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SCALING THE PEAK



GOING UP IN THE WORLD

THE lady with a head for heights is Julie Roberts, a technician with Network Services Telecom Section, Queensferry. Julie should have no trouble in reaching the top of her profession – and she won't have any female competition either. For Julie is the first female in Manweb to become an approved tower rescuer and regularly views the world from her 50 metre high workplace. "She is probably the only female tower rescuer in the industry, let alone Manweb. Said her colleague Peter Simcock: "The lads have worked on hundreds of tower jobs and have yet to meet another female rigger." Does any Contact reader know of another one?

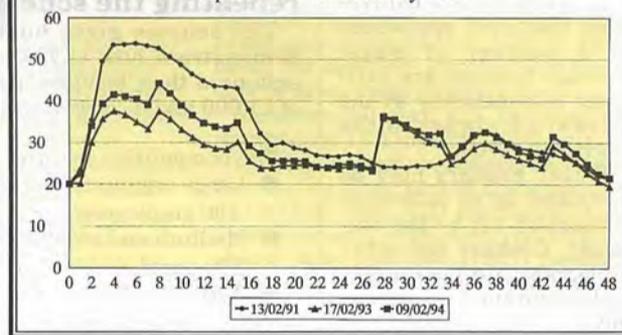
THE Menter Aberystwyth scheme that saved Manweb over £1 million pounds when it was introduced has proved to be a long term success. The scheme currently saves Manweb a further £200,000 a year in reduced use-of-system charges.

Network Services, both at Head Office and in Aberystwyth District, Domestic Marketing, and Tariffs and Customer Contracts joined forces to create this innovative scheme to overcome a nightly peak that was putting strain on the local network. The peak was caused by the large number of Economy 7 customers taking advantage of cheaper electricity.

It was decided that it would be more cost-effective to reduce the peak than reinforce the network, so the Menter tariff was offered to Economy 7 customers with large space and water heating installations. As with Economy 7 the Menter tariff offered seven hours of off-peak electricity, and 1,500 customers joined the scheme.

Menter Aberystwyth Economy 7 Tariff

17th February 1993 and 9th February 1994 compared to 13th February 1991



The customer base was then split in two so that the off-peak hours alternated between 9pm to 1am and 3.30am to 7.30am on a weekly basis. All customers received three hours of cheap rate electricity in the afternoon from 1.30pm to 4.30pm.

Manweb's Head of Tariffs and Customer Contracts, Mike Boxall, said: "The scheme proved very successful from Manweb's point of view. The spread of cheap-rate hours divided the previous Economy 7 load into three separate groups, peaking at different times. The total peak in demand was

reduced by around 10 MW, enabling the district to defer planned reinforcement." Customers have also found the scheme to their benefit and one responded to a market research questionnaire with 'We think Menter Aberystwyth is wonderful'.

The afternoon cheap rate period has proved extremely popular with customers, particularly in the case of elderly or sick people. Space and water heaters can be topped up through the day and show increased performance. This means that a more constant warmth can be achieved and can, if

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High levels of customer satisfaction have been achieved

SCALING THE PEAK

From page 1

needed provide two tanks of hot water a day. High levels of customer satisfaction have been achieved with Menter Aberystwyth.

Inevitably there were some initial difficulties in implementing a novel and creative solution to a network loading problem. Some customers were confused by the alternating time bands.

This problem was solved by providing calendars that showed which hours the cheaper rate operated that week.

Back-up messages through the afternoon have ensured that radio-controlled teleswitch meters have worked effectively. Initially the smallest interruption in a customer's supply meant the radio signal broadcast was lost, putting the customer back on Economy 7 times. An error was made last year when the clocks went forward. This resulted in Menter customers losing about 40 minutes of their afternoon low rate period.

Customers were compensated in October with one extra hour of off-peak afternoon electricity on 24 October.

Load research is now being used to assess customers' reaction to the Menter scheme.

Monitoring equipment has been installed in 50 homes. The households were carefully selected to give the best cross section of Menter tariff customers. Over the next 12 months Manweb will be monitoring their half hourly consumption.

Customers can control their electrical appliances in a number of ways. Storage heaters are activated automatically by the teleswitch signal to the electricity meter.

Water heaters may be controlled by an individual timeswitch set by the customer. Cookers and other appliances are more likely to be switched on manually.

The Menter Aberystwyth scheme gives customers the opportunity to use appliances at times that are more convenient to them at an off-peak rate. For example customers may now choose to use the washing machine in the afternoon because of the lower rates available to them.

Future tariff developments will benefit from more exact information on how customers physically react to the Menter scheme. Manweb's Load Research will help to identify how consumers' consumption patterns have changed. This will aid the design and costing of future tariffs.

Menter Aberystwyth has allowed Manweb to defer major reinforcement of the local network and avoid substantial energy costs, while improving customer comfort and satisfaction.



The tunnel portal at the Folkestone Terminal, September 1992

Committed railway buff Ian Bewley has had a long time interest in the progress of the channel tunnel project.

As the dream becomes reality, with the opening of the tunnel, Ian was lucky enough to have been invited along with the press for a preview of this exciting project.

A radio telecommunications technician in Network Services based at Queensferry, Ian subscribes to Environmental News and has been following the progress of the tunnel project in the fortnightly publication, Rail.

Here is an extract from his impressions of the day.

TUNNEL VISION

MY invitation was to join a press party for a guided tour on Thursday, 24 February. Along with several others I was picked up at Folkestone Central railway station by Eurotunnel mini-bus and taken the couple of miles to the Eurotunnel Exhibition Centre at St Martins Plain.

Although this was not my first visit to the exhibition centre, I still found it most impressive with a positively huge model railway layout representing both UK and French terminals and a short section of cut-away tunnel between both. Outside is a great deal of the construction equipment used while the tunnel was being built including a Running Tunnel boring machine, the size of which just has to be seen to be believed.

Together

The British and French frontier controls are passed through together at the terminal of departure as this avoids queuing a second time. Once you have passed through the tunnel, you simply drive away!

We were then taken to the 'allocation' where high vehicles, low vehicles and HGVs are all separated. From here you simply drive onto the platform and onto the shuttle train for your 27min journey to France.

Chance

Following this we were given the chance to tour the rest of the terminal where passengers would not normally go. We saw the service tunnel, vehicle maintenance and operation centre, rabies control unit, main tunnel control centre and of course the tunnel portal.

My visit to the Eurotunnel terminal at Folkestone would not have been possible without the much appreciated help of the following people: Mr Derek Meredith (Manager: Eurotunnel Terminal, Folkestone); Eurotunnel Press Office (Victoria Plaza, London); Eurotunnel Exhibition Centre (St Martins Plain, Folkestone).

I would like to thank them all.

GO GREEN FOR CASH

ENVIRONMENTALLY friendly businesses could be in line for cash awards in a competition to award 'green' achievements. Following last year's successful Business and Environment Achievement Awards, the Mersey Basin Campaign in association with Manweb is repeating the scheme in 1994.

The scheme gives businesses the opportunity to demonstrate how environmental improvements have enhanced their business performance and offers awards of £1,000 and a coveted trophy.

The competition features three categories:

- Large organisations with more than 100 employees.
- Medium and smaller organisations with up to 100 employees.
- Agricultural industry, including individual farmers, estate managers, landowners and horticulturists.

Colin Leonard, Manweb's Director, Power Marketing said: "The high standard and the diversity of entries received in the first year demonstrated the value businesses and agriculture place on protecting the environment. Once again we will be looking for changes which can be shown to have led directly to substantial and sustainable improvements in environmental standards as well as business performance over the last two years."

See Green Issues, Page 8

Ambassador's final fling

THE Ambassador 2000 scheme, designed to help staff help Manweb by generating new leads, came to its official end on 31 December 1993. All final leads have now been processed (where possible).

All members of Ambassador 2000 are thanked for their support and contributions, without which the scheme would not have been so successful.

And to ensure that Ambassador 2000 is well remembered, the scheme has closed with a grand finale - two fabulous prize draws.

Valid leads submitted throughout the incentive were entered into a Grand Finale Prize Draw to win a dream holiday up to the value of £2,000... and the lucky winner was Jean Stoves, from Wallasey Shop. She now has the enjoyable task of searching through the holiday brochures to choose the holiday of a lifetime.

In addition, all outstanding leads which could not be validated were entered into a draw to win one of three superb prizes - a murder mystery weekend, a country weekend and a London theatre weekend.

Christopher Kaye, of Moreton Shop, was the winner of a two-night country break, while Jean Humphries, of Network Supplies, is invited to spend a weekend of murder, mystery and mayhem at a choice of hotels. Meanwhile Patricia Reece, of Crewe Shop, is bound for a night of glamour in London's West End for the theatre show of her choice, plus a stay at the luxurious Hampshire Hotel.

Customer FOCUS

Mid Mersey to the rescue

HALTON Haven Cancer Care Centre was quick to praise a team of Manweb workers who came to the rescue when the centre was hit by a sudden power cut.

Patients were left without heat, light and telephones when a fault developed on the mains cable.

The Manweb team worked non-stop for

seven hours to help repair the fault. "They were really superb. We would like to say a big thank you to everyone. They certainly got us out of a hole," said Haven founder Dom Valdez.

Those in the Manweb team from Mid Mersey District were: Bernard Bradley, Len Yeardsley, Steve Newton and Pat O'Malley.

TAKE A CHALLENGE



MANWEB helped Chester Society for the Blind to keep in touch by donating a fax machine.

Head of Income Bob McMahon is pictured presenting the machine, which will help the charity produce Braille literature on behalf of Manweb, to Anne Roberts, of Chester Society for the Blind.

A NATIONWIDE initiative has been launched to encourage employees to carry out local community work and have fun at the same time.

Organised by The Volunteer Centre UK, Challenge '94 aims to foster long-term links between businesses and the local community.

Under the scheme, voluntary organisations will be able to issue challenges to local employees via a network of 12 regional support groups.

These challenges can be anything from clearing a pond to writing a piece of software, from renovating a scout hut to designing and producing an information leaflet or taking a group

of people out for the day.

Employees choose which challenge they wish to undertake and then complete the work between 9 and 25 September 1994.

The organisers hope to recruit 25,000 employees to help at least 2,000 different projects, and have issued a direct challenge to staff throughout Manweb to get involved.

