Digital Inclusion Service Handbook

A handbook designed for local brand partners who are either planning the launch of a new digital inclusion support service, or looking to develop or improve a specific aspect of their existing service. Includes theoretical knowledge, on-the-job learning, as well as tried and tested operational documents.

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1. About this handbook

Age UK has been involved in delivering digital inclusion support services for over 15 years and a significant amount of knowledge has been gained through the delivery of these programmes. This handbook is a repository of theoretical knowledge and on-the-job learning, as well as operational documents that can be used by local brand partners, either when planning the launch of a completely new digital inclusion support service or when developing/improving a specific aspect of an existing service.

The resources in this handbook were created based on feedback from a number of local Age UK and Age Cymru partners. What you will read in this handbook was tried and tested by many partners, though it is important to note that if one approach worked in a particular area, it doesn't necessarily mean it will work in yours. However, we are confident that the options within each section will give you plenty of guidance and practical tools, to discover your own tried and tested ways to deliver an impactful service.

If there is any feedback that you'd like to share with us about this handbook or anything you've learnt that isn't captured in these resources, please drop us a line on **servicesdigital@ageuk.org.uk**

We would like everyone reading this handbook to use it flexibly. You can simply dip into a section that is relevant to you. Each section will consist of good practice learning and, in most cases, there will be at least one example of a tool which you can adapt for your own purposes (e.g. a new learner assessment form).

You will also find handy icons across the document so look out for them when looking for a specific piece of information.

Section relevant if you are **developing a service from scratch**

Section relevant if you are **interested in developing a particular aspect of a service**

Resources that might be **helpful for frontline delivery staff**

Resources that might be **helpful for Digital Champions**

Resources that might be **helpful for older people**

2. Why is digital inclusion important?

How can I use this section?

To better understand the wider landscape of digital exclusion

To inform and train your wider organisation, including new staff and volunteers

To inform triaging/assessment processes when delivering the service

To support development of relevant funding proposals and contextualise the importance of digital inclusion

2. Why is digital inclusion important?

Although the number of older people who are digitally connected continues to rise, there are still 3.1 million people in the UK over the age of 65 who are not online, and age remains the biggest indicator of who is digitally excluded.[1] Worryingly, although the over 75s make up the highest proportion of non-users, in England only 15 per cent of these say they would like to use the internet more.[2]

We live in an increasingly online world, with many key services moving to become 'digital first'. Since the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the role of the internet has become even more important and for most people this has changed the way they work, access services, maintain social contacts, and generally live their lives. While many older people have embraced digital technology, there are others less confident who are at risk of being left behind.

As the pace of change to 'digital first' increases, for example through greater reliance on online shopping, virtual access to GPs, and more shops and services refusing to take cash, it has become more important than ever that older people understand the benefits of being online and can access the support they need to do so, if they wish to.

To support older people well, it's important that we:

- Acknowledge the barriers that are preventing older people from getting online and;
- Recognise the benefits that older people are missing out on because of being offline.

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1 www.ageing-better.org.uk/digital-inclusion

2 www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/digital-inclusion-in-the-pandemic-final-march-2021.pdf

2. Why is digital inclusion important?

Older people could benefit from being online in a number of ways. For example:

- Staying connected or reconnecting with others
- Accessing services and amenities including online shopping
- Getting practical help and information
- Education and learning
- Pursuing hobbies and interests

In addition, Age UK's programmes have demonstrated that older people use technology to support creative and cultural activities, access health information and support, and use a wide range of apps, from navigation, to help with sleep.[3]

It's important to note that Age UK's policy position[4] on digital inclusion is that older people should be supported and encouraged to get online, but those who cannot, or do not want to do so should be able to access services and support in a way that suits them.

Digital exclusion risk factors

Age remains the biggest indicator of who is digitally excluded, with the risk of being digital excluded increasing with age. Other risk factors for digital exclusion include:

- **Gender:** Women aged 65+ tend to use the internet less than men of the same age.

- **Health conditions:** Those with a disability and/or one or more long-term health condition are less likely to use the internet.

- **Socioeconomic status:** Internet non-users and those with fewer digital skills are more likely to be in lower socioeconomic groups. Over one third of benefit claimants, for example, have 'very low' digital engagement.[5]

- **Living alone:** Those who live alone are less likely to have an internet connection at home than their peers.[6]

Barriers to older people getting online

Although over 75s make up the highest proportion of those offline, in England only 15 per cent of these say they would like to use the internet more.[7] So, why is this?

When asked, many older people who are not online say this is because they don't need it or are not interested. However, further exploration shows that there are other contributing factors as to why older people are not online.

In fact, recent research highlighted that the most common barrier to older people getting online, among those who would like to use the internet, was lack of self-efficacy and digital skills, especially among the 75+ group where nearly four out of five (79 per cent) mentioned lack of skills.[8]

And while older people may say they are not interested in using the internet, sometimes this is because they are not aware of the benefits of being online is also a barrier.

Other common barriers for this age group are a lack of trust in the internet, concerns about security, and also not having access to equipment or broadband.[9] In fact, older people aged 65+ are less likely to have internet access in their home, which puts them at a greater risk of digital exclusion.[10]

3 www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/programmes/think-digital/think-digital-phase-2-evaluation---full-report.pdf

4 www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/policy-positions/active-communities/ppp_digital-_inclusion_uk.pdf

5 www.lloydsbank.com/assets/media/pdfs/banking_with_us/whats-happening/210513-lloyds-consumer-digital-index-2021-report.pdf

6 www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/householdcharacteristics/homeinternetandsocialmediausage/articles/exploringtheuksdigitaldivide/2019-03-04

7 www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/digital-inclusion-in-the-pandemic-final-march-2021.pdf

8 www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/digital-inclusion-in-the-pandemic-final-march-2021.pdf

9 www.ageuk.org.uk/globalassets/age-uk/documents/reports-and-publications/reports-and-briefings/active-communities/digital-inclusion-in-the-pandemic-final-march-2021.pdf

10 www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/householdcharacteristics/homeinternetandsocialmediausage/bulletins/internetaccesshouseholdsandindividuals/2020

3. Service model

How can I use this section?

To better understand the example Age UK digital inclusion support service model

To understand example service outcomes and determine local outcomes

To support considerations that need to be made to ensure your service model can achieve intended outcomes

3. Service model

Age UK's digital inclusion support services aim to motivate and inspire older people to get online, and/or support older people to engage safely and securely in the digital world, for example through the provision of technology, and/or in-depth and bespoke one-to-one support to aid the development of their digital skills and confidence.

You can find more detail about the Age UK digital inclusion support service in the Service Specification. The Service Specification is designed to help local partners identify and understand the key activities and processes that need to be undertaken in relation to a digital inclusion support service, to ensure that it is delivered safely, effectively and sustainably, and is of a high quality. It is one possible service specification and is not designed to exclude all other models and specifications.

We know that the tried and tested Digital Champion delivery model is the most effective and sustainable way of engaging with and supporting older people to develop digital confidence and skills. This support service is made up of three key activities:

1. **Awareness raising about the benefits of digital amongst identified service audiences, to inspire and motivate older people to engage with the service.** This could involve the delivery of small- and large-scale events, outreach work in partnership with external service providers, promotional activity, and embedding digital skills assessments within all other organisational interactions with key audiences.

2. **Provision of technology to older people who do not otherwise have access.** This technology must be accessible and take into consideration the specific barriers of the client, for example any disability. Technology could be provided through a loan scheme, or through safe and inclusive community spaces.

3. **Digital skills support to assist older people to develop their digital skills and confidence.** Support can be staff- or volunteer-led, delivered in either a one-to-one or group setting, and could be offered remotely (over the telephone or video call), in the client's home or in a suitable venue. Support should always be learner-led, person-centred, and remain informal and flexible.
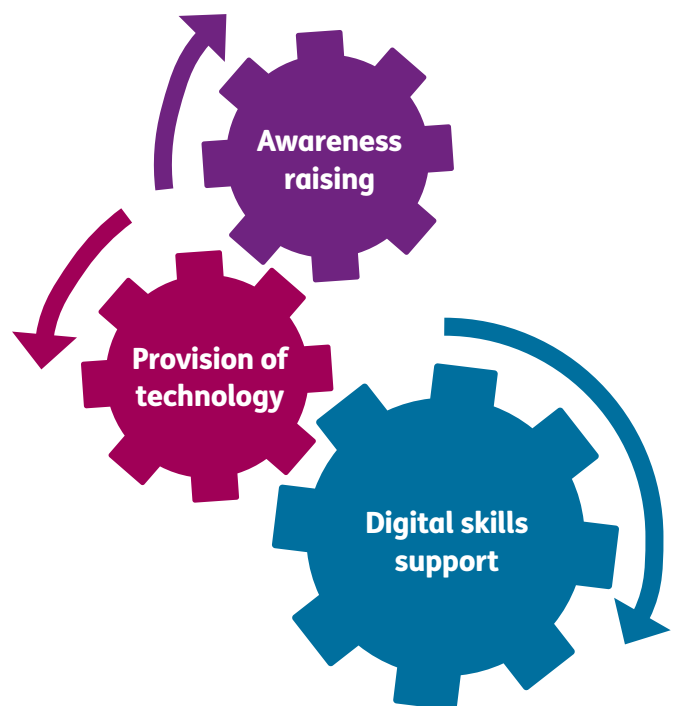
3. Service model

These three activities rely on the dedicated support of staff and volunteers. Whilst paid staff will likely be responsible for the day-to-day management and coordination of the service, volunteer Digital Champions can support and enhance the service by delivering digital skills support sessions. The effective recruitment, training, management and support for volunteer Digital Champions is vital to ensuring a quality, consistent and sustainable service. You can find more information about the staff and volunteers involved in the service here.

