



ROCHDALE  
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH  
COUNCIL

# Homeworking In Greater Manchester

A publication by  
Rochdale Homeworking Service  
Version 3

2010

## Foreword

This directory was first produced by The Greater Manchester Homework Development Project, part funded European Regional Development Fund and a partnership of five local authorities in Greater Manchester. The leading council, Rochdale MBC has supported homeworkers and those seeking homework for over twenty years, and is the only local authority to fund a permanent Homeworking Officer. The partner authorities of Manchester City Council, Wigan MBC, Oldham MBC and Bury Metro recognised the need for homework for people who cannot go out to work for whatever reason and made a contribution to the project during 2005 and 2006. European Regional Development Fund has supported homeworking in this area since 2000.

The advice in the book is the result of research by RMBC and acknowledgement is made to NGH (the National Group on Homeworking), The Health and Safety Executive, The Advertising Standards Agency, The Telework Association and the many organisations whose websites are mentioned, for providing invaluable information that is easy to access.

This reprint has been developed by the Homeworking Support Officer.

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## Are you looking for work to do at home?

### **What are your options?**

Homework, or outwork as it is also called, is often very difficult to find. It is just as hard to find a job to do in your own home, as it is to find a job in a factory or office. Sometimes it is even harder.

### **Skills**

If you have ever worked before, what skills were involved? Even if you have never done paid work before, life experiences (looking after children, caring for a relative, etc.) involve skills that may prove useful in the job market.

### **Training**

If you are unable to find work, it is worth considering training to learn new, valuable skills for the job market or for your own enjoyment. Training is usually available at local community centres or schools and colleges; you can ring them and enquire. Training can include confidence building; language skills; childcare; E.S.O.L. (English courses for people whose first language is not English); admin; typing and IT; arts and crafts and many more. Remember courses sometimes have help with fees and childcare facilities but you must check.

### **Education**

Again, if you are unable to find work and you are interested in gaining a new qualification or just studying something, it is worth considering an education course. Courses vary and if you would like further information then it is worth contacting adult/community education services or colleges, to find out where the courses are, and what fees are payable, and what childcare provision there is.

## **Starting your own Business.**

### **You can also start your own business from home.**

There are organisations that will help you if you want to start your own business. There is a list at the end of this book, of organisations that can help you to start up in business for yourself and who may be able to help you with funding.

Have you thought about catering e.g. making cakes for family or friends, catering for parties, repairing clothing, ironing, childminding, gardening, e.g. preparing bedding out plants? There are quite a variety of jobs, which can be done in the home, and they can all contribute towards starting your own business.

## **Voluntary Work**

Voluntary work means exactly that; you volunteer and the work is usually unpaid. However, you may be able to claim expenses. Many people do voluntary work for various reasons. Voluntary work will provide you with work experience, allowing you the opportunity to brush up on or improve your skills whilst helping people at the same time. It shows enthusiasm and may provide you with references for the future.

### **Who needs volunteers?**

You can check with your local volunteer bureau. Advice centres playgroups and charities usually take on volunteers. Remember to check who will pay expenses and about any childcare help available.

## **Job Hunting**

The realities of homeworking are often low pay and long hours. Often people who do homework feel isolated and would rather work in the mainstream job market given a choice. (E. g. if they had adequate childcare )

### **Looking for a job?**

Have you tried:

- *Looking in local newspapers*
- *Job Centre Plus for vacancies and assistance*
- *Careers Advice*
- *Friends, relatives, neighbours*
- *Job Shops*
- *Local Authorities job bulletins*
- *Temporary Agencies*
- 

### **If you find a homeworking job, what pay and conditions should you expect?**

- *You should be told how much you will be paid, either by the hour or by the piece, at the beginning of your employment*
- *The firm should deduct Tax and National Insurance if you earn enough.*
- *You should be reimbursed if, for example, you use your own electricity to run an industrial sewing machine.*
- *All materials and equipment you are asked to work with should be safe*
- *You should be given information on any potentially hazardous substances you are asked to work with, e.g. glues, paints, etc, and instructions on how to store them safely.*
- *You will find more information about fair piecework rates later in this book.*

NB: Not all employers follow these rules, so check before you start

### **What problems could I face?**

- *Much of the work that is done at home is boring, repetitive and not well paid.*
- *You may find you have to work under pressure to meet an employer's deadline.*
- *The work can be irregular, and weeks can go by with no work at all.*
- *You may have problems storing the work or staying in waiting for deliveries or collections*

### **What can I do about problems?**

Homeworking Service can offer you detailed advice on your rights as a worker: -

- *We can help you with legal advice*
- *We can help you with employment advice*
- *We can help with health and safety advice*
- *We can help you to find training.*
- *We can support you in any dispute with your employer*
- *We can help you check whether advertisements you see elsewhere are genuine or not.*
- *We can provide a list of local companies who employ homeworkers, although there is no guarantee that they will have vacancies.*
- *We can help you to find childcare*
- *We can help you to become self employed if that is your wish*
- *We can help you start a support group for homeworkers*

## Employed or self-employed?

The following extracts have been taken from the Inland Revenue Leaflet IR56.

The law doesn't define 'employment and 'self-employment'. The questions "Employed or Self-employed" below should help you to decide your employment status, although they are only a brief guide and don't cover every situation.

If you are unsure or you have any questions, ask at your local Inland Revenue Enquiry Centre or Tax Office, or Inland Revenue (NI Contributions) Office. Each office has someone responsible for all enquiries and decisions about employment status.

In most cases it will be obvious whether you are employed or self-employed. For example if you work for a company on a production line in its factory you are almost certainly employed. It may be clear that you are an employee because you have been given a written statement of your employment terms, or you may be a member of a pension scheme open only to employees.

However, it isn't always so easy to decide. You'll need to look at your job as a whole, taking into account all the conditions you work under in the light of the guidelines below.

### **Employed or self-employed?**

If you can answer "Yes" to the following questions you are probably employed.

#### **Employed**

- Do you yourself have to do the work rather than hire someone else to do it for you?
- Can someone tell you at any time what to do or when and how to do it?
- Are you paid by the hour, the week or month? Can you get overtime pay?
- Do you work set hours, or a given number of hours a week or month?
- Do you work at the premises of the person you work for or at a place or places he or she decides?

If you can answer "Yes" to the following questions, it will usually mean you are self-employed.

### **Self-employed**

- Do you have the final say in how the business is run?
- Do you risk your own money in the business?
- Are you responsible for meeting the losses as well as taking the profits?
- Do you provide the main items of equipment you need to do your job, not just the small tools many employees provide for themselves?
- Are you free to hire other people on your own terms to do the work you have taken on? Do you pay them out of your own pocket?
- Do you have to correct unsatisfactory work in your own time and at your own expense?

### **Casual, short term, temporary or part-time working**

The same consideration to determine employment status will apply even if you work part time or for a short period. Unless you can answer, "Yes" to the self-employed questions, you will normally be an employee.

If you have more than one job, or you work for a number of different people for a few days or weeks at a time you will need to answer the questions above for each job.

### **Employed**

It will normally be your employer's responsibility to deduct tax and National Insurance from your pay under PAYE and pay it over to the Inland Revenue.

The Inland Revenue Leaflet IR34 'PAYE-Pay as you earn' explains this in more detail.

### **Self-employed**

You are responsible for your own tax and National Insurance.

It also affects

- Social Security benefits you can claim, such as Job Seekers Allowance and SSP
- Other rights, such as the right to maternity leave, or to a redundancy payment, notice rights and so on.

## A - Z of Homeworking

This is a list of things that we know are assembled, packaged or processed by Homeworkers. It is not a list of jobs that are available in this area it is just to give you of an idea of the kind of jobs that are being done or have been done somewhere.

- A. Accounting; Appointment making; Academic gowns; Aprons; Aran sweaters.
- B. Bookkeeping; Bicycle parts; blouson jackets; Budgie cages; Brussels sprouts; boxer shorts; buckles; burglar alarms; badges; bath plugs; baby clothes; ball-point pens; ball-bearings; bingo ticket books; board games; book indexing; belts; bolts; brass valves; buttons; beading.
- C. Communications; CAD; Camera bags; carpet samples; chains; Christmas Crackers; chipping potatoes; curtain rails; computer leads; collating printed material; canoeing jackets; craft sewing; curtains; cushion covers; canvas covers; canvas shoes; copper tubes; cuffs & collars; combs; cloths; caps; chappatis; crocheting; charity fund raising.
- D. Data processing; Digital imaging; Dog collars; Dog coats; Dresses; Duffel coats; Draught excluders; Dusters.
- E. Electrical leads; electrical switches; embroidery; equestrian products; elastic.
- F. Faxing; Felt tip pens; fireman's trousers; first aid kits; fruit machines; fur coats; Father Christmas hats; football scarves and souvenirs; fireworks wrappers; filling pots with sand for artificial flowers; furnishings; Fairisle knitting.
- G. Graphic design; Garments of all kinds; glue ticketing.
- H. Hampers; hats; hangers; horse blankets; handbags; hospital gowns; Hoods; hooks and eyes; hearing aids; haberdashery.
- I. Inputting data; Intarsia knitting; insurance claims; ironing.
- J. Jackets; jewellery; jumpers.
- K. Knitting, by hand or machine; Keyboard work.

- L. Leather coats and jackets; light sockets; lobster pots; leather bags; leggings; lining; labels; leisure jackets; leisure rugs; leaflets; lampshades;
- M. Monitoring CCTV; Make-up cases; Mending cloth; Medical coats; Mohair sweaters; Medical supplies; Maggot bags; Mountaineering chalk bags; Mapping.
- N. Nappies; nurses' uniforms; nails and screws; nuts and bolts.
- O. Online research; Onions; (peeling) Onion Bajhis; Overalls
- P. Proof-reading; Pakoras; Printed circuit boards; pieces of leather and suede; party masks; pencil sharpeners; pet products; plants; plug; , pockets; puppets; painting; pottery; , pigeon clock cards; pillow cases; passports; pop socks; project management.
- Q. Quilting - cot covers and clothing
- R. Reading manuscripts; rag picking; rag dolls; rattles; rugby shorts; rosettes; remote control switches
- S. Samosas; Screws; sportswear; slippers; scourers; shoeshine kits; soldering, studs; stuffing envelopes; stringing labels; skirts; shirts
- T. Ties; tropical fish accessories; trousers; tights; tennis racquets; typing; telesales; tea towels; toy soldiers;
- U. Underwear; umbrellas
- V. Venetian blinds; velvet hearts; Victorian bowls; Vileda cloths
- W. Word processing; wires (crimping)
- X. Xmas Crackers; Xls. Spreadsheets,
- Y. Yashmaks
- Z. Zip Fasteners

## Homeworking scams

Hundreds of people in Greater Manchester have lost money to bogus homeworking schemes in their search for work to do at home. People, looking for work often respond to adverts placed in newspapers, newsagents, post offices, mail shots or attached to lampposts and they are asked to pay a registration fee in return for work from a homeworking company.

Various types of work are on offer including packing; envelope stuffing; typing; kit construction, craftwork; marketing and teleworking. However in the vast majority of cases no one is ever employed by the company and there is and never was any likelihood of gaining work.

### Supply of Homework

Often people looking for homework assume there is a list of companies that genuinely employ homeworkers; in fact no such national list exists. This book is the nearest you will find and this is only useful for people in this area, so don't be persuaded to spend money on a so-called directory of homeworking opportunities.

Finding work is really hard, unless you are lucky enough to know someone who already works at home, and they are willing to tell you the name of their employer. Evidence suggests that homeworking is an employers' market where the demand for work by far exceeds the supply, leaving workers and job seekers wide open to exploitation.

A scam is a scheme, which has been established with the **primary aim** of generating income from registration fees. No genuine employment exists nor any marketable product. There are a number of these types of schemes including:-

- ◆ **Directory**
- ◆ **Recruitment**
- ◆ **Kit making**
- ◆ **Marketing**
- ◆ **Get-rich-Quick**
- ◆ **Telephone**
- ◆ **Teleworking**

Scams can seem to be an attractive option and anyone could be fooled by them. Many of them are professionally written and sound very plausible but if they ask for money, our advice is to ignore it.

## Misleading scams - what you can do

The only legislation at present that covers misleading homeworking schemes is "The British Codes of Advertising and Sales Promotion 1995" the section on Employment and Business Opportunities sets out what information consumers should be given by companies operating homeworking schemes.

If you have lost money to a misleading homeworking scheme you should:

- **Ask the shopkeeper to remove the card from their window** or write to the Advertising Editor of the relevant newspaper asking them to stop running the advert. Ask them what steps they take to ensure that the information given in adverts that they run is genuine.
- **Report the company to the Advertising Standards Authority** if you think they have broken the British Codes of Advertising and Sales Promotion by providing misleading information. Homeworking schemes are mentioned in the specific rules relating to Employment and Business Opportunities which states what information consumers should be given before they decide to participate in a homework scheme.