Encourage

Employees benefit by developing their skills in a new environment which will encourage teamwork and leadership exper-

Manweb staff who would like to take up the challenge should contact Jackie Unsworth in Public Relations, Head Office (ext 2090) for further details.

tise. Companies also benefit from being more involved with their local community. And for local community groups, it is a way of tackling much-needed projects at little or no cost.

Sharon Kupusarevic, who is managing the Challenge '94 project, said: "Employee volunteering is good for all involved. People who are already volunteers say they get tremendous satisfaction out of putting something back into the local community. Equally the charities and local groups really benefit from the extra source of help."

ALL CHANGE

DOING IT NOW

STN investment will pay dividends

THIS August the changes will be rung for all telephone users when the STD codes they dial will gain an extra digit.

For example the Liverpool 051 code will become 0151, and the Chester 0244 code becomes 01244. The London area codes 071 and 081 become 0171 and 0181 respectively.

Also, five major UK cities will have completely new codes, plus an additional '9' or '2' in front of the local number, for example:

- Bristol 0272 becomes 0117 9xxx xxxx
- Leeds 0532 becomes 0113 2xxx xxxx
- Leicester 0533 becomes 0116 2xxx xxxx
- Nottingham 0602 becomes 0115 9xxx xxxx
- Sheffield 0742 becomes 0114 2xxx xxxx

The international access code changes from 010 and becomes 00 in line with the European Standard for International Direct Dialling.

This changeover is in readiness for 'PhONEday' on 16 April 1995, when the new codes become the only ones that the national telephone network will accept. From that date, if you dial 0244, 051 or any of the old codes, all you will obtain is a recorded message telling you that you have dialled incorrectly.

Manweb's Assistant Company Secretary Don Kilgallon said: "The Company's investment in its Single Telephone Number (STN) - 0345 112211 - will really pay dividends as this number will not change."

He explained: "The STN's 0345 prefix is a 'non-geographic' code and remains in use, as will the other non-geographic codes used for mobile services, premium rate services and free-phone numbers.

"Most domestic customers will probably have only one telephone with 'memory' dialling to reprogramme - possibly a fax too - and will not be greatly affected by the change until April 1995.

"However, Manweb, like other business users, has all of its own internal telephone system to convert, plus a whole range of

other telecommunications equipment to identify and reprogramme. Manweb's stationery and advertising literature must also be checked, and arrangements made for it to be either reprinted or amended with the appropriate new dialling codes."

Between August 1994 and PhONEday on 16 April 1995, the national network will accept both codes in order that large business users can phase in their many changes. It is important for everyone - domestic and business customers alike - to remember that it is not only telephones that will need to be reprogrammed.

Any item of equipment that uses the public telephone network, and gains access to that network through a dialling code, will need its code changing. Some of the items to be found in both the home and in business that will need converting are:

- Alarm Systems. Most modern systems that automatically dial the police or fire brigade are pre-programmed with the appropriate number and dialling code. It is unlikely that anyone other than the supplier or service company can make the necessary changes, so arrangements will need to be made.

- Modems. If you are the owner of a PC which is con-

nected to a modem, and if the PC autodial from its programme, then that programme will need to be changed. If you dial the number, then you will need to use the new code.

- Fax Machines. Numbers stored in an autodial memory will need changing. Remember also to change the dialling code on your 'answerback' - this is your number as printed by the receiving machine on its copy.

- Call Barring. Some telephones can now be set to 'bar' certain calls. However, if the new dialling code is used, then this will probably bypass the bar. So, from August 1994, remember to have both dialling codes recorded in the call barring system.

Conversion work at Manweb will be carried out by the Company's own Communications Network Department and will involve the Telephone Engineers making and co-ordinating the changes.

However, there are many

items of 'local equipment' which will have to be identified and converted.

Copies of the Company's information pamphlet 'The National Code Change - Advance Warning' have been circulated to all managers most likely to be affected and who will plan and implement the local changes.

If you use a telephone with an autodial facility or look after a fax machine that has stored numbers, you can help the process by identifying new codes for the stored numbers and checking your instruction book to make sure you know how to change them over.

For further advice on technical issues, please contact Tony Timmins (TIMMIW) on 700 3190, or, regarding administrative matters, Don Kilgallon (KILGAD) on 700 2048. Help and information on domestic queries can be obtained by calling the BT Helpline on 0800 01 01 01 or the Mercury Helpline on 0500 04 1995.



MANWEB's single telephone number went 'live' for staff on 1 May when 0345 112211 was launched internally.

The single telephone number (STN) concept has been developed over the past two years and customers have recently seen our television and bus-side campaign promoting this new service.

Chief Executive John Roberts said: "Instead of telling our customers what we can do, as of 1 May we are actually doing it."

All new white page telephone directories will from now on only carry the 10 emergency numbers and 112211. Callers using the directory enquiries service will only be given these same numbers.

However, all staff will be expected to promote the DDI (direct dial) facility.

Managers need to ensure that all letters leaving their part of the organisation have their own DDI numbers or Help Desk numbers. Only Regional stationery should show the 0345 112211 number. If any staff give out a number for Manweb, they should provide the appropriate DDI number.

In addition, internal standards have been set for staff. These are:

- All calls must be answered within 20 seconds.
- All telephone numbers should be manned or re-routed during normal hours.
- No call must be transferred more than once.
- All transferred calls should be announced so that the person receiving the call knows he or she cannot transfer it again.

The Head Office switchboard will continue to operate until call levels have fallen, and all non-technical telephone matters such as updating of directories, maintenance of on-line directories and monitoring DDI and switchboard calls will be dealt with by the Income Department.

John Roberts said: "Everybody has to be committed to the customer service ethic. The Regions are under pressure at the moment - they handled 246,499 calls last month - so if mistakes are made in the early days, everyone should try to help. Don't complain or moan; instead say 'how can I make this work' and take responsibility for the calls."

16 APRIL 1995

PHONEDAY

AREA CODES STARTING 0 WILL START 01

Customer FOCUS

CONTINUING our series of articles on the progress of Manweb's Customer Service programme, this month we focus on our contact with business customers. Reports by Tony Harper, John Kennedy, Berin Ames and Jonathan Price.

The unit born for business

AS we all know, Manweb is committed to providing excellent customer service and is facing increasing demands to improve the quality of service given to customers.

This has arisen through the standards of service, increased competition and greater customer awareness and expectation following privatisation. However, if we're not giving the customers what

they want in the first place... then forget it.

Through market research and Customer Focus initiatives we clearly found that most business customers believed they had different needs to domestic customers. This group of customers, up to 100,000, between the domestic and contract markets, told us we were treating them the same as domestic customers and were neglecting their different needs. Thus, the Business Unit was born.

Recently formed and centred at Rhostyllen, the Business Unit aims to provide a focal point for all small business customers via its 0345 250250 helpline.

Its primary aims are to provide expert and excellent customer service in a cost-effective way.

This means not only providing advice and information on a wide range of business accounts and tariffs, but gradually anticipating and exceeding the needs and expecta-

tions of business customers so that they stay with Manweb.

Having recently celebrated its first birthday, the Business Unit already handles between 2,000 and 3,000 business customers' calls every week. These range from complex monthly billing and street lighting enquiries right down to the more straightforward check meter-reading enquiries.

In addition, staff also deal with all business account amendments, provide energy efficiency and tariff advice and are helping to implement Manweb's marketing strategy whilst supporting the activities of our Energy Sales teams.

All that, and the Business Unit is still managing to provide billing and customer service facilities for Manweb Gas Ltd and promoting the expertise of Manweb Contracting Services amongst the business community.

Manweb's Business Unit Manager John Kennedy said: "Clearly we have achieved many goals along the road to achieving excellent customer service. However, we still have a long way to travel.

To improve further we will need the continued and constructive support of all our colleagues throughout Manweb. I'd like to take this opportunity of thanking everyone who has contributed to making the Business Unit the success it is already. Together we can make it better."

Manweb Account Manager Chris Jones uses Equerry on a laptop computer in his car

EQUERRY

A COMPUTER system called EQUERRY has been designed to support Energy Sales and Business Marketing in providing excellent service to our business customers.

EQUERRY is different from previous Sales and Marketing systems because it provides comprehensive information about our business customers in the context of company ownership.

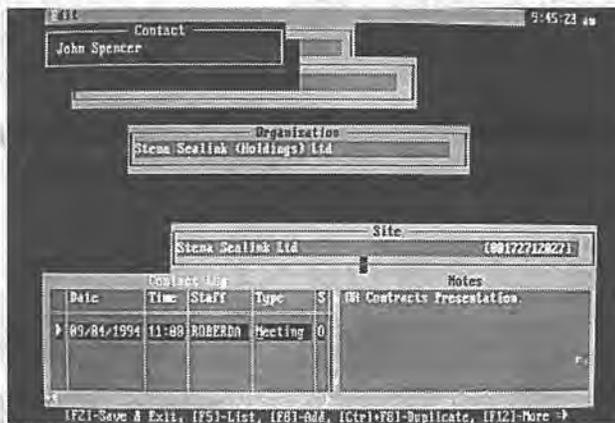
At the heart of EQUERRY is the Contact Manager. Company hierarchies of up to six levels can be recorded. In the case of a very large corporation such as Hanson plc, all of the subsidiary businesses and their subsidiaries, and their subsidiaries etc, down to sites with an electricity supply can be stored.

At each level, the people with whom Manweb deals (contacts) can be stored. Therefore, a contact's sphere of influence within a company and its subsidiaries can clearly be seen and intelligent marketing and sales decisions can be made. Decision-making of this kind, in context, has not before been possible.

EQUERRY also has a projects management feature integrated with the Contact Manager, an events manager, mailmerge facilities and an integrated diary.

EQUERRY will become the central information database for Manweb's Sales and Marketing operations. Electricity and gas supply contract information, currently stored in separate databases, will become centralised in EQUERRY. Information regarding a customer's consumption and payment history, extracted from mainframe systems will be stored in EQUERRY.

Information about business customers



The Equerry Contact Manager

With all the information regarding Manweb's contact with each customer in one place, an integrated approach to serving each customer, across divisions, can be achieved. This will avoid the customer's impression that "the right hand does not know what the left hand is doing".