Not all older people you work with will want or need to engage with all elements of the service. The service should remain flexible to ensure that it meets the specific needs of the individual, and that they can access support in a way that works for them. Equally, the support that someone needs and the way they want or need to access it may change over time, and it's important to acknowledge and respond to their changing needs. For example, as someone's digital skills and confidence develop, their support needs may become less intense, meaning that they can move from one-to-one to group support.

No or low-level digital skills	Low- or medium-level digital skills	Medium-level digital skills
High support needs: Client is unable to engage with the digital world independently.	**Medium support needs:** Client is more aware of what activities they can do online and is able to explore new activities with some support.	**Low support needs:** Client is confident and independent and requires support only with specific activities as part of expanding their skill-set.
One-to-one support sessions	Group support sessions	Drop-in group support sessions
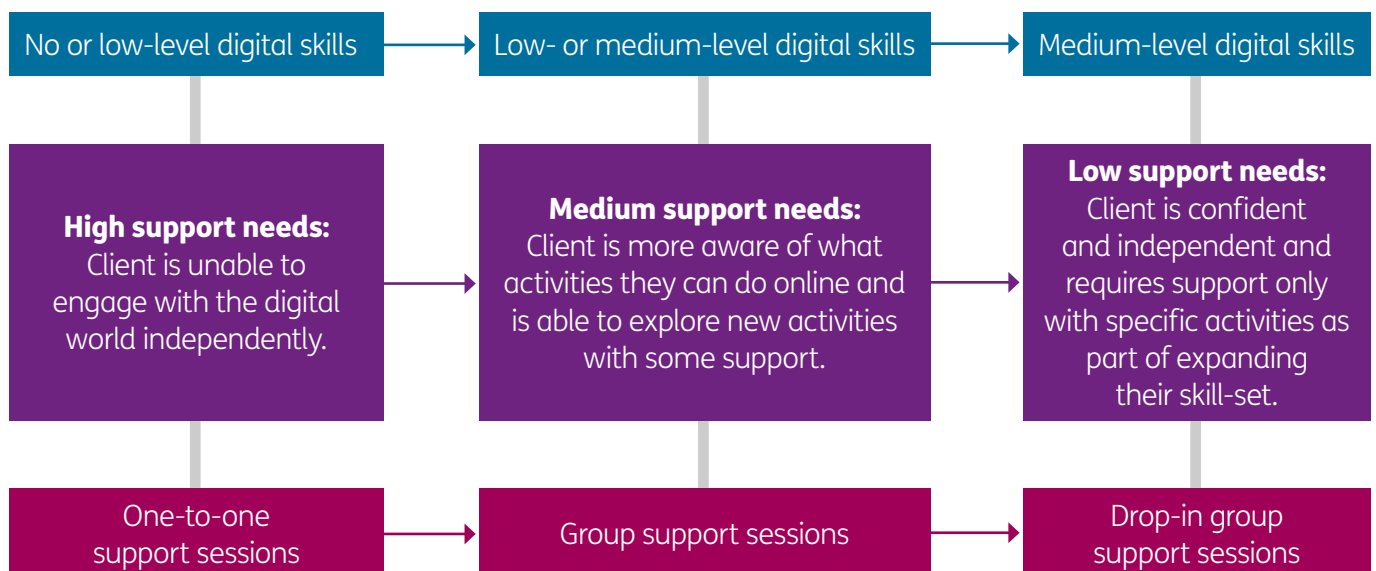
Service outcomes

The outcomes of Age UK digital inclusion support services are led by the need in the community, balancing both the needs of individuals and those delivering the service. An Age UK digital inclusion support service aims to achieve primary and secondary outcomes, both for the older people engaging with the service and for the wider organisation. These will vary based on the specific model and goals of your service. Examples include:

Primary outcomes

- Increased motivation of older people to engage with the service and to get online.

- Increased number of older people safely and securely engaging with online tools and services, as a result of improved confidence and skills.

- Increased organisational understanding of barriers that older people face with regards to digital inclusion and how to overcome these.

Secondary outcomes

For older people

- Improved overall wellbeing.

- Increased independence.

- Reduced risk of social isolation through the ability to connect online with family and friends.

- Improved management of finances.

- Improved self-management of health and access to health resources and services.

For the organisation

- Improved staff capabilities to deliver wider services.

- Consistent organisation-wide approach to the delivery of digital inclusion services.

- Improved ability to determine key outcomes for older people and/or the organisation through learning.

- Improved awareness by external organisations, service providers and service users of your organisation as recognised and trusted digital inclusion service providers for older people.

Resource #1: Service Checklist

To maximise these outcomes, make sure your service considers the service checklist.

Checklist	
Area of consideration	**Notes about current position and/or any further actions required**
Provide accessible, flexible, and tailored support to older people, to help them develop digital confidence and skills in order to engage with the digital world safely and securely, as opposed to following a set curriculum.	
Consider accessibility for the client in terms of design and any disabilities, for example visual impairment, when planning and delivering digital inclusion support services.	
Maintain a delivery model that can easily be adapted, and offer responsive and timely access to the service.	
If offering a chargeable service, be appealing and accessible to the client in terms of price, whilst also being sustainable for the organisation.	
Be person-centred and non-judgemental in delivery methods.	

3. Service model

Area of consideration	Notes about current position and/or any further actions required
Identify agreed selection priority/risk-stratification criteria for clients to ensure best use of limited resources when needed.	
Implement partnership working, both nationally and locally, to ensure beneficial collaboration and to reduce risk of duplication/competition.	
Understand what already exists (internally and externally), what has worked/hasn't worked and continue to learn and adapt in response, utilising and developing existing resources, where possible.	
Be a responsive, integrated and embedded service that can rapidly respond to the needs of the older person and involve other parts of the organisation as required.	
Provide accessible online and offline (i.e., printed) resources to aid ongoing digital skills learning.	
Provide access to accessible technology, including connectivity and devices, on a loan basis or through community settings, for example tablets made available for use in local partner venues.	

4. Service audience

How can I use this section?

To better understand who is at risk of digital exclusion

To inform additional considerations that should be made for high-risk groups

To support the consideration of encouraging diversity

4. Service audience

Age UK digital inclusion services are generally aimed at supporting older people over 50 years of age who have a need or desire to get online. The specific service audience your project works with will depend on the parameters of your project and the objectives of your service. Some of your activities might involve staff and volunteers, as well as the friends and family of digitally excluded older people. You can find more information about the service workforce here, and some of the resources included throughout the handbook might also be helpful to share with friends and family.

When considering who you want to support with your digital inclusion support services, it's important to consider which groups of older people are most at risk of digital exclusion.

Looking back at the digital exclusion risk factors (page 8), we can see that older people (particularly women) aged 65+, older people in lower income brackets, older people who have a disability and/or one or more health condition, and older people who live alone, are all at an increased risk of digital exclusion.

While there will be variation in risk factors across different regions, this knowledge can help you to target those who are most digitally excluded in your area and who would therefore benefit the most from your digital inclusion support service. It is important to recognise though, that the most at-risk groups may require additional and higher intensity support provisions, and to consider these within your service design and delivery.

Additional considerations for high-risk groups

Physical and mental health: For those older people experiencing or living with a physical or mental health condition, this can impact their motivation to engage with support, and the pace at which they progress. Focus should be made on motivating and inspiring older people to get online, with particular focus on the benefits it could bring. Support should remain flexible, allowing for support to be delivered in a way that works for the individual, considering their health conditions, while support providers should be patient and understanding of the individual's needs.

Accessibility barriers: Barriers, such as sight or hearing loss, may mean that the staff and volunteers delivering the service will need additional knowledge and skills to provide impactful support. To ensure that service providers are confident and competent to support older people with accessibility barriers, you might want to consider the provision of additional training, and/or signposting to information and support provided by more specialised organisations.

