

**Issue 179**

**OCTOBER 2012**



# **ISLE OF WIGHT PC USER GROUP**

## **HOT KEY**

**AUTUMN 2012**



More people attended the summer BBQ held in August than has been the case in previous years, we were lucky that the weather remained dry

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# The Isle of Wight Personal Computer User Group

We welcome anyone who has an interest in computers and related technology  
and the things you can do with it.

We are a group which seeks to exchange ideas and new information.

**Membership is £12 per annum**

Our meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at

**The Riverside Centre, Newport** from 7.30 to 9.30 pm

*Visitors are welcome.*

**A charge of £2 is made per meeting, which includes tea or  
coffee during the break.**

If you would like to know more about us, you are most welcome to come  
along to one of our meetings, or you can contact one of our Committee  
Members listed on page 3.

The Club Website address is **[www.iwpcug.org](http://www.iwpcug.org)**

We also have an e-group discussion area on  
Yahoo groups: **[iwpcusers@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:iwpcusers@yahoo.co.uk)**. See  
page 11 for how to join.



## **FUTURE MEETINGS**

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Subject</u></b>	<b><u>Speaker</u></b>
October 3	Windows 8	David Groom
November 7	Mini Talks	various speakers
December 5	Christmas meeting	TBC
January 2	Wordpress	David Groom
February 6	AGM	

## **ISLE OF WIGHT PC USER GROUP COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**Chairman :** David Groom

**Treasurer :** Phil Rogers

**Secretary :** Susanne Bone

**Membership & Database Secretary :** Ray Boote

**Committee Member :** Roger Skidmore

**Committee Member :** Steve Sutters

**Committee Member :** Soren Johanson

**HotKey Editor :** Bob Groom

**Note: Contact details removed prior to  
publishing on the internet.**

Suggestions for new events, topics or speakers for talks are always welcome.

Please contact any committee member with your ideas.  
If necessary we may be able to find a speaker for your subject.

## **Chairmans Report**

We have had a number of new members join us recently, which I'm pleased to see. The long term health of our club depends upon new members joining, and we all need to consider if among our family, friends and acquaintances there are any people who might like to attend our meetings.

Our Email discussion group, hosted at Yahoo Groups, continues to provide answers to queries which members raise, although it is surprising how infrequently questions arise.

Recognising that the world has moved on from IBM compatible PC's to other computing products, last months talk was on what Apple has to offer. I have to say that although I'm not yet a convert, I was impressed about what seems a very cheap upgrade path from one version of the operating system to the next. Many thanks to Carl Griffiths, from Just PC's in Grays Walk, Newport for demonstrating what you can do with Imacs, and Ipads, (see photo on back cover).

In fact even the phrase "IBM compatible PC's" itself, which until this issue had been used in the first sentence on page 2 of Hotkey for over 10 years, is a phrase which many people would struggle to understand, particularly since IBM stopped making personal computers some years ago.

Steve raises some interesting questions in his article on page 15. Obviously any change in name would have to be approved by the membership, and I'm not totally convinced it is necessary, but its certainly worth thinking about.

There is no cover disk with this months HotKey as I could not find any significantly different programs to put in the CD which justified the time in and costs involved in producing it. If you know of any free programs which would be worth putting on future cover disks then please let me know.

**David Groom**

## **In Celebration of Paper**

From shortly after the outset of the digital age, one of the loudest rallying cries has been the "paperless office." With wired and wireless networks to send anything instantaneously and with the huge capacities of magnetic, optical, and related storage technologies, why continue to imprint information onto dead trees?

Paper is environmentally unfriendly, costly, bulky, not easily searchable, cumbersome to update, and vulnerable to prying eyes and catching on fire. Only a neo-Luddite or technophobe would want to hang onto such a relic.

But as a society we're still hanging onto an awful lot of paper, and tossing paper into the wastebasket of history, more than 70 years after the development of the first digital computer, appears to have little likelihood of happening anytime soon.

This isn't for lack of trying. People have been using and prompting others to use scanners, optical character recognition software, database software, digital signatures, encryption, and other digital tools for decades, and during this time many people have predicted the end of paper in the office and elsewhere.

