Containerized Linux Print Server using Octoprint - the long way



The long way is for if you care about the technical steps and want to reproduce it yourself. See the short way to just get the LXC Octoprint image and get up and running as easy as possible.

The primary purpose of the article is to bookmark and reference my efforts to get Octoprint as opposed to Octopi, up and running on a repurposed redundant HP Laptop.

It might not be obvious why we want to do all of this, so let me start by explaining why all this effort was undertaken. So typically we would run Octopi instead, so Octorpint on a raspberry Pi. The issue with this is that due to chip shortages Pi's are now scarce and very expensive and quite framkly, mine has become slow and frustrating, so running this on a Linux PC is just orders of magnitude faster and more reliable, the issue is that Octoprint only supports one printer at a time, so if we can containerize them, we can keep on expanding until we run our of USB ports, or hardware resources, RAM, CPU and disk space. One instance of Octoprint on my 8 year old HP-Pavilion executes gcode processing about 100 times faster than my Pi 3B and the webcams just never glitch or hang, not to mention print fails because a Pi overheated or stop communicating.

This should be straightforward, how hard can it be, right. I thought so too, but days later I realized that this has to be revisited and documented as I probably will not remember most if what was done by the next time I have to repeat this process.

The basic steps to complete the process were as follow:

- Setup The Base Linux OS on the Laptop
- Install and configure LXD/LXC(Linux Containers)
- Pass Through and set up the printer connection
- Pass through and set up the webcam connection
- Start up and set up Octprint in the container

Setup The Base Linux OS on the Laptop

- Download Ubuntu 22.04 LTS 1)
- Create a bootable ISO Using Rufus 2) 3)
- · Boot from the ISO and install Ubuntu
- Create a Bridge for LXC(Linux Containers)
- Create a partition on Linux that LXD can use as a storage pool

Create a Bridge for LXC(Linux Containers)

The default config typically looks like this:

Amend as folow to add a bridge called br0 to the config.

```
root@hp-linux:~# cat /etc/netplan/00-installer-config.yaml
# This is the network config written by 'subiquity'
network:
   ethernets:
    enol: {}
   bridges:
     br0:
      dhcp4: true
      interfaces:
          - enol
      #gateway4: 192.168.0.1
   version: 2
```

Adding a bridge allows lxc to assign network accessible DHC assigned IP addresses to the containers, i.e your container will look like regular machines on the network with similar ip addresses to other systems on the router. That will allow you to connect to octoprint using the ip or host name.



We will need br0 in the following steps setting up LXD

Create a partition on Linux that LXD can use as a storage pool

This step basically aims to utilize the remaining disk space that was not allocated by the ubuntu install. The HP system happens to have more that 1TiB of storage and the Linux base OS install only allocated 98GiB by default.

Lots of googling and many articles later 4) 5) I started with a few commands to asses what is available and how to partition that for use by LXD.

```
root@hp-linux:~# fdisk -l /dev/sda
Disk /dev/sda: 1.82 TiB, 2000398934016 bytes, 3907029168 sectors
Disk model: ST2000LM003 HN-M
Units: sectors of 1 * 512 = 512 bytes
Sector size (logical/physical): 512 bytes / 4096 bytes
I/O size (minimum/optimal): 4096 bytes / 4096 bytes
Disklabel type: gpt
Disk identifier: 1D2EE2A6-79C5-4DBD-B799-42B48F45F62E
```

| Device | Start | End | Sectors | Size Type |
|-----------|---------|------------|------------|-----------------------|
| /dev/sda1 | 2048 | 2203647 | 2201600 | 1G EFI System |
| /dev/sda2 | 2203648 | 6397951 | 4194304 | 2G Linux filesystem |
| /dev/sda3 | 6397952 | 3907026943 | 3900628992 | 1.8T Linux filesystem |

| Command | Description |
|-------------|---|
| pvs | Display information about physical volumes |
| lvs | Display information about logical volumes |
| vgs | Display information about volume groups |
| pvdisplay | Display various attributes of physical volume(s) |
| lvdisplay | Display information about a logical volume |
| vgdisplay | Display volume group information |
| lvmdiskscan | List devices that may be used as physical volumes |