Language barriers: For older people for whom English is their second language, you could consider targeted recruitment of volunteer Digital Champions who can provide support in another language they are familiar with. Patience will be key to ensuring older people who speak limited English can benefit from the support. When developing resources to support the delivery of sessions, picture guides that rely less (or not at all) on words can help make information more accessible to this high-risk group. You could also use these resources for older people with no or low-level reading skills.

Low income: We know that a big barrier that some older people face when getting online is the affordability of technology and connectivity. Without access to the right technology and connectivity, older people may struggle to engage with the skills support you offer. Explore community technology provisions, for example in your local library and community centres, and take a look at Age UK's Tablet Loan Scheme Pack for guidance on loaning technology to older people who don't otherwise have access.

Importance of encouraging diversity and reaching underrepresented groups

All Age UK services should be accessible to all older people, from a diverse range of backgrounds and in a way that is relevant and works for them. In addition to the groups most at risk of digital exclusion, where possible capture and analyse information about the older people you are currently engaging with, to ascertain whether you are reaching a diverse group.

If you think you need to be reaching a more diverse group of older people, there are some things you can do to encourage diversity, for example:

- Recruiting a diverse group of volunteer Digital Champions;
- building relationships with community groups who work specifically with underrepresented groups, and;
- ensuring your resources are available in different languages.

You can find more information about the promoting the service **here** and identifying older people **here**.

5. Planning your service

How can I use this section?

To support the consideration of what services already exist in the local community

To support the consideration of the specific needs of older people in the local community

To better understand and consider the role of your organisation in the provision of digital inclusion services

To better understand and consider the organisations capabilities of effectively delivering digital inclusion services

5. Planning your service

Whether you are setting up a new digital inclusion support service at your organisation or developing an existing one, there are a few things you should consider first to make sure the service can effectively meet the needs of your community.

Horizon scanning

What digital inclusion services already exist in your community? Consider what's already available from both your own organisation and other service providers in your area. Consider who the current services support, what they provide and how they provide it. Horizon scanning helps to avoid service duplication, as well as identify opportunities for partnership working.

Ask yourself, how do these existing services compete with or complement the digital inclusion service that you will or are delivering?

Resource #2: Horizon Scanning Table

Service provider	Who does the service support?	What does the service provide?	Is it a charged-for or free service for the service user?	What is the service provision?	Where is the service provided?
e.g. our local council	e.g. members of the community aged 18+ within the council area who receive benefits	e.g. a loan tablet device	e.g. the service is free	e.g. technology only, no additional skills support provided	e.g. the technology is delivered to the service users' home

5. Planning your service

Service provider	Who does the service support?	What does the service provide?	Is it a charged-for or free service for the service user?	What is the service provision?	Where is the service provided?

Community needs

Once you know what is already provided, you will then want to understand how these services meet the needs of older people in your area. Think about the key activities of a digital inclusion service, and specifically the barriers older people face getting online. Be sure to refer to both national and local statistics. By doing this, you can identify the gaps that your service can fill.

Resource #3: Community Needs Table

Community need	Is this need currently being met? (Yes, Somewhat, No)	What services meet this need?	If this need is not currently being fully met, what gaps exist?
e.g. Lack of motivation to get online	e.g. Somewhat. Older people are encouraged to get online through conversations as part of applying for local council services, but is specific to the council service they need	e.g. N/A	e.g. Awareness raising activities that promote the benefits of being online, and that are specifically targeted at older people
e.g. Lack of access to devices			
e.g. Lack of access to connectivity			
e.g. Lack of confidence and skills			

5. Planning your service

Community need	Is this need currently being met? (Yes, Somewhat, No)	What services meet this need?	If this need is not currently being fully met, what gaps exist?

The role of your organisation

Now you've identified what needs to be in place to best meet the needs of older people in your community and you know what already exists, you can begin to think about your role to play in the service provision locally. Remember to ask yourselves whether you are best placed to provide this support. Consider whether there are opportunities for partnership working with other service providers in your community.

Having looked at what's already out there, the specific needs of older people in your area, and the role that you can play in meeting these needs, you should now have a better understanding of the service you want to deliver. Of course, you will need funding to cover the costs of the service provision (this is covered here) but before you begin to explore funding opportunities, there's just a few more things it would be helpful to consider.

Your strategy:

1. How does the digital inclusion service fit within your wider organisational strategy?

2. Do you need to increase buy-in from the wider organisational to ensure the success of the service? If so, how will you go about achieving this?

Your workforce:

1. What workforce do you need in place to support the delivery of the service (both paid and volunteer)? Who are the key teams you will need to get involved?

2. What skills and competencies will you need within the team to ensure impactful service delivery? This handbook provides example Job Descriptions and Person Specifications for key roles. You can find them here.

3. What training will the workforce (including volunteers) need? Do you already have this available to you or will you need to consider new training opportunities?

Your technology:

1. What technology will you need in place within the organisation, both for the workforce and older people? Of the technology needs you've identified, what do you already have and what will you need to purchase?

2. Does your wider organisational infrastructure support the implementation of this technology?

It can be helpful to carry out a Technology Audit to find out what tools and systems you are currently using that might enable or hinder the delivery of the digital inclusion support service. A good understanding of your technology will help you to understand which solutions are in place, highlight their benefits and limitations, and identify opportunities where you could consider a different approach on technology to get a better or more efficient solution.

Answer the questions in as much detail as possible. It may be that the relevant information will come from different people within your organisation, or that some of the technology will not be relevant to your organisation or service.

Resource #4: Technology Audit

Organisational need (specific to the digital inclusion support service)	Is this essential to the digital inclusion support service? (Yes/No)	If essential:		
		What's already in place to support this organisational need?	People and processes Who is using it, how are they using it and where are they using it from?	Does anything else need to be put in place to support this organisational need?
		Systems		
Website				
Payment tools (for example to support the purchase of resources for the service and/ or client payments for sessions, if applicable)				
Event management/ course booking (including managing events, taking bookings, managing communications)				
Core service tools for Information & Advice, Needs assessment tools, etc.				

Telephony (including systems for managing calls, including out of hours and remote working)				
Customer Relationship Management (CRM) (including storing and managing people's details, and their case history across different services)				
Case flow management and service delivery tools (including anything that supports the management of day-to-day delivery of digital inclusion services)				
Data analysis and reporting (including extracting insights about clients, understanding performance and creating reports for services)				
Financial management (including payroll and invoicing)				

5. Planning your service

Human resources for staff and volunteers (including systems that support recruitment, training and development)				
Other				
IT Infrastructure				
Technology leadership and delivery (including the structure of your IT team, whether technology is in-house or outsourced, skills)				
User management (systems that help manage the IT service)				
Desktop support (day-to-day support on offer to users)				

File sharing, cloud access and remote working (including how staff and volunteers might share data and files, and capabilities of working from the office or remotely)				
Print management (including printing and scanning)				
Network management (running the physical network)				
Data Centre (including where your data is stored, and the security measures in place)				
Devices (including device specifications, and support provided to use them)				

Staff and Volunteer Survey

To understand more about the confidence and skills that your staff and volunteers already have, and whether these are sufficient to support the delivery of the service, it could be helpful to do a survey which covers:

1. How do you currently use digital and technology in your role?

2. How confident do you feel using the digital and technology requirements of your role?

3. Do you feel you have the adequate technology to meet the requirements of your role?

4. Do you have any training needs with regards to your use of digital and technology within your role?

The results from the Technology Audit, and Staff and Volunteer Survey will provide useful insight into what you already have in place to support the delivery of your service, and what you'll need to look at developing further.

6. Securing funding

How can I use this section?

To better understand how to effectively identify funders

To support the development of funding proposals

To better understand the development of financial modelling for a digital inclusion support service

To better understand and consider the sustainability of digital inclusion support services

Identifying digital inclusion funders

There are several funders you can explore when looking for digital inclusion funding, including corporates, trusts, foundations, the public sector, and local community funds. When identifying possible funders, it is important to always ask yourself:

Who in your area would benefit from older people being online?

For Local Authorities and corporates such as technology companies, there is a clear benefit to the work we do: by supporting older people to get online, more people will be able to engage with and benefit from their services. But there are lots of other potential funders who could also benefit. These include banks, utility companies, health services, and retailers such as supermarkets, all of whom are increasingly moving to online service provision. Police commissioners may also have an interest in the work we do supporting older people to safeguard themselves against issues such as online fraud and scams.

Age UK update funding opportunities regularly on WordPress. To receive daily updates via email, you can sign up here and select 'Daily Update'. It's helpful to keep a record of potential funders you could proactively reach out to, to keep an eye on for funding opportunities and to keep a track of conversations. You might already have an existing relationship with some through other services, so be sure to make the most of any existing partnerships when exploring funding for your digital inclusion support services.

