

January 2021



Welcome to the IT Club Newsheet!

The last newsheet was produced during the 2nd lockdown and now we are in the 3rd, and, hopefully, final lockdown. However the future is looking much brighter with vaccinations progressing at speed and some of you may even have had your first one already.

2021 should be much better than 2020 with the country slowly opening up. The plans for the IT group remain the same: we will continue to produce this newsheet and will only restart the meetings when the effect of the mass vaccinations means we can meet safely.

During this lockdown we are not visiting homes to help with IT issues but you can still get help on telephone. Ring the office on **01372 732456** and a IT volunteer will ring back.

All the previous new sheets 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/>

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/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.

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>

Lovely Landscapes

January can be quite a grim month (although at the time of writing there is snow on the ground) so why not have a look at some lovely landscapes?

The Telegraph has a selection of beautiful UK landscapes:

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/europe/united-kingdom/galleries/the-best-landscapes-in-britain/>

The Cotswolds



Here are more from around the world:

<https://www.pexels.com/search/landscape/>

Paddy Fields



RSPB Great Bird Watch

The annual RSPB Great Bird Watch is this weekend 29-31 January.

In short, you pick an hour over the weekend then record every bird which lands in your garden. After the hour you submit the results on-line (or posted if preferable).

More details are here:

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/everything-you-need-to-know-about-big-garden-birdwatch/>

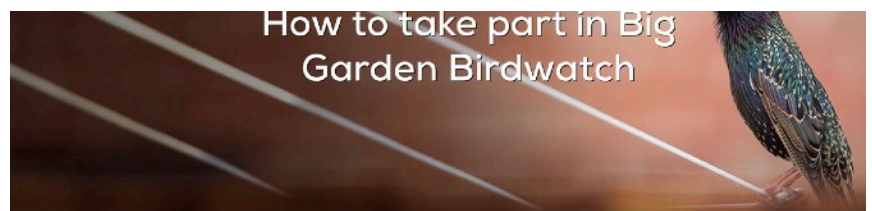
You will need to sign up with your name and address. Phone numbers are optional. There is a section about how much of a bird watcher you are (I selected "I have taken part but am not an expert birdwatcher") and then how you heard about it.

When you have submitted your details you will be told you have signed up.

Click on the link to find everything you need to take part and you will be taken here:

(nb Below the signed up message there is an invitation to become an RSPB member for £5 a month which you can ignore. Unless you want to become a member of course!)

There are full instructions and lots of resources including printable sheets to help with bird identification.



To play your part in the world's largest bird survey this January, just follow the simple instructions below.

[Jump to](#) | [Instructions](#) | [How it helps](#) | [Resources](#)

Instructions

1 Pick a time
You can choose any hour between 29 and 31 January. So whether you're an early bird or a night owl, you can still take part.


2 Tell us what you see
Count the birds you see in your garden or from your balcony*. Ignore any birds that are still in flight. To avoid double-counting, just record the highest number of each bird species you see at any one time - not a running total.

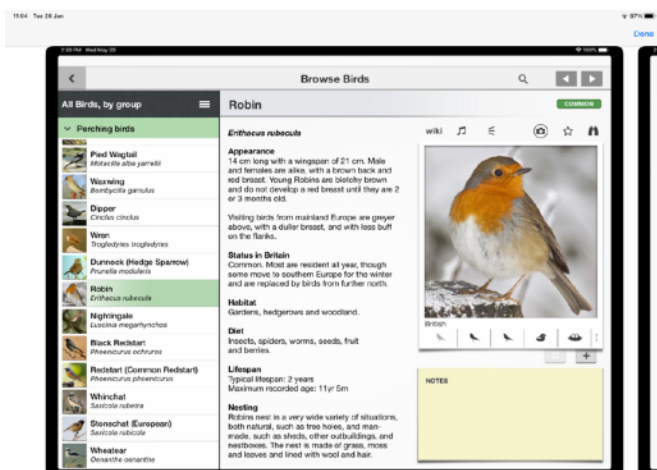
*This year our advice is to take part in the safety of your own home. This could include a birdwatch from your window if you overlook a green space or courtyard.

3 Submit your results
Online. You can submit your results online at rspb.org.uk/birdwatch from 29 January until 19 February.

KEY INFO

Dates: 29-31 January
Time: Any
Duration: 1 hour
Location: Your garden or balcony





You could also use an App to identify the birds.

Birds of Britain Pocket Guide is very good and has a high rating. It is not free.

