

Issue 169

April 2010

**ISLE OF WIGHT PC USER
GROUP**



HOT KEY

SPRING 2010



Fay Seabourne was showing us how
to use Microsoft Excel for Home

Book-keeping

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The Isle of Wight Personal computer User Group

We welcome all owners and users of IBM compatible Personal Computers.

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

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. Membership is £6 per annum

A charge of £1 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**

We also have an e-group discussion area on Yahoo groups:

iwpcusers@yahoo.com

See page 13 for how to join.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
May 5 (3 Speakers)	? Sailing Simulators Thought Experment	Steve Sutters Buz Austin David Broughton
June 2	Alternatives to Outlook Express	David Groom
July 7	Photoshop	Debbie Lane
Aug 4	Summer BBQ	

See our website for more information as it becomes available.

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

Email:- sutte@tiscali.co.uk

HotKey Editor : Bob Groom

Contact details removed prior to publishing on
web site

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.

Chairman's Report

As this is my first Chairman's Report since the AGM it is worth mentioning that Steve Sutters has joined the committee and Cliff Maidment has stepped down from the committee after many years service. Thank you Cliff for all the hard work you have put in over the years.

Roger Skidmore, assisted by Su Bone, is now in charge of arranging speakers, and as shown on page **2** we have speakers booked up to the summer BBQ, plus we have an outline of speakers for the remainder of the year. Keep an eye on the club web site for updates. Particularly when we ask outside speakers to attend it is important we have high turnouts, and it is encouraging to see the attendance at our meeting rising.

If you have been experiencing difficulties signing up for the Yahoo egroup, then see the message on page **13**.

Lastly my apologies, but I will be on holiday the first week of May, so won't be able to attend the meeting that month.

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.

David Groom

Excel Spreadsheet Evening

Thursday 3rd March saw the first presentation of the new season.

Fay Seabourne of Bright Brown Accountants came and spoke to us about setting up a basic spreadsheet to record typical domestic income and expenditure.

In what proved to be a useful introduction for some and reminder for others, of basic spreadsheet functionality she kept up our interest for the whole evening.

Linda Raynor													
Analysis of Income													
Date	Desc	Payee	Total	Wages	Interest	Dividends	Pension 1	Pension 2	Pension 3	Pension 4	Pension 5	Pension 6	
01-Apr	BGC	Norwich Union	300.00				300.00						
01-Apr	PIB	Employer	500.00	500.00									
04-Apr	Direct Credit	Lloyds	1.50		1.50								
05-Apr	BGC	Stockbroker	4.20			4.20							
05-Apr	BGC	Prudential	59.00					59.00					
05-Apr	BGC	DWP	400.00						400.00				
05-Apr	BGC	Standard Life	80.00							80.00			
05-Apr	BGC	Barclays	200.00								200.00		
06-Apr	BGC	Barclays	250.00									250.00	
			0.00										
			0.00										
			0.00										
			0.00										
			0.00										
			1,794.70	500.00	1.50	4.20	300.00	59.00	400.00	80.00	450.00	0.00	

The new evening format of a slightly shorter first half and slightly longer tea break also worked well, giving more time for chat and networking.

Steve's "freebie table" was also an innovation, extending the magazine exchange to include a variety of computer cable accessories. This could also be the start of a "puzzle/mystery" table as not all cables appeared to be of earthly origin !

Remote Assistance

Being known as the family PC expert I recently started looking at different ways of being able to fix friends/family Windows problems remotely. My son and daughter both live on the Mainland and when they had problems or wanted PC advice they were bringing their PC's over here or waiting until I went there. Having a go at fixing problems remotely seemed to be a quicker way of sorting things out so I began looking at some different free software available for remote access / remote assistance. Of course these solutions will only work if the machine can at least load Windows and have broadband internet access.

Before going further, I would like to add that all the PC's were running XP so I'm sure that the software will work on Vista and Windows 7, though it may be slightly different. I can't comment about Linux or Mac though.

To make things clearer in these examples I will refer to the helper as the expert and the person to be helped as the client.