Example Funder Tracker:

Organisation Name	Organisation Type	Contact	Existing/Ideal Relationship	Hook	Action points
	e.g. Corporate/ Trust/ Foundation/ Public sector/ Local fund	Name, role and email address. Look on the company website or on LinkedIn for relevant contacts	What is the existing relationship with the funder (if any)? If you don't already have a relationship, what ideal relationship do you want to build?	Why might this organisation be interested in funding your digital inclusion service?	e.g. Identify key contact, set up an introductory meeting, submit funding proposal

6. Securing funding

Creating a proposal

Different funders will have different requirements that you'll need to directly respond to in your funding proposal, but there are some key points it's good to include in every proposal.

1. **Illustrate the need in your local area –** use statistics and evidence, for example from Age UK research, ONS and UK Parliament data. This data can help illustrate:

    a. How many older people are not online in your area?

    b. How many older people have no access to technology or connectivity to the internet?

    c. What are the risk factors and barriers leading to older people not being online?

    d. What are the benefits of getting online that some older people are missing out on? Tailor this to the funder.

    e. What has/hasn't been done in your area to address this problem? How can your organisation fill the gap and/or complement what is already being offered?

    f. Any other evidence that you can use to evidence the need/demand for this service in your area – e.g. client feedback surveys, increased enquiries to info lines.

2. **Your solution**

    a. **What will you deliver?** Outline your delivery model, including the expected outcomes, and the journeys of those involved (for example, a Digital Champion or Client Journey). You can find example infographics on the Age UK website.

    b. **How will people know about it?** Explain how you plan to market the service locally to older people, their friends/family, as well as potential referrers and volunteers, to ensure the successful recruitment of Digital Champions and that older people are motivated to engage.

    c. **How much will it cost?** Outline your budget. You might be applying for a restricted budget amount and therefore won't have the flexibility to apply for unlimited funds. It's still important to be realistic about what you can achieve with the funding available, and to detail how this will be spent, including delivery costs, salary costs and overheads, for example. You can find more information about financial modelling for your digital inclusion support services here.

    d. **What will you achieve?** Include Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These help the funder understand what the service will achieve and can be used throughout delivery to demonstrate how effectively you are achieving the service objectives. Your KPIs will be key in demonstrating the reach and impact that a funder's money will have. KPIs you might want to include will be the number of Digital Champions recruited, the number of awareness raising, and skills support sessions delivered, and the number of older people supported.

    e. **How will you know the impact the service has had?** Consider qualitative methods for capturing the difference the service has had on older people, staff/volunteers as well as other organisations you have worked with. For instance, this can be through case studies, satisfaction surveys, feedback forms or regular catch ups with external referrers. You might even be in a position to commission an independent evaluator to carry out a more in-depth analysis of the service impact.

3. Making your organisation stand out

a. **Why your organisation?** Showcase why your organisation is best placed to meet the local need and deliver the programme you've outlined. Think about your unique selling points in comparison to other service providers, for example, are you a trusted brand? Can you offer wrap-around support? Do you have existing relationships with older people who could benefit from the service? Illustrate how you can utilise these strengths to ensure a successful and impactful digital inclusion service.

b. **What results have you delivered before?** If you have delivered a similar service before, demonstrate your experience, and provide evidence of its successful delivery.

c. **Who has already benefited from your service?** Storytellers (older people who can talk about their experience with your service) will help to demonstrate the human impact of your service. While numbers and statistics can be convincing, case studies from older people you have already helped should help to illustrate the potential for the digital inclusion service, and ultimately the impact it can have if they fund it.

Financial modelling

Age UK digital inclusion support services need to be financially sustainable whilst remaining accessible to older people.

Full Cost Recovery (FCR) is important because it ensures the availability of resources to allow the service to be sustainable and enable focus on the provision of effective help for older people. FCR requires knowledge of the digital inclusion support service's cost base and overheads so that decisions about pricing can be made and/or funding can be identified. Whilst achieving FCR might not always be possible, the full costs always need to be calculated.

Any shortfall will need to be accounted for and how it will be funded or offset by contingency funds, made clear. Age UK has produced a Full Cost Recovery Manual to help guide you through establishing the full costs of the service (Search for 'Full Cost Recovery Manual' on the loop).

Three key types of cost need to be calculated to develop a sound price:

1. **Direct Costs:** These include the costs of staff and activities which can be directly linked to the digital inclusion support service, i.e., salaries for staff, travel costs, insurance, etc.

2. **Direct Support Costs:** These are shared costs, such as property or managers.

3. **Indirect Costs or Overheads:** These are the costs which cannot be directly identified with the service.

Budget lines for digital inclusion support services could include salaries, volunteer Digital Champion recruitment, travel, event space, devices and connectivity, marketing, and overheads. When presenting the budget to the funder in the proposal, be sure to clearly identify which type of cost each budget line relates to.

Please note that, if the FCR is not calculated accurately, you will not be able to reflect the true cost to a funder and the service is likely to cost your organisation money to run. If this is not recognised at the outset it could result in an unexpected deficit.

As the cost of technology and connectivity can be a barrier to older people getting online, where possible Age UK digital inclusion support services should be offered to clients free of charge. However, this may not always be viable. One alternative model is to offer basic service provision free of charge to the older person, and costs can be attached to more intense support provision, for example one-to-one or long-term.

6. Securing funding

Building a sustainable programme

Most funding opportunities will be for a restricted period, but it is likely you will want to establish your digital inclusion support service on a longer-term basis.

It's important to have a clear long-term vision and aspiration for the service in your local area, and to be able to clearly illustrate this in your funding proposals. When developing a long-term strategy for your digital inclusion support service, think about the need, your solution/s, how much it will cost, and any dependencies, for example local partnerships.

It's also helpful to understand from funders their long-term vision, and ultimately whether there will be any further opportunities for funding.

Building long-term relationships with funders: Top Tips

- **Work together.** Work closely with the funder in the proposal development if possible.

- **Don't bite off more than you can chew.** Manage expectations about what you can realistically deliver, given your capacity and the amount of money they're giving. Over promising and not achieving the KPIs may hinder long-term relationships.

- **Communicate.** Throughout project delivery, ensure you meet the funder's monitoring and reporting requirements, and continue to demonstrate to them the impact their funding is having.

- **Extra value.** Is there anything else that was agreed as part of the funding? Make sure the funders are getting what they need from you in return for the funding, for example media coverage or signposting.

How else could the funder support your work?

As well as approaching a funder for money, it would be worth considering if the funder could help with your digital inclusion support service in other ways. For example, could they gift technology? Could they encourage their staff to volunteer as Digital Champions? Could you support the funder to make their organisation more digitally inclusive? Consider these questions and discuss with the funder from the start to help build an open and effective relationship.

7. Delivering the service

How can I use this section?

To better understand how the service could be delivered in practical terms

To access useful project resources which support the practical delivery of the service

To support the recruitment, training and management of the service workforce and volunteers

Useful project resources

- Job descriptions and Person Specifications (pages 36, 37, 39, 40)
- Digital Champion recruitment poster and leaflet (available on Brand Hub)
- Digital Champion record form (page 42)

Workforce

The digital inclusion service relies on support from both paid staff and volunteers.

In addition to the core frontline staff and volunteers who deliver the digital inclusion support service, a number of other people will be involved in the running of the service. These include but are not limited to: service managers, registered managers, service coordinators, administrative support, HR, finance, marketing, IT support and other Age UK service personnel as required, e.g. Information and Advice advisers.

Decision making on the roles required to provide a digital inclusion support service will reflect your organisational structure, service parameters and aims, the local culture, as well as the resources available.

Key example roles within the delivery of an Age UK digital inclusion support service include:

Role Title	Paid or Volunteer	Responsibilities
Project Coordinator	Paid	To successfully develop, manage and deliver digital inclusion support service to older people across a specific region.
Project Administrator		To coordinate sessions, including booking and monitoring of sessions.
'Embedded' Digital Champion		To identify clients engaging with a service in need of digital skills support, and signpost them accordingly.
Digital Outreach Worker		To facilitate outreach visits to promote referrals to the service and enable participation of clients who are unwilling or unable to attend volunteer-led sessions.
Volunteer Digital Champion	Volunteer	To provide personalised support to older people through the provision of one-to-one support and group workshops.

It's helpful to outline the specific skills and competencies of both staff and volunteers involved in the delivery of the digital inclusion service in structured Job Descriptions and Person Specifications.

A **Job Description** details the key duties and expected competencies of a job.

A **Person Specification** is a profile of the personal skills, qualifications, abilities, and experiences needed to perform a job role.

Service delivery staff

You might already have staff in place who can be deployed to support the delivery of the digital inclusion support service, or you might need to recruit new staff. Either way, it's important to think about the main purpose and responsibilities for each role.

To get you started, we've provided an example Job Description and Person Specification for the Project Coordinator. You can find more example Job Descriptions and Person Specifications for the digital inclusion support service staff roles in the Digital Inclusion Service Specification.