The term "paperless office" was a marketing slogan introduced in the 1960s to sell IBM computers. An article in the January 1970 issue of Administrative Management predicted that society would climb out of the "Gutenberg rut" by the end of the 1970s.

Reality has been quite different. An article in the Oct. 9, 2008, issue of the Economist documented how paper consumption doubled between 1980 and 2000. The use of paper since then has leveled off, but we still use a staggering amount. According to a study last year by market research firm International Data Corp., the number of pages output per year from computer printers should reach 1.2 trillion in 2015.

Things didn't start with paper. The Sumerians, who are most often credited with inventing writing along with civilization around 4000 B.C., put their impressions down on soft clay, which they hardened by baking in the sun. The ancient Egyptians famously used papyrus, made from the spongy material inside the stems of reeds growing in shallow water, which they rolled into scrolls.

Later the ancient Greeks wrote on animal skins called parchment, as did others. Vellum was originally a type of parchment made from calf skin before evolving into today's vegetable-based vellum used for blueprints and other technical

drawings, with some higher quality paper also described using this term. Many cultures through history have used beaten bark or flattened leaves as writing materials. The oldest surviving material onto which humans have expressed themselves was used for pictures, not words, the stone walls inside caves, beginning about 40,000 years ago.

But it was paper that has most transmitted learning over time during human history, accelerating the advancement of culture and civilization. The Chinese in the early 2nd century A.D. are most often credited with inventing paper, though some archeological evidence suggests it existed in China slightly earlier.

Among the earliest materials used in making paper was hemp, the same Cannabis sativa plant used in the cultivation of marijuana. Not all cannabis varieties produce psychoactive leaves and flowers, and hemp has long been used also in the making of cloth, rope, and other materials.

From China papermaking spread to Korea and other parts of Asia as well as Central Asia, Persia, Egypt, and Morocco. Paper was largely introduced to Europe by the Moors, the Moslem invaders of Spain, in the 12th century. Because of paper's Moslem connection, the Christian world initially preferred traditional parchment, with the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick II declaring in 1221 that all official documents written on paper were invalid.

The dramatic improvements of the printing press around 1440 by the German Johannes Gutenberg and the consequent mechanization of bookmaking sealed the fate of paper. Primarily made from wood or rags and often coated with gelatin, clay, or other substances, paper is largely the same today as it has been for centuries.

Among the beneficiaries of paper have been literacy, rationalism, the middle class, the scientific revolution, the industrial revolution, mass communication, modernity, and the democratization of knowledge.

Paper may have a long and illustrious history, but like any technology it's not necessarily destined for eternity. The financial troubles of the U.S. Postal Service, the greater convenience of electronic communication and bill payment, the demise of printed encyclopedias, and the rise of smartphones, tablets, and e-readers all point to the future. The Internet, spurred perhaps most by the popularization of the Web in the mid-1990s, has taken what paper has given us to the next level.

**Karren Hammond**

## **The New Facebook? Understanding Google+**

Lately it seems like everyone has been talking about Google+ , a new social networking conglomerate developed by the giant internet search engine Google. Even when the platform was still in its field trial stage there was already a large buzz about the product. So, what makes Google+ different from Facebook, the current most popular social networking site?

Through its three main features – Circles, Hangouts, and Sparks, Google+ differentiates itself because it:

- 1) Gives the user more privacy by allowing him or her to be in full control of what is shared
- 2) Has a group video chat feature
- 3) Allows the user to uncover content rather than purely share content

For the Facebook crowd at large who are unfamiliar with Google+, here is a quick glimpse into the nuts and bolts of the new site.

### **The Stream**

Once you get the invite, (the word is that there are currently tens of millions of users, so ask around – chances are you probably know someone who is using it) just sign in with your Gmail, Picassa, or Youtube account. You are then prompted to create your personal profile, which consists of a profile picture, introduction, education, employment, places lived, etc.

On the home screen, there is a GChat bar on the left side and a black bar at the top of the page that connects with Gmail, Calendar, Docs, Photo, Reader, and Web. Below this, there are four tabs that are quite similar to Facebook: Home, Photos, Profile, and Circles. The vast majority of the screen is taken up by a live news feed with comment and +1, or the “like”, capability of your Circles’s activities. But wait – what exactly is this “Circles” mechanism that keeps being referred to?

