UK online for business

Working Anywhere

Exploring telework for individuals and organisations
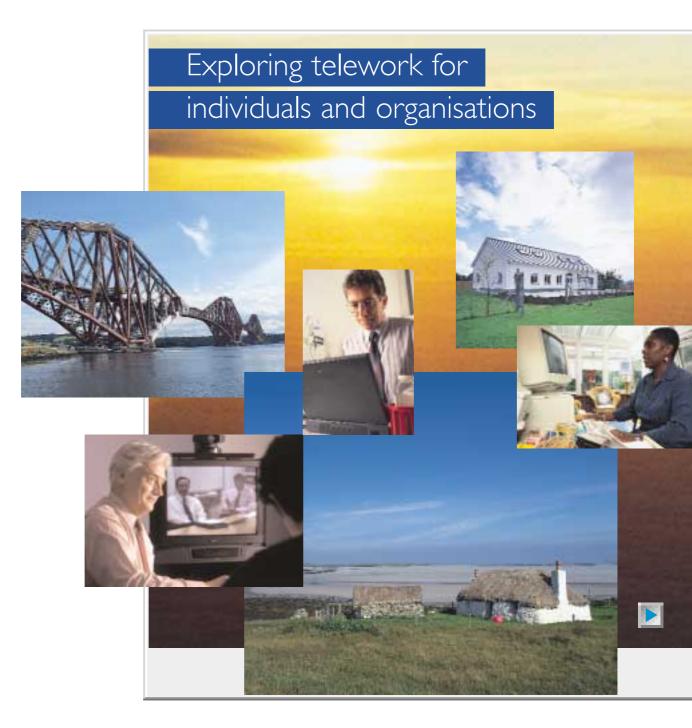
Working Anywhere

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Foreword

Since 1998, when this booklet was first published, most of us have become more familiar with working electronically: communicating by voice, video, text and graphics to anywhere in the world, from both fixed and mobile locations. Many businesses, as well as Government, are already embracing the opportunities from this way of working. This booklet sets out the benefits from being able to work anywhere- whether you are an employer, an employee or self-employed.

As more companies adopt teleworking, they have successfully addressed managers' concerns about managing at a distance. They have implemented strategies to ensure distance workers are not isolated from colleagues, so that everybody benefits from the new arrangements. Indeed, many companies - and individuals too - have found that a mixture of distance working and traditional workplace-based employment is the ideal rather than a compromise way of working.

A word that appears a number of times in this booklet is 'trust'. An organisation with clear objectives that trusts and encourages its employees to work together to meet these objectives should have no fear of adopting 'working anywhere' practices. A culture of sharing information and knowledge also creates the right atmosphere for people to work together, while apart. Indeed for companies to operate in a knowledge driven economy, their competence in fostering knowledge sharing should be regarded as a critical factor in their success.

Teleworking is really about exploring new and imaginative ways of getting the job done in a way which benefits both the organisation and the individual. Successful businesses depend on good people. They recognise that the ability and skills of the people who work for them are their most valuable resource. At the same time, everyone has a life outside of work. We may have children to look after, or other caring responsibilities, or simply want time to pursue other interests. Finding ways to link individual employees' needs to business needs makes sense to both. That is very much the message of the Government's Work-Life Balance Campaign which is raising awareness of the business benefits of work-life policies and sharing best practice.

Teleworking can help to reduce the amount of travel undertaken by people both to work and in the course of work, and can be promoted as part of a wider package of measures through a travel plan. Reductions in business mileage, for example through video-conferencing and audio-conferencing, can lead to real cost and time-savings. Working from home, or from nearby telecentres, is also likely to reduce the impact of travel on the environment, provided this is not offset by increases in non-work travel.

We believe that exploring the benefits of different ways of working should be on the agenda of every company. This booklet introduces various aspects of telework to let you see the bigger picture and how you can be part of it. We hope it makes a difference to you.
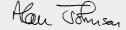
Patricia Hewitt
Minister for Small Business
and E-commerce

Alan Johnson
Minister for Competitiveness

Lord Macdonald
Minister for Transport

Margaret Hodge
Minister for Employment
and Equal Opportunities

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Working Anywhere

Most of us are already used to working in a variety of ways; few of us spend all our working time just sitting at one desk or in one building or just travelling from customer to customer or meeting to meeting.

Work is no longer dependent on geography. People can communicate and exchange information even though they are miles apart. Information – the lifeblood of any business - can now be passed effortlessly around the country, and indeed around the world. It makes no difference what form that information is in: computer files and data, voice conversations, pictures and moving images, other emerging types of multi-media, all these can be converted to electronic signals and sent through telecommunications channels.

A large element of the value added by any business, even if it is engaged in manufacturing physical articles, comes from the processing and management of information. This means that some aspects at least of its operation can now be done independent of geographical location. In the world of digital communications, you need never be in the wrong place to do your work.

You can access the information you need anywhere – from a remote satellite office or local business centre, from a client's premises, from home, from a hotel room or whilst on the move in a train or car.

This way of working has come to be known as teleworking. Confusingly, definitions of telework can vary very widely but most people now use the term for any form of working which meets the twin criteria of being undertaken at a distance from the conventional workplace, and being made possible by the use of information and communications technologies. This broader perspective is also the one which this booklet will take. Statistics for the number of people teleworking in the UK can be found on page 35.

As technology develops, so the practical possibilities increase. Electronic mail is now in widespread use. The phenomenal growth of the Internet shows just how powerful this international network of linked computers can be, whilst Internet standards are also being used by companies internally for their own computer networks. There are new, low-cost ways to undertake videoconferencing and data-conferencing from ordinary desktop computers. Portable laptops and palm-sized personal digital assistants are increasingly being linked to cellular phone networks. The next step forward in mobile telecommunication, which will open up the possibilities for fast data communication, is just around the corner. Meanwhile, increased competition in telecommunications is bringing down costs.
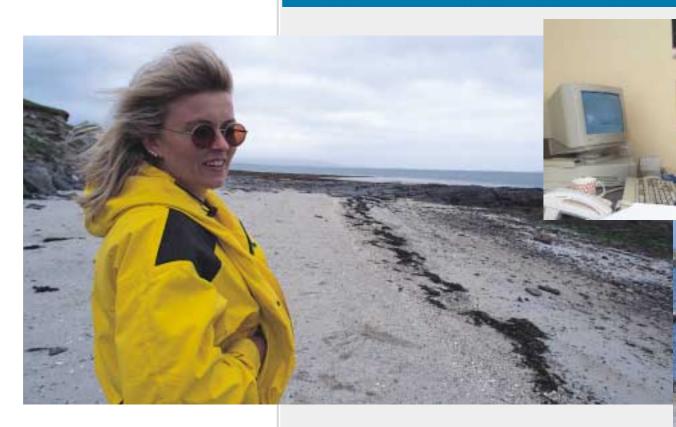
It is not just in work location, but also in work time that there are new possibilities for flexibility. Communications networks are available round-the-clock, so information can be accessed and work undertaken at the times of day which suit the individual and his or her employer. There are possibilities for undertaking work internationally, by taking advantage of time zone differences. Already, for example, some out-of-hours telephone calls by customers of US businesses are routed automatically to the UK, to be answered here during the day.

All these changes create important issues for both companies and individuals. If there is no longer the same necessity to work in centralised buildings during set times, we have a new freedom to look at a rather more important aspect of work organisation, the people, and how to ensure that their skills and potential are properly maximised.

Lasair Ltd

Developing these new ways of working is likely to mean changing the way organisations are structured and management is undertaken. It means relying less on traditional 'command and control' supervision techniques – rather difficult to maintain, if your employees are now in different parts of the country, miles away. It means developing new collaborative forms of working, based on mutual trust and an emphasis on enablement and empowerment.

Teleworking may also have a valuable role to contribute in reducing the amount of travel that individuals need to undertake for work. When teleworking substitutes for high-mileage driving patterns, this can benefit both the individual (through more leisure time and less stress) and the employer (through reduced transport costs). Teleconferencing has clear benefits – with reductions in travel resulting in a more efficient use of work-time and a reduced impact of business mileage on the environment. Providing reduction in travel to work is not replaced with other journeys made, for example from home during the working day (or by a more general shift from towns to the countryside), teleworking is likely to provide welcome benefits to the environment.

Of course, teleworking does not constitute a job in itself, only a method of working – individuals will still need to have the expertise and skills to bring to their work.

However, it can mean more business opportunities for the enterprising small business person and the self-employed.

Kathleen Turner is a director of Lasair Ltd, a small company based on the Hebridean island of Benbecula. She has exploited the possibilities of technology to develop a successful business undertaking editing, abstracting and database compilation work. Lasair makes use of a regular pool of about 30-40 highly skilled people throughout the Western Isles who work from their own homes on a sub-contract basis.

Kathleen Turner herself works for much of the week from her home, saving the necessity of a slow journey along narrow roads to the office.

Among Lasair's current contracts are editing and pre-production work for a new edition of the classic reference work, the Grove Dictionary of Music.

''Being located where we are matters not at all. The telecommunications links are very well developed - the Highlands and Islands of Scotland are more advanced in some ways than some southern mainland UK regions - and we can undertake just anything these days. The Western Isles also has a higher percentage of graduates per capita than anywhere else in the country, so we've found it quite an advantage to be here.

''I think we've proved ourselves. For example, we have a contract with the Home Office Forensic Science service to compile their database records. The work was previously done in London, and it took several weeks to turn the work around. We send it back in five days.

''The mark-up work for the Grove Dictionary of Music is being undertaken for a publisher in Oxford by ten people on the island of Barra. Their work then comes to us at Lasair and we

Yorkshire Water

Steve Mortimer manages a team of ten Yorkshire Water engineers, responsible for the network of reservoirs, treatment plants and water mains in a large area of the Yorkshire Dales.

Until recently, his team gathered at the start of each day for their instructions at a depot near Masham. Now eight of the engineers can work out their day's itinerary for themselves from home. Using laptops, they connect each morning

perform a quality control role, checking for errors, before sending the work back to the publisher.

"We are in day-to-day communication with our contractors, mainly electronically. We run an e-mail conference, and as I receive information I put it out on to the conference: it could be updates of software, or files which need to be sent out. It means that people for whom it's relevant can pick it up immediately. We encourage people to check their e-mail regularly throughout the day."

"We are exploring new avenues of innovation to provide the ultimate virtual service solution. We have recently started a service, 'LiveGenie' to provide on-line interactive customer support services for busy web sites. 'LiveGenie' enables our clients to transform the manner in which buying, selling and customer support is conducted on their Internet sites."

to the company's groupware system and to the real-time database which remotely monitors the flow and quality of water through their area.

"Prior to our use of computer laptops, everyone had to come in here. The dissemination of information was difficult, and the office was full of little notes.

"Now people are empowered more. They are able to take responsibility for their own workload and to take decisions for themselves. Previously, people came to me for things they should really have decided themselves. When we initially introduced the laptops, I made a point of staying at home and not coming in to the office for a few days, to get people out of the habit of coming to me.

"I begin a typical day at about 7am, when I log on from home to the company's

Regional Telemetry System (RTS) which monitors our sites twenty-four hours a day. I will look for any problems which are occurring, and allocate priorities. Then I'll log on to the groupware system and make some phone calls to team members.