A major limitation of the mainframe system is that access to it is confined to the office or home. EQUERRY overcomes this limitation.

EQUERRY is PC-based, and has been designed for use by office-based staff as well as home-based Energy Sales Account Managers. In fact EQUERRY can be used not only in the home, but also 'on the road' on the Account Manager's laptop computer.

Consequently, the information stored in EQUERRY can be accessed at any time, for instance immediately prior to a meeting with a client. Details of discussions during such a visit can immediately be entered into EQUERRY on the laptop, increasing the accuracy of information entered.

EQUERRY includes powerful analysis and reporting tools which maximise the system's effectiveness as an integrated sales and marketing database. Information entered by Account Managers, office-based staff and automated import will be immediately available for analysis and planning of marketing initiatives.

Clearly, information entered on individual laptop computers or office-based PCs must be available to other users of EQUERRY for maximum benefit. EQUERRY achieves this by automatic modem-transfer of data on a nightly basis. All data entered on any EQUERRY PC is transferred to all other EQUERRY PCs, ensuring that at the beginning of each day each user, potentially, has access to all data (provided they have sufficient security clearance).

Future enhancements and developments will be phased in over the following months, including implementation to Network Services sections in Districts.

IMPROVED TARIFF ADVICE SYSTEM

MANWEB has developed, as part of the Customer Focus Programme, an improved system designed to assist staff in the provision of electricity for businesses.

The system known as MTES (Manweb Tariff Enquiry System) functions by extracting information from the billing database into MTES where it is processed to provide a comparison of customers' existing tariff costs against other tariff alternatives.

Speedy

The main objective of the project was to provide a system that reflected changes in Manweb's organisation and business environment and which satisfied customer needs. To meet this objective, the revised system includes a range of features that combine to provide customers with a speedy and reliable tariff advice service.

These include a quick tariff comparison facility and a tariff presentation option where customers may receive information in the form of a report tailored to their own requirements.

In addition, the system has the facility to compare electricity tariffs with more complex electricity contracts, the importance of which has greatly increased with the lowering of the barrier to competition in the electricity supply market to customers with a maximum demand in excess of 100kW.

Training

An important part of the project was to identify appropriate users of the system and to ensure that they receive the necessary training to provide a high level of tariff advice. The main users of the system include the recently established Business Desk at Rhostyllen and the Area Energy Sales TSSUs (Technical Sales & Support Units) both of which will undergo extensive training before the system's expected launch during May 1994.

If you require any further information on MTES, please contact Berin Ames on Head Office ext 2872.

DELIVERING TO SATISFY DIFFERENT NEEDS

ALTHOUGH the vast majority of Manweb customers are domestic, our business customers have a major impact on both the network and the Company's profitability.

Business customers use around 70 per cent of the total number of units distributed, so handling that volume of business is crucial. Also, many of the businesses with which we deal are much more complex than a household, so the scope for confusion or misunderstanding is much greater.

Business customers differ

The variations between our business customers are massive, ranging from ICI's chlorine plant, which is the country's largest individual user, to literally thousands of small shops using only a fraction of the typical domestic load.

Because of these variations between businesses there are widely varying business customer expectations. To ICI, the cost per unit is critical to whether or not to continue production and the continuity of supply is critical to maintaining output.

An antique dealer's concern may not extend beyond a couple of lights on winter afternoons, whilst an equally small hairdressing salon may see the electricity supply as a vital part of the business and the bill as an all too obvious part of its costs.

Expect to be treated as businesses

The vast majority of business customers do share an expectation that they will be recognised and treated as businesses. People calling about their businesses will not accept having to explain to a member of staff that they are not talking about their home circumstances.

British Telecom, in particular, has set a new standard for business customer service by utilities and their clear separation of the business and domestic service sections is frequently quoted as the right approach.

Tailored service

Our aim - service tailored to the individual circumstances of the customer and the enquiry being handled at the time - requires that information and systems to handle it must be combined with experience and expertise in dealing on a business-to-business basis. People at work expect to be talking business and are not usually best pleased to be treated as though they were at home.

Some enquiries need a very specific and detailed answer, others need to be dealt with on the level of general principles or usual practice. Skill in recognising the occasions to use each approach and systems that allow speedy access to customer specific information are crucial to success in this area of service.

Complex customer organisations

Some customers have very complex internal structures, with either internal depart-

ments or area or regional offices controlling local activities. These internal arrangements are important to the way people work in their companies.

We think in terms of Districts, Areas, Regions, Shops or Head Office Departments and the different responsibilities of each constantly affect how we approach our work. The same is true of our business customers' staff and it is our job to keep the customer organisation in mind whilst we do business.

For complex customers, this can be a real problem and a computer system - EQUERRY - has been developed to handle the job. It can store details of who does what at up to six levels of structure in a customer - say, from a holding company like Hanson outside our area, through the regional or local office of a multiple retail chain like Threshers, to the different operational divisions of a county council.

Both the company structure and the names and personal interests of the people in the customer's structure can be recorded. The most important feature, however, is that all contact by Manweb can also be recorded and re-called as necessary to make sure that previous dealings with the customer can be taken into account, even if the people representing

Manweb or the customer are not the individuals who were involved in the previous dealings.

Manweb or the customer are not the individuals who were involved in the previous dealings.

Expanding scope

Although the starting point for EQUERRY will be the existing dialogue between Account Managers and their customers, the aim is to use this to gain familiarity with the system before expanding it to take in network-related issues.

The first step - planned for autumn 1994 - will be to make available details of Network Services and Power Marketing contacts with the 20,000 or so sites operated by large user or multi-site customers. At the very least, we hope to avoid the impression that neither Division is aware of the other's dealings with customers, since customers are generally intolerant of communications failure within Manweb.

On a more positive note, the intention is to extend the EQUERRY system to include sites with an above average potential to influence network operations so that we can take a more active approach to relations with the managements of these sites and, once the Network Management System project is more fully developed, to link the two systems to assist in the broad range of network management issues where customer contact will be required.

Business customers expect to be treated as businesses

- Dedicated contact routes both by phone and face to face
- Expert technical, tariff and business advice
- Designated individual people to contact in Manweb
- Recognition by Manweb of the customer's own internal organisation

THEY SAID IT

Extracts from letters TO Manweb about Manweb people and the services they provide FROM satisfied customers around the region.

TO: North Wirral District.
FROM: R. M. Palmer, Managing Director, Phoenix Chemicals Ltd.

"Just a brief letter to thank you for the efficient and courteous service that you have provided to us with regard to our new HV installation.

"The 'new MANWEB' is a pleasure to deal with!"

TO: Mid Cheshire District.
FROM: Edward A. Bell, Sutton Lane, Middlewich.

"Further to our earlier conversation of this week re electrical voltage supply fluctuations and damage to television/bulbs and appliance fuses. Firstly I must thank you for your continued effort in solving the voltage problem that we have had since we moved here. Since your engineers connected the cabling I have noted a much more constant voltage and as of yet have not seen the lights suddenly brighten or suddenly dim which was a continuous occurrence before (either that or I have actually got used to it!!!) I have had the TV repaired and am forwarding you the bill as you requested. Thank you for your assistance in all of the above, you have been extremely helpful - in fact you are a credit to Manweb - WELL DONE!"

Those concerned were Messrs M. Bellis, J. W. Ralphs, P. Oakes, R. Spann, and C. Davies.

TO: Dee Valley District.
FROM: E. J. Duncan, Town Lane, Moberley.

"When I moved into the above address I found that the heating system was Economy 7, and had no idea how to work it.

"I was given your telephone number by the Manweb store in Knutsford, and I had occasion to speak to Mrs Pam Powell.

"I would like to say that it was a total joy to speak to someone who was polite, friendly, and extremely helpful to me. It makes a change, I can tell you!

"Thanks to Mrs Powell, we now have a lovely warm cottage, plenty of hot water, and have gained a few tips on how to save money through the Economy 7 system.

"I would therefore be grateful if you could please pass on my thanks and gratitude to Mrs Powell, and may you be also thanked for having such pleasant staff."

TO: Manweb Contracting Services.
FROM: D. E. McGreal, Ascot Close, Birkdale.

"Please accept this note of appreciation to both yourself and your colleague, Mrs Pam Powell, for communicating with me regarding the problem which occurred on my mother-in-law's electric shower, installed by your organisation.

"I am most grateful that you decided to replace the heavy duty isolating switch which had become damaged. I am consequently entirely satisfied with this favourable customer relationship gesture.

"Many thanks for your kind assistance and personal concern in resolving this matter."

Pam Powell is Customer Service Controller, Birchwood.

TO: Karen Redhead, Account Control, Region.
FROM: J. A. Richards, Airdrie Close, Eastham.

"Thank you very much for the leaflets you sent re my inquiry about Economy 7 meter, I found the leaflets most helpful and will look forward to having my Economy 7 meter fitted.

"Thank you also for the way you dealt with my inquiry, you were most helpful and pleasant to talk to, so credit where credit's due, I find their inquiries are usually dealt with by someone who is always in a hurry to be doing something else and have a 'couldn't care less' sort of attitude so it was a pleasant surprise to receive such prompt and informative attention, I feel impelled to write and thank you; you have cheered an 'Old Fella' up enormously and restored some faith in human relations."

TO: Mid Cheshire District.
FROM: Edith Ashworth, Riley Close, Crewe.

"It was very good of you to respond to my letter so quickly and I appreciate it.

"On Saturday morning one of your men came and asked me where the gap in the hedge was. I took him up the bank to show him and he went to get a conifer or other evergreen shrub.

"He came back with a lovely conifer which he planted very well. I am delighted to see it there and would like to thank you and the man who planted it, very much."

The letter refers to M. G. Lathom, and A. Clarke, contractor.

TO: Mid Cheshire District.
FROM: Carol Whiting, Gresty Terrace, Crewe.

"Two days ago, unfortunately, my electricity supply was cut off at 6pm, and I had to phone your emergency number.

"The call was taken helpfully and cheerfully by a man who assured me help was on its way. Sure enough, within an hour, an engineer arrived and got to work.

"He soon found the fault, and I was back with heat and light. It is surprising how ill at ease I felt without my electricity.

"The engineer was S. Davies - I noticed that from his ID card, and he told me the helpful, cheerful man who took my call and reassured me was 'Dave'.

