

Issue 181

APRIL 2013

ISLE OF WIGHT PC USER
GROUP



HOT KEY

SPRING 2013



At our March meeting Ray Boote was
presented with a Camellia in recognition
of his long service to the IWPCUG

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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 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

We also have an e-group discussion area on

Yahoo groups: iwpcusers@yahoogroups.com. See page 10 for how to join.



FUTURE MEETINGS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
April 3	Disability and IT -the Broader Perspective	Buzz Austin
May 1	Mini Talks	Various Speakers
June 5	Social Media	Antony Luxton
July 3	TBC	
August 7	Summer BBQ	

ISLE OF WIGHT PC USER GROUP COMMITTEE

Chairman : David Groom

Treasurer : Phil Rogers

Secretary : Susanne Bone

Membership and Database Secretary : 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 Steve Sutters, or any committee member, with your ideas.

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

Chairmans Report

Since the last edition of HotKey we have held the clubs Annual General Meeting. The minutes of the AGM are available on the club web site in the secure section.

The biggest change resulting from the AGM is that Ray Boote has, after many years service to the club and its members, stepped down from the committee. On page 9 of this edition of HotKey Roger Skidmore has summarised the current committee positions and who is filling them.

The members only section of the club web site now has a link to the start of a “skills database”, giving details of some of our members talents and areas of expertise.

The question of a Facebook page for the IWPCUG was raised at the AGM. Whatever our personal feelings may be on the general pros and cons of Facebook it does in many ways seem perverse that a computer related club does not have a presence on this social networking site. It could well be a good way of promoting our activities to a new audience, resulting in new members and a wider range of possible speakers.

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.

What's In a Password?

In this digital age of ours, passwords have become a way of life. From using your ATM card, to logging onto innumerable websites, you need to prove you are who you claim to be with a password.

What's the most common password people use? Various surveys have revealed that it's simply "password." Consequently it's likely that this would be among the first passwords a scammer would use to try to clean out your bank account. Other all too commonly used passwords include "123456," "12345678," "welcome," "abc123," "qwerty," "monkey," "letmein," "dragon," and "111111," according to a recent study by security company SplashData (www.splashdata.com).

Additional mistakes people make are using as a password your birthdate, the name of a relative, or a dictionary word. Some password-cracking programs simply run through all of the words in a particular dictionary.

Passwords represent a balance between security and rememberability. Make a password too easy and it doesn't serve its purpose, too difficult and you're left having to ask for a new one.

Websites these days often require you to use a password that consists of at least eight characters made up of both letters and numbers, which makes it more difficult to crack. But some security experts now recommend 12 or 14 characters and that passwords also include uppercase and lowercase letters as well as symbols.

As an example of the possible vulnerabilities, a security conference this past December in Oslo, Norway, revealed a computer setup clustering together multiple devices that was able to make 350 billion password guesses per second. This allowed it to run through, for any given account, every possible eight-character combination of letters, numbers, and symbols in 5.5 hours.

Such "brute force" password-cracking setups can also theoretically reveal longer passwords, but it could take them days, weeks, or even years, making the effort impractical. Some sites prevent further attempts if more than a given number of incorrect passwords are tried. Bank and other financial sites also typically use "two-factor authentication," including asking you for the answers you've previously given to security questions such as your favorite sports team.

What's the best type of password? Size matters. One good choice according to security experts: A short sentence that's easy to remember, not too difficult to type, and very difficult to crack.

Security experts also recommend you use different passwords for different sites. News reports surface periodically of isolated but high-profile hacks of websites in which thousands of users' passwords are breached. In such cases if you use the same password for different sites, your other accounts could be compromised.

Another recommendation is to periodically change your passwords. But anecdotal evidence indicates that relatively few people use a different password for each site they visit that requires one or voluntarily change their passwords over time.

Some people write down their passwords on a piece of paper, even taping the paper to their computer or desk. The obvious downside to this is the risk of someone, from a nosy babysitter to an office adversary, coming across it.

Password-management services exist that can make it easier to use numerous passwords for numerous sites, requiring you to remember only the one password for the service you use. Two recommended free password managers are KeePass (www.keepass.info) [see more on page 10] and Lastpass (www.lastpass.com). Using a password manager does necessitate having trust in it. But such trust is not much different from the trust needed each time you make a purchase with a credit card, giving out your credit card number, expiration date, and security code.