"The arrangement showed its worth over Christmas 1997, when we had really catastrophic weather in the Dales. By 3am on Christmas Day trees were down all over and sixteen of our sites were without mains power. It was quite a juggling act keeping a supply of potable water. I set my laptop up in the dining room at home at midnight on Christmas Eve and was plugged in to our RTS all the time for the next twelve hours. The routine before would have been for everyone to come in to the office, in order to access the RTS information."

Fulcrum Pharma PLC

Jon Court is Chief Executive Officer of Fulcrum Pharma PLC, an independent virtual drug development company which was recently floated on the Alternative Investment Market. The company has expertise in the design, execution and delivery of drug development programmes and relies on state of the art information technology and infrastructure to supply its services

"Drug development is very expensive, and takes a long time - the industry average is ten to twelve years. We aim to be more efficient and help our customers get to the market quicker and therefore get more value from their products.
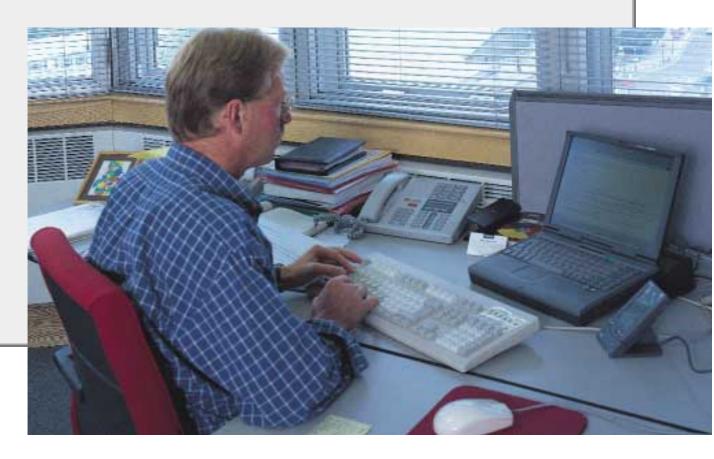
"Together with our clients, we set the strategy and then provide the leadership for Drug Development Projects. Strategic outsourcing is a cornerstone of the business and we conduct our work through tailor made virtual teams consisting of multiple suppliers. The work is therefore done in difference companies, in different countries and different time zones. We use electronic communications to manage information in this distributed environment.

"In practical terms the company could be anywhere and strives to be geographically independent, though the office has to be close to a good international airport. People spend perhaps 30% of their time travelling, and also frequently work from home. All of us can connect to the office from home and have docking stations for our laptops both at home and in the office. Our PCs are equipped with modems, so we can access the local area network and the Internet from any location.

"We don't have secretaries or assistants, so we handle messages ourselves. We use a personal number service which means that all calls and faxes get connected to us wherever we are. The system dials the home number, the mobile or diverts messages to the voice box."

If you are a chief executive or strategic planner

Taking a strategic overview

Companies can improve their competitiveness by faster decision making, shorter lead times and better service to customers, and these objectives can be achieved through better use of electronic communications in the business. Improved performance should drive change.

Teleworking could be of value to your company, if you

▶ depend on attracting or retaining people with scarce skills

▶ want to avoid a move to larger premises

▶ want to reduce office overheads

▶ want to make services available to customers outside normal office hours

▶ want to improve your time to market

▶ want to reduce work related transport costs

▶ need to handle workload peaks and troughs more easily.

Benefits could include:

▶ easier re-location

▶ opportunity to take advantage of a ready supply of labour in a different locality

▶ reduction in the time which field workers have to spend 'touching base' at the office

▶ easier management of a regionally-based service

▶ basing workers nearer to clients or suppliers

▶ attracting and retaining staff with disabilities

▶ retaining staff (eg those who want or need to spend time caring for their families)

▶ accommodating fluctuations in the demand for work

▶ gaining access to specialist skills which are only needed occasionally

▶ a more flexible workforce

▶ a more family-friendly working environment

▶ reducing spending on transport (eg company cars and work related travel).

Taking advantage of the opportunities

'Information', including knowledge and data, and 'communications' are what make a company function: they are akin to the blood and circulatory system in our bodies. An organisation whose culture encourages open access to, and the sharing and communication of, information is likely to be in the best position to take advantage of the opportunities.

Creating a successfully integrated organisation means

▶ using technology to serve the business process, and

▶ gaining employees' commitment to new ways of working.

This means convincing employees of the benefits for them, as well as for the company. It may mean modifying the role which they have (or perceive they have) in your organisation.

New technology should not be used as an excuse for poor work practice or unsatisfactory terms and conditions. Employees using new technology and working in new ways have the same employment rights as other workers. Teleworking should be a matter of choice.

It is worth remembering that many highly qualified people are self-employed and choose to live and work from a particular location. If the work can be transmitted electronically, then it is quite feasible, provided quality assurance and security procedures are in place, for contracts to be let to off-site parties regardless of their location. Companies may find this an attractive alternative to engaging on-site contractors and should consider offering the option when tendering contracts.

The implementation process: some issues

Successful implementation of new ways of working depends on drive and support from the highest level in the organisation, as well as a willingness to adapt by those who are directly affected. It helps if there is a culture of innovation and enablement, as well as an acceptance of failure without penalty.

Successful change will mean bringing together different parts of the organisation, which will have complementary roles to play: the business strategists, human resources, facilities management, IT department, and others, including trade unions.

Any feasibility study will inevitably include an analysis of likely costs and benefits. Look carefully at both 'hard' and 'soft' costs and benefits, but do not lose sight of the overall objective. Many companies first introduce new ways of working through pilot programmes, subject to proper monitoring and review.

Consider how you can maintain your corporate culture if work and workers are dispersed. How is the 'creative spark' in your organisation ignited? Are corridor discussions, meetings over the coffee machine, canteen exchanges and after-work socialising where the real collective inspiration emerges? Do you have in place the electronic networking facilities (e-mail, intranet, on-line discussion) to augment these physical meetings and enable distant workers to remain part of the mainstream?

There is considerable evidence that the interests of both an organisation and its staff are best served if for some of the time, perhaps as much as half, work is done in a collective environment. This could be the traditional office, or some other meeting place where face-to-face interaction is possible. This means that some accommodation will normally be required for remote workers, possibly with computer and communications facilities.

However, with a significant percentage of workers no longer in the head office for the whole of the working week opportunities arise for savings and improvements in the facilities provided there. Innovations such as 'club facilities', 'soft spaces' and 'hot desking' are becoming widespread.

Finally, you will need to consider the barriers to change in your organisation. Are some people (perhaps managers with long service in your company) raising objections about new technology and new ways of working in general because of a more fundamental fear of change or a different personal agenda? Are some people using the new communications methods while others are still resisting adoption? How can such wider issues be addressed so that there can be progress?

Reducing reliance on the car through telework

A number of firms who have introduced teleworking have witnessed a reduction in travel costs and mileage. These include:

▶ Hertfordshire County Council has developed Oases, local workstations, for Trading Standards officers to cut journeys to Headquarters. Savings have been 5-8% travel costs and 7% in car mileage. These will be enhanced to meet the likely increased need as a result of the county council's WorkWise programme which aims to reduce workstations within offices by 25%;

▶ Post Office Consulting has in excess of 300 people who are working flexibly. The ethos of flexibility has permeated throughout the organisation and people are now at liberty to work where it is most satisfactory for the client, the task, the business and themselves. They have found that this reduces commuting and has also, by utilising video conferencing and knowledge technology systems such as information, dialogue and team databases, ensured that business mileage and travelling is kept to a necessary minimum. They no longer estimate miles or journeys saved; but know they save many, many thousands of miles but still meet the expectations of their clients;

▶ ADAS Consulting Ltd have introduced IT-based working practices and reduced office sites from 90 to 25. More than 500 staff now work permanently from home and more than 1,200 use internet e-mail systems. Each home-based consultant is estimated to have reduced car use in the course of his or her work by 2,000 miles a year.

Surrey County Council

Paul Coen, Chief Executive, is currently overseeing the planned introduction of Surrey Workstyle, a major programme which will introduce new forms of flexible working to many of Surrey's employees. The authority has rationalised its property requirement and now plans to implement 16 local offices where 'landing pad' facilities (workstations available on a drop-in or pre-booked basis) will be available.
A number of these will be co-location with "partners" in their premises, for example district and borough councils and Health Authorities. With these, a corporate HQ and 4 area offices, we will have rationalised from 74 to 21 buildings.

Surrey already successfully operates a tele-centre in Epsom, providing office facilities for peripatetic employees and other staff working flexibly.

"Surrey Workstyle is an ambitious long-term enterprise to help us achieve our aim of improving services for our residents. It has emerged from an understanding that we couldn't successfully implement a property rationalisation programme without also linking it with cultural change in the organisation, in terms of an increase in sensitivity and responsiveness to our customers. There is a strong financial driver behind the programme, but it is linked to the more general culture change programme.

"The target group for the initial phase of Workstyle is about 3,400 people who are working out of about 74 offices. It's clear that the current configuration of office space is going to change. Depending on the work they do and their personal preferences, staff could work from a satellite office closer to home, from a telecentre, at or from home, on the road or from their team base. Our aim is to have a menu of options, and choice for staff over where and when they work.

"You can't bring this about by a Chief Executive memo. We're undertaking an exercise to win hearts and minds and asking people to look at their own jobs and decide whether the job lends itself to flexible working practices. It's important that staff warm to the idea, and don't think that this is just this year's whizzo idea. We're saying quite clearly that this is going to be imple-mented over at least a three year period.

"Workstyle is quite heavily focused on the potential of information and communication technology, but the reassuring thing is that it's old technology we'll be using. We're not planning anything which is cutting edge stuff.

We have already successfully implemented the Information and Communication Technology arrangements in a range of pilot sites to allow staff to work from any location and access their systems and information. "We have developed a workshop style training programme for teams to facilitate the move to flexible working. All Social Service teams have developed flexible working team plans and this is being extended to all other areas of the organisation.

"Everyone in the public sector is feeling overburdened, with the amount of work growing, but we're not in a position to address this with more resources or more people.
So the question is one of looking again at priorities. Learning to distance-manage is a big issue, but it has the effect of making managers address the question of the work they want their staff to do, to manage by outcomes. So it forces them to address the issue of overload, and of prioritising work.

"More flexible working will also help Surrey meet its targets in our Company Transport Plan, limiting the need for car journeys. We want everyone to realise it's just not a good use of their time to sit on a congested Surrey road, if there's an alternative."

If you are an operational manager

While the responsibility for the direction of the organisation may lie elsewhere, it is inevitable that day to day arrangements for teleworking will fall to operational managers. This will present new challenges, among which are building and maintaining teams. But there will also be benefits.

What are the potential advantages?

Teleworking gives an additional element of flexibility – making it easier to cover peak workloads or out of hours services, and perhaps enabling job sharing.

Staff are also less prone to the vagaries of public transport and road traffic conditions

Managers report that distant workers can become:

▶ more productive

▶ more reliable

▶ more loyal

  and are likely to:

▶ improve the quality of their work (because there are fewer distractions)

▶ take less time off (because minor ailments can be better endured at home)

▶ stay longer with the organisation (because their personal circumstances are catered for).