Using technology in Lockdown

It was 9 months ago (really?!) when my mother wrote about her time in hospital in Covid-19 and how her iPad was invaluable.

You can read it here: <https://ageconcernepsom.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/April-21st.pdf>

Now we are in lockdown 3.0 she has updated her story of her life with technology:

First, a re-cap

On 1st April I was taken to hospital with covid 19. As I was being carried to the ambulance I asked the paramedic to get my I pad and charger from beside my bed. So arrived at the hospital with just my nightdress and I pad! I was so pleased I had this as after a few days I was able to send my son progress reports, sometimes only one line, which he could pass on to my daughter in Canada and various friends who were ringing him. After leaving hospital I recuperated for 7 weeks with my son before finally going home.

Home

After I returned home in June my son and I FaceTimed every day and I also FaceTimed or Zoomed with my daughter (Zoom is better for a 3-way conversation) in Canada once or twice a week. On Boxing Day I had a 4-way Zoom with son in UK, daughter and grandchildren in British Columbia another granddaughter in Ontario. We even played charades for two hours!

My son and I also watched the US inauguration together - we Facetimed and put the TV on and it was a lovely shared experience - we will do it again sometime.

Our local U.3.A. is now using Zoom video calling for monthly meetings, and I have seen talks on Glen Miller, the outer Hebrides and Sex, scandals and salacious stories from 1600 to 1800. The last one attracted the largest audience!

My I pad is never far from my side as I use it to communicate with friends, order my on-line groceries, listen to music or stories on Audible, read the Times newspaper and listen to radio programmes on B.B.C. Sounds.

I am also grateful to my Alexa (the "virtual assistant" you speak to). I can ask her any question, for example what is the weather going to be? what is the latest news? please play the Archers omnibus or my favourite piece of music, how to spell difficult words etc. I can talk to the family through her by simply saying "Call Susan" even though she is in Canada. It is like talking to her in the room. Alexa even reminds me to take my pills. There is no end to Alexa's skills!

I am so grateful for this modern technology as I can't help thinking what things would have been like 40 or 50 years ago (or even 10! Ed.). I would have felt much more isolated and lonely.

I must also mention my gratitude to the N.H.S. for the marvellous attention I received and to my surprise I was telephoned by a doctor every evening for some time after my return home to see how I was getting on.

I think I am fully recovered but still wary of Long Covid. I had my first vaccine in December. and am looking forward to a more "normal" life.

Video Calling

The benefit of video calls during the lockdowns and indeed anytime since last March has become more apparent. It has enabled business life to operate, training to continue and helps with family communication, reducing isolation.

One of our group has told me how being able to see and play with her grandchildren has made her feel much less isolated. It is not the same as being physically together but it helps enormously.

My mother, as you can see above , uses video calling daily.

Another use is in training. I “act” as a role player to train nurses at Kingston University. Because it is vital to continue training nurses we have changed to video calling during the latest lockdown. Recently I played an isolated person post-operation who was struggling with life. Two nurses appeared on screen talking to me while about 15 nurses and 4 teachers watched. After the 20 minute session their performance was assessed by the teachers. Nerve wracking for the nurses but invaluable training. The point was made that this type of appointment is now reality and video calling will continue in certain circumstances even when the pandemic is over.

Here is a quick recap of video calling apps:

Facetime

Only on Apple products (iPad, iPhone, Mac) and already installed. Best for 2-way calls. Easy to use and high quality. I use it for my weekly piano lesson. No cost.

Zoom

Good for more than 2-way calls. We sometimes have 60+ on at once at Epsom Choral Society rehearsals. A limit of 40 minutes unless you pay. Works on any device.

Google Meet

Works on any device. Free.
Works very well.

House Party

As well as Video chat you can play games!

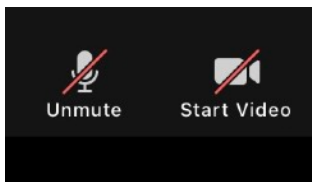
Microsoft Teams

Kingston university use this for training. Works well but really only for businesses, so it costs.

From my experience of video calling I have listed a few tips:

1. Look at the little window which displays you - that is exactly what the others will see, so if it shows the top of your head, that is how you will appear to others!
2. If the little window is completely black then you probably have not turned on the camera. Click on the screen and somewhere will be the command to turn the camera on. If it shows pink then you have got your thumb over it!

