

IT for the Terrified and Wired - Wedmore

Short Description:

Angela Vivian Enterprises and the Kings of Wessex Community School a specialist technology college are working in partnership with community groups, partner schools, district council and Learning and Skills Councils to replicate the successful "IT for the Terrified" model in a rural community amongst isolated young parents and the elderly. The "IT for the Terrified" model is "Tea, a giggle and a gossip and a little IT" delivered in a non-threatening environment on a one-to-one basis according to the individual's need. Concurrent benefits of the programme are increased employment, skilling of tutors, increased ICT resources for local schools, increased social inclusion and cohesion.

Participants:

The lead partners in these projects are; Angela Vivian Enterprises (AVE) The Kings of Wessex Community School A Specialist Technology College (KoWSTC) Sedgemoor District Council (SDC).

The Learning & Skills Council (LSC) Kings of Wessex Adult Learning and Leisure (KoWALL) The community groups participating in the project are; Axbridge First School and its parents. Wedmore First School and its parents.

Shipham First School and its parents.

Mark First School and its parents.

Lympsham First School and its parents.

A group of volunteer trainers based at the IT for the Terrified Centre in Wedmore village.

Wardens of SDC Sheltered homes.

A group of elderly gentlemen based at Elmsett Hall.

Individual clients who are; Elderly Disabled Have learning difficulties Live in rural isolation.

Target Groups: Young parents living in the physically, isolated rural communities of the Cheddar Valley in Somerset.

Older citizens who have not got the benefit of learning ICT skills at work or college, but who can travel to a training centre.

Elderly citizens who cannot travel to a training centre.

Disabled citizens who cannot travel to a training centre.

Citizens who have learning difficulties and are unaware of the power of ICT for themselves People living in rural isolation such as the farmers of the Cheddar Valley.

Objectives: The these two projects were initiated to empower the citizens of our rural community to access government using Information and Communications Technology. IT for the Terrified (IT4TT) equips citizens with the necessary IT skills. Wired Wedmore provides a developing, locally oriented, portal to government and local information which citizens need IT skills to access.

We hoped to develop; A model of self-sustaining, ICT training and support by and for rural communities which engages citizens of all ages and abilities. A demonstration of a local community portal to local and national government information and services.

Achievements: 350 to 400 people attended the IT4TT centre over the last 3 years.

85 of trainers trained Training and professional development of the three centre managers.

Employment of; Centre managers, Community ICT technician, Intranet Author, Community ICT Consultant Range of individuals contacted and involved in ICT training include those who are; Elderly Disabled Have learning difficulties Live in rural isolation.

Live in sheltered housing 10 parents involved at the First Schools in our first year with a further 25 -30 lined up for the Autumn term 2002 More than 35 computers provided to the First Schools Detailed Description: The IT4TT project was started in 1999 under the vision and guidance of Angela Vivian. Local people (mostly over 55) were recruited, firstly as trainees and then as trainers following a recipe of tea, sympathy a little bit of IT and a giggle/gossip, with the IT being provided as one-to-one training according to the needs and interests of the trainees. The trainers were trained themselves by staff from KoWALL.

Funding is provided by payments from trainees, donations from the local district council and from KoWALL. The centre (based in a local pub and equipped by Compaq and Hewlett Packard) is now managed on a job-share basis by two people who themselves have come up through the training program. Now three years on with more than 400 people having passed through the centre IT4TT's model is being replicated across the Cheddar Valley (with interest now coming from across the country, Europe and the USA). In September 2001, The Kings of Wessex Community School became a Specialist Technology College and sought to work in partnership with IT4TT to ensure the continuation of the project An integral part of the school's Specialist Technology Community action was the provision of internet access computers in the local First Schools for parents to use to learn the technology for themselves, thus providing local training across a widespread, rural community. The IT4TT model seemed the ideal method of ensuring the delivery of this action.

Since March 2002 on Monday afternoons, a group of parents have been learning basic IT and Internet skills tutored by staff from AVE and KoWALL. The equipment used was provided by Axbridge First School, KoWSTC and the LSC (managed by AVE). Thus three computers, printer and scanner were set up in the school hall connected to the Internet. When the parents are not using the equipment is there for staff and students to use.

In July 2002 a second of the First schools (Shipham) was equipped with a PC funded by KoWSTC . This will start to be used by parents in September 2002.

The next phase of school's work has begun with the equipping of Wedmore First School. This school's equipment was in a very poor state for its 300 children. With the school providing £8000, the LSC £3000 and KoWSTC £11000, the school will have a 24 station computer network for September 2002. It will also have a group of 6 PCs to use for the parents' Internet training and in the evenings, KoWALL will be able to run courses in the village using this facility.

The coming year will see at least two more schools (Mark and Lympsham) becoming centres for IT4TT. In both these cases we have done a good deal of preparatory work to

ensure that the groups will be self-supporting in terms of trainers from the outset. There is a limit to the number of centres which the volunteers based in Wedmore can support.

We have had very positive feedback from the trainees. Feedback is collected and collated from each of the IT4TT activities. Typically trainees comment on how much they have learned and how much better this approach is than the formal classroom style of teaching. Some trainees do in fact use the sessions as much for social contact as for IT training which we are very happy about.