But the benefits are not automatic and the introduction of teleworking must be planned and managed carefully.

The management challenges

Important tasks for you, if you are managing distant workers, will include:

▶ maintaining communication and feedback

▶ maintaining corporate and team culture

▶ ensuring that your staff have opportunities for development

▶ monitoring training

▶ ensuring effective appraisal

It can feel threatening to face the prospect of managing staff who are not sharing the same physical building as you. How do you know if they are really working? How can you monitor their time-keeping?

In fact, these concerns disappear if you move to management by results. This means setting agreed and achievable targets for your staff, which they are responsible for meeting. This involves changes to the traditional manager-employee relationship. It also means

developing a greater degree of trust, empowering your staff and allowing them to be confident that, if they make mistakes, they will not be penalised. This style of management is preferable to using crude quantifiable measures, such as the number of key strokes per hour.

Feedback on performance is very important for distant workers. Distant staff also have the right to have exactly the same information and news about the company as their office-based colleagues. You will, therefore, need to discuss arrangements for day-to-day contact with your staff. You may want to fix regular times for telephone contact, to use e-mail and fax, or to explore the possibilities of desktop videoconferencing. Many distant workers are office-based for part of each week, but those who work primarily away from the office should have regular (perhaps weekly or monthly) visits scheduled.

Keeping in contact gives you the opportunity to identify warning signs that something may be going wrong.

Staff who are using their homes for working have a right to privacy out-of-hours, and to be able to separate their working and home lives. You should also agree the times when they can or cannot be contacted on work issues. A separate telephone line provided for business use which can be switched to record messages will help in this. You should ensure that home visits are arranged at times acceptable to the teleworker.

It is also important to arrange regular team meetings and facilitate communication among teleworking staff.

The Royal Bank of Scotland

George Clarke is head of telecom services for The Royal Bank of Scotland, and has responsibility among other things for developing the bank's videoconferencing facilities. The bank has long been a pioneer of videoconferences as an alternative to time consuming and expensive business travel.

"It's a very heavily used service. We're up to about 450 videoconferences a month, ranging from, for example, two hour sessions linking five locations to half an hour link-ups between two locations.

We've got videoconferencing facilities in London, Manchester and Edinburgh. In five years, the number has gone up from eight to twenty-three. At one time, videoconferencing needed a studio environment, but now we simply put the technology in communal meeting rooms or wherever it's appropriate. It's rather like booking a squash court: if you book for half an hour, you get half an hour and after that people are likely to be waiting outside. Some companies allow a quarter of an hour turnaround time between calls - that's a luxury we haven't got.

There's a story that some years ago the bank's Chairman was waiting for a flight at Edinburgh airport and noticed that an awful lot of Royal Bank staff were there waiting with him. When the flight arrived, it also was full of bank staff. Now the bank's reservation form for anyone booking a flight has got a section in it which asks 'Why can't you videoconference rather than taking a flight?'. You actually have to explain in detail why you have to travel.

There are dedicated facilities for the bank's executives, two in London and one in Edinburgh. During the takeover of NatWest, people were using videoconferencing for up to four hours a day - it was very, very helpful. But videoconferencing is not solely for the use of executives: people in middle management and below use it. I think that when you're starting off a project, you do need to meet face-to-face, but for follow-up meetings videoconferencing is fine.

The videoconference facilities are connected into the head office digital telephone network, and we have a bridge, a device which allows us to set up the calls. For external conferences, we use a link to Thus (formerly Scottish Telecom).

I estimate that we save between £60,000 and £70,000 a month. This is a conservative estimate, based on the likelihood that, say, for a typical four-person conference only one person would otherwise be travelling. We also assume that only 60% of these videoconferences replace any travel. But even using these modest assumptions we're saving a staggering amount of money."

The legal, technical and practical issues

A number of issues will need to be carefully considered when your company introduces any form of teleworking. Often in larger enterprises responsibility for this will be given to a project team, who may be asked to plan and implement an initial pilot programme.

Project teams can usefully include specialists from different parts of your company, for example human resources, those responsible for health, safety and the environment, IT, legal, facilities management and strategic planning. Where there are trade unions or other employee representatives, they should be involved in the proposed working arrangements.

Among the issues which you may need to consider are

▶ contractual arrangements for distant workers

▶ health and safety arrangements

▶ furniture, equipment and computer and communications provision

▶ systems issues, eg remote access to company databases and applications

▶ information security

▶ insurance, of both people and equipment

▶ expenses and allowances (eg for home heating and lighting)

▶ taxation, including business rates

▶ human resources , such as recruitment, training and career progression

These areas are covered in more detail in the *Inside Information* sections of this booklet.

The *Further Information and Advice* section lists many sources of help which draw on the experiences of companies who have already instituted forms of teleworking. They can also put you in touch with companies offering specialist help and consultancy in setting up flexible working schemes.

If you are an employee

While many companies have introduced teleworking because there is a benefit to the business, it is worthwhile remembering that in others, the initiative has come from employees.

What are the potential advantages?

Changing the place where you work can provide real benefits. For example, you may be able to save time and money previously spent commuting. You may gain greater flexibility from being able to integrate your work with your home life. In some circumstances (if, for example, you have a disability), you may be able to undertake work which was previously unavailable to you. Telework could be right for you if you:

▶ currently commute a long distance or have a difficult journey to work

▶ live in an area where there is little choice of work or a shortage of jobs

▶ have young children and want more flexibility in your working hours

▶ are active in your local community and want to be available earlier in the evening

▶ have caring responsibilities that make it difficult to work away from home

▶ frequently work unsociable hours

▶ do work that requires quiet concentration with control over interruptions

▶ are regularly on call for out of hours responsibilities

▶ travel a lot for business purposes

▶ have mobility or health problems that make conventional work places inaccessible or a challenge

▶ are part of a team that is distributed in different companies or locations

▶ do work that mainly involves contact outside your company

Making the change

Moving from a traditional workplace represents a major change in your working life, however, and there are several factors you should consider.

There are a number of possible ways of remote working. Some of the same issues will apply whether you are considering moving to work from a satellite office or small neighbourhood office (such as one of the telecentres or telecottages which now exist in many parts of the country), operating increasingly as a mobile worker without an office base, or bringing your work to your home. Home-based teleworking raises some additional issues (see below).

You should be aware that there is also a substantial difference between continuing to spend a significant amount of time in the office working with your colleagues, and moving to an arrangement where almost all your work is undertaken remotely.

What personal qualities should I have for working on my own?

To work at a distance from your colleagues and line manager you need:

▶ self motivation

▶ ability to work without close supervision

▶ good time-management skills

▶ flexibility, resilience and self-reliance

▶ good communication skills – including new skills of communicating across electronic networks

▶ ability to cope with conflicting demands of home and work life.

Will remote working suit my circumstances?

Many people like the idea of working at or near home instead of commuting. The first question to ask is, "Can my job really be done if I'm based away from the main office?". For example do you need access to files that are still on paper? Do you need access to equipment or systems that can only be used on site? Does your work mainly need quiet concentration or do you need to bounce ideas round your colleagues all the time?

Then you should consider your personal style and preferences. Some people are happy working by themselves, others regard the companionship of people at work as an essential part of their life. If you are considering working

London Borough of Lewisham

Sonia Steele is one of about sixteen registration officers for childcare facilities who are taking part in a home teleworking programme. As well as inspection visits, she continues to visit her office two or three times a week for meetings and duty rota sessions. However, home is now her main work base. There are many employees who work in this way. The office has been reorganised to accommodate seven teams of staff who work flexibly. Each team has its own base within the office, but there are also shared drop in and bookable desks, as well as a soft furnishing area for meetings with colleagues. This approach has been duplicated in other areas of the council.

"We register and inspect childminders, nurseries and all under-8 facilities. There are always reports and other case work to write up - I'm never short of work to do at home. It's very calming, I enjoy it. I'm fortunate that to accommodate home working in my home I've got a suitable area which has plenty of natural light and looks out on the garden. When you have a large and difficult report to do it's easier to do it without interruptions.

"The employer supplies us with a PC, chair, table and drawer. We're given a BT chargecard for telephone calls we make from home, and we get an allowance of £100 for the heating and lighting costs. The council carries out a risk assessment of the house and we're advised to tell our insurers that we're now working from home.

"I think we were all apprehensive when the pilot scheme in which I was asked to participate started. It felt lonely at first, especially when the desks were taken away. I've worked in offices for quite a number of years, and an office is like a second home. You create your little space and take little things in to make yourself comfortable there. You have to decide to make a positive decision to make home-working work. You have to think, there's no turning back. You need to adjust to it mentally. I am now feeling confident and comfortable working from home.

"The vital thing is to keep in contact with your colleagues. We had an Awayday recently, and it was really enjoyable getting to know each other again. Three of us also arranged to take flexitime to go for a six mile walk - but it's up to you to keep in touch and do things together.

"You're inclined to work longer hours at home. At work you physically leave everything behind at the end of the day. At home the work is there and you think, 'perhaps I should finish this first'. You sometimes have to discipline yourself and say, 'no - hang on a moment, this is my own time'. On the other hand, it provides greater flexibility to organise your personal and work life. If you want to take a long lunch hour, the time can be made up later. There needs to be trust between the manager and staff to achieve a success of homeworking."

on your own, check what arrangements your employer is making for social interaction, keeping you as part of a team and keeping you in touch with events and opportunities at work. Consider what social arrangements you can, yourself, make with colleagues. Are there other people working at home near you, with whom you can share experiences and solve problems?

In general, the introduction of distant working should not be accompanied by any weakening of your terms and conditions of employment. If you are offered different terms and conditions from office-based colleagues, are these acceptable and satisfactory? You will normally want to ensure that your employment status is unaffected by the change in where you work. This issue is considered later in this booklet (page 24).

Beginning any form of teleworking should be a voluntary choice. Discuss with your employer whether you will be allowed to return from distant working to your previous arrangement – perhaps because you find that you are not suited to this way of working, or because your personal circumstances change.

You will want to continue to have the same training opportunities as office-based colleagues. Also consider whether there might be possible career limitations by not

being in the office and ask how your employer is proposing to ensure that your prospects for career development and promotion do not suffer from you being 'out of sight, out of mind'.

If you are a trade union member, how will you ensure you have adequate contact with your representatives?

If you are a carer or parent with a young family, new working arrangements may be a good way of combining caring responsibilities with re-entry to, or remaining in, the labour market. You will need to consider your own circumstances carefully. You should not assume that you can look after others and do a job at the same time. You will still need to make arrangements for care during your working hours. This will include special arrangements to provide for children during half term weeks and school holidays.

In the longer-term, think about whether you will enjoy your new working arrangement, whether your job will still offer variety, stimulation and opportunity for development and whether you will be able to combat the possible risk of isolation and loneliness.

Making your home your workplace

If you are considering working from home, you should think about whether you have sufficient working space and storage space – do you, for example, have a separate room available or can you make some space available that is "only for work". Check whether your employer is providing you with the equipment you need (including, perhaps, an extra telephone line) and whether your own furniture and equipment, or that provided by your employer, is of an adequate ergonomic standard to protect your health and safety.