An intermediate solution used by a lot of people is storing their passwords on their computer in a word processing file and then password-protecting that file with a strong password. If you go this route, you should make at least one backup of the file, preferably using a backup service such as Dropbox (www.dropbox.com) or Google Drive (drive.google.com), in case your computer or workspace is damaged.

It's also important to use a standard Internet security program, and to keep it up to date. This can prevent "keystroke logging" and "clipboard logging," which a hacker can use to capture any password you type in or copy, no matter its length, and the site you type it into. Recommended programs include Norton Internet Security (us.norton.com/internet-security) and Kaspersky Internet Security (www.kaspersky.com).

In the future, passwords may be rendered obsolete by more advanced technology. One possibility is biometrics, in which you're identified by a physical trait such as your fingerprint or voice. In the meantime, use long passwords.

Karen Hammond

How Sound is the Cloud?

Recent developments in the world of "cloud" computing, where you use Internet-based programs to process your data and Internet-based hard drives to store it, lead to new questions, and intensify some old ones, regarding this new paradigm.

The biggest news came in early December when Google announced that its popular Google Apps cloud software (apps.google.com) would no longer be available to new business and government users for free. Nobody really expected to be able to use this powerful suite of word processing, spreadsheet, presentation, and other programs for free indefinitely, particularly in organizational situations. But when launched in August 2006 Google did say it was "a service available at no cost to organizations of all shapes and sizes."

Existing business and governmental users still have free access, as do educational users and home users. New business and government users will be charged \$5 per user per month or \$50 per year. Unlike the free versions, Google Apps for Business and Google Apps for Government come with 24/7 telephone tech support, as did Google's now discontinued Google Apps Premier Edition.

Google Apps continues to pick up more organizational customers. Over the past year it has signed up the U.S. Interior Department and the Swiss drug maker Hoffmann-La Roche, among others. Despite its new pricing, Google Apps is still considerably less expensive than its main competition, Microsoft, whose eleven different pricing models for Microsoft Office can make it difficult even to figure out how much you'll be paying.

But several recent incidents indicate why reliability and security continue to be concerns when data is accessed and stored remotely with cloud computing in general.

The increasingly popular cloud storage and synchronization service Dropbox (www.dropbox.com) in July revealed that hackers had gotten access to a very small percentage of users' accounts and accessed their files. The breach took place because these users had used the same username and password at more than one website, and when one of those sites was compromised, the hackers could get into their Dropbox account as well.

The popular cloud video streaming service Netflix (www.netflix.com) went down on Christmas Eve, with users unable to watch film clips, movies, and TV shows. The same happened, at about the same time, with Amazon's video streaming

service, Amazon Prime (www.amazon.com/gp/prime), which unlike Netflix doesn't have a free option, costing \$79 per year. Amazon is also the dominant player in providing cloud storage support for other cloud service providers.

Google's cloud email service, Gmail (mail.google.com), which is available through Google Apps or by itself, went down in December for several hours at the beginning of a work week. This past July a lightning storm took down the photo sharing websites Instagram (www.instagram.com) and Pinterest (www.pinterest.com), among others, for some hours.

The reality with cloud services is that harsh weather conditions, an unexpected influx of users, or hacking attacks can cause service disruptions. Cloud service providers are continually ramping up their redundancy to improve reliability by minimizing such disruptions, but some inevitably happen.

Regarding security, work is underway here as well. Cloud service providers are acutely aware of both the reality, and the image, of security and are continually beefing it up.

Also, third-party companies, existing firms and startups alike, have developed products to specifically deal with cloud computing's security concerns. VMware Horizon Application Manager, for instance, is a program from VMware of Palo Alto, Calif. (www.vmware.com) that helps an organization's users access programs securely using remote devices from laptops to smartphones.

You have other options too. One home-spun solution, useful when using the cloud for storage only, is to encrypt your data before storing it with whatever cloud service you're using. This can be particularly advisable if the data is sensitive.

You can use, for instance, a free file archiver such as the well-regarded 7-Zip (7-zip.org), developed by the Russian programmer Igor Pavlov. Using the program is easy. You just select the files you want archived, which the program can optionally do with strong AES-256 encryption, and choose a password. The program creates an archived zip file containing those files, which you can then store remotely in a very secure fashion.

Many other encryption tools exist as well. Basic file encryption is also built into various versions of Microsoft Windows and the Mac's operating system.