### **Advertising Standards Authority (ASA)**

Brook House  
2 Torrington Place  
London WC1E 7HW  
Telephone: 020 7580 5555

or you can fill out an online complaint form at

[www.asa.org.uk/complain/form.asp](http://www.asa.org.uk/complain/form.asp)

- **Write a letter of complaint** to the company concerned, demanding a refund and threatening the company with civil action through the County Court if you do not get your money back. **Sample Letter Number 1 will help you to do this.**
- **Send a copy of your letter**, together with copies of the information listed below, to the **Trading Standards Institute (TSI)**. They are able to note the name of the alleged offender and add this to their database of alleged misleading adverts and keep a running total of the number of complaints they receive. This information can be used by the Institute to convince the Government that changes to existing legislation will be necessary to enable Trading Standards Departments to do more to protect people from these scams.

- **The information they require is;**
  1. Details of where, and when, you saw the initial advert. Include a copy of it if possible or, if you cannot get hold of a copy of the original advertisement, write down the wording of the advert or as much of it as you can remember
  2. The name and address (or other contact details) of the company concerned
  3. Proof of how much money you sent to the company and details of what you received for your payment, if anything
  4. Details of what steps you have taken to contact the company about your complaint and any response that you have received.

**Sample Letter No.2 will help you to do this.**

**Report the company to the Office of Fair Trading (OFT).** They have a duty to ensure that businesses operate fairly, legally and responsibly. Their address is

**Office of Fair Trading**  
Fleetbank House,  
2-6 Salisbury Square  
London EC4Y 8JX.

- You could also **report the company to the police fraud squad** in both the area where the advertisement appeared and in the area where the company is based. Under certain circumstances, the police may be able to bring criminal charges for theft or for conspiracy to defraud, but only if the intent to do so can be proved. The police will also need copies of all your evidence against the company before they can decide if there is a case to answer (see list above).
- Contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau or local law centre if you need help and advice in pursuing your case further.

In addition, if you wish to help bring about a change in the law, you could:

- **Write a letter to your local Councillors and your MP.** They can use their influence to raise awareness of the issue and of the need for legislation to deal with it. Councillors and MPs usually hold regular 'surgeries' or advice sessions in the area that they represent which you can attend. Details of how to find out about your local Councillors and MP can be found on the last page of this guide.

- **Write to the Minister for Consumer Affairs** whose department has responsibility for issues such as this. **Sample letter Number 3 will help you to do this.**

REMEMBER - always send copies of your evidence against the company. NEVER send the originals.

**Sample Letter Number 1** A letter to the company concerned

REMEMBER - keep a copy of your letter for your records. Please consult your local CAB or Law Centre for further help and advice on pursuing a claim through the County Court or taking other action against the company.

Your address

Company name and address

Date

Dear..... (name of company or contact name)

I saw your advertisement in my local shop window\*/newspaper\*  
(name the newspaper)/other place\* (state where) and sent you  
the fee requested of £.....

I sent the money in good faith believing the scheme to be genuine  
but no longer believe this to be the case for the following  
reasons..... (describe what is wrong).

Having sought advice, I believe that you may be breaking the  
'British Codes of Advertising and Sales Promotion' by  
printing misleading information. In addition, I suspect that you  
may be breaking the law by committing theft or by conspiring  
to defraud.

In view of this, I demand that you return the sum of £.....  
(insert amount) to me by return of post. If I do not receive  
a full refund within 7 days from the date of this letter I shall  
take further action to retrieve my money through the County Court.

Yours

(Signature)

(Print name)

## Sample Letter Number 2 Letter to the Trading Standards Institute

Your address

The Director  
TSI  
4/5 Hadleigh Business Centre  
Hadleigh  
Essex SS7 2BT

Date

Dear Sir

I am writing to you to complain about a misleading homeworking scheme. Attached are copies of my evidence against the company concerned.

I am extremely concerned by the fact that such exploitative practices are allowed to go on and would welcome your comments on what your organisation is doing to try to bring an end to this situation.

I understand, from the Greater Manchester Homework Development Project, that mine is not an isolated case and that many of these companies are exploiting loopholes in existing legislation. I would, therefore, also strongly urge you to work towards changes in the law in order to protect consumers from such unscrupulous homeworking schemes.

I look forward to receiving your reply.

Yours

Signature

(Print name)

**REMEMBER - keep a copy of your letter for your records. Also send copies (never the originals) of all your evidence against the company as detailed on Page 10.**

### Sample Letter Number 3    A letter to the Minister for Consumer Affairs

Your address

Minister for Competition and Consumer Affairs  
Dept. of Trade and Industry  
1,Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0ET

Date

Dear Minister

I am writing to you to complain about a misleading homeworking scheme. Attached are copies of my evidence against the company concerned.

I understand that, at present, legislation which is intended to protect consumers, and would-be homeworkers like myself, is inadequate and that companies such as this are able to exploit loopholes in existing laws. I am appalled that such exploitative practices are allowed to continue unregulated and largely unchallenged.

I understand from the National Group on Homeworking that they, and local homeworking projects around the country, have been campaigning on this issue for some time now. I would be grateful if you could inform me of what your department is doing to help stop these fraudulent companies from operating, particularly by enacting changes in legislation which would outlaw this practice for good.

Yours

Signature

(Print name)

**REMEMBER - keep a copy of your letter for your records.**

## Proofreading

### **Homeworking opportunity or Scam?**

Proofreading is something that many people think they would like to do as a homeworking job. There are advertisements in many publications saying "Earn up to £500 a week!" but what they are advertising is a course to learn proofreading.

After we received calls from a number of people complaining that they had been unable to find any work after completing the course and following instructions on contacting publishing houses to find work, we decided to do some investigating.

#### **What is proofreading and what are proofreaders?**

Proof-readers are used by publishing houses to read the proofs, i.e. the first printed draft of a book or magazine, to check for errors of a grammatical nature.

#### **What is the difference between a proofreader and a copy editor?**

A copy editor reads the original draft of a book or magazine article and checks for accuracy, legality and style before it goes to the printers.

#### **Who does the work?**

Publishers employ some freelance proofreaders and in-house copy editors. Freelance workers must have previous experience, excellent credentials and preferably live close to their place of business. The reason for this is the weight of the books for postage.

#### **Where is the scam?**

*The truth is that publishers do not advertise for proofreaders. The advertisements you see offering proofreading work are really offering a training course or guide for which you pay large sums of money.*

#### **Our Investigation**

We wrote to more than fifty publishing houses, both large and small, asking for their policies on employing freelancers. We were inundated with replies. Below are just a few quotes from the different companies' numerous letters and emails that we received.

- We at **Harper Collins** receive a large number of CV's from people looking for freelance work. For your information, editors at Harper Collins normally source their own freelancers utilising the services of long established contacts from the publishing industry."
- "The industry is not a growing one.....the last six months has seen the loss of almost 100 employees in trade publishing.....it is difficult for people in the industry to stay there; let alone for newcomers to break into the industry"
- "We would warn, however, that to become a freelance proof reader or copy editor it is normal to have worked in a publishing house on a full time basis for some years, in order to have contacts in the publishing industry."
- "I should add that there is no shortage of very well qualified and experienced freelance proof readers and copy editors as a result of various publishers having cut back on in-house staff in recent years."
- "... I receive between 4-5 enquiries by letter each week, the same amount of telephone calls and the inevitable e-mails. We don't even reply to the letters any more, as postal costs mount up when you are a small company."
- "For your information, we are inundated with people trying to sell us proof reading etc. 99% of which go in the bin!"
- "We would be very, very unlikely to employ someone who has done one of these home-learning courses"
- "I would hesitate to suggest that the skills people learn on these course are not sound, but realistically they won't get to work with the books they might have been promised."
- "We have had real problems with one company who charge quite a lot to their students and produce lamentably poor results"
- "We do employ freelance proof readers and copy-editors but have a team of regular freelancers that cover almost all of our titles.

- "...even if your clients did find work, it is not well paid, and it is not possible to make a living from it. As all publishers are punctilious about paying tax, it isn't possible to hide the income from the tax man."
- "Many of our books sell for £30 or more and we would not risk such an investment on an inexperienced and unsupervised proof reader."
- "Learning to be a proof reader takes at least six months, working on a full time basis - it is not just a matter of learning the correct proof reading symbols to use. Since freelance proof readers are usually paid by the hour, you would need to have had enough practice to be able to work at speed."

*On a positive note:*

Several people mentioned a recognised training course, "We would perhaps try someone who'd done the **Book House** training course, they run very good professional courses." **Eryl Humphry Jones, Constable & Robinson**

"If someone is really interested in becoming a proof reader, industry recognised courses are run by The Publishing Training Centre at **Book House**. Their web site is [www.train4publishing.co.uk](http://www.train4publishing.co.uk) and their phone number is 020 8874 2718. They may be able to recommend a course and advise on opportunities once the course has been completed." **Vanessa Williams, Michael O'Mara Books Ltd.**

"Should people be interested in a formal qualification in this field, they may wish to contact The Publishing Training Centre of **Book House** for further information." **Christine Rolfe, Harper Collins**

A piece of advice from a publisher:

"For anyone who has paid for one of these courses, they need to look at areas in their life they have specialist knowledge of and apply their skills wisely. If you have worked as a beautician, offer your services to a magazine that deals with beauty; if your hobby is bird watching, approach the RSPB about their publications."

## A guide to self employment

Most people who work from home do so either because it seems to be a good way to combine earning money with family responsibilities or because, for some reason, it is not possible to go out to work.

An alternative to working from home for another person is to start your own business and become self-employed.

This chapter gives you some basic information about self-employment and where to get advice and information.

### Your Business Idea

To start your own business, first you need a good idea!

#### Ask yourself:

- What could I do from home that people will pay for?
- What am I good at doing or what skills do I have?
- What am I trained to do?
- What could I learn to do?
- What goods/products/services would I pay someone to do at home if they were offered?

You may find that you could begin a small business from home and continue to work outside the home, at least initially, if you can choose your working hours to suit yourself, e.g. while the children are at school.

### How much to Charge

You can charge however much you like for the service you provide or the product you make, but you must be careful not to overcharge, (the way to lose custom) or undercharge, and end up out of pocket.

#### Ask Yourself

- Will anyone want to buy the product or pay for the service that I am providing?
- Will anyone pay what I am asking?
- Will I earn enough to cover costs and make a decent income?

### How to Find Customers

Finding customers can be the hardest part of making a success of your business. No one will pay you to do anything unless they know you are there.

#### A Few Ideas

- **Catering:** Children's parties; novelty birthday cakes; puddings or gateaux for local pubs or cafes, making cakes, jams or pickles to sell to shops or cafes.
- **Needlework:** knitting; dressmaking or repairs & alterations to clothes.
- Word processing or bookkeeping for another small businesses.
- **Hairdressing** or beauty treatments, (if suitably qualified)
- **Making** personalised greetings cards
- **Childminding** or after schoolcare, if registered.
- **Bed & Breakfast,** lodgings or student accommodation
- **Cleaning,** gardening or looking after pets while their owners are at work or on holiday.
- **Ironing**
- **Telephone** answering for sole tradesmen
- **Babysitting**

### **Think who your customers will be:**

- If you are offering cleaning, ironing or childminding they will be private individuals who live near you.
- If you are mending or typing, they may be students at your local college or university.
- If you are making a product you may have to either sell it to a shop or other retailer or ask a shop to sell your goods on a 'sale or return' basis. This means that the shop doesn't pay you for the goods until they have been sold.
- You could also have a stall at a local market or craft fair, and at church or community events.
- If you are offering a service for other small businesses you need to contact your local Chamber of Commerce and Business Link

### **Ways of Attracting Customers**

- Design a leaflet, photocopy it and post it through doors in your area
- Ask you local school, post office or community centre if they will display a card or poster, (they may make a small charge)
- If you are trying to attract other businesses like shops, pubs or cafes, you will have to talk to the owner or manager face-to-face. Phone them and make an appointment, then go along with samples of your product.
- If you wish to sell something directly to your customers you will have to rent a stall at a market or craft fair or sell through party plan.
- Advertising in newspapers is expensive so it is useful to think about cheaper ways to get yourself known. If you decide to use a newspaper to contact potential customers, try writing a short article about your new business that the paper might print. You might think of a funny or unusual angle to get their interest. Try local free papers first as these often look for local "human interest" stories.

Beware of using roadside notices or attaching posters to lampposts and railings, as, strictly speaking, you need planning permission for these.

## Working from Home and the Law

Many homeworkers (or outworkers as they are sometimes known) are currently treated as self-employed by their employer, even though they are not running a business or otherwise working for themselves.

**The National Minimum Wage Act 1998 reverses the burden of proof in that an employer has to prove why a worker should not be treated as an employee for national minimum wage (NMW) purposes.**

However, workers should note that it may be possible to be considered an employee for NMW purposes and still be classed as self-employed for tax and National Insurance purposes. (e.g. this situation may apply to some freelance workers).

### Planning Permission

In most cases it is perfectly legal to start a small business and run it from home. The following information applies if you are starting your own business or you are otherwise genuinely self-employed on your own account.