### **Circles**

One of the three main features of Google+ is Circles. Circles allow you to sort your contacts into groups, including but not limited to friends, family, acquaintances, and following (like Twitter). Do you ever go through your 1000+ Facebook friends and not know who certain people are and how you met them? Have no fear – Google+ will keep your contacts organized.

Additionally, Circles allows you to easily share posts and pictures with only a specific group of people. There is also the option of adding friends without a Google+ account to a circle, in which they will receive your posts via email. By giving the user control of essentially every post shared, Google+ can be as private or public as you want it to be.

### Hangouts

The Hangout tool is a video chat function. After downloading Google's Voice and Video Installer, you have the capability to create a Hangout and invite up to ten people in your network to chat. Rather than planning Skype sessions in advance, Google+ posts that you are "hanging out" in the live stream and gives others the chance to jump in. Another appealing feature of Hangouts is the ability for Groups to watch Youtube videos or movies together.

An analogous application to Hangouts, the Huddle feature allows users to group chat through text. This can be useful for creating plans for the night or making decisions on a work related project.

### Sparks

Sparks allows you to not only share content, but also to discover it. By typing your interests into the Sparks page that appears in your sidebar, you can stumble upon external sites that are of importance to you. Generally, these include current articles, videos, and other relevant content. Specifically, when I clicked on Recipes, which is one of the current featured interests, I was directed to "Foodmakers May Change Recipes to Cut Fat for Fare Advertised to Children," "New Restaurant Shares a New Blueberry Pie Recipe," and more. You can also share your favorite links from Sparks – and from anywhere on the web for that matter – onto your Wall.

### More on Google+

Similar to other social media sites, Google+ is available for those on the go. The native mobile app currently is available for the Android, but the web app is accessible for all smartphones, and SMS is coming soon.

The ultimate question remains: Will you switch to Google+ or stay with Facebook?

**Stephanie Wu**

**Source:** [www.articlecity.com/articles/computers\\_and\\_internet/article\\_6226.shtml](http://www.articlecity.com/articles/computers_and_internet/article_6226.shtml)



## **Keeping Healthy at the Computer**

Short of having a computer land on your head because a frustrated user threw one out a high-story window, PCs can't kill you. But they can cause injuries.

The most common health problems associated with computers are sore backs, stiff necks, painful wrists, bum shoulders, and aching eyes.

Preventing and treating such maladies involve analyzing how you work with your computer, including other equipment you use. The two largest and most important pieces of auxiliary equipment are your chair and desk.

After much experimentation, I've found two solutions that work best for me, one at the high end, the other in the midrange. These products, or similar ones, may be worth exploring for you as well.

Ergonomic chairs have been on the market for many years. Popular high-end brands include Aeron from Herman Miller ([www.hermanmiller.com](http://www.hermanmiller.com)), Leap from Steelcase ([www.steelcase.com](http://www.steelcase.com)), and Freedom from Humanscale ([www.humanscale.com](http://www.humanscale.com)).

You can also find highly adjustable ergonomic office chairs at your local office supply store, such as Staples or OfficeMax, that range from pricey to affordable. Being able to sit in a chair, play with its controls, and evaluate the seat padding can determine if that particular brand and model is right for you.

The one chair I've found that works best for me is BodyBilt by ErgoGenesis ([www.ergogenesis.com](http://www.ergogenesis.com)), which costs in the \$1,000 range. These high-end models feature innovative designs and quality materials that, for my back, have proved to be worth it.

One standout feature is the deeply contoured seat. The middle of the seat actually rises between your legs and derriere. It looks frightening, but it distributes your weight so well that you can sit comfortably for hours. Another standout feature is the "PT option," which consists of extra foam on the back, letting you adjust for the optimal lumbar support.

Arm rests may seem like a frill, but they can prevent you from leaning too far forward and straining your neck or shoulders. A high back and neck roll can be useful if you spend a lot of time leaning back in your chair, while talking on the phone, for instance.

You might think that with a good ergonomic chair, you're good to go. But desks or workstations can also play an important role in keeping you healthy.