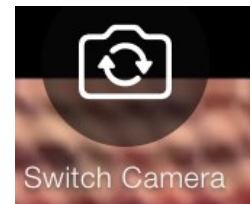




3. If people can't hear you, then similarly to item 2, find the command to unmute.

4. In FaceTime, if the little window showing you is positioned over someone's face you can move it to a better position by touching and dragging.

5. You can swap the camera from the one facing you to the one facing away to show your friends and family your house, garden, new kitchen etc. Remember to swap back so that it displays you when you have finished.



If anyone would like to try video calling then email me and we can set it up.

App of the month

How are the New Year Resolutions going?

Finding it hard to keep track of them?

Well, unsurprisingly, there are Apps to help you keep track of the success or otherwise of your resolutions.

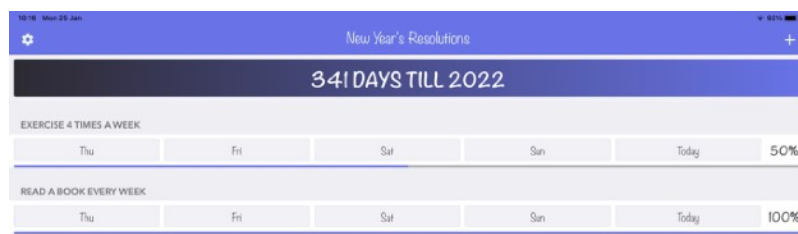
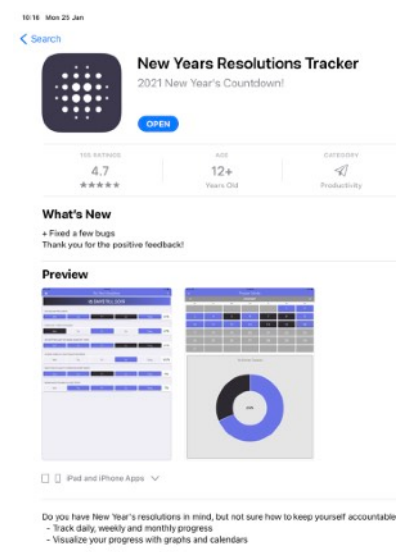
Here is an example:

New Years Resolutions Tracker

This App is free and appears to be quite easy to use.

You simply enter your resolution and then record its progress on a weekly planner which informs you of your success rate.

Could be hugely dispiriting!



Bitcoin Scams

Bitcoin is in the headlines at the moment and the scammers have wasted no time in exploiting it. It could be said that Bitcoin itself is a scam. So what is Bitcoin?

Bitcoin

Bitcoin is a type of currency invented in 2008 by unknown people. Unlike currencies such as £ € or \$, there is no government or organisation backing it. There is no gold behind it giving it value. It only exists as a letters and numbers on a computer. There is **no intrinsic value**. The only value it has is that there is a limited number available. New ones (ie new strings of letters and numbers) are “discovered” by powerful computers using vast amounts of electricity. It appears completely nonsensical yet people have been investing in it and therefore pushing the value up from almost nothing to very high values (\$40,000). Investors are drawn into it on the hope of the value continuing to go up. However the danger is the value drops and investors lose their money.

This is reminiscent of the Tulip mania of the 17th century (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tulip_mania) when the cost of a tulip rose dramatically because speculative investors pushed the price up to far above the value of a tulip. One current commentator said that Bitcoin is worse than tulip mania because when the tulip price crashed at least you had a tulip! With Bitcoin there is nothing left.

The warning then is to be very very wary of Bitcoin investment opportunities.

Anyway, this is not the main point!

Scams using Bitcoin hype

I have been getting many emails a day telling me I have bitcoins just waiting for me. It is very seductive message and easy to be taken in and it would be easy to say “What’s to lose” (as a friend of mine did).

However, what **is** to lose is your bank details!

22,140.01 GBP have been added to your account. Confirm Now!

Image

Hey Steven.p.dow,

You have multiple (5) calls to your account for the balance of your BitCoin account. You did not answer that. This is an automatic bulletin for the balance in your BitCoin account.

The first step is clear and waiting for confirmation. So respond to your messages today.

ACCOUNT INFORMATION:

Account: #78521075

USER INFORMATION

Steven.p.dow

Account: #78521075

Email: steven.p.dow@ntfworld.com

Must respond by:

01/21/2021

BALANCE SPECIFICATIONS

Date: 21-01-2021

Your balance: £ 22,140.01

Entry: #03035-22

Code: 8455-451

Note: - Confirm your e-mail. Your account credit will remain pending until your confirmation.

