As well as spending time with some top-class geeks, we managed to sell a few T-shirts and mugs – which you can now buy at **shop.linuxvoice.com**.

OGGCAMP
2014

Probably the largest event of its kind in the whole entire United Kingdom.

First, a little disclosure; we, along with Canonical and the OggCamp community, were Gold Sponsors at this year's event – you may have seen the adverts we ran on OggCamp's behalf in earlier issues. We did our best to promote what was happening and all of us here at Linux Voice attended, running a stall in the exhibitors' area, meeting lots of incredible people and drinking slightly too much beer. The sponsorship also gave us the chance to record a live podcast on the Sunday afternoon (you can listen on **LinuxVoice.com**).

We love what the OggCamp team does and why they do it. Everyone who helps is a volunteer and they all work incredibly hard putting the event together; from the original planning, the merchandise, dealing with registration and payments, the room re-organising, staging, audio engineering, lighting,

evening events, venue and accommodation, and the countless other tasks and processes we don't know about. Without these incredibly dedicated people, the event simply wouldn't happen. So firstly, a huge thank you to them.

OggCamp is an un-conference that's free to attend, but contributions are gratefully received and genuinely help make the event a success. This year it was held at The Oxford Hotel, some distance from the famous city centre. The conference takes place over a Saturday and a Sunday, but a great number of people arrived on the Friday evening and converged at the local public house, The Plough Inn. The landlords looked terrified at the hordes of monochrome T-shirts but dealt patiently with the introverted beer orders. It was a beautiful evening with lots of friendly faces that could have lasted longer had we not drunk the pub dry

and forced them to close early. Which was definitely a good thing, as we all needed to get to the conference early for a day of talks, and talking.

Bring and buy

Our table in the exhibitors' room was next to Mark and Vince from Peppertop Designs (**www.peppertop.com**), the immensely talented duo behind our own Elvie comic strip. They create all their illustrations using open source software, releasing all of their assets under a Creative Commons licence, and this was the first open source/un-conference they'd been to. We have them to thank for the pen and the paper we needed to write prices on our mugs and T-shirts, as well as the general advice we needed at an event like this.

On our left were the equally wonderful Steph and Stacey from Ragworm (**http://ragworm.eu**), printing up their own circuit boards and assorted electronics paraphernalia. We also met with Swindon Hackerspace. They'd brought a long an ingenious Twitter to Teletype machine, whose tappings sounded exactly like the 1980s sports results teleprinter on BBC's Grandstand. This relic must have something to do with Swindon Hackspace being located in Swindon's Museum of Computing, and we promised to pay them a visit after the current deadline receded and find out for sure.

There were several other hacker spaces in attendance, including Oxford Hackspace, the Surrey and Hampshire hackspace and Reading's MakerSpace (RLab). There was also a fantastic soldering workshop hosted by OpenTRV, whose founder, Damon Hart-Davis, gave a talk at the event. OpenTRV is an incredibly ambitious project that's attempting to cut the UK's entire carbon footprint by 10% with a rather neat and geeky solution. In the UK, many of us have hot water radiators and yet they're normally all controlled by a single thermostat positioned somewhere in the house. This governs whether the whole system is on or off regardless of whether you use a room or not, or whether the temperature in other rooms is below the heating threshold. OpenTRV is a project based on the installation of thermostatic regulating valves on your radiators. These talk to a server, which allows you to manage when, where and how the heating is applied to your house.

We also learnt about a great idea called 'Repair Cafe Reading'. This is where local experts help you fix your own stuff, including bikes, tools, computers, electronics, clothes and mechanical things. We thought this sounded like a fantastic project, not just because it gives equipment another life, but because it could teach a whole new set of skills. We saw the HyPi – a hydrogen powered Raspberry Pi – powering a HDMIPi display, with a

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theoretical run time of 1.5 hours, and spent a long while talking with the various volunteers representing Hacker Public Radio.

The high-tech online system for determining talks suffered a few hiccoughs, leaving attendees to the quaint but far more colourful method of "Post-It Notes on a Pull Down Metal Awning". As you'd expect, there were many great presentations over the two days; Stuart Langridge talked about cross-platform app development, Alan Pope talked about the 'Ubuntu Phone: the story so far', Andrew Katz about open hardware, and while it's difficult to believe we missed it, there was a reportedly fantastic talk on 'Hop Hackers' and open source beer. We also have to give special credit to Steve Engledow who actually camped. At OggCamp. There was also an excellent podcast panel and a raffle to round the whole weekend out, leaving us all happily exhausted. OggCamp overwhelmingly delivered in positivity, hackery and sheer attendee friendliness. We just hope that the awesome organisers have recovered enough from the weekend to do the same thing next year. See you then! ■

Just some of the blinkenlights brought by Reading's MakerSpace (RLab).

As OggCamp is an unconference, the sessions themselves are both proposed and voted on in real time.

Do you have a PCB design you want made flesh? Give Ragworm a bell. They also do learner kits aimed at getting electronics hardware teaching into schools.