Just as with chairs, picking a product that works for you is crucial. What's best for your body might not work for everyone else, and vice versa. Adjustability is also key, and the ultimate in adjustability is a height-adjustable desk.

The idea is to be able to get off your duff while working. No matter how ergonomic the chair, our bodies are made for walking, standing, and squatting, not sitting.

Some sitting is necessary and inevitable, but too much can cause problems. A new study, in fact, found that sitting too much can lower your life expectancy.

People who sit for more than 11 hours a day are 40 percent more likely to die within three years, and those who sit between 8 to 11 hours a day are 15 percent more likely to die, compared with those who sit less than 4 hours a day, according to the "45 and Up Study" of Australia's Sax Institute ([www.45andup.org.au](http://www.45andup.org.au)), published in the March 26, 2012, issue of the well-respected Archives of Internal Medicine. Other researchers have found that physical inactivity increases the risks of heart disease, cancer, and diabetes.

One solution is to stand at least part of the time when you would otherwise have been sitting. A height-adjustable desk, sometimes called a height-adjustable workstation, a hi-lo desk, or an ergonomic desk, makes this possible. Manufacturers include Baker Manufacturing ([www.bakermanufacturing.com](http://www.bakermanufacturing.com)), Safco ([www.safcoproducts.com](http://www.safcoproducts.com)), and SIS ([www.sisusainc.com](http://www.sisusainc.com)).

Such products can cost several thousand dollars. The SOHO Adjustable Computer Workstation from Tiffany Industries ([www.mayline.com](http://www.mayline.com)), available at some office supply stores, can cost less than \$300. You have to hand-crank the adjustments, and it's more appropriate for a laptop computer than a heavy desktop PC, but it conveniently, and healthfully, lets you stay on your feet without taking up much office space.

Another lower-cost option is a standing desk, also called a stand-up desk, which lets you work only standing up. If you use a laptop, netbook, or tablet computer, you can easily move from a standing position, in front of your standing desk, to a sitting position, at a regular desk, when you get tired of standing.

Provided you have an ergonomic chair for use with your regular desk or adjustable desk, you have the best of both worlds.

**Karren Hammond**

Karen raises some interesting points in the above article, a few years ago, for the second time in a couple of years, I woke one morning unable to turn my neck. A visit to a chiropractor suggested that the reason might be that I was continually looking down at my keyboard and monitor, and that I should try and arrange things so my head faced more forward. Whether it is just coincidence, but a few small changes to the layout of my desk and the problem has not recurred.

**David Groom**

### **Car Sharing / Lifts**

It is possible that a number of our members do not attend our monthly meetings because they find transport to Newport difficult and the committee have wondered if it might be possible to arrange lifts for those members. With a membership as large as ours it is not always obvious who might like to attend but has difficulty with transport, and secondly, who might live nearby and be able to offer them a lift.

As a first step, if you would like to attend the meetings but currently can't get to the Riverside Centre on a Wednesday evening, and would like to see if there is a nearby member who might offer you a lift, then could you please get in contact with a committee member. We will then try and find a member who might be willing to give you a lift.

### **Joining the Email Group**

Send an e-mail to: **[iwpcusers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:iwpcusers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com)** with "join" in the subject line.

All members are encouraged to join this group ( which costs nothing and is private to club members ) in order to keep intouch with events and to join in with the discussions.

You can also keep in touch by regularly visiting **[www.iwpcug.org](http://www.iwpcug.org)**

## **Club Web Site**

In late June the Club web site [www.iwpcug.org](http://www.iwpcug.org) was hacked and some malicious code was inserted into many of the pages. Not only was this an obvious security risk to anyone visiting the web site, but it also resulted in our whole domain being reported as dangerous, leading to some web-browsers blocking access to the site - not an ideal situation for a web site which represents a computer club!

I initially tried to clean up the affected pages, but the number of these pages was so large that I took the view that the easiest short term fix was to move the hosting to a completely new server. This I did, and I then uploaded only a few pages which I had checked to ensure they were "clean" from malicious code. This had the benefit that our domain name was removed from the "dangerous" list, and people could actually see some form of our web site, even though this was a very cut down version.

