

# Computer Notes.

## Index.

Page 1	Index of Notes.
Page 2	Backing up.
Page 3	Notes on actions we often perform.
Page 4	Notepad, Calculator, Clock calendar, WordPad, Paint.
Page 6	Alternatives to Microsoft.
Page 7	Sorting displayed Data, email Spam, Send To, Key Shortcuts.
Page 8	Information required about computer Club members.
Page 9	Free Office software, Photo editing, Password for file transferring.
Page 10	Excel and graphs.
Page 11	Printing Web Pages, Flash Drives, The Clipboard.
Page 12	Optical Recording, The Bios,
Page 13	Desktop Shortcuts, M/S Explorer-Favorites.
Page 14	Working with M/S Word.
Page 15	Organizing your Data.
Page 16	Organizing your Data continued.

## Junk

We all know what junk is, most of it comes through our letterbox at home, it comes as packaging on just about everything we buy and it arrives as e-mails onto our systems. Do you ever get rid of the junk on your machine? For example, when you used to pick up your photographs from the chemist, the first thing you did was to skim through them and throw away the junk. Do you do that with the photos you download from your digital camera? If not, why not!

Did you know that your Windows accessories (from the Start menu) includes a "System Tools" option which includes a 'Disk Clean-up' tool. This includes options to empty your recycle bin and to compress files which you haven't used for a long time, it also gives you the option to delete old restore points. Unless you are short of disk space, I would only suggest you empty your recycle bin, and then only if you are sure you won't go looking for something in there.

If you write and print lots of letters, how long do you keep the old copies? It's worth looking through sometimes and deleting the stuff you know you will never need any more. Also, if you follow some of my suggestions below for keeping backups of data from some of your applications, periodically look at that and delete anything which is too old to be useful.

## Backup

When did you last take a backup of the files you don't want to lose? You should periodically take a backup to CD/DVD or another hard disk, a copy of your whole "My Documents" folder. If you use an email client like Outlook Express or Thunderbird, think about whether you need to backup your address book. You can normally do that with an 'export' option from within the 'address book' itself, back it up to a separate folder within 'My Documents', I have a Thunderbird folder and within that a separate folder for each time I remembered to take backups, the sub folder name is the date in YYYY-MM-DD format.

If you actually want to keep backups of your messages, that can be more difficult! Possibly the best way is to right click on individual messages you don't want lose and use the 'Save As...' option to save them into a sub folder in your 'My Documents' folder. Do you use bookmarks in your internet browser (Microsoft calls them Favourites)? If so you should consider whether you want to take a backup of those periodically, you should find an 'export' option which will do that for you, again you should save them into sub folders in your 'My Documents'.

The same rule applies to most of the software you may prefer not to lose information from. If you use Microsoft Messenger or Skype or Yahoo Messenger, your 'buddies' are saved by the system on their server, but they should all have an 'export' option to allow you to save the details yourself. This can come in useful if someone asks for details of one of your 'buddies' to be able to add to their own list.

Finally, take a backup of your whole 'My Documents' folder, or (if it's too big) selectively take backups of sub folders until you've done all that you want to keep. I have a separate hard disk in my machine at home (not just a separate partition on the same disk!) and I periodically copy my whole 'My Documents' folder to that, then I rename the copy to include that date when I copied it.

It's better to do this onto a separate medium like a CD or a DVD, because then something that trashes all of your hard disks won't affect your backups. Keep your backups in a separate room, or if you really want to be extra cautious you should ask someone else to keep them for you.

## Backups are good for Identity Theft too!

If you get rid of an old computer, don't rely on the person you give or sell it to, to get rid of your precious data!

There are many ways an 'expert' can get data back from your old hard disk. If you've just deleted the data, did you empty the 'recycle Bin' as well? When you delete files, Windows just puts a space into the first character of the file name but the whole file content is still there on the disk until Windows reuses the space for something else. There are plenty of tools around to recover that data for you, or for an identity thief.

Either make sure you format the whole disk several times, (a full format, not a quick one), or take it out of the machine, open it up and physically smash the disk surfaces! That may sound a bit 'over the top' but it's what the consumer's association recommend.

Remember to do the same thing with your backups as well. If you've carefully labelled a CD as (say) 'Nov 2008 Backup' and you throw it in the bin, anyone who decides to go through your bin has access to everything you had put onto that disk. If identity thieves will try to put credit card bills back together after

## Poole Heart Support Group – January 2009

they've been through a shredder, how do you think they like to get hold of a full backup of your personal data? The answer, break your old backup CD's in half or put them through an appropriate shredder.

PLEASE be careful if you do decide to put a hammer through a disk or smash up your old CD's, preferably wear some goggles or wrap the whole thing in an old towel before you start smashing away. I won't be held responsible for accidents!

### Archiving

You may think we've been through enough of this, but stick with me. If you are producing a piece of work that you know may take a long time. Perhaps a lengthy letter, a complicated spreadsheet, a masterpiece with 'Paint' or touching up an old photograph to get rid of the people you don't want and remove the signs of mishandling. It's relatively easy to make a change (say you delete a rather complicated paragraph) and then after another twenty minutes work, decide you want it back!

Some software takes periodic checkpoints for you, but they are all written in the same place so that's not much good. You may have remembered to save your document, but if you save it periodically then your later changes and 'save' will have got rid of the paragraph you've decided you want to recover.

