



The Poggio Post

UK Community Newsletter – March 2021
EJSU - Supporting service personnel and their families

Fancy escaping the lockdown? by Stephanie Cooper

Back in February I submitted an application for some funding for our RAF community based here in Ferrara. The RAF Families Federation had charitable funds available for those communities previously affected by the COVID 19 pandemic, and those that are continuing to be affected. Applications were encouraged to support both individual projects as well as community initiatives. I applied on behalf of both the adult community here and also the children and I am pleased to share with you all that both applications were successful!

Something for the Grown-Ups

The process involved nominating and presenting an idea rather than just asking for money and I have managed to get £150 of escape room vouchers for the adults of the community to share. Each £25 voucher we have been gifted will allow 6 devices to access an online escape room. This allows 6 individuals, or 6 couples, to be able to enjoy a free evening of entertainment and have a bit of fun doing something a bit different. This should permit every adult member of our community to take part and it is for everyone to enjoy and all of us to be involved and included.

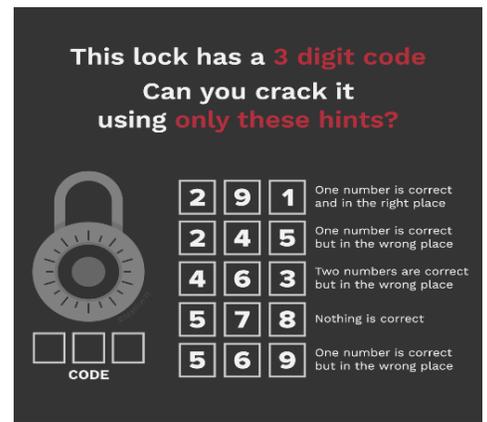


It is a game in which a team of players cooperatively discover clues, solve puzzles, and accomplish tasks in one or more rooms in order to progress and accomplish a specific goal in as quick a time as possible. The goal is often to escape out of a room but it could also be to solve a crime e.g. find a suspect and their location.

In spite of the name, escaping a room may not be the main goal for the players, nor is the game necessarily confined to a single room and so can be set in a variety of fictional locations. The player's goals and challenges they encounter usually follow the theme of the room. It will challenge the problem-solving, lateral thinking (“thinking outside of the box”), general knowledge and teamwork skills of its participants by providing a variety of puzzles and challenges that unlock access to new areas in the game when solved.

Challenges could include word, number, jigsaw and symbol puzzles such as cyphers, riddles, crosswords, Sudoku and mathematics. It could also require the team to search for a hidden physical object, or ask you to assemble an object, to navigate mazes, to be observant or to remember facts you may have been given earlier in the game.

The games usually last between 60 and 90 minutes depending on how good you are as a team! Playing from multiple locations requires a video calling app and zoom is the recommended platform. The main player will share their screen taking help and advice from the rest of the team to complete the game. All in all, it requires a team of people working together and so everyone will have something to contribute and bring to their team and best of all, it's a bit of free fun for us all to enjoy!



How do I get involved?

All I need from you as a community is to let me know how you would like to take part and claim your free gift. So, get your team of 6 individuals, couples or a combination of both together. The key is you can only access the game from 6 devices.

You can then choose a time to play the game whenever suits your team, so an evening with a few beers or glasses of wine or a Sunday afternoon with a cup of tea. It's totally up to you. Drop me a WhatsApp and I'll give you a detailed 'how to' as well as the voucher details.

Something for the Children



The other community initiative was for us to try and set up a 'Junior Book Club'. Our community here is very small and the chance for the children to come together during the last 12 months has been so limited due to the restrictions. This, coupled with the fact the schools have previously been closed and are now closed again, means that precious time for interaction with other children has been completely decimated. They 'see' their friends and classmates on Google

classroom but this is for formal learning and is not social or a chance for them to interact with each other. We decided to try and set up the book club to try and encourage something social as well as encouraging the children to read.

But to have a book club you need access to books. Currently the schools are not giving out books to students with school and public libraries remaining closed and the other challenges of buying English story books here in Ferrara, the Italian postal system being somewhat 'leisurely and unhurried' and let's not even mention using BFPO!!!

