

HELP FOR ISLAND IN DIRE STRAITS

by Graeme Cooper

A tiny north Wales island is set to receive mains electricity for the first time, with the help of Manweb.

Ynys Gorad Goch, which will be used by the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme as a base for water sports and other outdoor pursuits, is situated in the middle of the Menai Straits, between Anglesey and the mainland.

The island is in a stretch of water known as the Swellies, between Menai Bridge and Britannia Bridge.

Although Ynys Gorad Goch has been inhabited since at least the Middle Ages, when it was used as a fishery centre, it has never had mains power or water.

The lack of these two essentials has meant that the Duke of Edinburgh Award organisers have been unable to put the island to its intended use as a residential adventure training base for able bodied and disabled young people.

Capacity

But all that is set to change and work is due to start to bring the island into the 21st century.

Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme co-ordinator Peter Betts said: "Having a power supply will allow us to use the island to its full capacity all year round.

"We couldn't take disabled people out there without power or water, but the mains connection will enable us to provide full facilities."

Duke of Edinburgh volunteers have built a slipway to improve boat access to the island, but the installation of a power supply will mean that vessels can be winched safely clear of the Menai tides, which rise and fall by 30 feet. This makes access impossible at certain times.

Connecting Ynys Gorad Goch to Manweb's network will involve laying approximately 740 metres of cable from Anglesey, including 200 metres of under water cable.

An 11kV to LV transformer will also

be installed on the island.

Caernarfon-based Connections Project Manager Arthur Rowlands explained how the job will be done.

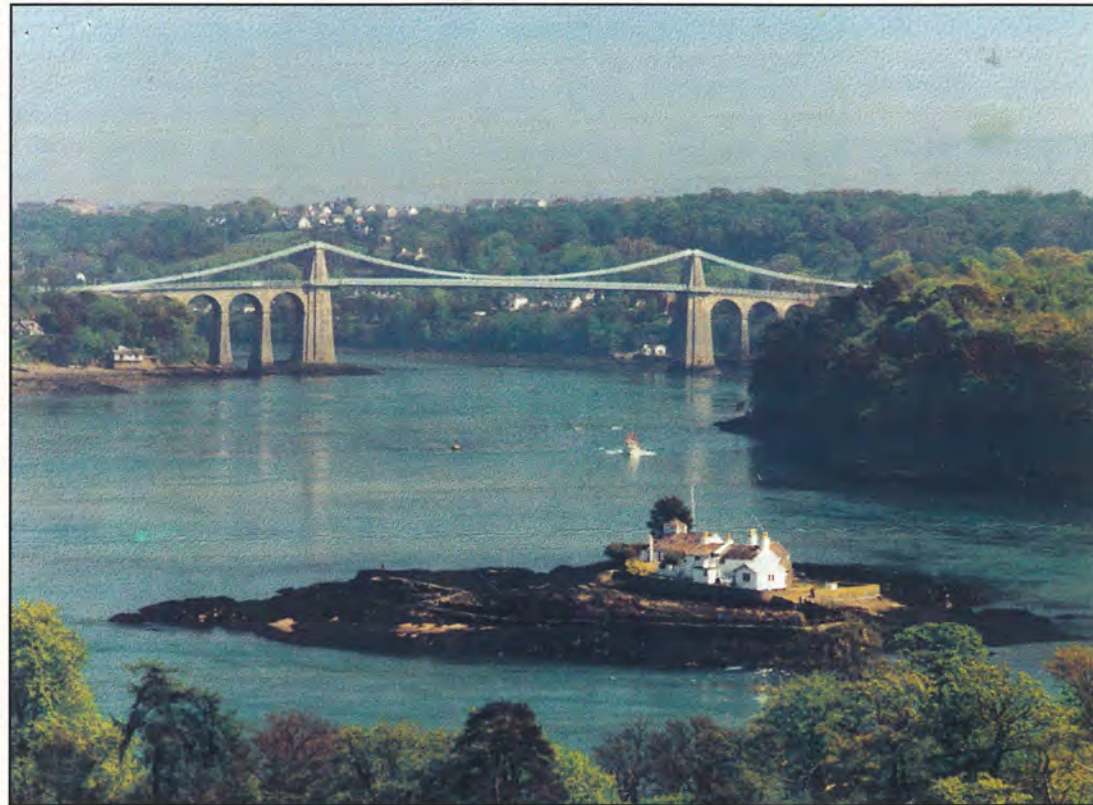
"We will need to joint the cable into the network on Anglesey, and will have to get the transformer across to the island.