If I'm doing work like this, I tend to use a numbering scheme. Instead of calling a letter "Duncan.doc" I will call it "Duncan01.doc" and use [File][Save As...] periodically to update the numeric part of the name. Once the letter is finished and I've printed off a copy and checked it, or attached it to an e-mail, I will go back and delete the earlier numbers so I just keep the final copy.

If I'm working on something more complicated, say a spreadsheet to monitor the bank account, and I'm going to be sorting the data or running macros on it, I use the same technique. But rather than delete the old versions which I may want to go back to, I create an 'archive' sub folder within the same folder and move all the old versions into there. This keeps the whole thing tidy and once I've finished working on the spreadsheet I can go through and delete the whole 'archive' folder to do my clean-up.

This month I have made notes on several actions we often do.

- 1)  
The size of scanned pictures if you use the software that came with the hardware, can be very large, perhaps some 30mbs. However if you use Photo Editing Software such as MS Photo editing, Serif or Adolphe Essentials and scan via 'acquire' in File, then the size is drastically reduced.
- 2)  
Just in case you are not sure of the 3 little boxes that are in the top right hand corner of your screen. The boxes should be left clicked to produce a change.  
The boxed X closes the window.  
The middle box when displaying one square will cause an increase to full page.  
The middle box when containing two squares will cause a decrease in size.  
The box containing a \_ will cause the window to collapse to the bottom of the window. This can then be clicked to re-activate. Type your letter here. For more details on modifying this letter
- 3)  
When you are working on a menu that needs you to confirm an action such as the 'Save as', then you will notice that the 'Save' button has a darker line around it. The computer has already selected this for you and needs you to click it with you mouse or a much quicker option is to press 'Enter'.  
You will find that this action can be applied to many instances where you are filling in details and then need to click a button to continue or confirm. Try just hitting the 'Enter' key instead.
- 4)  
I don't know about you but I regularly use the reply button on emails sent to me, it saves me the hassle of filling out the send to etc. and it does give the receiver his email for info.  
You do have the choice of including the original email or not and to alter your choice in Outlook Express go to Tools Menu-Options-Send and tick off 'include message'. In Outlook go to Tools menu-Options-preferences-Email options.  
If you use the option of including your signature at the end of your email, changes to this can be made by going to Outlook Express, Tools-Options-Signature and in Outlook go to Tools-Options-Mail Format.
- 5)  
I often visit a particular web site like the BBC weather page for Poole, and it is useful to be able to go straight to it. Visit the page and then right click and select 'Create Short Cut on Desk Top' then you have a choice of using your new icon.
- 6)  
Do you ever use the 'History list' which lists all the web sites and the pages in those sites which you have visited recently. The actual number of days/weeks of your history is set in - Tools- internet options-general tab and you can also turn history on or off there.
- 7)  
When you surf the Internet sometimes the print is small and hard to read, so go to the View menu-Text Size and experiment with Larger and Largest.
- 8)  
For those using Outlook or Outlook Express you should be aware of your actions when composing an email. When you have finished writing your message you hit send and the email goes to your outbox. If you only partially write your email, then you should hit save when it goes to your Drafts folder. The problem can occur when you have finished, but do not send it to your outbox and close down Outlook without saving it. You have now lost your email and cannot retrieve it.

I would like to thank Judy of Radio Solent whose Fact Sheets prompted these notes.

Happy computing Max.

## Poolle Heart Support Group - August 2008

### Summary of July meeting

At the July meeting we talked about some of the standard software items which are provided as accessories with Windows. All of these are available from the [Start] menu in the bottom left corner of your desktop, they are normally in the [Accessories] folder, but if not there, you should be able to find them in other folders from the start menu, or they may just be listed on their own.

### Notepad

This accessory is a very basic text editor. You can use it to look at the contents of lots of the text files on your computer but you can also use it to create simple files for your own use. It has none of the facilities of a word processor but it is very quick to open, write a few lines, save and close. I use notepad to scribble notes about anything I want to remember and just save them onto the desktop with names that remind me of what they are for. Notepad files are always saved with a .txt suffix so if your files display with their suffixes, make sure you leave these as .txt if you decide to rename a file.

If a text file has no end of line markers then Notepad will just spread the text across an endless line, you can then use the window controls to see your text, or click on [Format][Word Wrap] and it wraps the text so you can read all of it in your current window. There are a few useful facilities in Notepad, it has search and replace facilities and you can cut, copy and paste. If you click on [Edit][Time/Date] or press [F5] when you open a notepad file, you get a time and date stamp, very useful if you want to keep a simple log file of events. Notepad will not number text lines for you, but if you wanted to go to (say) line 555 of a long text file, the [Edit][Goto] option will go to that line for you.

You can print Notepad files, use [File][Page Setup] to make sure you will get the header and footer you want and use [Format][Font] to get the level of readability you need. It tends to remember the last header/footer it used so it's always worth checking before you print something. Notepad should certainly be a tool that everyone is familiar with. I use it at least three or four times a week, spend some time using it and see how useful it can be. One nice thing about Notepad is that it only produces very small files, one byte per character, so you don't end up with huge files of garbage such as you get with Word. Even if you only use it to print big letters for the title pages/spines of your file folders, you will begin to find it a useful little tool.