I must apologise that due to other commitments over the summer I did not proceed with checking the remainder of the site pages as quickly as I had first hoped. However I have now completed the task of checking most of the pages. I have deleted all the pages from the old server, and replaced them with the newly checked pages. The only section which I have yet to tackle is David Broughtons puzzle section, but I hope to complete this soon.

The one positive note to come out of this was the demonstration that current web browsers, coupled with good security software do block access to suspicious and dangerous sites. Although, as ever, it's worth remembering that you should keep you browsers and security software updated to the latest version to ensure maximum protection.

I've now registered our site with Norton, this means they will monitor the site and alert me to any problems which may occur in the future. A further benefit is that for anyone who uses a Norton security product, our sites security status will be displayed alongside web searches, giving greater security for anyone who uses our site.

**David Groom**

## The Raspberry Pi



larger image on back page

The Raspberry Pi is a credit-card sized computer that plugs into your TV and a keyboard, it measures just 85.60mm x 53.98mm x 17mm, with a little overlap for the SD card and connectors which project over the edges, and weighs 45g. It's a capable little PC which can be used for many of the things that your desktop PC does, like spreadsheets, word-processing and games. It also plays high-definition video. It is

available in two versions, both have 256Mb RAM, Model A (priced at \$25) has one USB port and no Ethernet (network connection), Model B (priced at \$35) has 2 USB ports and an Ethernet port. If you need more USB connections mice, keyboards, network adapters and external storage will all connect via a standard USB hub.

The Pi was designed in Cambridge, and is now being manufactured at a Sony factory in south Wales. The developers intention is that the provision of a low cost computer will stimulate the teaching of basic computer science in schools. In a similar way that the BBC micro did a generation ago. There is no operating system on the device itself, instead the SD card is used for booting and long-term storage. The recommended OS is Raspbian - a Debian Linux-based operating system optimised for the Raspberry Pi hardware.

Composite and HDMI are the supported outputs for video on the board, so you can hook it up to an old analogue TV, to a digital TV or to a DVI monitor (using a cheap adapter for the DVI). There is no VGA support for connection to "standard" computer monitors, but adaptors are available, although these are relatively expensive. There's a standard 3.5mm jack for audio out, and you can add any supported USB microphone for audio in.

Detailed reasoning behind the hardware specifications, and the compromises which had to be made can be found in a Wired article [1], written by one of the engineers involved in the early development of the Pi.

The device is powered by 5v micro USB connector. Model B owners using networking and high-current USB peripherals will require a supply which can source 700mA (many phone chargers meet this requirement). Model A owners

with powered USB devices will be able to get away with a much lower current capacity (probably only 300mA).

Pis can be brought online from Farnell ([uk.farnell.com](http://uk.farnell.com)) or RTS Components ([uk.rs-online.com](http://uk.rs-online.com)), though there is a waiting period of 3 - 9 weeks before orders are shipped. Inevitably these shipping delays have also lead to items appearing on Ebay for immediate despatch but at a higher cost than the official price, as sellers cash in on the high demand for the devices.

Maplin Electronics sell the Pi in a bundle, containing an AC powered 4-port USB hub, USB keyboard, USB optical mouse, 2.1A twin USB mains power supply, 1.5m gold-plated USB A to micro B cable to power the Raspberry Pi, 1.5m gold-plated HDMI cable and an N150 Nano Wi-Fi dongle for wireless connectivity. However all these additional items bring the selling price up to £70.

The big, and as yet unanswered question, is whether the Pi achieves the desired effect on the teaching of IT in schools, or whether the device is instead used mainly by hobbyists.

By default, Python will be the officially supported educational programming language. Any language which will compile for ARMv6 can be used with the Raspberry Pi, though; so you're not limited to using Python. A quick search on Google for "python programming for children" turned up quite a few resources for helping children learn to program in Python (see [2] & [3] for examples). This months (Oct 2012) edition of PC Pro magazine also has two articles on coding for the Pi. It's good to see this sort of thing appearing once more in mainstream computing magazines.

As might be expected, the availability of an incredibly cheap, yet relatively fully featured computer, has led to many people experimenting with what can be done with the hardware.

One of our club members has recently ordered a Pi, so it will be interesting to see what he manages to achieve with it.

