



HOT KEY

Autumn Edition 2005



Bob and David Groom, Once again hosts to an excellent Barbeque

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**The Isle of Wight
 Personal Computer
 User Group**

The Isle of Wight PC User Group WELCOMES all owners and users of IBM compatible Personal computers.

It is 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 9.30pm**

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: <http://www.iwpcug.org> *
 * We also have an e-group discussion area :- *
 * Yahoo iwpcusers: iwpcusers@yahoogroups.com *
 * See page 8 for how to join *

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Unless otherwise stated, meetings are held at the Riverside Centre in Newport starting at 7.30p.m. Some of the following are provisional. Keep a watch here and on the website for updates.

Date	Subject	Presenter
October 5th	Excel and Databases	David Broughton
November 2nd	Web sites	David Groom
December 7th	EGM and Christmas Party	

Suggestions for new events, speakers or topics are always welcome. Please contact any Committee member or the Editor with your ideas. If necessary we may be able to find a speaker to match your subject.



Honorary President Sir Norman Echlin

Chairman: David Groom

Vice-Chairman: Cliff Maidment

Treasurer: Bob Groom

Secretary: Andy King

Membership Secretary & Database Secretary: Ray Boote

Hotkey Editor: N. Peter Lovely

Committee Member: David Broughton

Committee Member: Robert Wilcock

Committee Member: Roger Skidmore

Disability Resources Co-ordinator: Helen Edom

Note: Contact details removed prior to
publishing on internet

EDITORIAL

I expect most of us have been confined to bed at one time or another. Perhaps it was due to 'flu or some other illness. Maybe you lived on your own or the other members of the house had to go out to work, shopping or some such cause so that you would be left on your own for several hours. Everything had to be prepared and in touch. A drink you could not reach or a bell you could not push might just as well not have been there. Mobile phones have helped a lot but only at the cost of someone's time.

Computers are much the same. Leave out a dot or a comma, use the wrong oblique, indeed any little thing and its command chain is broken. It cannot reach what it so urgently needs. So, the next time your "friend" frustrates you have a little empathy! It is probably you who has left something out of reach!

Sent to the bin

I saw a wondrous never land, I saw it on the net,
But how to get there, where to get there, not discovered yet.
I looked on Yahoo, tried the web and now I've lost the site;
Not "asking Jeeves", nor Microsoft has shed the slightest light.
Frustrated now beyond belief, I must have given in,
I've wrapped the damned computer up and sent it to the bin!

Previously code-named "Longhorn" Microsoft's replacement for 'Windows XP' will be called 'Microsoft Vista'. It is expected to be available from July 2006

I am using the free version of SPAMfighter for private users.

It has removed over 1,400 spam emails to date.

Paying users do not have this message in their emails.

Try www.spamfighter.com for free now! D.G.

According to Computer WHICH? Wanadoo, a popular ISP is changing its name to Orange (same as the Mobile company). Its parent, France Telecom wants to embrace broadband and mobile services in one brand. Customers' e-mail addresses will be unaffected.

An excellent review of Broadband suppliers (ISPs) can be found on page 18 etc. in the September edition of 'Computer Which'. Other ISP comparisons can be found on the Internet (but that may not be a lot of help if you don't have Broadband by which time you probably won't need it!)

Review of Ability Magazine for HotKey

The committee has asked me to write a review of the "Ability" magazine for which we pay £25 a year...

Ability magazine is produced by the Disability group of the British Computer Society (BCS), and its website is www.abilitymagazine.org.uk. It is produced to help users and supporters keep abreast of the latest developments in IT for disabled people. It is available either as printed copy (which we receive) or on disk or largely on its own website.

It is sponsored by Ford, Microsoft, VNU Publications and a number of other organisations. As with any special interest magazine it contains editorial comment, articles on specialist areas relating to disability and IT, news, updates, regular contributors, reviews of websites of relevance to disability, hot tips, product reviews and adverts for disability oriented products and services.