"The engineer then cheered me up even more, by saying there would be no charge - 'It's all part of our service'.

"Well, 'What Service!' Let me thank you very much, and I hope you pass on my thanks to your colleagues. In a day and age when all I seem to do is moan about poor quality, it was almost a pleasure to be cut off!"

TO: Terry Dunne, Power Marketing Division.
FROM: Hugh W. Evans, Deputy Chief Executive, Merseyside Improved Houses.

"I am writing to thank you for the photographs which you sent to me recording the Beta Award ceremony in France.

"My aunt and uncle, Margaret and Bill Jones, visited me at the weekend and told me how considerate you had been when they approached you.

"I think a good measure of any organisation is how it looks after its former employees and I know that Manweb is second to none in this regard."

TO: Manweb Contracting Services, Wrexham.
FROM: A. E. Darbyshire, Pentraeth, Anglesey.

"I refer to the intruder alarm fitted by your company on Thursday, 3 February, and would like to congratulate your staff.

"Firstly the young lady who did the survey, and also Mr G. Jones, the engineer, on his excellent work."

Those concerned are Dawn Hughes, Sales Representative, Abergele Depot and Glyn Jones, Electrician.

TO: Dee Valley District.
FROM: Brightside, Wallers Lane, Tarporley.

"Thank you very much for you and your team's excellent work in installing our new Manweb alarm system. Glyn and Ken worked neatly and were courteous and appear to have done a first class job."

The letter refers to Glyn Jones and Kenny Johnson of the MCS Security Team, Wrexham.

TO: North Mersey District.
FROM: D. Llewellyn, Golf Road, Formby.

"I refer to my letter to you voicing my concern re possible risks of living near a sub station.

"Today your Mr Keith Hornby, EMF Liaison Officer, North Mersey, called and completely satisfied us that no danger exists.

"The speed and efficiency of your response is a credit to your organisation."

TO: North Mersey District.
FROM: Phyllis Tyrer, Brookfield Lane, Aughton.

"I would like to express my thanks for the efficient way my problem has been dealt with by ALL your officials.

"All the neighbourhood were most impressed by the officers who came to our homes; very clean and smartly dressed; the cheerful and pleasant manner they conducted the enquiries.

"Would you convey my thanks to them. Once again, many thanks for all that was done for us."

TO: North Wirral District.
FROM: Terry Higgins, Parkway, Wallasey.

"I would just like to go on record to thank you, and all your staff, in particular Mrs Pritchard, for the very polite and very prompt service in restoring the power to our street lamp."

This customer sent in miniature whiskies for those involved.

TO: North Wirral District.
FROM: Pender Homes Ltd.

"The writer wishes to thank your department and in particular, Mr Chris Wharton, for the very prompt attention given when laying in the service cables and connections and making electricity available to the last five plots (at St Catherines Gardens) prior to the Christmas Holiday. This certainly was very much appreciated."



HELP HERE FOR WORKING MUMS AND DADS

THE POLICY

The Scheme is effective from 1 June 1994 and will be subject to annual review.

Manweb plc will assist qualifying employees by contributing towards the cost of childcare. The contribution will be in the form of vouchers given to the parent. The vouchers, provided by Childcare Vouchers Ltd, part of the Luncheon Vouchers Group, are redeemable by the childcarer only.

The Scheme refers to the term 'prime carer'. A strict definition of this phrase for the purposes of this Scheme is as follows:-

'The prime carer of the child(ren) must be an employee of Manweb, and it is the responsibility of that individual to make arrangements for the child(ren) on a regular basis and at times when for any reason the childcare facilities are not available or cannot be used. It is also that individual who would have to give up work to look after the child(ren) if circumstances required.'

Eligibility Criteria

In order to qualify for assistance under the Scheme you must satisfy all of the following criteria:-

- You must be the prime carer of the child(ren)
- You must be a permanent member of staff with a minimum of three years' service in the Company (including any periods of maternity leave) and working contracted hours of 12 or more per week
- You must demonstrate that it is necessary for you to pay someone other than your spouse/partner to look after your child(ren) to enable YOU to work for Manweb plc

Where:-

- Both parents work full-time for Manweb, only one parent, the prime carer, qualifies for the full-time allowance.
- One parent works full-time and the other part-time, both for Manweb, the part-time parent is seen as the prime carer and qualifies for the part-time allowance.

In the case where your spouse/partner is in full-time employment other than with Manweb and not in receipt of a similar allowance from their employer, you must demonstrate that you are the prime carer to qualify for the allowance.

As an employee of Manweb you will not qualify for Childcare Vouchers if your spouse/partner is either:-

- at home
- working part-time
- working full-time and is the prime carer.

Amount of Allowance

The allowance will be payable per child (up to a maximum of two children) and you will continue to receive the allowance until such time as the child(ren) reaches the age of five or takes up full-time education, whichever is the sooner.

For the first child the allowance is £30 per week for full-time employees. Part-time employees with contracted hours of work of 12 hours or more will receive an allowance of £20 per week.

The allowance is reduced by 50% for the second child.

Vouchers are allocated for each week you are eligible up to a maximum of 48 weeks in any 12 month period.

The allowance will not be given during any periods of maternity leave. It will also be suspended during any periods of sick leave, unpaid leave or any other situations where you cease to incur costs for childcare provision.

How the Scheme Works

If you think you are eligible for childcare assistance you must complete an application form and return it to the nominated Childcare Scheme Co-ordinator.

Once approval has been given by the Company you will receive a Childcare Voucher's information pack which will contain a registration form for your chosen childcarer to complete and return to Childcare Vouchers Ltd.

Once you have selected your childcarer you are responsible for explaining the system to them, details are contained in the information pack. When your childcarer has been accepted on to the Scheme you will receive weekly denominations of personalised Vouchers. If the cost of your childcare exceeds the value of your voucher, the balance must be met by yourself.

Childcare Vouchers can only be redeemed by people who are legally permitted to care for children. For the purposes of this Scheme, these carers are:-

- Registered Childminders
- Registered Private Nursery
- Local Authority Nursery
- Day Care Play Groups
- Nanny
- Close Relative (excluding spouse/partner)

Further Information

- Childcare Vouchers are taxed in the same way as ordinary income. The total value of the allowance received by you will be declared to the Inland Revenue on form P11D at the year end and your tax code will be adjusted accordingly.
- If your child(ren) begins full-time education or you no longer need to pay for childcare for any reason you must inform the nominated Childcare Scheme Co-ordinator and return any unused vouchers. The vouchers must only be used as permitted under the Scheme.
- Acceptance for the Childcare Voucher Scheme is solely at the Company's discretion. The Company reserves the right to change the eligibility criteria of the Scheme as business needs change and the facility can be withdrawn at any time.
- Fraudulent application and/or misuse of the Childcare Voucher Scheme will be regarded as serious misconduct and will be dealt with in accordance with the Company's Disciplinary Procedure.

A SCHEME designed to help many of Manweb's working mums and dads while their children are still under school age is being launched next month.

From 1 June Manweb will offer Childcare Vouchers to help qualifying male and female employees with the cost of providing childcare. The scheme will be reviewed annually.

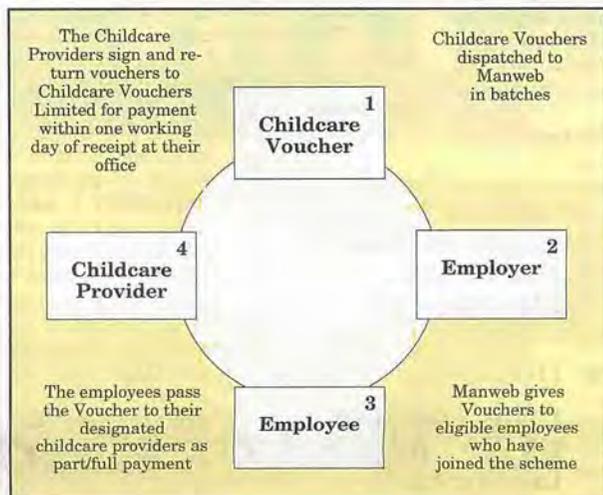
The vouchers will be provided by Childcare Vouchers Limited, part of the Accor Group, the largest staff benefits company in the world.

David Vernon-Smith, Manweb's Director, Corporate Affairs, said: "We chose Childcare Vouchers because they best meet our needs to provide childcare support for those employees who have children under school age.

"This means offering parents a way of choosing the childcare that suits their own priorities and enabling them to remain in the workforce, secure in the knowledge that they have made the right choice of care for their children".

Each eligible employee receives an information pack which explains how the benefit operates. There are also instructions for the childcare provider. Parents have complete freedom and responsibility to select and recruit their own childcare provider.

Each Voucher is secure as it can only be used by the employee to pay his or her designated childcare provider.



Survey results

A questionnaire was issued to all staff to obtain information on the arrangements they used for childcare and the number and age range of their children. The 569 who completed questionnaires provided us with the following information:-

Q1 Number of Children under the age of 15 years:-

44% of staff have 1 child
46% who replied have 2 children
only 10% have 3 or more children

Q2 Number of Children in each age group:-

Under 1 year	117
1-2 years	93
2-3 years	93
3-4 years	75
4-5 years	112
6-14 years	463
	<hr/>
	953

Q3 Childcare arrangements whilst at work:-

Spouse/Partner	40% (including outside school hours)
Close relative	27%
Registered Childminder	11.5%
Private/Local Authority Nursery	9%
Friend	5%
Nanny	1.25%
Playgroup	1%
Out of School Scheme	0.75%
Other e.g. Boarding School/other relative	4.5%

Q4 Cost of Childcare per child per week:-

£ 0-20	No of replies 201
--------	-------------------

21-40	103
41-60	84
61-80	33
81-100	16
101-120	NIL
120 or more	4
Don't know	73
NIL	55

Q5 Maximum amount prepared to pay per child per week for childcare:-

£30 or less 40%
£31-£60 43%
more than £60 17%

Q6 Male/Female Split:-

215 replies were from female employees
354 replies were from male employees

Q7 Start date with the Company:-

87% of employees replying had completed more than three years service with Manweb.

Q8 Hours of work of employees:-

476 replies were from full-time employees.
93 replies were from part-time employees.

