

Communications

Internet Connections

Currently the internet access within the parish of Peak Forest is inadequate. Levels of access vary with the condition of the users' telephone lines. Frequently there is difficulty gaining access and the users' access can be terminated unexpectedly.

The system is very slow, testing the patience of users. It is unsuitable for business use and, therefore, the development of businesses in the locality or the opportunity for local people to work from home where access to the internet is vital, is limited.

The suggested ways forward are as follows:

- **Broadband** To gain access to broadband requires 400 households to agree to sign up for access and for the village to be situated no further than 5.5 kilometres from a telephone exchange.

It may be possible to link with other communities, but it is still felt that this would present difficulties due to the distance aspect of the requirement for access to Broadband.

According to the Government's targets, all schools are to be linked to Broadband and Peak Forest School gained a connection during 2002, via satellite.

- **Combined satellite dish with radio link** Another option is to have a satellite base station. This can accommodate up to 15 other users who are connected to it via radio. However, they are required to have a 'line of sight' to the base station. The cost of the satellite dish is approximately £7000 per annum.

There is a Post Office satellite dish at the local village shop and the school has recently installed a satellite dish and there might be an opportunity to connect to this. Therefore the potential exists to deliver broadband from the school dish via a radio link which could be located on the church tower.

IT Teaching Classes

IT software training classes have previously been provided in the village primary school and were well attended. It is proposed that further training classes be held. It has been indicated that the Head Teacher of Peak Forest Primary School is proposing to set up a computer suite comprising of 10 computers.

- **Training in IT software** It is proposed to approach the Head Teacher to find out if further evening classes may be held at the school.

A survey of the local people would need to be undertaken to learn what type

of software training might be required. Possible suggested courses are: Microsoft, internet shopping, e-mail, digital cameras, European Driving Licence, and graphics. It may be beneficial to run a course on web design and then it may be possible to develop a Peak Forest website. Liaison with the Head Teacher and the previous IT Trainer would be necessary. There would be the potential to set up self-help groups.

- **Internet Café** There is the potential to create an internet cafe within the village.

Telephone Access

- **Land line telephone access** Areas of Peak Forest still have poor telephone access which is understood to relate to the condition of the landlines. It would be useful to approach British Telecom regarding plans for upgrading.
- **Mobile telephone access** Circulate information about best service providers for residents of the parish of Peak Forest.

Approach other service providers to assess whether they would be interested in utilising the 'Vodafone' mast.

Village Internet Website

Develop a local website to be maintained by local people. This would include both an internal and an external focus. The proposed information matter is:

- Lists of businesses
- Tourist information
- E-mail lists/groups (Yahoo etc)
- Parish Council information and news
- Village Management Committee developments
- Reading Room events
- Parish Newsletter

Signposting

- Review the local signposting – directions to the village and within the village.
- Provision of signposting to features of interest and walks around Peak Forest

Tourism Information Leaflets

- Provision of waterproof shelter where leaflets could be on display for tourists
- Map of key sites of interest within the village
- Leaflets on historic information

Newsletter

- Further develop village newsletter through a marketing approach
- Encourage more local people to provide features

The community is anxious to keep abreast of modern communication trends and technology.