Looking on the net the first package I came across was called Crossloop (www.crossloop.com). Both the expert and the client have to download the application (about 2.5MB) and set it up but this was fairly quick and painless. Upon starting the software both the expert and the client will be asked to create an account but this is not compulsory so you can just skip that section. The next screen has two tabs Access and Share. The client clicks on Share and they are given a unique 12 digit access code. They then communicate this to the expert by phone, email or chat. The expert then selects the Access tab and enters the code and both the expert and the client click on Connect. The expert should then receive an invitation to connect and needs to accept this. After a bit of handshaking including whether the session is to be view only a new window pops up on the expert's system which shows the client's desktop. If full access has been granted the expert can then perform actions on the client's system. The session continues until one or other hits the disconnect button which can be done at any time.

Crossloop is simple to set up and use. It seems to work across firewalls without problems and uses 128 bit encryption. It doesn't offer any file transfer facilities being a pure screen-sharing tool. The disadvantages I found were that it could be slow in accessing the remote system and that sometimes the connection would drop unexpectedly.

The next package I tried was called LogMeIn (www.logmein.com). This was somewhat different as it is marketed as a method of remote access to your PC from

any other PC providing your PC is loaded and the software is running. It can also be used for remote assistance though. The software is in the form of a free download and needs to be installed on the client's system only. This takes a couple of minutes but an account needs to be set up consisting of a valid email address, password and an access code. To access the client's PC all that is needed is for the expert to call up their browser and enter the email address and password on the www.logmein.com site. They will then be shown a list of the computer(s) that they can access. Normally this will just be the client's PC. It is then a simple procedure to connect using the previously entered access code and they will be presented with the client's desktop. The connection is secure using 256 bit encryption and like Crossloop it works across firewalls. You can also communicate with the client by a simple text messenger system so you can chat whilst resolving the problem. Either party can disconnect at any time and the PC with the software installed can disable it also so that no attempts can be made to connect.

I found this software to be much more reliable than Crossloop and it didn't suffer from broken connections. The expert can also reload the client's machine if required and it will reconnect afterwards, even in safe mode. The connection speed was also much faster, so overall this is a good package. There is a paid for version that allows you to perform other functions such as transferring files.

The final method I tried and which I found surprisingly easy to use was the Remote Assistance facility already provided in Windows. Although easy to use, it does take a bit of setting up to get going and if the client is not all that computer literate then it may need a bit of explaining on the phone to achieve. On XP I could not see that the data is encrypted though it may be in later versions. Also, as it uses Port 3389 to communicate, you may have a problem with firewall's blocking this by default. This can be remedied by accessing your firewall and allowing traffic on this port. The client has to be the owner account on the PC.

The first good thing is that neither party has to download any software as it is already built in to Windows. The software first has to be enabled from the System Properties screen. One way to get to this is via the control panel system option but there are numerous other ways. From System Properties select the Remote tab and you will see a box that can be ticked to allow Remote Assistance. This can be done at any time before assistance is required and the option can be left set.

To actual make a connection the next stage is for the client to click Start and select 'Help and Support'. From the initial screen there is a section called 'Ask for Assistance' with an entry called 'Invite a friend to connect to your computer with

Remote Assistance'. Clicking on this brings up the next screen for Remote Assistance and the entry 'Invite someone to help you' should be clicked. The client is then given three options for the invite. The first is to use Windows Messenger and you they would need to have an account here to use this. The second is to use a MAPI based email program such as Outlook Express to send an email to the expert. The third is to select a file, which would then have to be sent by one way or another to the expert. Whichever method the client uses the end result is to pass a small information file to the expert, which enables them to connect to the client's computer.

Assuming email is working ok, the client would select this option and type in the expert's email address. They will then have a chance to send a message with their request. An expiry time can be set for the help request to be answered. If the expert hasn't responded within this time the request lapses and a new one will have to be sent. The client can also set a password at this point that the expert will have to use to access the client's machine. This is a good safeguard in case the wrong person sees the request. The client can communicate the password by phone or text. Once the request has been sent, the client can sit back and wait for the expert to respond.

The expert will open the email and click on the small attachment. This will ask for the password that the client has given them and whether they want to connect now.

