



HOT KEY

ISLE OF WIGHT PC USER GROUP

MONTHLY JOURNAL

Issue 119 - November 2001



George Lemonifides, Peter Le Count and Renton Hudson at the "Video Editing" event at Riverside Centre

Our members were treated to a talk given by members of the Video Club, who brought with them a big projector screen, a projector and sound equipment. George Lemonifides was painstaking in his presentation, which took three days of preparation. George illustrated by means of a laptop computer and video projector, what video editing entailed and gave details of how he captured various scenes with his camcorder. George went on to explain how to trim clips and arrange them in sequence and then added transitions before rendering the video.

Adding background music and creating voice overs was also illustrated, as was the creating of titles in a separate window before overlaying the title on the opening movie window. After the coffee break, George answered various questions fielded by the members present and then finished off his presentation by showing a more advanced movie with animated effects, which was very effective. There is much to learn about video editing and we thank George, Peter and Renton for visiting our Computer Club to introduce the subject to us.

In This Issue

| | |
|-----------------|-------|
| Future Meetings | 2 |
| Editorial | 4 |
| PDF Mail | 6 |
| Tweakmaster | 7 |
| Comp Microscope | 8-10 |
| Differences | 11 |
| Bandwidth | 12-13 |
| Prize Puzzle | 14-15 |
| Notice Board | 16 |

FUTURE MEETINGS

| | | |
|----------------------|---|------------------|
| 7th November | Windows XP (Experience) | Dennis Linzmaier |
| Sunday | | |
| 18th November | Annual Computer Show | Riverside Centre |
| 21st November | New Products | Mark Worrall |
| 5th December | Internet Evening | Dennis Linzmaier |
| 19th December | Christmas Party | Riverside Centre |
| 2nd January | Corel Draw & Corel Photopaint | Ian Capon |
| 16th January | PDA's (Personal Digital Asst.) | To be advised |
| 6th February | A.G.M. followed by Questions and Answers | |
| 20th February | Linux Update | Bob Groom |
| 6th March | To be arranged | To be advised |
| 20th March | Building a Computer | Dennis Parkes |



John 'Buzz' Austin, Roger Brown and Roger Skidmore at the recent 'Computability Talk'

ISLE OF WIGHT PC USER GROUP – COMMITTEE MEMBERS

3

Honorary President:

Sir Norman Echlin, 36 Marina Avenue, Appley, Ryde, I.W. PO33 1NJ

E-Mail:- norm_phil@hotmail.com



564331

Chairman:

Dennis Linzmaier, 20 Queens Road, Sandown, I.W. PO36 8DJ

E-Mail:- d.linzmaier@ntlworld.com

403642

Vice Chairman:

David Broughton, Westwards, Hulverstone, Newport, I.W. PO30 4EH

E-Mail:- david@ddina.demon.co.uk

740421

Treasurer:

Bob Groom, Bembridge Lodge, High Street, Bembridge, I.W. PO35 5SQ

E-Mail:- bob@blodge.demon.co.uk

872707

Secretary:

Situation Vacant

Membership Secretary/Meetings Reception Assistant:

John Atkin, 2 Westview, Hulverstone, Newport, I.W. PO30 4EH

E-Mail:- kerm1940@btinternet.com

740036

Refreshments:

Dorothy Woollerton, Vine Cottage, Bierley, Niton, I.W. PO38 2QW

E-Mail:- petros@clara.net

730210

Hot Key Editor:

Brian Sexton, 48 Ashey Road, Ryde, I.W. PO33 2UT

E-Mail:- alleyne@clara.net

562569

New Members Co-ordinator:

Dennis Lambeth, 16 Bridgeway, Wootton Bridge, Ryde, PO33 4QF

E-Mail:- denlid@ntlworld.com

884072

Committee Member:

Cliff Maidment, 1 Palmers Road, Wootton, Ryde, I.W. PO33 4NA

E-Mail:- cliffm@clara.net

883642

Disability Resources Co-ordinator:

Helen Edom, Flat 1, Glenfield Court, Whitcombe Road, Carisbrooke, I.W. PO30 1ED

E-Mail:- helenedom@tesco.net

527208



With the Annual Computer Show just around the corner on November 18th at the Riverside Centre, we need volunteers to help with the Show. If you can help in any way, your services would be appreciated. Please contact David Broughton on:-

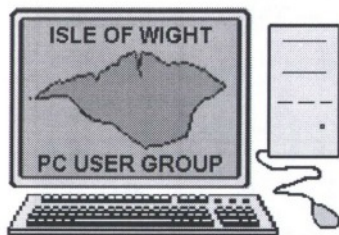
Tel:- 740421

This month sees the new Operating System, Windows XP from Microsoft.