### Calculator

This does "exactly what it say on the tin". By default it is a simple calculator with memory functions, it is happy for you to use the numeric keys above the alphabet on your keyboard or use the mouse to click the calculator's own keys. You can use the numeric pad itself (if you have one) but you will need to set [Num Lock] on to do so. You can use [Edit][Copy] to take a result from a calculation and paste it into another document, or you can copy a numeric value from a document and use [Edit][Paste] to put it into the calculator to use in further calculations. If you find it hard to read long numbers, there is an option [View][digit Grouping] which inserts the familiar commas between groups of three digits; this helps you work out whether your income is in the thousands, millions or billions. Anyone getting more than that can let us know how they manage! If you want to do complex scientific calculations, change the calculator [View][Scientific] and it will probably do most of what you need. It will even accept data in different number bases (binary, octal and hexadecimal) and convert between them at the click of a button.

### Clock/Calendar

We didn't mention this, but as you know the clock is normally in the right hand bottom corner of your desktop. Have you noticed that, if you hover the mouse over the clock, it tells you today's date? Did you know that if you double-click on the time, it shows you a calendar with the current month and day highlighted? You can use the calendar to look at other months/years, but make sure you always click [Cancel] when you have finished, or you may find you have inadvertently changed the date on your machine!

### WordPad

On very old systems, wordpad was called Write and had a pen as an icon. You will find one or the other in your accessory list. Both of them are very basic word processors and you can use them for most (if not all) of your letter and document writing. I've not got Write on my system so can't check its facilities, but Wordpad will do text alignment to left, right or centre, it will put bullets against your text.

## Pooler Heart Support Group - August 2008

You can use different text styles and colours at will. You can set tab points by clicking on the ruler, (remove them by dragging them back off) then tab within your document to get columns of information aligned.

You can insert a date/time stamp to several different formats and you can even insert files produced by other programs as 'objects', though I'm never sure how much use this is. I believe that most people could use WordPad instead of Word or any other expensive word processor for most (if not all) of their typing needs. WordPad produces quite small files, has a [Print Preview] but will not produce headers and footers for you. It is an ideal word processor to use for things you want to mail to other people. I would recommend you use the 'Rich Text Format' (.rtf) suffix when saving files, it should produce files which everyone you e-mail can read, unlike Word and some of the other word processing programs which people use. Get to know WordPad and you will be surprised how much you can do with it.

### Paint

I was surprised how few people had ever used the Paint accessory. Open it up and you have a blank canvas with a bunch of tools to allow you to express your artistic talents, draw simple diagrams, put labels onto pictures, etc, etc. There are far too many tools for me to talk through all of them but you really should spend some time to become familiar with this accessory, it can do many things for you and I've even found it can be very useful for keeping kids occupied if you don't mind giving them access to your computer. You can print your pictures and there are various options for saving them, the default is as a bitmap (.bmp suffix) but you can save them as in several other formats if you want to use a picture with some other piece of software that has limited options.

I'm not very artistic so I've not used Paint much but it comes in useful sometimes. One of my favourite uses is to paste an image from elsewhere into Paint and then chop off the stuff I don't want. You can sometimes do that with web pages but I also use it for capturing pop-up windows showing errors. Do you know that if you hit the [Print Screen] button on your keyboard, a current image of your display is captured to the 'clipboard'. If you then open Paint and [paste] into it, you have a complete picture of your screen, you can't click any of the buttons in the image because it is just a picture, but it's ideal to save if you want to be able to show someone exactly what happened. Similarly, if you have a smaller window open which you would like to capture, use [Alt-PrintScreen] and you have captured that window's image into the clipboard, you can then [Paste] that into Paint and save it as a file to be sent on to your helpmate or support person to help in resolving a particular problem.

I think everyone should spend at least a couple of hours playing with Paint and make sure they try out all of the options from the menu, the tools and the various palette options. You will be surprised how many useful things you can do with a very simple tool, which is always available at no cost.

### Other Standard Accessories

There are a number of other items available which we haven't touched on yet. Since I won't be here for the September meeting, perhaps they will provide a set of options for people to play with and discuss at those meetings.

The 'Character Map' is useful if you want to use an unusual character in one of your documents, perhaps an inverted question mark or exclamation mark such as the Spanish use to start relevant sentences. ¿Or do you want to be able to spell café correctly? You may find that you end up with your special characters in the wrong font, but if you just re-select the text and set the font back to what you want, that will normally tidy things up.

The 'Volume Control' can be used to increase or decrease the sound level your computer produces. You can also opt to include your microphone (if you have one) in your sound controls, this can be quite useful if you use one and find that you get feedback 'squeals' from your loudspeaker.

There is a 'Sound Recorder' accessory which I've never used before. Only useful if you have a microphone or other method for getting sounds into your machine, but it recorded my 'clapping song' without any problem and you could use it to record a 'Happy Birthday' message to attach to one of your e-mails. That would give the kids a nasty shock!

## **Poole Heart Support Group – Computer Club – July 2008**

### **Alternatives to Microsoft**

Many people with Microsoft Office have problems reading files written with Microsoft Works, and vice versa. Although it would seem reasonable to expect Microsoft to want to make it easy for people to transfer data between their systems, they seem to take pleasure in making it as difficult as possible.

