, if you feel like helping, or maybe participating when a group is available contact RNIB.

**Jenny Sweet – Talk and Support National Volunteer Co-ordinator
Telephone: 020 8692 2620**

TV AND RADIO NEWS

SMALL STEPS FORWARD FOR DIGITAL RADIO

(E-Access Bulletin, July 2002)

The UK launch last week of a portable digital radio set, at £99, promises to make the medium much more affordable.

But E-Access Bulletin has discovered that the set is only marginally more accessible to VIPs than its more expensive predecessors.

Those in areas with a digital signal will be able to use the 'EVOKE-1' receiver from VideoLogic Systems

Website:

<http://www.videologic.co.uk>

to pick up the 50 or so free-to-air digital services from the BBC

Website: www.bbc.co.uk/digitalradio

and commercial companies

Website: www.ukdigitalradio.co.uk

However, the set does not convert supplementary information about the content on air into voice output. With no verbal cue, VI users must select each channel to find out what it is and memorise the location for future reference.

VideoLogic told E-Access Bulletin that there are, nevertheless, several design features of the set which may be useful to VIPs, including its single raised and shaped control panel, and differing size and shape of its volume and tuning controls. Further improvements will be added to future models following discussions with RNIB, a spokesperson said.

Whatever the design access issues, digital radio is still not the answer for everyone because signal coverage is not yet universal. Even in areas served by a digital transmitter, local geography can block the signal entirely, unlike analogue where reception varies on a sliding scale.

To check if you live in the 85% of areas reached by commercial Digital One services you can enter your postcode at

Website:

www.ukdigitalradio.co.uk/coverage/search/

And, to see if you are living in the 65% of the country covered by BBC services

Telephone: 0870 010 0123

FOR YOU GOLF FANS!

The BBC has applied for the exclusive live coverage rights to broadcast the British Open Golf Championship.

INTERNET RADIO FOR THE BLIND

The Playback Service in Glasgow is intending to start an internet radio station for the blind. In the beginning, it will be aimed at a Scottish audience but it is hoped that it will eventually go mainstream.

ITV DIGITAL

The ITV Digital platform has been taken over by a consortium.

All the channels will be free-to-air. There will be 24 channels altogether. Consisting of the eight existing BBC channels, the two ITV channels as well as Channel Four, Channel Five, Sky News, Sky Travel and a few shopping channels. There will also be a few radio services.

AND FOR FOOTBALL FANS ...

BSkyB has obtained a four year contract with the Football League to show their games on Sky Sports. So watch out for your favourite teams!

PROGRAMME GUIDE UPDATE

235 – AVAGO – interactive games channel

The Sky movie channels have changed their names on the programme guide. They are now known as

- Sky Movies P1 –P4
- Sky Movies PW (widescreen)
- Sky Movies M1 – M5
- Sky Movies C1 and C2 (cinema channels)

There are also some new shopping channels

657 – Shopping Aid TV

658- Shopping Genie

659 – Shop 24-7

Some other new channels

232 – Rapture – a youth channel

435 – Setenta Sports

606 – Nick Toons

There have been some changes on the Sky Interactive menu

- Option 9 is now Sky Win Zone
- Option Zero is now 'Go Play TV'

TALKING VIDEO PLAYERS

The National Blind Children's Society is offering two different models of talking video recorder.

Model number: 50-203

- **2 heads**
- **ICON OSD (On-screen display)**
- **Video doctor (self-diagnosis)**
- **NTSC Playback on PAL TV**
- **Automatic Channel Memory System**
- **LP – Long play-recording and playback**
- **Talking video cassette recorder**
- **Batteries for remote control included**
- **12 months warranty**
- **360mm x 90mm x 265mm**
- **4Kg**

Cost: £89.95

Model number: 50.204

- **6 heads**
- **ICON OSD (On Screen Display)**
- **Video doctor (self-diagnosis)**
- **NTSC playback on PAL TV**
- **Automatic Channel Memory System**
- **LP – Long-play recording and playback**
- **Talking video cassette recorder**
- **High speed rewind**
- **Batteries for remote control included**
- **12 months warranty**
- **360mm x 90mm x 265mm**
- **4Kg**

Cost: £109.95

Both are available from NBCS

**Shop@NBCS
Bradbury House
Market Street
Highbridge**

**Somerset
TA9 3BW**

Telephone: 0845 050 5445

Fax: 01278 764 790

Email: shop@nbcs.org.uk

Website: www.nbcs.org.uk

SPEAK OUT!