You will only need planning permission if you are doing something which may cause annoyance to your neighbours or which changes the main use of your home from being a private house.

The main forms of nuisance or annoyance are traffic or parking problems, caused by customers calling at your house, and noise or smells caused by your business activity. If you are in doubt about whether you need planning permission, contact the Planning Department at your local council.

You **are** likely to need planning permission if your business means that you have to alter or extend the size and shape of your house.(e.g. build an extension or a loft conversion)

So long as your business is being run from a room in your house, which is also part of your home, such as a spare bedroom, you **are not** changing the main use of your house. You should not need planning permission and you will not need to pay business rates on your property. If your business takes over more than one room, you **may** need planning permission and you may also have to pay business rates rather than council tax, on your property.

## Tax for the Self-employed

If you're self-employed, you are responsible for paying your own tax and National Insurance contributions. You'll need to keep business records and details of your income so you can fill in an annual tax return. You may also need to register for VAT.

Every year you will have to tell the Inland Revenue how much money your business earns (income) and how much it costs to run (expenses). The difference between the income and the expenses is called **profit** and the amount of tax you will have to pay depends on how much profit you make.

It's important to let HMRC know that you're self-employed as soon as possible - even if you already fill in a tax return each year. If you don't tell them within three months of the end of your first month in business you could face a penalty.

You can register by:

- calling the Newly Self-Employed helpline on 0845 9154 515 (open from 8.00 am to 8.00 pm Monday to Friday and from 8.00 am to 4.00 pm at weekends)
- completing the form at the back of the leaflet: 'Thinking of working for yourself?'

They can help you with filling in the necessary **self-assessment** forms and will answer any questions you might have about tax.

From April 2010, you are allowed to make £6475 in profit before you pay any tax. This works out at £124.52 per week. This amount is subject to change with each new budget.

You calculate how much tax you have to pay by taking your total income for one year, then subtracting any expenses you had, such as travelling, advertising or equipment purchase. If the amount that is left comes to more than the amount you are allowed to earn before paying tax, you will pay tax on the extra profit that you make.

You will need to pay any tax that you owe at the end of each financial year. The tax year starts and ends in early April. If you think that your business will make enough profit for you to be liable to pay tax, you may wish to put some money aside each week or month so that you do not have to find all the money to pay your tax bill at one time.

## National Insurance for the Self-employed

Like tax, National Insurance Contributions, (NIC's) for self-employed people depend on how much profit you make over a year. However, unlike tax, which you pay at the end of the financial year, NIC's are paid monthly.

Self-employed people pay **Class 2 contributions**, which cost £2.40 per week. You must inform the Contributions Agency that you are becoming self-employed and they will send you details about how to pay your national insurance.

If you complete form **CWF1 "Notification of self-employment"** this also notifies the Inland Revenue and Customs and Excise, which deals with VAT. This form can be found at the back of leaflet **CWL1 "Starting your own business"**. Leaflet **CWL2 "National Insurance contributions for self-employed people. Class 2 and Class 4"** contains more information about NIC's.

You may not have to pay any NIC's if you do not think you are going to make more than £5,075 this year. This works out at £97 per week.

You still need to tell the Contributions Agency that you are going to be self-employed, but you can apply for a **Small Earnings Exemption Certificate**. There are time limits for this exemption, so you need to apply as soon as possible.

For more details and an application form, see leaflet **CA02 "National Insurance Contributions for self-employed people with small earnings."**

All the forms and leaflets above can be obtained free of charge by contacting your local tax office.

## Record-keeping for the self-employed

You must keep records of your income and your expenses so that you know how much profit you have made, and then work out if you have to pay any tax.

**You have to keep records of your income and expenses for up to 6 years and the Inland Revenue can ask to see your records**

### EXAMPLES OF BUSINESS EXPENSES

Raw materials, travel stationery, phone, heating and lighting in your work room, protective clothing, tolls and equipment.

#### ***DON'T FORGET:***

- Business expenses must be written in your books and
- you must have a receipt showing the amount spent.
- Your records should include bank statements (showing money paid in and taken out of your account), cheque book and paying-in book, stubs receipts for items you have bought, copies of receipts that you have given to customers and an accurate book keeping system.

**You can start a book keeping system quite simply, as the example shows below.**

1. Buy an exercise book and open it at a double page. Head the left side

INCOME and the right side EXPENSES.

2. Rule each page into 3 columns and give them these headings.

Date,

Details

Amount

3. Every time you earn any money, fill in the "Income" page with the date that you earned it, who paid it and how much you earned. Every time you spend any money on a business expense, fill in the expenses page with the date that you paid the money out, what you spent it on and how much you spent.

#### Income

Date	Details	Amount
21/4	Mrs. Smith	£10.00
28/4	Mrs Ahmed	£15.00

#### Expenses

Date	Details	Amount
23/4	Bus Fares	£1.60
26/4	Zip	£2.50

**To work out your profit for the year:**

1. Add up all the amounts on your **income** page to give your total income.
2. Add up all the amounts on your **expenses** page to give your total expenses.
3. Take the **expenses** away from the **income** and the amount left over is your **profit**.

You will pay tax on any **profit** over and above **£6475** (for tax year 2010-11)

Even if you have spent all your profit on yourself and your family, you still have to declare it for tax purposes.

### **Insurance for the self-employed**

If you are running your own business you will need to be insured. Your ordinary household contents and/or buildings insurance policy will not automatically cover you for business use.

**You will need to check this out with your insurer before you get started.**

Some insurance companies offer policies which will cover all aspects of your business needs, including such areas as business contents and public and employer's liability, as well as covering your domestic contents and buildings insurance needs.

***You will need public liability insurance if people are visiting your home for business purposes and you should make sure that any policy you are considering will meet your specific needs.***

A useful website for prospective entrepreneurs where you will find information on starting and building your own business is. <http://www.startups.co.uk>

## FRANCHISES

For many people franchising is an excellent way of starting up in business. There will be more support from a franchiser after the sale, than if you simply buy an existing business or start from scratch.

Franchises are usually offered as a low risk way of expanding a successful business across a wider area. When you buy a franchise you buy into an established system of support, training, stock, experience and brand name. You will probably have to follow rules that restrict your choices about recruitment and suppliers

You have to decide whether the back-up and brand name are worth the restrictions and make your choice accordingly.

### PRO'S

- You are often investing in a tried, tested and successful business formula.
  - You are gaining the benefit of the franchiser's experience and knowledge, thereby reducing the scope for mistakes. In particular you are spared many of the administrative headaches associated with setting up a business.
  - In many cases you will be taking advantage of the name and reputation which has already been built up by the franchiser.
  - On many occasions the franchiser offers training and ongoing support within the package.
  - You can benefit from the franchiser's activities in such areas as marketing, advertising, research and development and you can take advantage of their enhanced buying power.
  - Many high street banks see franchising as a sound investment and are more likely to lend more, and on better terms, than if you were starting your business from scratch.
  - A properly tested and structured franchise system, offered by a competent franchiser, offers more of a safety net than going into business independently.
  - You do not necessarily need direct experience in your chosen area so this can open up access to many types of business which you may not otherwise have considered.
  - If you carry out your research properly, you should have a clear idea of how you will be spending your time.
  - As with any form of self employment, you will be working for your own future and not someone else's
  - It is a well respected method of starting in business

## CONS

- Often a percentage of your profit will go to the franchiser.
- You are not entirely your own boss.
- Your business practice may be restricted with regards to : choice of suppliers, employment policy, customer base and territory etc. You may find this frustrating.
- A reasonable sized investment is required (ranging from about £5,000 to £20,000)
- The failure of a franchiser can leave the franchisee with a business which is not as viable as an independent operation.
- If the control of the franchise changes hands it could be for the better but it could be for the worst.
- You are very much dependent upon the franchiser and other franchisees to maintain the integrity of the brand. One bad apple can adversely affect the whole network.
- You may not be entitled to resell your franchise.
- Franchising is a complex area with many sources of potential conflict between the franchiser and franchisee, particularly regarding the terms of the contract.

### Watch out!

Do your research and be aware that some companies use the word franchise to describe what is really a commission agency, network marketing opportunity or other form of start-up.

There are franchises on offer in every field imaginable from child care to coffee shops and fast foods to financial services. If you type "Franchises" into Google and click on pages from the UK only you will find about 1,170,000 pages, and if you search the whole web it comes up with 14,300,000 pages, so there is lots of information out there and it will not all be truthful or honest, so please be careful and take impartial advice.

### Some useful links

Lloyds TSB offer franchise advice on:

<http://www.lloydstsbusiness.com/support/businessguides/franchising.asp>

The Franchise Business website that calls itself "The Guide to the UK Franchise Market"

<http://www.franchisebusiness.co.uk/>

Start in Business

<http://www.startinbusiness.co.uk/franchise.htm>

## Direct Sales Organisations

Direct Selling is an ideal way to start a business of your own and offers many unique opportunities. It's a method of selling goods directly to the consumer and is the UK's largest provider of part time earnings. It is usually made face to face - either where a product is demonstrated in the home or a catalogue is left with the customer.

Direct selling only requires a very modest initial investment to start your own business - often less than £100. Considering that the average start up cost for a small UK business working from home is around £5,000 - the Direct Selling opportunity offers both the personal satisfaction of creating your own business and a minimal outlay.

Virtually every category of goods sold in a typical supermarket or department store is now available via the Direct Sales market. "Services", the largest product sector, covers telecoms and utilities. The second largest sector, personal products, particularly benefit from the 'try and test' feature of Direct Selling. The same is true of books and novel household items that may not be readily available in retail stores.

<b>Services</b>	- Telecoms, Gas & Electricity Supplies.
<b>Personal</b>	- Cosmetics, Fragrances, Skincare, Jewellery, Clothes.
<b>Food &amp; Wellness</b>	-Foods, Supplements, Diet Plans, Fitness, Aromatherapy.
<b>Household</b>	-Kitchenware, Housewares, Furnishings, Electrical, Cleaning,
<b>Family</b>	-Books, Toys, Games, Audio Visual, Financial.

## Working in Direct Sales

A lot of people do make a decent living selling items direct to the public, either through party plan or catalogue sales. The reason you see so many advertisements is that it is not easy work, but if you take the right precautions when you chose a company to work for, and if you have the tenacity to keep going through the early days, then you can be successful.

### Key points to remember

Select a business with a product range that appeals to you and which you consider to be fairly priced. If you like the product, then you will find it easier to pass that enthusiasm on to others. It's a more important consideration than any earnings claim.

• Beware of exaggerated earnings claims. With a sound business, high earnings are possible, but they require time, hard work and dedication. They are always based on actual direct sales of products to consumers.

- Good Earning Opportunities in Direct Selling require only modest investments. Beware of invitations to take a short cut to a higher appointment by investing in large amounts in stock.
- *Always ensure that you receive a proper written contract and that you understand it. If the opportunity includes the right to recruit others, then check that it complies with the Law. DSA membership is a useful indication of legal compliance.*

## Reputable Companies

There are many "Get-rich-Quick" schemes advertising their unique business opportunities, trying to get your money, but, equally, there are lots of companies that sell a genuine product and pay a decent commission to those selling the products. An easy way to find a list of reputable companies is to check out the DSA website at <http://194.203.128.226/>



## The Direct Selling Association

Since 1965, the DSA has been the recognized trade association for the Direct Selling channel of distribution. Today its member companies account for 59% of total Direct Sales. Direct Selling is the UK's largest provider of part time, independent earning opportunities. It is an alternative channel of retail distribution which accounts for sales in excess of £2 billion every year and offers the public a wide range of consumer goods and services. Direct Selling businesses range from small companies to large multi-national operations. From gas and electricity supplies to clothes, toys and games to skin care and cosmetics, these are just some of the categories of goods that are supplied through Direct Selling companies.

### **DSA members are required to comply with two Codes:**

#### **DSA Consumer Code of Practice**

This Code provides consumers with a level of protection that exceeds their legal rights and has been approved by the Office of Fair Trading. The DSA Code demands fair selling methods and the provision of an independent Code Administrator whose judgments are binding on all members.

#### **DSA Code of Business Conduct**

This code covers the fair and honest promotion of independent business opportunities in Direct Selling. The Code provides protection of investments in business opportunities that exceed those demanded by law. The code is administered by the DSA's Independent Code Administrator.

## KLEENEZE V BETTERWARE

Kleeneze and Betterware are two companies selling similar products through catalogue sales and they both advertise regularly for agents. Here is a comparison of both companies for you to decide which one could be right for you.

**Kleeneze**, is an 80 year old British company that recruits people to sell its goods from home.

- **There is a genuine product** - Kleeneze sell household products through a main catalogue and "specialogues" that are delivered to your door. The items are useful and many people do look forward to receiving their catalogue and do buy from them. Many of the items they sell are unavailable anywhere else. Delivery is free and customers only pay for goods on delivery.
- **You can earn good money** - If you put out the catalogues, and take them back within a few days, you will get orders, and you can be paid up to 33% commission on those orders.
- **There is a career structure** if you wish to earn more money, and want to progress. (More about that later)
- **You do receive support.** You can only join Kleeneze through a sponsor. There is a structure called an UPLINE, which starts with your sponsor and works up through his sponsor to the top. When you start working, your sponsor will earn a little extra based on your earnings, for introducing you to the company.

