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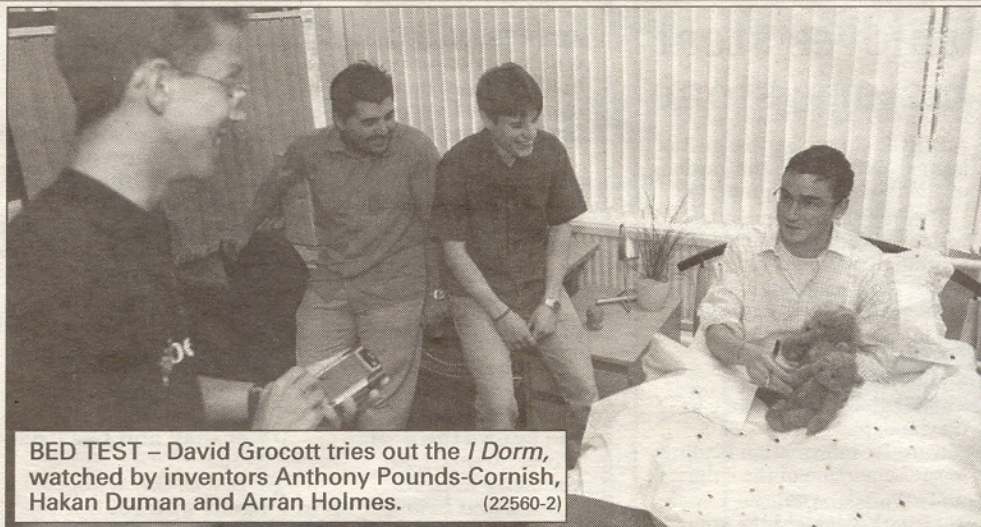
Our reporter who finds it difficult to get up in the morning gets a little help from university zzzz-kids

THOSE readers who have difficulty setting the video player, please look away now.

Essex University research students have this week revealed their vision of the future – a computerised bed capable of opening window blinds, switching on lights, and even predicting when you should get up.

The Intelligent Inhabited Environments Group of the department of computer science have spent the better part of two years coming up with what they believe is the perfect solution for people who hate to, or can't, get up.

Dubbed the I Dorm, their robotic bed, indeed bedroom, has recently appeared on BBC's Tomorrow's World and this week faced the tougher test of the County Standard's well-appointed backside.



BED TEST – David Grocott tries out the *I Dorm*, watched by inventors Anthony Pounds-Cornish, Hakan Duman and Arran Holmes. (22560-2)

From beneath the eiderdown a ballet of motors, sensors and switches does everything from switching on

the lights, when I move from lying down to sitting, to telling me on a computer screen when the window is open.

It's just a pair of pointy ears short of a set from Star Trek.

Developer Anthony Pounds-Cornish, 24, road tested the intelligent bedroom for two days before he explained the possibilities: "It is just an extension of the light switch. When you switch the light on you don't think about the circuitry behind it – this should be like that, so that you don't think about it.

"Any controlled environment could benefit from the system, hospital wards, old people's homes, prisons.

"Here we have the computer in the same room as

the bed and sensors, but if we had it elsewhere it could be very useful.

"What is truly different about this system is it learns, it can spot behavioural patterns. That is unique."

Fellow researcher, Arran Holmes, 23, added: "There is an element of Big Brother to it. If an elderly person has not woken, then the system can alert helpers to check on them."

The development duo have created their project along with fellow researcher Hakan Duman, 27, and assistance from the department's academic staff.

Projections made by the team suggest the intelligent bed could be beneath our pillows in ten to 15 years time.

DAVID GROCCOTT

● Anyone interested in finding out more about the system can contact the researchers on 01206 872138 or at <http://cswww.essex.ac.uk/intelligent-buildings>.

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