**Meeting 08/01/2013**

**Agony Corner:**

We had a quick review of last month's problems which were answered on the day or in the follow up email (q.v.), and then moved on to new issues...

1) From one of our members - 'I've received another example of a spoof email'.....

- Allegedly from BT saying that it's necessary to resubmit email details to continue to receive them. Hovering over the return address shows a standard (not BT) Yahoo name.
- Highly unlikely that this is genuine and should be should be deleted.
- Another check is to right click on a suspect email, then left click on 'Properties' then the 'Details' tab. Within this you should see a 'Reply to' address which often bears no resemblance to the purported sender.
- We were also reminded that it's unwise to click on the 'unsubscribe' link in an unknown email as this just alerts the sender that you are real.

2) 'I use AVG Free but keep getting nagged to upgrade to the paid version'.

- In most people's experience this is not necessary as the free version is highly regarded.
- AVG is thought to be very heavy on PC resources and the free alternative often recommended is 'Avast', http://tinyurl.com/o2cypok
- Several of our members use and recommend Microsoft Security Essentials although now, Microsoft themselves are saying it's not good enough!
- Windows 'Defender' is included with Windows 8.1 and should kick into action in the absence of other Virus protection software. However, you do need to check that it is activated, here's some help http://www.pcadvisor.co.uk/how-to/windows/3466684/how-turn-on-defender-in-windows-8/
- As we've discussed before, though, in tests not all virus checkers catch all contamination so regular use of an anti-malware programme such as 'Malware Bytes Anti Malware', 'Orbit Malware Fighter' or 'Spybot Search and Destroy' is advised.

3) 'My Vista PC will not reliably boot up correctly. Only occasionally can I achieve normal working'...

- Several suggestions were made. First, try the using Marian's disc repair process discussed at a previous meeting (file attached).
- If you have the original Vista disc it should have a 'Repair' process available. Here are some instructions http://pcsupport.about.com/od/toolsofthetrade/ss/windows-vista-startup-repair.htm
- There's also some useful help from Microsoft http://windows.microsoft.com/en-gb/windows-vista/what-to-do-if-windows-wont-start-correctly

**Topic for the day: 'Setting up a home network'.** In other words, how can I access the files on my PC from my laptop or tablet?

How to achieve interconnectivity amongst the variety of electronic equipment we have, perhaps all with different operating systems, is a hot topic these days. There's no one 'cap fits all' solution, but it proved well worthwhile to explore this topic together.

- It's much easier setting up a network these days than it used to be. Before XP arrived, it was usually necessary to bring in professional help to set up a home network and at the very least entailed trailing cables all around the house. Windows XP was supposed to simplify this and, to a degree probably did, but it was still necessary to set up on the main PC then copy files to a CD before copying those back into a laptop, say. The advent of wireless connectivity improved matters significantly.
- These days, with the advent of Windows 7 & 8, it's a much simpler process with devices being able to automatically pick up the signals from a home network.

We worked through the process from XP to Windows 8 and I provided several links to useful sources of information. For your convenience, I've converted the PowerPoint presentation into a PDF and attached herewith, [http://u3astowmarket.files.wordpress.com/2014/02/home-networking.pdf](http://u3astowmarket.files.wordpress.com/2014/02/home-networking.pdf)

In the process of researching this topic, I discovered a very useful free site with comprehensive tutorials (uncluttered with adverts) on all matters computing, *GCF Learn Free*. The link is on the final page of the pdf and I would strongly urge you to have a look.

**Next Meeting**

Will be on **Wednesday 12th February,** 1.30pm at Stowupland School.

**Topic for the day**: I've been conscious that our recent topics have not been, in themselves, very interactive and we haven't been making full use of the PC facilities at the school. To this end, Marian has agreed to revisit a topic she last covered in 2011 & 2012, i.e., **'Photo Manipulation using Photoshop Elements'**.

Elements is available to us on the school network and Marian will demonstrate a few useful and simple techniques for improving your pictures. It you have a picture or pictures which you think could be improved by a little 'tweaking', please feel free to bring them along on a USB stick and you can practice at your workstation with help available if you need it.