Because of its convenience, it's inevitable that cloud computing will continue to increase in popularity. Like everything else, the cloud has its strengths and vulnerabilities. Preparing for, or compensating for, the vulnerabilities can help you take advantage of the strengths.

Karren Hammond

Interestingly I've just started using Dropbox myself, and we hope soon to have an introduction to this service at one of our monthly meetings.

David Groom

Your New Committee

Your new committee is pretty much the same as last year with a few changes. **David Groom**, fortunately, is continuing to steer us along the straight and narrow as **Chairman**. The club's finances will continue to be managed by **Phil Rogers** and, as is happening in Europe in general, he seems to be pulling us back towards solvency. **Su Bone** will continue to keep track of our activities and handle all the correspondence as **Secretary**.

Roger Skidmore has organised the **monthly speakers** for three years now and says he has totally run out of inspiration, although he has passed on a few suggestions to **Steve Sutters** who will now be shouldering that responsibility.

Roger is taking over the **membership database** from Ray, who has stepped down from the committee (see front cover). David, as has been the case for some time, is sharing the editorship of HotKey with Bob Groom who is taking a more of a back seat rôle. Our other source of portfolio-free consultancy is **Soren Johanson** whose company we value despite his absconding for 11 weeks' sailing every Summer.

There are other jobs which must not be forgotten - our Chairman compiles the quarterly **HotKey Cover Disk** which keeps us up to date with many programs which are not always easy to download and uses it to make practical suggestions for must-have utilities. David manages the main website (www.iwpcug.org) and moderates the Yahoo egroup (access via main website.) He also liaises with the **Riverside Centre** which requires a certain skill-set of its own. Su manages the marketing side of things, keeping the public aware of our benefits and timings.

And of course Roger's other rôle, ably helped by Su and **Buzz Austin**, is our own **Computability project** (www.cfd-iw.org.uk).

Roger Skidmore

Skills Database

I am looking after the IWPCUG database and trying to build its value as a resource in addition to its role as a mailing/membership list. It would be very nice to have an overview of your computer interests - so we get to know our membership better.

I would like to add to the database details of each members' skills / interests information as Favourite Utilities, Favourite Software, Best Project Ever, type of advice which could be offered to other members. Also if you are happy, then we will publish this information in the members only section of the club web site

Roger Skidmore

Joining the Email Group

Send an email 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.iwpcug.org**

KeePass

Today you need to remember many passwords. Its is also the case that you should use different passwords for each account, because if you use only one password everywhere, and someone gets this password, you have a problem (see my article in April 2012 HotKey).

KeePass is a free open source password manager, which helps you to manage your passwords in a secure way. You can put all your passwords in one database, which is locked with one master key or a key file. So you only have to remember one single master password or select the key file to unlock the whole database. The databases are encrypted using the best and most secure encryption algorithms currently known.

Tips on using KeePass

I've been using KeePass for a few months now, and thought I'd share some of my tips.

Firstly under the menu Tools > Options here are some options I have ticked: in the “interface tab” I've ticked “minimize to tray instead of taskbar”, and under “Integration tab” I've ticked “run KeePass at Windows startup”.

For Firefox users

1) Consider using the “Firefox to KeePass Password Importer” plugin to import passwords currently stored in Firefox into KeePass.

2) Use the “KeeFox” plugin to integrate KeePass into Firefox so you can log in easily.

For Internet Explorer Users

Sadly there is no plugin to integrate KeePass with IE, so for a while I couldn't really understand how to best to use KeePass with this browser. However my answer is as follows:

- * Open KeePass and right click the required password entry, and move to the “URL(s)” submenu, if IE is your default browser then click “open”, else click “Open with Internet Explorer”;

- * Then in KeePass right click the required password entry and click “Perform Auto-Type”.

If its so complicated then why bother with KeePass?

By now you may well be asking yourself “why bother with KeePass in the first place and not simply use the browsers inbuilt password storage mechanism?”

1) Security – in Firefox saved passwords are easily seen, in IE I believe 3rd party tools can discover password details.

2) If you regularly use multiple browsers (say Firefox and IE) then you only have to store the password once.

3) If you store the password database in a Dropbox (or other online backup system) folder, then:

- a) the passwords automatically get backed up; and

- b) are synchronised between different computers which you regularly use.