Q9 Spouse-partners type of employment:-

Full time	273
Part time	160
Does not work	104
In full-time education	3
Self-employed	7
No spouse/partner	22

Q10 Only four replies confirmed that Childcare Support was provided by the Spouse/partners employer. e.g. in the provision of a work place nursery/play scheme or reduction in nursery fees.



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MANY of us are interested in sport. It helps us unwind and is beneficial in several other ways. Not all sport is in the form of team games - a lot derive great pleasure from the more individual sports such as fishing and shooting.

Unfortunately one member of the public paid the ultimate price for a day's sport recently when he accidentally made contact with an 11,000 volt overhead line.

The 30-year-old married man had enjoyed a day's pigeon shooting at Aughton, near Ormskirk, and was recovering his decoys from a tree when the accident happened.

To do this he used an aluminium sectional pole known as a pigeon loft to lift the decoys down. It was about 6pm so it was nearly dark. We can only guess he did not see the overhead line in the dark and made contact, with fatal results.

I am sure there are

How to Join the Childcare Voucher Scheme:

To request an application form to join the Scheme, please contact the Childcare Scheme Co-ordinator, Tracy Stockin, at Head Office on extension (700) 2064, or on Office ID STOCTJ.



Customers respond to the Man (and to Freddie)

THE end of 1993 saw a burst of advertising activity on television, posters, press and bus sides. In October and November, we were advertising meter cards on posters and in local press, Dish-washers and Cookers on TV, Price Promise and Aftercare Service in press and on radio.

Having just received results of a research programme designed to tell us what our customers think of the advertising and how they react to it, we are be-

ginning to see that customers are responding to 'The Man' and 'Make Life Easier'.

The recall of Manweb advertising with 'The Man' in it has risen from 9% to 14% from September to February.

Commercials

When pre-testing the new TV commercials, approximately 80% of respondents felt the commercials were trying to 'Make Life Easier'.

Interestingly, too, when we talked to our customers in the Granada TV region, they were much more

aware of Manweb's advertising than they were of Norweb's, despite the fact that Norweb spend significantly more money than do Manweb.

The beginning of 1994 has seen an exciting start to the year with the launch of three new TV commercials: 'Checkout', announcing that Manweb will be reducing the number of estimated bills; 'Select', announcing a special new tariff for low users of electricity, and more recently 'Slim', announcing the launch of the new Single Telephone Number. This latest was supported throughout April by bus

sides, two radio commercials, and an article in Cheshire Life.

Back by popular demand are the Freddie the Frog meter card posters which re-ran during February. So successful was this campaign that posters were mysteriously disappearing from the bus shelters in which they were displayed.

Requests

We received lots of requests for copies, from as far away as Poland and some people have even asked if they can buy their very own Freddie. Watch this space!



try

Keep them safe

By Phil Hughes



SAFETY-CONSCIOUS Central Field Unit staff raised £100 to help cancer sufferers, after completing 100 accident-free days at work.

CFU Manager Dennis Davies is pictured (2nd from right) presenting the cheque to Dr Brian Cottier, Chief Executive of Clatterbridge Centre for Oncology, watched by (left) Superintendent Radiographer Christine Ball and Linda Lewis, CFU's Head of Clerical.

Staff set themselves a target of having no reportable accidents during the 100-day period and, to spur them on, Manweb pledged a donation to the charity of their choice.

Dennis Davies said: "Under our Safety Incentive Scheme we were able last year to make three £100 donations to local charities. Hopefully we will be able to do the same this year, thanks to the efforts of our staff to work safely."



SAFE-WORKING by Manweb staff has resulted in a £100 cash boost for charity. Employees from Dee Valley District completed 30 accident-free days at work, and as a reward Manweb pledged a donation to Marie Curie Cancer Care, the charity of their choice. It is the fifth accident-free month worked by the staff since June 1993, and in recognition for each of these 'safe' periods Manweb has donated £100 to a local charity.

Customer Service Manager Bob Douglas said: "There's no doubt there has been a significant decrease in the number of reportable accidents since we started the scheme. Staff seem to be making a concerted effort to work safely." Bob Douglas is pictured (4th from left) presenting the £100 cheque to Andrea Johnson, Marie Curie Cancer Care's Appeals Co-ordinator (right), watched by Manweb colleagues (l-r) Peter Newbrook, Liz Rogers, Neil Goulden and Bryn Jones.

members of staff who have pigeon shooting or have relatives and friends who do so.

Incident

Members have already asked the British Association for the Advancement of Science and Conservation at Rossett to let all members know the details of the incident but to let your relatives or friends know just in case they do not have access to information.

There are some very strict rules that everyone enjoys any pursuit involving manipulating long poles, masts and rods, in open country follow:-

ALWAYS LOOK UP!

ALWAYS LOOK OUT!

KEEP CLEAR OF OVERHEAD POWER LINES

BE AWARE OF THE PRESENCE OF

OVERHEAD POWER LINES

- KNOW THEIR ROUTES
- AVOID USING ANY POLES WHICH ARE LONG ENOUGH TO REACH A LINE IN THE VICINITY OF A POWER LINE
- BE PARTICULARLY CAREFUL WHEN MOVING POLES FROM ONE PLACE TO ANOTHER IF THERE ARE ANY POWER LINES AROUND

Some of these poles can be 40 feet (12.6 metres) long. Across open country the minimum clearance for overhead power lines is 17 feet (5.2 metres). It is obvious what can happen when movement is uncontrolled.

If anyone would like any further information please contact Phil Hughes on Head Office extension 2239.

PARTY TIME

KIDDIES from Gwladys Street Primary School, Liverpool, were invited to a special party recently.

They were joined by Liverpool District Safety Co-ordinator Bernie Woods to celebrate Wilby's first birthday.

Wilby, the owl, has been helping Manweb over the past year to spread the safety message to schoolchildren.

The 'Play Safe with Wilby and Manweb' programme is based on electrical safety in the home and at play.

To date over 120,000 children have received the programme's message.

The children pictured with Bernie are; (l to r) Stephen Cavanagh, Carl Challoner and Lois Maxwell.



UP HERE FOR WORKING MUMS AND DADS

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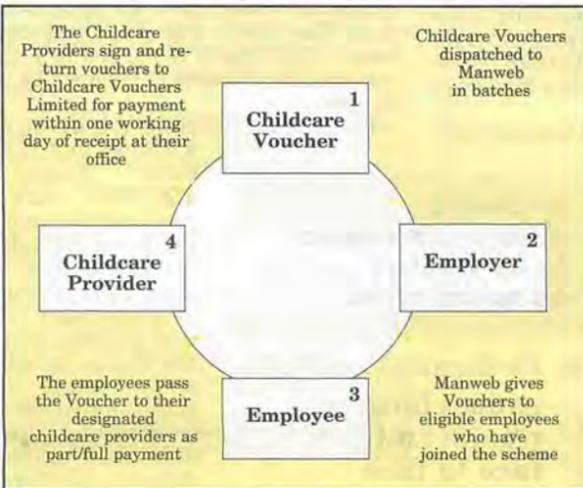
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From the information provided, the average amount prepared to pay is £42 per child per week.

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Country Sports

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**GREEN
ISSUES**



A DOUBLE BENEFIT

OSWESTRY District is supporting the Manweb commitment to replacing all trees lost during vital safety work by donating trees to projects sponsored by local environment groups.

Don McRae, Oswestry District Manager, is seen delivering some of the 3,000 trees provided to the Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust to support a scheme to establish a wildlife habitat in pasture land adjacent to the recently opened Welshpool Bypass.

Don said: "I am very pleased that this type of sponsorship allows our local communities to see the active involvement that Manweb is taking in care of the environ-

ment. I was also interested to discover through my discussions with local environmental agencies that in many cases the tree clearance work we do to preserve safety standards on overhead lines is thought by the environmental experts to offer many advantages in areas where the local wildlife benefits from the copping of woodland on a regular basis. It is amusing to note that in some cases the professional environmental agencies seem to get in more trouble for cutting down trees than we do. I did not realise until recently that our tree clearance programmes, combined with our environmental sponsorship, is offering this double benefit to the community."

£5.5m ENERGY SAVING DRIVE

MANWEB has launched a multi-million pound programme to help its customers save energy - and money.

Over the next four years £5.5 million has been set aside to introduce a range of energy saving measures. The ideas have been developed by Manweb, working closely with representatives of the local Electricity Consumer Committee and the regional office of electricity watchdog OFFER.

Liverpool City Council is one of the first local authorities to join Manweb in this partnership which will introduce energy efficiency measures in sheltered blocks in the City and enhance the residents' quality of life.

Announcing this major initiative, Manweb's Chief Executive John Roberts said: "We are particularly keen to see older people, disabled people and those on low incomes benefiting from these measures."

The package of energy saving measures includes roof and cavity wall insulation, more efficient space heating, low energy lighting, draught proofing and hot water cylinder insulation.

Other organisations signing onto the initiative include Knowsley Borough Council, Wrexham Maelor Borough Council and South Cheshire Housing Society.

Councillor Mrs Brenda Parry, Chair of Wrexham Maelor's Housing and Health Committee said: "The Council has a comprehensive Energy Efficiency Policy which is being actively pursued to provide tenants with a high standard of comfort, and at the same time helping to minimise the effects of VAT on fuel from April. The Manweb scheme is an excellent one which complements the

Council's work and we are pleased to fully support the scheme."

Substantial funding is also being provided by the Housing Corporation and the scheme enjoys the full support of Vale Royal Borough Council.

Manweb has led the way in promoting energy efficiency with its Holyhead Power Save Project, which recently received a national environment award from the Campaign for the

Protection of Rural Wales.

"Energy efficiency not only helps the environment, but it also helps our customers," said Ian Sharpe, Manweb's Head of Energy Resources. "Working with Liverpool City Council and the other organisations will provide us with useful experience of how best to introduce these measures. We will then be developing further energy efficiency initiatives throughout the region."



DISTRICT LINKS

IN line with the Company's Tree Management Policy Manweb has donated trees to Plas Lluest Residential Home at Aberystwyth. Plas Lluest, run by the charity 'Cause for Concern', has close links with Aberystwyth District which provides work experience by employing the trainees in the grounds and office.

Pictured (left) is District Manager Alison Eakins assisting in the tree planting, with Dave Dunbar, Gardener/Support Worker from Plas Lluest and trainees Ian Hodgson and Andy Ostler.