Using the commands above to discover what space is available to assign to the lxc storage pool.

```
root@hp-linux:~# pvs
 PV
             VG
                       Fmt Attr PSize PFree
  /dev/sda3 ubuntu-vg lvm2 a-- <1.82t 735.96g
root@hp-linux:~# vgs
            #PV #LV #SN Attr
                               VSize VFree
  ubuntu-vg
             1
                 2
                      0 wz--n- <1.82t 735.96g
root@hp-linux:~# lvs
  LV
            VG
                      Attr
                                 LSize
                                         Pool Origin Data% Meta% Move Log
Cpy%Sync Convert
            ubuntu-vg -wi-ao----
 lv-lxc
                                   1.00t
  ubuntu-lv ubuntu-vg -wi-ao---- 100.00g
root@hp-linux:~# pvdisplay
  --- Physical volume ---
 PV Name
                        /dev/sda3
 VG Name
                        ubuntu-vg
                        <1.82 TiB / not usable 4.00 MiB
 PV Size
 Allocatable
 PE Size
                        4.00 MiB
 Total PE
                        476150
 Free PE
                        188406
 Allocated PE
                        287744
 PV UUID
                        rvz2ag-hDP0-Yb9l-eCr5-P0lK-vslK-Le7W4u
root@hp-linux:~# vgdisplay
  --- Volume group ---
 VG Name
                        ubuntu-vg
 System ID
  Format
                        lvm2
 Metadata Areas
                        1
 Metadata Sequence No
                        3
                        read/write
 VG Access
 VG Status
                        resizable
 MAX LV
                        0
                        2
 Cur LV
```

```
Open LV
                        2
 Max PV
                        0
 Cur PV
                        1
 Act PV
                        1
 VG Size
                        <1.82 TiB
 PE Size
                        4.00 MiB
 Total PE
                        476150
                        287744 / <1.10 TiB
 Alloc PE / Size
  Free PE / Size
                        188406 / 735.96 GiB
 VG UUID
                        Dfph05-yeK8-Pkrb-JZh3-TMEU-jLF4-4pn1WY
root@hp-linux:~# lvdisplay
  --- Logical volume ---
  LV Path
                         /dev/ubuntu-vg/ubuntu-lv
 LV Name
                         ubuntu-lv
 VG Name
                         ubuntu-va
 LV UUID
                         lupg0H-eV6M-l5YN-UjNV-j75K-P55e-a7hkeg
 LV Write Access
                         read/write
 LV Creation host, time ubuntu-server, 2023-05-12 10:52:34 +0000
 LV Status
                         available
 # open
                         1
 LV Size
                         100.00 GiB
 Current LE
                         25600
 Segments
                         1
 Allocation
                         inherit
 Read ahead sectors
                         auto
  - currently set to
                         256
 Block device
                         253:0
  --- Logical volume ---
 LV Path
                         /dev/ubuntu-vg/lv-lxc
 LV Name
                         lv-lxc
 VG Name
                         ubuntu-vg
 LV UUID
                         b9oWe9-UBQg-yQ3R-Io3F-XcoY-lUm3-cy8GtK
 LV Write Access
                         read/write
 LV Creation host, time hp-linux, 2023-05-12 12:24:45 +0000
 LV Status
                         available
 # open
 LV Size
                         1.00 TiB
                         262144
 Current LE
 Segments
                         1
 Allocation
                         inherit
 Read ahead sectors
                         auto
  - currently set to
                         256
 Block device
                         253:1
```



The two commands used to set up the spare disk space was:

```
root@hp-linux:~# lvcreate -L 1T -n lv-lxc ubuntu-vg
root@hp-linux:~# mkfs.ext4 /dev/ubuntu-vg/lv-lxc
```



The first command creates a local volume of 1TiB names lvlxc in the ubuntu-vg.

The second command creates an ext4 filesystem on the volume.

Using df and lsblb to initially inspect what we can see:

```
root@hp-linux:~# df -h
Filesystem
                                  Size
                                       Used Avail Use% Mounted on
tmpfs
                                  779M
                                       1.7M 778M
                                                    1% /run
                                              82G 13% /
/dev/mapper/ubuntu--vg-ubuntu--lv
                                  98G
                                        12G
                                  3.9G
                                          0 3.9G
                                                    0% /dev/shm
tmpfs
                                          0 5.0M
                                  5.0M
tmpfs
                                                    0% /run/lock
                                  2.0G 272M 1.6G 15% /boot
/dev/sda2
/dev/sda1
                                  1.1G 6.1M 1.1G
                                                   1% /boot/efi
                                          0 1.0M
tmpfs
                                  1.0M
                                                    0%
/var/snap/lxd/common/ns
                                  779M 4.0K 779M
                                                    1% /run/user/0
tmpfs
```