"We'll be able to load it onto the boat without any trouble, and will crane it

off with lifting gear at the other end."

To help offset the costs of the connection, Duke of Edinburgh Award organisers are obtaining a length of special submarine cable.

They are also supplying the 'muscle power' from their own volunteers, to carry out jobs like trench excavation, with Manweb's support and guidance.



Ynys Gorad Goch - soon to receive a mains electricity supply.

Messing about on the river

Fancy a day or two with family and friends messing about on the River? Volunteers are needed to take part in a conservation weekend close to the River Mersey at Woolston, Warrington. The event starts on Friday, 11 October, 1996, and continues over the following two days.

Organised by the Mersey Basin Business Foundation, it follows on from a similar successful conservation event last year at the Dibbinsdale Nature Reserve on the Wirral. On that occasion various projects were completed, including a pond refurbishment, building dipping platforms, a floating bird island and a table with benches.

An equally interesting range of projects are being organised for this year by the Mersey Valley Partnership Rangers.

John Millett, Executive Director of the Mersey Basin Business Foundation, said: "The accent is on enjoyment and the work is not too strenuous. The Rangers will be on hand to give guidance and all materials will have been prepared."

If you are interested in participating, or wish to field a team to take part, please contact either Jackie Unsworth or Jan Cahill in Corporate Communications at Head Office, tel. 700 4106.

CONTACT

NEWSLETTER FOR MANWEB PEOPLE

SEPTEMBER 1996

MAKING OUR MARK

by Jackie Unsworth

Manweb will know next month if it has been successful in its bid to retain the Government's Charter Mark for excellence in customer service.

Earlier this month, Lord Blyth, Chairman of the Government's Charter Mark Advisory Panel, together with his assistant John Dobson, visited Manweb to carry out an audit of our customer service delivery.

We had been short-listed after successfully passing the written application stage of the process.

Lord Blyth, who arrived at Head Office by helicopter, met Chief Executive Charles Berry, Director, Distribution Operations Geoff Abel and Head of Customer Service Martyn Jones, for a discussion on customer service within Manweb.

The visitors then toured Chester Customer Service Centre, questioning staff and customers, and Manweb's regional office in Rhosyllen, where they met staff working in the Call Centre.

John Dobson then continued the assessment alone, going on to visit the Customer Service Centre in Wrexham, again talking to staff and customers.

Charles Berry said: "Everything went very smoothly, thanks to the enormous effort put in by our staff.

"The Charter Mark is a key business priority both for Manweb and ScottishPower in our strategy for the run-up to 1998, when we face full competition. Quality of service will be a crucial factor when customers are deciding who they want to supply their power, and potentially other utility services. By retaining our Charter Mark we can demonstrate very clearly that we are a company of the highest standard - the type of organisation people will want to come to in 1998 and giving us an excellent platform on which to build our business."

Manweb's re-application for the Charter Mark, which was first awarded in 1993, was co-ordinated by Community Relations



You're nicked!

Hello, hello, hello... What's going on here then? It was quite an arresting sight as Manweb's Finance Director Bob Green had his collar felt by the long arm of the law! But was it a fair cop? Turn to page 3 to find out.

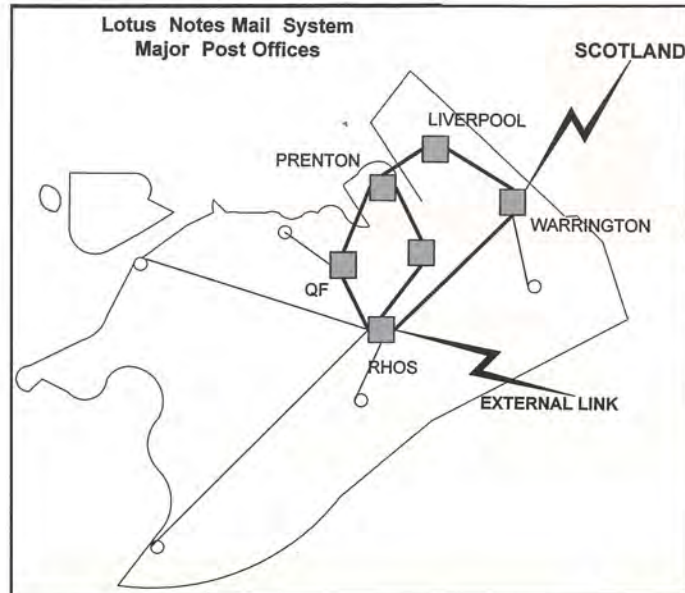
Manager John Kennedy, assisted by Community Relations Adviser Peter Simester.

