To connect to the database you will need equipment that is able to connect to a Viewdata service such as Prestel. This could be a BBC computer with the Prestel adaptor or any similar set of equipment. Certain facilities on the database may require you to be able to enter alphabetic characters; you can, however, use the system with a numeric pad if that is all you have available. Set up your system to dial Cambridge (0223) 243642 and proceed with the connection. With the Acorn Prestel adaptor this is done by typing: -

f3   (call)
<RET>
0223-243642<RET>

When the connection is made, you will be presented with a frame and asked to give your name and a telephone number where you may be contacted. You will also be asked for your user identity, this may be used in future to indicate certain areas of interest or types of user. At present, you do not need to enter any user identity and the log-on page reminds you of this. At the end of each entry press return (or #) to pass on to the next field. Using the Acorn Prestel adaptor, and certain other units, you can pre-program the responses to each of these questions into your adaptor. This will allow you to log-on quickly whenever you need information.

Once you have completed the connection in this way, a large number of pages are available to you (about 1500 pages in July 1985). You will find pages giving details of the use of the system, areas describing special features and you can type *HELP to get a set of useful help pages.

What will it cost ?
The service is provided free of charge and all pages are provided free of charge. Because the system is running on our own equipment at Acorn in Cambridge you will not receive any system charges or bills. You will however have to pay for the telephone call which will be charged by British Telecom in exactly the same way as any other call you may normaly make.

What if I can't get through ?
The system is currently operating on three telephone lines, if you do get the engaged tone please try again a few minutes latter.