

February 2021

Welcome to the IT Club Newsheet!

Things are starting to look up!

The Government has just announced the route out of lockdown. At Age Concern we will be following progress and opening up as soon as we can.

The full details of the government's plans are here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-spring-2021>

We have a couple of events coming up, please pass them to anyone you know who might be interested:

The first event is the Virtual Easter Bunny Hop event. A family fun run throughout the whole of April, to raise vital funds for ACEE. Participants can walk, jog, run, hop, skip or jump their own distance, tracking their achievement via smart phone or smart watch technology.

<https://ageconcernepsom.org.uk/get-involved/fundraise/fundraising-events/virtual-easter-bunny-hop/>

The second event is our breath-taking Mount Snowdon Challenge. This event is done under the starlit sky and participants get to watch a beautiful sunrise before their descent. This event is on August 8th-9th 2021.

<https://ageconcernepsom.org.uk/get-involved/fundraise/fundraising-events/snowdon-at-night-trek/>

There is quite a lot of information here, if you want more detail on any topic, or would like a new topic covered, just let me know at steven.p.dow@me.com.

We have requests to send this newsheet to other people so you can either send their email address to me or you can simply email them this pdf.

Information

Our website is here : <https://ageconcernepsom.org.uk>

The coronavirus update is here: <https://ageconcernepsom.org.uk/about-us/coronavirus/coronavirus-update/>

If you have IT problems you can still get telephone help by ringing our office on **01372 732456** between the hours of 9.30 – 1.00, Monday to Friday. An IT volunteer will then ring you back and hopefully solve your problem.

To keep up to date with Age Concern Epsom & Ewell's news and events please sign up to our charity newsletter. <https://ageconcernepsom.us11.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=72744b5e62d99b468ae2072a4&id=9b7e38510d>

All the previous newsheets can be accessed here:

<https://ageconcernepsom.org.uk/about-us/newsletters/it-newsletters/>

Useful Links

Government advice: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Age UK: <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/coronavirus/>

The NHS has lots of information: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>
111 phone line website: <https://111.nhs.uk>

Livi information: <https://www.livi.co.uk>

Art

The London Galleries have published lists of their top exhibits viewed online.

The National Gallery's top picture was Holbein's "The Ambassadors".

You can see it in amazing detail here: <https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/hans-holbein-the-younger-the-ambassadors>

Try zooming in to see fine details by clicking on the + sign next to the slider bar. You will probably see more detail than you would if you were standing in front of it.



The second most viewed painting is Van Eyck's "Arnolfini Marriage"

<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/jan-van-eyck-the-arnolfini-portrait>

The National Gallery director said *"Both are indoor scenes with very dressed-up people and I am wondering whether they reflect our own experience of being enclosed in our homes during lockdown but yearning to go out and celebrate,"*

The National Gallery has constantly changing exhibitions and is worth a visit if you like art.
<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk>

Britain's Lost Masterpieces

This is a BBC TV programme which discovers masterpieces in the UK's art galleries. The programme can be viewed here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episodes/b096mhvs/britains-lost-masterpieces>

The presenter and Art Historian Dr Bendor Grosvenor searches the nations art collections and identifies paintings which may have been mis-attributed and are actually by well known artists.

He does not visit every art gallery in the country but uses the national register, which you can do too here : <https://www.artuk.org/artdetective/>

The Art Uk website is very interesting and is here: <https://www.artuk.org>

Art Podcasts

First a recap on podcasts:

Podcasts are like having your own radio station with just programmes you have chosen: listen to what you want, when you want.

First of all you need to have a podcast player to play the podcast(!)

Apple devices (iPhone, iPad) will have the Apple podcast player already installed.



Android devices will have the Google podcast player.

Using your podcast player you can “subscribe” to podcasts that interests you (at no cost) and they will be sent, as if by magic, to you and will appear on your Podcast. You then simply play them whenever you want.

A more in depth look at podcasts was in our May 12th newsheet here: <https://ageconcernepsom.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/May-12th.pdf>

Suggested listening:

Waldy and Bendy’s Adventures in Art.

Waldemar Januszczak (Times Art critic of the Sunday Times) and Dr Bendor Grosvenor (Art historian and TV presenter - Britain’s Lost Masterpieces) talk about all sorts of art subjects, including discussions of individual artists (El Greco in the latest podcast) , art films, their favourite paintings and so on. I find it very entertaining and informative. The accompanying website has pictures of all the art they discuss and is here: <https://zczfilms.com>

History of Art

Produced by Oxford University and a bit more serious than the one above.