I've given up using either Works or Office and have now installed "Open Office". Open Office is available as a free download from the [www.openoffice.org](http://www.openoffice.org) website. The software was developed by the open source community and is provided with some participation from Sun Microsystems.

I also use FireFox as a browser, in place of Microsoft's "Internet Explorer" and I use Thunderbird as my e-mail client, rather than using Microsoft's "Outlook Express". Both FireFox and Thunderbird are available from the [www.mozilla.com](http://www.mozilla.com) website. Finally, I use Skype ([www.skype.com](http://www.skype.com)) in place of Microsoft's "Messenger".

### **Installation**

To install Open Office, just double click on the icon for the file you downloaded. When it asks which files it should process (word documents, excel spreadsheets, etc) you should accept this, unless you want to continue using Microsoft's software.

It will ask if it should convert existing Microsoft documents. I would recommend against this, since it took a long time on my machine. You don't really need to convert something unless you want to, and many old files you may never bother to look at again.

### **Microsoft format or Open Office?**

Whenever you come to save a file, Open Office is likely to recommend that you save it in their document format. I normally accept this. If you want to be able to send the file to someone who has Microsoft Office, then ask Open Office to save the file as a Word, Excel, etc file as it was originally. If you can persuade your contacts to use Open Office instead of Microsoft's Office, then they could use the open document formats used by Open Office instead.

### **Updates**

If you use Open Office regularly when you are on-line, it will periodically tell you there is a new version available. I find it best to download and install these as and when they are offered. If you are happy to use Open Office, you will probably never have to pay for an office suite again (even if you didn't the first time).

### **Differences**

Of course there are some differences from Microsoft Office to Open Office, but I found I quickly got into using the facilities I needed, other things don't seem difficult to find if I search for them. If you are using one of the Microsoft suites as a business, obviously you would need to spend some time evaluating Open Office before considering a switch to it, but you would probably decide it was worth it in the end.

### **Circular e-mail's**

I'm referring to mails sent to a bunch of people with a request to send them on to everyone you know. Some of these are OK and some can even be interesting or humorous. BUT if everyone who sends them or forwards them, always puts the addresses into the 'TO:' address field, then the spammers who eventually get the mail have lots of really good, live, e-mails addresses to add to their spam lists. Please always use the 'BCC:' option to forward junk mails, ask me if you don't know how..

## **Poole Heart Support Group – Computer Club – May 2008**

### **Computer Notes May 2008**

#### **Sorting Displayed Data in Columns**

Many items of software incorporate a facility to SORT the data in the displayed columns by a simple mouse click on the column heading. The simplest way to see this is to start up the 'explorer' on your computer, click on 'My Documents' or 'My Computer' and go into 'My Documents' from there.

If you don't have anything displayed, go up or down the directory structure until you find you have a few items shown. Now click the 'View' menu item and select 'Details'. Now click on the 'Date Modified' column heading and see that the display is sorted into ascending date order, if you click again on the same column, they are sorted in descending date order. The order is shown by the small triangle displayed in the column header. You can sort the data by clicking on any of the columns in this display.

Sorting applies to other items of software which display lists. Not everything includes the sort option, but if data isn't presented in the order you would like it's always worth a click in the column heading to see if that 'sorts' it out! This doesn't work for spreadsheets of course, a column click there selects the whole column.

#### **Controlling e-mail Spam at the ISP**

I use my e-mail address on a number of web sites, so inevitably, I get a lot of SPAM (unwanted e-mails). Most of this is removed by my ISP and put into a 'Bulk' folder and deleted after a month. Sometimes things get treated as spam which I actually wanted to receive, so I log in to my ISP and review the contents of my bulk folder. I found that this provides the option to sort by clicking on a column heading and that is really useful. I click on the 'Subject' column header and this orders the mails by subject. That makes it much easier to decide which is SPAM because so many of the mails have identical or similar subject lines.

#### **Send To**

If you right click a file or folder in explorer, you get a pop-up menu. One of the options in this is 'Send To', if you select that you will get a list of places you can send the file or folder to. Click on a place and the file or folder is copied (not moved) to the place you requested. If you have a floppy disk in a drive, this is a quick way to get a specific item transferred. If you use external drives like USB key drives, Windows will add the drive number to the 'Send To' list when you insert the drive and remove it when you disconnect.

#### **Standard Key and Mouse Clicks**

These work with many items of software and are well worth remembering. Click and drag the mouse to select files or an area of text then...

CTRL-INSERT	COPY	alternately CTRL-C
SHIFT-DELETE	CUT	alternately CTRL-X
SHIFT-INSERT	PASTE	alternately CTRL-V

To select more files or text, hold either SHIFT key and click at the end (or beginning) of the block or area.

To add an individual file to the selection, or remove one, hold either CTRL key and click the file.

HOME and END get you to the beginning or end of a line, with the SHIFT key pressed, they will select to the beginning or end of the line. With the CTRL key pressed, they will normally go to the beginning or end of the document (or paragraph or page) if you press the SHIFT key as well, then the area to beginning or end of the document will be selected.

## **Poole Heart Support Group – Computer Club – May 2008**

### **About Ourselves**

It would be interesting to have a bit of information about each of the members.

You may all have done this before but it would be appreciated if we could go over it now.

So I know who came to the meeting and can try to remember names, please write some answers onto the form and let me have them back at the end of the meeting.