There are costs attached to working from home, such as extra heating and lighting expenses, telephone charges, insurance (your domestic insurance policy may not cover work use), wear and tear, etc. There is also an 'opportunity cost', if for example you are using a room which was previously available as a spare room or workshop. You may find some overheads are effectively being transferred to you, and any allowances for them should be the subject of an agreement between you and your employer. On the other hand you may be saving substantial commuting costs.

There may be other issues to consider, such as your tax position, possible planning restrictions, liability for Business Rates and business charges by utilities, and health and safety legislation. The *Inside Information* section of this booklet investigates these legal, technical and practical issues in more detail.

Do you view your home as a sanctuary, a place for relaxation and family life into which work should not intrude? Can you keep your home and business life separate?

Will working at home affect others in your household: a partner, for example, who is already working from home. Will you disturb the activities of others in the household? Conversely you may find your work disturbed by other members of your family, or by visits from friends and neighbours, so you will need to find a way to make it clear to them that you are working.

However, bear in mind that some of these issues will not arise if you choose to telework from a nearby business centre, telecentre or telecottage.

Finally, consider how your transport needs will change. Will you still have transport needs either to reach a telecentre or for extra work journeys, such as shopping which you would have done as part of your work journey? Will you be able to get by with public transport, a bicycle or by walking? Will you start having to make additional car journeys for work?

KITE Telecentre

Sheila and Michael McCaffrey are directors of KITE which runs a purpose-built teleworking centre in the rural village of Kinawley, Co Fermanagh, Northern Ireland, offering the remote management of data. With an expanding customer base in the USA, UK and Ireland the focus for growth has stayed mainly in English speaking destinations world-wide.

KITE has also involved itself with partners to undertake high quality ICT training and development within the corporate and community sectors.

The development work to create KITE began in 1986, with the first building opening in 1993. Since then the centre has gone through a period of constant development with investment in new technology a key to success and growth. As the McCaffreys point out, investment decisions are taken based on customer needs, rather than, say, simply acquiring technology for technology's sake. KITE is also unusual in its emphasis on providing family-friendly work through the provision of childcare facilities.

"We have the ability to work for anybody anywhere in the world - technology allows us this opportunity. We use this technology at KITE to build markets, to tender for work, to send and receive work and finally get paid - all electronically!

"One of the key features of the KITE development is the provision of childcare on-site. The childcare provision originated with pre-school care and was further developed to include after-school / holiday care and a variety of play and learning based on ICT.

"Kinawley is a small village in south Fermanagh with high unemployment, lacking the infrastructural base needed to build vibrant economic activity. KITE has established the first cross-community and cross-border economic and social focus for this deprived rural area. The idea could be duplicated in almost any other location, though you need drive to make it happen."

If you are self-employed

An increasing number of people are choosing to take on the risks, but also hopefully the rewards, of running their own businesses. This section will help you identify some of the issues if you are planning this sort of step, and have the idea of basing your business in your home. It is not intended as a general review of the advantages and disadvantages of self-employment: there are many other guides and resources available.

Teleworking is a way of working, not a job in itself. Whether you will be able to find work and run a successful business depends on the experience and skills you have to offer, and the demand for the services you are providing.

You should be aware of the implications of changing your employment status, if you are currently an employee. If you begin to run your own business, you will take on responsibility for many things which may be currently provided for you under your contract of employment: such things as guaranteed regular pay, sickness and holiday entitlements, national insurance and pension provision, etc.

Remember there are options on 'where', 'when' and 'how' you work. Many new freelance businesses begin from an office at home, partly because this provides an easy and cheap way of getting started. For people whose work involves the use of information and communication technologies, home-based work is becoming an increasingly feasible option. There are other alternatives: you may prefer, for example, to use a satellite office or telecentre, and share expenses with others. In some sectors, it may be important that customers can come to see you in a 'proper' office.

What are the potential benefits?

To be self-employed is to run a one-person business; the self-employed teleworker stands to gain many of the benefits which teleworking brings to both employers and employees.

These include:

▶ the obvious cost savings, as an alternative to paying for an office elsewhere

▶ avoidance of travel time and costs

▶ the flexibility to work at whatever time suits you, since all the facilities for working are close to hand

▶ the advantage of being more available and accessible to family members.

An additional benefit for the self-employed teleworker is the potential to work with and for customers spread across a much wider distance – potentially worldwide.

If you can sell your services at a distance and do the work without needing to see the customer frequently, this can greatly extend your market opportunity.

Another potential benefit is that you can link with other self-employed people in your own or related fields across a wider distance. Many self-employed people get their business contacts and opportunities through networking; electronic networking through e-mail and other on-line methods makes it possible to link and keep in touch with many more people at a much lower cost in terms of both time and money. It may still be important to attend 'real' meetings for both business and social reasons, but the electronic links can greatly leverage the value of these face to face activities.

The virtual enterprise - new networks of self-employed people

The term 'virtual enterprise' is often used to describe partnerships between multinationals and other large enterprises, but the concept also has great potential significance for independent, self-employed people who can make use of information and communication technologies to work together in flexible multi-locational networks, to increase their marketing and sales impact, the flow of business opportunities and the range and depth of services they can provide to customers.

Sometimes the networks are informal – just a set of people who have agreed to use teleworking methods to keep in regular contact and to work together when suitable opportunities arise. Other networks become more formalised, with their own rules of participation and their own business processes.

Accessing global markets

The Internet presents immense opportunities to do business on a global as well as on a local basis. A well-presented Web site, backed by appropriate payment arrangements and a high standard of response to enquiries and orders, can be the self-employed teleworker's shop window for attracting potential customers and doing business with them.

For a customer doing business across the Internet, it matters not whether you are in a prestige office building or in your office over the garage. What matters is how you present your business and the value it delivers.

Will self-employed teleworking suit my circumstances?

Some of the issues which you will want to consider before beginning work as a self-employed teleworker are similar to those facing an employee (see page 14). Do you have:

▶ self motivation

▶ ability to work without supervision

▶ good time management skills

▶ flexibility, resilience and self reliance

▶ good communication skills

▶ ability to cope with conflicting demands of home and work life

People who are successfully self-employed enjoy the freedom and independence to make their own decisions, manage their own affairs and build up their customers.

On the other hand, people who have worked only in well-structured and well-managed enterprises usually find it a shock to have to not only make all their own decisions but also carry them out. And there is no guarantee of a regular salary payment at the end of each month.

You will also need to equip yourself with the necessary IT and other equipment. If you are new to computers you will benefit from formal training. Generally, you can also expect to spend several months becoming totally familiar with the hardware and software you are using.

Computer equipment is complex, and you will almost certainly need ready access to someone with technical expertise to help when things go wrong. It is essential to carry out standard procedures to protect your work, for example, back up your work regularly and keep it secure. Ensure that material you receive or send by disk or via the Internet is virus free.

Phil Beecher

Phil Beecher, from Brighton, is a freelance computer programmer who specialises in developing network software. His major client is a US company based in California.

"There is a shortage of available programmers on the West Coast of the USA, so the company started looking further afield. I'm their sole UK software programmer, and work from home where I have a small computer network.

"I just use a standard phone line and modem. I ship the completed code to them as an attachment to an e-mail message. I have a constant e-mail conversation going on with the company, and get all the internal memos. Most of the communication I can do by e-mail, though sometimes e-mail means that people miss out on the nuances. Therefore I use the telephone as well. I travel to California as and when necessary, about once every three months.

"It's very difficult to get down to things in an open-plan office. It's far easier for work which requires intellectual clarity to work at home, but you do have to be quite self-disciplined. The only disadvantage is a certain isolation.

"I work flexible hours. I might take a bit of time off when my children come back from school, but then work on into the evening."

The legal, technical and practical issues

If you are considering working from home, you should ask yourself many of the same questions as employees with regard to space for working and storage, the effect on others in your household, coping with interruptions and extra equipment and telephone lines.

The costs relating to working from home, provided they are incurred 'wholly and exclusively' for the purposes of your business, will normally be treated for tax purposes as legitimate business expenses. You should ask a professional adviser, such as an accountant, for further advice on this.

As well as taxation, there are other legal and technical issues which you will need to consider. These include:

▶ health and safety legislation

▶ planning controls; other restrictions on using your home for work

▶ insurance

▶ data protection legislation

These issues are looked at in more detail in the *Inside Information* section of this booklet.

Off to a good start

You are convinced: there are benefits to be had from teleworking. You – as an employee, as an employer or as a self-employed person – feel you are ready for telework. What happens next?

There are now many examples of successful teleworking, but there are also instances where a telework initiative has been less satisfactory or where an individual teleworker has encountered sufficient problems to make them want to return to conventional office working. How do you make a start to ensure that you have the best chances of success?

For the employer

First, decide on your priorities based on business opportunities and needs: these may be to bring about savings on costs, improved service to customers, increased revenues, a widening of your market, the retention or recruitment of skilled staff, etc.

Put someone in clear charge of the teleworking strategy and implementation. This needs to be someone senior and central enough to have an overall understanding of the enterprise, to perceive the implications of change, and to have the authority to make things happen. Quite naturally, this person will want to check out other companies' experience of teleworking and get a good feel for current best practice. They may want to short cut the learning curve by getting input from a specialist consultant. Contacts and sources are listed at the back of this booklet.

Depending on the organisation's culture, there may be resistance to the idea of change or there may be great enthusiasm. There are three key principles to bear in mind:

▶ For teleworking to be successful, it must be best for the company, best for its customers and business partners, and best for the people doing the work. A successful telework programme balances the interests of those concerned.

▶ The "technology of telework" needs to be already in successful use by the enterprise.

▶ Successful telework is about confidence: confidence among managers in their ability to manage at a distance, confidence among employees that being off site doesn't mean being out of touch, confidence that the business process will be better not worse.

All sorts of jobs at every level from senior management to the lowest grade of clerical work are potentially amenable to teleworking. Broadly any job or part of a job or task which involves the transfer or processing of information (including data, text, graphics and pictures) can be carried out flexibly. However, as we have seen not every individual will be suited for this way of working.

Department of Trade and Industry

Margaret Gibbins is a member of the Department of Trade and Industry's small specialist team of translators. After working in London for twenty years she returned to Scotland with her husband, and arranged to carry on working for the DTI from her home near Edinburgh.

"My husband and I had considered a move out of London for quite a long time, and three years ago my husband managed to get a transfer to Edinburgh. I asked the DTI if they would consider me working from home, and they said yes.

"I'd always felt that home working would be very isolating, and that it wouldn't suit me. I always got a lot out of being in the office. But I feel that I've adjusted much better than I expected. It helps that I have an active life here outside work.

"We get a very wide variety of documents to translate for the DTI and other govern-ment bodies. Most of my work is faxed to me, although if something is very bulky it will be posted. I return the work by e-mail.

"I tend to work much the same hours as the office. I like to start early, at about 8am, and finish correspondingly early. Obviously I can be flexible if I want to, but there is flexitime in the office, too. If an urgent job comes up, I work into the evenings to get it done - but people do that in the office in any case.

"The DTI has supplied me with a computer, printer, fax machine and telephone answering machine, and I've supplied the furniture. I use a room which would otherwise be a spare bedroom. I don't really think it's feasible to work from the corner of a dining room table, but then again it might work if you only had a laptop. I've got shelves and shelves of dictionaries, and need a largish space to spread them out.