No new mounted filesystem, but in the block devices we now have ubuntu-vg-lv-lxc with 1TiB of space assigned.

```
root@hp-linux:~# lsblk
NAME
                         MAJ:MIN RM
                                      SIZE RO TYPE MOUNTPOINTS
loop0
                           7:0
                                  0 63.3M 1 loop /snap/core20/1879
loop1
                           7:1
                                       73M 1 loop /snap/core22/617
                                  0
loop2
                           7:2
                                  0 111.9M 1 loop /snap/lxd/24322
loop3
                           7:3
                                  0 53.2M 1 loop /snap/snapd/19122
loop4
                           7:4
                                  0 73.1M 1 loop /snap/core22/634
                                  0 55.6M 1 loop /snap/core18/2745
loop5
                           7:5
                           7:6
                                  0 108.5M 1 loop /snap/lxdmosaic/247
loop6
                           7:7
                                  0 63.5M 1 loop /snap/core20/1891
loop7
                           8:0
                                      1.8T 0 disk
sda
                                  0
-sda1
                           8:1
                                  0
                                        1G 0 part /boot/efi
                                        2G 0 part /boot
 -sda2
                           8:2
                                  0
∟sda3
                           8:3
                                      1.8T
                                            0 part
                                  0
  -ubuntu--vg-ubuntu--lv 253:0
                                            0 lvm /
                                  0
                                      100G
  └ubuntu--vg-lv--lxc
                         253:1
                                        1T
                                  0
                                            0 lvm
                          11:0
                                     1024M
                                            0 rom
sr0
```

```
root@hp-linux:~# lvs
LV    VG    Attr    LSize    Pool Origin Data%    Meta%    Move Log
Cpy%Sync Convert
    lv-lxc    ubuntu-vg -wi-ao----    1.00t
```

```
ubuntu-lv ubuntu-vg -wi-ao---- 100.00g
```

We can also look at the mountpoints for the block devices like this:

| root@hp-linux:~# lsblk -o | | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|---------|-------|
| NAME | FSTYPE | LABEL | SIZE | |
| MOUNTPOINT | 1.6 | | 62.24 | |
| loop0 | squashfs | | 63.3M | |
| /snap/core20/1879 | 1.6 | | 7014 | |
| loop1 | squashfs | | 73M | |
| /snap/core22/617 | | | 111 OM | |
| loop2 | squashfs | | 111.9M | |
| /snap/lxd/24322 | 1.6 | | F2 2M | |
| loop3 | squashfs | | 53.2M | |
| /snap/snapd/19122 | 1.6 | | 70 14 | |
| loop4 | squashfs | | 73.1M | |
| /snap/core22/634 | 1.6 | | EE CM | |
| loop5 | squashfs | | 55.6M | |
| /snap/core18/2745 | 1.6 | | 100 514 | |
| loop6 | squashfs | | 108.5M | |
| /snap/lxdmosaic/247 | | | 60 54 | |
| loop7 | squashfs | | 63.5M | |
| /snap/core20/1891 | | | 1 07 | |
| sda | | | 1.8T | |
| ⊢sda1 | vfat | | 1G | |
| /boot/efi | | | | |
| -sda2 | ext4 | | | /boot |
| ∟sda3 | LVM2_member | | 1.8T | , |
| -ubuntuvg-ubuntulv | | | 100G | / |
| └ubuntuvg-lvlxc | zts_member | <pre>lxd_storage_pool_default</pre> | 1T | |
| sr0 | | | 1024M | |



lvdisplay gives us the path to the storage pool required
for the next steps in LV Path that point to /dev/ubuntuvg/lv-lxc

Install and configure LXD/LXC(Linux Containers)

- Install the latest stable version of LXD
- Initialise LXD
 - Specify the Bridge for Use that was set up in the OS setup section
 - Point the storage pool to the partition created previously
- Create and launch a container for octoprint