I have installed this new software and believe you me, it is outstanding and probably the best operating system that Microsoft has released. I particularly like the new interface and the customising features, together with the new look 'Start menu' and 'Taskbar'. Up to now Windows XP has been very stable on my computer and is informative regarding the installation of non-XP drivers. Windows XP recognised most of my hardware apart from my Logitech Webcam and Modem. I had to search for the Windows 2000 drivers on the Internet and now all my hardware is recognised in Device Manager. I also like the introduction of the 'One Step CD Burning', where you put a CD into your CD-RW drive and simply drag your files into the appropriate folder and start burning. The **Activating Windows XP** is a brilliant innovation and is sure to reduce the amount of piracy and copying of a worthy piece of software. Windows XP is definitely worth the investment and is a vast improvement on Windows Me and I have no hesitation in recommending this to all our members.

NB:- There is an Official Windows XP Magazine with a cover CD, available at your local newsagent, which contains the Microsoft Upgrade Adviser and Tour Videos.



The Isle of Wight PC User Group

welcomes all owners and users of IBM Compatible Personal Computers.

It is a group which seeks to exchange ideas and seek new information.

Our meetings are informal **on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at The Riverside Centre, Newport, 7.30 - 9.30 pm.**

The first Wednesday has usually a formal talk whilst the third Wednesday is more informal, geared to the new user and aims to help out members with specific problems.

Membership is £12 per year.

Visitors are welcome.

This journal, "HOTKEY", is produced every month.

If you would like to know more about us, either come along to one of our meetings or contact one of our Committee Members on one of the numbers on page 3.

H U M O U R

off the mark

by Mark Parisi

www.offthemark.com

5



off the mark

by Mark Parisi

www.offthemark.com

TODAY A HACKER TRIED UNSUCCESSFULLY
TO CRASH THE HOMEPAGE OF BRICKS.COM,
AUTHORITIES SUSPECT THE SAME CULPRIT
WHO BROUGHT DOWN THE HOMEPAGES
OF STRAW.COM AND
STICKS.COM





Recently featured on a cover disk, but small enough to be downloaded quickly, are two of the simplest and most useful programmes to have come my way for a long time. They are PDFfactory and Fineprint, available from www.fineprint.com in trial version and in full version for about \$50 each.

Everyone should have Adobe Acrobat Reader on their PCs (available from www.adobe.com) as a useful browser plugin and accessory. Acrobat Reader reads files in Adobe PDF - Portable Document Format - a sort of compressed universal text/graphic file format which has gained general recognition over recent years. Every month I download my Q&A QuickAnswer magazine in PDF format and print it out - odd pages first then even pages reversed to achieve front and back economy.

But how do you create PDF files without buying the whole Adobe Acrobat programme? Easy - download PDFfactory. And why should you want to create PDF files? Easy - because everyone has Acrobat Reader. Just as anyone can read generic text as a file attachment to your e-mails, so can anyone read PDF format files. How often do you find you can't read someone's attachment because they don't tell you what the file format is, and if they do you haven't got Office 2000 yet?

For instance, I wanted to send someone a flowchart in an old fashioned VISIO format. There was no chance of their having VISIO so I printed the flowchart to PDFfactory and sent the PDF file. I also wanted to send a desktop published announcement from Pressworks so I printed it to PDF format and sent that. A PDF file uploaded to and H-referenced on a webpage will automatically load Acrobat Reader on the client computer

and read that file. So you can load any complex page in PDF format for anyone to read in their browser - a very powerful and extremely simple web application. For instance, the Hot Key magazine could be available on the web if printed to PDF format and uploaded to our website. Any club calendar could be uploaded and made available with every revision.

PDFfactory is seen as an additional printer driver - you choose to print to PDFfactory instead of your normal printer and the file created is saved to a default directory or renamed and saved wherever you want. Fineprint prints in the same way but allows you to do various things with the document before final printing. You can view and then print to booklet format, print odd/even pages for front and back economy, add watermarks, overlay forms and lots of other clever things.

