

The Buzz Bulletin



June 2021
Edition 6 Vol. 6

Newsletter of the
North Hampshire Prostate
Cancer Support Group



Welcome to the Buzz Bulletin Chairman's Chat

I hope that you are all enjoying the warmer weather after a very damp April and early May. It was just my luck however that on the first weekend that we were allowed to say with friends in a hotel, a short break that I had booked months ago, it was very wet so we did not get out as much as we had hoped. Still it was good to meet up again after a long time apart.

A month ago we were all looking forward to the complete lifting of Covid restrictions on 21st June, now with the Indian Covid variant this looks less certain. We would still like to know however how you feel about returning to face-to-face group meetings.

We have only had replies from about 10% of the membership to our request for your views about resuming normal group meetings and that is from our previous membership list of about a hundred. Most of those suggested returning in August.

We know a lot has changed in the last 15 months or so. We hope you still value the support of the NHPCSG. Maybe you are just happy receiving this Buzz newsletter and occasional emails and are not interested in meetings or maybe you would just like to wait a few more months and see how the situation develops. Without knowing what you, our members, want is it very difficult to plan ahead. Please email or phone Allan our secretary with your views.

We are looking forward to getting back to face-to-face meetings and especially to seeing all of our members there once we are able to confirm the date for the lifting of the Covid restrictions.. We do hope that your membership has helped you cope better with prostate cancer.

Martin

May Group Meeting report – Cyber Security

Keith has also taken the opportunity for a break so I'm writing the report this month. Our May speaker was John Bragg, a Hampshire Cyber Security Champion, an organisation that is supported by Hampshire Police. His subject was how to keep safe on-line using computers, tablets and smartphone as well as how to recognise fake phone calls.

John had a good analogy – think of cyber security the same way as you treat your physical household security. i.e., it takes a bit of thought and good security does not come free. For example, many people happily pay for insurance approved door locks, window locks and exterior flood lights etc. but the cost of basic cyber security can prevent the loss of thousands of pounds, aggravation and stress similar to a physical house burglary.

John explained that most cyber crime was now for financial gain. The “hacker” is after your personal account details that are stored on your devices such as bank and credit card log-ins and passwords. A close 2nd is ransom-

DIARY DATES

Following Government Advice venues have been closed. Group Meetings are via Zoom.

Our next online meeting is on Thursday 24th June at 2.00pm

Speaker to be announced

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May Group Meeting Report (continued)

ware where all your photos, documents, emails etc are encrypted so you can't access them and to have to pay to get them back.

Most people know that Microsoft and Apple computer software needs to be updated to help keep you secure and that normally happens automatically, but it is worth checking. Did you know that smartphone and tablet software (Android or Apple's IOS) is equally at risk? Most smartphone manufacturers only provide 2-3 years of security updates, after that you need to buy a new phone. (Which? Magazine has an item on the same topic this month) You could buy a new smartphone today that first went on sale a year ago but it may then only receive security updates for only one more year. Ask when you buy!

Many companies now use your email address as part of a log-on so ensure that your email has a very strong password – at least 12 characters. Any ordinary word that is in a dictionary and used as a password can be broken very quickly. Don't think that substituting 1 or ! for letter i or a zero for letter o in a password is a good idea. The hacker knows all these tricks!

We are told to use a different password for every account but who can remember just one 12 character password! Many people now have well over 100 on-line accounts for their bank, building society, grocery shopping, Amazon, Facebook etc. I know one man who writes all his passwords down in a little black book that he also takes on holiday. Imagine what would happen if that was lost or stolen!

The answer is to use a password manager on your computer or smart device. Some are built into your web browser like Edge, others you have to pay for such as Bitwarden.

Even a long password on its own is not adequate for your most important accounts. Banks and other institutions such as Facebook and Google as well as password managers now offer Two Factor Authentication (2FA) as another layer of protection. This is usually a 2nd passcode that is generated each time you log-on. It could be in a text message sent to your phone, or any authenticator App on your smartphone or possibly a little physical key pad that generates a one-time code.

Also think beyond the obvious PC, Laptop, Tablet and Smartphone. Your broadband router has its own password and software that needs to be kept secure. Ask your internet service provider for a new one if you have an old router.

Many people are now filling their home with other smart devices such as cameras, doorbells, heating thermostats, lighting and even fridges. All of these are connected to the internet and if not secure give the hacker a way into the data on your PC or smartphone and could see when your home is unoccupied. Only buy these devices from a reputable manufacturer.

There were a lot of member's questions at the end of John's talk so we hope to have him back later in the year when those that could not join us on Zoom are able to meet him in person. John has also given us the slides from his presentation so if you would like more information send us an email and we'll send you a PDF copy.

Martin

Group Meetings

Group Meetings are via ZOOM



Together we are Stronger

Contact

For more information
call or text: 07377 430242
email : info@nhpcsg.org.uk
website: www.nhpcsg.org.uk



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