These will need to be adapted based on your service parameters and aims.

Resource #5: Example Job Description: Project Coordinator

Job Title	Project Coordinator
Location	Local Age UK/Age Cymru office
Main Purpose	To successfully develop, manage and deliver digital inclusion support service to older people through a team of trained Digital Champions.
Main Responsibilities	1. Recruit and manage Embedded and/or Volunteer Digital Champions. 2. Identify new clients who could benefit from the Age UK digital inclusion support service. To include establishing and facilitating internal and external referral routes. 3. Match Digital Champions to clients, taking into consideration their skills and competencies, interests, and availability. 4. Coordinate the delivery of the Tablet Loan Scheme. To include coordinating the purchase, set-up and distribution of tablets to clients who could benefit from the service. 5. Identify opportunities to increase the organisational digital maturity to ensure sustainability of the Age UK digital inclusion support service, as well as wider service provisions.
Salary and Benefits	Paid role. Salary and Benefits TBC by recruiting organisation.

Resource #6: Example Job Description: Project Coordinator

Job Title	Project Coordinator

Technical Skills	Organisational Skills	Communicative Skills
Advanced digital skill set, and the ability to use these in a flexible way to carry out the role effectively. Strategic thinking. Data management and analysis skills. Budget management. Ability to effectively manage volunteers. Awareness and understanding of the need for and ways to ensure safeguarding. Knowledge and understanding of the digital inclusion agenda, and relevant policy and local/national initiatives. Understanding of the local population profile.	Excellent organisational skills, including attention to detail. Ability to successfully manage projects in a timely and effective way, to ensure the delivery or results and sustainability. Ability to work flexibly and adapt to changing needs. Ability to meet deadlines and manage conflicting priorities.	Excellent communication and interpersonal skills (both oral and written), with a wide range of audiences at all levels. Ability to work as part of a team, as well as independently. Ability to present confidently and effectively. Ability to influence, negotiate and facilitate conversation both internally and externally.

Digital Champions

A volunteer Digital Champion is someone who is trained and supported to inspire older people in their community to get online and help them to develop their digital skills. Often, it is simple support that can make a huge difference to older people's lives. Digital Champions come from a range of different backgrounds and have varying levels of digital experience themselves, from IT professionals to people who are 'newly converted' to digital technology and want to share their enthusiasm. They may be staff and volunteers already working for or supporting your organisation, employees at local businesses or local community organisations, or other older people themselves.

Digital Champion approaches are proven to work in supporting digital inclusion and there is clear evidence that Digital Champion support is effective in building learners' confidence and digital skills.

The most important skill a volunteer Digital Champion can have is to be enthusiastic about the benefits of being online, and be willing to share this with others. The volunteer Digital Champion Job Description and Person Specification included in this handbook provide more detail about other important skills, knowledge and experience a volunteer Digital Champion might benefit from.

Recruiting volunteer Digital Champions

How and where? There are a variety of places to recruit volunteer Digital Champions and the best place to promote the opportunity will vary in different areas. Some places to consider include:

- **Websites:** your own website, local online job boards, other service provider websites, etc.

- **Social media:** use your organisations social media accounts, for example Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to promote the volunteer opportunity.

- **Newsletters:** your own newsletter and newsletters distributed by other local organisations.

- **Advertising** in local magazines, and on local TV and radio.

- **In local community spaces**, for example libraries and supermarkets. You could use Age UK's example Digital Champion poster and leaflet on Brand Hub.

- **Reach out to local groups** of people who might be particularly interested, for example local colleges and universities or local tech companies.

When promoting the volunteer Digital Champion opportunity, make sure to include information on the requirements of the role, including what skills and experience someone needs to have, how much time a volunteer needs to commit, what activities they will be responsible for, and most importantly, how to apply!

Please note that there are costs related to the recruitment and management of volunteers (e.g. equipment, insurance, management, rent, utilities) and these need to be taken into account when considering your Full Cost Recovery.

Volunteer Digital Champion – Volunteer Description and Person Specification

Whilst there may be some crossover with staff working on the digital inclusion support service, volunteer Digital Champions have distinct responsibilities in comparison to staff, and as a result will require different skills and competencies. In fact, Employment Law states that a volunteer should not undertake the same role as a paid staff member, as this constitutes substitution and can be legally challenged. Therefore, a volunteer Digital Champion should have clearly defined duties that supplement rather than replicate that of paid members of staff.

These example resources are designed to help you to better understand the volunteer Digital Champion role and support recruitment. We recommend that you use these (appropriately reviewed and amended) when advertising the role, and where applicable, interviewing applicants.

Resource #7: Example Volunteer Description: Volunteer Digital Champion

Job Title	Volunteer Digital Champion

Location	Community settings/home-based remote support

Main Purpose	To provide personalised support to older people through the provision of one-to-one support and group workshops.

Main Responsibilities	1. Liaise with the Project Coordinator and Project Administrator to be matched with older people for whom the Volunteer Digital Champion is best placed to provide support (based on interests, skills and competencies and availability). 2. Understand the specific needs and goals of the individual engaging with support, including their existing confidence and skills. 3. Using pre-existing templates and resources, create personalised sessions plans for individual clients to support them to meet their goals. 4. Deliver one-to-one support and group workshops with older people to develop their digital skills and confidence. One-to-one support sessions may be regular and ongoing depending on the needs of the individual. Sessions and workshops are delivered in community settings or remotely over the phone or video call, for example. 5. Collect monitoring information from clients' sessions and share with the Project Coordinator/Project Administrator as applicable.

Salary and Benefits	This role is a volunteer role and therefore salary is not applicable. Benefits TBC by recruiting organisation.

Resource #8: EXAMPLE Person Specification: Volunteer Digital Champion

Job Title	Volunteer Digital Champion

	Technical Skills	Organisational Skills	Communicative Skills
Essential	Good digital skills. Confident using different devices, including smart phones and tablets, laptops, and smart speakers. Knowledge of various IT packages and a wide range of popular applications. Confident delivering both group and one-to-one activities with older people. Good teaching skills, including the ability to create impactful session plans based on the needs of the client and using pre-existing templates as guidance. Ability to troubleshoot issues promptly as they arise.	The ability to organise session delivery to ensure that a client's goals are met in a timely manner. Excellent time management skills to ensure that sessions are delivered within the agreed time frame.	Excellent communication skills. Excellent listening skills. Ability to relay information and instructions in a clear, accessible, relevant and personable way. Ability to work with learners with different levels of knowledge and skill. Ability to be empathetic in a group to people's individual needs. Ability to maintain confidential communication where applicable.
Desirable	Confident using both Apple and Android devices.		

Experience	No specific experience required.

Behaviours and Values	• Willingness to understand the issues and barriers affecting older people and those around them, specifically with regards to digital skills. • An open-minded approach to individuals, avoiding judgement and stereotyping. • Enjoy working with others. • A commitment to and understanding of equal opportunities. • Honest and reliable. • Patient and understanding.

Qualifications and Education	No specific qualifications or education required.

The application process:

The application process for volunteer Digital Champions will depend on your organisational volunteer recruitment process and the specific responsibilities of the volunteer/s you are recruiting. You might want to consider:

- Requiring an application form to be completed by prospective volunteers.
- Requesting that prospective volunteers provide a personal and/or work reference.
- Inviting prospective volunteers to have an informal chat about the opportunity.
- Inviting prospective volunteers to attend an interview.
- Requiring prospective volunteers to complete a DBS Check.

Volunteer DBS checks

Often, we are inclined to process Enhanced or Enhanced with Barred List level DBS checks on prospective volunteers, to best safeguard the clients they may support. In many cases, it can feel like the right thing to do, given the reassurance you will receive of no existing criminal records for a volunteer as well as the reduced cost of processing an enhanced level DBS check as compared to a basic level DBS check on volunteer positions.

The volunteer Digital Champion role is likely to legally qualify for an Enhanced level DBS check (but not the Enhanced with Barred List level), given the likely duties and frequencies of the volunteer roles.

As a reminder, your organisation must only carry out an Enhanced DBS check on a volunteer Digital Champion if they carry out activities defined as work with adults, and that:

1. this includes any form of training, teaching, instruction, assistance, advice or guidance provided wholly or mainly for adults who receive a health or social care service and/or;

2. the adult receiving health and social care service is receiving support, assistance or advice to assist with living independently or maintaining capacity, and/or is receiving a service provided specifically because of their age, illness or disability, and/or;

3. the volunteer is doing so:
   a. more than three days in every 30 or;
   b. face-to-face between the hours of 2am and 6am or;
   c. at least weekly on an ongoing basis.

