

RADSTOCK.PCW, Amstrad PCW User Group

# NEWSLETTER



Welcome to PC Users!

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Issue 16, April 1999

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*Adrian's Ramblings*

Well, hello again folks - and welcome to any new members. At the last meeting it was decided that the club would expand to cover PCs as well as PcWs - this makes a lot of sense from my point of view because over 80% of the club members own PCs, and so need help to get started. However, those people still committed to PCWs need not despair, as the club will be supporting computers in general. For instance, at the April 99 meeting (this one) I will be going back to the basics of CP/M use - which will also cover the basics of DOS and Unix, as most of operating systems use almost exactly the same commands, when we start talking about desktop publishing or word processing there are many parallels between PCW and PC software - this can be seen up to a point in the MicroDesign tutorial in this issue, as I have repeated the instructions for a person using Publisher 97 - most of the steps are very similar.

The main difference that we will find is that we may start to get new members once again, and hopefully stop the drop in membership which we have faced recently as people get rid of their PCWs. Hopefully we will be able to strike a balance between both types of computer, so please let me know what you would like to find out about either your PC or your PCW.

Right, onto something different - you

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may notice that the Newsletter looks a little different this month, this is because I have decided to use the full abilities of the PC, and not just try to emulate effects available on the PcW as I have done with previous issues - the Newsletter is now produced entirely on a PC (I only use my PCWs for club nights or preparing for talks), and will be printed to my laser printer (when you are printing over 400 pages a month you need a laser printer). Talking of printers, it has been a sad month for me, as I have had to retire my trusty Epson from active service due to a worn out print head. I have been using the Epson for over two years now, and have printed over 17000 pages, so we were getting to know each other very well. However the volume of printing has meant that the printer needs a new printhead - which costs over £100 when you include getting it to a qualified technician) and so I have had to switch to the Canon BJC that came with the PC. Those present at meetings will be sure to remember my views about Canon printers in general, and this one in particular! (I gave up last time I tried to use it [about a year ago] because its speed, quality and reliability were just not up to the Epson). So I am now reduced to printing everything in black, at 8 pages per minute (it does you know - I timed it one day!), or in colour on the Canon at 3 minutes per page (the Epson managed 4 pages per minute most of the time), so I really do have to slow myself down when using it.

This explains why everything I print these days is in black and white (just as in the good old days before the Epson entered the house) as the laser is much quicker (and cheaper - about 2000 pages per £20 cartridge

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compared to 400 from the inkjet) to run.

Anyway, I had better get on with the rest of the Newsletter (I know some of you only read the Ramblings, but I can't keep on like this for the whole thing - well, actually I probably could), I hope you will all have a go at the word search at the back - if it takes you as long to complete as it took Liz and I to produce you should be in for quite a spell. If you don't know what the words mean, you had better start to ask some questions at the meetings, hadn't you?

Hope you enjoy the rest, bye for now! ♦

## **CLUB NEWS**

As you have probably already guessed, the club will now be open to both PC and PCW users, so the nature of meetings will be changing slightly, and hopefully we will be able to attract some new members. Over the past few months most of the club members have purchased PCs (in fact I am aware of only 4 members who haven't yet thought about buying a PC - if the PCW does all that you want, why bother upgrading?), and have been asking questions during the club meetings, and afterwards, about various aspects of their use. I have also been helping various friends and neighbours with their PCs, so incorporating them in the club seemed the obvious thing to do - particularly as the club membership has been dropping recently, with very few people coming to

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meetings (as you know, in the last Newsletter I said I would resign in September if the membership did not improve – this threat still holds!).

So if you have a PC or a PCW related question, bring it along to a meeting, and we will try to help you out. I don't promise to have a PC at each of the meetings (it takes far to long to disconnect and reconnect), but most questions can be answered if you are willing to take notes! The inclusion of PCs means that our services can also change slightly, we currently offer the following services:

- Newsletter.
- Items for Sale
- Items Wanted
- Scanning Service
- Library.
- Meetings
- Anonymous Questions service.
- Template/Mail merge etc. service
- Company Contacts list

All of these services will now cover PC issues as well, including a full colour scanning service, and optical character recognition. We will also offer upgrade and buying advice, and issues relating to e-mail and the internet, as well as any other information you may require. If there is a service that you would like - just let me know, I will see what I can do!

Just a quick word of advice - when buying PC magazines go for the software on the front, not the magazine contents. and try to get full versions of software, not just demos - in this respect I strongly recommend the PC Advisor and PC Direct magazines in this respect. ♦

