



Connecting via Zoom

This guide covers how you can use Zoom as a tool to connect with people who don't have an internet connection. Zoom allows anyone with access to a basic phone line to achieve a similar level of connectedness to those with an internet connection. The only drawback is that when phoning into a Zoom call those users only experience the audio and miss out on any visuals.

Instructions

We have found that having a simple set of instructions is very helpful for getting people connected. They will be particularly helpful to those with little or no knowledge of using new(er) technology, as they may be anxious about testing this out. You'll most probably hear "I cannae dae that!". Thankfully, when dialling into a Zoom call, the automated operator is clear, and uncomplicated.

It's important to be very clear about what people need to do – it may appear complicated on the page but is simple when you work your way through the process. There is a good automated service which talks you through when to enter each number.

The only details people will need are:

Phone number: 0131 460 1196 (We think this Edinburgh number will be the cheapest option for most people and will likely be included in the free minutes of many phone packages.)

Meeting ID: This will be different for each meeting.

Password: This will be different for each meeting.

Time: You can only dial in during the time of the meeting - this is not a catch-up service.

1. When you phone the number, you will be asked to enter the meeting ID followed by the hash key.
2. Next you will be asked for a participant ID, but you can bypass this by hitting the hash key again.
3. Finally, you are asked to enter the password followed by the hash key again.

You will be talked through all these steps by the automated service. Once you have completed this you will join the waiting room until the host admits you (providing you've turned on the waiting room feature).

For those connecting to Zoom online they will see each person's phone number as their name unless they have a participant ID to identify them. The host can mute/unmute them and remove them just like someone joining online. If at any point you do mute them, it may be worth announcing on your call that you have muted everyone, explaining why, and giving clear instructions of what they need to do in order to unmute themselves (explained below).

Considerations

Visual cues – Those phoning into a Zoom meeting are completely blind to what you are physically doing. If this is an important element, talk through what you are doing and explain why. This invites all to have a similar experience, even though some will have to use their imagination. In guiding their imagination, you can help paint the picture for them.

Allowing time – In any Zoom meeting it's valuable to give people time to hear from each other. People with no internet connection are perhaps more likely to have limited contact with others right now. Being in community with one another, in whatever form that may take, is one of our most valuable offerings at the moment.

Try it out beforehand – As we covered earlier, there may be some anxieties around trying something new for the first time; particularly if it's something you as a user are not well versed on. The easiest way to avoid that impacting anyone's experience of the meeting or service is to test it out with them beforehand. This builds their confidence and allows you to experience what functionality is available to those joining by phone. In doing this ahead of time, it also cuts down on the possibility of last-minute panicked phone calls from people struggling to get connected.

Muting – With all Zoom calls it's good practice to start off with everyone muted. This allows you, as the host, to gather and centre everyone before inviting others to speak. When a person phoning in is muted or unmuted this is announced to them over the call. They can mute/unmute themselves by dialling *6 on their phones. Similarly, if they would like to grab your attention or ask a question, they can do this by dialling *9 This then shows as a raised hand on your screen.

Chat box – Remind people that those joining the meeting by phone will not be able to see the chat box. You may decide not to use this function if it is important to you that everyone has the same experience.

Screen Share – If you are going to share your screen during the meeting then try to get a copy of what you will be sharing to those phoning in ahead of time. If the current circumstances don't allow that then make sure to acknowledge this and apologise that you're not able to be as inclusive as you would like to be.

Safeguarding and Security

There are several issues to consider around safeguarding and security and the Church of Scotland Safeguarding Team and Data Protection Officer have produced guides to help with this. These can be found on the Church of Scotland website (<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/covid-19-coronavirus-advice>)

Further Guidance

If you need help with any of the features mentioned above, Zoom's own support site offers lots of articles and videos to walk you through these features and much more (<https://support.zoom.us>)

Those of us in the Priority Areas team who have experience of using Zoom (Iain, John and Naomi) are happy to offer support and guidance. There is no such thing as a silly question, and we can offer one-to-one support. You can get in touch with us by email (priorityareas@churchofscotland.org.uk).

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