**David Groom**

References:

[1] <http://goo.gl/ZM5nW>

[2] <http://www.briggs.net.nz/snake-wrangling-for-kids.html>

[3] <http://inventwithpython.com>

## **A Name and Emphasis Change for our club?**

The world of computers has changed so much in the last 10 years. One of the biggest changes has been with the use of smaller devices to carry out our computing needs. Even smartphones can be used for basic tasks like surfing the net and sending emails. The general public is turning away from 'beige boxes' to a range of more compact and mobile devices. Even I have finally bought an old laptop for its portability. I think this trend should be catered for with speakers for future meetings. Roger Browns excellent introduction to the Samsung Galaxy tablet is what we could do with more of.

Also our name makes no mention of cameras, chaos, let alone I.O.W. Red Squirrels or the many interesting subjects that have a tenuous link to PCs but are of interest to the group because of their technological (or fluffy) content.

The phrase 'computer users' lacks sparkle. Most people today can already use a personal computer. Our job is to explore new uses for our gadgets and to boldly go where few PC users have gone before! When I mention our name to the average bloke they look bored. When I mention it to the average woman I get a look of total blankness. If we changed our name to something like the 'I.O.W. Computer and Gadget Club' it might even sound more appealing to women who often have the latest brightly coloured smartphones.

Now don't get me wrong. I think most of us will always love desktop computers for their power and versatility. I can't see myself ever being without my one! So long may there be traditional talks about creative ways to use our machines. We must also embrace the new trends in computing lest we go the same way as the dinosaurs.

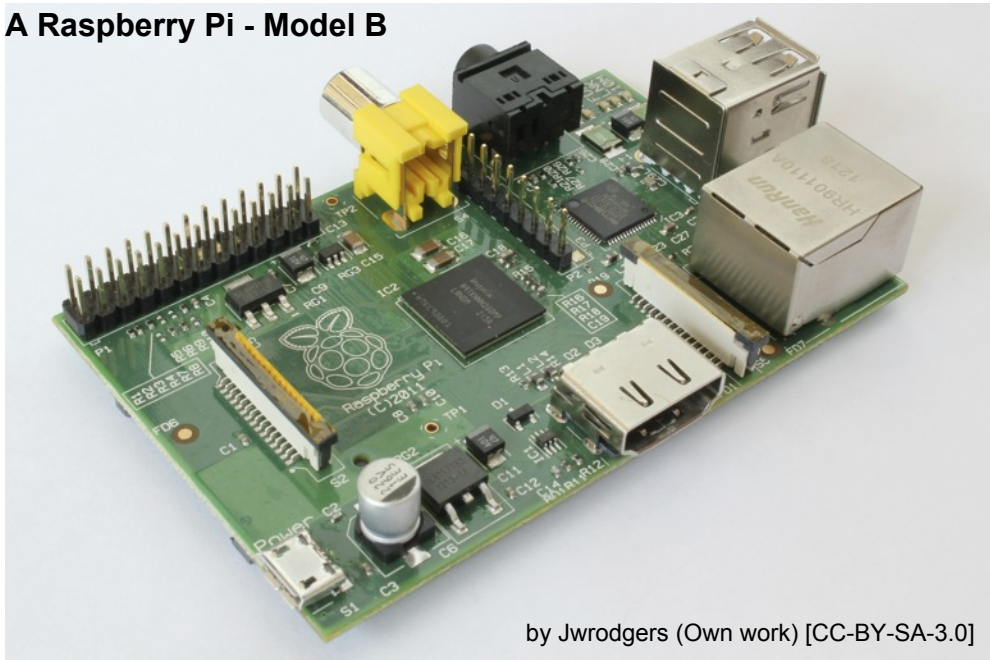
Suggestions for new names should be given to your prospective new speaker finder, [or any other committee member - Ed]

**Stephen Sutters.**

The possibility of a change of name was only raised at committee meeting last month. Steve is flagging up a possibility, and we would welcome input from members on this. Also, as alluded to in the last line of his article, from next year Steve has agreed to take on responsibility for arranging speakers and subjects for our monthly meetings.

**David Groom**

## A Raspberry Pi - Model B



by Jwrodgers (Own work) [CC-BY-SA-3.0]



Carl Griffiths from Just PC's demonstrating the Imac and Ipad at our September meeting.

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