**(Welcome to a world of ...
August 2002)**

Anyone who owns a computer will be familiar with the concept of talking to (or swearing at) an inanimate object – but here's one you can speak nicely to: a voice-activated remote control. This claims to have an advanced voice recognition system sensitised to nuances of language and accent, and which 'learns' each user's voice. You can use it for TV, VCR, DVD, satellite/cable boxes and hi-fi systems. It allows four different users to programme commands for up to eight devices, up to a maximum of 54 personalised commands. Some of these include 'macros' where the remote is programmed to perform a sequence of functions with one command. The set-up uses voice prompts to talk you through. It uses four AA batteries - not supplied.

Cost: £79.99

The remote is available from Innovations.

Product number: MK6485

Telephone: 0870 908 7002

Website: www.innovations.co.uk

***HOLIDAYS and DAYS
OUT***

LAST MINUTE BREAKS

In need of a break? RNIB may have vacant rooms or cancellations. So, if you feel like getting away from it all for a day or two give them a call – you never know!

**Palm Court Hotel, Eastbourne
Telephone: 01323 725 811**

**Century Hotel, Blackpool
Telephone: 01253 354 598**

Both hotels will arrange for you to be picked up from the station.

JOANNA LUMLEY and the NOTTINGHAM LACE MARKET

Joanna Lumley will help VI visitors enjoy the wealth of architectural treasures in Nottingham's historic Lace Market. She has recorded an audio guide which will be used in conjunction with eight new sculptures to highlight the area's outstanding buildings.

The project, called 'The Lace Market Unveiled', was officially launched on 14 May 2002.

Artist Alec Keeper has worked with Nottinghamshire Royal Society for the Blind to ensure the sculptural reliefs are equally relevant to people with or without sight disabilities.

The audio guide will be available from the Lace Market Heritage Point at the Galleries of Justice.

Telephone: 0115 970 6806

Email:

nrsb@dial.pipex.com

***CINEMA and THEATRE
NEWS***

CINEMA AUDIO DESCRIPTION TRIALS EXTENDED.

(E-Access Bulletin, July 2002)

More films have been added to UK trials of a new system that makes cinema accessible to VIPs, delivering audio descriptions at adjustable volume through cordless headsets.

Described films now include Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone; Monsters Inc; Ocean's Eleven; Panic Room; Time Machine; Star Wars Episode II and Spiderman.

Participating cinemas are located in Belfast, Cardiff, Gateshead, Glasgow, Guildford, London, Pontypridd, Uxbridge and Wolverhampton.

(Well, Cardiff and Wolverhampton are not too far away if you feel like giving it a try!)

At present, each of the 11 cinemas involved has only one screen with the trial equipment and only certain films have audio description. Cinema-goers are strongly advised to ring in advance to check that their film choice is being shown on the correct screen.

A small deposit may be required for the use of headphones.

Contact details can be found at

Website:

www.rnib.org.uk/broadcast/cinema.htm

E-Access Bulletin would welcome feedback from readers who have tried the system.

Email: derek@headstar.com

THE EVERYMAN, CHELTENHAM

It's Panto time! Well, not quite ...

However, the Everyman is offering an audio described performance of its 2002 Pantomime – Dick Whittington – described by Vocal-Eyes.

The performance will be on Friday 20 December 2002 at 2.00pm at the Everyman Theatre, Cheltenham.

Also on offer is a 'touch tour' where you can go on stage, learn all about the costumes and even learn the words to the sing-a-long songs! You might even meet some of the characters.

The tour runs from 12.00 noon to 12.30pm. it is advisable to book a place on the tour as numbers are limited. The tour will be led by the writer/director, Sue Holroyd.

When you make your booking for the panto, be sure to say that you will be needing the audio description facilities. Then the headset will be ready for you when you arrive.

