

# **Digital and Electronic Resources for Disabled People in Norfolk**

Report by the  
**Lord Mayor's New Horizon Fund**  
in association with  
**Research Plus+**

*'The power of the web is in its universality.  
Access by everyone regardless of their disability is an essential aspect.'*

*Tim Berners-Lee W3C Director & inventor of the World Wide Web*

Summer 2002

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- Mark Barton and Jenny Wilding, of Research Plus+, who collated and updated the information for us and prepared the initial draft of this report in the spring of 2001.

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Summer 2002

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# Section One

## Introduction

### 1.1 The context for the report

This report has been prepared by the Lord Mayor's New Horizons Fund, a Norfolk based charity. The Fund was established in 1981 and gives grants to people with disabilities to enable them to improve the quality of their lives. Many more of the requests are now for assistance with the purchase of electronics and computers. The Trustees have become increasingly concerned that there is a lack of connectedness between what is needed, what is available and what is recommended for use by people who have a disability.

In September 2000 the Lord Mayor's New Horizons Fund identified a number of unsatisfactory aspects of the present situation. These were:

- In the marketplace there may be a pressure to buy expensive equipment that does not provide the best solution
- Professionals find it hard to keep up with rapid technological change
- Feedback from equipment users does not sufficiently influence new design.
- There is a shortage of appropriately trained advisers to support disabled users in choosing and using ICT resources

A public consultation meeting of interested groups and individuals was held on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2000. Forty people attended the meeting and a smaller group attended a follow up meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2000. Invitees were requested to provide a written statement of how they or their members achieve assessment, provision of equipment and subsequent support. Some organisations provided information before the October meeting and some provided information soon after it

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 makes it unlawful for people who provide goods, facilities or services to the public to discriminate against disabled people. However it is less explicit regarding any overall legal framework to discriminate in favour of people with disabilities. In education the Disability Discrimination Act builds upon the 1993 Education Act, which aims to provide all pupils with special educational needs, including disabled pupils, with an education and school place appropriate to their needs. In employment the Disability Discrimination Act makes it unlawful for employers with 20 or more staff to discriminate against current or prospective employees with disabilities because of a reason relating to their disability.

The new Learning and Skills Council (LSC), operational since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2001, has a remit to respond to those who are excluded. It is welcome news that one of the early initiatives by the Council should be the setting up of the 'Distributed and e-learning Group' under Professor Bob Fryer. It is hoped that with its wide remit this Committee will be able to take particular account of the needs of learners with disabilities and build on the important earlier work of the FEFC's<sup>1</sup> Tomlinson Committee.

The Norfolk Learning and Skills Council has as its Director, John Brierley, without whose help this report could not have been produced. His help is acknowledged here with gratitude.

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<sup>1</sup> FEFC - The functions of the **Further Education Funding Council** for England are incorporated in the national LSC, which has 47 local arms.

## **1.2 Aim of the report**

The aim of the present report is to provide an overview or position statement on digital and electronic resources for disabled people in Norfolk based on information collected by the Lord Mayor's New Horizons Fund during 2000/2001.

## **1.3 Information used in the report**

The report is based on information collected by the Lord Mayor's New Horizons Fund during 2000/2001. This includes:

- Minutes of the public consultation meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2000
- Position statement prepared for the public consultation meeting
- Position statements provided by various local and national organisations in relation to issues raised as part of the public consultation.
- Agenda for the first project meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2000

Additional information was sought through:

- Telephone calls to some of the organisations already contacted and three new ones:
  - Anglia Disability Services Team, Employment Services
  - Electronic Aids for the Blind
  - Children's Services, Occupational Therapy, Norwich Community Health Partnership (now part of the Norwich Primary Care Trust)
  - IT Genie
  - Norfolk Psychological Service
  - Norfolk Library and Information Service
  - Norfolk Social Services Sensory Support Unit
  - Norfolk Education Sensory Support Services
  - Recycle – IT! Ltd.
- Internet searches of a number of national and local websites:
  - AbilityNet
  - ACE Centre
  - Aidis Trust
  - Assist Trust
  - IBM
  - NORCI
  - Possum Controls Ltd.

## **1.4 Definition of Terms**

Based on their recent experience of dealing with applications, it is suggested by the Fund's Trustees that there is a need to deal with a range of matters regarding the provision and use of ICT facilities by people with disabilities.

These may be categorised as follows: -

- basic computer - speed & memory requirements for intended applications
- basic input/output devices
- more sophisticated peripherals
- dedicated systems which utilise PC format to process information
- PC as basis for dedicated personal system
- other electronics as basis for dedicated personal system - e.g. intelligent prostheses
- generic software - systems/programmes

- specific software - user applications
- generic education/training software
- specific &/or specialist education/training software
- communications technology & related volume & speed issues
- fully developed systems of information & learning technology ILT with dedicated or customised learning programmes to meet individual learning needs
- access to accreditation & formal assessment of computer generated/originated course work etc.

### **1.5 The scope of the report**

Section Two of the report provides an overview of the needs of people with disabilities in relation to using digital and electronic resources and the resources that are currently available. Section Three draws these together and presents various proposals for the way forward.

A summary of the information provided by each organisation is provided in Appendix 3 and contact details are provided in Appendix 4.

## **Section Two**

### **Needs and Resources**

Particular needs identified were for information, advice and assessment, training and computer support and access to affordable equipment. The organisations contacted identified a variety of resources, which are available locally, regionally and nationally. These are discussed below. For further details on information provided by the organisations see Appendix 3.

#### **Information, advice and assessment**

People require information, advice and assessment in a number of settings or contexts:

- The home
- School
- Further and higher education
- Work
- Leisure.

Local resources that were identified as providing information, advice and assessment services include:

- Anglia Disability Services Team, Employment Services
- Assist Trust
- Norwich City College
- Occupational Therapy Service (adults), Norwich Community Health Partnership (now part of the Norwich Primary Care Trust)
- School Psychological Service
- Sensory Support Services, Norfolk Education
- Sensory Support Unit, Norfolk Social Services
- University of East Anglia, Student Support Services
- Various commercial suppliers.

Each of the above organisations provides assessments for particular groups of people and in some cases they need to refer people to more specialist assessment organisations outside Norfolk. The main sources of information, advice and assessment outside Norfolk that were mentioned were:

- AbilityNet
- Ace Centre
- Aidis Trust
- Computability Centre
- Communication Matters
- National RNIB (Royal National Institute for the Blind).

Where these organisations do make a charge or the client has to travel outside Norfolk, not everyone can afford such expense. Some forms of assessment can be very expensive.

### **Information, advice and assessment for children**

The Occupational Therapy services for children confirmed that there is unmet need - there is a lack of specialist staffing and equipment for children with learning disabilities needing computers at home and at school. The Occupational Therapy service does not have the resources or skills to assess children and they often have to recommend that children are assessed by a national organisation at great expense. Their recommendations are therefore not always taken up.

Occupational Therapy (children's services) identified the need for a centre where assessments can take place. A group initiated by Occupational Therapy and the Norfolk Psychological Service is now looking at how the assessment process for children with learning disabilities in schools who need a computer can be improved. Members include the education authority, sensory support services, pupil support services and health. This group recognises that there are limited facilities in Norfolk for the ongoing assessment of children's needs for specialist equipment to enable them to use ICT (Information and Communications Technology).