You can perhaps use the headings to help you decide what to tell us about yourself at the meeting.

### **Questions**

**Your Name?**

**Do you have your own machine?**

**What Operating System/Version do you use?**

**Do you use Dial-up, Broadband or neither?**

**Do you have separate logins on your machine?**

**Name three items of software you use frequently?**

**What software are you most experienced at?**

**How competent are you at using software HELP?**

**Who do you go to for help?**

**Who comes to you for help?**

**What would you like us to do at the meetings?**

# Poole HSG Computer Club February 2007

## Free Office Software

For those who do not have Microsoft Office there is a website offering software called 'Openoffice', you can use this software to open and create Word and Excel documents. Most important it is free and can be downloaded from their website [www.openoffice.org](http://www.openoffice.org), notice there is no uk after the org, if you do put uk you will end up in a site offering openoffice software for \$47.

## Photo Editing

You may remember we have discussed photo-editing software in the past and we used 'Adobe Photoshop Elements 2'. The latest version is 5 and came out top in a recent Which review, as did the previous versions.

## Password for Files

With your increased use of your computer, it is likely that you will have some sensitive information contained in a file. To prevent others from opening these files, especially if it is a laptop, it is best to create a password.

Let us now open a file and create a password. Find the file 'PHSG Feb 2007' in My Docs-PHSG folder, and open it in Word.

Select Tools – Options from the dropdown menu – select 'Security' and type in your password in the 'Password to Open space', click OK and then retype your password and click OK. You will now be unable to open the file until you have typed in your password when requested. **If you have created a password, open the file, go into 'Security' again and remove the password.**

For those with Office 2000; open the file and under File select 'Save As', select Tools in Save As select 'General Options'. You will now have the option to type in passwords to open and modify. Do not forget to erase the password.

## Transferring Files

There are occasions when you wish to transfer a file from one folder to another, or perhaps you want to transfer a photo into a flash drive. Let us have a look at the basic principles to perform these tasks.

Open 'My Computer' and right click on the 'C drive', left click 'Explore' from the drop down menu and you will have an index of your drive on the left of your screen, plus other drives such as the Optical Drive and if you have it plugged in, your Flash drive. On the right hand side of the screen you will have the content of your selected item from the left. To start you will have the content of your 'C' Drive, which you chose to open Explore.

Now left click on 'My Documents' from the left screen, as we are going to transfer a file from the PHSG folder to the Personal folder. The contents of My Docs are now displayed on the right screen and as we need to display the PHSG folder, left click on PHSG folder in the left window or double click PHSG in the right window to open it. Now select a file by a left click, then with the cursor on the selected file hold down the left click and drag the file over to the left hand window. Do not let go until the cursor is over the Personal folder and it is highlighted. When you release the left click the file will transfer over, if it is very large, a window appears showing the progress of the transfer.

Open up the personal folder and check that it has been transferred, **please transfer it back.**

The same procedure can be used to transfer photos from your Pictures folder to a Flash drive, so that you can view or transfer them on another computer.

Happy computing Max.

## PHSG Computer Club Jan 2007

No doubt many of you know that Microsoft is about to launch XP's successor called VISTA. From reading I gather to get the best from this new system you will need a processor speed in excess of 1 Gb, a RAM memory of 1Gb and a reasonably good graphics card. At the present moment it looks as if some internet protection software will not be made compatible with Vista in time. You can visit Microsoft's web site and get an automatic check on your computer to see if it suitable, I ran the check and received an OK. providing I uninstall my Norton internet software. This will not effect me as I do not intend to purchase this year, I will let some of the bugs get sorted, software compatible and drivers freely available before I buy!

Every month I produce an exercise for you on a particular subject, but my intention is not only the subject, but in using the computer to complete the exercise. It is important to ask, if you do not understand a particular action, even though it is not directly related to the exercise.

A few months ago I talked about tables and graphs, but did not go into them in detail, so tonight we will create a graph with a set of historical weight measurements. You can of course take any series of measurements or changing item, like your stocks and shares, if you have any.

Open the Excel file 'Weight records for PHSG' and select all the weights-click Chart Wizard from the tool bar-select Line chart-select the first sub chart-click Next.

Notice that the data range is up to B21, but to make the graph draw automatically with the next figures you must select the blank cells where you will insert these results. So select the arrow at the right hand end and reselect the results from B5 to B30-click the arrow again and select Series. The computer has given your graph the name Series 1, type in your chosen name say 'Roberts Weights' which will become the title of your graphs. If you were using more that one set of figures, then you can change your title next to a more general title like 'Weight records'. Click Next and here you can see where to retype your title. The X axis is always the horizontal one and Y the vertical one, so type in their descriptions, the X axis is 'Months from July 2004' and the Y axis is 'Weight in Kgms'

Select Gridlines and tick 'Minor Gridlines' to see the effect, un tick and select Legend when you have the choice of the position of your legends. For multiple graphs, each graph you will have a legend and the computer will choose a different colour for each one, although you can select different types of lines as well. Select Next and choose 'as object in', this will put the graph in your work page, click Finish.

