

February 2022



## **Welcome to the February IT Club Newsheet.**

After 2 years we held an IT Club meeting yesterday!

It was a full house so thank you to everybody who came, it was great to see you again, and welcome to those you came along for the first time.

We discussed the last 2 years and how technology helped, for example using Zoom to keep in touch.

We also discussed future topics for future meetings and came up with a few:

- Social Media in all its forms, good and bad. How it can be used safely.
- Passwords, how to use, how to check how strong they are and how to store them.
- Troublesome websites, eg those which draw you in and won't let go! Trust Pilot
- Smart watches and how they can help us.
- Online banking - how to keep safe
- Storage, backups, how to delete old history
- Search Engines, what is the difference and are any better?

If you have other topics you would like to add then please let me know at [steven.p.dow@me.com](mailto:steven.p.dow@me.com)

This newsheet will reflect the meetings and will be published a few days after the meeting. So, for example, if the meeting topic is Social Media, there will be an article about Social Media in the following newsheet.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday 29th March at 2pm in the normal room in the Old Town Hall. The first topic will be Social Media.

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](mailto: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.

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## Information

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

The coronavirus update is here: <https://ageconcernepsom.org.uk/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 have been put on the Epsom and Ewell Age Concern website and 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>

Government Ripoff website: <https://ripoff-tipoff.campaign.gov.uk>

## Future?

Many of us have Amazon's Alexa or Google's Assistant in our houses, ready to respond to our requests. Here are some uses available now, from simple to more complex.

Alexa,

- What time is it?
- Is it going to rain today?
- What is the temperature today?
- What are the news headlines?
- Play some music from the 1960s
- Read me my audiobook.
- Set alarm for 7.30am
- What is the capital city of Bolivia
- Who was prime minister in 1960?
- Remind me to take my pills at 9am every day
- Set an egg timer for 3 minutes
- When is the next 406 bus due?
- Turn on the lights
- And recently: Warm my car cabin up.

and many more

However a recent article in The Times suggested they may soon be adding more capabilities:

Smart speakers such as Amazon's [Alexa](#) or [Google Assistant](#) are expected within the decade to be able to spot oncoming colds and chronic health conditions before they appear by listening to a user's breathing, voice and heart rate.

That is the prediction of a report from Vodafone into what consumer technology will look like by 2030. The mobile phone company believes that we will be wearing devices that allow us to control gadgets with our minds, have digitally connected trees analysing the air quality, and be staring into smart mirrors that can detect skin conditions.

The report, co-written with the consultancy the Future Laboratory, says that consumers will expect technology to be a key way they can monitor their health. It predicts that smart assistants will be able to spot early signs of diseases such as Parkinson's from voice analysis alone, in a similar way to how temperature is an indicator of fever.

"[Artificial intelligence](#) embedded into your devices won't just work to tell you when you become unwell, but will assess vital measurements in real time — including heart and respiratory rate, hydration, blood pressure and blood sugar levels — to predict and prevent chronic health conditions even before they appear," the report states.

In 2018 it was revealed that Google had filed a patent for a smart speaker that could determine a speaker's mood through the "volume of the user's voice, detected breathing rate, crying and so forth", and if they have a medical condition "based on detected coughing, sneezing and so forth".

In January, at the Consumer Electronics Show, start-ups were offering lightbulbs that could monitor a person's body temperature and floorboards that could analyse a user's changing weight.

Martin Raymond, co-founder of the Future Laboratory, said that tech companies were working on smart mirrors that could detect changes in a user's skin colour and send alerts to an accompanying app if it detected that the person should consult a doctor.

Such devices are also likely to connect with other wi-fi enabled appliances around the house as well as phones or smartwatches to build up a picture of somebody's health, before sending health recommendations if needed.

Good news or scary?

## Wordle

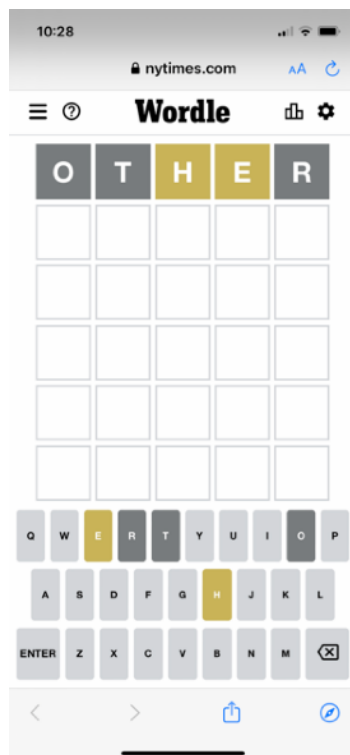
Wordle is a word puzzle game which has recently become hugely popular all over the world. It is a simple word guessing game invented by a British man to amuse his wife. It is quite similar to the old game of Mastermind which was hugely popular in the 1970s.