They prepared the document which supported our re-application for the Charter Mark, providing evidence that Manweb met the set criteria.

Peter said: "The document was marked by two separate assessors, who decided that Manweb had fulfilled the customer service criteria and short-listed us. Lord Blyth's visit was to see first hand how we deliver customer service. Both Lord Blyth and John Dobson wanted to talk to a cross section of staff as well as service users to get a clear picture of our customer service."

He added: "A terrific amount of work, involving many staff in various locations, went on behind the scenes to prepare for Lord Blyth's visit."

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Time was when the main task demanded of an electronic mail system was to get a basic message from one computer to another as quickly as possible. But time - and information technology - have moved on, and at Manweb, users are now demanding E-mail communications that will transmit complex text and other PC-based information. Information Systems Project Leader Paul Murphy explains how Manweb's new Lotus Notes E-mail system will work.

E-MAIL LINK IS TESTED

Manweb's current electronic mail system - MVS Office Vision - was introduced in the '80s and has been very successful. Its mainframe-based design cannot, however, be adapted to provide the openness and functionality demanded by Manweb users in the '90s.

The late eighties and early nineties have seen a massive shift in information technology, with the introduction of the personal computer. More and more people are using sophisticated personal productivity packages such as the Lotus Smartsuite and the Microsoft equivalents.

Manweb's existing electronic mail system - Office Vision - was not designed to compete with these types of product. The result of the shift is that more and more of the documents created within Manweb are produced on a PC, not on the mainframe. A major difficulty with this approach occurs when the document needs transporting to other people, either internally within Manweb or ScottishPower, or, as is becoming more frequent, to external contacts. While Office Vision does provide a basic mechanism for file transfer, it is fairly primitive and has a number of significant drawbacks.

A compatible E-Mail infrastructure between ScottishPower and Manweb is essential for the exchange not only of simple messages, but also for the communication of more complex documents and information sources. Corporate electronic communications is seen as a key enabler for the whole business integration process.

Backbone

A solution was put before the Chief Executive's Committee aimed at not only supporting the current business requirements, but also providing a sustainable messaging infrastructure for the foreseeable future. The preferred solution was one based on using Lotus Notes as a 'mail backbone' and Lotus Notes: Mail as the desktop front-end.

The system will run on IBM RS 6000 servers based in Chester, Prenton, Liverpool, Warrington, Queensferry and Wrexham. These electronic 'post offices' will support the system throughout the company. Dedicated boxes will act as gateways to ScottishPower's CC Mail system and the outside world.

The needs of business users have been the driving force behind the project and to ensure these are fully met, a pilot implementation project is underway within Supply Finance. Information Systems is also working with representatives from each of Manweb's main business areas, who will play a key role in the implementation process. This will enable better co-ordination to be developed with the Property Transition project and also enable business user priorities to be anticipated and catered for.

Initial indications are that the Supply Finance staff testing Lotus Notes are impressed with the system's capabilities, despite some teething troubles. Finance and Management Reporting Analyst Linda Hinton said: "IS moved very quick to put things right. For example, we had some days when we couldn't send or receive messages, and initially the system worked very slowly. The big advantage is that PC documents can be attached to messages and sent easily through the system."

If everything goes to plan, the rest of Manweb should transfer to Lotus Notes later this year.

Commitment to energy efficiency

Local authorities and housing associations across the Manweb region could benefit to the tune of £500,000 through the company's 1996 Energy Efficiency Grant Scheme.

Under the programme, qualifying housing providers are being asked to submit energy saving projects for their electrically-heated properties.

The competition is particularly aimed at properties occupied by disabled or older people, and those on low incomes, and is part of a four year £5.5 million energy saving commitment from Manweb.

Charles Berry, Manweb's Chief Executive, commented: "This project underlines our commitment to extend our current schemes throughout the Manweb area and to build on our excellent working partnerships with key local organisations."



Chief Executive, Charles Berry

"The benefits of the successful energy efficiency bids will be substantial, not only for customers, but also for the environment."

Entries must be submitted to Manweb by 1 December 1996, with a target to complete each project by March 1998. The winners will be announced by March 1997.

BOB DOES TIME

By Jan Cahill
and
Jackie Unsworth

But it's all in a good cause

Manweb Finance Director Bob Green felt the long arm of the law when he was 'arrested' by Royal National Institute for the Blind Area Fundraiser Mark Roberts.