In summary, the role should be eligible for an Enhanced Level DBS Check provided your digital inclusion support service:

- **restricts provision to service users by an older age minimum, and;**
- **the volunteers carrying out the role are delivering training and instruction or advice, and the volunteer is delivering the service at least three days in a month.**

Useful resources:
- Definition of Regulated Activity
- Guide to Adult Workforce Roles

Recording Digital Champions

You will need to keep track of your volunteer Digital Champions. You might already have volunteer recruitment and management processes in place for other services that could help. Our example of a Digital Champion Record form below helps to record all your engagements with Digital Champions. Always refer to your data sharing/consent policies to explain how their data will be shared with any third-party organisations.

Resource #9: Digital Champion Record Form

Digital Champion Record Form		
Date joining the organisation		
Champion ID		
Full name		
Email address		
Are they	Staff	
	Existing volunteer	
	New volunteer	
Gender	Male	
	Female	
	Other	
	Prefer not to say	
Age	18–24	
	25–40	
	41–50	
	50–64	
	65–74	
	75–84	
	85+	

7. Delivering the service

Ethnicity	Asian/Asian British (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, any other Asian background)	
	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British (African, Caribbean, any other Black/African/Caribbean background)	
	Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups (White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian, any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background)	
	White (English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British, Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, any other White background)	
	Other ethnic group (Arab, any other ethnic background)	
	Prefer not to say	
Reason for wanting to be a Digital Champion		
How would they rate their digital skills?	Very poor	
	Poor	
	OK	
	Good	
	Excellent	
How confident do they feel passing their digital skills onto others?	Not at all confident	
	Somewhat confident	
	Very confident	
What device(s) do they feel confident using?	e.g. smartphones or tablets/Apple or Android	
Are there any digital activities they feel particularly confident doing?	e.g. editing photos, online banking, communicating online	
What other skills are they interested in contributing within this service?	e.g. administrative support	
Next steps for supporting the Digital Champion	e.g. specific training needs, technology requirements	

Ongoing volunteer recruitment

As with all services, volunteer Digital Champions will come and go. Based on your individual service requirements, you should have a good understanding of how many volunteers you need to meet your service objectives. As volunteer Digital Champions leave throughout the project delivery period, it's important to recruit new volunteer Digital Champions to ensure you always have enough capacity to ensure the consistency and continued provision of the service. You will need to consider the turnaround time of promoting, recruiting and training new volunteers.

Training Digital Champions

In order for Digital Champions to feel confident in their roles and to be able to deliver an impactful service, they will likely need some form of training. The skills, experience and knowledge that volunteer Digital Champions already have will vary, so it won't be a case of 'one size fits all'.

Your organisation will likely already have a core volunteer training programme in place, and as volunteers, Digital Champions should complete any core training requirements that you already have, including organisational policy, risk assessments and mandatory safeguarding training, for example. You might also find the First Five Minutes e-learning helpful when training Digital Champions. This is available to all staff and volunteers. This training is designed for staff and volunteers who are a first point of contact for people coming to Age UK for help. It helps staff and volunteers provide good customer service to clients in the first five minutes of your interaction with them. Using photos, videos, audio and printable information, it looks at how to use a range of skills, including:

• active listening techniques;

• questioning techniques;

• positive body language;

• starting and ending conversations in the correct way;

• and signposting and referring clients to the support they need.

In addition to the core training provided, specific Digital Champion training can be provided as a 'pick and mix' offering, whereby Digital Champions can access training based on their individual needs. Training offerings could include:

- Identifying older people at risk of digital exclusion.

- How can older people benefit from getting online?

- Having a conversation with an older person about digital.

- Supporting an older person to get online and stay online:

  - Problem-solving.

  - Working at the right pace.

  - Delivering a person-centred service.

  - Delivering support remotely.

  - Delivering support face-to-face.

  - Delivering one-to-one support.

  - Delivering group sessions.

  - Digital safeguarding.

  - Accessibility and complex needs.

  - Supporting an older person to continue their digital journey.

It's not expected that all Digital Champions will complete all areas of training, but it is up to the staff coordinating the service and the volunteer Digital Champions themselves to create an individual learning programme based on their existing knowledge and expertise.

Training can be provided online whereby the volunteer Digital Champion can complete their learning independently. Remember to ensure that you have processes in place to track and verify that learning has been completed, especially if it's considered essential to a volunteer Digital Champions' ability to deliver their role. Staff-led training can be delivered remotely or face-to-face and, depending on the number of volunteers you are recruiting, you might deliver it one-to-one or as group training – or even a mixture of both.

There are lots of resources that you could use to support the training of your Digital Champions:

- Digital Unite Resources (free and paid options)

- Learn My Way Resources

- Age UK Resources:

  - Making the most of the internet (Age UK website)

  - For more Age UK resources please see Brand Hub

As technology changes and your service develops, you should think about any new areas of training that you might want your volunteer Digital Champions to complete. If you have longstanding volunteer Digital Champions supporting your service, make sure to engage them with training on a regular basis, based on the updates to your organisational volunteer training or, where possible, to help them with their personal development needs.

Managing Digital Champions

Just like your staff, volunteer Digital Champions will need to be supervised and supported by a member of staff. The frequency of formal supervision will vary depending on the level of support the volunteer provides to your digital inclusion support service. You might want to have regular one-to-one check-ins with volunteer Digital Champions to make sure they are satisfied with and feel confident in their role, to identify areas for support and/or development, and to answer any questions they might have about their role. This will also be a good opportunity to check in about what they've been delivering, and to capture any learnings that might be helpful for your wider service development. Outside of formal supervision, all volunteers should also have a designated member of staff who they can contact to discuss any concerns.

Ensuring volunteer Digital Champions feel supported and valued

As with any volunteer role, volunteer Digital Champions are giving up their time to support the service and make a difference in their community. It's vital that all volunteers therefore feel valued and receive adequate support to feel satisfied in their volunteer role.

Some examples of processes that you can put in place to ensure this include:

- **Talk:** Give volunteer Digital Champions plenty of opportunity for them to discuss their role, how they are finding it, any learning they can share, and any questions they might have. This is especially important in their first few months in the role. You can put processes in place to talk one-to-one, such as a formal supervision meeting or an informal catch-up. You can also bring volunteer Digital Champions together from across the service, virtually or face-to-face. This provides the opportunity for knowledge sharing and can help volunteers feel part of a wider community, especially if their role focuses on the delivery of one-to-one support.

- **Listen:** Make sure you actively listen to your volunteer Digital Champions and what they have to say. By delivering sessions, volunteer Digital Champions will gain lots of knowledge and experience and will likely have lots of helpful insight that might help you develop your service. Whilst the focus of your digital inclusion service is supporting older people to develop their digital skills and confidence, you couldn't do this without the support of the volunteer Digital Champions. Don't forget to listen to how they are finding their role to ensure volunteer satisfaction and retention.

- **Act:** The knowledge and experience of your volunteer Digital Champions will help you to determine opportunities for service development. Once you have a better understanding of this through talking with and listening to your volunteers, you can make more informed decisions about ways to develop the service, and better support the volunteer Digital Champions and older people in your community.

- **Work together:** Your volunteer Digital Champions will have varied knowledge, skills and experience so be sure to include them in the development of the service. For example, some volunteer Digital Champions might be able to support with the development of resources or the promotion of the programme.

- **Celebrate:** We want to celebrate the dedication and the great work that our volunteers support us with! There are some really simple ways to do this:

  - Host a coffee morning with your volunteers – you could even invite some of the older people they have supported.

  - Put in place volunteer recognition processes that recognise the achievements of your volunteer Digital Champions. For example, when a volunteer has delivered a milestone number of sessions or supported a particular number of people, you might want to award badges or recognise them in your regular communications.

  - Award volunteer Digital Champions with certificates or thank you cards. This could be when they complete their training, or as they deliver more support for example. You can find examples of thank you cards on Brand Hub.

8. Awareness raising activities

How can I use this section?

To better understand how to promote the service locally

To better understand how to encourage internal and external referrals

To access useful project resources which support awareness raising activities

Useful project resources

Search Brand Hub for example leaflets, posters and social media posts. Some are available for personalisation through the workflow function.

If you need to have an account set up on Brand Hub please email **brandhub@ageuk.org.uk**

Promoting the service

Once you know who you want to engage with your digital inclusion service, you'll need to think about the best ways to reach, inspire and engage with these groups. You can find more information on example service audiences earlier on in the handbook for more information on who to target with awareness raising activities.

Promoting digital inclusion services to older people

For some older people, lack of interest may be the biggest barrier to getting online. Therefore, in order to motivate and inspire them to learn, it's important to 'find a hook', in other words something that's already of interest to them, and show them how digital can support them to enjoy this interest or hobby more. Finding a hook ensures that digital skills are delivered in a fun, user-friendly way.