There are some others to explore but podcasts are not ideal for visual media!

Facebook tracking and Off Facebook Activity

Jane, one of our group, asked me to comment on a video forwarded to her from a rather hysterical American lady.

The lady was concerned, to put it mildly, that Facebook was monitoring all that you do on your device, even when Facebook wasn't being used. She claimed (incorrectly), that Facebook tracks every app including your on-line banking.

I use Facebook so I decided to investigate.

Facebook makes a huge amount of money from businesses and organisations who want to advertise in your Facebook newsfeed. That's OK: they have to make money somehow.

However here is an example of a situation which really happened: In my Facebook, amongst the normal news from the Archers and Surrey Cricket club was an advert for Bath Museum. This was odd because I was looking at staying in Bath in **another app**. Is it a coincidence that the advert for Bath Museum appeared or is something happening here?

Facebook explain it using an example (they actually use "Jane" in their example!)

1. Jane buys shoes from an online shoe shop.
2. The online shop shares Jane's purchase with Facebook
3. Facebook adds the purchase to Jane's Facebook details
4. When Jane is in Facebook a specific targeted advertisement (eg offering 10% off shoes) appears in front of her.

So

1. Facebook is not monitoring all your computer activity.
2. Business and organisations **decide** whether to give information to Facebook.
3. Banks would never pass confidential details to Facebook. If they did, they would very soon have no customers at all.

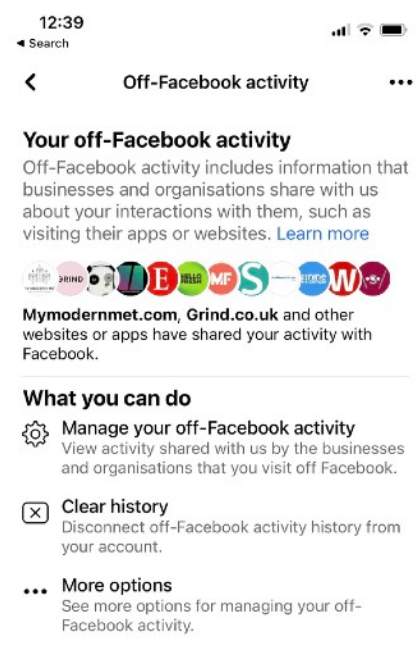
However some people may be uncomfortable with this so you can stop it by doing the following:

In Facebook go to

1. Settings
2. Scroll down to Your Facebook information
3. Go to Off-Facebook activity (interestingly this did not appear on my iPad but did on my iPhone)
4. More Options
5. Manage Future Activity, twice
6. Turn off Future off-Facebook activity

I had 105 apps sending information to Facebook including Economist, getSurrey, Walesonline, Cancerresearch, Independent newspaper, Which magazine and Surrey cricket.

I have **not** turned it off yet. If I do, will I get adverts for items I have no interest in?



Scams

We have reported scams regularly for, it seems, years. They have usually been the “phishing” type, ie millions of emails are sent to a list of addresses in the hope that just a few will “bite” and reveal details or send money.

However in January my mother received the following from a **friend's** email address, not an “odd” address the scammers normally use.

Good Morning,

I need a favor from you.

Do you have an Amazon Account ?

*Thank you,
Penny*

Her friend is indeed called Penny and the email address is correct. However there was no personal greeting and an American spelling of favour. Nevertheless my mother replied that she did have an Amazon account. The reply to this was:

Nice to hear from you. I've been trying to purchase a Amazon £300 Gift card by email, but it says they are having issues charging my card. I contacted my bank and they told me it would take a couple of days to get it sorted. I intend to buy it for a friend of mine she is down with cancer of the Liver, It's her birthday and I promised to get her Amazon gift cards. Can you purchase it from your end for me, I 'll refund it to you once my bank sorts the issue out. Let me know so i can send you her email.

*Thanks,
Penny*

This time the warning bells rang. There was no personal greeting, the grammar was bad and the “sting” has been revealed. What was interesting/worrying was that the scammers/criminals had got access to Penny’s email account and were replying individually to emails sent to her. They were not phishing but directly targeting people in Penny’s contact list. My mother rang Penny and found that many other friends had been in touch having received similar emails. Penny soon changed her email password. How did the criminals get her email password? We don’t know.

