I'm sorry to announce the death of Mike Hitchcock. Mike was a long standing member of the Computer Group, pre dating my time by many years. He was not able to attend throughout 2014 but always wanted to be kept informed of what we were up to. Over the years, I noticed how he was always willing to lend a hand in all U3A activities and indeed, several years ago, was on the Committee. He will be sadly missed.

Meeting 14/01/2015

We had 14 members attending today and 9 apologies.

Agony Corner:

We spent some time reviewing the topics discussed last month (see last email) before moving on...........

1) 'I'm still using XP on my desktop and have files on the hard disk that I don't want to lose. I'm getting this message when I switch on "Hard Disk WDC, S.M.A.R.T Command Failed, Port 00 Disc Read Error Occurred, Press Ctrl Alt Del to restart." This latter does not work. How do I recover my archived files?'

- There are numerous possible reasons for this message but it may be a precursor to total hard disk failure (if there are no 'beeping noises' accompanying the messages, this may not have happened *yet*. WDC refers to the Western Digital hard drive.
- There were several suggestions made including - try to start in 'Safe mode' or try booting from an XP recovery disc (Google search for how to do this).
- We also discussed removing the HDD from the machine, putting it into a caddy and connect by USB to another machine where you can copy your archived files. *This is probably the best thing to do first*.
- Back In the PC, open the cabinet check the cables and refit the HDD. Disconnect the power cable and Bus (cable which connects motherboard and peripheral devices) from the HDD. After reconnecting them, try again. It may be as simple as this and the computer may start work again without failure messages.
- Searching the internet for all these terms suggests a very complex problem which may be out of the scope of this meeting. It's worth noting, however, that SMART stands for Self-Monitoring, Analysis, and Reporting Technology for monitoring the Hard Disk Drive for any kind of malfunctioning. If S.M.A.R.T detect any problems with it, it will return the failure message.

2) 'I have been switched from Virgin Media to Talk Talk and as a consequence lost on line storage space. For a large file (26Mb *.wma) I've tried using Dropbox as an alternative. Directly, the file seems to be uploading in to Dropbox but never completes. Is 26 Mb too big for Dropbox?'

- No. Files uploaded to Dropbox via the desktop application or mobile apps have no file size limit. Files uploaded through the website (by clicking the upload button) have a 10 GB limit. In other words, each file you upload through the website must be 10 GB or less.
- It may be that a slow upload broadband speed may be the culprit.
- Best way to deal with this is to install the desktop application. You will then have a Dropbox folder which contains sub folders and a Getting Started pdf (copy attached – original recipients only).

- Copy and paste or drag and drop into the Public folder and the application will upload eventually. Any subsequent changes will be synced to that, The up to date version can be accessed from any device where you have installed the Dropbox application.

3) 'I keep getting a message about an 'End User Licence Agreement' (See jpg attached). Does this mean 'End' something or refer to me as an 'End User'. Is it genuine and what do I do?'

- It refers to you as the 'end user' and, yes it is genuine.
- If you click to accept and it goes away then that's that. If it keeps reappearing then this behaviour occurs if your user account does not have permissions to modify the Microsoft Windows Registry. (Something has been modified or corrupted along the way).
- Detailed information on this Microsoft page, http://tinyurl.com/mre5cz4 gives the causes and resolution. Unless you are very confident, however, I would *not recommend* using the 'workaround' which involves modifying the registry.

4) 'I've noticed an increase in phishing emails concerning thing I've allegedly bought on line, often referring to PayPal. I'm now in the habit of forwarding them all to the organisation from whom they were supposed to be sent'.

- We've all noticed this over the past year and members have been alerted at several previous meetings.
- Many include a mobile number to contact if there are any queries. I no circumstance should this be done.

Topic for the day:

Email issues – commonly raised problems. Revisited this topic which affects us all.

We looked at the many problems associated with attachments, how to add them, how to read them, why are some not accepted, with photos, how to attach them, what size should they be, how do I download them, where are they when I have downloaded them, etc. etc.?
Also, why don't people receive my emails/ why don't they receive mine?

Please find attached a PDF version of the PowerPoint presentation used at the meeting (original recipients only).

Next meeting 11/02/2015

'The Cloud'. What is it, what can I do with it, is it safe?

Looking ahead:-

March   – 'Security', an update on viruses, Trojans, phishing and the like, and how to deal with them.