Using the reasons above, I applied for funding to start a new Children's Library for the community here and to ask for some brand-new books to kick start the 'Junior Book Club.' We now have approximately £150 worth of brand-new books covering ages from 2-14 years on its way to us. It is hoped that by using it as a library system as well as a resource for a book club, they will continue to be available for use by future RAF families as well. Once the books arrive Dani, Rachel and I will be in touch to share how we plan to run the library and book clubs!

I hope what has been gifted to us by the RAF Families Federation brings a bit of fun and social interaction to our community and more importantly, everyone gets something to enjoy!

A few goodbyes and even more hello's

Since our last update we've seen several comings and goings. We said a fond farewell to Mr and Mrs Shuggie White who headed south to Naples as well as saying goodbye to Sgt Richy Bateson who headed back to the spiritual home of the Scopie, RAF Boulmer. We also said goodbye to Sgt Gaz Jones and his family. We hope they all have a fantastic time at their next postings and I'm sure we'll see them again very soon.

Pleasingly we've had lots of new arrivals and although it's been difficult to meet everyone in person, we are pleased to welcome you all. Wg Cdr Andy Cooper, his wife Stephanie and children Ava and William with their lovely dog Archie joined us in late 2020. We were also joined by WO Andy Friel and his wife Tracey oh and not forgetting their little pug Mabel. Sgt Paul Emery has also recently arrived with family, Amy and children Olivia, Alfie and Lucas and the most important family member, Thor the rabbit.

Sgt John Mitchell and his wife Joanne have also recently begun their tour, driving from the UK to Italy in their retro VW Camper van, Macy. Cpl Nile Jackson has also arrived with his family, his wife Rachel and children, Cece and Winston. Last, but by no means least, Cpl Taff Nind has joined us with his wife Zoe, little girl Isabella and dogs Starr and Skye. We extend the warmest welcomes to all the new families and we sincerely hope you enjoy your time here in Ferrara and more widely Italy.

FCUK events update

Ciao. We hope everyone is keeping well and managing as best you can during this difficult time. With summer around the corner, we should all be able to enjoy the sun very soon and we hope for better times come the warmer months. As you'll all be aware, the recent months have proved challenging for all, not least the FCUK committee and the impact restrictions have had on the events we had planned. After much discussion we are pleased that we have put a program of virtual events together and can now share them with you together with dates and details. The FCUK committee will continue to work hard to ensure we deliver community events and hope you'll be able to support and enjoy what we have planned in the coming weeks.

We hope you agree there's lots of fab events planned over the coming weeks and would love you all to join us, remember, the more the merrier. We also invite members of the community to host events or simply come up with some ideas that we can support. We sincerely hope things improve and we can all get together in person very soon. In the meantime, please stay safe!

Thanks everyone and we will see you all very soon.

Event	Date	Details
Virtual Horse Racing	27 Mar 21	SAC Harry Davies will host a virtual horse racing evening. Bring your good times and your laughter to, oh and maybe a bottle of wine! They're under starters orders!
Virtual Gin Tasting	2 Apr 21	Flt Lt Kate Hemmings will host a virtual gin tasting evening. This will be a fun filled night, for the adults! Hick-up!
Easter Bingo	4 Apr 21	Dani Hodson will host this event. It'll be an Easter Bingo extravaganza for all the family with fun and prizes along the way, eyes down for a full house!
Grand National	10 Apr 21	Charity event, Back a winner in the Grand National with some large cash prizes up for grabs. Contact SAC Crosby and Sgt Barry to take part.
March Fitness Competition Draw	17 Apr 21	Hosted by Sgt Fergz Whitcombe, we will find out who the lucky winners are of the March fitness challenge. This'll be a draw like no other. Quack Quack!
Saturday Night Take Away	TBC	Sgt Baz Barry will host his Saturday Night Take Away. This is not to be missed and who'll win the ads!? Wey aye pet!

A Night of
GIN TASTING

THE DETAILS The event will be held over Zoom on **FRIDAY 2 APRIL at 2000**. Due to limited gin supplies, we will be limiting participation to 20 people. Therefore if you wish to attend you are to PM Kate Hemmings as places will be first come first serve. If you have any questions let Kate know.