New energy efficiency standards

PROFESSOR Stephen Littlechild, Director General of Electricity Supply, has announced new standards which require regional electricity companies to carry out a major programme of energy saving projects.

Announcing the legally enforceable Standards of Performance for Energy Efficiency Professor Littlechild said: "When contributions from the companies, customers and third parties to the energy efficiency projects are taken into account it is estimated that enough electricity will be saved to power a city the size of Manchester for four years. The savings should also bring about a reduction in carbon emissions of about 200,000 tonnes by the end of the century."

The Standards, which came into

effect on 1 April 1994, follow the new Supply Price Control for each of the RECs which allows £1 per franchise customer for expenditure on energy efficiency projects. This will finance nearly £100 million of new schemes by 1998. The key requirement of the Standards is to ensure that money raised by the

RECs is spent on worthwhile energy efficiency projects to benefit the franchise customer.

Companies will be encouraged to target special needs customers, such as the elderly, disabled, low income families, and be required to consider the environmental aspects of their projects.

WINDFARM PLANS IN POWYS

TWO public exhibitions have been held in advance of Manweb's planning application to build a windfarm at Mynydd Yr Hendre in Powys. As part of its overall programme of exploring opportunities for renewable energy generation, Manweb has been studying the potential site at Mynydd Yr Hendre for nearly two years now, measuring the wind speed, carrying out ecological surveys and looking for the most suitable location for the windfarm site.

Manweb's Head of Energy Resources,

★ THE growing partnership between Manweb and Cheshire Special Landscape Project continues as this picture shows.

Mid Cheshire District Manager Jeff Hunt helps with tree planting at Grange School, Winsford. Children in the picture are: Anthony Haspell and Gemma McLellan with Kevin Jones, Landscape Project Officer for the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, looking on.

Ian Sharpe, said: "It is important to us that the local community is fully consulted about this project. We will be writing to local residents before we submit the planning application with further details."

The exhibition, at Cefn Coch and Carno, detailed the size, layout and location of the proposed windfarm, as well as covering environmental issues and how the project would impact on the local economy. Manweb staff were on hand to discuss any issues that arose.

IN BRIEF

A BUSY programme is in the pipeline for Manweb's retired staff associations as follows:-

Aberystwyth, 28 May, Bodnant Gardens & Llandudno; 21 June, Evening Trip with stop for bar meal; 26 July, Afternoon Trip; 12 August, Shrewsbury Flower Show.

Liverpool, 1 June, Llandudno; 6 July, Skipton (including canal cruise); 3 August, Trawsfynydd (visit to Nuclear Energy Social Club); 7 September, Buxton/Bakewell.

Chester and Head Office, 18 May, Afternoon visit to Dalesman Ice Cream Farm, Whitchurch; 22 June, National Railway Museum at Crich; 21 July, Royal Worcester Porcelain at Worcester. Full reports will be published next month.

THE Head Office Sports and Social Club Golf Society fixtures for the season are:- Warrington GC, 25 May (Murphy event); Rhuddlan GC, 10 June (Geoffrey Barnes Trophy); Eaton GC (new course), 4 July (Gravett Cup); Denbigh GC, 25 July (Inter District Trophy); Wrexham GC, 5 August (Bernie Green Trophy); Oswestry GC, 7 September (Captain's Day); Llangollen GC, 26 September.

ELLIS DAVIES, Foreman at Corwen, has taken early retirement at the age of 60 after a total of 39 years in the electricity supply industry.

Ellis was presented with a wristwatch by District Manager John Macdonald on behalf of colleagues.

TRADING PARTNERS

THIS month we continue the series of articles which look at how Manweb Contracting Services Ltd is working closely with the parent company. We also look at how the retail sections within our Trading Division are assisting with the development of MCSL's operations.



Peter Goulding, left, and Jeff Hunt.

Service Level Agreement to be extended

IN April 1993 a Service Level Agreement for DOJM (Distributional Operational Job Management) was agreed and signed by senior management within Network Services and Information Services. Even though this current agreement is a success Network Services requested that it be widened to include other Network Services business areas.

With this improvement in mind, further negotiations between IS and Network Services have taken place which have widened the scope and content of the services in the agreement.

Jeff Hunt, Mid Cheshire District Manager, has been acting as the representative for the Districts and as such Jeff has been collecting all the comments and concerns of his fellow District Managers. Where possible these

areas of concern have been included in the new agreement, examples of some of the new areas to be covered are:

- Response time targets for terminals at districts and depots;
- Clarification of support for Network Services critical applications;
- New reporting methods which will provide regular data tailored to the requirements of the district managers.

It is not currently possible to include all the points Jeff has collected but they will be included in the Agreement in a section entitled 'Future Actions and Plans'.

Data Centre Manager Peter Goulding commented: "This agreement will, over time, cover all critical IS services as seen by the Network Services Division, and will be an important element in improving these services."

VAT ADVICE FOR ELDERLY

AGE CONCERN and Manweb have joined forces to offer advice and information to older people worried about the impact of VAT on fuel.

The Benefits Agency is also involved in discussions to launch a series of projects throughout the region offering advice and guidance on a range of issues including possible entitlement to income benefits, energy efficiency, home insulation grants and easy ways to spread the cost of fuel bills.

The initiative is the result

of a seminar held at Head Office on 15 April. Over 45 representatives from the Company's Customer Service sections, local Age Concern groups and Benefits Agency offices debated the best method of ensuring older people are fully informed of all the help that may be available to help them offset higher fuel bills caused by VAT. Pilot projects will be run through Age Concern outlets in Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens, Caernarfon, Rhyl and Wirral.

WE regret that due to having an overwhelming amount of copy for this issue we have had to omit a number of items.

We will update as much of the material as possible and endeavor to publish it in the next issue.

Meanwhile let us know of anything newsworthy you feel would be of interest to Contact readers

BRIGHT SPARKS

THIS month sees the close of the MCSL Bright Sparks competition where you were invited to write in with your suggestions on how MCSL could develop its contracting business.

The last date for contributions will be 10 June 1994.

In the meantime, thank you to all who wrote in with suggestions. Winners will be announced in the July edition of Contact.

THE Retail operation, Energy Marketing and MCSL have established a strong working relationship over the last 18 months with the introduction of the Choice I display stands, catalogue and leaflets into 60 Manweb shops and three superstores.

The Choice range, designed to promote domestic electrical installation concepts and packages through the Manweb shops as a joint venture between Retail, Domestic Energy Marketing and MCSL, has proven a great success. The project has contributed greatly to the increase within the last 12 months of domestic contracting sales through Manweb shops.



A prominent example is the domestic shower market where MCSL has expanded its market share while shower sales amongst RECs in general fell by 12 per cent. At the forefront of these efforts is Retail Manager Terry Keenan's teams, of three regional operations managers, shop managers and sales staff, who operate at the sharp end, passing leads and sales to the MCSL Domestic Work Control Unit now centralised at Wrexham.

To maintain the momentum, the Choice medium is constantly being discussed and reviewed via the Choice liaison meetings which take place monthly with Mark Astbury from Retail, Bob Buckingham from Domestic Energy Sales and Cheryl Stevenson from MCSL. 1994/95 will see both updates and new additions to the Choice range including:-

- A new range of instantaneous shower units with choice of coloured shower curtain for purchasers of fully installed models.

- Development of the rewiring section to offer the customer a choice of consumer units and accessories ie dimmer switches, sockets and switch plates.

- Double glazing and conservatory installation packages, in liaison with our trade partner Marshall Turriex, as a development of MCSL into the total home improvement sector.

Retail Domestic Energy Marketing and MCSL Domestic staff will have an additional chance to see products and meet manufacturers such as Creda, Dimplex, Pilkington Glass and Insulation, Trikon and Redring, at the next Choice Roadshow, for which planning is underway by the Choice liaison group.

It is not just via Choice that co-operation exists, Contracting is also pleased to be able to participate in other retail promotional media such as the door-to-door mailers produced by the Retail Marketing Section headed by Stan Hawtin and his team.

Two customers who recently had cause to approve of this collaboration were Mr and Mrs A Farrent of Stockton Heath, Warrington, and Mrs M Mason of Wrexham. Both were lucky winners of the Security System competition, in which purchasers of fully installed shower packages were invited to write, in less than 10 words, why they would like to have a security alarm installed by Manweb.

Manweb sponsors sign language training



MANWEB is supporting a charity's work in promoting communication between deaf and hearing people.

The Company has donated £200 to the Council for the Advancement of Communication with Deaf People (CACDP) to help fund sign language training.

Last year a record number of 11,500 people sat British Sign Language exams, and Manweb's sponsorship will cover the cost of examining some of the 295 Stage 1 candidates on Merseyside.

The cheque was presented to CACDP at Typetalk, the Royal National Institute for Deaf People's national telephone relay service at Speke, Liverpool, where six members of staff have passed the Stage 1 exam.

CACDP's Funding Development Officer Ruth Holmes said Manweb's donation would help keep the examination fee at a reasonable level. "We want as many hearing people as possible to learn to communicate with their deaf friends, relatives or colleagues."

Manweb's Liverpool District Manager Bill Tubey is pictured presenting the sponsorship cheque to Typetalk staff, left to right, Jan Makin, Wendy Andersen, Trish Topping, Kathy Allen, Melanie Burnham and Joyce Davies.

OBITUARIES

IT is with sadness that Contact reports the deaths of the following retired Manweb employees.

Violet Walton, 92, who died last October, was a Drawing Office Assistant in Area 1 before retiring in 1961.

Gwilym Davies worked as a Linesman in Gwynedd before retiring in 1972. He died on 18 February, aged 79.

Hugh Samuel Roberts, 66, who died on 15 March, was a Transport Driver at Bangor before retiring in 1969.

Anthony Daniels died on 18 March, aged 57. He worked in Mid Cheshire District before retiring in 1992.

Hugh Alexander Robinson, 78, who was a Gatekeeper in South Lancashire before retiring in 1974, died on 19 March.

Ronald Neil, 73, who died on March 23, was a 3rd Engineer at Head Office before retiring in 1986.

Clifford Robinson, 65, who was a Sales Assistant in Dee Valley before retirement in 1989, died on 31 March.

Reginald Fairbrother, who died on 1 April, aged 90, retired in 1967 from Area 2/3, where he was a Senior Assistant.