It is easy to underestimate the extent of the disability industry, its costs and benefits. The new disability discrimination act has given a whole new thrust to disability rights and supportive activity.

Our own disability group, Computability-IW, is our own contribution to this world and its activities are represented on our own disability web site www.cfd-iw.org.uk (e-mail info@cfdiw.org.uk).

The magazine is sent to Roger Skidmore who passes it on to Buzz Austin. If you would like to be included in our circulation list, please contact Roger (rogerskid@supanet.com).

Roger Skidmore
Computability-IW organiser

Internet Broadband

(compiled by the Editor with grateful acknowledgement to ADSL Guide, Telsyte, John Bowness, David Broughton, David Groom and other IWPC users who have contributed by their discussions).

Those of us who are not IWPC users please see the bottom of page 8 and, if on line, seriously consider joining. The rest of us have been able to follow a fascinating and mostly informative discussion about the additional facilities that can come with broadband connection.

For those who use the internet and e-mail only occasionally, who do not wish to incur additional expense, the good old 56k modem and a modestly priced Internet Service Provider (ISP, for example BT Internet, Wanadoo, NTL etc) may continue to be good enough.

Broadband is undoubtedly the way ahead and is rapidly becoming the accepted connection. In June it was estimated that 54% of UK internet connections were Broadband. In its favour are the facts that it does not tie up the use of the telephone on the same line and that the user is permanently connected to unrestricted use of the internet and e-mail as required (within the generally generous limits of the ISP agreement). Against this is the fact that it is another annual expense to meet, though considering that the ISP and call costs have to be paid for anyway, not as great as it sounds. There are other advantages to being on broadband but these can be left until later. (Try www.skype.com for a start!)

Getting Broadband is easy provided it is available in your area. That is the first thing to establish. On the website of most ISPs is a space for you to put in your postcode and it will tell you immediately if Broadband is viable for you. Alternatively you can 'phone. Sometimes one ISP may be able to provide where another cannot. There are factors affecting this which will be explained later. If you are on line go to Google, type in 'Which ISP?' and the range is such that choosing one is the hardest part

Connecting to Broadband

- **Decide which ISP you want to use** (If not on line see p.4)
- **Ask the ISP to provide the service**
- **Wait for the box of bits to arrive from the ISP**
- **Follow the simple to follow instructions from the ISP**
- **Seriously follow up fire-walling, perhaps from your ISP; you need protection.**
- **You will now have a working broadband connection.**

That is all you need to get started. You will be able to use your phone

whilst you are connected to the internet. Now we will try to explain what has happened and some of the advantages that Broadband can bring you.

The copper telephone wire system which connects your house to the system was designed simply to carry reasonable quality speech, about 50 to 3000 hertz. It can carry voice communication over quite large distances without the need for repeater amplification. However, the wire is actually capable of carrying much broader bandwidth and this is what permits the simultaneous support of speech and digital signals. Hence we get upstream data from the subscriber to the internet, downstream data from the internet to the subscriber, and audio frequencies all capable of travelling in a DSL (digital subscriber line) These need separating from each other so that upstream and downstream data are made asynchronous to each other in what now becomes an ADSL (asynchronous subscriber line). Using frequencies above 3000 hertz it is arranged to give more than half the bandwidth to downstream data and the rest to upstream data, the most suitable arrangement for most people. The signal weakens much more rapidly at these higher frequencies and it is the attenuation per kilometre of the signals carrying the digital data that imposes a limit on the maximum distance from the exchange to the subscriber. Recent technological improvement has increased this distance to up to about 10 kilometres unless the line is old and substandard. Although the signals carrying the digital data are supposed to be above the 3000 hertz allocated for speech, spurious signals are generated that would interfere with voice communication. This is avoided by the use of filters. There has to be a filter between every telephone earpiece and telephone wire. Young people can sometimes hear frequencies as high as 20,000 hertz (can you hear bats?) but all this above 3000Hz is filtered out. These filters are provided by or can be obtained from the ISP.