WE WILL PROVIDE

<p>GIN</p> <p>4 x 50ml bottles of four different gins. You will have the opportunity to taste the gins and then create your own cocktail or simply serve with tonic and ice.</p>	<p>FUN</p> <p>Following the recent stricter restrictions, we have created a fun gin tasting experience for you to enjoy in the comfort of your own home.</p>	<p>GUIDANCE</p> <p>We will guide you through a tasting of four gins, provide tasting notes and discuss the tonic and garnish pairings for each gin's perfect serve.</p>
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YOU WILL NEED

<p>GLASSES</p> <p>You will need 4 glasses. Copa glasses are ideal but small wine glasses will also work as an alternative.</p>	<p>ICE</p> <p>Plenty of ice, the bigger cubes the better. Larger cubes melt more slowly and so will chill your gin (and tonic) without over diluting it.</p>	<p>TONIC</p> <p>A cold indian tonic will enable the botanicals to shine out. Alternatively, you can use lime juice, lemonade, or soda water.</p>	<p>GARNISH</p> <p>You can stay classic and opt for a slice or wedge of lime. If you're feeling more adventurous try cucumber, mint, thyme, or even chile peppers.</p>
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FCUK PRESENTS

Easter Eggstravaganza

EASTER BAKING
CRAFT ACTIVITIES
SCAVENGER HUNT
EASTER DRAWING COMPETITION (KIDS & GROWN UPS)
EASTER BINGO

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OVER EASTER WEEKEND  
CONTACT THE CLO FOR DETAILS

CONTACT THE CLO TO REGISTER

AMAZING PRIZES TO BE WON



**GRAND NATIONAL**  
10 APR 21

FCUK PRESENTS

**Back A Winner in the GRAND national**

€10 PER HORSE with a chance of placing 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup>  
HORSES NUMBERS PICKED AT RANDOM

CONTACT OR-2 CROSBY OR OR-6 BARRY TO ENTER.  
ALL ENTRIES BY 9 APR 21

1<sup>st</sup> PLACE €100  
2<sup>nd</sup> PLACE €60  
3<sup>rd</sup> PLACE €40

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## *Covid-19*

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Emilia-Romagna is currently in the Red Zone. This means that the following restrictions are in place;

- Running and cycling is permitted but a social distance of 2 metres must be maintained. Walking is permitted in the proximity of your home.
- Self certification may be required when out. Translated documents available on the PR group.
- It is only permitted to move for health reasons, work, food shopping or other emergencies.
- All non-essential shops are closed.
- All bars and restaurants will be completely closed. Takeaways are available until 10 p.m and home deliveries are allowed.
- All schools are closed.
- The national curfew of 2200 to 0500 remains in place. You can leave your house only for work, state of necessity and health reasons. Self-certification will be required during the curfew.
- It is prohibited to visit friends or family in a different household.
- The inter-regional travel ban has been extended until 6<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

Up to date information relating to Covid-19 and restrictions can be found via the following links;

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/italy>

<https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control>

<https://www.esteri.it/mae/it/>

<https://www.thelocal.it/>

In addition to this there is a News section on the Poggio Renatico EJSU.Net page which contains regular updates and can be accessed via the following link;

<https://www.ejsu.net/poggio/>

If you have any questions or queries please contact the NSE team. We will continue to provide regular updates once they become available.

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## DIO

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We have welcomed Ciaran Burke to the team as the Customer Relations Assistant. Ciaran can assist with any issues that have already been raised through the Babcock helpdesk (CCC). We have attached the Babcock helpdesk details and remind that all housing repairs or problems must be reported to Babcock in the first instance. Mac Italia should not be contacted until the repair has been raised through Babcock and you have received an appointment. Ciaran can be contacted on +39 331 6113608, [Ciaran.burke121@mod.gov.uk](mailto:Ciaran.burke121@mod.gov.uk). If you have any queries please contact the DIO team.



**Welcome to the CCC Helpdesk**

**European Joint Support Unit**

**babcock**

**Defence Infrastructure Organisation**

The CCC (Customer Contact Centre) is 24/7 365 days a year service that started in 2007. It was created to provide a professional, fully mobilised contact centre service that provides excellence as standard. We have a range of clients including UK schools, European military bases, and Global businesses including Airports and Fleet Management solutions, so we have a diverse mix of clients and are fully versed on all aspects of defence activity. It is important that occupants engage with DIO and not their Landlords directly to ensure that the occupant is not held liable for any receipted works out of entitlement.

