

What you can do with your new PC?

People without broadband access are missing out on major savings, according to new research commissioned by the government's Digital Champion.

The study by PricewaterhouseCoopers, which was given the green light by Martha Lane Fox, found that all households without an internet connection are missing out on savings of up to £560 a year due to the cheaper deals for utilities and other issues available online.



What is a PC

- A PC is a personal computer, it can be used to play games, type letters, produce presentations, listen to music, watch DVD's and many other uses.
- It comes in several styles, a desktop PC with a separate monitor. A Laptop PC, a portable machine with built in screen and a netbook, like a laptop but smaller and mainly used just to access the internet.
- One of the most common uses for PC's at the moment is to access the internet, most often using a Broadband connection.

What is Broadband

- Broadband has replaced dial up as a way of accessing the internet, it now runs at speeds over 1mb per second, which really means that you can read material online quickly, watch video and listen to music quickly and easily.
- Broadband opens up a world of possible savings, entertainment and access to information and services.
- Is it important? Well, "Finland's Ministry of Transport and Communications has made 1-megabit(1mb) broadband Web access a legal right." And "France, one of a few countries that has made Internet access a human right, did so earlier this year."

Essential security tips

- Your PC comes with Microsoft Security Essentials installed but there's nothing stopping you from installing another package, examples of free alternatives are AVG or Avast.
- Look up online security for further information sites like www.getsafeonline.org and www.ecrimewales.com will provide free advice and links.
- Get training and advice, see page 6 for details of where to go and who to ask.

Saving Money online

- A great use for a computer and broadband connection is to save money online.
- General Sites
- Sites like www.moneysavingexpert.com or www.moneyforums.co.uk can help to point you to savings, bargains and free advice. Moneysaving expert in particular receives no sponsorship or advertising so is a fairly impartial source of information.
- www.consumerdirect.gov.uk is a government run site which contains lots of information on shopping safely online as well as information on latest scams and rip offs to look out for.

Price comparison sites

- Price comparison sites can help you to find the best deals on the things you need or want to buy.
- Many are advertised on TV such as www.moneysupermarket.com or www.comparethemarket.com help to find the best deals on things like household or car insurance, savings, credit cards and bank accounts.
- These sites generally make money by either advertising or by gaining a fee if you buy a product after clicking through from their site.
- If you have time try using more than one comparison site to see which deals you get offered. When you find the cheapest, try going to that company site yourself for a quote which can sometimes produce a further saving.
- Other sites such as www.kelkoo.co.uk or www.google.co.uk/products allow you to search for many different items, Books, CD's, DVD's, Hairdryers to Cars.

Online Shopping

- Most high street shops have an online shop also, **www.argos.co.uk**, **www.asda.co.uk** for instance.
- Some supermarkets, such as Asda and **www.tesco.co.uk** and **www.sainsbury.co.uk** allow you not only to browse but shop online, with a small delivery charge.
- Online only shops such as **www.play.com** and **www.amazon.co.uk** can also offer cheaper deals than high street shops.

Important! If you use any site that requires you to input any credit or debit card information then ensure that the web address has https not http in it also you will see a locked padlock symbol in the corner of your web site.

Earning money online

Survey Sites

Online survey sites could easily earn you over £200 per year, usually paid out as cash, vouchers or points that can be redeemed for gifts.

- Online survey sites can be an excellent way of earning small amounts of money with surveys often paying amounts between 50p and £5.00.
- Go for trusted sites such as **www.yougov.com**, **www.valuedopinions.co.uk** or **www.iap-interactive.com**. **www.pureprofile.co.uk** You gov pay out with a £50 cheque when you reach that amount (could be over a year) Pureprofile when you reach £20. Valued opinions pay out in Amazon or other shopping vouchers. IAP in online shopping vouchers.
- Check out any survey site online if you're not sure **www.moneysavingexpert.co.uk** will often have reviews with people saying if they have had problems or if they recommend a particular site.

Some sites will require you to register so you will need an email address and you will get some extra emails so it can be a good idea to set up two email addresses, one for online activity such as shopping and offers and one to share with just friends and family. Local training is available to help you with this, see later:

Free entertainment online

There is a world of free entertainment available www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer is one of the more familiar but many channels have watch again facilities, www.channel4.com had **4 On Demand (4OD)**, some free and some paid for content. If you subscribe to Sky Digital you can get online access to their programmes by visiting www.sky.com.

