

# Automation Special Interest Group (SIG)

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## What are the Aims of the SIG?



This automation SIG is here to share knowledge and skills between members about different aspects of automation. Hopefully we can develop some common practices to all systems and compare systems to establish which automation scenarios are best suited by that particular technology.

We hope to develop a number of members of the group as the go to member for advice but still allow others to share their experiences and views.

## How do I contact the Automation SIG?



Please indicate Automation SIG in your message

[Contact MERG](#)

## Who are the leaders of the group?



M6456 Malcolm Asker Caretaker  
M5615 Francis Pritchard Deputy Group Leader

## Would you like to join today?

Not a member? then

[Join MERG Here](#)



and sign up to this Special Interest Group. If you are already a member

[Join the Automation SIG](#)

Select **Automation SIG** from the drop down list in **Other SIGs** and press the **Subscribe to SIG** button.

## How do you meet?



The group meets online. The day/time and frequency will be decided by a Poll of members [Link to SIG Poll](#). We plan to hold different types of meeting that can best accommodate the wide selection of topics and involvement this SIG will create. This may include but not limited to;

- A presentation
- A discussion
- A practical workshop session
- A demonstration

Dates for meetings are held in the [MERG meetings diary](#) unless otherwise stated or see **When are the next Meetings?** below.

Anyone wishing to attend a meeting just needs to join the group and the zoom links will



be in **My Upcoming Events**.

## And the Next Meeting?

Best viewed in landscape on a mobile phone

Date	Event	Description	Location	Link
19:30 13-Feb	An Evening with Automation	This session is a relaxed time where members of the group can share what they have been up to, ask for help. Be prepared to show us a short video, a photo or a short demo whilst online. There are no rigid rules here, just a time to share. Bring your own beer, wine or hot drink!	Online Zoom Meeting	
19:30 13-Mar	An Evening with Automation	This session is a relaxed time where members of the group can share what they have been up to, ask for help. Be prepared to show us a short video, a photo or a short demo whilst online. There are no rigid rules here, just a time to share. Bring your own beer, wine or hot drink!	Online Zoom Meeting	

## How do Video Calls Work?

To join in you may need to add a headset with microphone and optionally a camera to your device, if they are not built in. You will receive a link which will get you into the meeting, automatically installing Zoom on your device if necessary.

Calls are scheduled and topics announced in advance.

Zoom provides thumbnails of each video participant and any shared presentations or desktops. The call host facilitates the meeting/questions/discussion. Zoom has developed a lot during Covid and I can't describe all the features here.



Usually everyone mutes their microphone to avoid a lot of noise from phones, clocks chiming, family activity etc. To speak you can just press the spacebar to (after a slight pause) temporarily unmute.

You can select among several icons to, for example raise a hand, clap, agree, vote etc. Useful for questioning.

You can also type "chat" either with everyone or with a selected participant. This is quite a good way to have a one-to-one conversation without involving/annoying everyone else. It can also be used to distribute weblinks etc although there are many other ways to "share" (with permission) screens, documents, open apps, whiteboard and so on.

If you would like to try out Zoom, then there is a test meeting service where you are the

only participant and you can experiment with the various options available.



[Test Zoom](#)

This link is available to anybody, not just members of the virtual area group.

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