The client will then receive a message asking to confirm the connection request. When accepted, the expert will be in view mode only at this stage and can see the client's desktop. They can also have an online chat which is very useful. When ready to take control of the client's system the expert can hit a button marked as such and again the client will be asked to confirm that this is ok. From then on the expert can see and control the client's system. Either side can disconnect at any time.

Unlike the previous method 'Remote Assistance' won't allow the expert to reload the system and regain control. A fresh request will have to be made. This also applies if the client reloads their system between making a request for help and making the connection. I liked this method as although tricky to set up it was a nice interface and the connection didn't drop at all.

Other packages exist such as TightVNC but I have not yet tried these out.

Who's Storing Your Words ?

One of the oldest online maxims is "You own your own words." If only it were that simple !

This maxim comes from the pre-Internet explosion days when computer bulletin board systems were how most people communicated online. It was coined by the founder of the popular service The WELL, Stewart Brand, to try to place responsibility for what posters posted on them and not on him in case of libel disputes.

But it has also been interpreted to mean that nobody else but you should copy and reuse your words online unless they have your permission to do so, even though Brand himself opposed this copyright interpretation of what he wrote in his early WELL members agreement.

Fortunately, others have also agreed with this broader interpretation of what others can do with your words. But not everybody.

When you put up a Web site or blog or participate in Internet discussions, you may think that your words, whether they're hasty or wise, will gradually fade away over time. But Internet archive systems exist that in all likelihood are preserving them long term.

The best-known Web archive service is the Wayback Machine (www.archive.org/web/web.php), part of a larger effort called the Internet Archive (www.archive.org). If you've put up a Web site or blog then later had second thoughts and taken it down, chances are it's preserved through the Wayback Machine.

This free service has been taking snapshots of the Web at various points in time since 1996, with an astonishing 85 billion pages currently archived. Archiving is all about redundancy, and the content of the Wayback Machine are mirrored, appropriately enough, at the New Library of Alexandria in Egypt. The original Library of Alexandria, founded by the Greek rulers of Egypt around 300 BC, was designed to be the repository of all the world's knowledge.

If you don't want your words preserved for posterity, the Wayback Machine lets you opt out. The service offers detailed directions on how to remove previous versions of your site from its archive and prevent it from making archives in the future (www.archive.org/about/exclude.php).

Another well-known archive service is Google Groups (groups.google.com), previously called Deja News and before that DejaViews. Google Groups is a Web interface to Usenet, the worldwide system of hundreds of thousands of online discussion groups. People can participate in these discussions through the Web, through their e-mail program, or through a specialized Usenet program.

The Google Groups Web site is most useful in letting you search for and join specific discussion groups as well as search for current and old posts of yours and others about specific subject matter, with archives of posts going back to 1981. Google Groups provides means to remove your previous posts from its archive and to prevent it from archiving future posts, but as with the Wayback Machine you have to take matters into your own hands.

To remove your posts from the Google Groups archive, you have to create a free account with it, and it's best to do so using the same e-mail address you used for the posts you want deleted. You can have it delete posts you made with an old e-mail address you know longer have, but this is more cumbersome. For details, read "How do I remove my own posts?" (groups.google.com/support/bin/answer.py?answer=46493).

Google Groups also lets you prevent it from archiving your posts in the first place, with instructions at groups.google.com/support/bin/answer.py?answer=46487.

Your words may also be archived at any Web site discussion groups and Yahoo Groups e-mail discussion groups you've participated in. Some Web site discussion groups let you remove your posts yourself. But you may need to, as with Yahoo Groups, ask the webmaster or group moderator to remove any given post for you.

There are numerous other Web sites that crawl the Web, Usenet, Yahoo Groups, and similar places and create archives themselves. You can find some of them through a relevant Google search, typing in as key words any distinctive phrases you remember from any posts you've made. Some of these sites, however, are pay services, and their archives won't be accessible to Google. So there's no way to ensure that your words are completely within your control.

Perhaps the best strategy, if you don't want your words to come back and haunt you, is to remember your mother's words: Think before you speak. Another option is to use a pseudonym or "handle."

The flip side of Internet archive services is their usefulness in helping you find what might otherwise have been lost.