Occupational Therapy (children's services) identified issues related to provision of IT and adapted access to children with disabilities within mainstream school:

- Need for specialist skills
- Need to keep up to date with technological change
- Need for equipment to be available to try out
- Need for training of users and carers.

They suggested that the proposed steering group work towards providing:

- A database of local contacts and resources
- A centre to provide ongoing support and information on resources
- This centre to be able to provide assessment of children's needs
- This centre to include hardware, software, technical know how, training for all involved, co-ordinated database, trained assessors (users, therapists).

The Norfolk Psychological Service provided an update on developments for this report. The service is currently (May 2001) establishing a team of six staff across the county to undertake assessments of school pupils, provide ongoing support to teachers, pupils and parents and carry out reviews. This means that all except those with the most severe disabilities will be able to be assessed within the county.

For school pupils with hearing and visual impairments the Norfolk Education Sensory Support Service carries out assessments. If required, the national RNIB (Royal National Institute for the Blind) also carries out assessments for a charge.

## **Information, advice and assessment for young people and adults**

Within further and higher education:

- The Disability Co-ordinator at the University of East Anglia is able to assess students' needs and advise them on specialist equipment. The students can purchase their own basic computer equipment at a discounted price through the university's IT and Computing Centre 'shop' and receive training and support.
- Norwich City College has four members of staff with special responsibility for students and prospective students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The College has some specialist equipment and a wide range of information technology aids to help students.
- Other colleges may provide similar resources, which have not been researched for this report.

The Assist Trust carries out assessments of the need for training of their members and make recommendations on suitable hardware and/or software.

### **Assessing the quality of advice & assessment services**

The quality of the advice and assessment services described cannot be judged against any set standards. The range of needs is extremely wide, the technical complexity and rapid change in the computing resources and the end uses to which individuals will put the equipment are almost limitless. There may be a case for a nationally accredited scheme for people outside HE who undertake this work.

### **Computer training and support**

People need training in how to set up and use computers in general and training in how to use specialist equipment and software. Obviously specialist training is needed for specialist equipment and software. Beyond this Create, an arts project working with people with disabilities, emphasised the need for most disabled people to be able to avail themselves of the computer training available within the community. Organisations that were mentioned that provide computer training and support for people with disabilities in Norfolk were:

- Assist Trust
- Broadland Training Services
- Karten CTEC Centres run by NORCI
- Norfolk Adult Education Service
- Norwich City College
- Sensory Support Unit, Norfolk Social Services
- University of East Anglia
- Vauxhall Centre.

Four regional and national organisations that provide computer training and support for people with disabilities were identified:

- AbilityNet
- Ace Centre
- Aidis Trust
- Karten CTEC Centres.

### **Affordable equipment**

Many people, especially those on benefits, cannot personally afford computer equipment and/or the special software / adaptations they require nor the cost of internet access. Sometimes the care provider will purchase the equipment but most often people need to apply to charitable organisations for financial assistance. Organisations that loan or provide computer and related equipment include:

- Aidis Trust
- IBM
- IT Genie
- Norwich City College – for their students
- Possum Products
- Recycle – IT! Ltd.
- REMAP
- University of East Anglia, IT and Computing Centre ‘shop’ – for their students.
- ViSiCast.

Electronic Aids for the Blind provide funding for computer and related equipment. However they reported that this is becoming increasingly difficult as charities are switching to funding group based computer training courses rather than individual purchases.

REMAP identified four possible approaches:

1. Fund a pool of machines to be loaned to clients for say 1 year, for free or for a minimal rent. After the specified time the client encouraged to buy own equipment?
2. Possible project to develop a voice activated input for other than word processing?
3. Identify / set up instructional / support structure
4. Identify a procurement structure to ensure the benefits of bulk purchase are realised.

Recycle–IT! Ltd have recently opened a satellite in Kings Lynn to collect redundant computer equipment from Norfolk based companies and recycle it back to the community. They also plan to offer in house training service and a delivery, installation and training package, supported by other Norfolk groups, to people in their homes. They are working in association with IT Genie.

Remploy are in discussion with a potential partner to investigate setting up a joint venture to refurbish redundant or replaced computer equipment from large corporations. The potential partner provides new equipment and installations. The refurbished equipment would be suitable for home or school use.

The Aidis Trust assesses clients and provides appropriate equipment and undertakes fundraising when necessary.

## **Development of new equipment**

The organisations that provided information to the Lord Mayor's New Horizons Fund did not particularly discuss the potential in Norfolk for developing new equipment. The OT service (adults) is keen to develop using switches to control equipment or the environment. Possum Controls Ltd. and the Aidis Trust supply and provide this type of specialist equipment.

The limited application of intelligent components in systems designed for use by people with disabilities limits their effectiveness. Whether it is a voice-activated interface on a computer or a neuro-sensory controlled prosthesis<sup>2</sup> there are undoubtedly new developments available now but prohibitively priced. There is also great potential for harnessing the converging technologies to create new products and services. The best way to bring benefits from such initiatives to the County may be for the research and development to be undertaken in Norfolk. The UEA School of Information Systems has for instance established 'SYS', a company which will undertake innovative activities. It already has experience in developing the computer generated signing avata for use with video by people with a hearing deficit.

'Just Vanilla', another local company which was represented at the October 2000 meeting has subsequently released its software which allows the person with a disability to customise the user-interface of a computer in ways which make it easier to manage.

'New Scientist' recently reported<sup>3</sup> on a development in USA between a major motor manufacturer and a mobility organisation of a smart, self-balancing, telescopic 'wheel-chair'.

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<sup>2</sup> Guardian; Tomorrow's World, NHS Innovations, June 2001

Prodigitis is a partnership that wants to get a better grip on things. It makes electrically powered mechanical hands, with a separately powered finger & thumb, that can be fitted through a silicon sleeve on the wrist.

<sup>3</sup> New Scientist; Features, 'Access All Areas', 26 August 2000

## Section Three

### Discussion and Proposals

#### **Information, advice and assessments**

There is clearly a need for more sharing of information both between professionals and particularly with disabled people and their carers. Bringing individuals and groups into contact with each other would be one valuable service that does not seem to be happening to the fullest extent as yet. There appears to be a great deal going on in Norfolk especially Norwich. There is a need to ensure that services are known throughout the city and county.

Provision of information is a worthwhile activity. This is the Information Age and information can be relatively easily updated and disseminated through a website, providing that appropriate software for those with the most severe disabilities and sensory impairments is built in from the outset. Contact could be made with local website hosts and designers to see what is available at a reduced rate for charities.

This website could then be marketed widely to local statutory and voluntary organisations. However this will only work in a way that empowers people with disabilities if they have some control over the deployment. Many disability organisations have a website and some of them have particularly good links sections e.g. ACE Centre and Aidis Trust. Local organisations could obtain reciprocal links on their websites with local and national organisations. Other interested organisations could also join Communications Matters.

**Proposal One:** It is proposed that a local website on digital and electronic resources for disabled people is developed. This could be part of an existing website for people with disabilities if there is an appropriate one.

The new team being developed within the Norfolk Psychological Service should be able to provide local assessments for all school students except those with the most severe and multiple difficulties, who will still need to be assessed by specialist centres outside the county. The Assist Trust carry out assessments of their own members and they would be willing to discuss providing assessments to other people with learning disabilities.