William Horridge, 85, a Meter Fixer in St Helens until retirement in 1971, died on 2 April.

John Elliot Orr, 68, who died on 4 April, was a Watchman in Liverpool before retiring in 1982.

Frank Green, 83, a Contracting Engineer in Mid Cheshire until retirement in 1971, died on 4 April.

Samuel Shaw, who died on 8 April, aged 72, was a Labourer in Mid Cheshire until retiring in 1979.

Harold Waring, 76, who died on 9 April, was a Principal Assistant in Computer Operations at Head Office until retiring in



Food loving Grace

Amazing Grace

IT was service with a song for canteen assistant Grace Jones when her popularity led to an appearance on the Keith Chegwin Big Breakfast show.

Just when Grace had reached retirement age and thought she had served up her last meal to Gwynedd District staff at Caernarvon she received a pleasant surprise.

Fun-loving Grace was so highly thought of by her customers that they begged her to carry on cooking.

Nigel Hughes, Drawing Office Manager, said: "Grace is such good fun. She takes a lot of leg-pulling and just loves mothering us all.

She's got a heart of gold and there are so many things about her that it's hard to pinpoint just one."

Grace's boss, Sutcliffe Catering Manager Yvonne Pritchard, encourages Grace's tremendous sense of fun by writing rather risqué poems with which Grace entertains staff, particularly at Christmas time.

Grace's TV appearance came when producers heard of her popularity and the staff's desire to keep her at Caernarvon and decided she would be an entertaining personality on the show.

Said a surprised Grace: "Keith arrived when I was getting a jug of gravy, the next thing I knew a microphone was at my face."

True to form, she not only dressed up to provide the fun, but wowed the viewers with her rendering of Danny Boy. And the verdict? "She's a natural TV star," said Keith.



Fun loving Grace



FLOWER POWER

Ian Basford says it with flowers to Administration Supervisor Menna Rowlands to mark her 20 years' service with Manweb.

THIS month we start a new feature . . . ROUND & ABOUT, in which we record snaps and snippets from various Manweb locations . . . in other words your own page in the newspaper.

We begin with a call to Gwynedd District.

If you feel you have enough material to be included in a future issue please let us know and we will arrange a visit to your location to collect the information and take the pictures. Please contact Don Edwards on 051-423 6690.

● Our next issue will feature North Mersey District



It's reunion time for (l to r) Allan Littler, Brian Davies and Ian Basford.

Didn't they do well?

'ACHIEVEMENTS in Gwynedd' was the subject of a presentation by District Manager Ian Basford at the local staff forum held at the Royal Victoria Hotel, Llanberis, in February.

Ian complimented all staff on the terrific achievement regarding the improvement in customer service. He made particular reference to the District's Network re-

freshment during 1993/94.

Nearly 150 guests attended the event including; Alwyn Ellis, District Manager Designate; Jim McLennan, District Support Manager; Alison Eakins, District Manager, Aberystwyth; Allan Littler, Managing Director, Manweb Contracting Services; Roy Haley, Regional Contracting Manager; Rodger Hemmington, Training and Development Manager, Network Service; Bill Hatton, Area Energy Sales Manager, Wales and Dick Owen, retired District Manager.

There was also a special reunion for three former apprentice electricians who were at the Hoylake Skills Centre in 1965. The trio; Allan Littler, Managing Director, Manweb Contracting Services; Brian Davies, Planning Engineer and Ian Basford, took time out to enjoy a drink and an informal chat.



IT was presentation time at Seiont Manor Hotel, Caernarvon, recently when Gwynedd District staff lined up to receive their certificates from Gwynedd District Manager Ian Basford following successful training courses.

Top: With their Management Development Programme certificates are (l to r) Brian Davies; Ian Basford; Dian Powel; Eifion Griffith; Gwynfor James; Trevor Coates; Menna Rowlands; Ian Barraclough and Kevin Hughes.

Above: At the presentation of certificates in the National Examination Board for Supervisory Studies are; (l to r) Len Hicks; Ian Basford; Carl Woodman, Project Manager, Head Office; Gwynfor James; Ieuan Davies and Ifor Williams, NEBS Tutor, Pencraig College.



Ian Basford is pictured (centre) with Tony Ollier (left) and Dr Dunn outside Porthmadog substation. The plaque recognises European Community funding at the site.

STRESSING THE ROLE OF EURO FUNDS

DR Michael Dunn, Head of the European Affairs Division at the Welsh Office, paid a St David's Day visit to Gwynedd District to learn about the refurbishment and strengthening needs of the network.

He toured a number of sites in the district which had received partial funding from the European Community Rural Development Fund . . . and was very impressed with the benefits already achieved through this earlier funding.

District Manager Ian Basford, Eryri Section Manager Tom Wheldon-Williams, plus Network Services Assistant Accountant Tony Ollier

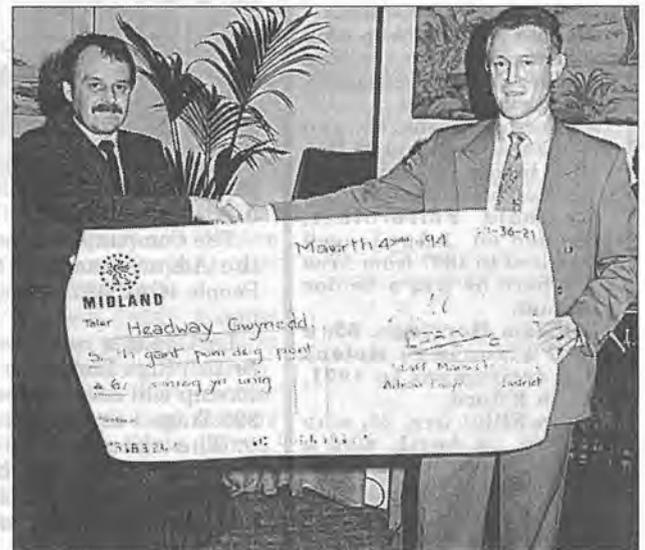
and Economist Garth Blundell presented the network's needs to Dr Dunn.

The group also visited the Llanfrothen 33kV substation, out of which runs the oldest 33kV line in Great Britain. The line is in need of refurbishment and covers around 28km to Cwm Dyli Power Station.

Programme

The visit was designed to give Dr Dunn an overview of how Manweb's capital programme is funded, and to stress the vital role European funding can play in this.

At the end of the tour Dr Dunn gave his support to Manweb by encouraging submission of future projects.



A BURST of extra activity by Gwynedd District staff has given a big cash boost to Headway Gwynedd, a branch of the National Head Injuries Association. District Manager Ian Basford handed over a cheque for £1,000 to Colin Rowlands of Gwynedd Headway at a presentation at Seiont Hotel in March. Colin thanked all district staff who had contributed with special thanks going to Gwilym Jones, Statutory Foreman, and his wife for their sponsored walk, Dave Grady, Customer Service Manager, and Dafydd Edwards, Storekeeper for their sponsored slim and Ian Basford for rounding up the total to the £1,000 mark. The National Head Injuries Association, based at Nottingham, provides information, support and advice for the head injured, their families and carers.

CAR TESTED:

Car Tested: Citroen Xantia 1.9LX Turbo Diesel
Price: £12,900

ONCE upon a time if you bought a Citroen you were regarded, like the cars, as a little unconventional. The sort of person who liked quirky things, and didn't mind being sniggered at by the neighbours. Now Citroen has changed tack, and is

By
Jon Tracey

aiming its cars at a more conservative market. The Xantia is one product of this new philosophy, but can it compete with the likes of Ford's Mondeo and Rover's 400?

The Xantia, while looking slightly different from the herd, no longer has the zany styling of Citroen's past. While this reflects Citroen's move upmarket, many enthusiasts will no doubt be disappointed. The interior is exceptionally well built and, while not in the class of a Rover, is substantially better than most. Interior space is generous with rear seat passengers finding plenty of room to stretch their legs. The front seats in this LX model adjust for height, while the steering wheel is adjustable for rake only.

Inexpensive

The Xantia is generously equipped, and our car came with standard electric sunroof, power steering and electric front windows. Particularly useful are steering wheel mounted radio controls which prevent you from burying your head in the dashboard every time you want to turn the volume up - but why is it only the French car makers who fit this inexpensive safety feature?

We chose to test a turbo-diesel model which manufacturers claim can give almost petrol engine performance with diesel economy. Diesel drivers will be surprised at how quiet the 1.9 litre turbo-diesel is at motorway cruising speeds, and at how willing it is to accelerate. You can certainly feel the turbo kick-in at around 2700rpm, though hills leave the Xantia gasping for breath. But people don't buy diesels for performance - they buy them for economy. The Xantia swallows a gallon every 56 miles, if you drive at a steady 56mph. This is disappointingly low when compared with other turbo-diesels in the class, the



Mondeo returning around 62mpg at the same speed.

Citroen along with many other manufacturers make great claims about the safety of the Xantia. Seatbelt pre-tensioners, side impact protection bars and a remote-controlled alarm are useful features on all Xantias. However, the remote-controlled alarm unit on our car decided to take a day off - and there is no other means off arming the alarm. Airbags and anti-lock brakes are expensive extras on the LX model - putting the Citroen behind the Mondeo in the safety stakes.

The real reason to buy a Xantia turbo-diesel over any of its competitors lies in its class-beating ride and handling. The hydro-pneumatic suspension system - which uses gas-filled spheres to provide springing and damping - gives an almost magic carpet ride quality. Handling, again, is way above what you expect from a family saloon and is guaranteed to put a smile on your face.

Performance table 1.9TD LX

Max Speed	111mph
0-60mph	11.6 secs
Fuel economy	56.5mpg/56mph
Ins Group	9

VERDICT:

Superb ride and handling combined with strong build quality make the turbo diesel a strong contender. Let down by relatively poor economy and lack of safety features.

Contact rating: ★★★★★



FREE ADS

FOR SALE

Caravan sited at Pen-y-Retail Caravan site, Moelfre, Abergel, Clwyd LL2 2PN. Tel. 0745-833611. Mr & Mrs P. V. R. Renshaw, Site Managers. No sub-letting. Strictly family site.