Controlling Pop-up Ads

Spyware/Adware/Hijackers these are names used for a set of malicious programs that you do not want on your computer. Collectively they are known as *Malware*. As the internet has grown it has attracted its fair share of questionable characters that purport to be helping you when, in fact, they are setting you up to give them money. We all know this, but some of us are not familiar with all of the ways they try. Many new ways are literally popping up everyday. The number of pop-up ads warning that your computer is infected is growing and many are very realistic, appearing to be a windows screen and not an internet ad.

Often computer users download a spyware or adware remover program not knowing for sure if it really is what it claims to be. A couple of very good programs such as Spybot S&D (www.safer-networking.org) as well as Ad-Aware (www.lavasoftusa.com) are used to remove unwanted Malware from your computer. They also end up being the target of some unscrupulous imitators that vary the name or simply steal it and claim to be those programs. In many cases users end up with a program that is itself Malware or a hijacker program. In the end this causes more damage and trouble for the user.

There are ways to avoid these troublesome pop-ups. I have a few tips and tricks to help you stop these malicious programs in their tracks. It only takes a few steps to avoid having your computer hijacked by these pesky programs

Never download a program if you get a pop-up telling you to do so. The people that create these pop-ups are using unethical advertising and are never what they claim to be. You will get inaccurate readings and false warning screens saying things like, your computer is severely infected and steps must be taken to save your data so you must register the software and pay them money. Well, not so fast! Almost everything you need to clean your computer can be obtained for free. If you do not know which programs are legitimate or need advice on how to make your computer more internet safe contact a reputable computer company like Residential Computer Services.

Read the fine print. Make sure you know what the pop-up is really saying. Many advertisers have started to use pop-ups that are designed to look exactly like a Microsoft Windows error message. In fact they are really nothing more than a look-alike window. If you look carefully you can usually tell the difference. Ask yourself, have you ever received exact instructions from Microsoft on how to solve a problem, much less from a windows error message? So when the message says install this program to fix it you know it is a scam.

Never click “OK” or “Cancel” on a pop-up window. Many times a program is downloaded and installed just because the user clicked cancel just to close the window. These buttons are not what they appear to be and can actually be a link granting permissions to download the program and install it in the background when you do not want to do so. Instead click the “x” in the upper right corner of the pop-up window; only do so however, if you are sure it is a real window. This brings us to the next great scam.

If it looks a little off it probably is. Double check the way the “window” looks. If it is a slightly different color or the “X” is too big, too small, or it just does not look exactly the same as the other windows on your screen, there is a reason. Some programmers have found a way to make the window that normally appears around the pop-up to remain hidden and have replaced it with their own border that looks like a window. This “X” that does not look right can have the same effect as clicking on the “OK” button. Sneaky aren’t they?

If the “X” is not there or does not look right, look at the bottom of your screen for the bar that shows all of the programs that are open on your computer. This is called the taskbar. You can sometimes isolate the program causing the pop-up by clicking on the different program buttons until the pop-up comes back to the front. When you find the correct button, right click on the button on the taskbar and select “close”.

If selecting a program button does not appear to give you the desired results of bringing the pop-up to the front, the very last option is to use the infamous Ctrl-Alt-Del sequence. This will produce a window in which you can choose the task manager program. The first tab in the Task manager is the “applications” tab. In the window you will see all the programs open on your computer. Locate one or more listings for your internet browser. Click one time on a single entry it to select it and then click on the end task button towards the bottom of the screen. Repeat this process for each listing of your internet browser until no more are listed. This will close all the internet browser windows. You can then reopen your internet browser as usual with no worries of getting hijacked. Just don’t go back to that page. You can find the same information somewhere else.

Finally, consider installing some pop-up blocker software and defense programs to help you combat these pop-ups before that can even get on your screen. Google tool bar is a great addition to your web browser and completely Malware free. Many people get a message that constantly pops-up basically saying something wants permission to install ActiveX controls on your computer. This happens when you are downloading programs and some other events where you need to grant the website access to your computer.