Wordle has recently been bought from the inventor for an undisclosed large sum by the New York Times who are keeping it free for the moment.

There is a new puzzle every day, and it is the same the world over and millions of people play.

So what is the fuss about and how do you play it?

This is where you find it: <https://www.nytimes.com/games/wordle/index.html>



The first time you visit the website you get a blank screen, ready for your first 5 letter word guess. nb It has to be a valid

The first guess here is OTHER and the colour signify:

Dark Grey (O,T,R) not in the word at all

Green/Orange (H,E) are in the word but not in the correct position.

Note the keyboard at the bottom reflects the colours for each letter. Light grey means not used yet.

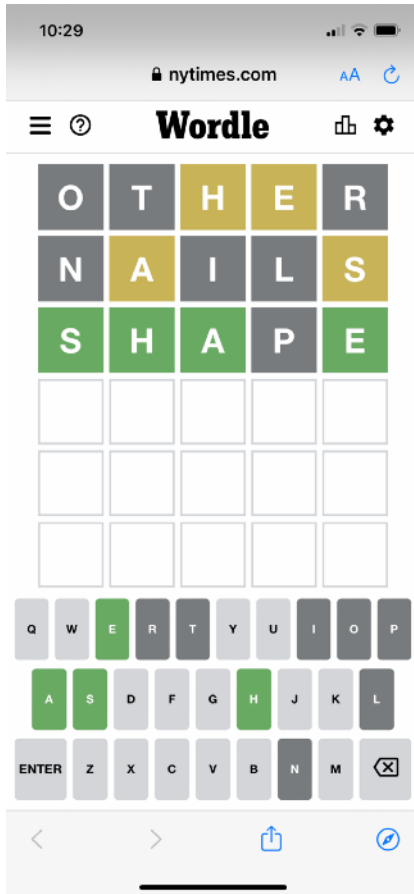
So ready for the next guess:

NAILS was the next guess and we now know that the word has A,H,E and S in but we don't know the position.

However we do know that the A is not in 2nd position, H is not in the 3rd position and so on.

Time for the next guess





With the 4 letters (A,H,E and S) we can have a good guess so SHAPE is worth a try.

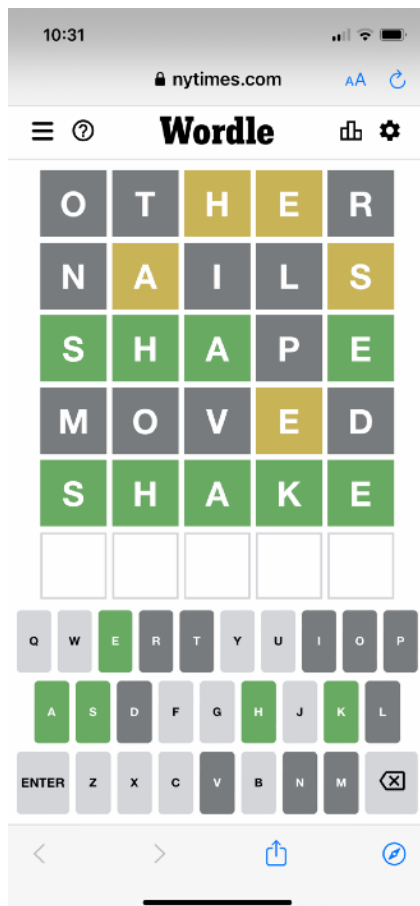
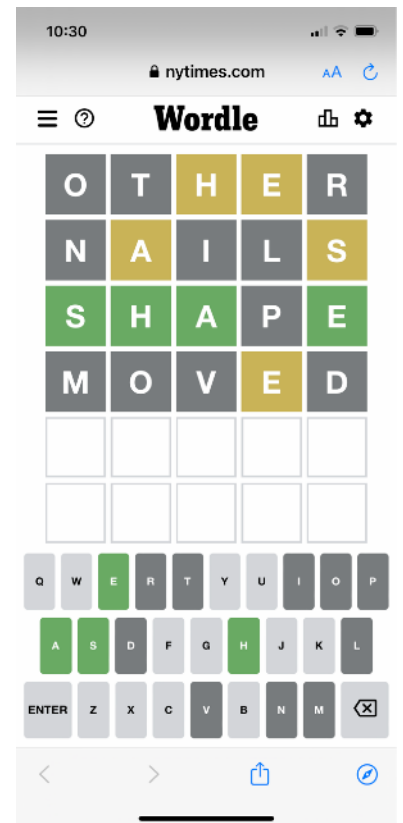
Nearly there! The Green boxes indicate the letter is in the correct place so it is just the 4th letter which is wrong.