The career structure they talk about is based on you recruiting other distributors, who recruit yet more distributors ad infinitum. There are people earning vast sums of money, and they are very open about showing just how much, because it encourages others to join.

### BUT

- **It is not as easy as they say** Before you can deliver your catalogues you have to put them together. Several catalogues, an order form, an introduction slip and a plastic bag, have to be assembled. The catalogues need to have the distributor's name, address, telephone number and distributor number on them. When you first get your catalogues they come in VERY heavy boxes.
- **There is a payment to be made in advance.** We tell people never to pay up front for work, but the company stress that this is a business opportunity, not a job. At the time of my research the amount required to join was £75, this bought you 50 catalogues and "specialogues" plus several promotional audio and video tapes to assist you in recruiting other distributors. The company suggests that it is better to start with more catalogues and another 50 cost £25, making £100 investment to start.

**Betterware** is another British company that started in the East London in the 1920's and sells genuine household products via a catalogue that is delivered to your home by a distributor. Their website gives a history of the company.

<http://www.betterware.co.uk/>

**There is no cash outlay;** everything is free, including all catalogues and stationery because the company advertise that they provide everything you need to succeed. As a distributor you would have a clearly defined territory assigned specifically to you. You distribute catalogues to homes. Take and deliver orders and prepare a weekly order form for processing.

### COMPARISON

**Betterware** and **Kleeneze** appear at first sight to be similar opportunities but there are some major differences.

- With **Betterware** you will be allocated an exclusive geographical area in your locality by your co-ordinator, who will expect you to service the households in that area on a regular basis.
- You will not have another Betterware distributor competing for business in the same territory, although you may have competition from other companies such as Kleeneze. If a Betterware distributor proves unreliable or unprofitable, he or she is likely to be replaced as soon as another agent can be recruited. In many instances this is all that a sloppy distributor should expect, but if a conscientious distributor has spent many months building up a solid base of repeat customers, then has the misfortune to fall ill for a length of time all the hard work will be handed on a plate to the replacement distributor or the best customers could be cherry-picked by the co-ordinator
- **Kleeneze** differs in that you are free to run your business pretty much as you please with respect to where, when and for how long you work. **Kleeneze** won't get rid of you if you produce poor sales levels unless you sell absolutely nothing within a six-month period, in which case you've pretty well got rid of Kleeneze rather than vice-versa) but of course your earnings will be correspondingly poor.
- **Betterware** provides 'free' catalogues and order forms etc. whereas **Kleeneze** charges for them but the commission on sales for Betterware is less than with Kleeneze which pays higher commission for higher volume sales. This means that with **Betterware** you are paying for your stationery in a round about way.

- **Betterware** offer positions to successful distributors as 'self-employed' coordinators, earning an override on the sales of distributors within their defined territories whereas **Kleeneze** offers every distributor the chance to sponsor new people into the business which is why you see so many advertisements; everyone wants to earn the money without doing all the work.
- **Stop Press:** Another difference between **Kleeneze** and **Betterware** that we have just found out about is that to join **Kleeneze** you must have a clean credit record, or they will turn you down. **Betterware**, however have stopped credit scoring, because they were losing out on potentially good workers.

### Which is better?

It depends on how you like to be organised. If you prefer to have someone to report to, who will tell you where and when to work, and make some of the decisions for you, then **Betterware** is for you.

If you want to be free to choose where, when, how you work, and **you have the self-discipline to organise everything yourself**, but with someone above you to call on for help, maybe **Kleeneze** is the one.

Either way, you will end up doing a lot of legwork in all weathers, and have to deal with people on their doorsteps. It isn't what I would choose, but I know people who do it, and enjoy it whichever company they work for. They look upon it as a profitable form of exercise, and enjoy the contact with customers.

So next time you see one of those adverts offering fantastic lifestyles but giving little other information unless you fill in your personal details, you may find out it is **Kleeneze** or **Betterware**. Don't worry, it's not a scam, just the chance to do some hard work and make some money in your own time.

## EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS FOR HOMEWORKERS

### TAX CREDITS

Homeworkers are entitled to claim tax credits if eligible

The general rule is that to qualify for TAX CREDITS you must be aged 16 or over and usually live in the United Kingdom. Some people who live abroad are eligible, too, and more information can be obtained from the Inland Revenue Tax Credit help line.\*

#### Child Tax Credit

is payable to families with at least one child and is worth £10.48 (the family element) per week to all families with annual incomes below £50,000. Families with a baby under a year old receive an extra £10.48 (the baby element) and for each qualifying child for whom they are responsible they receive £44.23 (the child element). This amount is increased to £52.21 if a child has a disability (disabled child element) and to £73.26 if the child has a severe disability (severe disability element.) These are the maximum amounts payable and are subject to earnings thresholds. For a full explanation it would be wise to contact the Inland Revenue Tax Credits Help line\*.

Please note: If you are part of a couple, you must claim jointly, you cannot decide to claim independently of your husband or wife.

**Working Tax Credit** is for people who are employed or self-employed (either on their own or in a partnership), who

- usually work 16 hours or more a week
- are paid for that work, and
- expect to work for at least 4 weeks

and who are

- aged 16 or over and responsible for at least one child, or
- aged 16 or over and disabled, or
- aged 25 or over and usually work at least 30 hours a week
- People aged over 25 without children may qualify if they work over 30 hours.
- People aged 50 or over may qualify for up to a year if they are returning to work following 6 months on benefit.

**Working Tax Credit** is paid to the person who is working 16 hours or more a week. Couples, both working more than 16 hours a week, must choose who will receive it.

*You cannot receive **Working Tax Credit** if you are not working but you can receive it if you are a homeworker working more than 16 hours a week.*

### What can you get?

- The basic amount per week of tax credit is **£36.92**
- If you are a couple or a lone parent This rises to **£73.26**
- If you work more than 30 hours per week you could receive a further **£15.19**
- There are additional payments if you are disabled, severely disabled, or over 50.

Call the \*Inland Revenue Tax Help line for further information.

### The Childcare Element

As part of Working Tax Credit you may qualify for help towards the costs of childcare. If you do qualify, the amount of help you receive will depend on your income. The maximum you could claim would be 80p for every £1 you pay out in childcare costs.

#### There are limits to the amount you can claim:

- For one child there is a limit of £175.00 per week
- For two or more children the limit is £300.00 per week
- This means the most you can receive for the childcare element if you have one child is £140 (£175 at 80p in the £1),
- or if you have two or more children. £240.00 (£300 at 80p in the £1)

#### To make a claim for the childcare element:

- A lone parent must work 16 hours a week or more.
- Couples can only claim if both of you work 16 hours or more,

or

- One of you works 16 hours or more per week **and** the other is incapacitated for childcare purposes i.e. has to stay at home but cannot look after the children.

or

- One of you works 16 hours a week or more **and** the other is an in-patient in hospital,

or

- One of you works 16 hours a week or more **and** the other is in prison.

**\* Tax Credit Help Line Telephone Number is 0845 300 3900**

## Holiday Rights

On 1<sup>st</sup> October 1998 the government introduced new laws which gave ALL workers the right to paid holidays and to breaks during their working day. These new laws are particularly important because for the first time they give homeworkers the right to paid holidays.

### **Some people who work at home may be self-employed.**

If you are selling goods or services direct to the public from your home, e.g. if you offer your own typing service or run your own childminding business you are likely to be self-employed.

**However**, if you work for an employer, to his specifications, using his materials, you are likely to be employed. This is the case even if your employer says that you are self-employed or expects you to pay your own tax and National Insurance.

*Your employer cannot avoid giving you paid holidays simply by saying that you are self - employed.*

### **How much holiday pay should you get?**

From 23 November 1999 the law gave all workers the right to **four weeks** paid holiday. Most homeworkers do not receive paid holidays. If you already have paid holidays and these are less than four weeks then your employer **must** give you four weeks.

If you have never had paid holidays then your holiday rights are explained below.

### **What you should be paid?**

#### **A week is a normal working week.**

Many homeworkers have different patterns of work from time to time, and do different amounts of work over time. This makes it complicated to work out what a working week is.

For homeworkers the simplest answer is to say that if you want to take a week's holiday, then the amount you should be paid for this week will be based on the average of what you have earned in the last 12 weeks.

Add up everything you have earned in the last 12 weeks and divide the total by 12. This is what you should be paid for a week's holiday. If you want to take a holiday less than a week you will have to divide this answer by the number of days a week you normally work to get the amount you should be paid for each day's holiday.

### **When you can take your holiday?**

Some homeworkers are able to decide whether or not to accept work in a particular week e.g. Christmas or Ramadhan. However, some homeworkers feel that it is important to take work whenever it is available and to fit any "Holiday" into the times when work may not be available.

### **Booking a holiday - giving notice**

You should give your employer notice of your intention to take holidays; either according to any agreement that may exist or, if there is no agreement, by giving twice as much notice as the length of the holiday that you intend to take.

- For example, if you want to take two weeks' holiday, you should inform your employer at least 4 weeks beforehand.

### **Employers' notice**

Your employer can decide when you may or may not take these holidays but he or she has to give you enough notice, equivalent to that number of days.

- For example, if he or she did not want you to have a holiday in the first three weeks in December, then he or she would have to tell you this at least three weeks before the start of that period., i.e. by the second week in November.

NB. Your employer cannot pay you instead of giving you a holiday.

There must be at least three weeks when you are not working and are being paid. You cannot carry over holidays from one year to another so you must be sure to take your holidays every year.

## If you are sick

### Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

SSP is the pay you get from your employer when you are sick. If you qualify you can claim SSP for up to 28 Weeks.

### Can I claim?

- Everyone who earns above the National Insurance threshold is entitled to SSP. At April 2010, this threshold is £97.00 a week (the Lower Earnings Limit).
- If you qualify you will not receive anything for the first three days of sickness (the waiting days), unless your illness is a recurrence of a condition which made you absent within the previous eight weeks.
- If you have a recurring illness you may not have to wait for three days before the payments start.

### How do I claim?

- Your employer should pay SSP.
- You must tell your employer that you are sick as soon as possible and provide a sick note.
- Your employer's rules on sick leave should be in your written statement of terms and conditions. If you have a statement, check the section and follow the rules.

### What if I don't get SSP

If your employer does not give you SSP, you must claim from the Benefits Agency.

- You may not get SSP because you have used all your 28 week entitlement
- If you earn less than the Lower Earnings Limit (LEL), you will not be paid Insurance Contributions. ( At April 2010, the LEL is £97.00 per week).
- You should try and claim Incapacity Benefit or Income Support.

**If your employer refuses to pay you SSP**, ask him or her to fill in a form SSP1. Your employer should have one, and to give you the reasons in writing.

- Take the form and the written statement to your Benefits Agency to see if you can get Incapacity Benefit or Income Support instead.
- If either you or the Benefits Agency consider your employer's reasons for refusing you SSP are wrong, you can appeal. Your Benefits Agency or Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) can give you more information.

**You do not pay NI until your earnings reach £110**

## National Minimum Wage

Since 1st April 1999 most workers aged over 18 have been entitled to the National Minimum Wage. There are very few exceptions to this. The exceptions include among others, people doing voluntary work and people in the Armed Services.

Some employers will try to avoid paying the Minimum Wage by calling people who work for them, "self employed".\* this is because self-employed people are one of the groups not entitled to the Minimum Wage. However, even if you pay your own tax and National Insurance, if you are doing work for someone else **you may qualify to be paid the Minimum Wage.**

### **New Regulations about Piece Work for Homeworkers.**

**From October 2004**, employers have been obliged to:

1. Give employees written information about the rate they are expected to work at and their hourly wage;
2. Pay the minimum wage for all hours worked if you are not provided with a written notice. You should keep a record each time you start work and when you stop.

**NB** The written notice must state that the employer has completed a test or estimated the average speed at which the task in question can be performed, and state the rate per piece to be paid AND give the telephone number of one of the National Minimum Wage help lines.

The Current rates of the Minimum wage (October 2010)

The Minimum Wage is paid at the following rates:-

Full adult rate (workers aged 22 and over) £5.93 per hour

Development rate (workers aged 18 - 21) £4.92 per hour

*The development rate can also apply to workers aged 22 and above during their first 6 months in a new job with a new employer if they are receiving accredited training.*

**From April 2005**, employers have to pay the average home worker 120% of the national minimum wage for a block of work. This means that more employees - not just the fastest - will get the national minimum wage for an agreed block of work.

\*see "Employed or Self-employed?" P4

## How this is calculated

An employer will have to carry out tests to establish what is called the "*mean hourly output rate*."