David Groom

“This Is Me” - A Computability client writes to HotKey

My name is Peter Camfield, I'm 23 years old, and have been married to Gemma for 4 months, but have known her for 5 years. She was my sister's best friend from college. We are hoping to be living in our own place soon because we are currently living with the in-laws. Maybe in the future we'd like to have a family, but not yet. I've been diagnosed with Autism and I lack confidence and social skills to interact with people although I do receive support from a personal budget. I try to take advantage of this by concentrating on what I can do.

I'm part of the Isle of Wight Disability Football Team and the Isle of Wight Writer's Circle. I have a poem and a short story published in a collection called Slices of Island Life which can be bought in Waterstones and the County Press shop. All the money goes towards the IW Parkinson's Society charity.

Thanks to the laptop I received, I'm in the process of finishing the 2nd draft of my sci-fi novel. At the moment I am currently studying to retake my GCSE English and Maths, then I'm hoping that I can join Highbury College in February next year, and start the Diploma in Journalism course, which is a twenty week intensive course. This will then allow me to gain the recommended qualification to becoming a national-status journalist.

Before then however I would like to volunteer at the Isle of Wight County Press and learn what it's like to be in a busy local paper office and help the reporters and editor's in their tasks (like making the tea or coffee). Eventually, through experience, I'm hoping to become a recognised author with a few sci-fi novels under my belt.


Ever since college, I've always been fascinated about GNU/Linux and have used many distros including Ubuntu, Linux Mint, Open SUSE and Fedora. With the laptop I received, I installed a GNU/Linux distro called #!Crunchbang Linux and it comes with a desktop environment called Openbox. I'm hoping that one day I'll have the knowledge to develop my own distro and release it for free for everyone on the internet.

Thanks to Computerbility I've been able to meet new people, finish off my novel, learn more about GNU/Linux and I wouldn't have known my poem and short story were published without the laptop.

Peter Camfield

IWPCUG Web and Internet

Ever go there? See what you're missing... the site on the left - the club's main



Isle of Wight PC User Group

Home	News	WebPages	Sign
Documents	Secure section	For key	Group
Computability	Index	Contents	Index

Anyone who lives on the Isle of Wight and is interested in computing is invited to join the Isle of Wight PC User Group.

Unless previously advised, we meet on the first Wednesday each month at 7.30pm at The Boatyard, Cowes on the Isle of Wight.

Each meeting consists of a talk or demonstration relating to software or hardware, we cater for all levels of expertise. In the evening we have experienced and knowledgeable people available to assist in the range of help and advice. The meetings are free and are open to all. The meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month.

Visitors are welcome to attend one or two meetings without joining, so do come along and see what it is all about - good company and expertise in a variety of computing areas.

We have an email discussion group to which all members are invited to subscribe if they wish. In this way members can ask questions or get help in relation to computing (or other computer related) and there is usually someone who can help to answer.

The monthly subscription is only £2. There is always £2 payable at each meeting.

All members receive a magazine called 'Isle of Wight Computing News, Information and useful articles, which we aim to publish quarterly.

If you are a member of our club, please visit our website on the left hand side of the page.

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Join This Group

Activity within 7 days: 1 New Member - 11 New Messages

Description

Isle of Wight Personal Computer Users Group

This Yahoo Group is only available to members of Isle of Wight PC Users Group (IWPCUG), but anyone who lives (or works) on the Isle of Wight may join the IWPCUG by visiting our web site www.iwpcug.org where you will find an application form and more information about the club.

All members of the Isle of Wight PC User Group are invited to join this discussion group.



Isle of Wight PC User Group

Visit the PC Users' Computability web site at: www.cfd-iw.org.uk

Poster advertising IWPCUG in PDF format: IWPCUG Poster

website, is found at www.iwpcug.org and the one on the above right is the club's Yahoo e-group site. The easiest way to get to the Yahoo e-group is to link across from the club's home page.

You can also visit www.cfd-iw.org.uk to see the club's Computability site. These days almost everyone's activity is represented on a website. Sometimes a website is just a colour brochure setting out static information, and some sites are more interactive where you can buy things, run videos, submit comments etc.



Computability IW

recycling computers for disabled and less-enabled on the Isle of Wight

Computability IW is a very small charity which provides computers to those who are possibly not going to well in a number of ways. Often we can give a first experience of computing or bridge that affordability gap in times of hardship.