To oversee all this development the LSC and KoWSTC have provided funding for Angela Vivian to act in a consultancy/outreach role. In this role, sometimes using a laptop provided by the KoWSTC, Angela has initiated four new areas of activity; Cold-calling at remote homes and farms offering ICT training, developing contacts at local sheltered housing and nursing homes, working with people with disabilities, working with the elderly. Some examples of exactly what this work involves are given later.

To further assist in her work Angela will have the services of an administrative assistant from September 2002 funded by KoWSTC.

The underlying aim of training this community to use ICT is to empower them to participate in the e-government. Initiated by Angela Vivian the Wired Wedmore project, now runs with technical support from the KoWSTC who fund the time of an Internet Technician to develop the website. Launched in December 2000 its website is a source of information about the village, its organisations and businesses. It also offers links to local and central government websites. Consultation on both of these projects was undertaken with community members and groups. Each of the projects also has a decision-making body made up of leading members of the community and key individuals in local groups.

A committee of local residents, including two project managers and a director, oversee the development of the IT for the Terrified Centre. Wired Wedmore is directed by a Citizens' Panel. This is a group of 10 local representatives brought together to provide feedback on the development of the website and work with ICT companies to test products and services. For example, the Panel provided feedback in trials of the Employment Service Internet JobBank and kiosk before they were installed in the IT centre.

There are open invitations to members of the community to attend the monthly partnership meetings. Sedgemoor District Council have provided 10 set-top boxes for use in a trial of access to the Wired Wedmore website and other sites of relevance from a television set. These are being given initially to people who have developed their skills through IT4TT and can therefore make immediate use of them, allowing us to concentrate on evaluating the content and its delivery rather than the access technology.

The District Council have also been working with Wired Wedmore to develop a proof - of concept project. The concept is to deliver information held on SDCs information system through a community portal. The pilot project is to provide constantly updated information on local planning applications through the Wired Wedmore website.

A companion project to Wired Wedmore is the Wedmore Advice and Information Centre set up in a room adjacent to the IT4TT centre. Here AVE has created a one-stop shop for access to local and national agencies including; The Police, Inland Revenue, Customs & Excise, Citizens Advice Bureau, District Council and the Start Here kiosk. These organisations provide literature and attend in person at scheduled times in the month. The co-operation required to achieve this is a pre-cursor to the development of a

common Internet access portal and the full implementation of e-government. (See Appendix 1 for more information). Crucial factors in the success of the projects have been; Finding key local champions who galvanise the local community into action and who carry the vision for themselves.

Drawing on multiple sources of finance, turning several small amounts into a single significant resource.

Funding the community IT Consultant to be released to try innovative approaches to IT outreach.

The flexibility to respond to local requests for help and the ability to tailor that help to the individual organisations requirements Assessment of Impact of Project: The impact of this project extends internationally. We have had visits in person and virtually from USA, Holland, South Africa and many other countries as well as many regions within the UK. The model we have developed works and addresses sections of the population who have been unreached by, or been disaffected by, traditional Adult Learning approaches.

IT for the Terrified is a community activity launched with vision and lots of hope by 6 people, 5 over 50 and 4 who had never touched a computer. 3 years on 400 people been through the Centre, 85 trainers have been trained and 80% of those trainers have been retained. Many are now taking the European Computer Driving License qualification. As a direct result of involvement in IT4TT 4 of our people for the first time, went to the parish council and engaged the district council on a matter of local policy clear evidence of a developing sense of civic responsibility.

The employment and professional development of the Centre Managers is a significant outcome of the project. The first centre manager has now moved on to work in America.

One of our centre managers had previously been employed in a manual job, making wrought iron gates. She is now an effective trainer and manager. The impact of the project on individuals lives is enormous both those of the project team and those of the clients/trainees and is described in the following paragraphs.

Cold-calling at remote homes and farms offering ICT training.

We have contacted and worked with a farming family. This family suffers from isolation, the downturn in farming, transport difficulties - both father and son (only child of 22) suffer from severe dyslexia problems.

Jenny, aged 58, was initially not interested in anything to do with IT.

Using the IT for the Terrified approach, with the giggle and gossip etc.

and with Angela and Kate making visits each week, for about one hour, Jenny has now become quite proficient in the use of Word Processing etc. The provision of a second hand computer by Angela followed by Internet Access has seen further progress. The son has been helping his mother build up her skills! Developing contacts at local sheltered housing and nursing homes.

Plans are in hand to set up a computer at Penn Close Sheltered Housing in Cheddar which has 44 residents. The Warden, a positive lady with vision is currently sampling the IT for the Terrified recipe and is making considerable progress in building up her skills. KoWSTC have provided the computer which will be installed in the Common Room. Trainers from IT4TT will attend initially for approx. 2 hours a week. The aim will be to build up skills with in the community itself with help from Janet the warden and the two residents who possess existing computer skills. Three other wardens in other areas of

Sedgemoor District now want the same facilities and plans are in hand to deliver in the near future.

Working with people with disabilities.

Once a week Kate (IT4TT Centre Manager) visits Harriet in Wedmore. Harriet is over 50, has cancer, has had a severe stroke which had affected her arm and legs and lives on her own. Harriet approached the Wedmore Centre to learn how to use her own computer. She is already benefiting from Kate's readiness to become involved and can now use e-mail after some initial difficulties. The social challenges of Harriet's case are many but Kate's visits are of significant value to Harriet who is fiercely independent and has refused other more "orthodox" offers of help.