Bob was taking part in the RNIB's 'Jail em and Bail em' day to raise funds for much needed services and equipment for blind and partially sighted children in North Wales.

Staff watched in horror as Bob was nicked by the uniformed 'officer' at his desk in Head Office and led away in handcuffs to a secret location - later revealed as Northop Country Park Golf Club - where he was locked away with only his cell phone to keep him company.

Bob served his time well, using his mobile phone to call all his friends and colleagues at Manweb, ScottishPower and Southern Water.

RNIB had set a ransom of £250 for his safe return, however, being a financial wizard and good with numbers, Bob was confident he could double his money and persuade his pals to part with £500.

On this occasion, Bob's calculations were well below par, as his colleagues dug even deeper in their pockets than expected and forked out the grand total of £1,000.

Back in the office Bob's Secretary June Emmerson began a 'Free Bob' campaign, sending out an emergency electronic mail message on his behalf to various people she hoped would pay to get him back.

The note read: "HELP!!! I have been kidnapped by a gang of desperados...I am being held in a secret location in North Wales and will only be released if I can raise a ransom of at least £500.

"You must provide financial assistance so as to spring me from jail. Yours in desperation, Bob Green."

There were a few anxious moments when several of Bob's colleagues offered to pay extra to keep him behind bars!

June received a note from ScottishPower's Finance Director Ian Russell, who replied: "Bob, £25 to the RNIB if they let you go (and £1,000,000 if they'll keep you!)."

And David Jones, Managing Director of Information Systems, pledged £50 from his Division, saying: "Can you ask for a tenth of your body to be released immediately? You can decide which tenth!"

Other colleagues' comments included:



Help! Bob desperately tries to raise the ransom money, watched by RNIB 'policeman' Mark Roberts.

"I have put my cheque for £5 in the post to you but if you could possibly arrange for Bob to be detained until after the new budgets have been agreed later in the year, this would be extremely helpful."

"Wonderful news - no accountants! I'm happy to contribute £5 to the fund in the hope that they'll hang on to him a bit longer."

"Some say accountants ought to be kept locked up! Seriously though, we cannot really manage without them...the cheque is on its way."

"I have collected £10 in Finance. It will be more, I'm told, if they keep him."

None the worse for his ordeal, Bob later said: "I would like to thank my friends and colleagues for their generosity."

"The response was fantastic and the money they donated will provide badly needed equipment for blind and partially-sighted children."

Six managers from various local companies took part in the Jail em and Bail em day, between them raising a total of £4,000.

RNIB's Mark Roberts said: "We are overwhelmed by the response to our fund-raising appeal and would like to thank Bob for giving up his valuable time, and his colleagues for being so generous."

WINDFARM FIRST

ScottishPower has confirmed its position as the UK's leading wind generator with the opening of Scotland's first commercial windfarm. The 15 MegaWatt windfarm in Lanarkshire takes the company's portfolio of wind generation to 52.5 MW. It comprises 26 turbines, each with a capacity of 600 kW, producing enough power to meet the energy needs of a town of around 17,000 households.

ScottishPower is also owner of the first commercial windfarms in Northern Ireland and has a share of Europe's largest windfarm, at Penrhuddian and Lliidiartywaum in mid-Wales. The company also owns windfarms in Cornwall and Lancashire and has received planning permission for a 15 MW windfarm in Barnesmore, Co. Donegal.

MOVING FORWARD IN UPBEAT MERSEYSIDE

Whether you're a fan of cosmopolitan life or prefer gentle rolling farmland, you can find both in Merseyside Region.

With a rich agricultural belt on its northern and eastern fringes, there is certainly much more to Merseyside than the city of Liverpool, where Manweb's regional office is based.

Among the mix of homes, farms, shops, commercial premises and factories served by the region are the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company, glass manufacturers Pilkington, Liverpool and Everton football clubs, Aintree Racecourse, two cathedrals and Liverpool's Philharmonic Hall.

Although the region contains a wealth of variety, in geographical terms it is relatively compact: It accounts for about five per cent of the Manweb area but contains around 38 per cent of its customers.

In charge of the region is 'local lad' Bill Tubey, who says that the nature of the area helps make Merseyside a very efficient and customer focused operation.

"Because we are a fairly small and compact region, we can operate from a combined regional office and depot in Lister Drive. This means that we have a very

functional organisation. We don't need people based in a large number of places."