"The translator's life is a fairly solitary one even if you're in the office, and it does lend itself to this way of working. But I think it is very important to keep up contact with the office, both at a formal level with line management and at a social level with colleagues, so that they don't forget you exist. It's important to visit the office occasionally, to keep up with developments.

"I don't find distractions a big problem. People say, oh, aren't you tempted to clean the house? My answer is that translating is considerably more interesting than doing the cleaning!"

Generally, firms begin by inviting existing employees to telework. Recruiting new employees direct into a remote working environment is an additional challenge, but one which may well need to be faced eventually. This may involve changes to recruitment, training and induction procedures. New ways may need to be found to help newly-appointed remote workers understand and integrate into the corporate culture.

Teleworking can be particularly valuable in enhancing the employment opportunities of people with disabilities. As well as enabling them to work, if appropriate, from home or other distant locations, the use of information technology can be used to overcome other barriers within employment. Whilst discussion between the individual and employer on the appropriateness of the approach is likely to be the first step, it will normally also be sensible to take advice from specialist disability and IT organisations.

As a remote working programme begins to get under way, managers should remember the existing staff who are remaining in the workplace, and not give all their attention to the new teleworkers. Sometimes, those who are left working in the same way as before can begin to harbour resentment towards their colleagues who have flown the nest. Ways may need to be found to reinforce team working, between both office-based and remote workers.

Take care, too, that distant workers are not becoming more productive at the expense of their office colleagues. This can happen, for example, if the office staff have to

deal with telephone calls or administration which the teleworkers would previously have handled. There are a number of innovative technical solutions now available to enable telephone calls to company switchboards to be patched through automatically to distant workers.

Above all, success depends on open lines for regular communication among all those involved in new ways of working. Distant workers can be managed successfully, but remember to manage expectations, respect boundaries and develop mutual trust.

For the employee

If you are about to start teleworking as part of a company scheme, your employer should have thought through and addressed the implications. You should receive a thorough briefing about the background to the change, the support you will be offered to assist you in making the decision to telework, and the subsequent help which will be available to make teleworking work out for you as well as for your company and your colleagues. But don't take anything for granted. If you have questions, ask them – you may raise the one issue that has been overlooked.

If you want to telework but there is no company policy about this, you need to do three things:

First, think about it from the company's perspective. Will you be more effective and useful as a teleworker?

Then, think about it from the perspective of your manager and your immediate work colleagues. How will it affect them in practice?

And, of course, think about it from your own personal perspective, based on the questions and issues raised earlier in this booklet.

Remember that telework is not right for every work situation or for everyone.

For the self-employed person

One of the benefits of self-employment is that you don't have an organisation to consider, only yourself and your customers (and perhaps other family members) to think about. You are the decision maker.

If you are going to connect with customers and colleagues electronically you need the skills to do this. These include the mechanics of electronic networking – using a computer, connecting to the Internet, sending and receiving e-mail, searching the Web and producing straightforward Web pages. All these skills can be learned without much difficulty and there are plenty of self-teach and classroom courses available. There are also the important skills of knowing how to relate to other people on-line, the "netiquette" involved in sending and receiving e-mails to avoid causing annoyance and

aggressive responses. These skills are new, but some of the Web sites and on-line discussion forums listed at the back of this booklet provide advice and guidance for new networkers.

Finally ...

Whatever your role, remember that teleworking is not a business objective in itself, it is simply another way to improve the business process and to give individuals more flexibility.

Help is available from the Department of Trade and Industry and other organisations. See the section on Further information and advice.

Partnerships with People★, a joint DTI/DfEE guide based on an in-depth study of over 60 successful organisations in the UK, found that sustained success is earned in organisations where:

▶ Shared Goals – goals, aims and ambitions are understood and 'lived' from top to bottom of the organisation;

▶ Shared Learning – people participate and embrace training and are developed to reach their full potential;

▶ Shared Effort – teamwork allows everyone to contribute to the full;

▶ Shared Information – knowledge and ideas flow freely up, down and across the organisation to underpin activities; and, perhaps most important of all

▶ Shared Culture – a culture of trust and fairness is developed, where collective confidence overrides fear of failure.

Achieving this is not easy, but there is a very real sense of pride in the organisations embracing these practices. The benefits are real because their success in achieving corporate goals – of exceeding customers' expectations – is shared by the entire workforce, working as one.

★See page 33 for how to obtain the report.

Inside Information

Training and development

Training for teleworking

The main skills and training needed for teleworking are no different to those needed for business generally. These include:

▶ job-related skills, i.e. those specific to the particular requirements of the job

▶ generic skills, including competence in IT and the use of new communications methods, (for example keyboard skills, use of modems, electronic mail, on-line discussion, effective use of Web sites, and use of software required for the work), report-writing skills and effective telephone communication skills.

▶ self-management skills, including training in time management.

It is good practice for new recruits to the organisation, especially those who are in their first job, to spend some time in the office environment to familiarise themselves with the organisation and with colleagues, before working remotely. This will allow skills to be learned informally, from being in contact with others with more experience. They will also need induction training about the organisation to ensure familiarity with its procedures and culture, including health and safety issues and whom to contact for help and supplies.

It is important to ensure that employees who work remotely do not miss out on regular training.

Training for managers of distant workers

Those responsible for teleworkers also need to develop skills and competencies to meet the challenges of managing at a distance which have been described on page 12.

Training opportunities and resources

There are Teleworking NVQs/SVQs Levels 2 and 3 which can be obtained through national awarding bodies, such as City and Guilds They are designed for workers who process information remotely using electronic communications. Details can be obtained from:

ITNTO: Information Technology National Training Organisation
16-18 Berners St, London W1P 3DD.
Tel: 020 7580 6677; Web site http://www.itnto.org.uk
Training can be provided in an office environment or 'off-the-job', for example at a Further Education College.

The University for Industry, Ufi

Using the brand name 'learndirect' for its products and services, will help people and businesses to identify the right learning and to access it at a time, in a place and at a pace which suits them. Over 60% of its materials will be available on-line when the Ufi is launched nationally in autumn 2000 and this proportion will rise in future years. For many distant workers this could mean accessing learndirect products at home via a computer or through other forms of communication, such as broadcasting. Learndirect helpline Tel: 0800 100 900

Nto.tele.com (the national training organisation for the telecommunications industry) has developed a series of occupational standards for call handlers which define the knowledge, understanding and abilities required for those working with traditional and virtual Call Centres. These standards are relevant for those up to Management level (NVQ level4) and will be supported by the introduction of a series of National/Scottish Vocational qualifications. Further information about occupational standards for the call centre sector can be obtained from: Nto.tele.com, Blackfriars House, 399 South Row, Central Milton Keynes MK9 2PG. Tel: 01908 240120, mail@ntotele.com, http://www.ntotele.com

e-business.nto (the national training organisation for electronic and software services) offers qualifications for 'Customer Response Centre' for call centre type functions and 'IT Service Technician' for providing technical help desk facilities to customers. Further information can be obtained from: e-business.nto, 7 Borelli Yard, The Borough, Farnham, Surrey, GU9 7NU. Tel: 01252 899900, vocations@e-businessnto.org.uk, http://www.e-businessnto.org.uk

Information on available training opportunities can also be obtained from

National Training Organisation Division
Department for Education & Employment, Room E4a, Moorfoot, Sheffield S1 4PQ. Tel: 0114 259 3340

Technologies for Training Ltd
3rd Floor, 1 Pickford Street, Aldershot, GU11 1TY
Tel: 01252 336077, e-mail gesvt@tft.co.uk,
Web site http://www.tft.co.uk

Employment rights and conditions

Employers have the same legal obligations towards employees working remotely, including those working at home, as they do towards employees in a traditional office.

In general, the same terms and conditions should apply to employees, regardless of where they may be working. Teleworking should not be used as a means of replacing permanent jobs with freelance or temporary contracts. Existing contracts of employment can be varied only with the agreement of both parties.

However, particular aspects of the contract of employment may need to be adapted. Among issues which may need consideration are:

▶ Place of work

▶ Hours of work. Greater flexibility, within the limits of the Working Time Regulations, may be possible, perhaps with a set 'core' time when remote workers undertake to be working or to be contactable. There may need to be agreement on attendance at on-site team meetings. Equally the employee needs to know on what basis the reporting manager and the other company personnel are contactable

▶ Extra responsibilities or duties. This may include procedures for reporting to the office

▶ Expenses policies may have to be altered, for example to allow claims for expenses to attend team meetings or travel to the office for other reasons

▶ For home-based workers: allowances for business rates, heating, lighting, wear and tear, etc may be considered

▶ For home-based workers: access arrangements to the working area may need to be clarified. Health and safety requirements mean that an employer has a responsibility to assess the home workplace (eg for electrical power supply, safety of equipment, ergonomic use of equipment)

▶ For home-based workers: provision of equipment by the employer. Provision of telephone line/ISDN line for work purposes. Equipment and data security proce-dures, including back up. Maintenance arrangements

▶ Employer's insurance may need to be extended to cover work equipment not kept in the office, including equipment used on the move. Workers using their own equipment for work purposes should check whether such use is covered by their home insurance policy

Health and safety

▶ Leave in line with the statutory minimum set by the Working Time Regulations and sick leave arrangements

▶ Procedure if the teleworker wishes to return to working in the office

The Department of Trade and Industry produces a number of publications on employing staff and employment rights designed to help existing small firms and also those thinking of starting a business. See page 33 for ordering information.
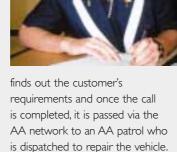
Employers have a general duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974, and this applies whether employees are working in a conventional office or remotely. This general duty is qualified by the principle of 'so far as is reasonably practicable'. In other words, the degree of risk in a particular job or workplace needs to be balanced against the time, trouble, cost and physical difficulty of taking measures to avoid or reduce the risk.

Employers are also required to do a suitable and sufficient risk assessment of all the work activities carried out by their workers under the *Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992*. This includes those who work from home or elsewhere. The risk assessment needs to identify the hazards that are present and then to ▶

The Automobile Association

Breakdown calls to the AA are normally taken at one of five dedicated call centres. Since the end of 1997, however, the AA has also had a number of employees handling calls from their own homes.

Sue Moulson, manager of Call Handling, has been responsible for setting up the home-working programme.

"The busiest time for calls is in the morning when people are driving to work, and in the evening when they're coming home from work. We've asked the teleworkers to work a split shift, from 7.30am-11.30am and from 4.30pm to 8.30pm. This is something the office staff can't easily do, as it would mean double travelling.

We've put telephone lines into the teleworkers' homes, and they take calls in exactly the same way as office staff. An AA member will ring in, and the automated call distribution system in the call centre will pass the call to whoever has been free longest. If that's a teleworker, the call will be diverted down the line to their home. There the teleworker

finds out the customer's requirements and once the call is completed, it is passed via the AA network to an AA patrol who is dispatched to repair the vehicle.

The supervisors can see on their monitors what teleworkers are doing, the same as if a member of staff was just out of sight in the office. We bring the team of tele-workers into the office for a team briefing once a month, and the supervisors also conduct home visits and regularly ring each worker at home. There's also a fair amount of interaction between the teleworkers themselves. It's a very strong team.