He can do this simply by dividing the total number of pieces produced in an hour by the total number of workers tested. Or he can test a sample of workers, but these must not just be the fastest workers. The test must include any extra tasks such as unpacking boxes before starting work. The employer can be called upon to prove how he estimated the time it would take.

- If the tests show that an average worker completes 10 pieces in an hour, the employer would have to pay his on-site workers at least 59.3 pence per piece in order to comply with the regulations. (Equal to the current minimum wage rate of £5.93p an hour)
- From April 2005, the law is that homeworkers would earn 71.16p per piece. (Equal to 120% of the current minimum wage rate of £5.93p an hour).
- By setting the rate at 120% of the on-site rate, homeworkers who have to get work out and put it away, which takes up time, will have a chance at actually achieve NMW.

## Problems with your employer over the Minimum Wage

**It is an offence if any employer should:**

- not pay the Minimum Wage,
- keep insufficient records or keep false records
- delay or obstruct officers appointed to enforce the Minimum Wage.

Your employer **cannot dismiss you** or subject you to any other detrimental action for enforcing your right to the Minimum Wage. If he does so, you can bring a claim before an Employment tribunal. You can do this from the first day that the employer employs you.

Please Note: Even if you no longer work for your employer, if you believe you have been paid below the minimum wage you should continue to contact the Inland Revenue's minimum wage help line on **0800 917 2368** or contact this office for further assistance. Telephone numbers are at the back of the book.

## Employment

### Companies that use homeworkers

The 1998 - 2004 Workplace Employment Relations Survey Panel (WERS) Survey (conducted in continuing workplaces) recorded a substantial increase in the availability of a range of flexible working and leave arrangements, including homeworking, 28% of workplaces up from 16% in 1998.

The following is a list of companies and organisations who offer homeworking as a work-life balance option, although you may have to work for them on site before you have the option to work at home. Others have advertised home-based jobs within the last year. You can find details of most of them on the Internet and web addresses are given in most cases.

1. **AA** The AA employ homeworkers to take calls from stranded motorists.  
<http://www.theaa.com/careers/meet-our-people/home-based-teleworker.html>
2. **Age Concern:** Age Concern have advertised home based fundraising jobs in the last year. <http://www.ageconcern.org.uk>
3. **Anthony Nolan Bone Marrow Foundation** <http://www.anthonynolan.org.uk>  
"Our fundraising staff are based either from home, Head Office or at one of our Regional offices near Oxford or Livingston. Our Fundraising staff play a vital role in maintaining support for the charity at a local level, raising vital funds and working closely with the media to ensure regular media exposure in their areas. They give talks to a variety of public groups and organise large and small fundraising events. We recruit people experienced in communication and fund-raising." e-mail: [recruitment@anthonynolan.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@anthonynolan.org.uk)
4. **Boehringer Ingelheim (BI)** is a company that allows homeworking as part of its work life balance policy.  
<http://us.boehringer-ingelheim.com/employment/employment.htm>
5. **British Medical Association employs** Employment Advisors who work from home. "Vacancies arise from time to time across the Association from representational and political activities, professional activities, public affairs and communications, as well as business support areas including finance, human resources, information management and technology and legal services"  
<http://www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/Hubcareersatthebma>

6. **BT** "We promote flexible, home and part-time working, supported by generous policies on maternity, paternity, parental and adoptive leave and leave for carers."  
<http://www.btplc.com/Careercentre/Ourworkstyle/index.htm>
7. **Campaign for Rural England** has advertised home based jobs in the last year. <http://www.cpre.org.uk/jobs/index.htm>
8. **Lilly and Company Limited** Eli Lilly and Company Limited is the UK affiliate of major American pharmaceutical manufacturer, Eli Lilly and Company of Indianapolis. This affiliate is one of the UK's top pharmaceutical companies, with a research and development centre, two manufacturing sites and a distribution centre which exports medicines to all parts of the world. They employ 2,400 people in the UK. They allow staff to work at home as part of work life balance policy.  
<http://www.lilly.co.uk/Nitro/index.jsp>
9. **Environment Agency** has advertised home based jobs in the past year.  
<http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/jobs/>
10. **Future Travel** employs home based agents. Future Travel is a subsidiary of United Co-op Travel Group and is registered at Hamil Road, Burslem, Stoke on Trent, Staffordshire ST6 1AJ. Registered company number. 3283092
11. **Kidney Cancer UK** Kidney Cancer UK was founded in January 2000 by Keith Taylor and Dick Williams, two kidney cancer patients. It is the first support organization for kidney cancer patients and carers to be established in the UK. They have advertised for a home-based administrator within the last year.
12. **Kidney Research UK**, recently advertised for a fundraising manager  
<http://www.kidneyresearchuk.org>
13. **KPMG** This national accountancy and audit company allows homeworking as part of their work life balance policies.  
<http://www.kpmg.co.uk/>
14. **Lloyds TSB** are currently posting ads on their website for home based mortgage specialists. They also allow other staff to work from home as part of their work life balance policies. <http://www.lloydstsbjobs.com/>

15. **London Borough of Camden** is one of many councils that allow staff to work from home.
16. **London Wildlife Trust** is another organization that advertised home based jobs in the last year. <http://www.wildlondon.org.uk/>
17. **Macmillan Cancer Relief** advertised for home based fundraisers within the last year.
18. **Merton City Council** another local authority that allows homeworking as work life balance.
19. **MS Society** advertised in the last year for home based LOCAL SUPPORT DEVELOPMENT OFFICERS <http://www.mssociety.org.uk/>
20. **Nationwide Building Society** are employers who offer homeworking as a work life balance option. <http://www.nationwide.co.uk/careers/default.htm>
21. **My Travel**, are advertising for experienced sales advisors to work from home. They used an agency for those particular positions, but you can find out about jobs at [www.mytravelcareers.co.uk/retail/positions.asp](http://www.mytravelcareers.co.uk/retail/positions.asp)
22. **Nortel Networks** is a telecomms company that has used teleworkers for a long time [http://www.nortel.com/employment/life\\_at\\_nn/jobs.html](http://www.nortel.com/employment/life_at_nn/jobs.html)
23. **Newcastle City Council** another local authority that employs homeworking staff.
24. **Ofsted** Ofsted is the inspectorate for children and learners in England. Most of their inspectors now work from home. <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/>
25. **Rochdale Council** currently employs some home-based research/admin assistants and is considering homework for work/life balance.
26. **Royal Town Planning Institute** offers home based jobs for planners and inspectors <http://jobs.planningresource.co.uk/>
27. **Salford Council** Some parts of the council have introduced arrangements where staff can work from home and it may be that this becomes more widespread in time. Whether it will apply in the case of jobs you are interested in will depend on the type of work.  
<http://www.salford.gov.uk/council/jobs.htm>

28. **Shaw Trust** has advertised home based fundraising post in the last year.  
<http://www.shaw-trust.org.uk/>
29. **Stockport Council** employs homeworkers in its Revenues and Benefits Section. <http://www.stockport.gov.uk/>
30. **The Body Shop at Home**. This company sells by party plan, and charges nearly £100 for a kit worth £500. Contact 08459 050607
31. **The National Autistic Society** advertised for a home based **ADVOCACY SERVICE MANAGER** last year. <http://www.nas.org.uk/>
32. **The Office for Civil Nuclear Security** employs home based Security Vetting Interviewers.
33. **The Royal Bank of Scotland Group** is a founder member of Employers for Work/life Balance and has developed flexible working policies.
34. **Unilever** are another company with strong work/life balance policies who were original members of Employers for work/life Balance
35. **Thomas Pocklington Trust** This charity provides housing and support for people with sight loss, and they advertised for a home-based **PROJECT MANAGER** last year.
36. **Workplace Basic Skills Network** now called **The Network** employs a home based Regional Development Officer
37. **Yellow Pages** Yellow pages has a policy of allowing homeworking for people who already work for them.

## COMPANIES IN AND AROUND GREATER MANCHESTER WHO USE HOMEWORKERS

This is a list of companies who have been identified as using or wishing to use homeworkers. They are all genuine companies doing business in the Greater Manchester area. **However**, just because they are listed here does not mean that they necessarily have vacancies.

If you want to contact an employer, seeking work, you should **write a letter** to the company and tell them about your skills and experience in the kind of work their homeworkers are doing, and ask to be considered when a vacancy arises.

The person named as a contact is the person our researchers spoke to, they may be employees themselves who may leave the company so do not telephone to ask for that person as it may spoil your chances if they no longer work for the company. There are some companies who are actively recruiting and we have given details of their requirements, and contact instructions.

The information in this list has been given to us by the contact person in the company, and was accurate at the time of printing.

Methods of payment can be by cash, cheque or BACS, i.e. Bank transfer.

Remember it is illegal for an employer to pay less than National Minimum Wage, or to ask you to work more than 48 hours per week.

**1. 1<sup>st</sup> Transnational Translations, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, The Triangle, Exchange Sq.**

Manchester, M4 3TR

Contact: Mr. John Wheen, Tel: 0161 930 8214

This translation/interpreting service require freelance translators/interpreters for translation, telephone interpreting and transcription work. A Good command of native and English language, written and spoken is essential, as well as a degree or 4 years experience. Membership of a professional body is desirable.

Pay varies with language and competence. Paid by cheque within 8 weeks of completing job. Covers all languages, particularly looking for Indian sub-continent/African/Far East and Middle East Languages.

**2. ABC Chemical Company, Woodhouse Rd, Todmorden, OL14 5TD**

Contact: Gareth Brooks, Tel: 01706 811604

This company employs home based Sales person for International sales. They pay monthly by BACS and the homeworkers make more than National Minimum Wage.

- 3. Agius Language Services**, 9 Hawthorn Ave. Eccles, Manchester M30 9NE  
Contact: Claire Agius, Tel. 0161 789 3058  
Freelance Translators/Interpreters needed for translation and transcription work.  
Good command of native language and English Language, written and/or spoken. Prerequisite: degree in native language or membership of professional body. Pay by cash/BACS monthly, rates dependent upon language combination and experience. All languages required as and when.
- 4. Alpine International Translations**, 42 Woodhill Drive, Prestwich. M25 0AS  
Contact: Mr. Kamali, Tel: 0161 798 5200  
Freelance translators/ interpreters wanted. Good command of native language and English language, written and/or spoken. £20 per hour; , paid by cheque fortnightly. Specialises in Farsi, but all languages welcome.
- 5. Alterlist Ltd**, 32 Mason Street, Manchester M4 5EY  
Contact: Mr. Ashraf, Tel, 0161-8332723  
This clothing manufacturer wants machinists with sewing skills to work from samples. They pay by cash or cheque every two weeks. The homeworkers make at least National Minimum Wage. The work can be picked up and delivered if you live on their set route. You must have your own industrial machine.
- 6. AMCC UK Ltd**, Unit 1, Enterprise House, Manchester Science Park, Manchester, M15 6SE  
Contact: Lorraine Egan Tel: 0161 232 6360  
This company employs home based Sales personnel who are paid monthly by BACS and make more than National Minimum Wage
- 7. AN Knitwear**, Majid House, Devonshire St. North, Mcr M12 6JR  
Contact: Mr Akram Tel: 061 273 6861  
This manufacturer is interested in using homeworkers for Sewing / Overlocking during the busy period from August to January. Average pay is £5.50 per hour, paid monthly in cash.
- 8. Anam Knitwear Ltd**, 66 - 72 Chapeltown St, Mcr, M1 2WH  
Contact: Mr Riaz Tel: 0161 272 6348  
This company is looking for Overlockers. Average pay is £6 per hour paid in cash weekly and an industrial machine can be provided if necessary.

9. **ANS Plc**, Synergy House, Manchester Science Park, Manchester, M15 6SY  
Contact: Chris Malthouse, Tel: 0161 227 1000  
This IT Consultancy employs Home based workers for Sales and Project Management. Specialist skills and training are required.
10. **Around Town Flats**, 208 Wilmslow Rd., Fallowfield, Manchester M14 6LF  
Contact: C. M. Coolican Tel: 0161 248 0040  
This property company employs home-based Admin staff for clerical work. They get paid monthly by BACS.
11. **Arts about Manchester**, 6th Floor, Churchgate House, 56 Oxford St Manchester M1 6EU  
Contact: Claire Watts Tel: 0161 238 4500  
This company employs home based workers for research and Project Management. They pay monthly by BACS
12. **Betterware UK**, Phoenix Distribution, The Tower, Daltongate Business Centre, Ulverston, Cumbria, LAA12 7AJ  
Coordinator: Danny Shea, Tel 01942 792820 or 07906305354  
Danny Shea is coordinator for Leigh, Atherton, Little Hulton, Farnworth and BL3 2 and BL3 3 areas. If you live in any of these areas and want to work for Betterware, then you can contact Danny.
13. **Chinese Marketing and Communications** 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, 16 Nicholas St Manchester, M1 4EJ  
Contact: Mr Simon Jones. Tel 0161 237 3821  
This organisation, established since 1986 is looking for Chinese speakers of Mandarin and dialects, with a good command of native language and English, written and spoken, for translation/telephone interpreting and research. Market rates paid. Freelance work, experience desirable.
14. **Cinetique Translations**, Studio 3, 8 Lower Ormond St., Manchester, M1 5QF,  
Contact: Ms Laurence Auffret, Tel: 0161-2445707  
This translation service is looking for interpreters/translators for Translation/Telephone Interpreting/Transcription/website localisation/Desk top publishing, market research & project management in foreign language. Good command of native and English language - written and spoken. Pre-requisite - Degree in native language and 3 yrs experience. Desirable - member of

professional body. Pay will be dependent upon the nature of the job, paid by BACS within 20 days of invoice date. Mainly European languages - others also see website [www.cinetique.co.uk](http://www.cinetique.co.uk)

15. **EG**, 5th Floor, Statham House, Talbot Rd, Stretford, Mcr M32 0FP  
Contact: Rebecca Guest, Tel 0161 246 1044  
This media company employs home-based workers for Freelance Telephone Research. Excellent communication skills are needed. The company pay at least National Minimum Wage, by BACS, monthly.
  