It should be remembered that providing services to children is a whole family affair. A full range of support in the use of the technology must be available to parents & siblings if such resources are to be really effective.

**Proposal Two:** It is proposed that the people who currently provide assessments in Norfolk, together with people they have previously advised, meet to discuss ways of increasing assessment facilities in Norfolk.

Occupational Therapy (children's services) identified the need for a centre where assessments can take place. There may now be less need for a centre for assessments, but a centre that provides information and support and where people can discuss and try out the range of different equipment that is available would be welcomed by many local people. It could also act as a showcase for equipment manufacturers and specialist national services. Communications Matters can provide assistance with organising a roadshow of manufacturers in Norfolk. This would enable the potential purchasers, the organisations who can advise them and the suppliers to come together and obtain the most appropriate equipment for the individual.

**Proposal Three:** It is proposed that a representative group considers setting up an information and support centre on digital and electronic resources for disabled people. A number of local organisations already provide information to disabled people, e.g. the Norfolk Disability Information Service. It would be beneficial to liaise with them and to work with local disability groups on this project.

**Proposal Four:** It is proposed that training providers across Norfolk are encouraged to ensure that they are accessible, welcoming to people with disabilities and competent to assist them.

There may also be a need for more training provision in the use of specialist equipment.

### **Computer training and support**

There are numerous free and low cost computer training courses available in Norfolk and a number of innovative schemes to reach particular groups, e.g. CyberWoman, e.g. Cybercity. In June 2000 consultants Research Plus+ identified sixteen providers of general computer training/support in Norwich alone. The challenge for the providers is to ensure that they are accessible and welcoming to people with disabilities and that they have the facilities and staff to meet their needs. Organisations with experience of providing training for people with disabilities may be willing to provide advice and information to other training providers.

### **Affordable equipment**

**Proposal Five:** It is proposed that organisations already providing access to reduced price computer and related equipment and other interested parties (Recycle-IT! Ltd, IT Genie, Remploy etc.) meet together to discuss ways of expanding the provision of affordable equipment in Norfolk.

### **An e-enabled strategy?**

There may now be a strong case for new systems with built in adaptations to be specified by Government as a requirement in various national schemes. A strong case can now be made from the e-government, e-learning and e-commerce initiatives to work towards an e-enabled strategy. This would be fully funded from national resources as an element in the social inclusion agenda.

### **A role for the Learning & Skills Council?**

There will be new resources directed to meeting the needs of people with disabilities and since information and learning technologies are high on their list of priorities, this report is in part directed to them. It is hoped that they will find it useful in supporting decision making in the whole area of learning support, ILT and specialist provision for people with a wide range of disabilities. They will need to be mindful of the needs of learners in an ageing population for access to appropriate technologies. It would seem essential that, in conjunction with the CONNEXIONS programme, the schools and post-school education and training providers coordinate their advice and funding to best meet the needs of individuals through the period of transition to adult life.

### **Affordable Software and Connectivity**

Software can rapidly go out of date and leaves users no longer able to communicate. Any future schemes need to be proofed against such vagaries.

**Development of new products and services**

Although there are many manufacturers of products and companies that can adapt these existing products, more precise definition of need and opportunity may lead to important developments in Norfolk, especially with the synergy which comes from the new hospital, the Forum and single point of access initiatives

# Appendix 1

## **Digital and Electronic Resources for Disabled People in Norfolk** September 2000 Position Paper

Prepared by Bernard Godding, Chairman, The Lord Mayor's New Horizons Fund, Norwich

Norfolk, with a strong voluntary sector and a culture of innovation, is well placed to establish itself as a centre of excellence in the field of applying ICT & electronics to meeting the needs of people with disabilities.

The new medical school at the University is a potential catalyst for this development since it co-locates with other significant but so far uncoordinated resources such as the new Millennium Library and related Telematics resources. These proposals also come at a time when there are concerns regarding the way in which NHS resources are currently being used to support people living in the community. This has identified the need for greater co-ordination between health, social services and the voluntary sector.

The range of needs that would be better met with improved co-ordination include those concerned with education at all stages. Where hardware, interfaces, software on the one hand and training on the other currently fail to meet users real needs individuals and agencies could all benefit from greater integration.

Electronic Advice & Guidance is developing at a national level and the Norfolk Deaf Association's work on integrating sign language with video is an important development. Other work on automated signing is taking place in Essex. However ideas for the development of new technical solutions to disability issues can take a long time to get to the market place, despite their potential for world-wide applicability.

The benefits to Norfolk of local organisations giving backing to such an initiative are great. Forming a critical mass of researchers, developers and facilitators together with a demonstration site and one-stop advice and information base will be good for the people and good for Norfolk businesses. It will mean that the most skilled and innovative practitioners will be gathered to pool their expertise and develop new products that have potential in world markets.

These include environmental, signalling, lifting and handling facilities on the hardware front. In terms of software there are a range of niche markets that may not have been fully explored and which might translate readily to meeting the needs of the wider non-disabled community.

So far Norwich and Norfolk have lagged behind in this field. There is no specialist staffing for special needs ICT assessment for children of school age and unlike other areas, the County has no ICT Access Centre for those embarking on full-time FE & HE courses.

Outside the straight-forwardly commercial field, there is a mixture of organisations offering advice and guidance on the selection and use of ICT systems. However there does not appear to be any systematic, accredited training for the practitioners and there is no 'kite-marking' for the services provided.

Bodies such as Remap may well be producing one-off technical solutions involving advanced design and engineering that have the potential for further development, testing and marketing that could be sponsored through an effective partnership model.

The Lord Mayor's New Horizons Fund does not claim a great expertise in these fields. It does however have a 20-year grant giving history in the County. These proposals arise in large measure from Trustees of the Fund investigating bids and advising applicants in pursuit of its grant giving activities.

It is clear to us that the future for public funding will be with organisations that are user driven and these proposals are for a transparent, inclusive approach to increasing the availability of equipment. In putting them forward the intention is to improve the match between existing and/or newly developed resources and the needs of individuals which are to be met.

## **Appendix 2**

### **Lord Mayor's New Horizons Fund Public Consultation Meeting**

#### **Digital and Electronic Resources for Disabled People in Norfolk – Consultation**

Minutes of Meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> October 2000 5.00 p.m. to 8 p.m.

#### **WELCOME**

The Lord Mayor, Councillor Ron Borrett, opened the meeting and explained that a former Lord Mayor of Norwich, Councillor Eric Hartley, had used the proceeds of one of the first modern Lord Mayor's processions to establish the Lord Mayor's New Horizons Fund. The Lord Mayor paid tribute to Bernard Godding, the Chairman of the New Horizons Fund and Peter Kinchen, who had worked hard to set up this meeting and get it organised. He also thanked everybody for attending the meeting, especially the speakers who had travelled from Warwick and Dorset. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity to air specific concerns regarding the lack of access of those people in Norfolk, who have some form of disability, to the range of new and emerging technical solutions that may make a real difference to their quality of life. In addition, there is a great need for better co-ordination and additional training to bring the fruits of these developing technologies more rapidly to those in the County who might most benefit from them. He said he hoped that it would be a successful meeting and that progress could be made which would benefit disabled people in this area.