You can't be without Acrobat Reader - can you do without PDFfactory?

PS - I note that the Internet Magazine (Oct. 2001) contains a programme in its cover disk called "PDFmail". This would appear to do exactly what PDFfactory does. The installation file is smaller (about 850K) and can be downloaded from the website www.pdfmail.com and would appear to be a trial version, although the restrictions are not obvious. The only problem I have found with this is that it doesn't seem to like older 16bit graphics programmes, but see what you make of it!

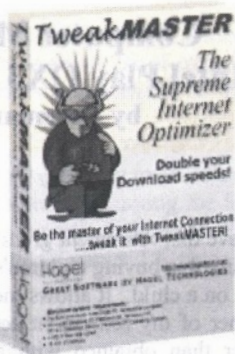
Hope this is helpful,

Roger Skidmore

TweakMASTER

Hagel Technologies is proud to present TweakMASTER, the supreme Internet Optimiser, which is actually four utilities in one! It represents the culmination of five years experience by one of the foremost innovators in the field of Internet Optimisation.

Unlike so many of the outdated utilities out there today which depend on deceptive advertising while "claiming" to "speed up your connection", TweakMASTER can actually do just that. It will **correctly** optimise all versions of Windows, including Windows XP.



DNS Accelerator

TweakMASTER includes the first truly intelligently designed DNS Accelerator or DNS caching utility which actually helps you to connect faster to the sites you visit most often. Simply click on the DNS Accelerator button and check "Enable DNS Accelerator". The DNS Accelerator is fully automatic once enabled and will speed up your web experience with no further attention on your part, while avoiding the risks of so many other outdated DNS caching utilities.

Clock Synchronization

TweakMASTER allows you to perform regularly scheduled updates to your PC's clock from super-accurate Internet Time Servers. You can schedule these updates daily or weekly if you like or perform them manually at any time to keep your PC synched.

TweakMASTER operation

If you have enabled one of the above features, the little red "Close" door will close the TweakMASTER window, but will allow it to keep running in the background.

TweakMASTER does not need to run to Optimise your Internet connection. Once you find settings that seem to work well for you, you need not run it to enjoy the benefits. However the DNS Accelerator and Clock Synchronization, require TweakMASTER to remain running in the background. Although TweakMASTER is carefully designed to use minimal system resources, you can also shut it down completely sometimes if needed by using "Exit" from the main File menu.

No software can overcome occasional Internet congestion, slow servers, bogged down Internet routers or overloaded ISPs. But your own computer will no longer be the weakest link in the chain. You can optimise your own system to permit the fastest connectivity the Internet can provide. And you don't need to be a computer expert to do it! Try TweakMASTER and **EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE NOW!**

<http://www.tweakmaster.com>

Computer Microscope Intel Play QX3 from Mattel by Rosemary West



I believe that retirement gives me the ideal opportunity to enjoy my second childhood even if it does involve buying children's toys. The QX3 computer microscope strikes me as too good to waste on a child. It allows me to examine and identify macroinvertebrates fished out of ponds (another of my retirement activities, masquerading as environmental science) at magnitudes greater than obtained with a hand lens. There is no need for a camera mounted on a conventional microscope because these images are already captured to the computer screen whence they can be manipulated and saved.

The QX3 is very easy to set up. First install the software from the CD-ROM. Then restart the computer after plugging in the USB cable supplied, and that is all there is to it. With the kit come some plastic accessories: 2 sample jars with lids, 2 containment dishes with lids, plastic tweezers and eyedropper. I prefer jam jars with lids because my samples don't survive for long in the little sample jars provided. I also use a standard eye dropper with the glass in backwards to make it large enough to select and suck in reasonably sized specimens. Also provided are three prepared and labelled strips of slides that include bug parts, spores and plant sections etc. The booklet has 8 pages at the back for a Parent Quick Start Guide and 16 pages at the front as your Activity Book. This suits me down to the ground (since it is intended for age 6+ years).

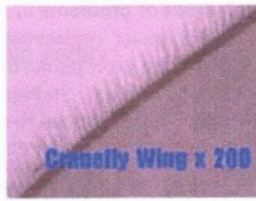
When you open the software the microscope's light comes on and you are in Live View. Samples placed on the view platform are displayed on a rectangle on your PC screen. There is a 'slider' to adjust the light intensity and a choice between top lighting and bottom lighting. Click 'snapshot' to save the current view to your collection. Here are four slides from my collection:



You can also use the microscope as a hand-held magnifying glass but you need a steady hand and low magnification to keep your specimen in focus. There is about 2m of cable between the unit and the USB port on the computer. The lighting shifts automatically to the top in hand-held mode.