Unfortunately there are many possible words which would fit: SHAME, SHADE, SHAVE, SHAKE (not SHARE because we know from the first line that there is not an R)

If we tried each one in turn we might run out of guesses.

So by putting MOVED which contains the possible 4th letters, we should discover the correct 4th letter.

MOVED tells us there is no M, V or D so it must be a SHAKE.



And sure enough the word is SHAKE!

Often the word is easier than the example given here.

So if you want to have a go, it is quick, free and it is here:

<https://www.nytimes.com/games/wordle/index.html>

# Scams

## 1. Tax Scam.

Here is an email I received which must be one of the worst (as in badly written) scams I have seen.

Apparently I have an unspecified account with lots of money in and for some reason I need to pay tax of 1 bitcoin which is about £28,000. Payment method is Bank Terminal, but I don't know what that means and shipping is by "Cridet" card. In addition they think I am in Australia.

Of course they want me to click on View Account button and then they will no doubt want my bank and other personal details. I didn't!

**Your Account Contains: £44704.87**

Hello, steven.p.dow

INVOICE #14800026585

### Tax Invoice

|  |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| <b>Billing Information:</b>  | <b>Payment Method:</b>    |
| Bitcoin<br>Amount: 1 BTC<br>You must pay by: 31.01.2022  | Bank terminal             |
| <b>Shipping address:</b>   | <b>Shipping Method:</b>   |
| Email :<br><a href="mailto:steven.p.dow@ntlworld.com">steven.p.dow@ntlworld.com</a><br>Country:<br>Australia | Cridet Card - Cridet Card |

| Item     | SKU                 | Qty | Subtotal (Ex GST) |
|----------|---------------------|-----|-------------------|
| Bitcoin  | 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 | 1   | £28,041.14        |
| Subtotal |                     |     | £28,041.14        |

Thank you again

[VIEW ACCOUNT](#)

## 2. Amazon Telephone Scam.

Recently I received a telephone call from "Amazon" saying that £800 was about to be taken from my account because an order for an expensive phone had been placed and did I know about this because it could be a fraud.

The fraudsters posing as Amazon had made the story up about possible fraud (how ironic) in the hope that I would be frightened of losing money and give them my Amazon details.

However I replied that I wanted a new phone anyway so not to worry!

They rang off. I checked my Amazon account and of course there was no order for a phone, fraudulent or otherwise.

### 3. Not a scam!

This is a bit embarrassing but here is the story of not-a-scam.

My mother had found a payment leaving her bank account monthly which she could not account for. She contacted her bank and all was resolved and she got the money back.

Following this I looked into my account and saw a monthly payment with a less than useful name (Debit payment) which I could not account for. Most payments have useful names such as Virgin Media, David Lloyd etc. I rang Nationwide and they looked into it and said that name (Debit payment) was usually for gym memberships. I definitely didn't have 2 gym memberships so the payment was cancelled and I got back payments of £170.

3 weeks later an email from Pet Insurance said that payments had stopped! It was a legitimate payment! How embarrassing. This is where it started to go strange.

I rang the bank and said it was my fault and please take back the £170 they had reimbursed me. Simple. Unfortunately not. Their administrative wheels were already turning and could not be stopped. They were going to pursue the innocent Pet company for the £170 which they had legitimately received. They could not just take it back from my account. So I am trying to contact the Pet company to say that if *my* bank chases them for money, I will re-imburse them! It is completely ludicrous!

Update next month!