Install the latest stable version of LXD

At the time of writing this, see file date below right, LXD 5.0 was the stable release candidate, we want ti make sure to run that. My distribution uses snap, so using snap to check versions installed you can run snap list.

```
root@hp-linux:~# snap list
                                             Publisher
Name
         Version
                        Rev
                               Tracking
                                                        Notes
                        2745
                               latest/stable canonical ✓ base
core18
         20230426
         20230503
                               latest/stable canonical√ base
core20
                        1891
         20230503
                        634
                               latest/stable canonical√ base
core22
lxd
         5.0.2-838e1b2 24322 5.0/stable
                                           canonical√
                               latest/stable turtle0x1
lxdmosaic 0+git.c6f53f3f 247
                        19122 latest/stable canonical ✓ snapd
         2.59.2
snapd
```

If you don't have a stable candidate, it can be removed and reinstalled as follow:

```
root@hp-linux:~# snap remove lxd
root@hp-linux:~# snap install lxd --channel=5.0/stable
```

Initialise LXD

The next step is to is to edit configurations and view logs, you need to get this set up.

SSH comes bundled with Linux and is already set up and installed, we just need some minor edits to allow users to log in using password authentication. The linux preferred way is to create RSA tokens and it's a great idea, just beyond the scope if this document. ⁶⁾

We are just going to allow a password authentication for now:

We need to:

- edit the ssh daemon configuration first
- restart the service

We can do it from our host Linux server OS directly on the container like this:

```
dev@hp-linux:~$ lxc exec octo -- bash -c "nano /etc/ssh/sshd_config"
```

That opens the sshd_config file on ythe container and allows us to edit it locally.

• find and uncomment/edit PasswordAuthentication no to yes

```
# To disable tunneled clear text passwords, change to no here!
#PasswordAuthentication no
#PermitEmptyPasswords no
```

```
# To disable tunneled clear text passwords, change to no here!
#PasswordAuthentication no
PasswordAuthentication yes
```



Then remember to restart sshd

```
dev@hp-linux:~$ lxc exec octo -- bash -c "systemctl restart sshd"
```

Now test ssh connectivity

```
dev@hp-linux:~$ ssh octo@octo
octo@cr6's password:
Welcome to Ubuntu 22.04.2 LTS (GNU/Linux 5.15.0-71-generic x86_64)
* Documentation:
                   https://help.ubuntu.com
* Management:
                   https://landscape.canonical.com
* Support:
                   https://ubuntu.com/advantage
 System information as of Thu May 18 09:37:40 UTC 2023
* Strictly confined Kubernetes makes edge and IoT secure. Learn how
MicroK8s
  just raised the bar for easy, resilient and secure K8s cluster
deployment.
  https://ubuntu.com/engage/secure-kubernetes-at-the-edge
Expanded Security Maintenance for Applications is not enabled.
13 updates can be applied immediately.
5 of these updates are standard security updates.
To see these additional updates run: apt list --upgradable
9 additional security updates can be applied with ESM Apps.
Learn more about enabling ESM Apps service at https://ubuntu.com/esm
Last login: Thu May 18 09:34:52 2023 from 192.168.0.32
octo@octo:~$
```

We are now connected as the octo user on the oct instance of lxc. I use PuTTY⁷⁾ to connect from my Windows PC into a Linux shell session to work on the backends of the Linux headless systems.

Start up and set up Octprint in the container

The last section follows the instruction from the Octoprint community forum for published here 8)

There is a current issue with some of the key plugins I need to work, i.e. Filament manager and Spool manager that causes failures running under Python 3.10 on the Linux setup. Forcing the install to Python 3.9 in the virtual environment creation, resolves the issues.

Set up a Python 3.9 virtual environment (venv)

- add repositories to get access to 3.9
- install 3.9

```
octo@octo:~# sudo add-apt-repository universe #add universe as a
repo option
octo@octo:~# sudo apt update #and update the
repo source list on the instance
octo@octo:~# sudo apt install python3.9 #try to install
3.9, stop here on success
octo@octo:~# sudo add-apt-repository ppa:deadsnakes/ppa #on fail add
deadsnakes
octo@octo:~# sudo apt install python3.9 #now 3.9 should
install
```

- Create and change into the OctoPrint folder
- Create a 3.9 venv(Virtual Environment)
- Activate the new environment for further steps to follow

```
octo@octo:~$ mkdir OctoPrint && cd OctoPrint
octo@octo:~/OctoPrint$ python3.9 -m venv venv
octo@octo:~/OctoPrint$ source venv/bin/activate
(venv) octo@octo:~/OctoPrint$
```

Note the last line showing our 3.9 environment to be activated.