The Chairman thanked the Lord Mayor for his hospitality. He explained that the New Horizons Fund had received little further funding since 1981. Over the 20 years of its existence, the Trust had never employed any paid staff. However, the Trustees of the Fund had a 20 year history of grant giving in the County and experience of investigating bids and advising applicants in pursuit of its grant giving activities. He referred to the briefing note which had been circulated with the Agenda for the meeting and said that at this point in time the Trust wanted to establish a forward agenda.

(The Lord Mayor left the meeting at this point).

## **PRESENTATION ON ABILITYNET BY JOHN MAITLAND**

John Maitland said that AbilityNet was formed as a Charity in 1998 to provide assistance for disabled people and advice on computer technology. This had developed out of initiative from the marketing department of IBM in the 1980's to provide a Support Group for their products, such as the "talking terminals" aimed at people with visual impairments. An independent charity had been formed to fill a gap in the Support Service to provide information on a whole range of products and had been successful in disassociating itself from IBM and its products. AbilityNet provided information on enquiries about personal computer systems and possible adaptations. The key to the service was the one-to-one assessment of individuals, which was the focus of most of its resources. The Charity had grown and provided a free telephone advice service to individuals and organisations. There were increasingly more Contractors providing services to the public sector requesting information on computer systems for the disabled. AbilityNet had eight centres in different locations throughout the United Kingdom which included Warwick, Malvern, West Byfleet, Reading, Edinburgh, Liverpool, York and Central London. Its strength was that it used premises at existing businesses and organisations such as Hewlett Packard at Edinburgh and Microsoft at Reading. Forty people were employed by the Charity. It was funded by charitable donations, corporate sponsorship and by selling its services. This year there had been 15,000 telephone calls, and 2,000 visits. In addition, AbilityNet workers had given presentations on the facilities available at various Conferences and Seminars. A free Information Pack could be obtained on 0800 269545.

The Chairman thanked John Maitland for his report and said that he hoped that there could be an AbilityNet centre in Norfolk unless mobile provision would be more suitable for such a rural community.

## **AIDIS TRUST**

Philip Ross explained that the Aidis Trust had started in Shillingstone in Dorset, 25 years ago and was now a national charity throughout the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland. His first contact with Bernard Godding and the Lord Mayor's New Horizons Fund had been to help provide equipment for a child. The Aidis Trust had also collaborated on projects with the Access Trust, the "Children Today Charity" in South Manchester, speech therapists in Suffolk and had administered the provision of IT to disabled people in the Colchester area and North East Essex. The Trust provided 50% match-funding and set up equipment in people's homes. It had a narrow target base and did considerable amount of work with SCOPE. It was important to provide clients with a good basic service. The Aidis Trust would be providing an advisory role to the Government in its "Computer In Reach" Scheme. He advised people working in the field to attend the "Communications Matter" Conference. This would provide an opportunity for people to meet with other interested individuals. He felt that the way forward would be to look outside the county for a partner if necessary but to ensure that whoever was involved could meet the core service provision.

Bernard Godding said that not only was technology changing but the map of funding was also changing. It was difficult for practitioners in one field, such as Further Education, to keep track of all the changes. It seemed especially difficult to provide a

service for a disabled child in an ordinary school. It was important to provide a seamless service so that individuals could access funding and advice as necessary. He said that he recognised the valuable work of the AbilityNet and Aidis Trust and thanked the two guest contributors, John Maitland and Philip Ross.

## DISCUSSION GROUPS – IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES AND POTENTIAL SOURCES OF SUPPORT, FUNDING, ETC.

The Chairman suggested that the meeting broke up into three groups for further discussion as follows:

- (a) computer hardware, peripherals and devices
- (b) computer software, support and training
- (c) applications of electronics in education, training, access, mobility and daily living

He suggested that each group appointed a convenor and a note taker. The notes of each meeting would be considered by the Planning Group once it was established.

John Child of the Norfolk and Norwich Organisation for the Blind said that his organisation provided resources for the delivery of technology to individuals and suggested that it would be important for individuals to share information about their organisations and groups. The Chairman suggested that this dialogue could be conducted in the groups. Peter Kinchen reminded the meeting that there was an invitation with the position paper for individuals to fill in about their organisations and groups that could be part of a fact finding and information-sharing project. He had already received a number of contributions that would be useful in further discussions. The Chairman said that he had spoken to a representative of the Careers Service who had said that one important feature of the meeting would be to establish a mapping exercise which could be conducted following the meeting.

Barbara James, of the Trades Council, said that she had experience of working with the physically disabled for 20 years. She said she felt very uncomfortable in a room where people who used wheelchairs were unable to take-part as they had to sit at the back. The Chairman responded by saying that the Council Chamber had been kindly made available by the Lord Mayor and that one of the reasons why the group would break up into smaller groups was for the full participation of all attendees. Councillor Bradford pointed out that the implementation of the microphone system was an important feature of the Council Chamber. There were no acoustical set ups except for loop systems in the Committee Rooms. Unfortunately, the Council Chamber was a legacy of the past when access requirements were not so widely recognised but he personally made effective use of the facilities.

Neil Howard, Chair of Norwich Access Group and employed by Norfolk County Council Social Services, said that it would be very important to receive the names and telephone numbers and addresses of people attending the meeting with a short paragraph of what the organisation does and provides. The Chairman said that he had received the offer of a web page as a resource and there would need to be further discussion about the maintenance of it.

Pat Ramsey said that she was the co-ordinator for the disabled at the University of East Anglia and referred to the position paper which had been circulated prior to the

meeting. She said that it would be important to note that the Medical School at the University of East Anglia should not be considered as a centre of operations for the project. The Chairman said that the University of East Anglia was a large resource which should be encouraged to join in with local affairs. Councillor Bradford said that disability was not a medical problem but a community issue. It was important that equipment was affordable and accessible to all people who required them. The Chairman thanked members for their views.

(The meeting then split into three groups and reconvened).

## PLENARY SESSION – FEEDBACK FROM GROUPS AND AGENDA FOR ACTION

### **Computer Software, Support and Training**

The speaker for the Computer Software, Support and Training Group said that there needed to be a compact between the private and public sectors with voluntary organisations to provide a single point of IT expertise in Norfolk. Organisations needed to be able to feed into an IT link to acquire information on equipment, aids and facilities for and by disabled people. Need should be put before funding. From the speaker's experience funding often created need. He referred to a social model of disability whereby training should be provided by people who were disabled themselves in Schools and Colleges for example.

The Chairman said that the Learning Skills Council had a clear remit to respond to those who are excluded. In this respect it made sense that people with disabilities should be empowered to become trainers themselves. This model was also employed for social inclusion in other communities to provide a self-generated group to meet locally identified needs.

### **Computer Hardware, Peripherals and Devices**

The speaker for this group, Councillor Bradford, said that it would be useful to produce and circulate a list of everyone who had attended the meeting and what service they could provide. The conclusion of their group was that there was a lack of connection between abilities and skills. An example had been given to the group of a young child with educational needs requiring computer technology not receiving this because of a backlog in assessments of needs. There had been a debate about second-hand computers and teaching people to use them. There was no point in separating software and hardware in defining what people could do and once a demand was created it should be possible to satisfy it by developing the supply. There needed to be a connection between the build-up of resources for Norfolk. Communication was the key word. It was important to create a directory of contact and provide a focal group which would be of service to everybody.