For those interested and who wish to take the subject further there are diagrams which can be obtained as notes from the Editor on request, also items on routers, ADSL routers including wireless and a glossary. These give an outline, though much simplified, of the process of how receiving audio and high frequency signals is achieved. Detailed information can be gained from the many fascinating pages of diagrams and information to be found following www.adslguide.org.uk/howitworks/. A word of warning, perhaps: I have spent many days studying the information contained in these pages and am only now beginning to grasp the fundamentals. Clearly one could spend years trying to grasp it all and keep up to date.

Chairman's Report

As mentioned in my report in the June edition of HotKey a few minor practical issues have arisen at the two most recent AGMs. These are due to the wording of the Constitution. It was suggested that the current wording should be reviewed. Later in this issue you will find a notice of an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Club which is being held to consider proposed changes to the Constitution. These proposed changes aim to clarify areas of confusion, to allow the committee to fill vacant committee positions and appoint an external examiner of the club accounts. Also to bring in a few points which have previously only been in the guidance notes to the constitution.

It has been good to see that the Club e-group has become more active in the last few months. In fact August had the third highest number of postings ever. To some extent I believe this is self perpetuating, in that the more questions that are posed, the more answers are generated and the more useful the e-group seems to be. Therefore people post more questions. David Broughton has been appointed to ensure that queries are not left without any response, so if a posting does not get a reply within a few days he will step in to help to clarify the problem, and to prompt other members to answer it. To date only a little over half our members belong to the e-group and I would encourage all of you to join as it provides a useful way of getting solutions to your computing problems. It also keeps fellow club members in touch.

The Club web site has undergone a few minor changes recently, the most significant of which is the introduction of a more secure section to the web site. Further details on page **11**.

David Groom

HOW TO JOIN THE E-GROUP

Send an e-mail to: **iwpusers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com**

All members are encouraged to join this e-group (which costs nothing and is private to all club members) in order to keep in touch with events and join in discussions. You can also keep in touch by regularly visiting **www.iwpcug.org**

It is particularly desirable that you should keep up with the latest details of meetings

NOTICE OF Extraordinary General Meeting

An EGM of the Isle of Wight PC User Group (the “Club”) shall be held at the Riverside Centre, Newport, on 7 December 2005 at 7:30 PM.

The purpose of the EGM is to consider, and if appropriate approve, changes to the Club’s Constitution.

A summary of the proposed changes, together with the reasoning behind the proposals, is given below. A full copy of the proposed constitution is available on the Club’s web site.

Proposed Changes to the Constitution

(References to paragraph numbers below, refer to the paragraph number in the proposed constitution.)

MEMBERSHIP

A) In paragraph 3a replace the phrase “Ordinary Members must be over 16 years of age” with “Ordinary Members must be 16 years or older”.

Reason for proposed change – to avoid confusion as to status of 16 year olds

B) Delete existing paragraph 3b “Associate Members. Associate Members are of two kinds: Persons living at the same private address as an Ordinary Member. Members of a recognised organisation that has a representative who is an Ordinary Member.” and replace with “Associate Members. Associate Membership is available to persons living at the same private address as an Ordinary Member.”

Reason for proposed change – it is unclear what a “recognised organisation” might be, and in the view of the committee it is easier to remove this route to Associate membership rather than produce a list of “recognised organisations”

C) Insert a new Paragraph 3c “Honorary Members. Those persons who, in the view of the committee, have contributed exceptional service to the club, or computing in general. Honorary members do not pay a subscription, but have full membership status.”

Then in paragraph 3 replace the phrase “two classes of membership” with “ three classes of membership.”

Reason for proposed change – Although we currently have “Honorary Members” this is not reflected as a class of membership in the current Constitution.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

D) Insert new paragraph 5 “Subscriptions are due on 1st January each year. Members who have not renewed their membership by the last day of February shall no longer be considered as members”

Reason for proposed change – The constitution currently does not deal with subscriptions.

