

## Question and Answer

The first session of 2011 was devoted to a few questions and answers. There was a good exchange of information and questions raised. Here, we merely give an indication of the topics covered.

### **Homeplug**

This is a method of passing ethernet (LAN signals) over the mains electrical supply wiring, suitable for small businesses and home networks. Devices are plugged directly into a mains socket, and can be connected either by an ethernet port on the device, or some have a local wifi connection.

There was some discussion of how good they are, and it was thought that they were possibly a bit slow sometimes, and prone occasionally to interference. But on the whole, worth while considering for places where wireless connections do not work well, and cabling is not desirable.

Later discussion on the mailing list gave more information. They can be used across different mains circuits, but not across different phases, nor past the meter.

### **How safe is wireless for connection to the router?**

Should be OK for now if WPA encryption is enabled, and the standard password on the router was changed. Routers come with standard admin names and passwords, and these should be changed to prevent outsiders getting in by knowing the standard ones.

### **Apple group**

There was a pre-release announcement of an Apple Products group for the U3A in Bath.

If you are interested look for the official notice in the next newsletter. It is aimed at beginners, but intends to cover all Apple products, not just computers, but also iPhones, iPads, etc.

**Update:** Since the meeting, this has been cancelled and will **not** go ahead in the foreseeable future.

### **How to create a bootable memory stick from an .iso file?**

.iso files are exact images of a CD, but if it represents a bootable CD, then it will usually be possible to create a bootable USB stick. The example was for Ubuntu, which is supported by a program called unetbootin. Details and downloads for it are at: <http://unetbootin.sourceforge.net/>

Under Ubuntu, the application is installed by default.

### **Network Attached Storage (NAS)**

This is a means of putting a large amount of storage directly onto the Ethernet so it can be seen by anything that is connected to the network. Some modern boxes can now allow such storage to be accessed from outside across the Internet. There was no experience, but some interest in looking further at it.

### **Backups.**

It was decided that we should have a full session to consider all the alternatives and what the

important factors are. Whether to backup system or just data, at what frequency to do it.  
This is scheduled for 22 September 2011.

### ***Firewall***

A session of firewalls might be sensible, as well as other security-related things like how to keep passwords safe, etc.

This is scheduled for 28 April 2011 and will include comments on use of passwords, etc.

### ***Which operating system to use?***

The question on what Operating System to use and their respective strengths was postponed to a later session.

This discussion is now scheduled for 28 July 2011.

### ***Background information***

Meanwhile, for newcomers, these papers give the background and history to the free software developments:

Presentation:

[http://www.u3ainbath.org.uk/group\\_pages/foss/LinkedFiles2010/April\\_Talk.pdf](http://www.u3ainbath.org.uk/group_pages/foss/LinkedFiles2010/April_Talk.pdf)

Paper (2006):

[http://www.u3ainbath.org.uk/group\\_pages/foss/LinkedFiles2006/FOSS\\_paper.pdf](http://www.u3ainbath.org.uk/group_pages/foss/LinkedFiles2006/FOSS_paper.pdf)

More information is at:

[http://www.u3ainbath.org.uk/group\\_pages/foss/Diaries/foss\\_2006.html](http://www.u3ainbath.org.uk/group_pages/foss/Diaries/foss_2006.html)