Re-focussing on my PC is rather slow so they suggest reducing the display to 16 colours. This speeds up re-focussing somewhat but there is still some delay between turning the focussing knob and seeing the result of the alteration on the screen. This is particularly noticeable when changing the magnification. There are three fixed magnifications, times 10, times 60, and times 200.

Examples of the same subject at the three available magnifications, where I have annotated these slides using a Paint option from the Main menu.



The Paint button provides quite a useful paint program but the menus are all pictorial. As well as standard draw, paint brush, paint bucket, text, scissors and eraser options there is a rubber stamp symbol which allows a number of different strange objects to be pasted onto the picture with selectable colour and transparency. The Activity booklet gives a brief outline of all this but, if you seek further enlightenment, choose the ? symbol for Audio Help. Like many another help feature, this seldom tells you *exactly* what you want to know but this one is slightly different in that it tells you *out loud* what you didn't really want to know.

The Activity booklet suggests making a time-lapse movie. Set this up in Live View by clicking on the Time Lapse button. A 'slider' on the screen controls the rate at which snapshots are taken and this can vary from one picture every second to one picture every hour. Clicking on the Record button starts the process. It is also possible to record without using time-lapse but fast moving objects such as lesser water boatmen produce blurred images. The book shows a sample called "Pond scum - the movie" and then suggests you make your own and call it "The Return of Pond Scum".

Once you have captured your pictures and/or movies click on an arrow icon to go to the Main menu and display your slide collection. Clicking on a slide selects it for editing using one of the Main buttons. Besides the Paint button, there are a Special Effects button, Show button and Print button. Separated from these on the screen are a Collection button (to view your collection of slides), Trash Can button and finally a Quit button.



The Special Effects options are no use if you are looking for factual information from your slides, producing as they do various distortions such as alteration of colours or effects that might be obtained from distorting mirrors. The Printing capability is somewhat limited. You can obtain a full A4 picture, a poster consisting of four A4 sheets and a page of stickers, apparently giving 9 stickers to the page. They suggest that to obtain round sticky labels of the right size check at <http://www.avery.com>. For full control of printing it is better to use the Export facility, putting pictures, which are in JPEG format, in a folder to be used with a standard package such as Photoshop or Paint Shop Pro.

As well as exporting you can Import an image to add to your collection and, for special effects, combine a slide with a photo. Once you have made a collection of slides the Show button allows you to assemble a slide show choosing items out of your collection. Playing your slide show cycles through the chosen slides until you decide to stop. There is even a choice of four tunes to accompany your slide show (if you can stand it). Its all child's play really.

In the event of problems the Parent Quick Start Guide offers a limited amount of advice, e.g. to get a lens cover replacement or one of the special type of bulb, contact Mattel Consumer Affairs. They give 'phone number for the US and one for Canada plus a web address at: www.intelplay.com. In Newport the supplier of these microscopes is Staples but I don't know how they would respond to a request for spares.

Computability IW

Can YOU help a disabled person use a computer



Volunteers are needed to give an hour a week to help disabled people get to understand their computer. If you can encourage, help and be generally enthusiastic, it would make a big difference, especially to those who are housebound.

We Need Old or Used Computers and Printers.....

Computability IW is a voluntary group, part of the IW PC User Group and aims to provide computers for disabled people on a trial/loan basis to get them started.

Members of the IW PC User Group can collect your old equipment, refurbish it and recycle it through Computability IW. If you are upgrading and would like to help, or you know of anyone else, could you please contact us.