Working with the elderly.

Ernie is 90 and lives in a Nursing Home in Brent Knoll. Severe arthritis restricts his ability to move but his mental powers are undiminished. The initial contact was made through the Nursing Home owner's contact with the owner of Elmsett Hall in Wedmore. Angela and Kate, with laptop, visit once a week for about one hour. The range of activities covers games, word processing and Paint-Ernie used to paint a great deal and has taken readily to the computer "version". The visits are clearly of value to Ernie on the social front and the banter between Ernie and Kate is good to hear.

All our trainers, presently about 34 in number, are volunteers, most of whom are over 50, but who vary in age from 22 to 84. They also vary in experience: some are self-taught, some only started learning about IT a few weeks before we opened in 1999, and some have been customers, who now wish to pass on the skills they have learned.

We have asked some of our trainers to write a short paragraph about their experience with IT. Their testimonies show that everybody can learn to use and enjoy computers:

- Make the effort - it's worth it. It is one of the best things I have ever done. I had looked into the idea of having a computer - but did not really know if I could justify the cost - and what would I use it for? I did not want to do accounts or copy my paper work onto a computer, I was quite happy with the way I had it already. Then the idea of using the internet and sending E-mails to a son and Daughter who live over the other side of the world - that really started to appeal - but then there was the 'learning how to use a computer'. I did not fancy signing up for a whole term. What if I did not like it - everyone there would be young and probably have a good idea what to do. Would I be left far behind? I had heard of others who had tried this route and abandoned the classes! I did not want to do that. Then I heard of IT For The Terrified - that was me alright - I peered in through the window of the centre a few times - not long after the centre had opened - then decided to jump! AM I glad I did. Couldn't believe it - I could have one lesson at a time (so I had an escape route if I needed one), I could keep repeating the lesson if I needed to, I could have as many or as few lessons as I wanted. I was soon hooked. Now I have a computer - bought through a recommendation from the centre - so I have a reliable backup in case anything goes wrong. There is not a day goes by that I don't use my computer; I can E-mail my son and daughter and get a reply back the same day at the cost of a local phone call and don't have to think will they be in because they can accept the message when it suits them, so I feel closer to them. Now when I see a programme on the TV that I enjoy and there is a web site to visit I can do that too. On a rainy day I can just play!! So I

do urge anyone who feels nervous - just jump in like me - you won't regret it and guess what - I am now training other Terrifieds!! So you can do it too!

- **Suzanne Ager** Gosh - Computers!!! Where do I start? Or even - do I start! At the ripe age referred to as "Grey" do I really need to learn anything new at all? Well the answer to that is of course that with time, everything will be computerised and we will all need to know how they work and how to operate them. There will be "chips" everywhere. In our television sets and telephones there will be built-in computers, so just to be able to turn these things on will be difficult if we don't have any knowledge of computers. So rather than be left behind I decided to take the "bull by the horns" and buy a computer. After spending time putting various wires etc. into sockets I eventually got to the stage of turning the computer on!!!!!! Panic, panic and more panic!!!!!! I realised I didn't have a clue so looked in the local paper for some help. A young man came to my house (at great cost I might add) who was an absolute wiz kid on computers but not a teacher!!!!!! So only one lesson (in which I learned very little). Next stop was to buy a very basic book "How To Get To Grips With Your Computer". Still not easy enough for me. My friend called and said in her village Wedmore there were some computer classes for the Grey brigade! Just up my street, I thought. So I became a member of "IT for the Terrified". What a wonderful experience. I made new friends, enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere and can you believe it I learned so much more than I believed possible. The tuition I received was on a one-to-one basis and for someone of a certain age this was so important. I could learn at my pace and take time to absorb everything I was being taught. I could ask to go over as often as I needed without feeling a complete idiot. It gave me confidence to go home and tackle my computer and experiment with spreadsheets, etc., something I had wanted to do for a long time. I was eventually asked to become a volunteer trainer which meant I could attend a session of training each week and then return the help I had received by helping others to get to grips with this new world of computers.
- **Christine Gale** I went to see my accountant (who has an office in Wedmore) and noticed all these people in a shop using computers, "IT For The Terrified" was then in a shop opposite where we are now. I was going on holiday so I thought when I come back from holiday I will give it a go. So in I went in and got the details. I came back from holiday rang up booked a day that suited me, I had never switched on a computer! That's not quite true I had walked in to Comet and if no one was looking I would press a button or two, to see what would happen? Nothing ever did of course. So back to "IT For The Terrified": it's one to one tuition. So if you need to do something again (and again as in my case), it's no problem. We are now in the loft at the George hotel Wedmore So if you, like me, want to know how to use a computer, come and see us. You might even get me giving you your first lesson!
- **Alan Cook** I am a trainer at "IT for the Terrified" at Wedmore because it is essential for people not to be afraid of computers. Are you terrified of your washing machine? Very soon a computer will be a piece of household equipment in every home just like the washing machine, the cooker, the vacuum cleaner etc. We had hoped to have access to the internet in every home in Wedmore, but sadly we have not achieved that yet. Soon most business and leisure activities will be organised over the internet and it will be hard to keep up without a computer. I have been involved with computers since the early eighties. My