Now right click in a vacant spot in your graph, select Format Chart Area, select No Border, select No Area Colour. You can now see how to format the chart area. Right click again and you can choose to change the type of graph, the data range, the series name and the chart options

One thing to change especially if you have several graphs in the chart area is the density or weight of the chart line. Move the cursor over the graph line until you see the graph details, right click and select 'Format data series'. Under 'Patterns' you can change the weight of the line to make it more distinct. Move the cursor again this time over the Y axis and right click choosing 'Format Axis'. You can now change amongst other things the minimum value of the Y axis, uncheck the Auto and choose 50. Click ok and see the graph in more detail as it now starts from 50.

You can of course change the X axis too by selecting the X axis in the same way.

A prosperous and healthy New Year to you all.

Happy computing Max.

## COMPUTER CLUB JULY 2005

I am sure that sometime you have printed a web page and lost the right hand side of the page. Before you print, have a close look at the web page for 'Printable View' which you can click to obtain a revised layout of your page which is printer friendly. This can be at the top and sometimes at the bottom of the page and sometimes not there at all, in which case change to landscape printing. This will produce a wide page, but will use more sheets of paper as the height is now reduced. To change, select file-Print-Properties and select landscape, This will remain your chosen property until you either re-select to portrait or restart your computer, when the default will be portrait.

If you are not sure whether to do any changes, select file-print preview and see what details you are going to print.

The demise of the Floppy Disk is certainly on its way with the USB Flash Drive, these are becoming cheaper and their storage capacity is now from 32Mb to 2Gb. Some of the new computers do not have a floppy drive installed. I have brought with me tonight two Flash drives so that you can plug one in and experiment.

Windows Explorer recognizes them as a removable hard drive ready for you to drag and drop files in to it, you can access them as you would any hard drive.

So put one into your computer and find it in Windows Explorer (I have already connected the Flash Drive to the computer and XP & ME installed the necessary drivers automatically). Open Word and find a file to transfer to the flash drive, note the name and position. Now close down Word and find the chosen file via explorer and drag and drop the file into the flash drive. I have not given you details on how to do this as I want you to try and do it yourself, however call me if you get into trouble.

Some older flash drives were for USB 1, but today all drives are USB 2 with their superior transfer speed in excess of 400Mb/sec, some 40 times the speed of USB 1.

The Microsoft USB Flash Drive Manager can help you manage your drive & is available on free download, do make sure you have the Microsoft.NET Framework 1.1 files installed on your computer first.

It is advisable to double click on the 'safely remove hardware' icon on the lower task bar before removing the drive.

I am not sure wether I have talked about the CLIPBOARD before, but it is a very useful tool. When you cut something from your work page it is placed in the clipboard, from here you can insert it into any other file at any time before you close down the program. Open up Word and any file and select something and cut, now in XP select Edit-clipboard (or View-Toolbars-clipboard in ME) and the contents of the clipboard is shown. Move to another section of the page and select a position where you wish to paste the cut item, insert the cursor. Move the cursor over the item in the clipboard, then over the arrow, click and select the Paste option., Your cut item should now be inserted in the chosen place.

You can cut several items and they will be listed in the clipboard, up to 24 in XP & 12 in ME. Note that you have the option of deleting any items in the clipboard that you do not want to keep and when closing the program you may be asked wether you wish to keep the items remaining. You can also select Options and have further choices.

## PHSG COMPUTER CLUB JUNE 2005

You will be pleased to hear that we now have five computers available for our club meetings.

To manipulate photos and videos remember that photo story 2 and Movie Maker 2 are both free downloads from Microsoft - [www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com). Microsoft's Digital Editing Suite is available from internet suppliers for around 47 pounds. There are free software programs available and are usually older programmes which have been upgraded, but are still very useable.

### **Optical Recording**

I have been asked about DVD disks recently, so I thought I would write some info.

Optical drives come in several different types:-

CD play

CD play and record

CD play & record + DVD play

CD & DVD play and record

CD & DVD play and record + DVD double layer play & record.

CD's have a data capacity of 700 or 800Mb, DVD 4.7Gb and DVD/DL 8.5Gb

In the near future drives called Blue Ray and HD with storage capacities of 25 & 45Gb, these disks will allow recording of High Definition TV/Videos

You will notice in the specs of the drives and the disks a times (x) symbol which indicates the speed of recording. **The spec of the disks should match the drive** and this is where you will notice the + & - in the spec of the DVD's. Manufacturers could not agree on a universal format so two formats appeared the + and the -.

Record once only disks are DVD-R and DVD+R, record and erase many times are DVD-RW and DVD+RW.

Fortunately Drives are available which will record and play both the - and the + disks.

Writing speeds increase gradually with time and CD's are now up to x52, DVD's are up to x16 and will no doubt go on increasing. You will find that the RW disks have halve the writing speed of the R disks.

Sometimes the recording speed of a drive can be increased by downloading and installing an updated Firmware for your particular model, do read the installation instructions.

### **The BIOS**

Tonight we are going to have a look at the computer BIOS (Basic Input Output System), you may not have looked at this before. It is a program that works directly from your mother board and it is loaded by the manufacturer of the board. The BIOS plays a crucial role in the start up procedure, checking the Ram, Keyboard, mouse, hard drive, Monitor and other hardware. Once the BIOS verifies the hardware, there is a quick hand over to Windows or equivalent to load your operating system. Also in the BIOS you can select the drive you boot from, arrange the password, adjust the power saving settings, configure a new hard drive, and load default BIOS settings. On recent motherboards you can adjust the speed of your processor including overclocking, and adjust the cooling fans.