"We're still continuing to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of using telework. The teleworkers are

taking more calls: they are answering calls in a shorter space of time, and the after-call work is shorter. So far, the quality is exactly the same as for office staff. We've also found that the people at home are very flexible: if there is an unexpected peak in calls, within five minutes they can be on duty, taking calls.

"All the staff involved are on the same terms and conditions of employment as office staff, apart from the fact that we've asked them to sign a teleworking agreement. This covers the hours of work, the right of access to the home by the supervisor,

things like tax and insurance, health and safety and changes in personal circumstances, for instance moving house.

"My advice to any company thinking of teleworking is to prepare properly: we had a project team, with people from Operational Management, Training, IT, Human Resources and Health and Safety to ensure every aspect was covered. And I'd stress that launching a telework programme is all about communication, to all the staff and to all managers. It is imperative everyone is kept informed of the progress."

assess the extent of the risks. Hazards can arise from electrical equipment and VDUs or from equipment and fittings in the room where the work activity is taking place. These may include the workstation, seating, lighting, heating and ventilation and so on.

The main Regulations which relate to computers and communications media are:

▶ the *Electricity at Work Regulations 1989*

▶ the *Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992*

▶ the *Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1992*.

Employees must also take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of anyone else who might be affected by what they do. For home-based workers this is likely to include other family members, neighbours, visitors and so on.

Self-employed people are responsible for looking after their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others who may be affected by their work activity. The Health and Safety Executive advises the self-employed to carry out a risk assessment to identify any hazards, and to take appropriate action to remove them or reduce them.

Remote working, if not properly managed, can raise concerns about isolation and stress. It is not acceptable, nor compatible with an employer's health and safety responsibilities, to expect teleworkers to be available at all hours. Nor should staff, managers included, be expected or allowed to work themselves to exhaustion simply because they are always able to access the office computer remotely, or because they have an office phone at home. People who lead stressed lives in the service of their work inevitably do so at the expense of their personal health, family relationships and their efficiency at work.

Further information:

Health and Safety Executive, Information Centre, Broad Lane, Sheffield, S3 7HQ
Health and Safety Executive Infoline Tel: 0541 545500
Web site http://www.hse.gov.uk

Guidance on the above regulations, and the free booklets, *Homeworking: guidance for employers and employees on health and safety* and *Working with VDUs* are available from HSE Books, PO Box 1999, Sudbury, Suffolk, CO10 6FS. Tel: 01787 881165

Janet Marker

Janet Marker is a botanical artist and calligrapher, who specialises in detailed paintings and drawings of plants and animals. Her work has been exhibited in London, and she also sells designs to greeting card publishers. Janet is based in Bristol and was training as a medical student when the onset of rheumatoid arthritis obliged her to change direction. She launched her current business after participating in the Workability scheme run by the Leonard Cheshire organisation.

"I've been running the business for just about two years. The first year made a profit, and I am gradually building up contacts and bringing in new work.

I've got one room of my home which is my studio and office. I use a wheelchair, and working from home is necessary for me, partly because of the difficulty of getting to a workplace. If I'm having an off-day, I can stop work for a while. If it's a good day, I'm able to work on.

I was unemployed for a time, and, through the Jobcentre, enrolled for an access to work course for disabled people who wanted to set up their own business. The woman who was running that suggested Workability, and I applied for it and was accepted. The scheme equips you with a computer and printer and sets you up with an Internet connection which you can use to access the Workability college, it's a virtual college, to learn IT skills. Because I launched my business at much the same time as I got the computer, I tended to learn a lot just from hands-on experience.

I've added a scanner, and I use that to produce publicity material and to scan in my artwork. If I'm working for a card manufacturer they usually want the original. But if I am retaining the copyright, I can then use the scanned file later myself.

If I can paint from life I do, though it's difficult in the middle of winter if somebody wants a sunflower. I've got sketchbooks full of drawings, and if I have to I'll use photographs. I use the Internet, too, for various types of research, for example to get more details about the plants I'm drawing.

Email is useful: I've had a couple of enquiries from women in America, and emailing is much quicker than sending a posted reply back to them. I don't have a web site at the moment, but I'm thinking I might do that soon."

Taxation and Business Rates

Income tax and expenses

Employees can set against tax expenses which they have to incur 'wholly, exclusively and necessarily' in undertaking their employment duties.

For employees, for whom it is an objective requirement of their duties that they have to work at home, it is advisable wherever possible to separate work and personal facilities (eg, to arrange to use a separate work telephone line for all business calls). Where this is not possible (eg for heating and lighting costs), it will be necessary to demonstrate that any element claimed as a work expense is incurred wholly, exclusively and necessarily in the performance of the duties and that the basis on which it has been calculated is justified and reasonable.

If an employer pays an employee for expenses incurred at home, depending on the circumstances either PAYE should be operated or the amount paid should be declared as part of the employer's end of year P11D return and will also be declarable by the employee. A tax liability may be incurred.

The employee benefits tax charge has been removed on computers lent by employers to employees for computer equipment with an annual chargeable value of £500. Since the annual charge on loaned assets is usually 20% of the asset value this means that computer equipment of up to £2,500 can be exempt. This exemption is intended to help extend computer access and experience throughout the employed workforce. Normal taxing rules apply on the annual value of a computer in excess of £500; this exemption will not be given if the equipment is confined to or made available on more favourable terms to directors and senior staff.

Income tax and travel expenses

A major simplification of the income tax treatment of business travel was introduced from 6 April 1998. Effectively the cost of all business travel, including travel from home to and from a temporary workplace, qualifies as tax deductible. However, the cost of ordinary commuting or private travel between home and the permanent workplace remains non tax deductible.

The Inland Revenue has published a guidance note for employers, *Employee Travel - A Tax and NIC Guide for Employers*. There is guidance on travel costs for workers where home is treated as their permanent workplace in paragraphs 3.28–3.30. A leaflet for employees, *Tax Relief for Employees Business Travel* (IR161), is also available.

Employed or self-employed?

Normally, the distinctions between employee status and self-employment are obvious. However some workers who appear to be self-employed may for tax purposes be in an employee relationship with an employer.

This issue is explained in the free booklet *Employed or self-employed? A guide for tax and National Insurance* (IR56/N139), available from the Inland Revenue.

If you are self-employed, the costs relating to working from home, provided they are incurred 'wholly and exclusively' for the purposes of your business, will normally be treated for tax purposes as legitimate business expenses. You should ask a professional adviser, such as an accountant, for further advice on this.

Capital Gains Tax and your home

Working from home may affect your capital gains tax liability if you sell, or otherwise dispose of, your home. In most cases private residence relief means that you will not have to pay capital gains tax when you sell your only or main residence. But, if part of your house has at some time been used exclusively for your employment, trade or business, any gain will be apportioned between that part and the part that qualifies for private residence relief. If, however, no part of your home is used exclusively for business – that is, you also use it at times for residential purposes – then, depending on the amount of residential use, full relief could be available.

Further information:

Inland Revenue Visitors Information Centre, Ground Floor, South West Wing, Bush House, Strand, London WC2B 4RD.
Inland Revenue Information Line Tel: 020 7438 6420 or your local Inland Revenue Tax Office or Tax Enquiry Centre. Further information including copies of any relevant leaflets may be found on the Inland Revenue web site at http://www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk.

Data protection and security

Home-based working: business rates

Where a homeworker has an area of their home dedicated exclusively to their work (eg a study with PC, filing cabinets, etc), then they could be liable for business rates.

However, where the business use of any part of their home is subsidiary to the domestic usage (i.e. a desk in the corner of a living room) then rates will probably not be levied.

The Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) Local Government Taxation Division is based at Zone 5/J1, Eland House, Bressenden Place, London SW1E 5DU (Helpline Tel: 020 7994 3000). The address of the local valuation officer of the Valuation Office Agency can be found in the local telephone directory.

The position in Scotland is broadly similar to that in England and Wales. In Scotland local assessors are responsible for valuation for local taxation. Further information can be obtained from The Secretary, The Scottish Assessors Association, City of Glasgow Council, Sun Life House, 116 West Regent Street, Glasgow, G2 2RW. Tel: 0141 287 7517

The Scottish Executive, Development Department, Local Government Division 3 is based at Area 3-J, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ. Tel: 0131 244 7005.

Data Protection

You should consider the applicability of the Data Protection Act 1998, which came into force on 1 March 2000, to your circumstances. This new Act replaces the Data Protection Act 1984.

The new Act introduces a new system of notification which will replace the existing registration scheme. This will result in a publicly available register of data controllers replacing the present register. Under the 1984 Act a data user who was exempt from registration was exempt from compliance with the eight Data Protection Principles.

The new Act covers personal data (information relating to living individuals), which is, broadly speaking, held on computer. The Act also extends to some manual records. Almost any activity involving personal data is covered by the Act's provisions.

The new Act requires every data controller who is processing personal data to notify the Commissioner (basically provide a general description of the personal data they hold and use), unless they are exempt. Unless a data controller is able to claim an exemption from a Principle(s) whether on a transitional or outright basis, the Principles apply to all data controllers, even if they are exempt from notification. Amongst other things, the Principles require that personal data are processed fairly and lawfully, are accurate, relevant and not excessive and are kept secure. In keeping data secure the total management of security is to be considered – i.e. not just technical measures, but also physical considerations such as procedures and the reliability of staff. If using the Internet, there must be adequate protection for personal data if there is a possibility that they are to be transferred to countries outside the EEA.

The European Data Protection Telecommunications Directive 97/66/EC imposes special rules for the processing of personal data in public telecommunications systems. The provisions of the Directive came into effect with the Data Protection Act 1998. These deal with the use of faxes, telephones and automated calling systems for unsolicited marketing. Marketing faxes must not be sent to individual subscribers without their prior consent. Individual subscribers have a statutory right to opt-out of unsolicited telephone marketing either by telling the caller or by registering on a central stop list. Corporate subscribers cannot opt-out of telephone sales but have the right to opt-out of unsolicited marketing faxes. Automated calling systems must have the prior consent of both corporate and individual subscribers.

Further information:

Up to the minute information regarding the new Act in general is regularly placed on the Commissioner's Homepage (http://www.dataprotection.gov.uk).

Enquirers can also request hard copies of relevant papers by writing to:
Publications, Data Protection Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Data Protection Commissioner's Information Line Tel: 01625 545745.

Security

Remote working is likely to raise issues of data security. Breaches of confidentiality and integrity tend to occur in one of three main ways. Laptop computers may be lost or stolen (in some instances, specifically for the information they contain), or the display on your laptop may be able to be seen by other people, for example on trains. Unauthorised access to corporate systems can be obtained through careless use of passwords and phone numbers (including passing this information on-line to fraudulent 'service providers'). Finally, information in transit over the Internet (unless encrypted) can be read by anyone with simple, readily available tools. Ensure that material you receive or send by disk or via the Internet is virus free.

If you are working from home, there are particular issues of security and confidentiality to bear in mind. Hard as it may seem, other members of your household (in practice, children) may have to be told firmly that computing equipment used for work is firmly out-of-bounds. A lockable cupboard into which all equipment can be stored at the end of the working day is a usual feature of most companies' home teleworking programmes.

The most important safeguard for employers is to make users aware of the risks, supported by simple and explicit policies, including regular data backup procedures.