THE COMMITTEE

E) Insert new paragraph 8 “The Committee shall have the power to appoint any Ordinary Member to fill a vacant Committee position at any time during the year.”

Reason for proposed change – The situation has arisen at the previous two AGM’s where not all committee posts have been filled at the AGM. A specific resolution has been needed at the each of these AGMs to allow the committee to fill a vacant post, and it is proposed for simplicity that the power to do this be put in the Constitution.

GENERAL MEETINGS

F) Delete from paragraph 9 the sentence “General Meetings shall be given at least 14 days written notice.” and replace with “ Written notice of any General Meeting shall be given to the members at least 14 days before the meeting.”

Reason for proposed change – The proposed wording is more grammatically correct.

THE AGM

G) In paragraph 10 after the words “Set the annual subscription rate” insert the words “taking into consideration the recommendation of the committee”.

Reason for proposed change – Subscriptions are due on 1st January, but the subscription rate is agreed at the AGM which occurs in February. This proposal assists the changing of the subscription rate for the current year, rather than having to wait for one year.

H) In paragraph 10 after the words “Appoint an Independent Examiner” delete the words “who shall not be a member of the Committee”

Reason for proposed change – this is now dealt with in a new section of the Constitution (see J below).

ACCOUNTS

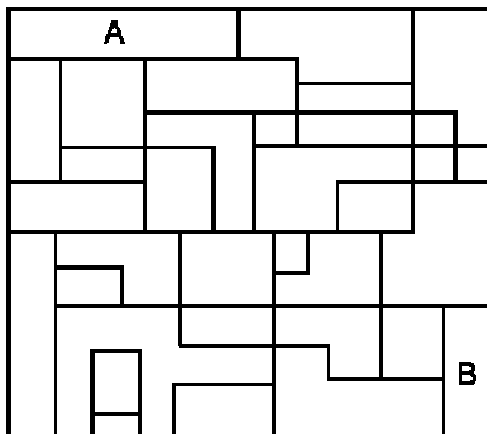
I) Insert in paragraph 15 the sentence “Publication of the accounts shall be restricted to members and to anyone else the Committee believes has good reason to have them.”

SECURE SECTION OF CLUB WEBSITE

All documents on the club web site, which are intended to be secure, are now held in a directory which is password protected. There is no way of reaching these documents if you do not know the required username and password.

The previous method of securing documents was by only enabling you to see the link to these pages if you knew the correct password, but actual access to the documents was not protected.

(continued overleaf)



I have visited _____ areas.

Name: _____

The diagram shows 34 fields. No, this is not like the July puzzle. The object here is to draw a continuous line from field A to field B passing through as many fields as possible. You are not expected to visit every one, but the more the better. The person who visits the most fields is the winner (or, if equal, a draw will take place).

The rules are

- * you must start in field A and end up in field B passing from one field to the other through the common boundary, not through a junction.
- * you may visit a field once and once only
- * you are not allowed outside the diagram

Add up the number of fields visited and write the result in the space provided with your name and send to me, David Broughton, Will-scroft, Copse Lane, Freshwater, PO40 9BZ to arrive by 2nd November 2005 or send your diagram (compressed in GIF format) by email (davidb67@clara.co.uk). Extra copies of the diagram can be downloaded from www.iwpcug.org/davidbro/puz0510.gif.

Cover disk

This months cover disk primarily features Open Source Software (“OSS”) alternatives to commercially available software. Open Source means exactly what it says – the source code for the program is freely available for anyone to look at and adapt, and improve where applicable. The basic idea behind open source is very simple: When programmers can read, redistribute, and modify the source code for a piece of software, the software evolves. People improve it, people adapt it, people fix bugs. This can happen at a speed which, if one is used to the slow pace of conventional software development, will seem astonishing.