Neil Howard suggested that the tools should be in place to help provide individuals with the access to funding to enable them to purchase equipment.

## **Applications of Electronics in Education, Training, Access, Mobility and Daily Living**

Councillor Hartley was the spokesperson for this group. She said it was difficult to define need if it was not possible to recognise potential. People who become disabled later in life found it difficult to tap into information available for their disability. There was a need for better sign-posting to individuals to find the source of information. People who were employed with practical skills to help individuals should not spend their time looking for resources. People of all ages have needs and it should be recognised that Information Technology does not have all the answers. There were issues about clients feeding back their views about what was provided. There also should be a minimum level of provision. It was difficult to fund schemes especially when organisations could only commit funding for short periods which made it difficult to obtain a long term view of sustainable funding. There had been discussion about resources and who should decide what technology should be brought in and who would provide funding and support services. There was a difference between service provision and “Living Aids” and one providing the technology. Should the two be provided together? People in need of assistance also require personal contact. Reliance on technology could lessen this contact and this raises the question of what happens if the technology breaks down or fails in any way.

### MEETING CLOSES

The Chairman said that the meeting had looked through the four issues provided on the discussion paper and that he had been pleased with the intensity of the discussion engaged within each group. It had become clear that it was the wish and intention of those present to develop a county-wide strategy to embrace the issues. There had been talk about increasing communication and providing a mapping exercise to identify services and organisations throughout the county. It was necessary to have a well informed User Group with knowledge about the available technology and where it could be obtained. John Child said that his organisation organised exhibitions from commercial organisations which were used to demonstrate their expertise and the equipment available. He said that they were successful in contacting people through Braille newsletters, audio tapes and large print newsletters and through people working in the community bringing people into the resource centres.

The Chairman asked for a show of hands which suggested that a lot of organisations needed to know where good quality information was provided which could be usefully collated through a mapping model. During discussion it was suggested that although small User Groups may be well informed the difficulty was informing other people outside these groups. One representative of a Deaf Awareness Group said that the new technology was so advanced that people were frightened of the technology and this needed to be overcome. Another agency representative suggested that as many people who had been provided with voice-activated software were not happy with it as those who were happy to use it. There was a difficulty of informing people and assessing them. It was suggested that training provided the key to access to IT in a way that was not frightening for the individual. The Chairman referred to Education Minister, Margaret Hodge, who had stated that Government policy was to help parents to train and support their children outside the classroom.

John Maitland of AbilityNet suggested that a simple base for an initial enquiry should be the next step to address the problem.

During discussion it was suggested that there was a role for the Lord Mayor's New Horizons Fund to take forward strategic thinking in an organised and co-ordinated way to:-

- provide information on what was available and who was providing which service
- also attract funding as the Lord Mayor, the Patron of the Trust, provided a focal point for Norfolk.

The Chairman said that the Trustees were themselves not a strong group but could act as a resource which could be the catalyst for collectively forwarding the agenda. The New Horizons Fund had always been inclusive. He asked for organisations to provide six months of commitment until the end of the financial year to develop a business plan for 2001/2002. Organisations could provide a small amount of money or time or help in kind such as providing a web site space. In particular, he acknowledged the assistance of Peter Kinchen in bringing about this meeting. He pointed out that the Lord Mayor was not an active participant but a tremendous Patron and thanked the Council Officers for their assistance.

AGREED to –

- (1) Form a group of people to provide a business case for 2001/2002;
- (2) Arrange to hold a brainstorming session on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November at 6 p.m. in a Committee Room, City Hall.

## Appendix 3

# Notes from organisations' position statements, phone calls and websites

## 1. Norfolk Statutory Organisations

### **Anglia Disability Services Team, Employment Services** (phone call)

Works with unemployed people and their employers / potential employers. The 'Access to Work Scheme' looks at potential problems in the workplace and can help people through the provision of a support worker or specialised equipment, including computer equipment. Employers can reclaim the purchase cost.

Employment Services can also help arrange training courses in computing for unemployed people with disabilities through their normal channels. Training organisations that are contracted with the Employment Services to provide this training can apply for extra funding to provide specialist equipment if required.

### **Norfolk Libraries and Information Service** (written information and phone call)

The Norfolk Libraries and Information Service wish to extend the provision of assistive technology within its 50 public libraries across the county including 'The Forum', the new central library in Norwich. The 'People's Network' bid will provide additional IT facilities in all libraries in Norfolk and will include some assistive technology. This should be available in the Forum the new central library in Norwich.

### **Norfolk Psychological Service** (phone call)

The Norfolk Psychological Service works closely with Occupational Therapy services for children. Cate Hidden, Occupational Therapy service for children focuses on physical needs and Anna James, Computer Aided Learning Co-ordinator, Norfolk Psychological Service focuses on software requirements.

Anna James, is developing a team of six people across the county who can provide assessments, advice and support. The team of part time people will work with children with severe and multiple disabilities, who, without technological assistance, would have extremely limited access to learning. The new team will mean that fewer children will have to go outside the county to be assessed. As well as making assessments the team will be able to provide ongoing support to parents and children, review their needs and make adjustments. The referral criteria have been established and the project is at the training stage. The existing educational psychology school support teams make regular visits to schools (every term) and can identify need for referral to the new team.

It is hoped that the new team will meet the IT needs of children in school. However there is still a need for a centre where parents, children and teachers can see what is available and can try it out – a showcase providing 'hands on' experience, support and the opportunity to discuss specialist equipment.

### **Norwich City College** (written information)

Norwich City College has a policy relating to disabled students. There are four members of staff with special responsibility for students and prospective students with learning difficulties and / or disabilities. The College has some specialist equipment and a wide range of information technology aids to help students, including a laptop computer loan scheme. Over a number of years, City College has also developed close links with external organisations of and for people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in both the statutory and voluntary sectors.

### **Occupational Therapy – Adults with Learning Difficulties** (written information)

The OT service is predominantly based on the Community Teams for Adults with Learning Difficulties. People use IT for leisure purposes and for using switches to control either the environment or specific electrical items e.g. kettle or radio.

For computers for leisure purposes they rely on expertise within the day services in the hospital. The OT service is keen to develop using switches to control equipment or the environment. They have equipment from manufacturers to use for assessment purposes. Care providers may supply equipment or clients may be asked to purchase their own or apply for charitable funding.

### **Occupational Therapy – children’s services – physical disabilities**

(written information and phone call)

The Occupational Therapy service for children confirmed that there is unmet need - there is a lack of specialist staffing and equipment for children needing computers at home and at school. The Occupational Therapy service does not have the resources or skills to assess children. They often have to recommend that children are assessed by a national organisation at great expense. Therefore their recommendation is often not followed. There is a need for a local centre to meet this need.

A group is looking at how the assessment process for children in schools who need a computer can be improved. Cate Hidden, OT services, and Anna James from the Norfolk Psychological Service initiated it. Members include the education authority, sensory support services, pupil support services and health. This group recognises that there are limited facilities in Norfolk for the ongoing assessment of children’s needs for specialist equipment to enable them to use Information and Communications Technology (ICT). (See details of further developments on this under Norfolk Psychological Service above.)

Issues related to provision of IT and adapted access to children with disabilities within mainstream school include:

- Need for specialist skills
- Need to keep up to date with technological change
- Need for equipment to be available to try out
- Need for training of users and carers.