husband used to work for IBM although he had retired before the first PC was even built. Although my husband was retired, retirees were kept in touch, and when IBM marketed their first PC they offered the chance to purchase one to the retired also. The first PC, which was described as a portable, consisted of one piece, at a rough guess from memory, about 24 inches long with a small screen on the left and two slots on the right for two 5 1/4" floppy disks which looked rather like CD-Roms. Those really were floppy not like the current 3 1/2" ones, which are not floppy at all. This computer was offered to us for £250, and came with a incomprehensible manual. I didn't even know that I needed to buy a word processing program and that I had to install it every time I used the computer. No hard disk in those days. It took me about six months to master it and during that period I would willingly have thrown the PC out of the window. The reason for the two slots was that one was for installing the program and the other to input the information. We gradually progressed. The next PC was the PS2 which had a separate processing unit and a separate monitor which was much larger. I think the first ones measured 15" diagonally which to us now is absolutely tiny. The PS2 still had to have its program installed every time before use but the disk were now 3 1/2" and they were no longer floppy, although they are still always described as floppies. It was quite some years before we got round to the IBM Aptiva which had a hard disk.

This is the story of the Personal Computer from personal experience!

- **Margot Owles** I.T. for the Terrified - what a great name that is!!! It perfectly describes my feelings when it was first suggested that I become interested in computers. It is the feeling that I expect most people of advanced years have - that it is far too late to become involved in all this new technology and is better left to the young. The Government have over the last few years been encouraging people to take up computers by subsidizing courses around the country and my wife and her friend decided to join and after much arm-twisting I was also persuaded to go along. I found the courses interesting and soon fell into the routine and jargon of Computers. However it was a very formal course for about 40 people with just two trainers. Much time was spent with raised arm waiting for help from one of the Trainers. When my time on the course came to an end I felt the need to continue in some way with what I had started. Then one day I saw an advert in the National Press extolling the virtues of a venture in Wedmore - IT for the Terrified - and although I live in Weston it sounded ideal and I found my way to the little shop in Wedmore. The contrast could not have been more marked - one to one training - what a luxury! The atmosphere was so friendly with its policy of a cup of tea, a giggle, and some computer training. It soon became apparent that many of the trainers had in fact previously been clients and were now passing on their knowledge to others. I eventually reached a point where I thought that I would like to do this myself and enquired of Penny whether she thought that I was good enough so to do. I have been doing this ever since.
- In the time I have been coming the expansion of the centre into the 'Hayloft' has been quite remarkable and would not be out of place in a big city complex. This is almost entirely due to the energetic and selfless effort of Angela without whom it could not have started or been the remarkable success it is. Her continuing and frustrating efforts to raise more funds from apathetic officials is undoubtedly the catalyst which prompts people to give of their time whether as trainers or in

helping with fund raising activities. I have nothing but admiration for her effort and may this venture be allowed to grow and continue to be of benefit to the community.

- **C.A. Boyce** In 1965, due to a job change, we moved from Hampstead to Wedmore when it was a quiet agricultural village. We arrived in May and spent the rest of the summer adjusting to a new environment, becoming involved with the Wedmore cricket team and trying to develop a garden from a building site. We were introduced to Wedmore Harvest Home, a major full day's local event that incorporated a procession of tractor- drawn floats and pedestrian entries and which at the start ran completely round two sides of the central village square. Over the succeeding years, the Harvest Home has diminished and the nature of Wedmore has changed from its original quiet rural backwater status to a residential village with many modern amenities including the facility for giving tuition in computer skills. In working as a consultant in procurement management, I had the need to use a computer and a few years ago bought a lap-top, together with a couple of volumes of instruction. After many months of frustration, lost files and bad language, I finally got the hang of the thing. A couple of years ago a friend introduced me to IT for the Terrified, where he was a tutor and I thought that I would give it a go, At that time I thought that it would be a case of the blind leading the blind, but some of the people that I taught were kind enough to say that I had helped. I am sure that if I had had one-to-one tuition initially there would have been less bad language in the house. I would say that for all those who wish to contribute less to the swear box to take computer tuition at IT for the Terrified.
- **Clive Holt** My first memory is of moving into the farmhouse with my dolls house on the back of a tractor and trailer. My second memory is of my toy typewriter. I always knew I wanted to be a secretary, so I went to a secretarial school and worked in offices until my first child was born. I then became involved with the local Playgroup, somehow still seemed to be there 21 years later! When the Government brought in the Nursery Education Scheme it also brought in copious amounts of paperwork to go with it. A computer seemed the only way to cope with it so Playgroup bought a second hand computer. I then spent all my time in Playgroup, so I bought a second hand computer, and spent all my time at home on it instead! I visited I.T. for the Terrified for some top-up knowledge, and was so impressed by the friendly, helping atmosphere that I started to chat to Penny, who was the Centre Manager. She said their main problem was the shortage of trainers, so I said I thought I could manage one afternoon a week! A year later I became Centre Manager - something of a quantum leap! The ironic thing is I left Playgroup (mostly) because it had become too demanding, and there was too much paper work. Now I am web editing, teaching 1:1, teaching a course, learning ECDL, filling in paperwork, compiling paperwork, writing Newsletters, typing out reports, etc. etc. I also help Angela with some of the tasks for the Wired Wedmore project - she says it is run by "one man and his dog" - I'm not too sure what that makes me! Sometimes I look back on the past year and wonder what happened! However, despite all the ups and downs, I have really enjoyed my time (so far!) in I.T. for the Terrified - it is everything a good learning centre should be - no pressure, no expectations, just learning. I have developed my computer knowledge 100-fold, made new friends, met new people, gained new qualifications, had new experiences and boldly gone where no Playgroup Supervisor has gone before!