Premises and facilities

Home-based working: possible legal restrictions

Employers who are considering introducing home-based working for their employees, or self-employed people considering working from home, should check that there would be no obstacle to what they propose. For example, is there a restrictive covenant attached to the lease or the deeds of the property forbidding non-domestic activity? If the house or flat is rented, is it necessary to ensure that the landlord is happy with the proposed arrangements? If there is a mortgage on the property, does the lender need to be informed and to give permission?

Home-based working: planning issues

Planning permission may also need to be considered. Was a planning condition imposed on the original planning permission for the home, for example, which could prevent home working?

If not, you still need to ensure that you would not be changing the use of the house or flat to such an extent that you would need planning permission. The key test is whether the overall character of the property will change as a result of the business.

Planning Policy Guidance note 4, paragraph 32, includes the following:
'Home working does not necessarily require planning permission. Permission is not normally required where the use of part of the dwellinghouse for business purposes does not change the overall character of the property's use as a single dwelling. For instance the use by a householder of a room as an office would not normally require planning permission.' (Similar advice is given in Scotland through National Planning Policy Guideline 2, paragraph 44.)

The free booklet, *Planning Permission, A Guide for Business*, (available from DETR Free Literature, PO Box 236, Wetherby, West Yorkshire LS23 7NB. Tel: 0870 1226 236) suggests that planning permission is likely to be needed if the answer to any of the following questions is 'yes':

▶ Will your home no longer be used mainly as a private residence?

▶ Will your business result in a marked rise in traffic or people calling?

▶ Will your business involve any activities unusual in a residential area?

▶ Will your business disturb your neighbours at unreasonable hours or create other forms of nuisance such as noise or smells?

(While there is not an equivalent booklet in Scotland, these criteria are equally relevant in assessing whether particular home working arrangements constitute a material change of use.)

Your local planning authority should be able to help you with advice.

Home-based working: utility charges

Certain utility companies may consider that the use of a home for working purposes incurs business charges or the use of a business, rather than domestic, tariff. You can check this with your local water, gas and electricity suppliers.

Some terms explained

Announcement list: Used in companies as the on-line equivalent to the notice board.

Audioconferencing: A conference using the telephone to enable several people at different locations to take part simultaneously.

Computer supported co-operative working: The software tools and working methods used to support team working, including virtual team working. cf. Virtual company.

Convergence: The process by which the computing, telecom-munications and increasingly also media/broadcasting sectors have been coming together in recent years.

Data conferencing: Using telecom-munications to enable two or more participants in different locations to work collaboratively and at the same time on computer files or documents.

Discussion list: A facility through which a message sent to one e-mail address is automatically distributed to all participants and any participant can reply publicly.

Electronic commerce, electronic business: Business transactions for the supply of goods and services undertaken over computer networks, such as the Internet.

E-mail: The sending and receiving of messages over computer networks, such as the Internet. Multimedia documents can also be sent this way.

Extranet: The extension of an internal company intranet to include other stakeholders in the business (eg suppliers and customers).

Firewall: A secure gateway limiting access into and out of an internal computer network, so that unauthorised users are unable to access information.

Groupware: Software applications that support group working.

Homeworking: This term tends to be applied primarily to traditional forms of work from home (eg in the textile industry). If teleworking is involved, the preferred terms tend to be home-based teleworking, or Tele-homeworking.

ICTs: Information and communication technologies.

Internet: The global information system created by the networking of computer networks worldwide.

Intranet: An internal corporate computer network which uses the Internet protocol, so that company information and documents can be accessed using a Web browser.

ISDN: Integrated Services Digital Network. Telecommunications network which allows fast transmission of data, and which can handle voice telephone, fax and computer data transmission without the need for a modem. The basic ISDN2 service consists of two channels, transferring data at 64 Kbps.

Teleconferencing: A generic term which includes both audio- and video-conferencing.

Telecottages: Sometimes known as telecentres or 'electronic village halls', these are centres which have been set up, usually in rural areas, to provide IT training, access to IT equipment and workspace for teleworking.

Teleworking: Remote working, which relies on the use of information and communication technologies for its effectiveness.

Videoconferencing: Video and audio real time communication between two or more people, over a high-speed communications link.

Virtual company, virtual organisation: An organisation which relies on team working via the use of information and commu-nications technologies, and does not have a physical headquarters building as its main focus.

Web browser: Software which enables access to the World Wide Web to search for specific information (such as Netscape Navigator or Microsoft Internet Explorer).

World Wide Web: the collection of material stored on computers linked to the Internet, held as hypertext documents and accessible through a Web browser.

Further Info

Useful contacts

Government

Department of Trade and Industry, Enquiry Desk
Tel: 020 7215 5000 (See also inside back cover)

Health and Safety Executive, Infoline
Tel: 0541 545500 (See also page 26)

Inland Revenue, Information Line
Tel: 020 7438 6420 (See also page 27)

Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, Local Government Taxation Division, Helpline
Tel: 020 7944 3000 (See also page 27)

Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, Travel Plans
Zone 3/15, Great Minster House, 76 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DR. Tel: 020 7944 4904
http://www.local-transport.detr.gov.uk/travelplans
Environment and Energy Helpline 0800 585794

Department for Education and Employment, Work-life Balance Team
Caxton House, 6-12 Tothill Street, London SW1H 9NA
Tel: 020 7273 5626
team.work-life-balance@dfee.gov.uk
http://www.dfee.gov.uk/work-lifebalance

The Data Protection Commissioner, Information Line
Tel: 01625 545745 (See also page 28)

Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)
Brandon House, 180 Borough High St, London SE1 1LW
Tel: 020 7210 3711
www.strategy@acas.org.uk
http://www.acas.org.uk

Office of National Statistics
1 Drummond Gate, London SW1V 2QQ
Tel: 020 7533 6094

rmation and Advice

Representative Organisations

(unless otherwise indicated, these organisations can offer advice)

TCA (The Telework, Telecottage and Telecentre Association)

c/o WREN Telecottage, Freepost CV2312,
Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 2RR
info@tca.org.uk
Tel: 0800 616008
http://www.tca.org.uk

European Telework Development

Tel: +45 86 28 64 55
eto-info@eto.org.uk
http://www.eto.org.uk

National Association of Teleworking

(corporate members only)
Glebe House, Chew Magna, Bristol BS40 8RA.
Tel: 01275 333862
enquiries@teleworking.org.uk
http://www.teleworking.org.uk

Scottish Teleworking Association

3 High St, Kinross, KY13 7AW
Tel: 01592 840734
admin@telework.cix.co.uk
http://www.cali.co.uk/sta

Telecottages Wales

Unit 16, Welshpool Enterprise Centre, Salop Rd,
Welshpool, Powys SY21 7SW
Tel: 01938 556822
http://www.telecottages.org

Telework Ireland

(covers the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland)
7 Clones Rd, Monaghan, Ireland
Tel: +353 47 72069
riona@telework.ie
http://www.telework.ie

The Home Business Alliance

(organisation for home-based businesses
and the self-employed)
Freepost ANG3155, Wisbech PE13 2BR
Tel: 01945 463303
info@homebusiness.org.uk
http://www.homebusiness.org.uk

OwnBase, The National Association for Home Based Working

Birchwood, Hill Road South, Helsby, Frodsham,
Cheshire WA6 9PT
membership@ownbase.com
http://www.ownbase.com

Interactive Communications Users Association

Park House, 104 Derby Road, Long Eaton NG10 4LS
Tel: 0115 946 7527. Videoconference: 0115 946 7522
info@icua.org.uk
http://www.icua.org.uk/icua

Other Organisations

Small Business Service

The Agency was set up in April 2000. It aims to act as a strong voice for small firms at the heart of Government; simplify and improve the quality and coherence of support to small firms; and help small firms deal with regulation, ensuring their interests are properly considered.

Its 45 local outlets, delivering services under the Business Link brand, will begin operating from April 2001. Until then, local services will be provided by the existing Business Link network. Business Link Signpostline Tel: 0845 7567765 will put you through to your local Business Link.

The SBS will provide information or advice, or access to experts, on all aspects of running a business, including business planning, finance, management, exporting, quality, employment issues, training and development, innovation, design, regulation/design, Information and Communication Technologies and E-commerce.

The SBS will also run national services to help small firms (e.g. Loan Guarantee Scheme, SMART grants for technology transfer, and on advice on management best practice).

All these services will be available via the "SBS Gateway", a comprehensive network of business support organisations, initiatives and information from the public, private and voluntary sectors. The Gateway will make extensive use of Internet and call-centre technology. It will be accessible directly or via local or sectoral organisations (such as trade associations).

To find out more, or keep up to date, visit the SBS Website on: http://www.businessadviceonline.org

In Scotland the Business Shop Network operates.

Lowlands enquiries Tel. 0800 787878 (Highlands and Islands enquiries contact Local Enterprise Company).

The equivalent in Wales is Business Connect

Tel: 0345 969798

UK online for business Local Support Centres

(National network of centres providing independent and 'hands-on' advice about new information and communication technologies.)
Infoline Tel: 0845 715 2000
info@ukonlineforbusiness.gov.uk,
http://www.ukonlineforbusiness.gov.uk

The Future Work Forum
(Networking group for employers.)
Henley Management College, Greenlands, Henley-on-Thames,
Oxfordshire, Tel: 01491 571454 (ext 2225)
http://www.henleymc.ac.uk/fwf

The Industrial Society
3 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5DG
Tel: 020 7479 1000 (Contact: Juliet Durrant)

New Ways to Work
(Publish a number of information sheets)
22 Northumberland Avenue, London WC2N 5AP
Tel: 020 7930 3355
http://www.new-ways.co.uk

Employers' Organisation for Local Government
Layden House, 76-86 Turnmill Street,
London EC1M 5QU.
Tel: 020 7296 6742
jill.mortimer@lg-employers.gov.uk

National Group on Homeworking
Office 26, 30-38 Dock St, Leeds LS10 1JF
Tel: 0113 245 4273
Homeworkers helpline: Tel: 0800 174095
homeworking@gn.apc.org

Trades Union Congress
Congress House, Great Russell St, London WC1B 3LS
Tel: 020 7636 4030
http://www.tuc.org.uk

Planning Aid for London
Calvert House, 5 Calvert Avenue, London E2 7JP
Tel: 020 7613 4435
http://www.pafl.org.uk

NCC Education Services Limited
The Towers, Towers Business Park, Wilmslow Road, Didsbury,
Manchester, M20 2EZ
Tel: 0161 438 6200
http://www.nccedu.com

Business Centre Association
Kinetic Centre, Theobald Street, Borehamwood, Herts WD6 4PJ
Tel: 020 8387 1444
info@bca.uk.com
http://www.bca.uk.com

Books and publications

- **The Teleworking Handbook: New ways of working in the Information Society**
  Imogen Bertin and Alan Denbigh for TCA (The Telework, Telecottage and Telecentre Association). 3nd edition. (2000) ISBN 0-9528492-2-4. Available from WREN Telecottage, Freepost CV2312, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 2RR. Tel: 0800 616008. E-mail: info@tca.org.uk

- **Teleworking: guidelines for good practice**
  Ursula Huws, Institute of Employment Studies Report 329 (1997) ISBN 1-85184-257-8. Available from Grantham Book Services Ltd, Isaac Newton Way, Alma Park Industrial Estate, Grantham NG31 9SD. Tel: 01476 541000

- **Teleworking explained,**
  M Gray, N Hodson and G Gordon, John Wiley & Sons (1993) ISBN 0-471-93975-7

- **Changing Places: A manager's guide to working from home**
  New Ways to Work (1996) ISBN 1-870878-16-7. Available from 22 Northumberland Avenue, London WC2N 5AP. Tel: 020 7930 3355

- **Health, Safety and Welfare Guidance for Employers of Homeworkers**
- **Employer's Fact Pack: How to get the best from Homeworking**
  National Group on Homeworking (1998). Available from NGH, Office 26, 30-38 Dock St, Leeds LS10 1JF Tel: 0113 245 4273

- **Teleworking: A Director's Guide:**
  Institute of Directors, Director Publications Ltd, Mountbarrow House, Elizabeth Street, London SW1W 9RB (1996) ISBN 0-901230- 63-4 Tel: 020 7766 8766

- **Teleworking: Thirteen Journeys to the Future of Work**
  Andrew Bibby, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (1995) ISBN 0-903319-74-8. Available from Turnaround Publisher Services, Unit 3, Olympia Trading Estate, Coburg Road, London N22 6TZ. Tel:0208 829 3000.

