

## **I.T. can be easy – April 2021 by Steven Dunwell**

### **Your Digital Legacy**

A “digital legacy” is the amount of electronic information that a person leaves behind on the internet and other electronic storage locations following their passing.

Not the cheeriest of subjects to think about, but a very important one.

I have come across in my travels where someone has sadly passed away, which means passwords are lost, so that the next of kin cannot access photographs, emails, personal music, online TV services like Netflix and electronic business accounts i.e. water, electricity, insurance etc.

So here are a few hints and tips to consider...

#### **Passwords**

We all know the importance of keeping passwords safe and secure.

However, in circumstances where a next of kin needs to access online business accounts, and you are happy to do so, share the passwords with your next of kin or at least let them know where you safely keep them. Ensure that they are all clearly listed, concise and kept up to date with any changes that are made. For social media accounts e.g. Facebook, where photos and other memories are stored, these could be lost if the next of kin does not know the password.

A lot of people keep passwords written down in various formats, make sure that your next of kin knows where to locate it.

#### **Emails**

Bear in mind that a person may still receive personal and business-related emails from various sources. The next of kin may want to access these accounts to pass on any relevant news to family, friends and to advise business of what’s happened.

Knowing the account names and passwords is particularly important where people have multiple email accounts.

#### **Electronic Equipment**

Not just personal computers, laptops, desktops etc. but consider password access to smart phones, tablets, Kindles, iPads and indeed any electronic device that requires a password or passcode to access them.

For example, if a device cannot be accessed because a password or passcode is not known, the device may well have to be wiped clean to allow future access and precious memories may well be lost unless regular backups have been made.

Don't rely on social media sites and cloud storage to keep your photos safe, ensure that the devices are regularly backed up to an external storage device like portable a hard disk drive.

## **Social Media**

Unless these accounts are closed down, information will still be received. The sharing of passwords will allow you to access photographs and other personal data and eventually, if applicable close down the account. If this is not done, people will still receive reminders from the original person on past events like birthdays and weddings etc.

**A superb source of advice and free guides can be found at the Digital Legacy Associations website:**

<https://digitallegacyassociation.org/>