



NEWS

ComputerTown UK! - a nationwide computer literacy project - is under way with centres already opened in Nottingham and Hillingdon and lots of interest being shown in other parts of the country. To contact CTUK! write c/o PCW, 14 Rathbone Place, London, W1P 1DE, enclosing an SAE if you want a reply. Please don't try to ring the PCW office as this project is carried out in our spare time.

The ComputerTown issue of *PCW* hit the news stands just as we were putting this one to bed so it is still too early to gauge reaction to the announcement. In the meantime we can tell you that, following a very low-key launch at the *PCW* show, quite a few people have shown interest and several have already set the wheels in motion in their own communities. A number of businesses have pledged software and machines to the project and, if these initial reactions are anything to go by, then CTUK! promises to be a huge success.

One interesting - but not very surprising - reaction has been the almost universal dislike of the name ComputerTown UK! Some say it's too American, some say it's meaningless, while others just can't put their fingers on the reason. We all know that the name is utterly irrelevant; it's what we're doing that's important. But if someone out there would like to donate a name which reflects the theme of 'taking computers out into your local community in order to promote computer awareness and remove fear,' then we'd love to hear from you. Write to us at the above address.

Now let's look at what's happened so far. First of all, Sutton-in-Ashfield and Eastcote will have CTUK!s running by the time you read this article. In each case, the local library is being used with a great deal of enthusiasm and commitment from the library staffs themselves.

Sutton-in-Ashfield is starting off in a big way with several machines, including at least one Atom, Sharp, PET, ZX80, Apple, Microtan and maybe a TRS-80 as well. They have managed this by making CTUK! an adjunct to their already thriving Sutton-in-Ashfield Computer Club (other clubs please note!). Graham Handley and Roy Griffin of Leasalink Viewdata have kindly provided them with an Atom on 'permanent loan'.

Sutton-in-Ashfield is getting its software either by developing it in-house or by scrounging. Anyone wanting to get involved should contact Deric Ellerby on Mansfield (0623) 753576. You may be interested to learn that Deric is aided and abetted in this venture by our very own Derrick Daines.

Eastcote CTUK! is starting rather less spectacularly in the (very small) local library. In fact there's only room for two machines. Contingency plans have been

made for the time when interest (and the number of volunteers) grows. Three other local libraries have been offered as potential CTUK! sites: Ruislip, South Ruislip and Ruislip Manor. Mr P Colahan, the Hillingdon borough librarian, is very sympathetic to CTUK! so, if anyone else in the borough wants to start up, you'll find him a most approachable man.

As with Sutton-in-Ashfield, software is being developed or scrounged. In fact, Eastcote-based software house, Supersoft has kindly given the project a number of programs from its catalogue. Thank you Supersoft. The people responsible for CTUK! Eastcote are Martin Baldwin and *PCW*'s editor, David Tebbutt. David can be contacted (but not by phone) at the main CTUK! address.

Hammersmith looks like being a lively area when it comes to CTUK! We've already heard from three people who'd like to set up there. We've put them in touch with each other but if anyone else would like to join in ring either Jo Gedrych on 01-602 1269 or our very own Malcolm Peltu on 01-995 1548. We can't yet give the third person's name because we're still waiting for permission. Jo and Malcolm see their project as CTUK! West London, although this doesn't mean that West London can now be considered covered! Good luck lads - we hope to hear some more news soon.

We had a nice letter from another West London man. His name is Mike Baker and he lives in Hanwell, W7. He'd like to hear from other people in his locality who'd be interested in starting a CTUK! there. Mike can be contacted on 01-840 0030.

Exciting news comes from Ingersoll, UK distributors of the Atari computer systems. Marketing manager, Steve

Bernard, strongly believes in CTUK! to the extent that he has pledged a number of machines to the project. We welcome his support and look forward to installing his computers in permanent CTUK! locations.

We also had a letter from David Payne, who works for Tandy. Although he's not in a position to scrounge free machines, he'd love to help in any way possible. He lives in South West London but any letter should be sent to the main CTUK! address for the moment and we'll forward them.

Edward Teague, until recently Sharp's PR man, popped in the other day and went away to propose a CTUK! in his home town of Romiley in Cheshire. For the moment contact Edward through the main CTUK! address.

While typing this report I had a phone call from Lyn Antill, author of our Systems series. Guess what? - she'd like to get a CTUK! going in the City of London. Anyone interested in joining in should write to her at 1 Defoe House, Barbican, London EC2Y 8DN.

Well that's it for this month. Our thanks to all those people mentioned; we really appreciate what you're doing. Next month we hope to bring you news of several more developments. Remember CTUK! should eventually cover the entire country, so it still needs plenty more volunteers. Anyone needing further information about CTUK! write to the main address enclosing an SAE. Once again, *please don't phone the PCW offices*, because CTUK! is a spare time activity.

We look forward to hearing from you, especially if you have news of your own local CTUK! progress. All news received by the middle of the month will appear in *PCW* a month later (or thereabouts).

ComputerTown UK! in brief

ComputerTown UK! is a voluntary, nationwide, community-based activity which aims to promote computer literacy by making microcomputers freely accessible to anyone interested. In particular it recognises the need for our future leaders, especially today's children, to feel completely at ease with the new technology. In ComputerTown the keywords are *fun* and *enjoyment*

with the emphasis on learning through discovery at the keyboard.

ComputerTown UK! isn't just a passing craze any more than are microcomputers themselves. It's not a plot to turn Britain into a nation of programmers nor is it a sneaky way to sell computers - in fact ComputerTown represents no commercial interests at all and is not a profit-making activity.