CONFIRM HERE.

These scams have nothing to do with Bitcoin, they are simply using the hype of the so-called currency to entice people to follow the links and, eventually, enter their bank details.

Luckily they are easy to spot and, if you have never had any dealings with Bitcoin, easy to ignore.

Be aware of Bitcoin scams!

bitcoin code

My account

FIRST PAYOUT IS READY FOR YOUR CONFIRMATION

Hello Steven.p.dow,

You are a recipient of Bitcoin Payroll Order #BTC-WTY5Z0 created by External Employers. The Transaction is confirmed, and you can view it in your Worker Profile. [Read more.](#)

CONFIRM RELEASE

Summary

Email	Confirmation Link Expiration date
steven.p.dow@ntfworld.com	20/01/2021

Account information:

Login: Steven.p.dow

Account owner: steven.p.dow@ntfworld.com

Country: UK

Bitcoin balance: \$11,659.60

CONFIRM RELEASE

Royal Mail scam

I recently received this email purporting to come from the Royal Mail.

Bad grammar, no name and a very dubious email address (morimura351@kcn.jp) set the alarm bells ringing.

Also the link they provide does not appear to be one the Royal Mail would use:



Delivery Failed
To: Steven Dow >

18:21

#Royal Mail# - The delivery address was incorrect/incomplete.

Hello,

Most common reasons for a failed delivery attempt

The receiver was absent, meaning there was no one at the address to receive the parcel.
The delivery address was incorrect/incomplete.

This does not necessarily mean that you wrote down the wrong address.

It can be that the instructions were unclear or that some details were missing.

The courier could not access the delivery location.

If the courier driver tried to deliver a parcel but was unsuccessful, there are three things that can happen.

Read on to Stay with us and find out what you can do if you face in case of a failed delivery attempt.

As we have been unable to determine the full address for this package, the parcel has remained in our depot.

From here, you can take several different options:

Update and complete the delivery address provided here >> <http://royalcloud-delivery.hollywoodwindowtinting.com/>

Then arrange delivery of the parcel to an alternative address

However in the interests of our readers I took the link and was presented with this page.

And the scam is revealed - you are required to sign up with your details and pay the "outstanding" money.

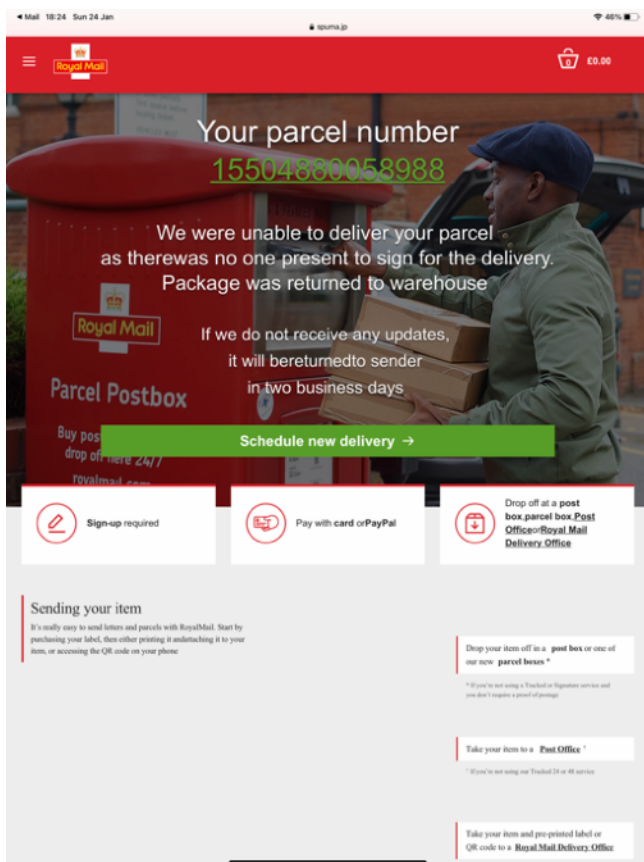
I did not do this!

There are also scam emails purporting to come from DPD.

Be aware!

The guardian has an article about this scam:

<https://www.theguardian.com/money/2020/dec/19/missed-delivery-parcel-scams-christmas-dpd-royal-mail>



Puzzling picture

Perspective can make an interesting photo!



Finally



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

See you next month!