Promotional materials you create and use may reference popular activities that older people are interested in, for example communicating online, ways to enjoy entertainment and hobbies online, accessing essential services or saving money. When speaking with an individual you can direct the conversation based on their interests. For example, for someone who is interested in knitting, you may show them how being online means that they can look up new knitting patterns, watch video tutorials and join online groups with like-minded people. It may be helpful to use quotes or case studies from older people who have already benefitted.

8. Awareness raising activities

The use of language can help to illustrate the opportunities available to older people, for example using phrases such as 'find out more', 'explore', 'discover' can help inspire older people, even when they might not know exactly what it is they want to and can do. It's best to avoid using commands or jargon such as 'get online' as this may leave older people feeling coerced, or reinforce existing feelings of resistance or exclusion.

Promotional resources you might benefit from available on Brand Hub include:

• Leaflets

• Self-referral card

• Posters

• Social media

Some are available for personalisation through the workflow function. If you need to have an account set up on Brand Hub please email **brandhub@ageuk.org.uk**

Once you've got your promotional resources ready, you'll need to think about the best places and ways to disseminate them to ensure they are widely seen by the older people you want to reach. For example:

• Age UK offices.

• Via post, particularly targeting areas with an older demographic.

• Community centres.

• Local businesses and supermarkets.

• Taxi companies or transport hubs.

• GP surgeries and pharmacies.

• Care homes and supported housing.

Promoting digital inclusion services to other groups

Whilst the main target audience for your promotional activities may be older people themselves, the resources you create and share may be seen and noticed by others, including family and friends of older people who might benefit from the service, as well as other service providers. With effective promotional materials, these additional audiences can support us to reach older people who might not be in the spaces we can easily reach, for example older people who are housebound. You could carry out targeted promotional activities to these groups, for example, by using social media or attending local events.

Awareness raising

As well as the promotional activities, you might also want to facilitate small- and large-scale events, deliver workshops, and attend pre-existing groups of older people to help raise awareness about the benefits of getting online.

For example, contact your local residential care homes and attend one of their coffee mornings to speak to older people about the service, and the ways in which it might be able to support them. If you have a local event happening, for example a community festival, set up a stall to showcase the service, and speak with people who might be interested in taking part – this could also be a great way to recruit new volunteer Digital Champions! Or you can speak to your local supermarket and ask if you can have a stand-up banner in the store where you could speak to older people who might be interested to access the support available and get online.

9. Identifying older people

How can I use this section?

To better understand how to identify older people who could benefit from accessing the service

....

To access useful project resources which support identifying older people and encouraging referrals

Useful project resources

9. Identifying older people

In section 2, you can find more information about the specific barriers that older people face getting online, which may help you to identify groups in your community who are at a high risk of digital exclusion. Your digital inclusion support services should aim to support older people aged 50+ at risk of digital exclusion with differing levels of confidence, experience, and skills – from no to low-level. Depending on the parameters of your service, you might want or need to target your service at particular audiences within these high-risk groups.

Resource #10: Example Referral Criteria

Example: Referral Checklist	
The person is aged 50+	
The person has no or low-level digital skills	
The person is interested to know more about getting online	
Anything else specific to your service...	
If you're working with someone who meets the referral criteria, please complete the Digital Inclusion Service Referral Form or Referral Card and send it to your digital inclusion lead.	

Whilst we believe that Age UK are best placed to engage with these audiences, the service relies on partnership working to ensure efficient service design and delivery, joined-up client support provision, the delivery of specific support, to aid referrals and to avoid duplication. If you've already done a horizon scanning exercise (see section 5), you should have a good idea about who you might need to partner with to identify older people who could benefit from the service.

Establishing referral routes both internally and externally will help to identify and reach older people that you could support. You likely already have well-established referral routes in place, but it might be helpful to revisit existing referral routes and explore new opportunities for referrals that are specific to your digital inclusion service.

9. Identifying older people

Internal referrals

You can strengthen your internal referral routes through to your digital inclusion support services by:

- establishing clear referral criteria;
- having the right tools in place internally to assess clients based on the criteria;
- training staff and volunteers to enable them to have the right conversations, so that they can identify and refer older people who could benefit from the service, and;
- providing a clear referral mechanism.

When thinking about your internal referral routes, it might be helpful to consider:

Q: What services do you currently offer that could identify older people who could benefit from the service?

For example, are you providing exercise classes online that older people who are offline are struggling to attend? Are your Information & Advice advisors supporting older people to access other local services online, such as applying for benefits or housing?

Q: Do others across your organisation know about the digital inclusion service and feel confident to talk about it and promote it?

You might find it helpful to deliver an internal briefing and/or training to ensure that everyone understands who is at risk of digital exclusion, how older people can benefit from getting online, and the support that is on offer.

Q: Do others across your organisation have all the resources and information that they need to refer older people?

You might want to use a Digital Diagnostic tool across your other services to gain a better understanding about the needs of all older people you are speaking with, specifically around their access to technology, digital skills and confidence, and their support needs. This will allow staff and volunteers to assess every client who engages with your services. For example, someone might call for support applying for a Blue Badge and could be referred to your digital inclusion team to support them to develop the skills and confidence they need to do the application independently now and in the future.

Resource #11: Example Digital Diagnostic Survey

Digital Diagnostic Survey

Q1: How often do you use the internet? (tick one only)

- I use the internet regularly (at least once a month) ☐
- I regularly use the internet, but with assistance from family/friends ☐
- I use the internet, but not that regularly (once or less in the past three months) ☐
- I never use the internet ☐

Q2: If you do not use the internet regularly, what is the main reason? (tick one only)

- Lack of confidence ☐
- Lack of skills ☐
- Lack of device or outdated device (computer, laptop, smartphone, tablet) ☐
- Lack of access to internet/connectivity ☐
- Too expensive ☐
- Not interested/Don't need it ☐
- Worried about online security ☐
- Other (Please specify):

Q3: If you do not use the internet regularly, does this make things harder for you day-to-day? (tick one only)

- Yes. I struggle to carry out my day-to-day activities ☐
- Somewhat. I can carry out most of my day-to-day activities, but some have become harder ☐
- No. I can continue doing everything offline ☐
- No. I get support from my family/friends to do the things I need to online ☐
- Other (Please specify):

Q4: Are there any digital skills or topics you'd like to learn more about? (Tick all that apply)

- Basic skills (e.g. turning on device, updating settings, connecting to the internet) ☐
- Keeping safe online ☐
- Emails ☐
- Social media and messaging apps (Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp etc.) ☐
- Video calls (Zoom, Skype etc.) ☐
- Handling information & content (using search engines) ☐
- Games and Entertainment ☐
- Online Shopping ☐
- Online Banking ☐
- GP Appointments & Prescriptions ☐
- Online tutorials and education ☐
- Employability ☐
- Other (please specify):

Q5: Would you like to be contacted by a Digital Champion to support you to learn more about getting online?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

Additional notes

External referrals

While internal referrals are a great resource, establishing strong links with external organisations could help widen the reach of the service to new clients. When promoting the service and establishing external referral routes, it might be that older people referred will also benefit from your wider services.

When thinking about your external referral routes, it might be helpful to consider:

Q: Which organisations are you already working with who are supporting older people who could benefit from the service?

Refer to information gathered through your horizon scanning exercise to identify those organisations you are already working with. It might be that you have established referral routes for some through to other services, but not for your digital inclusion support service. When thinking about which organisations might be most impactful, consider the barriers that older people face getting online (see section 2).

Q: Is there anyone else you could build relationships with to establish external referral routes?

Again, use information gathered through horizon scanning and think about the specific barriers older people face when getting online to inform this. You might want to build relationships with other local charities, NHS Trusts, religious organisations and groups, or disability groups, for example. When reaching out to new organisations, it's always best to try and find the right member of staff rather than sending information to a general inbox or calling a general telephone number. You might find this information on the organisation's website, social media or LinkedIn. When making the initial contact, be sure to reference how the referral process works and how the service will benefit their service users, and their organisation more broadly. Moreover, it is important to remember that some external connections may require more senior involvement so ensure you have involved the right colleagues within your organisation if your own endeavours to establish relationships are not fruitful.

Top tip: Approach organisations that specifically support under-represented groups. For example, if you're struggling to reach people from ethnic minority communities, try doing some research into whether there are any local organisations that support those older people and establish direct referral routes with them. You might need to adapt your information and resources to ensure it's accessible for the specific group you are trying to reach. You can find more information on encouraging diversity here.

9. Identifying older people

Q: Do these external organisations have all the information they need to identify people and talk to them about the service?

Do they need any training or guidance to make these conversations more effective? As with internal referrals, it's important that anyone you are relying on to identify older people and promote the service has all the information that they need to have an impactful and informative conversation, and that they feel confident to inspire people to 'give it a go'. If they don't, you risk the older person losing interest and not seeking support in the future. Provide any external organisations who will be making referrals with information to circulate to their staff and volunteers about the barriers and benefits of older people getting online, as well as a summary of the service available and who they need to contact within your organisation. It's helpful to have a Referral Form or Referral Card specific to the service to make sure that you have everything you need to get someone set up.

