

Notes on Meeting 08/03/2017

We had another good turnout on 8th March, 13 members, and 5 apologies.

This was our first meeting at the Scout Centre in Stowmarket. The premises were opened for us at 1.45 pm giving us plenty of time to get ourselves organised. Most managed to get online fairly quickly and with a good Wifi signal. When we next visit, our devices should connect automatically.

Since the last email, I discovered that there was an extra £6.00 per session for the use of the kitchen. We debated this but the consensus was that we should continue with it. The charges are now made up of 2 hours @ £10.00 + £6.00, total £26.00 less 10% charity discount, £23.40. Agreed that £2.00/head per session would normally cover this. I've now made a regular booking for the months ahead.

Matters Arising from last meeting:

1) 'Until recently I've been able to have video chats with my family on my (older version) iPhone [presumed using Facetime]. Now, it's stopped and I need to know what's gone wrong and how to fix it'...

- Some solutions were offered and the problem is now fixed

Unfortunately, most of the people who raised other queries last time were not here today, so no worthwhile discussion on these was possible.

Agony Corner:

There was one query raised with me about the short links I frequently use – why and how?

- For me, primarily to shorten URLs (web addresses) to a manageable size. Particularly when sent by email, long addresses can be impossible to type accurately and be broken in the body of the email. For example
- The following URL:

<https://u3astowmarket.files.wordpress.com/2015/07/pat-smith-memoirs-1924-1983.pdf>
has a length of 81 characters (some addresses can have several hundred characters). This can be converted to a TinyURL which has a length of 26 characters,
<http://tinyurl.com/kvpm9dn>

- There are many address shortening sites which are used by businesses for analytical purposes e.g. measuring the success of campaigns. Many of you will be familiar with the snipca.com/xxxx short links used by Computer Active magazine, but there are several more.
- If there's the interest we can look at this in a little more detail at the next meeting.

Topic for today:

At the last session we studied 'All about Google, – how to get the most out of this ubiquitous tool and a look at some things we may not have come across before'.

At this meeting we decided to look at some of this in more detail with:- ‘An interactive session on **Google Drive and Google Docs**’

To make sure that we were all working on the same documents but not interfering with each other, the learning exercise was as follows:-

- 1) Two documents (docx – unformatted text copied from a web site, and PDF – covering Dave Potter’s talk last year.....copies attached to original member email) were downloaded from Dropbox from links given (unfortunately these links will no longer work as Dropbox changed their systems on 15th March and all previous links became void!).
 - 2) We discovered where these files were downloaded to, normally on a laptop to the ‘Downloads’ folder.
 - 3) One member who did not have Word installed noted that whilst the docx downloaded file would not open, it could later be viewed and edited in Google Docs (see 6 below).
 - 4) To work on documents in Drive/Docs it is necessary to have a Google account. Those who already had one launched Google Drive whilst those who hadn’t yet done so were shown how to create an account (see last email and below).
 - 5) We then learnt how to upload the files to Drive, either by dragging and dropping or browsing to the file location (downloads) and uploading from there.
 - 6) Noted that whilst it is possible to view these files in Drive, it’s not possible to edit them there. To do this it is necessary to open the file as a Google Docs file.
 - 7) In the original Word.docx file (now in a Google Docs file format), we did some basic formatting including making all the text the same font style and size, centring the title and making it bold, and changing page width. We noted that all changes were saved *as they were made*.
 - 8) On the original pdf file we confirm that it could not be edited in Drive (and normally pdf files cannot be edited anywhere) but it became full editable in Docs. This is an extremely useful tool which works both with native pdf files and well as scanned image pdfs.
- (I’ve listened to the tape and from all the laughter and chat, it’s clear that everyone was enjoying the session!)

To refresh your memory and as shown at the last meeting, all these steps are clearly shown on the gcflern site at <http://www.gcflernfree.org/googledocuments/>

Next Meeting:

12th April: Following on from a previous request, we’ll have an update on “**Computer Security Issues**’ plus scams in general, and how to deal with them. We have looked at these topics several times over the years, most recently in May 2015, and May and September 2016 but as we now have several new members it’s worthwhile a revisit.