Box Office

Telephone: 01242 572 573

*ACCESIBLE MUSEUMS,
GALLERIES and
ARCHIVES*

RESOURCE

The Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries – known as 'Resource' – has been asked by the government to make sure that Museums, Archives and Libraries give complete access to all disabled people (including VIPs).

Resource is to ensure that all museums, archives and libraries, which are classed as services, should be made more aware through the DDA as, at the moment, only 14% produce their literature in large print and 4% in Braille. They want VIPs to have the right to decent customer services, have audio guides available and the right to touch objects.

Telephone: 020 7273 1444

Website:

www.resource.gov.uk

IN THE KITCHEN

TALKING MICROWAVE

A talking microwave is now available from the National Blind Children's Society.

Model number: 50-018

- **Braille embossed keypad**
- **Speech function**
- **900 watts**
- **5 power levels**
- **4 auto-weight defrost programmes**
- **28 litre capacity**
- **Step by step spoken guide**
- **530mm x 322mm x 404mm**
- **26 personal memo facility**
- **Kitchen timer**
- **Clock**
- **Built-in microphone**
- **Built-in speaker**
- **12 months warranty**
- **White body**
- **17Kg**

Cost: £109.95

Shop@NBCS

**Bradbury House
Market Street
Highbridge
Somerset
TA9 3BW**

Telephone: 0845 050 5445

Fax: 01278 764 790

Email:

shop@nbcs.org.uk

Website:

www.nbcs.org.uk

WORLD'S FIRST TALKING WASHING MACHINE!

(Side View, May 2002)

The world's first talking washing machine has been launched in India!

Manufactured by a company called Electrolux Kelvinator Ltd, the fully automatic Washy Talky has a 'warm, personal Indian lady's accent' and is, of course, able to speak in both English and Hindi. It is sufficiently technically advanced to take the user through the entire washing process.

Hopefully, something similar could soon become available in the UK!

THAT JUG!!

Well, we went to Sight Village and we went to see the people at Cobolt. We have been assured that the jug has just gone into production and should be available very shortly. They are now taking orders. I (Sue) have one on back order and I will let you know how it performs, once I eventually get it!!

The jug is now appearing at Cobolt's online shop and in the new catalogue.

It is a very neat piece of equipment and the jug itself can be removed from the unit to wash as normal or in a dishwasher. It is calibrated to measure water, milk – at any temperature – and cooking oil. There is also a function where you can set it to measure any liquid of your choice but this does mean you have to calibrate it yourself. However, this is quite easy to do. It comes with large print and audio instructions.

The talking measuring jug costs £38 and is available from Cobolt Systems.

Telephone: 01493 700 172

Fax: 01493 701 037

Email: cobolt@compuserve.com

Website: www.cobolt.co.uk

SUE'S COMMENTS: I have now received my new jug! Unfortunately, jug number one arrived and refused to speak at all! So, I telephoned Cobolt and was advised to immediately pack it up and return it. The replacement arrived by return of post and it is chattering away nicely! Seriously, the jug does seem to be fairly accurate and works well. It is easy to use and has settings for milk, oil and water and will measure in millilitres, litres, pints, fluid ounces, US pints and US fluid ounces. It is a bit heavy when full and is about the size of a jug kettle.

A NEW COOKBOOK FROM THE CO-OP

'How to cook meat' is a new cookbook from the Co-op. it is available in Braille and large print. It explains how to prepare and cook fresh meat and it includes 15 easy, tasty recipes.

Telephone: 0800 0686 727

Email:

Customer.relations@co-op.co.uk

The book does rely on Co-op ingredients! However, it is quite simple to substitute your favorite brand!

BENEFITS and FINANCE**MINIMUM INCOME GUARANTEE (MIG)**

If you are in receipt of Attendance Allowance and a state pension and you have less than £12,000 capital, you could make a claim Income Support (also called the Minimum Income Guarantee).

Ignoring Attendance Allowance, if your pension is less than £140.40 per week you might get MIG to top it up to that amount.

If you do not have a carer receiving Invalid Care Allowance to look after you and/or you do not live alone (there are some limited exceptions to this requirement) then the rate you will be topped up to is £98.15.

If you think you may be entitled to MIG, you should claim immediately

Telephone: 0800 028 1111

If you receive MIG, then you can get extra help with health costs, free dental care and vouchers towards the cost of glasses. You may be able to apply to your Social Security office for grants and loans from the Social Fund and you should get maximum Council Tax Benefit.