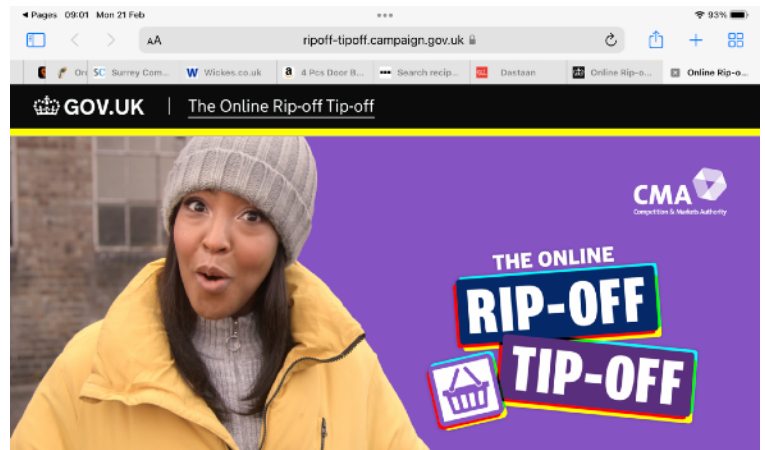
## Online ripoff tips from the Government

Online shopping has become increasingly popular, especially during the pandemic.

Unfortunately it is quite easy to be misled or exploited when buying items online so the Government has launched a website which helps you avoid problems.

You can visit the website here:

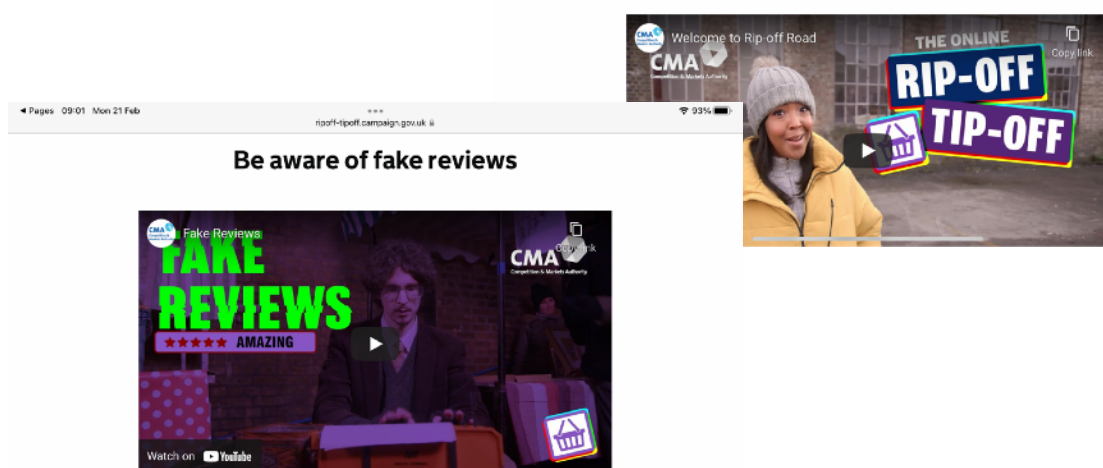
<https://ripoff-tipoff.campaign.gov.uk>



### Helping you spot and avoid sneaky sales tactics

These days you can buy almost anything online. But not everything is always as it seems. Some retailers use sneaky sales tactics to dupe you into parting with your money – often before you've had a chance to properly think it through. We've turned the online marketplace into a real street market to show you exactly what's happening – and help you shop more confidently.

### Take a stroll down Rip-Off Road...



Some businesses pay or reward people for positive reviews. So don't believe everything you read. Fake reviews are difficult to spot. Try reading the negatives as well as positives, find reviews on multiple sites, and look for specific details instead of generic remarks. If it's too good to be true, it probably is.

#### ▼ Fake Reviews Tip-Offs

1. Look at negative as well as positive reviews.
2. Check the dates of the reviews – be cautious if they are old or if they were all published close together.
3. Look out for patterns or repeated phrases in reviews – it may indicate they were written by the same person.
4. Be cautious of very high percentages of 5-star reviews.
5. Does the review contain specifics about the product/service experience rather than just using general terms like 'Brilliant' or 'Fantastic'? Real reviews often talk about specifics of the products, such as the quality or price.

### Need a little help?

Citizens Advice, Consumer Council Northern Ireland and Advice Direct Scotland are the advice organisations that you can go to for further support regarding misleading [online practices](#).



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## Puzzling picture

It has been very windy recently but is this picture real?



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## Finally

I know the feeling:



If you have a favourite App you would like to share, or topic discussed, just let me know at [steven.p.dow@me.com](mailto:steven.p.dow@me.com).

See you next month!