When your computer starts and the BIOS is working you will see somewhere on the monitor 'press Delete for set up' or sometimes it is an F number like F2. Press this firmly immediately, if you are too late the system will go on loading and you will have to wait until that has finished before restarting.

Once the set up page is displayed, you will see the headings at the top similar to:-

Main Advanced Security Power Boot Info Exit.

Move from one heading to the next by pressing the arrow keys and enter key. To move down the listed items use the arrow keys again and to alter any values within an item use the + & - keys. To move back into the set up display press the Esc key. You will usually find these actions listed along the bottom of the screen.

Have a look at the options open to you and **ONE IMPORTANT ACTION WHEN YOU EXIT THE BIOS, SELECT EXIT, CHOOSE 'EXIT DISCARDING CHANGES' OR SIMILAR PHRASE AND PRESS ENTER, JUST IN CASE YOU ALTERED ANY SETING!**

Happy computing

Max.

PHSG Computer Club May 2005

### **Microsoft Explorer-Favorites.**

This is such a useful tool especially if you explore the net and use a web site often. Favorites is a folder in which you can store the URL of a site or a page of a site and you have a further choice of making the page available when you are off line.

Assume you are looking at a page of a web site which you would like to return to at a later time. Click Favorites on your tool bar and a drop down menu appears on the left hand side of your screen. Click 'Add' and a menu appears which gives the name of the page which you can change or remove it, then type in words to make it more recognizable by you. It will not affect the computers ability to find the page for you.

The other choice is the available off line, if you tick this box you then can either click OK and your page will be made available offline or you can click 'synchronize or Customize' and work through the Wizard with its choices, which includes including other pages attached to your original page.

Your selection should be visible in the list of Favorites and the available offline should be in bold. Check out your work including coming off line and see your offline selection.

The list of favorites can get very long and need weeding out sometimes, or create a folder into which you can put certain favorites. Just right click in the favorites and select 'create new folder' and type in the name. You can then drag your favorites into the folder.

### **Desktop Shortcuts**

Having shortcuts on your desktop for programs you often use is convenient. To create one select Start-programs- and right click on the selected program. Choose create shortcut and it will appear in the list of programs, drag this shortcut into the desktop. You may modify the name by clicking once on the name and putting the cursor in the name area or right click in the icon and select rename.

### **Backup**

We will discuss this important action during the meeting and find the different methods that each of you use.

I am sorry that I was unable to make it last Tuesday, I am pleased to say that my back is much better now, but still very painful.

Happy computing

Max.

## Poole Heart Support Group - December 2008

### October Spreadsheet Exercise

In October, I gave people the opportunity to run through a spreadsheet exercise, based on my travel details of distances and mileages. Did anyone complete the exercise? Would anyone like to share their results? Did anyone write down answers for the two final 'exercise' questions:-

- 1). Why was the last formula entered so different?
- 2). Put in a totals row, make it **bold**, use formulae like “=sum(D2:D11)” to get the values.

### Word Document Exercise

Start Microsoft Word for a new document. Create a centred 'header' saying “December PHSG Exercise” and create a 'footer' with the current (automatic) date in the centre and the current (automatic) page number on the right hand side. Ask for help for any parts you don't know how to do.

Write a couple of lines to explain this is an exercise and then enter the meeting dates above in a tabular fashion with headings of **Month** [tab] **Date**. Because the actual dates will be different sizes, make the tab into a right tab so they line up properly.

Now add another item alongside Month and Date, put in a [tab] first and then **Estimate**. Now enter a fictional estimate of the money coming into PHSG each month next year. Make the estimates in pounds and pence with a dot between, but don't put a pound sign at the front. Make the amounts vary from 0.00 to 9,999.99.

See that the money column looks fairly scruffy and change the tab for that column to a decimal tab, see if that lines things up better! Now put in a final line starting **Total** with enough [tabs] to get across to the money column and use the word 'sum' facility to put a total of the amounts at the foot of the column. Does that line up properly? Do you need to make the last tab into a 'decimal' tab?

### Further Work with Word

Although put together a tabular list like that is straightforward, sometimes it's better to create a proper table to do the same sort of thing. Move the cursor to the bottom of your current list and put in a couple of New Lines [return] to leave a gap.

Now use the [insert] [table] option and create a table with 14 rows and three columns. Try to put the same top and bottom lines into the table and get the data as above in between. You should be able to adjust the appearance of data in the columns by selecting the whole column and setting the format.

It's a matter of personal preference which method you use to contain tabular information, but generally I think an actual table can be easier, especially if you find you have to change bits of data. Just typing the lines with [tab] in between is generally quicker but can be more fiddly to get right, especially if the length of information in the fields varies a lot.

### **Organising Your Data**

Eddy asked if I could go over some suggestions which would help him organise his photographs and I thought it was worthwhile going into the subject generally. We each have a 'My Documents' area on our computer and most modern programs will opt to save things in 'My Documents' when you use the menu 'Save' or 'Save As...' option. If a program doesn't offer to save within 'My Documents' you should always navigate your way to 'My Documents' before saving things, that way you can always look in 'My Documents' when you want them.