- **Lynne Duckett** My interest in computing started very gradually as I realised that my children and grandchildren spoke a language of which I knew absolutely nothing. Words such as "floppy disc", "gigabytes", and "down loading". I also felt that e-mailing and surfing the net sounded rather exciting and possibly helpful in my rapidly maturing years. My children were most encouraging and arranged for me to have one of their old computers. Once installed, my senior son (who is a systems analyst) advised me to "sign on in a beginners class". This seemed eminently sensible if a trifle daunting! Having trained as a radiographer and then, after many years as a chiropodist, I had absolutely no office skills whatsoever - even looking at a keyboard was scary and as for using a mouse!! However, I enrolled in a class for retired beginners. This proved not to be the right road for me as it consisted of a class of twenty-four students and although the Tutor was very encouraging, it wasn't possible for him to give me the individual attention that I felt I needed. One of the other students on the course told me of I.T. for the Terrified at Wedmore - how relaxed was the atmosphere and that you were offered one to one lessons. It sounded just what I was looking for. The Centre really is a joy! I was made to feel most welcome and after even one session I felt more confident and sure that I could progress at my own pace. My enthusiasm for using my computer grows week by week and I know the Centre is there if I have a problem. In the last few months I have upgraded my computer to a Windows 2000 and started on the E.D.C.L course, something I would never have done without the help and encouragement of my friends at the Centre. I have also been attending the Trainers sessions hoping that I might give to others a little of the help, support and kindness that I have had. I.T. for the Terrified caters for all levels of computing needs, it is such an asset to the local community and what is more it works and is fun!
- **Jocelyne Fox** Audrey Beale began at the Centre in August 1999, with no knowledge of computers whatsoever. She has just completed her first month as a voluntary trainer. Audrey is retired and in her 60s and although for most of her working life Audrey was a fully qualified secretary, her knowledge of computers was zero. Her last job ended because the human element of the system was replaced by a mechanised one. When she first walked in the door of the Centre last summer Audrey knew absolutely nothing about IT and the benefits and pleasure it would present to her. Audrey visited the centre to learn the basics of IT and started off writing a document in word. She quickly moved onto e-mails and spreadsheets and in the last month has taken up the mantle of a trainer. Since then she has trained two beginners in the process of word. Audrey now has her own computer at home and uses it regularly to send e-mails to her daughter and her friend in Australia. Audrey says that she gained belief in herself and what she could achieve as she found the centre so comfortable and relaxed and not at all intimidating.

Editors Notes: Since writing this original case study Audrey has sat and passed her CLAIT1 Certificate and is now studying to gain the ECDL qualification. Also, I.T. for the Terrified, Wired Wedmore has moved to larger premises in order to gain capacity for the ever-growing list of attendees. The membership is currently sitting at over 150 and growing on a daily basis. For such a small populated area the project has far surpassed the original plans. It has proved to be a very social environment with many of the clients living alone with a large part of the success being the encouragement of just having a gossip over a cup of coffee. The initiative has given many a new lease of life they have

made new friends and developed skills which they had never imagined they could master.

Appendix 1: Advice & Information Centre Do you have a question? Would you like some answers! Wedmore's Advice and Information Centre is situated in The Annexe at the back of the George Hotel in Church Street, Wedmore. The centre is staffed by a part-time project manager, volunteers and staff from some of the various agencies represented at the Centre. These currently include: The Inland Revenue Sedgemoor District Council The Citizen's Advice Bureau StartHere Avon & Somerset Police Benefits Agency Pensions Service Online shopping advice We anticipate that other agencies will soon be ready to provide their range of services to help make YOUR life easier when you have to deal with Government, at local and national levels. The room has been extensively renovated, and offers a pleasant informal atmosphere to sit in comfort and discuss a variety of subjects to various agencies who will be on hand at different "surgery" times, subject to demand. Should you have to wait, you can watch Digital TV from a comfortable sofa. Access for the disabled will shortly be available. It is also hoped in time to have one of the Employment Service kiosks, which will enable you to access over 500,000 job vacancies. Hours of opening are currently under consideration. We will be publishing these on our boards, in The Wedmore News, on the web sites and other convenient sites.

StartHere StartHere has a touch-screen kiosk, which gives you access to a range of addresses so that you can contact the person you need. It is where you go when you do not know where to go. At the moment it is national addresses, but we are hoping to have local information soon. Once you access any addresses you need, you can print them and you can take that piece of paper away. You do not need to know anything about computers to use this friendly kiosk.

Inland Revenue The Inland Revenue is currently attending on Tuesday afternoons between 1.00pm and 4.00pm to answer questions on a variety of subjects, including:- Getting tax back Self-assessment forms Pensions Working family tax credit, etc. Their helpful staff will also be able to assist you to help get in your returns.