Contact numbers: Roger Brown: 520928 or Roger Skidmore: 822900

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN A MAILING LIST AND A NEWSGROUP

| | MAILING LIST | NEWSGROUP |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| Eligible persons who can contribute | Restricted to a group of people, such as a club. | Unrestricted to anyone with Internet access. |
| Method of subscription. | Send an e-mail to the supporting organisation in a defined format. | Tell your e-mail software which newsgroup you would like to subscribe to. |
| Subscriber vetting. | Every subscriber must be approved by the facilitator, a person approved by the club. | No vetting |
| Who knows you subscribe? | The mailing list organisation (e.g. yahoogroups) and the facilitator. | No one (but your ISP could find out if there were a need). |
| Legal aspects of publication. | Material is private to the group of subscribers. | Copyright material is subject to copyright law. |
| Type of address. | Like an e-mail, with the '@' sign. | Hierarchical list of words separated with dots. No '@' sign. |
| Anonymous postings? | Impossible, as postings are restricted to named individuals. | Yes, using an agency that can forward postings after editing the header. |
| Encryption? | Yes, if all on the list had the decryption key. | No point. No one would be able to decipher it unless everyone could. |

For more information, see my article in Hot Key for March 2001, page 13.

David Broughton, david@ddina.demon.co.uk

BANDWIDTH



Just as the local utility company supplies gas to your home through metal pipes, an ISP pumps communications bandwidth, or internet connectivity, into a business or residence by way of electronic 'pipes' that connect a computer to the internet. These pipes are, of course, wires and take a variety of forms, from standard telephone lines, to cables and leased lines.

Bandwidth refers to the transmission capacity of these lines, and transmission rates are measured by how many bits of data cross the wire each second. Slower transmission speeds are measured in kilobits per second (1,024 bits, abbreviated to Kbps), while faster transmissions are in megabits (Mbps) or gigabits (Gbps).

So what actually dictates the data transmission speed?

There are several flavours of bandwidth available to business and residential customers. Most consumers get internet access through dialup via an ISP.

A standard PC modem converts analogue phone signals to digital data transmissions for data coming into the PC and vice versa. PC modems deliver bandwidth at transmission speeds of 14.4Kbps, 28.8Kbps and 56Kbps. Speeds above 56Kbps aren't possible using a standard dialup connection via a telephone line. This is due to the twisted-copper pair wires, which make up telephone lines, having an upper limit of 56Kbps for analogue signals.

Is it possible to get round the limits of analogue?

Yes, with digital technology. Several digital-to-digital connectivity options offer data transmission over the internet at higher speeds than a dialup connection. Individually or collectively, these high-speed access methods are often called broadband. Broadband options include already established leased lines and the newer technologies of integrated cable modems and ADSL (asymmetric digital subscriber lines). Each of these services differs technologically, and each offers a different maximum connection speed. Leased lines are the fastest option, offering maximum transfer speeds for incoming and outgoing data. ADSL and cable, which provide consumer download speeds of up to 2Mbps and 512Kbps respectively, upload data more slowly than they receive it. The speeds of all three services are further affected by the number of other users trying to connect to the internet at the same time.



How much do broadband services cost?

The cost is relatively low for cable and ADSL access – typically around £40 per month, as well as some installation expenses. Leased lines are far more costly, which is why they tend to be used by bigger businesses. Monthly access charges for leased line services start at approximately £500 per month, but companies generally pay between £10,000 and £20,000 for around 2Mbps.

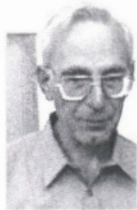
The intermediate-level broadband service ISDN (integrated services digital network) has been around for some time now. It delivers bandwidth up to 128Kbps over a digital-to-digital dialup connection to the telephone network. However, for most residential customers the cost ruled it out long ago, and problems installing and maintaining lines and equipment have further hastened its demise.

Okay, so what's the catch?

The biggest pitfall is security. Leased lines, cable modems and ADSL are 'always-on' connections, which means there's no physical dialling required. But with this convenience comes increased risk. It's rather like connecting your PC up to one huge LAN (local area network) so anyone who's connected is able to see – and access – anyone else's system. It's therefore important to protect your PC with firewall software.

Geography could be a problem, too. For ADSL to work at all, you must be physically situated within 3-3.8 miles of your local telephone exchange. And remember, telephone lines don't necessarily travel in a straight line, so you may need to be nearer still. Furthermore, cable isn't available to every region in the UK, so again your location could dictate your broadband choice.

Our thanks to PC Advisor Magazine for this article



PRIZE PUZZLE CORNER
NOVEMBER 2001
 by David Broughton



The ATOB Puzzle

This month, the puzzle is a computer program you can download from the web page.

Go to <http://www.ddina.demon.co.uk/iwpcug/> click on "Downloadable Binaries" then "List of Files" where you will find "ATOB" where you can read about it before downloading it.

