Which of the many Cu3a Technology Groups is best for you?

Mike Hender – Technology Support

It's amazing to learn that, in the year 2000 (Chiltern u3a's first year of operation), almost sixty percent of our organisation were members of the Computer Group!

Since then, we've added many other groups covering the liberal arts, outdoor and social activities, and sports. All have grown substantially to add balance to our one hundred plus portfolio of groups.

But the strong interest in computers and technology continues today where we now have eight groups covering the digital waterfront.

So, you would be forgiven for being a little overwhelmed by the wide range of the topics on offer. This article aims to clarify what's available to meet your personal technology interests and hopefully spark new areas for you to explore. You may find the table on the next page helpful. More help is available from our website and by emailing Mike Hender at u3atec@chiltern-u3a.org.uk.

Android Helpshop
u3aandroidhelp@chiltern-u3a.org.uk

Is open to all members having problems with Android tablets and phones.

Android Users
u3aaug@chiltern-u3a.org.uk

Focuses on Android phones and Android tablets. The aim is to help members get the most use and enjoyment out of their devices, Apps and Services.

Apple Mac Computers
u3amac@chiltern-u3a.org.uk

Is a self-help group of Apple Mac users sharing knowledge and experience of using Mac basics and keeping up to date with Mac innovations. Meetings are workshops with members bringing questions, issues and solutions to be discussed by the Group.

Apple New Technology
u3ant@chiltern-u3a.org.uk

Aims to keep members abreast of new technology developments that add interest and fun to our lives. The focus is on the use of Apple products, in particular iPhones and iPads, helping members get the most from their devices. We also aim to keep up with broader technology trends such as: technology in Health, Facebook and Data Privacy, Broadband Innovations, Artificial Intelligence and how to get the most out of Zoom!

Computer Improvers
u3acomputersimp@chiltern-u3a.org.uk

Starts with the premise that life is complicated, and everyone needs different things from their computer and associated technology. Therefore, the sessions are unstructured and based on Q & A where Members ask the Questions, preferably beforehand by email, and Phil Verity will offer some Answers, with members chipping in with their experience.

There is no boundary so peripherals, phones, tablets, TVs, digital home, photography have all featured, together with the boring stuff that keeps things stable like organising data, backing it up, and keeping up to date and secure.

Digital Technologies
u3adigitech@chiltern-u3a.org.uk

(Previously known as Advanced Computers) is building on a long heritage of Microsoft Windows experience to expand interest in all areas of modern digital technology. We lean towards the practical use of technology now and in the near future and explore our personal and society's relationship with technology innovations.

We cover a very wide range of devices and applications with an emphasis on working on information and creating content.

Photography
u3aphotography@chiltern-u3a.org.uk

Covers both pictorial topics, such as composition and lighting, and digital imaging techniques and technologies to process images using a variety of tools such as Photoshop. More on this fascinating group in the following article by David Pearson.

Science & Technology
u3ascience@chiltern-u3a.org.uk

Presentations and discussions cover a wide spectrum of science topics and the technology (in its broadest sense) that flows from them. We encourage friendly social interaction particularly during our mid-session tea break and during or after the presentation. Our meetings have ranged from dark matter and landing on a comet, to the

Technology – continued

inner workings of the human cell, with self–driving cars, the environmental effects of aviation, and 'using science to grow vegetables'. Presentations are normally from our group members based on their working knowledge, hobbies or something that has caught their interest. You certainly do not have to be a scientist to be in the group, although some people are. Of more importance is an interest in things scientific.

Your interest !	Android Users	Android Help Desk	Apple Mac	Apple New Technology	Computer Improvers	Digital Technologies	Photography	Science & Technology
Using Android phones, tablets, Apps	Y	Y						
Fixing issues with Android devices	Y	Y						
Using Apple Mac, MacOS, Mac Apps			Y					
Using Apple iPhones, iPads, iOS, iOS Apps				Y				
General technology issues					Y			
Using Windows OS and Apps					Y	Y		
Taking and editing photos							Y	
Recent and future technology developments*			Y	Y		Y		Y

* That will affect our lives. Examples are: AI, Health Tech, Autonomous cars, Social media, and many more.

But there's more than just Technology from the Photography group!

David Pearson

We are a thriving and enthusiastic group for anyone who has an interest in photography.

We have members who simply use their phone for family and holiday snaps to experts who win acceptances in international competitions, so we try to provide something for everyone.

We have two aims: to learn how to improve our own photography and to share and enjoy each other's pictures. So, at each meeting (on the first Friday of the month) we start with a tutorial by a member.

We try to alternate these talks between 'technical', such as the use of Photoshop and other software, and 'pictorial', where we may consider composition, lighting or camera controls.

The second part of the meeting is devoted to our 'set subject', where all members are invited to submit their own photos of the month's set subject. We project all of these on the big screen and the authors have the chance to talk about their images and others may comment on them, always in a supportive way.

Three or four times a year we organise a photoshoot where we can go out for the day to some photogenic place to take photographs. It is always interesting to see how different people find completely different subjects to take or treat the same subject in different ways. Just as important is that they are great social occasions where we get together over a coffee or a beer, get to know each other and can share ideas and tips.

Everyone is welcome. Come regularly and your photography is sure to improve, whether that is from the expert help that is always available or simply by getting ideas from seeing and enjoying other people's pictures.