Consider installing Spyware Blaster from <http://www.javacoolsoftware.com/spywareblaster.html>. This application evaluates the ActiveX controls that are always requesting permissions to load on your computer and blocks the ones that can cause harm or install Malware on your computer. Only allow ActiveX control from a site you trust implicitly. ActiveX is not bad but it can be used for malicious purposes. Do not remove ActiveX or block every attempt to load, some functions of ActiveX are very necessary. Let Spyware Blocker act as an interpreter and help you know which applications are malicious.

See page 15 for source

Joining the Email Group

Send an e-mail to: **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 in touch with events and to join in with the discussions

You can also keep in touch by regularly visiting **www.ipcug.org**

A number of you may have experienced problems signing up to this egrouop, due to a couple of problems :-

The first problem is that for a number of years the signup address shown above has contained a typing error. This has now been corrected!

The second issue is that it used to be the case that a blank email (ie no message content and no message subject) sent to the signup address would be sufficient to start the process. It would appear that Yahoo have made some changes, and that now the email which is sent has to have the subject “**join**”.

Photography competition

At the AGM the suggestion was made that, as a replacement for the monthly puzzles, a photography competition be run instead. The committee has decided that this will initially be a quarterly competition. Entries should be emailed to me by 6 June (please keep to under 2Mb), and the winner will be announced, and the photo published, in the July issue of HotKey. The theme for this competition will be “Springtime”

David Groom

Ordnance Survey launches OS OpenData

On 1 April Ordnance Survey, the UK mapping agency launched OS OpenData, an online portal providing free and unrestricted access to a large range of mapping and geographic information .

OS OpenData allows users to download a wide range of mapping and geographic information for free reuse direct to their computers; view maps and boundary information for the whole country; and develop web-map applications using Ordnance Survey's OS OpenSpace API (Application Programming Interface).

The launch follows the announcement by the Prime Minister on 17 November that some Ordnance Survey mapping would be made freely available as part of the 'Making Public Data Public' initiative. The project, championed by web-inventor Sir Tim Berners-Lee and Nigel Shadbolt, the Professor of Artificial Intelligence and Deputy Head (Research) of the School of Electronics and Computer Science at the University of Southampton, aims to support greater transparency and accountability within Government, improve public services and create new economic and social value.

To listen to Sir Tim Berners-Lee and Professor Nigel Shadbolt talking about OS OpenData please visit blog.ordnancesurvey.co.uk

The release of free data comes after a public consultation document, released on 23 December 2009, set out various long-term strategic options for Ordnance Survey. The consultation period closed on 17 March, and on 31 March the Department for Communities and Local Government published the Government's official response. The launch of OS OpenData marks the culmination of this process, delivering greater access to geographic information in Britain than ever before.

OS OpenData, which is being funded by government, is made up of a range of raster and vector mapping datasets. These include the detailed 1:10 000 scale OS Street View, Boundary-Line, which provides the electoral and administrative geography of the country, and Meridian 2 and Strategi which offer customisable views of Britain's topography.

Included in OS OpenData. are detailed raster maps, mid-scale vector data (including vector data for elevation contours), and post code information.

OS VectorMap District, a brand new mid-scale vector dataset which has been specifically designed to display information on the web, will be available from May 2010. Users should visit “www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/opendata” for more details of what is available.

CoverDisk

This month the cover disk features a number of free and trial software packages to help you manage your finances.

Also included on the cover disk are the usual collection of utilities, updated to the latest versions where applicable.

From our special Correspondent !

One of my nieces, Karen, lives in a small town called Paducah, in Kentucky, USA. (there is also a Paducah in Texas). She is the owner and Editor of the local, free, magazine called “ Paducah Parenting and Family ”.

A couple of weeks ago I was chatting to her and complaining about the difficulty I had in getting articles for HotKey.

“ Oh yes, I know the problem ” she said “ I may be able to help, I have a few computer articles, some that I have written and some that we have purchased from other writers. We have the copyrights, so it will be OK for you to use them ”.

By way of the next 3 emails I had 8 promising articles !

I don't get that response from our members !

The article “ Who's Storing Your Words ” was part of one by Reid Goldsborough and “ Controlling pop-up Ads ” was by Thomas Fairhurst.

Karen has now apparently told the authors they are “Internationally Famous ” !

Editor



Sample OS Street View®

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2010

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