The computer program makes it easy, but if you want to do it the hard way, this is what you have to do. Using the diagram on page 15, go from square A to square B moving horizontally or vertically (not diagonally) visiting any number of cells that gives you the highest score when all the numbers in the cells you visit are added; i.e. avoiding the cells with negative numbers as far as possible and making your route include the largest selection of positive numbers you can find. You cannot visit the same cell more than once. The winner is the one with the highest score (a tie break will be resolved with a random draw). The computer program will keep track of your score, of course, so you avoid doing the arithmetic that way. It's the same diagram and the same numbers whichever way you do it.

I will need to see your route through the matrix if you do it the hard way so please send me a copy of your route with the total and let me have it BEFORE Wednesday 5th December to give me time to check it.

If you do the puzzle the easy way with the computer program then your score is accompanied with a security code that checks the score and the answer can be given to me at the 5th December meeting.

Have fun.

Answer to the Three Thieves and the Box of Apples problem.

This was one of the easiest problems. It was not difficult either guessing a possible answer and checking it works or using algebra. Seven entries were received from Peter Woollerton, Gwynn White (winner of the draw), Rosemary West, John Bownas, Peter Wreford, Peter Greenhalgh and Ken Cameron. Many thanks to all and congratulations to Gwynn.

NB:

I shall be giving up this puzzle page after the February 2002 edition of Hot Key to give an opportunity for someone else with a bent for puzzles to take my place. Please let Brian Sexton know if you would like to volunteer for this job. I can give advice and make suggestions for puzzles from time to time if you need help.

David Broughton

DIAGRAM FOR ATOB PUZZLE

15

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----------|
| A | 28 | 30 | -8 | -6 | -56 | -50 | -16 | -38 | 84 | -42 | 36 | -18 | -24 | 26 |
| 40 | 26 | -72 | 18 | 4 | -6 | -32 | 62 | -44 | -78 | 32 | -34 | -4 | 2 | -16 |
| -42 | -4 | 6 | -4 | -26 | 48 | -2 | -40 | -22 | -40 | 14 | -52 | 6 | 24 | -46 |
| -40 | -42 | 48 | -18 | -4 | -38 | -4 | 34 | 20 | 26 | 32 | 74 | 32 | -22 | 20 |
| 38 | -32 | 54 | 4 | 26 | 92 | -82 | 40 | 2 | 76 | 42 | 0 | 2 | 48 | 18 |
| -16 | -10 | -56 | -82 | -8 | 2 | 28 | 42 | -48 | -62 | 0 | -46 | -64 | 62 | 32 |
| -10 | -20 | -26 | 16 | 14 | -24 | 10 | 60 | 62 | -4 | -30 | -8 | 34 | -24 | -46 |
| -52 | -70 | 8 | 62 | -8 | 14 | -36 | 22 | 24 | -14 | 44 | 6 | 16 | -82 | 12 |
| 50 | -4 | 2 | 4 | 10 | 0 | 10 | -16 | -34 | -8 | 42 | 24 | -26 | 8 | B |



Peter and Jayne Scovell enjoying the recent "Video Editing Talk" at The Riverside Centre

MEMBERS NOTICE BOARD

**This Board is FREE to members
Please use it!**



FOR SALE

HARDWARE

**Iomega Zip100
Parallel Port Drive**
(with software and manual
plus 5 extra zip disks)
Only £45 (incl. vat)

Contact:-
The Editor
Tel. 562569

FOR SALE

SHARP FONTWRITER Model FW 600

An electronic typewriter with a built in 3.5" disk drive and word processor with spell checker. It has two ribbons, one new and one almost new. Also included is a manual, built in screen and a carry handle, plus a dictionary on floppy disk, which can be loaded as needed.

Hardly used
£50 ono

Contact:-
John Atkin
Tel.740036

FOR SALE

BOOK

**Peter Norton's Guide to Upgrading
& Repairing PCs**

Normal Price
£26.95
**Sale Price
£10**

Contact:-
The Editor
Tel. 562569



Hot Key is published on the first Wednesday of every month. This edition was compiled using Microsoft Publisher 2000 and reproduced on an Epson Stylus Colour ink jet printer and a Brother HL-1250 laser printer.

The views and opinions expressed here are those of the contributors alone. No responsibility can be accepted with respect to advice or suggestions made in this journal.