For more information call RNIB

Telephone: 08457 66 99 99

COMMUNICATIONS**ORANGE**

Orange is to scrap their Equity Points system in the early autumn. You will no longer be able to obtain points as you make calls – if you

have been on the appropriate tariff. The cut-off date for collecting points is 30 August 2002. Any remaining points you may have after this date must be redeemed no later than 27 September 2002. If you do not redeem points by this date you will lose them.

DEREGULATION OF FIXED LINES IN THE UK

DIRECTORY ENQUIRIES

There are two deregulatory items which will take place during August.

One is to do with Directory Enquiries. Don't worry! You will not lose the BT service on 195. However, there will be a choice of other companies providing directory enquiries available in this country. Eventually, there will be space for up to 300 such companies. At first, there will be a further eleven companies available.

BT will keep their present 192 service, 153 – International Enquiries – and the free 195 service.

The way OFFTEL is to allocate the numbers is that all directory enquiry numbers will be six digit numbers beginning with 118. It has been suggested to OFFTEL if BT could keep the current numbers

- 118 192
- 118 153
- 118 195

Some of the other companies will be YELL, ntl, Mobile networks etc. The idea is to create competition to bring down the overall cost of calling directory enquiries. It is also expected that some of the services will be provided in different languages for ethnic groups.

THE LOCAL LOOP

The Local Loop refers to the local connection between your phone and the local exchange – as it used to be called. The local line, at present, is owned totally by either BT or ntl, or Telewest.

BT Group plc owns everything within the group and then rents out services depending on who needs them. In the case of residential lines, they are rented to BT retail. The change in regulations means that BT Group plc will have to rent the lines to other companies at the same rate. ntl and Telewest will be able to provide their services directly to the customer on lines they lease from BT. They will be able to set their own charges.

Other companies will be able to provide a line and call charges directly.

The range of services will be from 'Pay as you Go', where you will pay a little more for the calls but no line rental, to the total all-in package, where you pay a fixed fee and get all your geographic calls free of charge.

The tariffs will probably become more complicated – as with mobile tariffs – but BT will have competition and they will have to provide Pay as you Go tariffs as well.

CHANGE OF NUMBER FOR PHONEANYTHING.COM

As from 1 July 2002, the phoneanything.com number has changed to

Telephone: 0870 222 0870

This is a National rate number.

At present, this does not affect ACB Radio

Telephone: 0845 333 0855

ASSOCIATION NEWS

**AVIOS – ASSOCIATION of VISUALLY IMPAIRED OFFICE
STAFF**

AVIOS is an organisation of and for visually impaired office staff. They support members on employment issues and technology for use by VIPs in office-related employment

The association is planning several training and information events in the autumn. They are also looking for new members and they also have an 'Egroup'.

To subscribe to the group send a blank email to

Email:

Avios-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Or for information on AVIOS

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A CAUTIONARY TALE ...

CRUMBS!

**By George Medd
(Side View, May 2002)**

I am 81 years old and live alone.

One day, whilst in the kitchen, one arm of my spectacles fell off, the screw having come out. In grabbing for the falling specs I discovered the other arm had also come off, that screw must have been loose too!

My MD is a problem but I got down on my hands and knees and, after some time, found the two screws. Placing them in an envelope I went off to my optician. I explained what had happened and gave her the pieces. She looked in the envelope, produced a box full of screws, selected two and repaired the spectacles. I thanked her, put 50p in the Red Cross box and prepared to leave.

As I was leaving I asked her why she hadn't used the screws in the envelope. "Well", she said, "Those weren't screws, they were breadcrumbs!"

We can't win, can we!

USEFUL WEBSITES

READING UNIVERSITY

If you didn't have a travel survey from Reading University and you would like to fill one in and send it off, you can do so online at the special website

Website:

www.extra.reading.ac.uk/fit

COBOLT SYSTEMS

Cobolt has an online shop where you can buy their items. Usually, delivery is very quick.

Website: www.cobolt.co.uk

OUCH!

Website:

www.bbc.co.uk/ouch

This is a lifestyle site produced by disabled people.

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