Proposed steering group working towards providing:

- A database of local contacts and resources
- A centre to provide ongoing support and information on resources
- This centre to be able to provide assessment of children’s needs
- This centre to include hardware, software, technical know how, training for all involved, co-ordinated database, trained assessors (users, therapists).

**Remploy** (written information)

Remploy employs disabled people. They are in discussion with a potential partner to investigate setting up a joint venture to refurbish redundant or replaced computer equipment from large corporations. The potential partner provides new equipment and installations. The venture would provide employment for Remploy staff. The refurbished equipment would be suitable for home or school use.

**Sensory Support Unit, Norfolk Social Services**

(written information and phone call)

They provide a comprehensive service to people of all ages in Norfolk who are sensorily impaired (hearing and/or sight). Members of staff undertake initial assessments. The services of specialist agencies are used for more advanced or complex assessments, e.g. AbilityNet.

Most clients are unable to purchase their own equipment and funding is sought from charitable organisations, e.g. Electronic Aids for the Blind. Norfolk Social Services provides some equipment for those who are deaf or hard of hearing, e.g. text phones and fax machines. Training is mainly needed to enable clients to use the equipment. Some of this is provided by the unit's staff or from local colleges. If it is clear that specialist training is required additional funding is usually applied for at the time of the original grant application.

**Sensory Support Services, Norfolk Education Authority**

The Sensory Support Services provide support for school pupils with hearing and visual impairments. They are able to undertake assessments and the national RNIB (Royal National Institute for the Blind) occasionally do assessments for them for a fee. The provision of equipment is an issue. Many pupils have access to appropriate software at school but unless this is provided on a laptop they cannot take it home with them. This makes it difficult for them to do homework and other computer activities at home.

There are also issues about major book publishers providing school textbooks on CDRom so that pupils can have access to large print and embossed versions.

**University of East Anglia** (written information)

The University has a policy relating to disabled students. Pat Ramsey is the Disability Co-ordinator at UEA and is based in the Dean of Students' Office. She assesses disabled students and puts in place strategies to enable them to access their chosen course of study and achieve their academic potential. Many of these involve IT. She is a trained assessor (\*) and also does Learning Support Assessments for students on degree courses at Norwich School of Art and Design and higher education students referred by Norfolk County Council in support of applications for Disabled Student Allowances. UEA uses Viglen Ltd to supply computers for students at discounted prices. Disabled students can purchase their computer and associated peripherals at the IT and Computing Centre 'shop' alongside other students but they do not have to do so. A one-year on-site warranty is included in the cost.

(\*University of Plymouth, Certificate in Advanced Professional Studies in 'assessment of specialist equipment and other support strategies for students with dyslexia and/or disabilities in post sixteen education'.)

Pat Ramsey provides students with information and advice about specialist software, which is ordered separately. When it has all arrived the IT trainer carries out the installation of the software and any peripheral devices and provides relevant training.

Computer facilities for students are provided at a number of locations on the campus. The specialist software for students with dyslexia is available through an on site licence on all PCs in the student IT areas. The library, which is open 24 hours a day, has a terminal with priority for wheelchair users. It has a 21 inch monitor and an MS Natural keyboard.

## **2. Norfolk Voluntary and Commercial Organisations**

### **Age Concern** (written information)

They do not supply any services themselves to their constituency. They act as a conduit for their members to access existing services / training provided by others. They also supply contact details for the individuals to be able to get in touch with the right people.

### **Assist Trust** (written information, website and phone call)

The Assist Trust are a Norfolk based organisation working with people with learning disabilities. They have a gardening centre in the city of Norwich. They have an established a purpose built IT / Multi Media suite which is gradually being opened to wider members of the community. There is an aim that tutor support will be provided by the members.

The Assist Trust carry out assessments of their own members' need for training and make recommendations on suitable hardware and/or software. They would be willing to discuss providing assessments to other people with learning disabilities.

### **BUILD – Bridges Unlimited for People with Disabilities** (written information)

They have developed computer literate staff. They have received support from a variety of local providers and are currently dealing directly with DAN for hardware. The TEC recommended a trainer to them, he teaches staff who then teach other people. They have also used Broadland Training Services. They support the position paper prepared by the Lord Mayors New Horizon Fund. (see Appendix 1)

### **Create! – a voice for disabled people in the arts** (written information)

Part of Norfolk County Council, therefore able to use the services of CAPITA, who provide hardware, software and back up but no training.

IT is still inaccessible to people on low incomes who cannot access public IT outlets – libraries, cybercafes etc.

Two issues:

- IT outlets underestimate that there are many different and relatively cheap ways to make computer hardware and software accessible to disabled people – there is a big list. There is knowledge and resources within the Employment Services through the Disability Services Team
- Disabled people need access to an inclusive range of quality training opportunities within mainstream education and local communities, not at specialist 'ghettoising' centres.

They need physical access to buildings too to get into them to get the training. IT skills and the arts - digital arts courses need to be accessible to disabled people. Create agrees that there needs to be a more strategic approach to make IT resources accessible to disabled people. However need to avoid labelling services as 'for the disabled' and thereby 'ghettoising' them.

Mainstream providers and trainers need access to training for their own staff which will enable them to serve the needs of disabled people in the community. We need to create an environment where the majority of disabled people can participate. Specialist services should still exist but in a more co-ordinated fashion, focusing on their specialist skills and knowledge.

Buying or giving grants to buy computers is not always a good use of money because they become out of date very quickly. Some hardware and software that is not readily available could be loaned out so people can try out specific aids and adaptations. Create are quite keen to set up a laptop loan scheme for people in isolated rural areas to explore digital arts. However there are concerns that demand is likely to exceed supply.

**IT Genie** (written information and phone call)

Supply low cost, recycled computers to local people in Norfolk. Work with Recycle IT! Ltd, see below.

**Lady Hoare Trust For Physically Disabled Children** (written information)

Work with children and young people up to age 18 with joint and limb disabilities, including arthritis. Families sometimes apply to local charities to get grants towards computers. They see a need for training and advice on sources of training in computing.

**NORCI (Norfolk Rehabilitation and Community Initiatives)**

(written information and website)

This is a Norfolk based project aimed at helping people with mental health problems, learning and other disabilities reach their full potential in terms of work skills and confidence, by encouraging and actively facilitating the process of moving people into integrated work and training opportunities in the community. They also run two recently opened Karten CTEC Centres in Norfolk (in Norwich and Kings Lynn). Both Karten Centres offer IT training.

**REMAP – Technical Equipment for Disabled People** (written information)

REMAP provides technical equipment for disabled people. It is a national charity, which operates through independent Panels. There are three Panels in Norfolk: Central Norfolk, Norfolk West and Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft. They use mainly retired engineers and craftsmen, giving their services free, to ease the lives of disabled people where commercial solutions do not exist or need to be modified to suit a particular client's need. They identified four possible approaches:

1. Fund a pool of machines to be loaned to clients for say 1 year, for free or for a minimal rent. After the specified time the client encouraged to buy own equipment?
2. Possible project to develop a voice activated input for other than word processing?
3. Identify / set up instructional / support structure
4. Identify a procurement structure to ensure the benefits of bulk purchase are realised.