- www.youtube.com is a great way to watch free videos from professional programmes, music videos and user generated content, you too could be a video star!
- Music fans also have access to free online content, www.bbc.co.uk has access to all radio stations they offer and radio stations such as www.totalkiss.com and www.absolute.co.uk allow live listening.
- www.spotify.com needs downloading but allows you to pick your own music and play like a radio station.
- www.last.fm also provides a free customisable radio station.
- Free games are also available, www.miniclip.com, www.yahooligans.com and others allow you to play games for free. Many more sites are available just Google “free games”.
- Free online competitions are available from sites such as the oddly named www.loquax.co.uk which offers access to up to 500 free competitions per day, one local resident won over £3000 worth of prizes last year using a similar site.
- Most newspapers have an online section, mainly free. The Sun, Mirror, Mail and Guardian amongst others have lots of free content. Magazines also have online content free.
- Readers are also well served with http://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/Main_Page a project that has access to over 3000 free books and Google books has access to archive copies of magazines also <http://books.google.com/books>

If you have a hobby you can also find information and links online, from www.hornby.co.uk for model trains, <http://www.simplyknitting.co.uk/> for

knitters, <http://www.ccgb.org.uk/lobby/index.php?/categories/4> **Cartooning-News** for cartoonists and <http://www.letsogardening.co.uk/> for those who enjoy gardening and <http://www.4barsrest.com/default.asp> for those who like Brass Bands!. These sites and hundreds of others are great to find information, shop online for items you can't get locally, speak to other like minded enthusiasts.

If you are a sports fan you can get scores, video and information on any sport you like. www.nfl.com, www.mlb.com for American sports, www.nrl.com.au for Aussie rules fans. <http://www.british-gymnastics.orgsite/> and <http://www.pcuk.org/> the Pony Club offering yet more opportunities.

Information online

There are many access to services and sources of information online from Government, National and Local, Local Contact information and also free access to local news.

Government and Services

www.direct.gov.uk is the government directory for all public services, from taxing a car to getting pension advice.

www.gateway.gov.uk enables access to many Government services such as HM Revenue & Customs

- Self Assessment Online - for Individuals and Agents to submit SA tax returns over the Internet, view statements, and make payments
- Tax Credits Online - for individuals/families to apply for Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit, and notify changes to their circumstances. If you want to manage your tax credits online, you need to register via the link below
- State Pension Forecast - for the full working age population - 16 years of age through to 4 months and 4 days from State Pension Age – currently 60 for women and 65 for men.
- www.number10.gov.uk Site for the Prime Minister, get information, even post petitions.
- <http://wales.gov.uk> for access to Welsh Assembly Government site and your local Assembly Member.

- <http://jobseekers.direct.gov.uk> find a job or training course online, same data as Job Centre search machines.

Local contacts

- www.torfaen.gov.uk for access to local council services and your local councillor.
- <http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk> NHS direct for health matters.
- <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/866/directory/> local health services directory, find a GP, Optician, Pharmacist or Dentist.
- <http://www.gwent.police.uk/> site for Gwent Police including local crime mapping and up to date news and information.
- <http://www.torfaenvoluntaryalliance.org.uk/> is the voluntary council for the County Borough of Torfaen (a registered charity and company limited by guarantee). Our role is to support, promote, develop and represent voluntary and community groups in the county.

Local News

- <http://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/>
- <http://www.freepressseries.co.uk/>
- www.BBC.co.uk/news

Contacts

For further enquiries.
Contact Daryl Hand.
www.melinhomes.co.uk

For general enquiries please:
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E-mail: uha@melinhomes.co.uk

Further information

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Education

[http://www.torfaen.gov.uk/EducationAndLearning/
AdultAndCommunityEducation/Home.aspx](http://www.torfaen.gov.uk/EducationAndLearning/AdultAndCommunityEducation/Home.aspx)

For information on computer courses in your area
Alternatively call into Church View, Blaenavon or ring 01495791128 and
ask to see the facility and check on courses there.

Bridges Into Work
Help and support for skills and training
Croesyceiliog CEC, Cwmbran
Tel: 01633 647740/647742
Email: bridgesintowork@torfaen.gov.uk