Police We hope local policeman Will Danning and/or friends will be available for an hour or so at least once a month. Law and order are priorities for us all. We need to help the police to help us. Come and share your concerns.

Online Shopping Would you like to use the internet to get those bulk items delivered to your door? Advice will be available once a fortnight.

Citizens' Advice Bureau A member of the Citizens' Advice Bureau will be available at the Centre during "surgery" times to be arranged. They will be able to offer help and advice on a variety of topics, and have access to further information as necessary. As with the other agencies the aim will be to give you as complete an answer as possible to ALL those queries! Sedgemoor District Council Planning applications Council Tax Payments Access to District Councillors How are your monies used? What does 'Best Value' really mean to you, etc. All these and many other questions which you may have can be asked face-to-face with the representative from the District Council who will be present on one afternoon a week and is ready to help with the above, and other issues which have been troubling you. Come to the Centre to meet the friendly and helpful face of the District Council - a real person! Pension Service A representative from the Benefits Agency will hold a Pensions Service "surgery" to address your problems and queries, from 1:00pm to 4:00pm on the following dates: 5th March - 2nd April - 7th May - 11th June - 9th July -

6th August - 17th September - 8th October - 5th November - 3rd December If these are successful a regular spot will follow in 2003.

Appendix 2:

Websites Project websites: www.itforttheterrified.co.uk www.wiredwedmore.co.uk
Partner websites: www.avecom.co.uk www.kowessex.co.uk
www.wiredwedmore.co.uk/local/kings_of_wessex_lc.htm www.sedgemoor.gov.uk

Appendix 3:

Case Study IT for the Terrified

Introduction to the Projects

The IT for the Terrified (ITFT) Centre opened in July 1999 in the Somerset village of Wedmore. Run as a community venture, it has developed an innovative form of introductory and ongoing training in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) skills using volunteer support. It also offers formal classes through links with the local Kings of Wessex (KOW) Community Education facility. It aims to ensure ICT is accessible to all in the community and provides an informal forum for community discussion of such developments. Its sister project, Wired Wedmore (WW), began in August 1999 and focused on the wider objective of providing direct online access to a range of electronic information and services of specific relevance to the citizens of the civic parish of Wedmore. It worked in direct partnership with a number of ICT companies (AVE, BT, Compaq, Cisco, EDS, HP, Oracle), the local parish, district and county councils, local education and health providers and other associated organisations. By 31st December 2000, it had established a community website containing a range of information about the village, its organisations and its businesses and including 'footprint' access to simplified electronic local and central government communications. Active discussions were also underway with Ondigital as to the provision of DITV Internet access for residents of the parish.

(A separate case study for Wired Wedmore is available from Angela Vivian, Project Director. The website can be found at www.wiredwedmore.co.uk) At the end of March 2001, the Wired Wedmore project evolved into Switch On Wedmore (SOW) to continue the exploration and development of WW's aims and achievements. The local district council, Sedgemoor (SDC), is the lead organisation in its funding bid to the New Opportunities Fund's Community Grids for Learning. IT for the Terrified is one of the partner organisations in SOW and future plans for the Centre to become a community One-Stop Shop are under discussion with SDC. (A project plan for SOW is available from Maria Scordialos, Corporate Director, Sedgemoor District Council.) Co-Project Managers, IT for the Terrified: Pauline Peters and Lynne Duckett. Currently Lynne Duckett and Kate Poole.

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Case Studies completed in March 2001 by Penny Vivian, Project Manager of IT for the Terrified, July 1999 - Dec 2000. Defining the Context: Community Resources and

Constraints Wedmore is representative of a resourceful rural community containing some diversity of individuals and abilities. It is the main village in a civic parish which stretches for 20 square miles and forms a focal point for the surrounding smaller villages and hamlets. It has a number of shops and businesses serving both general needs and specialist interests. It has a large variety of clubs and groups including the Isle of Wedmore Society, publishes its own Wedmore News and has its own Parish Council.

The population of the ward numbers 3,200, almost all of whom are white and of British origin. 24% are over 60¹ whilst 17% of households contain a lone pensioner². This large percentage of older people offers a considerable resource in terms of experience and in both variety of interests and similarity of concerns. This group is also representative of the growing political voice of "Grey Power". However, the village is also an example of a community which continues to face the many challenges to traditional rural life, including those effected by the Information Revolution. The decline and difficulties associated with the established industries, primarily farming, have resulted in the growing need to find other sources of employment and income. This, in turn, necessitates the diversification of customary cultural and leisure activities. Similarly, with the need to find employment elsewhere, changes have to be faced with regard to the nature of family life and modes of communication.

Wedmore contains a population of mixed income levels and faces the same 'hidden' poverty of other rural communities, many of which are resistant to intervention by central government. This, along with the significant number of pensioners, means that the community as a whole does not have large financial resources to spend on facilities and services. Of equal significance is the isolation which it shares with similar communities. Wedmore itself is the most isolated ward in the Sedgemoor district and within the top 10% for the country³. Public transport provision is extremely limited. Hence the educational, information and commercial services that are readily available in the surrounding urban areas are almost physically inaccessible to village residents without a car. This creates particular limitations for the older members of the community, as well as those suffering from physical disabilities.