Please note that 'My Documents' is really a very poor name for Microsoft to have chosen. It implies that it should only contain written documents but it is actually the space for anything you want to store. It would have been better had they called it 'My Files' or 'My Data' or even 'My Everything'. You can just let everything go into 'My Documents' and have all of it in a big pile or you can organise 'My Documents' to make it easier to find things. You don't keep all of your 'stuff' in the garage in one heap (or maybe you do!) so why would you do that with your computer files.

Think about how you want to organise your information. I start off by breaking things down by data type. So I put my 'Documents' (written letters, etc) into one place, my 'Spreadsheets' (bank statements, utility bills, etc) into another. You will already see a 'My Pictures' folder and a 'My Music' folder within 'My Documents' and that really is the key to organising everything. Open up 'My Documents' so that you are in Windows Explorer, you will see that there are one or more yellow icons that are supposed to look like file folders from a filing cabinet.

### **What is in 'My Folders' already?**

If you hover the mouse cursor over each of those in turn it will give you an idea of whether the folder is empty or contains other files, etc. If you have a folder called 'New Folder', you created that at some time and never changed it's name. Look to see if there is anything in there and when you come back out of the folder, right click on it, choose 'rename' and type in a name which represents what you want to keep in there.

You can create more empty folders by clicking on the menu item [File] and going down the list to select [New] and then clicking on the [Folder] option. This will give you a fresh folder icon called 'New Folder' and you will see that the name is already selected (coloured blue) so if you type a name for the folder and press 'Enter' then your new folder will have the name you chose. You should do this to create any folder you want to enable you to organise your files.

Now, you have the folders but a lot of your files are still lying about in your 'My Documents'. Go back to your 'My Documents' folder and drag (click and hold then move the mouse) each file (document, etc) into the folder where you want it to be. If you drag a file in this way onto the folder where you want it, you will see the folder icon goes blue, if you then release your finger from the mouse button, the file will be put into the folder. You should continue to do this with all of the files (documents, etc) until your 'My Documents' folder looks well organized.

### **What about the odd files which are left?**

If you only have a few 'loose' files in 'My Documents' which you haven't been able to categorise, it's fine to leave them where they are. If you end up with several more then new categories may present themselves to you and you can make a new folder which you move the relevant files into.

### **Further Organising**

Of course you don't have to stop there. If there is a particular club or organisation you belong to, you may find it easier to keep all of their files in the same folder. I have a folder called PHSG and all of the Poole Heart Support Group files are in there. Within my PHSG folder I've built a few other folders to keep my PHSG stuff tidy. I have one for the computer club called 'Computer Club', and because I look after the membership database, I have another folder called 'Production' with all of the current membership files in there. I also have a folder called 'Development' which I use for anything I'm trying out, or scripts I'm developing to help make the membership easier to manage.

### **Lots of Pictures?**

Suppose like Eddy you have lots of pictures you want to organize. You will probably have put them into 'My Pictures' already, but if you've got several hundred it would be much better to set up further folders within 'My Pictures' so you can break down you photos into separate categories. In my own 'My Pictures' folder I have

## Poole Heart Support Group – February 2009

more than fifty folders with different categories of pictures. Animals, houses, flowers, landscapes, seascapes, humourous, family, school, etc, etc, etc. Within the 'Family' folder, I've got further folders for particular family groups, one for each wedding we've got a bunch of pictures for, a couple of baptisms, etc.

### What if I a picture belongs in two or more categories?

Suppose in your family groups you have some nice background pictures of specific gardens, or you want to pull pictures of everyone's pets into a separate folder? Create the folders you want. Then for each picture you want in other folders, use the RIGHT mouse button to drag the picture onto the folder where you want it, when you release the right mouse button you will get a small menu, select 'Create Shortcuts Here' and this will create an item called "Shortcut to Aunty Floes Garden" or whatever. You can rename this shortcut to whatever you want, right click on it and opt for 'Rename', then change the name to 'Aunty Floes Collie', or whatever.

### Look at options in your own software

Eddy said that he uses 'Picasa' to organize his photographs. I don't know anything about this software but I found there is a version which can be downloaded from Google. This will find all of the pictures on your computer and group them in the categories of the folders you have already organized them into. I assume that it will help if you decide to add additional categories by building those folders for you, but without downloading the software I don't know.

One thing I did notice in the current version is that you can define your own 'albums' in Picasa, this will then allow you to build albums of photos by grouping together selections of pictures from your existing categories (folders). It doesn't move the pictures into the albums, just keeps a list of the folder and picture names for each picture you put into each album. This would also allow you to group pictures (or anything else) into several different categories to help you find them.

### Lots of other files?

If you happen to have lots of documents rather than lots of pictures, you could use the same 'Shortcut' strategy above to organise those into multiple categories. The same also applies to any other sort of file where you want to be able to cross reference things. Suppose you have lots of music files. You will know that 'Windows Media Player' will organize them by album, favourites, and music type, but suppose you want to organize songs into subject types, year they were first recorded, where they got to in the 'Hit Parade', etc. You can use the same strategy with shortcuts for those.

### Organise your Internet Bookmarks and e-mails

Microsoft calls these 'Favorites' but everyone else calls them bookmarks. The methods are slightly different but you can use folders to better organize your internet bookmarks, helping you to find the links related to holidays, cars, health, family, etc. Similarly, you can create folders for your e-mails so that you can organize those and this will help you to find particular mails in the future when you need to. Folders are good, folders of folders can be even better.