

## Zooming in My Pants

Don't panic. I haven't yet. Although it came close a couple of times. I went for a snooze one afternoon, only to wake up and find I was five minutes away from a Zoom play-along with my lovely friends from Worcester Ukulele Club (WUC) (see the screenshot).

Thing is, you can look perfectly respectable, even smart, if you can only see the top half. But you can only use your imagination on what's going on below the belt...

WUC's first Zoom session was just over a year ago today. We hadn't met in person since the beginning of March, and were already getting a bit fed up. In addition, we would have been doing two or three gigs a week around Herefordshire and Worcestershire: parties, residential care homes, busking in the street and so on. We raise money for a chosen charity each year. Last year it was Alzheimer's Research UK.

This year it's them again, because of lockdown. We usually raise at least £10,000 in a year, culminating in an all-day gig in the Crowngate as part of the Victorian Christmas.

But I digress...

Has anyone not done a Zoom meeting? This time last year, you probably wouldn't have known what I was talking about. For the uninitiated (there might be one or two) it's just getting together, but on line. You can all see and hear each other, although you can always mute or hide yourself and just listen.



Once you sign up, you can have meetings up to 40 minutes long for free. WUC does play-alongs. Because of the latency in the internet, we can't play along together. But we can play along with the music and music chart, run by the meeting host. It's good fun and good practice. It also means we can see each other's faces, talk and insult each other, and tell stories. Recently, different people have been choosing the songs (we have over 300 play along songs amongst over 4,000 in total), and telling stories in between.

That's not all, though. I've been Zooming with Worcestershire Camera Club, where we have talks, show-and-tell, and competitions. I also drop in occasionally to the Clay Cross Photographic Society Zoom meetings.

But it's my good lady, Elaine, who's really gone to town. At the last count, she's doing cake craft, Tai Chi, watercolour painting, and her own ukulele play along group. We hardly see each other during the day...

And finally, NT Hardwick has its own WhatsApp group. This is where the bad (and I mean awful) jokes and insults abound.

Why? Well, it keeps me sane, means I can talk to people I like, and is something to look forward to. It's also about maintaining relationships and friendships. Important stuff in these times.

Try it. I haven't seen any pants yet (even by accident), although I did see a bit of bra once, just saying.

Geoff Hicks  
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