As well as the Open Source software, I have also included four free programs which I find of use

Open Source Programs on the disk

AbiWord

AbiWord is completely free and contains tons of features which should make MS Word jealous; though there are some features which AbiWord lacks, such as a grammar checker.

The user interface in AbiWord is very similar to that of MS Word except that AbiWord uses much bigger icons than MS Word. All of the usual features such as creating a new document, opening and saving a document , are all conveniently placed on the task bar with the addition of a few others you won't see on the Word task bar by default, such as the "Show/hide formatting marks" icon in AbiWord which by default is placed on the task bar. Other useful icons include indenting, numbering and inserting an image.

There are a few minor differences in the user interface of AbiWord to those of MS Word such as the bold, italic and underline icons; in AbiWord these are represented by an icon with just one letter, A, simulating the type of formatting, bold, italic or underline. Other than this, MS Word users would not have a hard time getting used to AbiWord.

In addition, AbiWord also loads faster than MS Word; it also responds much faster and takes up less system resources. AbiWord uses only about 6MB of memory usage while MS Word uses over 30MB. AbiWord really appeals to those users with 64MB RAM.

Open Office

Open Office is an office productivity suite. It includes the key desktop applications, such as a word processor, spreadsheet, presentation manager, and drawing program, with a user interface and feature set similar to other office suites. Sophisticated and flexible, Open Office also works transparently with a variety of file formats, including those of Microsoft Office.

It opens most major formats such as MS Office almost flawlessly (Macros aren't converted), saves to PDF , has comprehensive help, and spellchecking in 15 languages.

FireFox

An alternative to Internet Explorer for browsing the web. One of the most suc-

successful open source projects, with over 25 million downloads.

You can view more than one web page in a single window, with tabbed browsing. This time saving feature reduces the time to load a second web site and reduces the load on your computer.

The basic functionality of Firefox can be extended by the addition of small add-ons known as extensions; these can be downloaded from the web site. They can add anything from a toolbar button to a completely new feature.

Firefox does not support visual basic scripts, ActiveX or Browser Helper Objects, which makes it less vulnerable to malicious attacks than Internet Explorer.

Thunderbird

Thunderbird is a free mail client for most operating systems including, but not limited to, Windows, Linux and Macintosh. It is based on the Mozilla code-base. It is a robust and easy to use client, similar to competing products like Outlook Express, but with some major advantages such as junk mail classification.

Tired of spam and annoying advertising in your Inbox? Mozilla Thunderbird provides the most effective tools for detecting junk mail. The program's tools analyse your e-mail and identify those that are most likely to be junk. You can have your junk mail automatically deleted or put in a specific folder.

Mozilla Thunderbird is already packed with great features like IMAP/POP support, support for HTML mail, labels, quick search, a smart address book, return receipts, advanced message filtering, LDAP address completion, import tools, powerful search, and the ability to manage multiple e-mail and newsgroup accounts.

In addition to this, Mozilla Thunderbird lets you add additional features as you need them through extensions. Extensions are powerful tools to help you build a mail client that meets your specific needs, and are available for download at the web site.

Sunbird

A calendar / diary program

Free Programs on the Disk

Opera Claimed to be "The Fastest Browser on Earth", this is a free web browser to replace Internet Explorer. Further information on the disk.

Zone Alarm

Easy-to-use firewall which blocks hackers and other unknown threats.

Systematically identifies hackers and blocks access attempts

Automatically makes your computer invisible to anyone on the Internet

Spybot Spybot - Search & Destroy can detect and remove spyware of different kinds from your computer.

AdAware Ad-Aware is designed to provide advanced protection from known Data-mining, aggressive advertising, Parasites, Scumware, selected traditional Trojans, Dialers, Malware, Browser hijackers, and tracking components.

There is much more information about the free programs on the disk



Further pictures from the Barbeque at Bembridge Lodge on August 3rd.
Picture credits to Mike Shepherd.

Members Own Notice Board

A space where you can advertise goods for sale and any other notices
you may wish to put in.

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