

Exciting announcement

Dear All,

In an earlier message I mentioned our intention to organise a number of virtual meetings using Zoom technology. We held a virtual committee meeting this week to prove the technology (and our ability to use it) and I am pleased to confirm we are moving forward with this idea. We believe in these very difficult times this approach offers us an alternative way to hold meetings. Once the current restrictions are lifted and we return to normal it will be a very useful addition to our range of activity. We are keen therefore to explore its potential and gain full benefit from it.

Below I have summarised how it will work:

Virtual meetings will be available to all fully paid-up members of the society. This year's subscriptions were due at the beginning of April. If you have yet to pay your subscriptions please do so to ensure you are eligible for these meetings and to receive the magazine. The latest edition of which will be sent out this week.

We will announce when meetings will be held on our website, the Facebook page and via email. For the first meetings we are limiting attendance to 30 participants. This is to give us the opportunity to become familiar with the software. After the initial meetings we will increase the level of participation.

As with our regional meetings taking part will be determined on a first come first served basis. If you wish to take part in a meeting you need to email our secretary to book a place.

for participants to access a session, they need to have provided a valid email address (preferably the one with which they are registered with the ToKen Society) so that a video session link can be sent by the host to them. Once the host has opened the call at the designated time, participants can click on the link, which should open an in-browser session

As with all meetings we would like to establish a code of conduct.

I have listed the basic rules of participation below:

Respect for fellow participants: - Apply the same standards of behaviour you would in a normal meeting. We expect participants to be courteous and respectful at all times in line with our published code of conduct.

Be Patient: - It is more difficult to understand what people are thinking when communicating on line. Give people the benefit of the doubt.

Be Collaborative: - share knowledge and ideas. Participate, the greater the interaction the more we can all gain from the process.

Support: - For many of us the use of this technology is new and a little daunting please be supportive as we learn to use it effectively.

Dress appropriately:- Remember you are on Camera. Please ensure those parts of you that are visible are appropriately dressed!

Protocol for meetings:

When mailing links to participants we will also send a link to a short tutorial outlining the basic functions of zoom. Based on our initial experience we would like to include the following operational rules:

-please mute your microphone while the presenter speaks. Zoom switches the main screen of the session to the source of sounds. So if a participant makes any noise the on-screen image will switch to them (that could include coughing, paper shuffling, door screeching, etc)

- if you wish to ask questions or make comments, we recommend that these are recorded using the chat option displayed on screen. Questions will be addressed at the end of the presentation, unless the speaker opens the floor to comments/questions.

- if you wish to ask the question verbally on screen, please raise a 'virtual hand' by using the hand emoji in the menu

- if you wish to share content with participants, please ensure you are comfortable for them to see your screen (if unsure, close down other programs)

Details of where to find these options on PC, MAC and mobile phone will be sent to participants with the other instructions.

We think this a very exciting development which has considerable potential. I hope members will support it enthusiastically.