So if you receive an email from anybody, even friends, asking for personal details or money, **double-check** by telephone or another method.

iPad Stands

Bridget from our group was fed up with propping up her iPad with books when doing FaceTime or Zoom calls so she investigated what she could do about it.

A search of Amazon produced a number of iPad stands which seemed to fit the bill and chose a Lamicall. Here is what she said about it:

I'm quite pleased with this as it's meant I've got rid of most books under and behind the iPad as it's secure and a little higher.

However the adjustable bit is the cradle which you can turn around and up and down. I still wish it would go higher though.

Lamicall also does a height adjustable one a Gooseneck or something- but you need to clamp it to a surface so it's not for me but the Daily Telegraph liked it.

There seem to be more offers on Amazon than the other day and lots of makes. There's a Tryone which goes taller and I half wish I'd gone for that.



I have the same problem propping up my iPad so, after reading Bridget's review I bought this one: https://www.amazon.co.uk/Lamicall-Tablet-Stand-Adjustable-Holder/dp/B01N05W4A2/ref=sr_1_2?dchild=1&keywords=lamicall&qid=1613990570&sr=8-2

It is not height adjustable but works perfectly for my purposes and I wonder why I didn't buy one earlier, so thanks Bridget!

Bridget also sent the following

I suddenly remembered this mini beanbag I got last year to support my iPad when reading in bed or sitting down. It's really light - about 4 oz but feels less.

It's called Bean Lazy from www.beanlazy.com. I bought off Amazon for about £12 but they're not available from them now. The ones they show now are stupidly expensive in my opinion. Ebay have these though for about the same price.



Thanks, Bridget - you could be our official reviewer!

RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch update

The results of the Big Garden Birdwatch held January will be out in April.

Here is where the results will be:

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/>

In the meantime, click on the picture to get a LIVE feed of the RSPB bird table:



Live webcam

Who is stopping for a snack at RSPB Arne today? We could watch this for hours!



Update

Just had a look at the live webcam and there were lots of different birds feeding happily.

Looked again and now there is a squirrel dismantling the feeders watched by two disgruntled birds!

We did the Big Garden Bird Watch for an hour in January and wondered why we saw only 3 birds (2 blue tits and a robin).

And then we realised.

The reason we saw very few birds was caught on camera - our cat!

Birds are, indeed, having a tough time!



Puzzling picture

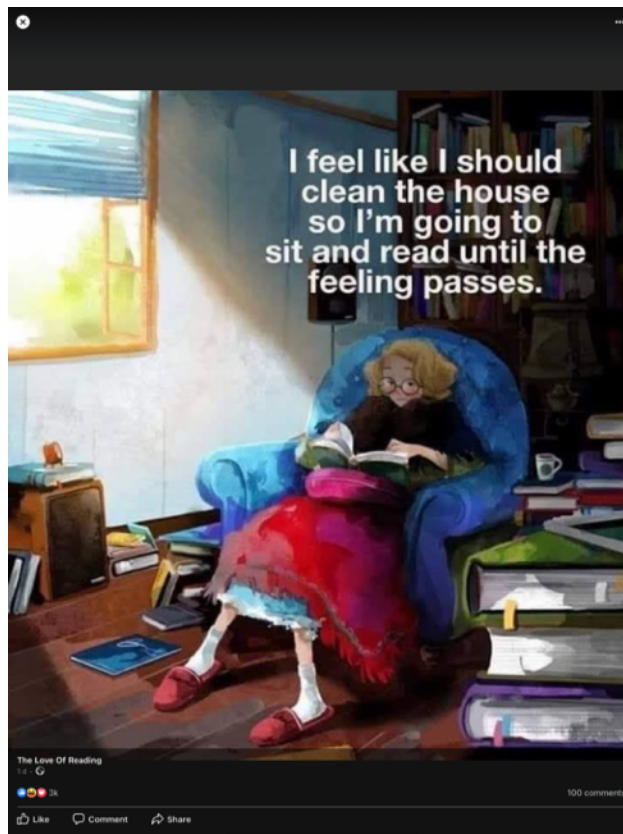
This is a photograph of a normal, square house with flat walls!

An artist has created a very clever optical illusion.

Here are more amazing examples:
<https://mymodernmet.com/3d-street-art-illusions/>



Finally



If you have any ideas, comments, suggestions please email them to me at steven.p.dow@me.com