

Please note: Due to school closure for the Easter holiday, there will be no April meeting.

Computer Group Meeting 11/03/15

Thanks very much to **Ann Williams** for holding the fort for me today.

Here are Ann's notes of the meetings – and I've added *a few comments where appropriate*

Agony corner

We reviewed the topics covered in the last session.

1. Problems with 'Mysearchdial' browser hijacker

The person concerned was not present to report back whether they had managed to remove it.

3. Problems accessing Inbox in Outlook Express.

The member with this problem could not use Outlook Express with Windows 8. Might he be able to migrate his Outlook Express account into Windows Live Mail? He had looked at his emails through Talktalk webmail, and was now using Gmail but was having to type in all his contacts again. He could export them from Outlook Express and import them into Gmail.

There's a lot of help on the web for both these questions

- *Transfer Outlook Express account to WLM e.g. <http://tinyurl.com/lq3vz9o>*
- *Export Outlook Express address book from Outlook Express and import into GMail e.g. <http://tinyurl.com/yjwxxnu>*

4. Windows 10

No-one else had been looking at this new OS yet, but it was felt that reviews suggest that it would be an improvement on its predecessors, and was likely to be a free upgrade to Windows 7 and 8 users.

New topics

1. One member said that they were having trouble using their USB stick or external hard drive on their laptop, getting an error message saying they were corrupt, even though they worked perfectly elsewhere. Another USB stick worked fine. The laptop was old but there had been no problems before.

The reasons for this can be complicated, implicating both the USB drive and the lap top. The fact that the external hard drive is affected as well suggests that the latter is the case. Best case scenario would be to make sure that any valuable data is safely backed up elsewhere in case of total failure of the lap top.

2. Members using Gmail on tablets could choose which addresses they wished to use.

3. One member had an icon that came up on their computer saying that the device was not connected to the internet, although everything connected as normal. No explanation for this!

Mysterious things happen! Often, unplugging the router, waiting for a couple minutes then reconnecting the power often solves this kind of issue. (It can take a couple of minutes until all the lights on your router are green/flashing green for full reconnection).

Also they were unable to upgrade their Apple device for 6 months, but it would now do so. Was this a ploy to persuade people to buy a new device?

4. A member had a problem with their XP device. They were getting an error message- 'a disk read error occurred' Pressing Ctrl+Alt+Delete resulted in getting into a loop of checks going too fast to read. Members suggested doing a

system restore, which he was unable to do, and starting it in safe mode. Starting in safe mode might allow him to check the disk. Another suggestion was to type the error message into Google to see what answers might come up.

This problem and possible solutions are discussed here - <http://tinyurl.com/o2qvruk>

5. Project Gutenberg has lots of free books, including classics, that can be downloaded <https://www.gutenberg.org/>. There are also free books on Kindle, and e-books can also be borrowed from the library (*ask at the library for a password and instructions for using the 'Overdrive reader'*). Amazon publishes a list of free books, or ones at only 99p, of many genres. If anyone has books in good condition they no longer need they can take them to the library to be sold to help with the running of the library.

6. A member mentioned an Amazon 'scam' – free delivery on Amazon Prime, which was for one month only and then cost £79 per annum. This is not good value if you are only ordering a few items. One member finds it very useful as you can pick delivery time, also if you want to stream videos, that is included. If you want to use the one month's free delivery, but don't want to pay, you must remember to cancel it within the month.

In spite of much publicity in the press, this isn't a scam. It's been the case for many years that if, when signing up for a free trial of anything and you are asked for your credit card details, then you should expect to pay thereafter unless you cancel the subscription before the end of the free trial. With the streaming video it's quite a good deal compared to Netflix, £5.99 - £6.99 pm.

7. Members were reminded of the reduced cost of software for U3A members via <http://www.software4students.co.uk/>. Office 365 is currently on offer for £52 (normally £104) which is cheap, but also when Microsoft Office 2016 becomes available those with Office 365 can get a free upgrade. Office is upgraded every few years – Office 2003 is on the school computers, members of the group also had Office 2007 and 2010, and there is also Office 2013. The ribbon was introduced in Office 2007. Another member suggested that there were other alternatives to Microsoft – he has used Serif Page Plus for many years – now PP 7 – and prefers it, perhaps because he is familiar with it. He has used it mainly for publishing, but can be used as a Word alternative as well.

We saw recently that there's no need to pay for Microsoft Office at all. There are basic versions of the MS Office programmes on OneDrive Live plus several free Office compatible programmes are available e.g Libre Office <https://www.libreoffice.org/>, Open Office <https://www.openoffice.org/>, and KingSoft Office <http://www.kingsoftstore.com/>

8. Was Adobe PhotoShop still being offered with a discount at <http://www.software4students.co.uk/?> Yes, but you have to be careful. In the past you could pay for it, and download it but then you had to get in touch with Adobe to register it. This can be fraught with difficulty when trying to prove that membership of the U3A qualifies. You can finish up paying a lot of money but being unable to use the software.

Currently, the Adobe Creative Cloud comprising PhotoShop CC and Lightroom is available on S4S at a rental of £8.75 pm but you have to own a legitimate copy of CC3 upwards and there's no reason to believe that the restrictions would be any less onerous.

Other alternatives with different strengths and weaknesses were discussed including Lightroom, PhotoShop Elements, Serif Photo Plus and the free Picasa3. Noted that 'Academia' sells discounted software.

We've also recently recommended the completely free on line or desktop photo editor application, Pixlr <https://pixlr.com/>

Topic for the Day

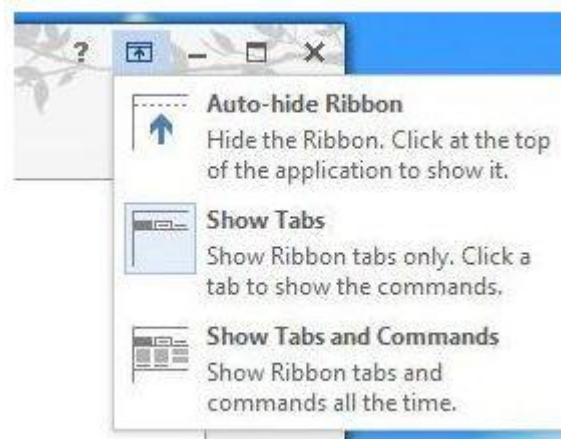
Some of the basics of **'Word Processing'** with particular reference to **Word 2003** (It was intended to look at Word 2007 but the school still uses predominately Office 2003)

Using gcflearn free, <http://www.gcflearnfree.org/word2003> the group worked through some of the basics of Word 2003. Like all lessons on the site, this one is clear and well-structured and can be of great assistance to anyone who uses Word 2003 at home (there are similar lessons on all versions of Office from 200 to 2013).

During the lesson, it seems that one machine had Word 2013 installed. A feature noted was that the Ribbon was magnified – it was thought that this is a useful feature for anyone with eyesight difficulties.

In Office 2013, Microsoft now gives you the option of three different Ribbon views.

1. Start any Office 2013 app: Word, Excel, etc.
2. In the very top-right corner of the window, just to the left of the Minimize button, you'll see a Ribbon display-option button (which looks like a little arrow inside a box). Click it.
3. Now you'll see three options: Auto-hide Ribbon, Show Tabs, and Show Tabs and Commands. This last is the default view; it shows everything. Choose one of the other two and you'll immediately see the result.



Next meeting 13/05/2015

‘Security’, an update on viruses, Trojans, phishing, PuPs and the like, and how to deal with them.