

Issue 207

AUTUMN 2019

ISLE OF WIGHT PC USER
GROUP



HOT KEY

OCTOBER 2019



At our September meeting Maurice Gilliam gave us an introduction to editing video footage on a PC.

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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 what you can do with them.

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

Membership is £12 per annum

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

The Riverside Centre, Newport from 7.00 to 9.00 pm

Visitors are always 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 web site address is **www.iwpcug.org**

We also have an e-group discussion area on
Yahoo groups: **iwpcusers@yahoogroups.com**.



FUTURE MEETINGS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
2 October	Universal Boot CD, and more	Jonathan Burt
6 November	My Cameras (part 3); plugin hybrids	Andrew Collins
4 December	Christmas Meeting	Denny Linzmaier

ISLE OF WIGHT PC USER GROUP COMMITTEE

Chairman : David Groom

Secretary : Susanne Bone

Treasurer : Mike Hoar

Membership and Database Secretary : Roger Skidmore

Committee Member : Steve Sutters

Treasury Supervisor : Phil Rogers

Note:

Contact details removed prior to publishing on the internet.

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

Please contact Steve Sutters, or any committee member, with your ideas.

If necessary we may be able to find a speaker for your subject.

Chairman's Report

In August we held our annual summer BBQ. Once again we are grateful to Roger Skidmore who kindly allowed us to take over his garden for the evening. The weather was good, and I hope a great time was had by all.

We've not yet made the room bookings with the Riverside Centre for next year, but given that the first Wednesday in January is New Years Day I think it highly likely that we will meet instead on the 8th. Please keep an eye on our website, or the E-Group for confirmation of this.

The E-group has become very quiet recently, other than the meeting reminders there has only been one message since June.

As in the past few years, we have included with this issue of HotKey a reminder of subscriptions due. It helps cut down on the administration of the club if we send these out at the same time as posting you the magazine.

Lastly a quick reminder that if there is any subject on which you would like a talk then please do let one of the committee know.

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, 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 me. We will then try and find a member who might be willing to give you a lift.

HotKey Cover Disk

This issue of HotKey should come with a CD cover disk. In the past this used to be a regular occurrence, however with faster internet connections the production of a quarterly CD with software on it became redundant.

However in view of the wealth of information he has created the committee thought it might be good to produce a one-off CD which contained a copy of the talks by our regular speaker Jonathan Burt, which are on the CD in PDF format.

Having decided to produce such a CD we then thought it would be a good idea to also include a selection of links to (and some downloads) of useful software.

The CD should automatically run when it is inserted, however this is not always guaranteed as Windows locks down autorun a lot more now. If it doesn't auto-start, double click AutoRun.exe instead.

Linux Laptop Upgrade Experience - addendum

Further to my article in HotKey (issue 206, page 5) I have discovered that using EaseUs sector by sector disc copy also replicates the original hard disc size. It will only copy to same size hard drives or bigger, but when copying to a bigger hard drive it still gives you the same size limit. So copying a 40Gb drive to a 60Gb drive still leaves you with nominally a 40Gb drive.

All is not lost since gParted comes to the rescue. Running gParted allows you to effortlessly increase the drive size to maximum (e.g. to 60Gb in the case of an actual 60Gb drive.) See <https://gparted.org/>

gParted can be installed within Linux as would any other programme. To use in Windows it is necessary to download the ISO file and then create a bootable CD.

As ever when fiddling with partitions, ensure you have all your data backed up. Or practice first on a spare hard drive!

Roger Skidmore

Windows 10 Recovery - Part 1

A few months ago, after a Windows Update, my computer refused to boot up correctly. It would start to boot, display the Windows logo, and then end up stuck at a black screen. Prior to Windows 10, I would have restarted the machine, whilst holding down SHIFT & F8 and tried to repair the installation, but although in theory this option is still available in Windows 10, for many people, me included, it does not work.

You can get into the recovery menu if you can get to the Sign In screen, then press and hold the SHIFT key. With this key still pressed, click the Power button and, in the menu that opens, click Restart. But my computer would not boot as far as the Sign In screen, so that option was unavailable to me!

After a search on Google I found an alternative method. If Windows 10 fails to boot normally three times over, the fourth time it enters by default in an Automatic Repair mode. To trigger the Automatic Repair mode, you must interrupt the normal boot process three consecutive times: use the Reset or the Power button on your Windows 10 PC to stop it during boot, before it finishes loading Windows 10. I did this by holding down the power key at the moment the Windows logo started to appear on screen. Somewhat to my amazement the fourth time the computer booted I was taken to the Recovery menu.