### **3. Regional, National and International Organisations**

#### **AbilityNet** (written information and website)

This is a Warwickshire based organisation, with a regional centre in Cambridge, offering a range of services aimed at increasing the support to disabled computer users. It was set up by the Computability Centre and The Foundation for Communication for the Disabled. They also link with partner organisations so that local centres can be part of the initiative. They have a website at [www.abilitynet.co.uk](http://www.abilitynet.co.uk) with links to other organisations around the country. They have links with major corporations e.g. Glaxo.

#### **Ace Centre** (written information and website)

The Ace Centre is based in Oxford. They undertake assessments and specialise in working with children. According to their website ([www.ace-centre.org.uk](http://www.ace-centre.org.uk)), this is charged at £300 + VAT per person. They have a lot of links from their website. They have a list of software that is available to enable those with disabilities to use computers more effectively. They offer a loan scheme so that carers and users can find out if the software or hardware does what they want it to do in their particular situation and so they are less reliant on sales pitches. Support and training is also offered.

The Ace Centre recommends that any interested body joins Communications Matters. They have access to a wide range of services aimed at carers, users and professionals. There is a journal published three times a year. Also, with their assistance, a roadshow of manufacturers can be arranged on a local basis. Communications Matters also act as a conduit between those in need of equipment and manufacturers.

#### **ACDET (Advisory Committee for Disabled People in Employment & Training)**

The Committee, formerly part of the Department for Education & Employment is now part of the Department for Work & Pensions. In June 2000 it issued an important Consultation Report 'Access to Information/Communication Technology (AICT) for Disabled People' on behalf of a cross-Government working group.

#### **Aidis Trust** (written information and website)

They are able to provide help with getting adapted equipment for disabled people. Their website ([www.aidis.org](http://www.aidis.org)) has extensive links on it. They are providing an advisory role to the government's 'Computer in Reach' scheme.

**BECTa** the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency is playing a leading role in developing the educational uses of the new technologies in support of learning. It has recently been allocated £10 million over two years to provide items of communication equipment for children where there are requirements in excess of those identified in statements of educational need.

#### **British Society of Rehabilitation Medicine**

The Society is a registered charity that is co-located with the Royal College of Physicians. A Working Party Report published in July 2000 made five key recommendations including 'comprehensive holistic assessment' operated at a local level with access to specialist regional centres for users with complex problems and 'integrated service delivery' based on national standards and supported by research and professional training.

**Computability Centre** (website)

The Computability Centre is one of the founding organisations of AbilityNet and again is based in Warwickshire. There is a free advice and information service. They run courses for both disabled people and professionals. They offer needs assessments for individuals looking at software, hardware and what adaptations are available. A consultancy service is also available. Their website was not available at the time of writing this report.

**East Anglia Regional ACCESS Centre** based at Anglia Polytechnic in Cambridge has been funded by the Higher Education Funding Council to provide a regional resource for adaptive and assistive technology together with an assessment service provided in conjunction with City College, Norwich.

**Electronic Aids for the Blind** (written information and phone call)

Through the Equipment for Individuals project they finance the cost of specialised equipment for blind and visually impaired people. However they are finding it increasingly difficult to fund computers for individuals as the charities that support them are increasingly putting their funds into computer courses for groups rather than equipment for individuals. The organisation is concerned that the courses raise people's expectations but there is no provision for funding a computer at the end of it. This will be one of the topics discussed in their annual report. Two of the last three people from East Anglia who applied for funding for a computer were turned down.

In the past twelve months Electronic Aids for the Blind have launched an internet site to disseminate quality information. It is currently being redesigned and there will be separate pages for members and the general public. The information on the website is also available in print, tape and Braille.

**Karten CTEC Centres** (written information)

The aim of a CTEC Centre is to improve the quality of life and independence of adult people with congenital or acquired physical, cognitive, sensory or learning disabilities or with mental health problems by giving them access to adaptive computer technology for recreation and mental stimulation, for the development of their communications skills, for further education and for training in computer – related occupations. The head office of the Karten Charitable Trust is in Surrey. NORCI have recently opened two Karten Centres in Norfolk (see above).

**IBM** (website)

They are a US based company and they have a section on their website ([www.ibm.com](http://www.ibm.com)) called Accessibility Center (their spelling). Their products are subdivided into different areas: vision, speech/hearing, mobility, education, and cognitive/dyslexia. Supplying disabled people with IT equipment is not their prime aim.

**Recycle – IT! Ltd.** (written information and phone call)

Founded in 1995 they are the UK's first and largest not for profit computer recycling company, providing computers for community and educational use. They are based in Luton and have a UK wide operation. They aim to provide low cost but high quality computers at a price equitable with resources. One of their target groups is disabled people. They can adapt equipment or loan out specialised software.

They are interested in opening a satellite in Norfolk to collect redundant computer equipment from Norfolk based companies and recycling it back to the community. They also plan to offer an in house training service and a delivery, installation and training package, supported by other Norfolk groups, to people in their homes.

Update June 2001 – They have recently established a satellite in Norfolk in King's Lynn supported by WREN (Waste Recycling Environmental) from a grant received under the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme. They liaise with IT Genie in Norwich.

**Possum Controls Ltd.** (written information and website)

This is a company who use technology to create controls for everyday household tasks such as drawing curtains and turning electrical appliances on and off. They were specifically set up to do this. As they are more locally based (Eastern Region) they should be more approachable with regards to adaptations.

**ViSiCast** (written information)

The goal of ViSiCast is to improve the quality of life of Europe's deaf citizens by widening their access to services and facilities enjoyed by the community at large. The objective of the ViSiCast project is to produce adaptable communication tools allowing sign language communication where only speech and text are available at present. They are developing a virtual signing system.

## Appendix 4

### List of Organisations Contacted

#### 1. Organisations that provided written information to the Lord Mayor's New Horizons Fund

Organisation	Telephone	Main contact person
AbilityNet PO Box 94 Warwick CV34 5WS	01926 312847	John Maitland Chief Executive enquiries@abilitynet.co.uk
AbilityNet East Upper Pendrill Court Papworth Everard Cambridgeshire CB3 8UY	01480 839091  Freephone information line: 0800 269545	
ACE Centre 92 Windmill Road Headington, Oxford OX3 7DR	01865 759800	info@ace-centre.org.uk
Aidis Trust 1 Albany Park Cabot Lane Poole Dorset, BH17 7BX	01202 695244	Philip Ross Chief Executive
Age Concern Norfolk County Office 300 St Faith's Road Old Catton, Norwich NR3 7BJ	01603 787111	
Assist Trust 5a Beckham Place Edward Street, Norwich NR3 3DZ	01603 625161	Melanie Hopkins IT Tutor and qualified learning disabilities nurse
BUILD – Bridges Unlimited for People with Disabilities The United Reform Church Princes Street, Norwich NR3 1AZ	01603 618029	Liz Ellis Manager
Computability Centre PO Box 94 Warwick CV34 5WS	0800 269545	
Create! – a voice for disabled people in the arts The Vauxhall Centre Johnson Place, Norwich NR2 2SA	01603 626972	Ann Young Co-ordinator