Add pip and wheel updates

```
(venv) octo@octo:~/OctoPrint$ pip install --upgrade pip wheel
Requirement already satisfied: pip in ./venv/lib/python3.9/site-packages
(22.0.4)
Collecting pip
  Using cached pip-23.1.2-py3-none-any.whl (2.1 MB)
Collecting wheel
  Using cached wheel-0.40.0-py3-none-any.whl (64 kB)
Installing collected packages: wheel, pip
  Attempting uninstall: pip
   Found existing installation: pip 22.0.4
  Uninstalling pip-22.0.4:
    Successfully uninstalled pip-23.1.2 wheel-0.40.0
```

Install Octoprint

On successful completion, proceed to install octoprint

```
(venv) octo@octo:~/OctoPrint$ pip install octoprint
Collecting octoprint
  Using cached OctoPrint-1.8.7-py2.py3-none-any.whl (3.9 MB)
Collecting OctoPrint-FileCheck>=2021.2.23 (from octoprint)
  Using cached OctoPrint_FileCheck-2021.2.23-py2.py3-none-any.whl (19 kB)
```

Wait for it to run to completion and address any errors that might show up. Hopefully no issues will arise, mine ran through without failures here.

Assign octo user run permissions

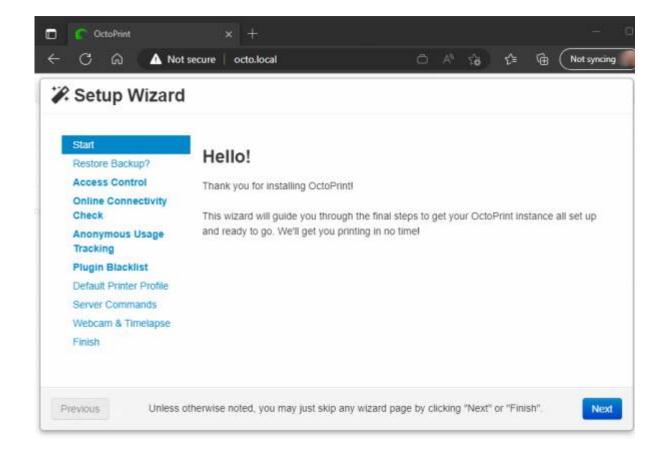
Now let us assign two more permissions to our octo user.

```
(venv) octo@octo:~/OctoPrint$ sudo usermod -aG tty octo
(venv) octo@octo:~/OctoPrint$ sudo usermod -aG dialout octo
```

The commands above add octo to the tty and dialout groups, so octo can run terminal session and connect to our devices like the prinyter port and camera ports.

Do a test run

So we have concluded the basics to get a base install for Octoprint working.



Autostart Octoprint as a Linux Service

Run the automated script here:

```
(venv) octo@octo:~$ wget
https://github.com/OctoPrint/OctoPrint/raw/master/scripts/octoprint.service
&& sudo mv octoprint.service /etc/systemd/system/octoprint.service
```

Or copy from here:

octoprint.service

```
[Unit]
Description=Octoprint Web Service
After=network-online.target
Wants=network-online.target

[Service]
Environment="LC_ALL=C.UTF-8"
Environment="LANG=C.UTF-8"
Type=exec
User=octo
ExecStart=/home/octo/OctoPrint/venv/bin/octoprint

[Install]
WantedBy=multi-user.target
```

```
(venv) octo@octo:~$ nano /etc/systemd/system/octoprint.service
```