16. **Elite Edge Marketing Consultants**, Technology House, Lissadel St., Salford, M6 6AP  
Contact: Marie Clement Tel: 0161 278 2788  
This company employs home based Marketing Assistants. They pay above National Minimum Wage, by BACS, monthly. They will also provide a PC and pay for work related telephone calls.
  
17. **Fire & Security Technologies Ltd** Office 3, Falcon House, Falcon Enterprise Centre, Victoria St. Chadderton, Oldham OL9 0HB  
Contact: Mr Ernie Hulston, Tel: 0161 633 9400  
This company has stated that they may be interested in employing a telesales/appointment maker to work at home.
  
18. **Fothergill Engineered Fabrics**, PO Box 1, Summit, Littleborough, OL15 0LU  
Contact: Alison Cranks, Tel: 01706 758577  
This manufacturer employs home based sales staff, paid monthly by BACS. They earn at least National Minimum Wage.
  
19. **Gorton's**, Stanmore House, 64-68 Blackburn St., Radcliffe  
Contact: David Gorton Tel:0161 723 6420  
This accountancy company employs home based workers with accountancy qualifications. They pay monthly by BACS and provide computer hardware and software.
  
20. **HAC Micros**, 2c Faulkenhurst St, Chadderton, Oldham OL1 2QA  
Contact: Tony Nosworthy, Tel: 0161 626 9396  
This company employ homeworkers for production and administration. They are paid by BACS weekly and earn at least National Minimum Wage. The company provides tools and equipment, and picks up and delivers the work.

21. **Hine Insurance Brokers Ltd**, 79-81 School Lane, Didsbury, M20 6WN  
Contact: Paul Hine, Tel: 0161 438 0000,  
This Insurance Broker employs one home based broker.
22. **Hollinwood Welding and Engineering**, Busk Rd, Oldham, OL9 6QZ  
Contact: Gary Garlick, Tel: 0161 624 2750  
This company employs one home based secretary .
23. **Hsuan Mao UK**, Saddleworth Business Centre,  
Huddersfield Rd, Delph, Oldham, OL3 5DF  
Contact: Deborah Cherry, Tel: 01457 819500  
This company uses homeworkers used for cable assembly. They pay at least National Minimum Wage by BACS, monthly and the homeworkers are full employees of the company.
24. **Impromptu Publishing Ltd.**, 4th Floor, 117 - 119 Portland St.,  
Manchester M1 6ED  
Contact: Mr Marcus Netherwood, Tel; 0161 236 9526  
This publisher is looking for the following staff,  
1. **Advertising sales** with excellent communication skills  
2. **Editorial** proofreading knowledge of Quark Xpress an advantage  
3. **Magazine design** work must have knowledge of Quark Xpress.  
Pay will be monthly by BACS and will be negotiable depending upon knowledge and skills and will be contract only as and when needed.
25. **Jason West Design Consultants Ltd.**, 40 Thomas St.,  
Manchester M4 1ER  
Contact: Jason West, Tel: 0161 832 6111  
This company may be interested in employing interior designers to work from home.
26. **Kooltrade Ltd.**, 3 Orbital Way, Denton, Manchester M34 3QA  
Contact: Kelly Turner-Crooks, Tel: 0161 335 2500  
This importer of Nursery Goods employs a home based machinist to do sewing work. The employer provides a machine and equipment and pays at least National Minimum Wage by BACS monthly.
27. **Languages Express Ltd**, St. Phillips Presbytery, Northallerton Road,  
Salford, M7 3TP  
Contact: Miss Dina Railean, Tel: 0161-7924800

and This company is looking for Translators & Interpreters to do Translation / Telephone Interpreting. Good command of native English language, both written & spoken. Minimum of level 3 Community Interpreting or DPSI. CRB clearance an advantage. Good rates of pay depending upon skills, payable by cheque or BACS monthly. Work is available in all languages as and when.

**28. Legal Service Translations, 450 Cheetham Hill Road, Manchester M8 9LE**  
Contact: Mr Khan, Tel: 0161-7402882

This non-profit making translation service is looking for qualified interpreters /translators for translation and telephone interpreting. Attachment to professional interpreting body necessary for interpreting, desirable for translation. The company holds a large database of freelance workers. above National Minimum Wage and varies according to the language, payable by BACS fortnightly. Over 50 languages. BME employer.

**29. B.Luft, 5 Sharp St. Middleton, Manchester M24 1AH**  
Contact: Mr. Owen, tel: 0161 653 1604

This manufacturer of men's headwear employs homeworkers for sewing. This is a specialised skill and full training is given on site. This exemplary employer pays above National Minimum Wage and gives full employment rights to his homeworkers.

**30. Lychgate Projects Ltd. 12 Diddenham Court, Lambwood Hill, Grazely, Reading, RG7 1JS**

Contact: Sarah Condon, Tel: 0118 988 7343, Fax: 0118 988 7070  
Email: [sarahc@lychgate.co.uk](mailto:sarahc@lychgate.co.uk)

"Lychgate are a market research company with looking for people willing to interview professionals over the phone. A lot of our work involves interviewing Architects, Contractors, Housebuilders and others in the building industry. Many of our interviews last up to 20 minutes. No previous experience is required as on the job training will be given. All interviewers work from home.

As well as a polite, friendly and confident telephone manner, you should have an enquiring mind, be self-motivated and reliable, with an ability to work to reasonable deadlines. Tenacity is also required! Work is on a project-by-project basis, and is therefore ideal for those people with other interests and activities not wanting to work full-time. Our interviews are normally qualitative in nature so we require people to be able to probe the respondents to get detailed

answers. The company will contact interviewers when they have a suitable Project and ask whether they are available - this means there is no specific commitment to Lychgate and projects may be fitted around other activities. Workload may therefore vary.

Lychgate provides full project briefings, in writing and over the phone. Contact details are provided but not the names of the individuals you need to contact - you will be required to find and interview the most appropriate person given our description.

Lychgate give quotas of the numbers of interviews you should complete within a deadline, for example 20 interviews in a 2 - 3 week period. Payment is on a per interview basis. For example, rates are about £12-25 per interview, but do depend on the length of the questionnaire.

For more information telephone or email Sarah, contact details above.

- 31. Manlon Property Services** 11 High Lane, Chorlton,  
Manchester M21 9DJ  
Contact: Mr Colin Fallows Tel: 0844 8055072  
This property-letting agency may be interested in employing home-based telephone/admin staff in the future
- 32. Ten Alps Publishing.**, 5th Floor, Quay House, Quay St.,  
Manchester M3 3JE  
Contact: Jenny Sutton Tel: 0161 832 6000  
This publishing company looking for the following staff:
1. **Telecanners** with good communication skills. Previous experience beneficial must have phone/internet. Training can be given to the right candidate. Salary depends on experience.
  2. **Editorial Assistants** with previous experience-either commissioning or editing/sub-editing. Salary 12k plus.
  3. **Researchers** with good working knowledge of internet for research and a research background.
- 33. Medeval Ltd.**, Skelton House, Manchester Science Park,  
Lloyd St North, Manchester M15 6SH  
Contact: Dr. S. Toon, Tel; 0161 226 6575  
This Pharmaceutical Research Company employs homeworkers for Data Analysis. The company provides computers, printers and phone. Pay is at least National Minimum Wage, paid monthly by BACS

- 34. Onelessplasticbag,**  
Contact: Jessica Symons, email; jessica@krata.co.uk  
Jessica makes re-useable shopping bags with a secret, and employs home based machinists to make up the bags.
- 35. Pearson Hall, Unit 4 Egerton St., Droylsden, Manchester M43 7EL**  
Contact: Mrs. Helen. Pearson Tel: 0161 371 7754  
This Baby Goods manufacturer is interested in experienced upholstery machinists with experience of walk in needle walk in foot machine. Piecework rates above National Minimum Wage paid by cash or cheque weekly. Specialist machines are available to hire if required.
- 36. PJ Bookkeeping Services, Blake House, 11 High St, Lees, Oldham OL43BHJ**  
Contact: P. Harley, Tel: 0161 620 3767  
This company employs home-based bookkeepers.
- 37. Promo Clothing, Unit 23 Dale House, Vickers Street, Miles Platting, Manchester M40 8BB**  
Contact: Stuart Basger, Tel: 0161 205 8930  
This company needs qualified and experienced machinists who can sew through jackets, including zip pockets. The company will help with the cost of renting an industrial machine if you don't have your own.
- 38. S. Pervis Co. Ltd., Solmar House, 7 - 9 Blackfriars Rd., Salford M3 7AG**  
Contact: Mr Michael Pervis, Tel: 0161 833 9910  
This luggage manufacturer may be interested in employing skilled homeworkers to hand sew leather.
- 39. Salford Community Relations Link Project, Britannia House, Bright Rd. Eccles, M30 0WP.**  
Contact: Farah Shahid. Tel: 0161 787 8219  
Freelance translators/interpreters wanted. Appropriate experience and qualifications required. Translation £10 per 100 words, interpreting £2.50 for 15 minutes paid by cheque monthly.
- 40. Sensée HomeAgent Network, 36 Dale St. London W4 2BL**  
Contact: Hayley Morgan, Tel. 0161 330 2460

The Sensée Home Agent Network is an innovative staffing company which provides customer services representatives to contact centres with the originality that the agents work entirely from home. At present they are working with an office supplies company in Ashton-under-Lyne and are recruiting full time home-based call centre operatives initially, but as they grow there will be scope for part time workers, too. They will be opening an office in Ashton in the near future. For further information and online application, go to <http://www.sensee.co.uk/HomeAgents/index.html>

- 41. Swingers**, Unit 6, Springbank Ind. Est. Liverpool Rd.,  
Wigan WN2 3TY  
Contact: Mr. Cardwell Tel: 01942 867079  
The Protective Clothing Manufacturer employs homeworkers for sewing.
- 42. The Exhibiting Agency Ltd.**, PO Box 588, Altrincham, WA14 3WJ  
Contact: John D. Blaskey Tel: 0161 926 9952  
This Exhibition Marketing Consultancy uses home based Telephone Researchers. Pay of at least National Minimum Wage is paid by BACS monthly.
- 43. The Gate Shop**, Rear Westwood Garage, Warburton Lane,  
Partington, Manchester M31 4JW  
Contact: Mrs. C. Pomfret, Tel: 0161 456 2603  
This company uses a home-based admin worker. Pay of at least National Minimum Wage is paid weekly by BACS
- 44. The Plastic Arts Company**, Michelle House, 16 Chorlton St  
Manchester M1 3HW  
Contact: Mr Kitchingham Tel: 0161 236 1947  
This company is looking for homeworkers for Book binding/print finishing. Piecework rates of at least National Minimum Wage will be paid weekly on completion of the job. Equipment will be provided and work will be picked up and delivered if necessary.

- 45. TPAS**, 5th floor, Trafford House, Chester Rd., Manchester M32 0RS  
Contact: Jenny Topham, Tel: 0161 868 3500  
This company gives housing advice and employs home based consultants. The company provides all IT equipment and furniture and pays at least National Minimum Wage by BACS monthly.
- 46. Tuition Services**, Brotherdale Close, Royton, Oldham, OL2 6NX  
Contact: Steven Chadderton, Tel: 0161 284 8449  
Supplementary Education Providers.  
If you have high qualifications in English, Maths or Science subjects but no teaching qualifications you can give private tuition in students' homes. There is a fee for training and business plans, which can be paid off as you work. You must be prepared to teach a minimum of ten hours per week, usually in the evening or weekend.
- 47. Wiretronic Ltd.**, 7 Canal St., Rochdale, OL11 1AB  
Contact: Mr Dignan, Tel: 01706 657455  
This Electronic Engineering company employs homeworkers for soldering and assembly work. The company will pick up and deliver, and provides soldering irons, solder pots and light tools. Pay is at least National Minimum Wage and is paid monthly by BACS.

