How ICT affects the disabled

This is a report on how ICT helps people with disabilities. We were set this work and had to find a person with a disability and interview them on how ICT influenced their day-to-day life. I chose someone who lives in my villa ge that is elderly and does not have the mobility to get to and from the shops to buy food and clothes. They also use ICT to communicate with other people as they cannot get up and go and see them.

The person I have chose is an elderly man who lives in m y village called Peter Bark, he is 83 and is partially deaf. He has his deafness from working over 30 years in the mines in Sheffield and as a result of his old age he is not very mobile and cannot move for a sustained distance.

I interviewed Peter and th is is what I found out about his social/personal and his day-to-day life:

Social/Personal	ICT in use
Using and induction loop in the 'T' position when using the telephone.	Contacting family and friends
SMS (Simple Messaging Service)	Contacting family and friends.
Internet	Shopping.
ATM machine.	Getting money out of the bank
Ceefax	Television guide
E-mail	Contacting friends and family

How The ICT meets his needs?

Social/Personal

- *Induction loop*

An induction loop is a hearing aid which when set to the 'T' position will cut out any background noise and allow Peter to hear specific things. For instance when he is trying to watch and hear the television the loop will cut out the background noise and allow him to hear it fairly clearly. This also enables him to hear the telephone clearly as well, although he can only just make out what they are saying it seems clear to him.

- *SMS (Simple Messaging Service)*

SMS is a way of sending messages in a text form via mobile phones. As Peter cannot get around very well this makes it easier to contact people such as family and friends. On a variety of operators Peter can get an unlimited number of texts a month with a pre set price and makes this cheaper for him,

also if he co-ordinates the operators with the majori ty of his friends and family he can get free phone calls to people with the same operator as him. This also cuts down the amount of money he has to pay out.

The only problem that SMS poses for Peter is that you cannot fit an unlimited amount of characters on a single message. Also it is fairly unfamiliar to him at the moment so it takes him a long time to type a single message also the buttons are very small on the model he has.

- *Internet*

Peter often uses the Internet for purchasing goods as his limited mobility means he cannot get out easily. These helps a lot with many supermarkets in his area offering home delivery and also have Internet purchase facilities. Also he can buy clothes on the Internet and gifts from the comfort of his own house. Another reason why this is good for Peter is that often things are cheaper on the Internet than in the high street.

The major problem posed by this facility is the unfamiliarity of the Internet but with time this can become a non -issue.

- *ATM Machine ('Hole in the wall' cash dispenser)*

This aids Peter with transactions when he needs to get money out of the bank, this helps, as it is a quick and easy way to get his money out for whatever reason. It particularly helps Peter as it means he does not have to stand up for a long time waiting in a queue because he can get it from the ATM machine easier and quicker.

One problem with this facility is that with his failing memory he cannot always remember his PIN number and this makes it difficult for him.

- *Ceefax/Teletext*

Ceefax/Teletext enables Peter to access information from his armchair. Examples of the information he can access are: TV Guide, Cinema times, News and sports information. It is a quick and easy information source, which is supplied by all of the terrestr ial television channels. This service also provides Peter with fun and games that can entertain him for a short amount of time.

 The disadvantages that occur within Ceefax/Teletext are that not all televisions can provide Teletext and there is a limit to the information and quality of the graphics held in it.

- *E-Mail*

E-Mail allows Peter to communicate with his friends and family wherever in the world they may be. The messages that he sends are instantly sent and received, he can also send many of e-mails at a time and does not have to worry about how many e-mails he sends because they do not cost him anything. Another good thing with e-mail is that Peter can send videos, music files, graphics and text. Peter has already got the hang of using this, as it is very easy to use. The amount of characters permitted is not limited to him so his e-mails do not have to be a certain length.

The problems that occur are that the e-mails can only be sent while he is connected to the internet which does cost, however the e-mails can be written off-line (disconnected from the internet) then sent when on-line, which only takes a few seconds and does not run up a very big bill.