Pytchley Black gent's hunting coat, as new, size 44in chest; £85. Please contact S. Jackson on 0244 654354

Four Berth Frame Tent (Trigano Madora) big family tent with kitchen area, two bedrooms, in mint condition, only used three times. Only £300 ono. Also other camping equipment, cooker etc. For further details contact L. Skingley, Widnes Shop on 0928 710840.

21-inch Ferguson TV. Hi-fi stereo, teletext, remote control; £50 for quick sale. Contact: J. P. Grace on (0244) 375954 or Office: GRAC J.

Ladies Sheepskin Jacket, size 12, colour tan with cream lining. As new; £150, was £245. Contact Deborah Banks, Mid Cheshire District on Internal 760 2258 or 0270 502253.

NR Pullman Caravan Awning, both ends detachable, brown/beige, amber tinted windows, spring-loaded frame, caravan skirt, 11ft. Cost new £300 plus, in new condition; £150 ono. Contact: Mr J. H. Pomeroy. Tel. 0492 584275.

Raleigh Mountain Bike, men's, 16 gears, red, good condition; £60 ono. Wharfedale Active Speakers, ring for specifications; £35 ono. Rucksack, large, good condition; £25 ono. Contact: Wayne Hewson, Chester Shop on Home 0978 760997 or at work, 0244 38817.

HOLIDAYS

French Alps/Ancecy. A traditional Savoyade farmhouse in beautiful Alpine valley, 30 mins to Ancecy, 25 mins to La Clusaz. Sleeps 9, all modern facilities. Summer activities: walking, sailing, swimming, skating and luge. Winter: all winter sports. Contact P. Moray, internal H.O. 2311 or 051-336 6230

Llandudno, Branstone Hotel. Privately owned Licensed Hotel. 3 night breaks £59 per person half-board. B&B from £14.50 per person. To make your reservation telephone Jan or Geoff Cole on 0492 876448 and don't forget to mention Contact. **Fully Furnished 2 Bed House.** Paphos, Cyprus. Near to beach, shops, restaurants, swimming pool on site, sleeps 4-6; £150 to £200pw. Available 24-5-94 to 12-7-94 and also 14-9-94 to 8-10-94. Photos available. Contact Stephen Bebbington on 0744 31452.

Seychelles - for a holiday which is unhurried, uncrowded, unspoilt and unique. Staying in a new guesthouse standing in a 5-acre garden with its own beach. Details when you ring 0928 732530.

North Wales, Colwyn Bay. Swiss-style chalet, sleeps up to five. Electric heating and cooking, bathroom and flush toilet, fridge, colour TV, garden and parking. Situated in wooded dell near Eirias Park and beach. Weekly rates or weekends or

mid-week breaks. Pets welcome. Tel. 051-678 9854.

Borderlands of Cumbria and Scotland. Cosy cottage retreat on Kirklington smallholding, sleeps 4. Fully inclusive. Open all year. Short breaks. Excellent touring base - Northumberland, Hadrian's Wall, Lakes. No pets. Brochure 0228-75650.

B&B Accommodation just off A55 at Halkyn. Wonderful views, great pubs locally serving excellent food. Ideal for walking and horseriding. Ample car parking. Contact Sharon Jackson, Queensferry, on 4354.

Llandudno, Rosaire Hotel. Family run with excellent home cooking, separate tables. All double and twin rooms en-suite with colour TV. Tea-making facilities and free parking. £15 B&B with 4-course evening dinner optional at £5 per head. Central to all amenities and on level ground. For further details please ring Mrs W. G. Evans on 0492 877677.

Costa Del Sol - Benalmadena. Private studio apartment suitable two people on beautiful site. Large pool, gardens etc. Close to beach, bars and amenities. Cable TV, 24hr reception. Easy travel from airport. Flights and insurance available if required. Contact Bette Flanagan on 0244 341097.

Caravan For Hire. Sunnysands Caravan Park, Talybont, Barmouth. 6-8 berth caravan (32ft), very roomy, two bedrooms, shower/washbasin/wc. All main services. Licensed social club on site. For further information please ring Wrexham (0978) 750041 after 6pm or leave message on answerphone.

Costa Del Sol - Puerto Cabopino, situated between Marbella and Fuengirola. Superior 2-bed apartment, plus settee in lounge converts to 2 single beds. Superb views over yacht marina and sea, lovely beach and swimming pool. Ideal for family or golfing holiday. Supermarket, video bar, restaurant etc on site. Fully equipped for self-catering. Available for 2 weeks, Saturday October 15th to Saturday October 29th. Rental includes

electricity, linen, towels and weekly maid service. Contact H. J. Bird, Southport (0704) 538645.

To Good To Be True. How would you like your own apartment on the Costa Del Sol (per week) for life from £450 to £1,050 one-off payment or £50 deposit and from £2.00 per week for 7 years. I have had a timeshare with this company for eight years and can fully recommend them for value for money and reliability. For further details contact Brian Thomas, MCS Ltd Abergel 0745 822333 or Home 0492 580604. It will cost nothing to look and no salesman will call on you.

Caravan (modern), 31ft 6/7 berth, sited on Haven's award-winning park at Towyn, North Wales. All mains services, gas and electric, free. Fully equipped, including TV. Free family entertainment, heated indoor swimming pool, children's Tiger Club. All amenities on site. Sorry, no pets. Big savings on Haven's brochure price for Manweb employees and their families. Tel. 0244 372860.

ACCOMMODATION

2-bed Semi in Liverpool 30. £17,000 50% shared ownership, rent £40pcm or £34,000 on full mortgage. Fully alarmed, gardens front, back and side, with drive-in for 2 cars. Fitted kitchen, half-tiled bathroom with shower, carpets, curtains and many extras. Bargain! Tel. 051-521 5140.

Caergwrle: Large 2-bedroomed end terraced house. Lounge, dining room, hall, kitchen, bathroom. Gardens to front and rear. Garage and storage shed. Partly modernised. For quick sale; £39,500. Tel. 0978 760391.

PERSONAL

Try the latest 'All In The Ear' hearing aids in the comfort of your home. For a free hearing test and demonstration contact Geraint Davies, Tan y Berllan, Eglwysbach, Gwynedd. Tel. 0492 650790. £60 discount to all Manweb employees and ex-employees.

Wedding and Portrait Photography at realistic prices, eg Weddings covered from £70. Full details from Ken Smyth (Work - 0244 652449) or (Home - 0244 544771).

PLEASE PRINT YOUR FREE AD. ON THIS COUPON OR ON PLAIN PAPER. IF THE ADVERT IS TO RUN FOR MORE THAN ONE MONTH, PLEASE SUBMIT ANOTHER COUPON.

(BLOCK CAPITALS, PLEASE)

Name

Work place (or retired)

Tel:

Send to: 'CONTACT' FREE ADS, MANWEB, SEALAND ROAD, CHESTER CH1 4LR



Cable link just purr-fect

NORTH West Cable's 'store-in-store' at St John's Shop, Liverpool, was voted 'purr-fect' by customers at its launch with Cable cartoon characters Cable Cat and Cable Kitten.

Customers can now sign up for cable TV and cable phone at Manweb's St John's centre and, as well as cuddly cats, face painting for children was laid-on, courtesy of Cable North West Communications.

The link-up between the cable company and Manweb was originally put together by Manweb's Corporate Business Development Section before management was handed over to Nigel Clark, Utilities Manager in the Trading Division.

Business Income Project Manager Nigel said: "The store is proving to be a phenomenal success. Since its launch it has had more than 500 sales leads, and actually signed-up some 100 subscribers."

As well as offering a valuable additional service the cable link-up is also helping to attract additional customers to Manweb's shops in Liverpool.

A happy junior customer is pictured (second from left) with Cable Kitten (left), Cable Cat and North West Cable's make-up artist at St John's centre.

FIND OUT ON HOTLINE

SINCE October last year Manweb Customer Service Centres in Liverpool have been accepting payments for North West Cable.

There are currently 50,000 subscribers in the city, half of whom pay by direct debit, and Manweb shops now handle 2/3 of all North West Cable's remaining cash paying customers in Liverpool.

Manweb staff wishing to find out more about North West Cable's TV and telecoms services can phone the Company's sales hotline . . . 0500 500 100, or call in to St John's store. All customers in the franchise area will receive free connection throughout May, and this period is being extended for Manweb staff.

GOLDEN GIRL



WHEN Manda Roberts met HRH Prince Philip she could proudly claim she had earned the privilege the hard way.

For the 26-year-old from Mid Mersey District Planning Office it was the crowning moment following two years' dedication on the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

Manda was presented with her Gold Award on 29 March at a ceremony staged at St James Palace, London.

The impetus for her two year stint came after she had enjoyed Manweb's two weeks' Outward Bound course in Aberdovey.

To achieve her Gold Award in the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme, Manda had to undertake 12 months community service and 12 months on a skills programme. This involved serving in Wrexham Maelor Hospital's shop in the evenings and weekends, 15 weeks' hard physical training, a solo residential visit to Spain and a four day expedition in Snowdonia. As part of her skills programme she played Cinderella at Wrexham Little Theatre.

"It was all very valuable experience and so worthwhile," Manda enthused. "I would certainly recommend it to anyone especially if they like outdoor adventure."

Now it's all over, Manda is devoting most of her time to studying. She wants to be an electrical engineer with Manweb and sits her finals in June. After that it's back to action as she intends to carry on with aerobics, mountaineering, cycling, horse riding "and any other outdoor pursuit".

Keen to pass on any help or information regarding the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, Manda says she would be pleased to talk to any Manweb employee who may wish to contact her at Mid Mersey District, ext 2199.

Customer FOCUS

CREWE Customer Service Centre had a more than satisfied customer in the store recently.

He was Jonathan White, winner of an Amstrad satellite system, for his entry in a Manweb mail drop competition.

Jonathan is pictured receiving his prize from Manager David Hughes and Staff Customer Service Adviser Shelley Williams.



Debbie's day

WEDDING bells rang for Debbie Bannister, Security Systems Supervisor for Manweb Contracting Services in Wrexham, when she married Richard Williams at St Michael's church, Llanfynydd.

Debbie, who wore a dress of ivory satin with peach rosebuds and antique lace, carried a bouquet of dried roses. She and Richard, who is a Machine Operator for Sharp UK, spent their honeymoon in Tunisia and are now living in Llay.