The region was created from all of Manweb's former Liverpool and North Mersey districts plus the Widnes and St Helens areas from Mid-Mersey district.

The hub of the operation is in Lister Drive, with depots in Southport and St Helens, but the work of the latter is scheduled to move to Liverpool in the near future.

"When St Helens was part of the old Mid-Mersey district there was a good case for having a depot there," said Bill.

"But Liverpool and St Helens are so close that we've found we can operate effectively in the town from Lister Drive and maintain customer service levels."

Creating a new Manweb region for Merseyside meant much more than simply adding additional areas onto the old Liverpool District, as GRAEME COOPER discovered when he met the man in charge, Bill Tubey. This is the final part in a series of features focusing on Distribution Operations.

Creating the new region wasn't simply a matter of adding on sections from old districts. Staffing issues had to be handled sensitively, ensuring the people were matched to appropriate jobs, while keeping in mind the personal concerns of employees, such as travel-to-work times.

"We had been through the process when North Mersey district was merged with Liverpool and we knew how sensitive these issues are," acknowledged Bill.

The region's 290 staff are drawn not just from Liverpool, North and Mid-Mersey, but from the former 132kV Central Field Unit in Prenton and from Head Office, so a priority for Bill was to integrate his people into a team. Appointing the right management team was a key part of this.

The management team consists of five section managers: **Operations Manager Jimmy Henderson, Construction Manager John Marsh, Maintenance Manager Steve Lloyd, Business Support Manager Shawn McGuinness and Finance Manager Nigel Jones.**

They are ably assisted by **Quality, Safety and Environmental Co-ordinator Chris Parker.**

"I was very keen to get everyone on board, to give them a common aim of running the region efficiently and meeting our customer service targets," says Bill.

"Straight away we had a huge sign-on to Merseyside Region, with everyone feeling they were part of the team."

Success

An early success for the region was its win in the area of safety, where Merseyside Region was joint winner of July's Safety First campaign.

Bill acknowledges that Merseyside and its predecessors shared Manweb's not always impressive safety record.

However, with the Safety First win and an eight week accident-free period during the summer, Bill is determined to keep up the progress and ensure his staff work safely.

The feeling of moving ahead in the region is emphasised by the extensive site redevelopment work going on at Lister Drive.

The old power generating station which housed the old Liverpool district office has gone, leaving a modern and comfortable working environment for staff.



Regional Manager Bill Tubey outside Manweb's Merseyside office in Lister Drive, Liverpool, where a former generating station has been demolished to make way for new business development.

Lister Drive's public reception area is also important: being located near Liverpool city centre, the office has a large number of customers calling in to discuss bills or buy meter cards. With this in mind, the reception area is roomy and features a children's play area.

Links with the local community are in evidence, with local schoolchildren's safety posters taking pride of place on the wall.

When the Lister Drive redevelopment is complete, the land freed by the demolition of the power station is due to become a light industry business park. This type of urban redevelopment scheme is characteristic of the regeneration taking place across Merseyside, which is good news for Manweb as well as the region.

In Liverpool city centre, Manweb is reinforcing power supplies to new retail and office developments, particularly around the Queen's Square area, while Liverpool University and Teaching Hospital, which each have their own combined heat and power generation, help secure power supplies to that part of the city centre. Should they wish to 'export' power to Manweb's network, this is also possible.

Other projects include a major supply installation for water treatment equipment at Sandon Dock on the Liverpool waterfront, connections changes to Pilkington's at St Helens, and a major substation refurbishment at the former Bold power station site.

There is a somewhat unusual scheme under way near Southport, where Bill's staff are connecting Norweb customers to the Manweb network.

"Our supplies in that area are more secure than Norweb's, so we'll actually supply Norweb as Second Tier customers," Bill explained.

Security of supply is something that Merseyside Region is very proud of. In part this is due to the fact that over 90 per cent of the network is underground,

so is not vulnerable to weather-related faults.

Another secret of the region's success is the high voltage interconnection of the Merseyside network. This allows supplies to be fed through alternative routes, so preventing high voltage faults causing losses of power.

But because Merseyside customers enjoy a very reliable power supply, their expectations are also high, and various projects are under way to ensure the system continues to perform well, and numbers of faults are reduced.

Modern

In Southport, old 6kV distribution systems are being upgraded to 11kV, while a £2.5 million programme of service refurbishment is rolling across the region, replacing old customer connections with modern cabling.

Work is also ongoing to upgrade connections to street lights in Liverpool - Merseyside Region operates a Service Level Agreement with Liverpool City Council to ensure problems are sorted out quickly.