Once the edits are completed and matching our setup, enable and start the service.

```
(venv) octo@octo:~$ sudo systemctl enable octoprint
Created symlink /etc/systemd/system/multi-
user.target.wants/octoprint.service → /etc/systemd/system/octoprint.service.
(venv) octo@octo:~$ sudo systemctl start octoprint
(venv) octo@octo:~$ sudo systemctl status octoprint

    octoprint.service - Octoprint Web Service

     Loaded: loaded (/etc/systemd/system/octoprint.service; enabled; vendor
preset: enabled)
     Active: active (running) since Thu 2023-05-18 13:25:25 UTC; 6s ago
   Main PID: 16533 (octoprint)
      Tasks: 12 (limit: 9209)
     Memory: 79.0M
        CPU: 4.457s
     CGroup: /system.slice/octoprint.service
             └16533 /home/octo/OctoPrint/venv/bin/python3.9
/home/octo/OctoPrint/venv/bin/octoprint
May 18 13:25:28 octo octoprint[16533]: 2023-05-18 13:25:28,904 -
octoprint.server - INFO - Listening on http://0.0.0.0:5000 and
http://[::]:5000
May 18 13:25:28 octo octoprint[16533]: 2023-05-18 13:25:28,935 -
octoprint.plugins.pluginmanager - INFO - Loaded plugin repository data from
May 18 13:25:29 octo octoprint[16533]: 2023-05-18 13:25:29,274 -
octoprint.util.pip - INFO - Using "/home/octo/OctoPrint/venv/bin/python3.9 -
May 18 13:25:29 octo octoprint[16533]: 2023-05-18 13:25:29,279 -
octoprint.util.pip - INFO - pip installs to
/home/octo/OctoPrint/venv/lib/pytho>
May 18 13:25:29 octo octoprint[16533]: 2023-05-18 13:25:29,279 -
octoprint.util.pip - INFO - ==> pip ok -> yes
May 18 13:25:29 octo octoprint[16533]: 2023-05-18 13:25:29,287 -
octoprint.plugins.pluginmanager - INFO - Loaded notice data from disk, was
stil>
May 18 13:25:29 octo octoprint[16533]: 2023-05-18 13:25:29,291 -
octoprint.plugins.softwareupdate - INFO - Minimum free storage across all
updat>
May 18 13:25:29 octo octoprint[16533]: 2023-05-18 13:25:29,291 -
octoprint.plugins.softwareupdate - INFO - Fetching check overlays from
May 18 13:25:29 octo octoprint[16533]: 2023-05-18 13:25:29,670 -
octoprint.server.preemptive cache - INFO - Preemptively caching / (ui
default)>
May 18 13:25:31 octo octoprint[16533]: 2023-05-18 13:25:31,095 -
octoprint.server.preemptive cache - INFO - ... done in 1.42s
```

Setting up SSH access to your container

SSH access is not a requirement for Octoprint to work, however if you need to access the linux environment backend shell, and run useful linux commands to edit configurations and view logs, you need to get this set up.

SSH comes bundled with Linux and is already set up and installed, we just need some minor edits to allow users to log in using password authentication. The linux preferred way is to create RSA tokens and it's a great idea, just beyond the scope if this document. ⁹⁾

We are just going to allow a password authentication for now:

We need to:

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We can do it from our host Linux server OS directly on the container like this:

```
dev@hp-linux:~$ lxc exec octo -- bash -c "nano /etc/ssh/sshd_config"
```

That opens the sshd config file on ythe container and allows us to edit it locally.

• find and uncomment/edit PasswordAuthentication no to yes

```
# To disable tunneled clear text passwords, change to no here!
#PasswordAuthentication no
#PermitEmptyPasswords no
```

```
# To disable tunneled clear text passwords, change to no here!
#PasswordAuthentication no
```

PasswordAuthentication yes

#PermitEmptyPasswords no



Then remember to restart sshd

```
dev@hp-linux:~$ lxc exec octo -- bash -c "systemctl restart sshd"
```

Now test ssh connectivity

```
dev@hp-linux:~$ ssh octo@octo
octo@cr6's password:
Welcome to Ubuntu 22.04.2 LTS (GNU/Linux 5.15.0-71-generic x86_64)

* Documentation: https://help.ubuntu.com
```

```
* Management:
                   https://landscape.canonical.com
* Support:
                   https://ubuntu.com/advantage
 System information as of Thu May 18 09:37:40 UTC 2023
* Strictly confined Kubernetes makes edge and IoT secure. Learn how
MicroK8s
  just raised the bar for easy, resilient and secure K8s cluster
deployment.
  https://ubuntu.com/engage/secure-kubernetes-at-the-edge
Expanded Security Maintenance for Applications is not enabled.
13 updates can be applied immediately.
5 of these updates are standard security updates.
To see these additional updates run: apt list --upgradable
9 additional security updates can be applied with ESM Apps.
Learn more about enabling ESM Apps service at https://ubuntu.com/esm
Last login: Thu May 18 09:34:52 2023 from 192.168.0.32
octo@octo:~$
```

We are now connected as the octo user on the oct instance of lxc. I use PuTTY¹⁰⁾ to connect from my Windows PC into a Linux shell session to work on the backends of the Linux headless systems.

References