Once in Recovery I could reset my PC to a time before the update was installed, and then reboot the PC. Much to my relief the computer booted up normally and I had a working PC again!

You might image my alarm when I switched off the computer later that day only to be informed that Windows was once again performing an update! I dreaded having to go through the recovery process the next time I started Windows, but luckily this time the update seemed to have installed OK.

Of course switching off a computer whilst it is booting up is generality not recommended as it can result in file damage or in extreme cases a hard drive failure, and the fact that I had to do this three times in a row alarmed me, but I had no option.

David Groom

Windows 10 Recovery - Part 2

The method described opposite to get to the recovery mode would not have been necessary if I had had a Windows installation DVD. However as this installation is a free upgrade from Windows 8 I have no such installation DVD.

An alternative method of getting to the boot menu is to boot from system recovery USB drive, but I had never made one!

I immediately decided it was time that did make such a drive. Looking on line seemed to indicate that I would need an 8Gb memory stick, but with prices quite low I decided to be on the safe side and buy an 16Gb stick (it only cost £4.96 from Amazon). This turned out to be fortuitous, as when I started the process to create the drive my computer told me I needed a 16Gb stick.

Creating the Recovery Drive

The first thing you need to do is plug in the USB memory stick or external hard drive which you want to turn into a recovery drive. Once Windows 10 has detected it correctly, go to the search box near the Start button, and type "recovery." In the list of results, click or tap "Create a recovery drive."

You see a checkbox that says "Backup system files to the recovery drive." If you enable the checkbox, the recovery drive gives you the option later, during recovery, to install Windows 10 if the system files are damaged. It seemed best to click this checkbox.

You are then asked to select the drive on which the recovery drive will be created. Having selected the appropriate drive you receive a warning message that everything on the drive is going to be erased. This is your last chance to save the data on it. When you are ready to start the process, click Create.

For my installation it then took 5 hours to complete the process, after which I should now have a recovery drive which to get me out of trouble if Windows 10 decides not to boot again. If you don't have a Windows 10 installation disc I would encourage you to create a recovery drive.

David Groom

11 Surprising Ways You May Use Linux Every Day

What technology runs on Linux? You might be astonished to know just how often you use Linux in your daily life.

Linux runs almost everything these days, but many people are not aware of that. Some might be aware of Linux and might have heard that this operating system runs supercomputers. According to Top500, Linux now powers the five-hundred fastest computers in the world. Go to their site and search for "Linux" to see the results for yourself.

NASA runs on Linux

You might not be aware that Linux powers NASA. NASA's Pleiades supercomputer runs Linux. The International Space Station switched from Windows to Linux six years ago due to the operating system's reliability. NASA even recently deployed three "Astrobee" robots—which run Linux—to the International Space Station.

eReaders run on Linux

I read a great deal, and my go-to device is the Amazon Kindle Paperwhite, which runs Linux (though most people are completely unaware of that fact). If you use any of Amazon's services—from Amazon Elastic Compute Cloud (Amazon EC2) to Fire TV—you are running on Linux. When you ask Alexa what time it is, or for the score of your favourite sports team, you are also using Linux, since Alexa is powered by Fire OS (an Android-based operating system). In fact, Android was developed by Google as Linux for mobile handsets, and powers 76% of today's mobile phones.

TV runs on Linux

If you have a TiVo, you are also running Linux. If you are a Roku user, then you too are using Linux. Roku OS is a custom version of Linux specifically for Roku devices. You may opt to use Chromecast—which runs on Linux—for video streaming. Linux doesn't just power set-top boxes and streaming devices, though. It likely runs your smart TV, too. LG uses webOS, which is

based on the Linux kernel. Panasonic uses Firefox OS, which is also based on the Linux kernel. Samsung, Phillips, and many more use Linux-based operating systems to power their devices.

Smartwatches and laptops run on Linux

If you own a smartwatch, it's likely running Linux. School systems throughout the world have been implementing one-to-one systems where each child is provided their own laptop. A rapidly increasing number of those institutions outfit their students with a Chromebook. These lightweight laptops use Chrome OS, which is based on Linux.

Cars run on Linux

The car you drive might well be running Linux. Automotive-Grade Linux has enlisted manufacturers like Toyota, Mazda, Mercedes-Benz, and Volkswagen in a project that will see Linux as the standard code base for automobiles. It is also likely that your in-vehicle infotainment system runs Linux. The GENIVI Alliance develops "standard approaches for integrating operating systems and middleware present in the centralized and connected vehicle cockpit," according to its website.

