

Helping people to get on-line before winter 20/21

July 2020



Introduction:

This report is based on the experiences of staff in a number of different organisations delivering Time to Shine projects. It includes information from 100% Digital Leeds.

Almost all of the Time to Shine projects have moved some of their 'usual' activities online, and many of their participants or service users have taken to the digital world like ducks to water.

As it seems likely we may be forced to lock down again at some point, and it is also recognised that some older people feel more confined over the winter it seemed appropriate to consider the future of working with an element of digital provision.

This information is being shared at a time when it could be easier to support people who may now wish to get online. Organisations may use this information themselves during socially distanced face to face meetings, or share it with family members who are able to work side by side with individual older people to adapt equipment or share skills.

Information from [100% Digital Leeds](#)

100% Digital Leeds take the position that not becoming digitally engaged should be a matter of **informed choice**, and they are there to help organisations as they support individuals to engage. Statistics tell them that people who are digitally engaged benefit

"Motivation is one of the key barriers to doing more online – over one-third of those offline say the Internet 'doesn't interest me' and 48% of the digitally excluded state that 'nothing' could motivate them to get online."

Lloyds Consumer Digital Index, 2020

Digital skills can be a lifeline for people and are even more likely to be so at this moment in time. For People with high digital engagement, there are significant lifestyle and well-being benefits.

- 87% say it helps them to connect better with friends and family
- 84% say it helps them to connect better with friends and family
- 55% say it makes them feel more part of a community
- 44% say it helps them to manage physical and mental well-being

100% Digital Leeds can support your organisation in a number of ways:

- Device loan scheme

This is still running; although the equipment is popular and may be out on loan you can join the waiting list. Devices are being returned every week though so if your organisation would like to support your members to get online please get in touch with 100% Digital Leeds. They loan tablets, and smart speakers(using Alexa for instance) individuals can try.

- Training for Digital Champions

To support you in your work with older people they can train all your staff and volunteers to become Digital Champions, and they really want everyone to champion the digital. Even if your front line staff and volunteers are not providing the digital support themselves they will play a key role in identifying individuals who are ready to try things out now.

- Information and resources

Their website is packed with information on everything from beginner friendly apps and software to make devices easier to use, to help with internet safety.

100% Digital Leeds Top Tips

- **Find the 'hook' and take someone straight to it** - whether its football podcasts, films from the 50s or zoom calls with the grandchildren people need to see the internet can make their life better in some way. Then, work backwards to fill in skills gaps - for those who have been offered support already and rejected it it is unlikely starting at step one and working through in a linear progression will work without a strong motivator or 'hook'.
- **One new thing at a time is enough for people.** Going straight to a touch screen and Candy Crush is too much at once; but give someone a jigsaw to complete, or solitaire, and they only have to work out how the touch screen works.
- **Work peer to peer to motivate people if you can.** Digital Champions don't need super skills, they need to convince the non-users that it has been wonderful talking to their grandchildren or they have found an fascinating site full of woodwork projects where they can 'talk' to others about their hobby.

- **Mind your language.** Tablets are something that you take for a headache, some older people have no idea their smartphone is a digital device, so when you ask who has one they may say they haven't.
- **Use tools that enable you to share screens** or offer remote access, it can help you if you are supporting people from a distance. Eg Team Viewer, log Me In, or FixMe.IT
- **Become an Online Centre** with and you can access lots of information about help and funding.

Time to Shine delivery partner concerns

All the partner organisations said one of the biggest fears participants had about going online was anxiety about scams and losing money. This does have to be addressed as it is undoubtedly an issue, BUT it is important to explain to people it is not more of an issue than doorstep scammers or other crimes, and it is possible to learn how to protect yourself.

Balancing the demands of those who have the skills and enthusiasm to take part - and would occupy all the project capacity - and those who you are trying to engage.

Learning from colleagues

- **Do one new thing at a time.** MHA are able to confirm that working step by step does work. They have members they were able to link up by telephone, they started hesitantly but are now asking about Zoom.
- **Using Alexa** powered devices - they can work really well for many people, can be linked to a screen for video calls, are not necessarily expensive and can get people started. They are particularly good if people don't feel up to typing, or want to access phone calls and facetime easily.
- **Use friends, family and grandchildren.** If there is someone in the individual's life who can spend some time with them then they might be able to get the older person started, you can share information with them about ways to simplify things; for example removing unnecessary apps off a tablet to make the screen less cluttered.
- **All sorts of tablets** and other devices are OK to use. The iPads loaned by the Council were bought for reasons of robustness and connectivity, but this doesn't imply you can't invest in less expensive equipment.
- **Skill for Life** CARA too thinks those people who have learned to get online now will continue to use those skills after Covid-19 has passed. Older members have mentioned this to other partners - they say it will help them to keep in touch on dark evenings when they don't want to go out.
- **Using digital buddies** to help staff time go further really helps.