Statistical Resources:

1 Total population, ethnic and age breakdown from Office of National Statistics, Neighbourhood Statistics, 1998.

2 Percentage of lone pensioners from 1991 Census.

3 Isolation statistics from Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions, Multiple Index of Deprivation, 2000.

Identification of Community and Project Needs

Consultations with individuals and groups within the community demonstrated that many of those over 30 and in particular over 45 had little or no knowledge of the potential benefits of ICT. Rather than lack of interest, this was often the result of lack of access to learning provision and ICT facilities due to both geographical isolation and financial restraints.

Many had also built up a fear of something of which they had so little understanding or experience, whilst the older members of the community in particular felt that the development of ICT skills was regarded and promoted as "something for the young". For those who had attempted access to learning provision, many had been disappointed at the lack of services which they found appropriate to their needs. It was therefore

determined that an ICT project was required within the community and that this project should be focused as a community venture.

This would ensure that the project developed directly according to community needs; facilitate the use of existing and developing resources for community benefit; and encourage a "bottom-up", as opposed to "top down", approach to the development of the project. The consultations demonstrated that the project needed to provide a learning facility which would of direct benefit to the community and should therefore provide the following: inclusion for all members of the community with a particular focus upon older people as this group tended to be and/or feel more excluded from utilising such services easy access in terms of physical location within the village and flexibility of the service to meet the varying needs of users low charges, and where appropriate free training, so as to make it affordable to all a welcoming and informal environment where people would feel comfortable in discussing any fears and apprehensions regarding the use of ICT training by volunteers from within the community so as to encourage the sharing of knowledge between interested individuals and also offset some of the associated costs by utilising existing and developing resources from within the community one-to-one training with an emphasis on the individual needs of each user in terms of both interest and experience an introduction to the uses of a computer in a simple and understandable form including basic training in word processing and spreadsheets an introduction to using the World Wide Web and access to email, with Internet access also provided as a service in itself. Such a facility would also promote an informed community forum for discussion of ICT developments. It was hoped that this would encourage the empowerment of the community in expressing its needs and concerns in both this arena and that of E-Governance.

Working directly with the Wired Wedmore project (please see Introduction), such provision could also help to facilitate and deliver solutions to wider community isolation and employment issues by enabling access to: training in ICT skills for employment as well as personal purposes experience in both training and use of such skills for volunteer trainers and potential future job creation within the project itself email services so as to expand communication methods between individuals, families and organisations within and outside the community the Internet and in particular web-based information and services of specific relevance to the community including: local business details so as also to ensure their vital online promotion simplified local and central government information and local education and health services as available. Project Implementation For the project to achieve these aims, the following elements were (and continue to be) required:

The formation of the IT for the Terrified Committee, consisting of a project director, 2 part-time co-project managers, a treasurer and two other committee members, all of whom are also trainers at the Centre. The committee has a constitution and meets on a monthly basis to discuss all issues involved with the project. The leasing of suitable premises which would be easily accessible and promote community awareness of the project. The Centre has recently moved from its original location on one of the main streets of the village across the road to larger premises in a converted hayloft at the local pub. The acquisition of appropriate systems and software for training purposes, including printing and Internet facilities and the capability to maintain these systems. The Centre originally contained 6 PCs purchased from a local supplier. It now houses 12, all with large flat screen monitors, printing facilities and Internet access, as donated by HP, Compaq and Cisco.

Obtaining adequate maintenance provision proved to be difficult but this is now supplied both by a local college student and through a weekly service contract with a local technician. The training of the trainers so as to enable them to share knowledge and skills with the "terrified". This is provided by a qualified IT trainer from Community Education and has been developed into a full programme of pre-scheduled bi-weekly teaching sessions with opportunity for trainers to suggest future session topics. As well as the introductory training subjects previously discussed, trainers are encouraged to share knowledge of additional packages, such as databases and desk top publishing, with customers once they feel sufficiently competent to do so.

The development of affordable and accessible learning provision offering inclusion to all members of the community. Hence the Centre is open throughout the year and runs sessions lasting for two hours from Monday to Friday, morning and afternoon, and a Monday evening class. It also offers early morning, lunchtime, late afternoon and Saturday sessions where necessary for individual users and a 'twilight' no-charge class for low income families. The cost for all charged sessions is £4, thereby making it as affordable as possible. All attempts are also made to meet any particular requirements of disabled users with regard to both assistance and equipment (such as, for example, the use of large, flat screen monitors) and the provision of such facilities continues to be explored. The constant publicising and marketing of the project so as to ensure community awareness of its aims and provision. A major and successful form of publicity is word-of-mouth whilst articles are consistently included in the Wedmore News and other local papers. On a wider front, sustained publicity by the Project Director has encompassed articles in the national press and on radio (BBC Bristol, Radio 4) and television, including Channel 4's E-Millionaires Show.