Gaming runs on Linux

If you are a gamer, then you might be using SteamOS, which is a Linux-based operating system. Also, if you use any of Google's myriad of services, then you are running on Linux.

Social media runs on Linux

As you're scrolling and commenting, you may realize what a lot of work these platforms are doing. Perhaps then it's not so surprising that Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter all run on Linux.

Additionally, the new wave of social media, de-centralized, federated nodes of connected communities like Mastodon, GNU Social, Nextcloud Social (microblogging platforms similar to Twitter), Pixelfed (distributed photo sharing), and Peertube (distributed video sharing) are, at least by default, run

on Linux. Being open source, they can each run on any platform, which is a powerful precedence in itself.

Businesses and governments run on Linux

The New York Stock Exchange runs on Linux, as does the Pentagon. The Federal Aviation Administration handles over sixteen million flights a year, and they operate on Linux. The Library of Congress, House of Representatives, Senate, and White House all use Linux.

Retail runs on Linux

That entertainment system in the seat back on your latest flight is likely running on Linux. It's possible that the point of sale at your favourite store is running Linux. Tizen OS, which is based on Linux, powers an array of smart home and other smart devices. Many public libraries now host their integrated library systems on Evergreen and Koha. Both of those systems run on Linux.

Apple runs on Linux

If you are an iOS user who uses iCloud, then you, too, are using a system that runs on Linux. Apple Computer's company website runs on Linux. If you would like to know what other websites are run on Linux, be sure to use Netcraft and check the results of "What's that site running?"

Routers run on Linux

It is possible that the router that connects you to the internet in your home is running Linux.

30 Aug 2019 Don Watkins

Published on <https://opensource.com/article/19/8/everyday-tech-runs-linux>
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Affinity Publisher

For over a year now I have occasionally been using a beta version of Affinity Publisher, the new desktop publishing software from Serif (the company which produced Page Plus, the software which has been used to put together HotKey since July 2007).

In June the beta versions of Publisher were discontinued and the software was released for sale to the public.

The software is radically different in look to PagePlus, it is more complex, and I believe has a steeper learning curve in understanding how to use it. However it is supposed to offer major improvements over PagePlus and has received some very good reviews. I can confirm that on occasions when I could not produce a satisfactory document in PagePlus but then tried to produce a similar document in Affinity Publisher I had no problems.

In the world of desktop publishing Adobe InDesign is currently king, it is what most graphic designers and publishers use. But Serif are going after that market, and given some of the reviews I have seen it looks like they may well be on their way to achieving a serious competitor to InDesign.

It's worth mentioning that Serif is a British company based in Nottingham, and is taking on world class leaders.

Sadly Affinity Publisher won't import PagePlus files, so for the moment I will continue to produce HotKey in PagePlus as I already have the layout saved in that format. When I get more time I shall experiment more with Affinity Publisher.

No discussion of the software would be complete without mentioning the price. It is available for purchase for a one off fee of £48.99. In comparison Adobe InDesign is available for a monthly fee of £19.97, or £238.42 if you pay up front for a years licence.

David Groom

How to Install Python on Windows

In the April 2019 edition of Hotkey I wrote an article introducing the programming language Python, but I did not cover how you might install and start to use it. Assuming you want to try it out, the steps required are detailed below.

Get Python

Python is available from its website, Python.org. Once there, hover your mouse over the **Downloads** menu, then over the **Windows** option, and then click the button to download the latest release.

Alternatively, you can click the Downloads menu button and select a specific version from the downloads page.

Install Python

Once the package is downloaded, open it to start the installer.

It is safe to accept the default install location, and it's vital to add Python to PATH. If you don't add Python to your PATH, then Python applications won't know where to find Python (which they require in order to run). This is not selected by default, so activate it at the bottom of the install window before continuing!

Before Windows allows you to install an application from a publisher other than Microsoft, you must give your approval. Click the Yes button when prompted by the User Account Control system.

Wait patiently for Windows to distribute the files from the Python package into the appropriate locations, and when it's finished, you're done installing Python.

Time to play.

Install an IDE

To write programs in Python, all you really need is a text editor, but it's convenient to have an integrated development environment (IDE). An IDE integrates a text editor with some friendly and helpful Python features. IDLE 3 and NINJA-IDE are two options to consider.