Overall, Merseyside will spend somewhere in the region of £11 million on capital projects in 1996/97, and all this is in addition to carrying out the job of keeping power flowing through the system.

But it isn't all work and no play. Merseyside Region has excellent sporting facilities at Thingwall Road in Liverpool, and Bill has been quick to put these to use to help reinforce team spirit. The region has thriving cricket, football and pool teams. And, of course, Merseyside plays host to Manweb's ever-popular It's A Knockout competition. Also on the cards is a friendly against the ScottishPower football team, although a date has yet to be set.



New connections form an important part of Merseyside Region's work. Engineer Jim Powell (left) and Foreman Andy Skarratts are pictured outside a new substation constructed to serve the QVC television shopping channel's call centre in Kirkby.

Kids get the glove

There were smiles all round when Manweb provided a school holiday treat for disabled youngsters in Liverpool.

A donation to Spring Elm Activity Club paid for entertainment during the summer by Mrs Giggles the puppet-maker.

The Club caters for children with severe learning difficulties who attend The Elms School, Stockbridge Village, and physically disabled pupils at Springfield School, Kirkby.

Nigel Jones, Finance Manager at Manweb's Merseyside Regional Office, is pictured with Mrs Giggles and some of the youngsters at Springfield School.



13 HAZARDS AT HOME



1. **Clutter.** Falls are the most common cause of death or injury at home, so keep clutter off the floors and stairs. Watch out for trailing flexes or wrinkled carpets.
2. **Gas Fumes.** Faulty boilers, fires and cookers can produce poisonous carbon monoxide fumes, so ensure all gas appliances are serviced annually.
3. **Electrical Faults.** Around 30 people die at home each year from electrocution, and a further 200 from fires caused by an electrical fault. Residual current circuit breakers built into plugs and adaptors or fitted to the mains can save your life.
4. **DIY Dangers.** DIY accounts for about 180,000 accidents a year. Don't tackle jobs around the home unless you are sure you can do them. Treat sharp tools with respect and wear appropriate protective clothing or goggles.
5. **Medicines.** Keep all medicines in their original containers, locked away from children, and return any unused drugs to your pharmacist.
6. **Deep Frying Pan.** Many kitchen fires are caused by deep frying. Make sure the pan is only one third full of fat or oil and never leave unattended.
7. **Washing Machine.** Never leave unattended. You could return to a flood or even a fire caused by an electrical fault.
8. **Water.** Never use an electrical appliance in the bathroom, even if it is plugged in outside the room - water and electricity don't mix. The only exception is an electric shaver used with a permanent shaver socket.

9. **Chemicals.** Store flammable items such as petrol, oil and polish where they can't come into contact with direct heat or strong sunlight. In the garden, lock away chemicals such as weedkillers.
10. **Sockets.** Only use one plug per socket. Overloading can lead to overheating and cause a fire. Before going to bed, unplug all electrical appliances that are not designed to run continuously. Have your house wiring circuits tested every five years.
11. **Unlocked Windows.** About 16 per cent of all children's accidents involve falling from a height. Fit child resistant locks or guards to windows and never leave furniture underneath windows for children to climb on.
12. **Forgetting to Check Your Smoke Alarm.** There are about 55,000 house fires in Britain every year. Smoke alarms are cheap and easy to install, but should be kept clean, tested once a week and have their batteries changed annually.
13. **Microwave Leaks.** Radiation leaks are hazardous and can mean food isn't cooked properly, allowing bacteria to survive. Get old microwaves checked by a qualified engineer.

JANE HALL AND CHRIS PARKER

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Good health is good business

The week commencing 7 October 1996 has been designated European Week for Safety and Health at Work.

The aim of the week is to put the spotlight firmly on safety and emphasise the social and economic gains from a successful safety management system.

Various industries throughout the UK are running local seminars to promote safety in the workplace.

The catch phrase for the campaign is 'Good Health is Good Business'.

You may wonder how this fits in with the Manweb Safety First Campaign. Whilst we are not proposing any special events for the safety week, the goals are the same as those of Safety First - to manage safety in such a way that there are fewer accidents to staff.

Where Manweb leads, Europe appears to be following.

DAVE WILLIAMS



Cheshire Regional Manager John Hampson presents a microwave oven to Jan Hays, Clatterbridge Cancer Research Trust Appeals Manager. The appliance will be used in the Wirral-based Trust's molecular genetics laboratory for research purposes.