The consistent account of the views of the service users to develop the project directly in line with the needs, abilities, concerns and interests of the community. Both written and verbal user feedback is facilitated and encouraged throughout initial and continuing use of the service. In association with Wired Wedmore, a "Citizen's Panel" has been formed to represent and offer community feedback on products and services. The search for appropriate sources of funding/sponsorship in order to maintain the low session charges and an impartial, non-profit making approach. The Centre has not been registered as a charity so as to enable obtaining financial support from a variety of sources, including session charges, available public funds and sponsorship, and to encourage the development of genuine partnerships. Initial funding/sponsorship came from a Help the Aged Millennium Award and BT, whilst in-kind contributions have been donated by the ICT companies (equipment), SDC (rent) and Community Education (training of trainers). However, the search for financial resources presents perhaps the greatest challenge to the continued provision of the Centre and, despite numerous applications to funding bodies, the project has remained unsatisfactorily dependent on financial investment by its director. The development in partnership with the local community education facility so as to provide access to formal qualifications at the Centre, as well as to oversee training for the trainers. KOW Community Education has offered an increasing number of courses through the Centre including Internet Technologies, CLAIT and the European Computer Driving Licence.

ITFT is also the Community ICT Access Project in the school's bid for technology status and the facility is actively involved in discussions regarding future ownership of the Centre. The development of links with other relevant organisations to establish mutually beneficial associations and partnerships and promote appropriate replication of the project. In alliance with the Wired Wedmore project, links are continually being

developed with public, private and voluntary sector organisations at both local and national level. These include local schools, businesses and community groups, the Parish, District and County Councils, the Regional Development Agency, the Somerset Economic Partnership, central government departments such as the Inland Revenue, ICT companies including BT, Compaq, Cisco, EDS, HP and Oracle, Help the Aged, the Foresight Panel, the Institute of Public Policy and Research and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Indicators of Success

The ITFT project began as something of an experiment to see if the community would indeed use such a service. Its success has been beyond expectation and over 250 people had used the Centre's training services at the time of this study for a wide variety of needs. This, along with the equipment contributed by ICT company partners, prompted the Centre's recent move to larger premises, enabling the use of 12 computers for informal and formal training purposes. Interest in the project and its potential for replication continues to grow both within and outside the community and includes frequent articles in both the local and national media. The number of volunteer trainers has increased from 6 to 30 and almost half of these (14) have utilised the service as customers and gone on to become trainers. The emphasis upon knowledge sharing, as opposed to a formal learning environment, creates continual resource expansion in terms of both the number of those skilled within the community and the development of training according to the interests of members. Trainers and service users are involved in the development of training materials, in particular those of relevance to everyday activities and using "plain English". The informal and supportive environment, the one-to-one training, the focus on individual requirements and the flexibility of the service are all major factors contributing to its success. This particular and innovative approach in meeting the needs of users has encouraged not only those within the parish but also others from surrounding towns and villages and even distances of 20 miles away to access the service. There have also been a number of inquiries and exchange of information with others wishing to set up such ventures elsewhere in the country. The project was "...singled out for special attention..." in the PAQ 15 report, Closing the Digital Divide: Information and Communications Technologies in Deprived Areas, which "...highlight[ed] practical examples of best practice in furthering community access to information technology facilities and skills throughout the UK". (IT for All News, April 2000.) A large percentage of the customers are over 50 and access the service both for personal interests and in the desire to keep up with ICT developments.

A growing proportion of young people are utilising the service for leisure interests and, along with a number of job returnees and SMEs, to develop ICT skills for the workplace. Training with regard to the specific needs of the farming community is being developed, as are links with this group and in particular the Young Farmers Association. Also with regard to inclusion, links with the local 1st school have facilitated the provision of the no-charge session for parents and young children from low-income families and those with Community Education, free CLAIT courses for those over 60 and the unemployed. Of those without access to a home computer, the vast majority have either purchased or found other regular access to a computer during the course of or further to visits to the Centre. The exchange of information and discussion of experiences helps to enable the users to become informed consumers and to acquire systems appropriate to their needs. Similarly, as previously discussed, the Centre provides access to and encourages feedback on products and services. Both the Centre users and the Citizen's Panel have assisted in product trials with BT, EDS and the DTI's IT for All initiative, along with

continual appraisals of the Wired Wedmore website. Addressing the genuine anxiety that ICT advances will discourage a sense of community, the Centre has demonstrated that they can in fact facilitate it.

As social creatures, human beings very often wish to discuss their discoveries and concerns and the Centre provides an unthreatening and inclusive place to do so. This is further demonstrated with the development of Centre groups by members of the community to discuss subjects such as genealogy, antiques and stocks and shares, using ICT as a facilitator for research. The Centre has also assisted in the use of such facilities for Neighbourhood Watch activities. In its promotion of the discussion of rural community issues, it has linked with Somerset Action Forum (SAF) and contributed to facilitating the completion of over 500 questionnaires regarding the provision of rural Post Offices.

Critical Success Factors The experiences in Wedmore have shown that the essential elements for the development and implementation of IT for the Terrified project include: a project director with the vision, belief and stamina to drive, publicise and build partnerships on behalf of the project. a project manager/coordinator(s) with the interpersonal skills and flexible approach required to respond effectively to the ever-changing needs of the service initially six committed volunteers who are reasonably ICT literate and who recognise the needs of those who have little or no knowledge of computers premises which are easily accessible and enable the promotion of the service as part of the community sufficient ICT equipment to facilitate training along with access to technical support effective and sustained marketing which promotes awareness of the project and its aims forms of financial support which help to maintain the provision of a low-cost service development of partnerships and associations with other appropriate organisations to facilitate the exchange of information, the sharing of resources and the provision of services for the benefit of the community and its citizens.