



Pencil Point

No, that is not a mis-spelling. Pencil is a new research project that has just started at High Trees—how People ENCounter E-ILiteracy. Researchers from the London School of Economics, LSE, will be working here for the next two years. They will be talking to people who do not use computers about what they would like to do, if they knew how. From these interviews they will work with local residents to design new courses to meet these needs. These courses will build on the ones already running successfully at Burnell House and in the Library Centre.

As more and more Government and Council services are put on-line, not being able to use computers will become a sharper issue. We already know that IT skills are needed for many jobs. The researchers want to find out if lack of skills and lack of access is starting to get in the way of people getting on with their everyday lives.

Because people on St Martin come from all over the world, e-mail can be a way of keeping in touch with family and friends who are far away. Many things can be bought cheaper over the internet than in our local shops. Sorting out your gas bill over the internet can save hours hanging on the phone to call centres. Are there lots of people who are missing out these chances to make their lives easier? The point of Pencil is to find out.

If you want to know more about Pencil, please call Mike Cushman at LSE on 020 7955 7426 or contact Angela Hall at the library centre.

Acorn Publicity Group
St Martin's Library Centre
220 Upper Tulse Hill
London SW2 2NS
Tel: 020 8671 3132
Fax: 020 8674 0166
Email: admin@high-trees.org

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