**The following companies have said that although they do not employ homeworkers at present, they would consider using homeworkers in the future.**

#### **Manchester**

1. Byrom Clark Roberts Ltd (Architects) Washbrook House, Lancastrian Office Centre, Manchester M32 0FP
2. Chadwick Textiles, (Baby Goods and Services) Stenor House, 1 Edwards St, Cambridge Industrial Area, Salford M7 1FN
3. Mediavest (Mcr) Ltd (Ad. Agency) 119 Portland St, Manchester M1 6ED
4. Kozy Knitwear Ltd (Knitwear Manufacturers and Wholesalers) 58 Baring St Manchester, M1 2PY
5. Tilton & Co (Knitwear Manufacturers and Wholesalers)

55 Cable St Manchester M4 5DF

6. Premiercode Ltd. (Knitwear Manufacturers and Wholesalers)  
Unit 1, Hemmons St. Ind Est. M12 5ST
7. Accounts Direct, (Accountants) 54 Derby St, Manchester, M8 8HF
8. Abacus Care, (Healthcare) 7<sup>th</sup> Floor, St James House, Pendleton Way  
Salford M6 5FW
9. ES2000 Security Systems, (Security) Carrington Business Park,  
M31 4DD
10. Exide Technologies, (Battery Manufacturers) 6-7 Parkway Business  
Centre, Old Trafford, M17 1SN
11. Britch & Associates, (Architects) 31 The Crescent, Salford, M5 4PF
12. J Hopkins Contractor, 1 Mercury Way, Urmston, M41 7BZ
13. Ainsbury Insurance, 75-79 Station Rd, Swinton, M27 6GR
14. Elite Cleaning and Environmental Services, 247 Barlow Moor Rd. Chorlton,  
Manchester M21 7GJ
15. Omega Engineering, One Omega Drive, Riverbend Technology Ctr. Irlam,  
Manchester M44 5BD
16. R.M. Adjusting Ltd, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, 102 Pendlebury Rd., Swinton,  
Manchester M27 4BF
17. Roscoe Haigh Pawlett, (Recruitment) 341 Barlow Moor Rd Chorlton,  
Manchester M21 7QH
18. Mail Boxes Etc. 6 Wilmslow Rd, Manchester Rusholme, M14 5DT
19. Abstract Balloon Art. 329 Moston Lane, Moston, M40 9NL
20. Paramount Print Group, Caxton Park Wright St. M16 9EW
21. Labels UK, City Court Trading Estate, Poland St, Ancoats,

**Manchester M4 6AL**

22. Smith-Bullough Ltd, Victoria Works, Thomas St. Atherton, M46 9TS
23. Excel Publishing Co. Ltd, 127-129 Portland St Manchester M1 4PZ
24. Black Labrador Community Arts, 6 Mount St. Manchester M2 5NS
25. Gaby's 6-8 Wrigley Head, Failsworth, Manchester M35 9BL
26. Pinnacle (Mcr) Ltd Crown Business Centre, George St, Failsworth, Manchester M35 9BW
27. East to West Properties, 123 Barrington St. Clayton, M11 4FB
28. Nick Bailey Tree Services, 7 Brooklands Ave. Withington,
29. Fletcher McNeill, (Chartered Surveyors) 46 Manchester Rd. Chorlton, Manchester
30. Omega Engineering Ltd. One Omega Drive, Riverbend Technology Centre, Northbank, Irlam, Manchester M44 5BD
31. Butterfield Architecture Design, 1 Marlee Court, 62 Tib St, Manchester

**Oldham**

1. Business Solutions, 61 Albert St., Oldham, OL2 5DF
2. PJ Bookkeeping Services, Blake House, 11High St. Lees, Oldham OL4 3BH
3. Hendricks Lintels, Stock Lane, Chadderton, Oldham OL9 9EY
4. Falconex Ltd. , Falcon Business Centre, Victoria Street, Chadderton, Oldham, OL9 0HB
5. Tunnel Engineering Services (UK) Ltd, Heywood St. Oldham OL4 2HA

6. TP Railtech, Unit C Prince Of Wales Indust Units, Vulcan St,  
Oldham OL1 4ER
7. CNA Sales.co.uk Rochdale Rd. Oldham OL2 6PS
8. Matthew James Furniture, Unit 23 Osborne Industrial Estate,  
Waddington St., Chadderton, Oldham OL9 6QQ
9. Hatfields, Borough Garage Ltd., Copster Hill Road  
OLDHAM OL8 1QH
10. Langham Environmental Services, Langham House Regent St,  
Oldham, OL1 3TZ
11. Hargreaves James Associates, (Recruitment Agency) Hollinwood Business  
Centre, Albert St Hollinwood, Oldham, OL8 3QP
12. Joe Saldanha & Co. (Chartered Accountants) 164 Rochdale Road, Royton,  
Oldham, OL2 6QF
13. Pyro Protection Ltd. Saddleworth Business Centre, Huddersfield Rd.  
Delph, Oldham, OL3 5DF
14. Moorside Electrical Contractors Ltd. Hilltop House, 677 Ripponden Rd.  
Moorside, Oldham,
15. PJ Mobile Mechanic, 55 Sherwood Way, Higher Crompton, Shaw OL2 7NB
16. G.B. Security Systems Ltd. Hollinwood Business Centre, Albert St.  
Hollinwood, Oldham

## **Rochdale**

1. Ravenfield Designs Ltd. Russell St. Heywood, OL10 1NX
2. D. Swift, Electrical Supplies, Junction 19 Industrial Park,  
Green Lane, Heywood, OL10 1NB
3. TBA Electroconductive Products, PO Box 56, Rooley Moor Rd.  
Rochdale, OL12 7DQ
4. Bright Book Supplies, Shaw House, Shawclough Trading Est.  
Shawclough Rd, Rochdale OL12 6ND
5. Moss Brothers Dyers, Bridgroyd Works, Halifax Rd.  
Todmorden, OL14 6DF
6. Avanti Colour Print, 3 Clover St., Rochdale, OL12 6TP
7. Paragon Media Research, 7 Yorkshire St. Rochdale. OL16 1BH
8. Pressed Flights Ltd. Unit 6, Ferrand Lodge, Todmorden Rd,  
Littleborough OL15 9EG
9. Indelec, Unit 3F, Moss Industrial Estate, Woodbine St East  
Rochdale, OL16 5LB
10. Bright Look Fashion, 33-35 Mere Lane, Rochdale. OL11 3TD
11. Gould's Design & Manufacturing Ltd. Sefton St. Heywood, OL10 2JF
12. Wm Lusty Group Ltd. Fir St. Heywood, OL10 1NW
13. Atwell Engineering, Unit A10-A13, Fieldhouse Industrial Estate,  
Rochdale. OL12 0AA
14. Ken Mills Engineering, Unit 8, Shawclough Trading Estate, Rochdale  
OL12 6ND

## Health and Safety for Homeworkers

Your employer is required to conduct a risk assessment, identifying the risks and hazards in the workplace and providing controls to minimise the risks. To ensure that accidents do not happen whilst working at home, you must also be aware of the risks and hazards associated with the work you do.

- **A risk** is the chance, great or small, that someone will be harmed by a hazard.
- **A hazard** is anything that may cause harm.

### What are the Risks and Hazards and how can we control them?

- When handling heavy loads there is a **risk** that you could hurt your back, therefore employers should avoid the need for you to handle heavy loads, as these could be a **hazard**. However, if you must handle goods as part of your work, your employer is responsible for reducing the risks, either by providing training and/or lifting aids to prevent injury or dividing loads into smaller batches to reduce the weight. This is what is meant by **controlling** the risk.

*You can help yourself to avoid injury by lifting safely.*

- When using work equipment such as a sewing machine or a soldering iron there is a **risk** that you could injure yourself. All machinery in the home could be a **hazard**. Employers who provide homeworkers with equipment have a legal responsibility to keep the equipment in good condition, with all necessary safety attachments and to ensure those working with and maintaining the equipment have full training.

*But you also have responsibility to use the equipment correctly. Always use any safety guard, or other safety equipment such as gloves, masks, glasses, lights etc.*

- When using electrical equipment there is the **risk** of electric shock or fire. If the equipment is supplied by your employer, he is responsible for its maintenance to ensure it does not become a **hazard**. However, he is only responsible for the equipment he supplies; electrical sockets and other parts of your home electrical system are your responsibility, and they could also be a **hazard**. **If you supply your own equipment, you are responsible for keeping it correctly maintained.**

**Risks when using substances and materials for work at home.**

Many substances, materials or chemicals may be **hazardous** to health and safety. They may be flammable, toxic or corrosive. They may give off fumes. *It is your responsibility to make sure they are stored safely, away from the reach of children.*

Employers are responsible for any substance or materials they provide, under the COSHH 1999 regulations, he must ensure that your exposure to the substance is controlled. If possible he should replace the hazardous substance with a less hazardous one. He must supply personal protective equipment such as gloves or a mask. These are ways to **control** the risk.

*It is your responsibility to wear the gloves or mask, to always open a window where there are fumes or vapours, and to take care that you do not breathe in any fumes.*

## **Working with VDU's**

Employers have a duty to make sure that display screen equipment supplied by them is safe and does not affect your health.

You can request an eye test from your employer to ensure that your sight is not being harmed by VDU use. Your employer is obliged to pay for tests and glasses where needed for work.

*It is up to you to make sure that your posture is correct and your viewing angle is comfortable when using a VDU to minimise the risk of injury.*

### **New and expectant mothers**

An employer must pay attention to homeworkers who are new and expectant mothers, taking into account any risks to the unborn child or the child of a woman who is still breastfeeding - not just risks to the mother herself.

*If you become pregnant while working as a homemaker, tell your employer, to make sure that your work is safe for you and the baby.*

### **Accidents and First Aid**

Employers have the responsibility to ensure there is adequate First Aid provision for their workers. Depending on the work and risks involved, this could mean:

- Providing a First Aid Kit for your home
- Discussing what you should do in the event of an accident or emergency that is work related
- An agreed procedure for reporting accidents and incidents

**Whatever work you do, you should take precautions against FIRE.**

A good employer should provide a fire extinguisher that is suitable for the kind of fire that could break out e.g. electrical equipment needs a carbon dioxide extinguisher.

- *You should fit a smoke detector; this is essential even if you do not work at home.*
- *If using chemicals of any kind, keep them securely stored away from any source of flame, such as the fire, gas cooker, matches etc.*
- *If you use portable heaters, make sure they are stable and keep them away from children and materials.*
- *All gas heaters should be checked annually by a CORGI registered gas contractor.*
- *Always ensure good ventilation when using gas heating*

## **Heat and Cold**

Working in extreme heat or cold will increase the **risk** of accidents and could lead to ill health.

*If it is very hot, you must work more slowly and increase your intake of fluids to avoid dehydration.*

## **Children**

Children are always at risk when you are homeworking, not only when you are working and cannot keep a close eye on them, but also from the work materials.

*If possible find a nursery or swap childcare arrangements with a friend. Try to work when the children are not around.*

## **Handling Loads**

Handling loads can cause serious injury, particularly to the back.

The risk can be increased by:

- Handling loads that are heavy, bulky, difficult to grasp or unstable.
- Awkward lifting, reaching or handling
- Pushing or pulling
- Repetitive handling that does not allow enough rest time between loads
- Twisting and Stooping

*If possible, employers should avoid the need for hazardous manual handling.*

However, if homeworkers must handle goods as part of their work, employers are responsible for assessing and reducing the risks, by providing training or lifting aids to prevent injury. This could involve using a trolley to allow a load to be moved easily.

**When lifting is necessary, good techniques can help reduce the risk**

**DO**

- Plant your feet firmly - get a stable base.
- Bend at your knees - not your waist.
- Tighten your abdominal muscles to support your spine.
- Get a good grip - use both hands.
- Keep the load close to your body.
- Use your leg muscles as you lift.
- Keep your back upright, keep it in its natural posture.
- Lift steadily and smoothly without jerking.
- Breathe - If you must hold your breath to lift it, it is too heavy.

**DO NOT...**

- Lift from the floor.
- Twist and lift.
- Lift with one hand (unbalanced)
- Lift loads across obstacles.
- Lift while reaching or stretching.
- Lift from an uncomfortable posture.
- Don't fight to recover a dropped object.
- Don't hold your breath while lifting.

**If you do hurt your back;**

- Report it to your employer
- Rest on a firm surface for several hours.
- Lie flat on your back, with a pillow under your knees, or on your side with your knees bent when sleeping
- Apply cold compress or ice pack to the injured area, (inside a pillowcase not directly on the skin).for the first 24 hours
- After 24 hours, apply a heat pad or hot water bottle
- Try to avoid another injury, and don't lift anything heavy.
- Sit in straight back chairs, and sleep on a firm mattress.
- Anti-inflammatory medications (such as ibuprofen) can help, and stretching and strengthening of the back muscles is important.
- If the pain continues longer than a week call your doctor.