If you are in some way qualified and would like to receive a computer or technical support, or support some who could benefit, then please phone 01983 520850 or email info@cf-iw.org.uk

We have a selection of PCs mostly 100MHz processor and above, also from time to time some printers comprising mostly desktops and some printers. We have an assortment of computer components, not a good range of mostly 100MHz or 200MHz software largely compiled on our 'Desktop' hard CD.

We are therefore able to supply mostly at no charge or long loan anything from the range and the technical expertise to work with this age of equipment - please check if requesting a computer that you have space to put one, power sockets nearby and a landline telephone for internet access. A willing computer savvy friend or neighbour can be a great asset, too.

We have some experience in helping those less able, site is advising and designing less enabled people to alternative sources of help. Particularly see the various links on this site, always feel free to ask.

We welcome donations of computers provided they carry a Windows 95 product code; we no longer accept donations of Win 98 systems or old style heavy CRT monitors. Donors are also welcome provided they work in some fashion (i.e. not dead-end integrated). "New" computers just a few individuals working under the info@cf-iw.org.uk and as present are not a registered charity.

Commercial and business users may wish to visit www.cfd-iw.org.uk for disposal within sales regulations. Refreshed systems are available for purchase from James' Computer City, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

Computability contact details are:

Resources: Tel: 01983 520850 Email: info@cf-iw.org.uk

Admin: Tel: 01983 520850 Email: administration@cf-iw.org.uk

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These sites mostly set out what the club is, but the Yahoo group does offer a calendar which is where your meetings notices come from, and the email distribution facility where you can post messages to the group as a whole.

You can belong to the Yahoo group as a email correspondent, or if you set up a Yahoo ID you can go into the site and find places where files and photos are stored, polls can be created and answered and the membership list viewed (although there is scant information on the membership list.) To Join simply go to the Yahoo group and request to join - or ask David or Roger to send you an e-invitation.

Explore the club's own website and see what Computability has been getting up to. Now that Internet access is much faster this can be an exciting tour rather than the chore it used to be.

Roger Skidmore & David Groom

Steve Sutters - Rants and Raves

Welcome to the first of many of my 'Steve's Rants' articles. First off I want to express my love for modern technology and all the wonderful things it can help us do as well as the time it can save us. Computers are tools and like most tools they can be put to good and bad uses. Here is one of the bad uses.

Violent video games

I shall never forget playing space invaders at my local pub, the tension as the evil aliens got closer and closer and the dum dum dum which sped up as the evil aliens got closer. I think all the player's heartbeats sped up too as the game progressed.

Fast forward to today and how games have changed! Gone is the surreal charm of the primitive graphics. The improvements in graphics technology means the likeness of modern games to actual violent scenes is worrying and I believe they help to make violent behaviour more acceptable and likely especially in the angry and mentally unbalanced! Violent games directly reward violent behaviour and have more effect on players than violent movies as the players are actively taking part in the fight with their controllers rather than passively watching. Also tests have shown that children become more aggressive after playing violent games.

Even if a living creature is only represented by only a few unrealistic pixels, if those pixels represent an innocent civilian, is it morally right and setting a good example to encourage the player to kill them?

In summary, although they are not the only factor that increases aggression, violent video games do have a significant effect on aggression.

I think a culture change could help a great deal to lesson violence in society. Steps like a zero tolerance to bullying and anti social behaviour, a ban on the sale of guns and ammunition, deleting parts of films showing violent scenes for entertainment and only peaceful computer games allowed (though I would let the early ‘Space invaders’ type games off) would result in a more peaceful society.

Alas, as long as there is money to be made using violence as entertainment it will continue in films and computer games. It would take governments who were concerned about the spiritual development of mankind to bring about these changes.

As long as people want to play these games and write them, they will continue but how much better to use a computer constructively or, for example, learning a musical instrument, than spending ones time blatting everything that moves on a computer screen!

[I am promised some “raves” (i.e. Things Steve likes) in future articles. Ed.]

Cover Disk

New This month:

KeePass – password manager see page 10

PartitionWizard - Free partition manager software

RadioSure - a standalone Internet radio player which allows users to tune into radio stations from around the globe and even record their favourite programs.

Major updates as follows:

Firefox updated from ver 17 to ver 19

LibreOffice updated to ver 3.6 (note although ver 4 has been released, ver 3.6 is still the recommenced version for home and corporate users)

CCCleaner updated from 3.25 to 4.0



David Groom, Steve Sutters and Roger Skidmore who each gave a short talk at the March meeting

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