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>Main contact person</b>
Electronic Aids for the Blind Suite 4B 71 – 75 High Street Chislehurst, Kent BR7 5AG	0802 295 3636	Mrs Lorraine Ireland Director
Ian Karten Charitable Trust Mill House, Newark Lane Ripley, Surrey GU23 6DP	01483 225020	
IT Genie 30 West Parade Norwich NR2 3DW	01603 622028	Helen Long
Lady Hoare Trust For Physically Disabled Children C/o 226 Norwich Road New Costessey, Norwich NR5 0LH	01603 744542	Pauline Wilkinson
Media Projects East Ltd 21 Low Road Keswick Norwich NR4 6TZ	01603 504879	Martin Sercombe
NORCI - Norfolk Rehabilitation and Community Initiatives 4/5 Marriott Way, City Trading Estate Norwich NR2 4UX	01603 667525	Alan Holland norci@norci.org
NORCI Step Karten CTEC Centre 52 Magdalen Road Norwich NR3 4AQ	01603 403411	Suzi Heybourne
(Also a NORCI Step Karten CTEC Centre in King's Lynn)		

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>Main contact person</b>
Norwich City College Ipswich Road Norwich NR2 2LJ	01603 773399	Marie Rought, Co-ordinator for Students with Learning Difficulties and / or Disabilities
Norwich Community Health Partnership (now part of Norwich Primary Care Trust) Occupational Therapy – Children’s Services 40 Upton Road Norwich NR4 7PA	01603 506535	Cate Hidden Occupational Therapist, Children’s Services
Norwich Community Health Partnership (now part of Norwich Primary Care Trust) Occupational Therapy Department – Adults with Learning Disabilities Little Plumstead Hospital Norwich NR13 5EW	01603 711289	Liz Garnham Head Occupational Therapist
Possum Controls Ltd. 8 Farmbrough Close Aylesbury Vale Industrial Park Stocklake, Aylesbury Bucks HP20 1DQ	01296 481591	
Recycle – IT! Ltd. C/o SKF (UK) Ltd. Sundon Park Road, Luton, Bedfordshire LU3 3BL	01582 492436	George Ruddock Managing Director
REMAP – Technical Equipment for Disabled People 2 Skedge Way Blofield Heath Norwich NR13 4RY	01603 712267	R G Abbott, Chairman
Remploy Limited Remploy Manufacturing Services 79 Torrington Avenue Tile Hill, Coventry West Midlands CV4 9AQ	024 76462715	R H Biggs General Manager

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>Main contact person</b>
Sensory Support Unit Norfolk Social Services 33 Unthank Road Norwich NR2 2RB	01603 622331	Sue Howe Rehabilitation Worker
Dean of Students' Office University of East Anglia Norwich NR4 7TJ	01603 456161	Pat Ramsey Disability Co-ordinator
ViSiCast (No contact details provided)		

## 2. Additional organisations contacted for the report

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>Main contact person</b>
The Advisory Committee for Disabled People in Employment and Training (ACDET)	0207 712 2171	Sue Cross
Anglia Disability Services Team Employment Services Job Centre, 5 <sup>th</sup> Floor Kiln House, Pottergate Norwich NR2 1BZ	01603 248840	Jackie Tinkler Disability Services Team Manager (Phone call with Jack Utting, Disability Employment Advisor)
East Anglia Regional Access Centre Student Support Services Room 102 Ruskin Anglia Polytechnic University East Road, Cambridge CB1 1PT	01223 363271 Ex 2378	Ed Barker Project Director  Jonathan Auld Access Centre Manager
Recycle – IT! Ltd. West Norfolk Business Centre North Lynn Industrial Estate Bergen Way King’s Lynn Norfolk IP30 2JH	01553 772524	Chris Evans
Sensory Support Service Norfolk Education C/o Heartease High School Marryat Road Norwich NR7 9DF	01603 435709	David Pointon Head of Service
Norfolk Psychological Service Greenwood Centre Greenwood Road Tuckswood Estate Norwich NR4 6BN	01603 458191	Anna James Computer Aided Learning Co-ordinator

### **3. Websites visited**

- AbilityNet [www.abilitynet.co.uk](http://www.abilitynet.co.uk)
- Aidis Trust [www.aidis.org](http://www.aidis.org)
- The ACE Centre [www.ace-centre.org.uk](http://www.ace-centre.org.uk) and [www.ace-north.org.uk](http://www.ace-north.org.uk)
- Assist Trust [www.assist-trust.sagenet.co.uk](http://www.assist-trust.sagenet.co.uk)
- BECTa [www.becta.org.uk](http://www.becta.org.uk)
- IBM [www.ibm.com](http://www.ibm.com)
- JISC [www.jisc.ac.uk/pub01/smbp15.html](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/pub01/smbp15.html)
- Possum Controls Ltd [www.possum.co.uk](http://www.possum.co.uk)
- NORCI [www.norci.org](http://www.norci.org)

### **4. Other known organisations with related interests**

- IT Can Help Network
- Media Projects East
- Norfolk Adult Education Service
- Norfolk Association for the Blind
- Norfolk Coalition of Disabled People
- Norfolk Deaf Association
- Norfolk Disability Information Service
- People First of Norfolk
- Vauxhall Centre

## Appendix 5

### Postscript - The 'e' is for enablement

Content of emails received 20 November 2001

Around 1980 some fine arts practitioners did refer to e(lectronic) art. This sparked off an interesting debate for a time, highlighting that indeed work produced with the aid of the PC was being judged with the aid of a different aesthetic from other, manual, forms, and that bad work was being "excused" as computer-based. Thankfully that era has passed. Artists and designers are very familiar with digital media and it has taken its place in the continuum of art and design practice.

However this current, e-learning, debate reminds me of the electronic art arguments.

Lessons and parallels:-

+ The need to focus on the medium rather than the message will pass. This doesn't, and shouldn't, stop us being fascinated by and focussed on technology as a communications medium through which we can enable or promote teaching and learning.

+ Bad teaching is bad teaching whatever the medium. We have to live with the new media in order to be able to translate it into educational good practice.

+ The next generation of educators will not have these hang-ups.

Nigel Peet, Director of ICT, South Cheshire College

From: Peter Trethewey [<mailto:PeterT@BROMLEY.AC.UK>]

Sent: 20 November 2001 12:54

To: [UFI-LIFELONGLEARNING@JISCMAIL.AC.UK](mailto:UFI-LIFELONGLEARNING@JISCMAIL.AC.UK)

Subject: What's good e-learning - again? Quote from the current OLS Newsletter:

"Finally, Kirk Ramsay ( [kirk@scottishufi.com](mailto:kirk@scottishufi.com) ) thinks "people get too wound up about defining e-learning" -- and definitions may limit what we think we can do."

"There are a number of definitions that get quoted a lot and I think all of them are wrong -- but they are probably all correct for somebody as well," says Ramsay, director of learning and technology at the Scottish University for Industry in Glasgow.

**Ramsay's view is this: The 'e' is for enablement.**

Learning options are "limited only by our imaginations" says Ramsay.

E-learning allows learner-centering, says Ramsay, so e-learning professionals can scrap the "one-size- fits-all model" for "individually targeted experiences."

Ramsay hopes that "very soon we will get past the point where the e-learning word gets used -- and we will then talk about learning again."

Definitions limit thinking, Ramsay warns -- so "ban definitions of e-learning.

"We are still learning about learning," Ramsay concludes, "and to date I doubt we have scratched the surface of the e-world of learning."

## Appendix 6