**Ways to contact**

**Phone** - 800940008 Free from Italian mobile Or +44 1454 806957 from UK mobile  
**Email** - BSSlhelp@babcockinternational.com  
**Web Portal** - BSSGhelp.babcock.uk  
**Feedback Email** – BSSI-customerfeedback@babcockinternational.com

**Information needed from you**

**The 5 W's - Who, Where, What/Why and When**  
**Who are you?** - Name and best contact number  
**Where are you?** - Villa number/Parco name for us to find where you are situated  
**What/Why is the issue?** - Check for the fault issue, i.e. if a light is out is it the switch that's faulty or is it the bulb itself?  
**When?** - The local team in Italy will call to arrange an appointment at your convenience once the job is raised

**Job Categorisation**  
The Helpdesk agents log all requests with a category, depending on the urgency of the issue. These categories are as follows:  
**Emergency** - Where there is imminent danger to health, life or building Babcock will attend to make safe. One hour's response time.  
**Urgent** - Where work needs to be completed swiftly to prevent further damage to property or put right a controllable health risk. Five working days maximum rectification time.  
**Routine** - Where work is necessary to prevent further damage and restore normal working order. Twenty working days maximum rectification time.

**Job Tracking**  
If you wish to track progress of the work reported please contact the Help Desk via email providing the reference number given to you during the log in process. An operator will be in touch with you to give you all the information you've requested.



## **European Joint Support Unit**

— TO PROVIDE FIRM BASE  
SUPPORT TO SERVICE PERSONNEL,  
CIVILIANS AND THEIR FAMILIES  
SERVING WITH NATO, THE EU AND  
ELSEWHERE IN EUROPE AND TURKEY,  
IN ORDER TO FACILITATE SUCCESS ON  
OPERATIONS —

EJSU.Net is now live and we have updated our Poggio Renatico information and guides. Please take a moment to take a look and we would welcome any feedback and recommendations. The guides can be found via the following link;

<https://www.ejsu.net/poggio-guides/>

I have also produced a Mental health and wellbeing information guide which is also available to view on EJSU.Net and via the following link;

<https://www.ejsu.net/poggio/>

EJSU.Net has an EU Transition period section with lots of useful information and guidance which can be accessed at the following link;

<https://www.ejsu.net/eutransition/>

The EJSU Welfare team have a section which contains up to date information on how to access support which can be accessed via the following link;

<https://www.ejsu.net/welfare/>

<https://www.ejsu.net/covid-welfare-support/>

The EJSU news section also contains up to date relevant information and is easily accessed via the following link;

<https://www.ejsu.net/category/ejsunews/>

Please share the Poggio EJSU.Net link to anyone you know who is considering an overseas tour or is due to join us here at Poggio.

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## *BFPO*

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### Service Update;

Since the introduction of the new import/export regulations on 1 January 2021, BFPO have been advising customers of customs clearance issues within some locations. This is being further complicated by items received in BFPO from UK commercial companies, which do not comply with the new regulations. This has led to a number of countries refusing to clear private mail items and returning them to the sender. The issue is being felt across the whole UK mail industry and is not just affecting BFPO. The need for compliance has been raised on a number of occasions with UK commercial companies by BFPO and some are starting to change processes; it remains the sender's responsibility to ensure customs compliance and the overseas community will need to ensure that any orders meet the requirements.

From 31 March 2021 for all locations, BFPO will be returning items which do not comply with current International private mail import/export regulations to the sender.

BFPO customers in all overseas defence locations are reminded it is their responsibility to inform people/companies that items sent from the UK must now be dispatched as international mail and that they, as the sender, are responsible for ensuring customs compliance. This applies to all BFPO numbers/BF1 postcodes.

Family and friends of UK defence personnel and their dependants serving overseas, who post private mail items via UK Post Office Counters should note, that you should always be required to complete a customs declaration for private parcels destined for BFPO addresses overseas. Completion of customs declaration forms should be as accurate as possible and must include as a bare minimum, all contents, value and a valid signature. These details are important to ensure local customs authorities in the country of destination can assess your parcel contents and clear items for delivery as efficiently as possible.

BFPO understand that this decision is not ideal, but we need to ensure that existing and future regulations are met, and that compliant mail is not delayed or impounded as a result of a few non-compliant items.

Further updates will be provided as they become available. If you require any assistance or further information please contact the NSE team.

I hope you are all well, if anyone has any suggestions or articles to publish in the Poggio Post please let me know. Thanks, Dani 😊