- **Teleworking in Brief**
  Mike Johnson, Butterworth/Heinemann (1997) ISBN 0-7506-2875-8

- **New Ways of Working**
  A report by Stephen Jupp, Hawksmere, ISBN 1-85418-169-6. Available from Hawksmere, 12-18 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0DH. Tel: 020 7881 1850

- **Teleworking and rural development**
Ursula Huws, S Honey, S Morris, Rural Development
Commission (1996) ISBN 1-869964-53-5

- **Flexible Working Practices**
Croner Publications Ltd, Croner House, London Road, Kingston
upon Thames, Surrey, KT2 6SR. Tel: 020 8547 3333

- **Status report on European Telework: Telework 1999**
European Commission Directorate-General Information Society,
Rue de la Roi 200 BU-9 4/82, B-1049 Brussels.
Tel: +32 2 296 3415.
On-line at http://www.eto.org.uk/twork/tw99

- **Implementing Telework (CD-ROM)**
The MIRTI Consortium. Available from G Herman,
24 Zetland Rd, Manchester M21 8TH. Tel: 0161 881 0672,
e-mail gherman@KeywordsAssociates.com
See also http://www.euro-telework.org

- **Telework: Penetration, Potential and Practice in Europe**
WB Korte, R Wynne, IOS Press ISBN 90-5199-255-6

- **Teleworking and Local Government: assessing the
costs and benefits**
Ursula Huws, Local Government Management Board (1998).
Available from Employers' Organisation for Local Government,
Layden House, 76-86 Turnmill Street, London EC1M 5QU.
Tel: 020 7296 6742

- **Telework expert papers - presentations to the
Telework World Conference**
Compiled by P Thomson and Q Love. From WREN
Telecottage, Freepost CV2312, Kenilworth, Warwickshire,
CV8 2RR Tel: 0800 616008

**New Information and Communications
Technologies at Work**
Trades Union Congress (1998) ISBN 1-85006-410-5
Tel: 020 7636 4030

- **Teleworking: Code of Practice for Employees**
Information Technology Professionals Association,
Manufacturing, Science and Finance Union,
40 Bermondsey Street, London SE1 3UD. Tel: 020 7939 7086
See also http://www.msf.org.uk

- **The Tavistock Handbook & Directory of Business
Centres and Managed Workspace**
THB Publications Ltd, Dunkley House, 11 Albert Street,
Hebden Bridge, W Yorks, HX7 8AH
Tel: 01422 844490
See also http://www.tavistockdirectory.com

Teleconferencing Directory
Interactive Communications Users Association
Park House, 104 Derby Road, Long Eaton NG10 4LS
Tel: 0115 946 7527. Videoconference: 0115 946 7522
info@icua.org.uk, http://www.icua.org.uk/icua

Handbook of Data Communications
NCC Education Services Limited, The Towers, Towers Business
Park, Wilmslow Road, Didsbury, Manchester, M20 2EZ.
Tel: 0161 438 6200

- **Tomorrow's Office - creating effective
and humane interiors**
Santa Raymond and Roger Cunliffe, Routledge (1996)
ISBN 0419-21240-X

- **Facilities Management Guide, Management Guide to
Serviced Offices**
The Eclipse Group, 18-20 Highbury Place, London N5 1QP.
Tel: 020 7354 6764

- **Partnerships with People**
Department of Trade and Industry
Available at no charge from Admail, PO Box 528,
London SW1W 8YT.
Tel: 0870 1502 500, Fax: 0870 1502 333. dtipubs@christian.co.uk.

- **Doing Business in the Information Society -
applying technology to help your business**
- **How mobile communications can work for you**
- **How e-mail and fax can work for you**
- **How the Internet can work for you**
- **How videoconferencing can work for you**
- **How CD-ROM can work for you**
- **How networking can work for you**
- **How EDI (Electronic Data Interchange) can work for you**
- **Information Security and the Internet**
- **Demonstrating the benefits: Multimedia Demonstrator
Programme 1st call award winners - case studies**
- **Maximise the Potential - a self assessment quiz**
UK online for business (formerly Information Society Initiative)
publications, Available at no charge from the
Infoline Tel: 0845 715 2000,
e-mail info@ukonlineforbusiness.gov.uk.
See also Web site http://www.ukonlineforbusiness.gov.uk

- **Starting your own Business**
Inland Revenue, booklet CWL1, available from local Inland
Revenue Tax Offices or Tax Enquiry Centres and at
www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk

- **A short guide to the Working Time Regulations**
Department of Trade and Industry, Working Time
Orderline 0845 6000 925

- **Contracts of employment PL810**
Department of Trade and Industry
The Department of Trade and Industry also publishes a number
of free booklets to help small firms set up in business.
Available from DTI Publications Orderline
Tel: 0870 1502 500, Fax: 0870 1502 333.
Textphone: 08701502 100.
See also Web sites http://www.dti.gov.uk/publications/sme
and http://www.dti.gov.uk/guidance.htm.

- **Changing Patterns of Work**
- **Varying a contract of employment**
The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS).
ACAS also publishes a series of booklets with basic guidance
on subjects such as recruitment, supervision, appraisal, etc.
Available from ACAS Reader Ltd, PO Box 16, Earl Shilton,
Leicester LE9 8ZZ. Tel: 01455-852225

- **Changing Patterns in a Changing World**
Department for Education and Employment. Available from
Prolog, Prolog House, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 2YJ. Tel: 0845
6022260. E-mail dfee@prologistics.co.uk

Periodicals

Teleworker
TCA (The Telework, Telecottage and Telecentre Association).
Available from WREN Telecottage,
Freepost CV2312, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 2RR.
ISSN 1358-1465. Tel: 0800 616008. E-mail: info@tca.org.uk

European Journal of Teleworking
Addico Cornix Ltd., 70 Causewayhead, Penzance,
TR18 2SR. Tel: 01736 332736. ISSN 0966-7458

Flexible Working
The Eclipse Group, 18-20 Highbury Place, London N5 1QP.
Tel: 020 7354 5858. ISSN 1360-9505

Better Business
Active Information, Cribau Mill, Llanvair Discoed, Chepstow
NP16 6RD. Tel: 01291 641222. ISSN 0968-2066
Register at http://www.better-business.co.uk

All About Working From Home
Partridge Publications, Avenue Lodge, 60 East Street, Brighton,
East Sussex BN1 1HN. Tel: 01273 719922. http://www.home-
workers.com

RealTime (e-mail bulletin on teleconferencing news)
Register through etf@questmark.co.uk

Web sites (see also Useful Contacts)

Department of Trade and Industry
http://www.dti.gov.uk

**Department of Trade and Industry,
Employment Relations**
http://www.dti.gov.uk/er

Department of Trade and Industry, Small Firms
http://www.dti.gov.uk/guidance.htm
http://www.dti.gov.uk/publications/sme

Small Business Service
http://www.businessadviceonline.org.uk

Travel Plans
http://www.localtransport.detr.gov.uk/travelplans

Work-Life Balance Campaign
http://www.dfee.gov.uk/work-lifebalance

European Union Information Society Project Office
http://www.ispo.cec.be

Enterprize Zone
http://www.enterprisezone.org.uk

The Telework, Telecottage and Telecentre Association
http://www.tca.org.uk

Information Technology Professionals Association
http://www.msf.org.uk

European Telework Online
http://www.eto.org.uk

BT Research Laboratories
http://www.labs.bt.com/library/on-line/index.htm

Gil Gordon Associates
http://www.gilgordon.com/index.htm

Flexibility (from HOP Associates)
http://www.flexibility.co.uk

Home Run
http://www.homerun.co.uk

HOP Associates
http://www.hop.co.uk

Communities Online
http://www.communities.org.uk

TeamIT Training
http://www.teamittraining.com

Articles on telework by Andrew Bibby
http://www.andrewbibby.com

Telework information from Analytica
http://www.analytica.org.uk

Fleming Ltd Telework Resources Page
http://www.mother.com/~dfleming/dmflinks.htm

Women's Electronic Village Hall
http://www.wevh.org.uk

Surrey County Council Telecentre Evaluation
http://www.surreycc.gov.uk

The South West Teleworker Web Site
http://www.telework-southwest.co.uk

The Western Isles ICT Advisory Service
http://www.work-global.com

Kington Connected Community
http://www.kc3.co.uk

WREN Telecottage
http://www.nrec.org.uk/wren

Woolwich Teleservices Centre, Baker-Brown Mckay
http://www.bbm-architects.co.uk/cws.html

Telework publications from Bill Murray
http://www.smallworldconnections.com

Telework: the statistics

The Office for National Statistics is now monitoring the number of teleworkers.

Information on teleworkers from the Labour Force Survey identifies three distinct types.

Teleworker homeworkers include only those who:

▶ in their main job work mainly in their home, and

▶ could not work at home without using both a telephone and a computer.

Teleworkers who work in different places using home as a base (also referred to as home-based teleworkers) includes those who:

▶ in their main job work in different places using home as a base, and

▶ could not do their work at home without using both a telephone and a computer.

Occasional teleworkers include those who:

▶ do not usually work either in their own home or in different places using home as a base but, spent at least one day in the reference week working in their own home or in different places using home as a base, and

▶ could not have worked at home without using both a telephone and a computer.

The Labour Force Survey, Spring 2000 gives the following figures for each category (both employees and self-employed), adjusted for non-response:

	ALL	MEN	WOMEN
Teleworker homeworkers	312,000	149,000	165,000
as % of all employees/self-employed	1.1%	1.0%	1.3%
Teleworkers who work in different places using home as a base	805,000	640,000	164,000
as % of all employees/self-employed	2.9%	4.2%	1.3%
Occasional teleworkers	477,000	318,000	159,000
as % of all employees/self-employed	1.7%	2.1%	1.3%
All teleworkers	1,593,000	1,107,000	488,000
as % of all employees/self-employed	5.8%	7.3%	4.0%

Source: Labour Force Survey, Office for National Statistics

Acknowledgements