IDLE 3

Python comes with an IDE called IDLE. You can write code in any text editor, but using an IDE provides you with keyword highlighting to help detect typos, a Run button to test code quickly and easily, and other code-specific features that a plain text editor like Notepad++ normally doesn't have.

To start IDLE, click the Start (or Window) menu and type python for matches. You may find a few matches, since Python provides more than one interface, so make sure you launch IDLE.

If you don't see Python in the Start menu, launch the Windows command prompt by typing cmd in the Start menu, then type:

```
C:\Windows\py.exe
```

If that doesn't work, try reinstalling Python. Be sure to select Add Python to PATH in the install wizard. Refer to the Python docs for detailed instructions.

Ninja-IDE

If you already have some coding experience and IDLE seems too simple for you, try Ninja-IDE. Ninja-IDE is an excellent Python IDE. It has keyword highlighting to help detect typos, quotation and parenthesis completion to avoid syntax errors, line numbers (helpful when debugging), indentation markers, and a Run button to test code quickly and easily.

To install it, visit the Ninja-IDE website and download the Windows installer. The process is the same as with Python: start the installer, allow Windows to install a non-Microsoft application, and wait for the installer to finish.

Once Ninja-IDE is installed, double-click the Ninja-IDE icon on your desktop or select it from the Start menu.

Original Article on which this was based published by **Seth Kenlon**
at <https://opensource.com/article/19/8/how-install-python-windows>
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First a Rant Then a Rave

Fake reviews

Normally with false praise for a product but also with false criticism from competitors. I first suspected fake reviews when I was looking through the reviews for a vacuum cleaner on Amazon. One model I was interested in had a high percentage of 5 star reviews but it seemed odd that most of these reviews had photos of the cleaner and people rarely bother to post photos with reviews. Not only that but the grammatical and spelling mistakes were strange in a way that you don't tend see from English speaking people. I tried other sites for reviews (I would suggest not just using Amazon for reviews) and found many people having problems with this model so I bought another.

Found another example of dodgy review whilst looking for a speedometer for my electric bike again from Amazon.

Bought this bicycle computer few days ago. I really likes its features especially the speed record, everything just fit my requirements. I would highly recommended it to friends!

This review did not meet my requirements for a genuine review!

Does the review include specifics about the product? Genuine reviews will often describe how products work in detail and often include criticism (after all not many things are perfect in the real world). Is the reviewer making outrageous claims?

There is a lot on the net about how to spot fake reviews and of course as with most things a very low price and high quality do not often go together.

And now the Rave

Now for a rave about duplex (prints both sides) printers. This is about one mono laser printer but applies to most of them.

A friend gave me an HP mono (black only) LaserJet P2055d (d stands for duplex). The dimensions are about 35cm x 35cm base and weighs 10.6 kg so a

bit bigger and heavier than the cheapest mono lasers. It was strange using it for the first time and seeing the page start to come out then go back in to print the other side. Printing speed is fast with good quality text and graphics. These printers are no longer made but second hand prices are from about £25-£110 on eBay. Genuine HP toner cartridges are expensive at £76.80 (from HP) but there are plenty of cheap compatible ones from £7 on eBay although I am not sure how good at that price. Compatible cartridges are always a lot cheaper than the original ones and I have always found them to work well with a good page yield.

There are plenty of other makes / models of duplex laser printers and they all cost more than the one side only models but there are plenty of second hand ones about with lots of life still in them. After using a duplex printer I don't want to go back to one side only machines as they use less paper and can still be used to print one side only by adjusting the settings after clicking on a print key.

Stephen Sutters

“God” Mode

If you want easy access to a whole host of tweaking options, look no further than this other ancient, yet oft-forgotten enthusiast tweak: “God” Mode. This Easter Egg consolidates a massive amount of power user settings into a single, easy-to-parse interface. The options are grouped into logical categories based on task types, such as “Administrative tools,” “Ease of access center,” and “System.” It’s great.

To enable “God” Mode, create a new folder and leave it empty. (I like to plop God Mode on my desktop.) Then right-click the folder, select **Rename**, and give it the following name:

God Mode.{ED7BA470-8E54-465E-825C-99712043E01C}.

Just cut and paste that in to be sure you don’t make any typos. Feel free to change the text before the first period, which gives the folder its name—if you aren’t keen on the traditional “God” Mode moniker, you can change it to whatever pleases you. Press **Enter** to save the name change, and the folder’s icon will change to mimic the Control Panel’s image. Open up and bask in “God” Mode’s fully unified glory (see image on back cover).

Jonathan Burt