***It can take several weeks for an injured back to heal, so remember:***

- Prevention is better than cure
- Do not lift heavy loads unless it is absolutely unavoidable

## Working with paints and glues

Most paints and glues used to produce goods are poisonous in some way. Many are potential killers. The law says the supplier should give you information, so make sure that all substances are labelled and that there is information on safe handling. This may include avoiding contact with the skin, wearing masks, ventilation of rooms, not smoking or keeping away from heat sources. The law also requires risk assessment, to ensure pregnant and breast feeding mothers are not exposed to chemicals that could harm the mother or baby.

- Chemicals affect the body in many ways and it is not necessarily obvious or immediate. For instance, solvent fumes can cause headaches, sickness and allergies, and in the longer term, heart and lung disease. Soldering fumes can cause asthma.
- Some chemicals used by homeworkers can cause cancer, for instance, benzene, used in leather working. Typical activities using chemicals in the home include painting toys and porcelain, gluing shoes, handbags, lampshades etc.
- Often a safer alternative could be used and under the law, employers are expected to find safer methods, e.g. water based rather than solvent based glues and paints.

### What you can do

1. Keep chemicals in safe covered containers, away from heat and light and locked away from children
2. Do not smoke or eat whilst using chemicals
3. Maximise ventilation - ALWAYS open windows, doors, use extractor fans and avoid working in confined spaces.
4. Wear protective masks, goggles etc.
5. Avoid skin contact if possible.
6. Make sure you know what steps to take in case of an emergency  
*Tell your employer if you plan to become pregnant, and ask if the work or the chemicals could affect your health*

## Working with machines

Machines have fast moving parts, belts, needles and sharp cutting edges, and are often unguarded, putting children at high risk. Vibration and noise will affect you and possibly the neighbours. Overloading electrical circuits can cause fire hazards. Poor quality seating, lighting and positioning and long hours of work can cause back pain, arm strain and injury. Electrical equipment can be particularly hazardous, so you should take extra care ensure everything is properly maintained.

### What you can do

- Check electrical circuits are not overheating or overloading.
- Don't plug too many appliances into one socket
- Switch off and unplug at the socket if you stop, even temporarily, when children are around.
- Ensure electrical equipment is turned off before it is checked.
- Check that plugs are not damaged
- Check plugs are correctly wired and maintained
- Check the outer cover of cable or wire is gripped where it enters the plug or equipment
- Check the outer cover of the machine is not damaged, and there are no loose parts or screws
- Make sure your work is well lit. Use an angle poise lamp to highlight close work
- Use a decent adjustable chair for work. Make sure your back is supported, change position frequently, put your legs up to redress your circulation and reduce swelling.
- Keep children clear of all work, do not let them help. Confine crawlers to a play-pen and fix a safety gate if possible.

## Working with Noise

### **Machines produce noise.**

High level noise could cause you and your children to develop hearing loss. If you have to shout above your work you are at risk of hearing loss.

- Noise and vibration can also cause nausea, back pain, difficulty in focussing eyes and stress. Industrial ear protectors can protect you but it is more important to reduce the noise from the machine, especially as neighbours may complain.
- As a general rule, if a neighbour complains, an officer from the Environmental Health Department will visit you and may give helpful advice. He may decide the noise is a "nuisance" under health laws and can take you to court to stop further noise. This applies to anyone, whether a tenant or a home-owner.

### **What you can do**

- Try to talk to the neighbours. Discuss reasonable hours and possible solutions.
- Move the machine away from a shared wall or hollow floor
- Place a heavy rubber mat (or piece of carpet underlay) under the machine to reduce noise and vibration
- Make sure the machine is regularly serviced, to keep the noise down
- Try to get a quieter machine

## Working with cloth and textiles

Dust and fibres from materials often cause breathing problems, particularly mohair, furs, wool and polyester. Many fabrics are treated with toxic chemicals such as fire retardants. These chemicals can cause skin rashes, allergies and sore throats. Many women and children have been affected so badly they have developed asthma and lung problems. With some fabrics and fibres an allergic reaction may occur, even with very little exposure.

### What you can do

- Keep dust levels as low as possible
- Damp dust and cover food
- If you or your children suffer asthma or eczema ordinary vacuum cleaners may increase the problem if the dust is very fine. An industrial filter machine would be better.
- Wear an overall with close fitting sleeves
- Gloves may be necessary with chemically treated fabrics.
- Masks may be obtained very cheaply
- Check if a mask is suitable for the particular chemical or dust
- Report any health problems to the doctor, especially rashes and breathing problems. Doctor's notes are confidential so you can safely tell him if you think there is a link with your work.

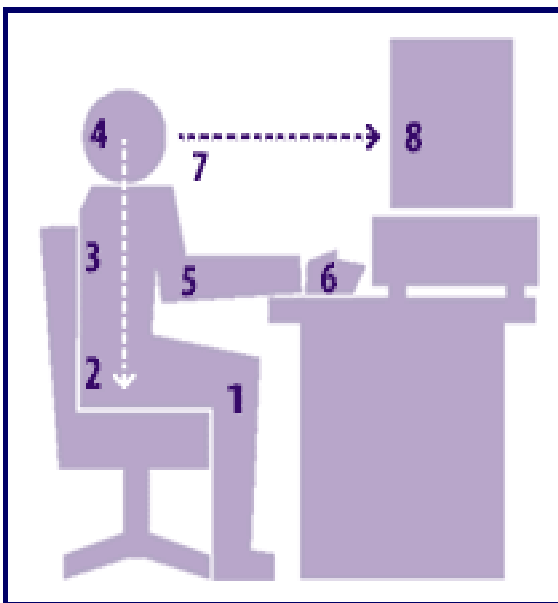
## Working with Computers

Working as a homeworker using information and communications technology, especially work involving data and word processing, is rapidly increasing. Employers should provide safe and appropriate equipment. If your equipment is badly designed and you work for long periods without adequate breaks, you may develop some serious health problems. Examples of these are:

- Work Related Upper Limb Disorders (WRULDS), often called Repetitive Strain Injury, is a serious long term injury and can lead to disability. It is caused by a number of factors, including poor wrist and arm position, excessive keyboard use, poor work station layout and the use of a mouse, all associated with data and word processing. If you develop symptoms such as pins and needles in the hands, wrists or arms, aching in these areas or burning sensations, get advice from your GP and occupational health project as soon as possible. Early intervention can prevent more serious long-term disabilities developing which could stop you working.
- Other problems are likely to be eyestrain, back and neck problems, static build up and skin complaints.

### What you can do

When sitting, adjust the chair height so that your knees are level with your hips. If your feet are not resting flat on the floor, use a footrest. If there is a difference in height between the keyboard and the writing surface, the seat height of the chair must be adjusted accordingly.



1. Adjust the lumbar support of the chair to support the curve in our low back. If not properly adjusted the normal "S" curve of the spine will be altered and this can create stress on the muscles and joints of the back.
2. Use the backrest of the chair for support to prevent muscle discomfort and fatigue. Avoid working in the forward position, or sitting on the edge of the seat without back support.
3. Maintain the normal "S" shaped curve of the spine. Ensure that your ear is in line with your shoulder, chin in. Avoid a "poking chin" posture as this places stress on the neck and shoulders.

4. Your forearms should be alongside your body, elbows at 90 degrees when using the keyboard and mouse. Wrists are in a straight line and not bent. Support arms with armrests.
5. Position the mouse or pointing device as close to the keyboard as possible. The mouse should be at the same level as the keyboard
7. Locate the monitor straight in front of you, not off to one side. The top of the monitor screen should be at eye level.
8. Use a document holder to place documents at eye level and near the monitor.
9. Position the computer with the window to your side to control light levels and glare.

### **Getting comfortable**

- If you are short use a footstool
- Make sure there is enough space beneath your desk to move your legs freely.
- Move any boxes or obstructions from under the desk

### **Posture and Breaks**

- Don't sit in the same position for long periods
- Change your posture as often as practicable
- Arrange your workstation so you do not need to keep stretching to reach things you need.
- Frequent short breaks are better than fewer long ones.

### **Reading the screen**

- Guard your screen against glare
- Reduce eyestrain by positioning VDU at right angle to window
- Make sure the screen surface is clean

- Adjust the brightness and contrast controls on the screen to suit lighting conditions in the room.
- Keep lighting low, except for on the document, and avoid fluorescent lights
- When setting up software, choose options giving text that is large enough to read easily on your screen when you are sitting in a normal working position
- Individual characters on the screen should be sharply focused and should not flicker or move. If they do the monitor may need servicing or adjusting
- Have regular eye tests. If possible have one before beginning this work and then periodically.

### **Keying in**

- Adjust your keyboard to get a good keying position. A space in front of the keyboard is sometimes helpful for resting the hands and wrists when not keying.
- Try to keep your wrists straight when keying. Keep a soft touch on the keys and don't overstretch your fingers. Good keyboard techniques are important.

### **Using the mouse**

- Bring the mouse as close to you as possible so you can reach it comfortably.
- Move the keyboard out of the way if it is not being used.
- Support your forearm on the desk, and don't grip the mouse too tightly.
- Rest your fingers lightly on the buttons and do not press them hard

*As always, prevention is better than cure, take precautions and you should be able to work safely.*

## Stress and Depression

Homeworkers are a high-risk stress group. Isolation, lack of control over work deadlines, pressure of doing three jobs simultaneously (childcare, housework and homework) and the tiring nature of the unsociable hours, leads to stress symptoms. Stress is also caused by physical factors, such as poor lighting, seating, ventilation, excessive heat and cold and the effect of the body fighting off poisonous substances.

### Common symptoms and effects of stress

**Physical:** Headache, backache; muscle cramps; poor sleep; indigestion; increased heart rate; loss of appetite or excessive hunger

**Mental:** Fatigue; anxiety; boredom; lack of concentration; low self-esteem; depression; mental breakdown

**Social & Lifestyle** Addiction to drugs (prescribed or otherwise), cigarettes and drink. Not able to get on with family, friends, neighbours etc. marriage breakdown; problems with children's development.

**Long Term effects** Stress can lead to serious mental and physical problems, such as cancer and heart disease.

### What you can do:

- Try and recognise what causes stress for you and try to separate the work-related causes from the more personal ones.
- Look at ways of improving your working day.
- Take regular breaks from your work. Frequent short breaks are better than fewer longer ones.
- Improve health and safety. Always use any safety equipment that your employer supplies. If he doesn't provide safety equipment, contact the Homeworking Development Project, who may be able to provide equipment such as safety masks, noise reducing mats, desk lamps, on loan to homeworkers.
- Get training locally that could improve your skills and provide cheap or free childcare for part of the day. The Homework Development project will help you to find training close to home, with childcare.

- Talk to your doctor, if you are severely depressed, you may need medical treatment, or support.
- Join a Homeworkers' Support Group. In Rochdale there is existing Homeworker's Support Group that meets regularly. A support group provides a social outlet, an escape from the house, the opportunity to talk to people who are experiencing the same kind of problems, an exchange of ideas, a crèche for your children to make new friends, and often a visiting speaker to talk about subjects relevant to homeworkers.
- Homeworkers in Rochdale have been consulted and become involved in research into Health and Safety for the Health and Safety Executive. They have contributed to research into the effects of homeworking on the lives of homeworkers and their families for Teeside University, and they have received training by the National Group on Homeworking on how to set up in business themselves, cutting out the middle man.
- They have also taken part in consultations on National Minimum Wage and other important issues.
- They go on an annual outing with their children to a destination of their choice. They have their own bank account and they can call on the Homeworking Officer for advice in matters of Welfare Benefits, Budgeting, Training and Development, Childcare, Employment rights and any other issue that affects them as a result of their work.

**If you are a homeworker and you would like to form or join a support group, please contact Tanzeem Mahmood on:**

**Rochdale 01706 923535**

## TRAINING INFORMATION

To find out about courses run by WEA, you can ask at the centres or you can contact Rehanna Mohammed- Learning Manager for Greater Manchester, at 4th Floor, Crawford House, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9GH  
Tel: 0161 277 5400, Fax: 0161 274 4948  
or email her at [rmohammed@wea.org.uk](mailto:rmohammed@wea.org.uk)

**Local Adult Education in Rochdale** - Learn Local courses are available via **Hopwood Hall College** and you can find out more information on:

Rochdale Campus - 01706 345346  
Middleton Campus - 0161 643 2114  
Email: [enquiries@hopwood.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@hopwood.ac.uk)

**WEA** also run courses in Rochdale and can be contacted as above.

### **How to find your local Councillor**

You can contact your local councillor by writing to him or her c/o Member Services at your Town Hall or Municipal Offices.

If you do not know the name of your local councillor you can find out by logging onto your council's website and clicking on the link to the members, it is usually labelled "Your council" or "Council Members"

If you don't have Internet access, you can ask at your Town Hall or Municipal Offices. Telephone numbers are below.

Similarly, if you wish to contact your local MP, they usually have an office in their constituency, and the address will also be on the council website or available if you telephone your local Town Hall or Municipal Offices.

#### Council Telephone Number

Rochdale                      01706 647474