Resource #12: Example Self-referral Card

Are you interested in exploring the benefits of the internet?

Or could you benefit from support with your smartphone or tablet?

We've got dedicated Digital Champions on hand to support you to make the most out of technology, for free.

To connect to your local Digital Champion, simply complete the fields below and return this card to:

Full name: _____

Telephone number: _____

Best time to contact me: _____

Resource #13: Example External Professional Referral Card

Do you know someone who could benefit from getting online?

We've got dedicated Digital Champions on hand to support older people to make the most out of technology, for free.

To connect someone you know to your local Digital Champion, simply return this card to:

Referrer details

Full name:

_____

Email:

_____

Job title:

_____

Organisation:

_____

Do they have any technology of their own?

Yes ☐

No, they need to borrow technology ☐

Not sure ☐

Do they have any accessibility barriers?

Hearing loss ☐   Sight loss ☐

Dexterity ☐   Cognitive ☐

Other (please specify):

_____

Client details

Full name:

_____

Age: 50–64 ☐   65–74 ☐

75–84 ☐   85+ ☐

Telephone number:

_____

Best time to contact:

_____

Please explain why you are referring this person

They have expressed an interest in getting online ☐

I think they could benefit from getting online ☐

A change in circumstances has meant they need to get online to carry out essential activities ☐

Other (please specify):

_____

10. Client Assessment

How can I use this section?

To better understand how to carry out a client assessment

To access useful project resources which support the delivery of client assessments

To consider the use of client assessments and other data to inform Digital Champion and client matching

Useful project resources

- Example Client Assessment Form (page 59)

10. Client Assessment

Making sure that you capture as much information as possible during the referral process will mean that you already have lots of helpful data about the client to help plan their support. You will probably still need to find out a bit more about them to make sure the support is provided in a way that's suitable for them, is relevant and that they are matched with a Digital Champion who will be able to confidently support them.

If you've got information that you've already captured using a Digital Diagnostic Tool or Referral Card for example, make sure that you make note of this and avoid asking the client the same questions again. For clients that you are already supporting via other services, you might also be able to use some of this information (if the relevant consent is in place) to reduce the number of questions you need.

The key information that you'll need to understand as part of a Client Assessment and to plan effective support include:

• Client name and contact details (including when is best to contact them).

• Any accessibility barriers or additional considerations that might impact on the way in which support is provided or the client's use of technology.

• Client's learning goals: What do they want to learn and why? Is there a time-pressure on achieving these goals?

• Client's existing digital skills and confidence: Does the client use the internet already or they a complete beginner? Does the client feel confident or nervous about getting online?

• Barriers to getting online: What has prevented the client from getting online before? Are there particular barriers, for example scams, the ongoing costs, or breaking the device, that a Digital Champion might want to focus on overcoming?

• Client's access to technology: Does the client have their own technology? Is their device Apple or Android? Is their technology portable or can it only be used in the home?

10. Client Assessment

Resource #14: Example Client Assessment Form

Client details			
Name			
Telephone/Email			
Best time to contact			
Accessibility barriers (if applicable)	**Barrier 1**	**Barrier 2**	**Barrier 3**
	Details:	Details:	Details:
	This can be supported by:	This can be supported by:	This can be supported by:

10. Client Assessment

Learning goals	Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3
	Details:	Details:	Details:
	What do you need to do to achieve this?	What do you need to do to achieve this?	What do you need to do to achieve this?
	Who do you need support from?	Who do you need support from?	Who do you need support from?
	Achieve by: MM/YY	Achieve by: MM/YY	Achieve by: MM/YY
	Anything else:	Anything else:	Anything else:

10. Client Assessment

Internet use	I use the internet regularly (at least once a month) ☐	
	I regularly use the internet, but with assistance from family/friends ☐	
	I use the internet, but not that regularly (once or less in the past three months) ☐	
	I never use the internet ☐	
Barriers (if the client does not use the internet regularly)	Lack of confidence ☐	Lack of access to device ☐
	Lack of skills ☐	Not interested/don't need it ☐
	Too expensive ☐	Worried about online security ☐
	Lack of access to broadband/connectivity ☐	Additional support needs as a result of a disability or impairment ☐
Technology	**Device(s)**	**Connectivity**
	Device 1:	WiFi ☐
		MiFi ☐
	Device 2:	No connectivity ☐
		Mobile Data (PAYG) ☐
	Device 3:	Mobile Data (Contract) ☐
Next steps		
Preferred session setting and availability		

Digital Champion and client matching

Successfully matching the right Digital Champion to the right client will ensure that the Digital Champion is able to feel fulfilled and confident in their role, and that the client is able to engage with support that is relevant to them in an accessible way. Using the information that you capture during the Digital Champion recruitment, the Digital Champion Record Form and Client Assessment process, you should be able to effectively match Digital Champions to clients.

It's important to consider:

- **Availability of the Digital Champion and client:** Everyone involved will likely have other commitments, and availability will need to be reviewed to ensure that both the Digital Champion and the client can attend sessions at a time that works for them. It might be that some Digital Champions can only support during the evening and weekends, which might work for some older people but not others, for example.

- **Technology being used:** You should know from the Client Assessment what technology the client is intending to use during their sessions. Some Digital Champions might be more familiar with this technology than others, so be sure to consider this when matching a client with a Digital Champion.

- **Digital skills and confidence:** Some of your Digital Champions might be more confident online than others and therefore be able to support older people who might have more complex barriers and/or more advanced goals. Similarly, depending on the goals of the client, it's important to consider whether you have a Digital Champion who is particularly skilled in that area, for example exploring a particular hobby.

- **Accessibility:** We don't expect all Digital Champions to be able to support all older people with a variety of different accessibility needs. Some Digital Champions might be more confident than others, and therefore be in a better position to help particular clients. For example, do you have a Digital Champion who is familiar with the needs of lip reading or understands about issues surrounding sight loss?

- **Delivery preference:** Some older people might be more comfortable or only able to engage with support in their homes, whilst others might be able or keen to get out the house and attend sessions in a community venue. Ensuring you have a mix of Digital Champions who are able to a mix of face-to-face and remote delivery in various settings will help you better meet the needs of the older people you are supporting.

- **Other:** Get to know the clients seeking support and the Digital Champions offering support. As well as practical elements, it might be that people have similar interests, beliefs or that you just think they will get on well.

It's always worth checking in with the Digital Champion and the client at regular points to see how their relationship is going. It might be that you need to review some elements of support to improve the service or they may need re-matching.

11. Providing skills support

How can I use this section?

To better understand how to practically provide digital skills support to older people

To consider the importance of person-centred support and how to achieve this within session delivery

To access useful project resources which support the delivery of digital skills support

Useful project resources

- Example Digital Skills Assessment (page 68)
- Example Session Delivery Template (page 70)

11. Providing skills support

Overall, an Age UK digital inclusion support service should be offered on a flexible basis to ensure the successful recruitment of volunteer Digital Champions and the accessibility of the service for clients. Digital support sessions can be delivered on a one-to-one or group basis, and delivered either remotely or face-to-face, e.g. in a client's home or at a community venue. Sessions can be delivered by paid staff or volunteers.

Location

The service should be offered either remotely (for example over the phone) or face-to-face, for example in community venues.

The remote service offering needs to respond to the capabilities of the client. If the client has no or low-level digital skills, it is best to deliver initial sessions on the telephone. If and when the client has developed some digital skills, sessions could be delivered via video calls, for example Zoom. Involving the client's support network initially, for example friends, family members or carers, can improve their capability and confidence to engage with the service-remotely.

The face-to-face service offering can be delivered in the client's home, in a community venue, such as a local library, or in your local office. The accessibility and technology infrastructure (e.g. quality of connectivity) of the venue needs to be considered (see Ensuring accessible delivery).

One-to-one vs. Group

Digital support sessions work in both a one-to-one and group setting. You'll need to work together with the client to understand what setting will work best for them.

The service should remain flexible to ensure that it meets the specific needs of the individual, and that they can access support in a way that works for them. Equally, the support that someone needs and the way they want or need to access it may change over time, and it's important to acknowledge and respond to their changing needs. For example, as someone's digital skills and confidence develop, their support needs may become less intense, meaning that they can move from one-to-one to group support.

No or low-level digital skills	Low- or medium-level digital skills	Medium-level digital skills
High support needs: Client is unable to engage with the digital world independently.	**Medium support needs:** Client is more aware of what activities they can do online and is able to explore new activities with some support.	**Low support needs:** Client is confident and independent and requires support only with specific activities as part of expanding their skill-set.
One-to-one support sessions	Group support sessions	Drop-in group support sessions
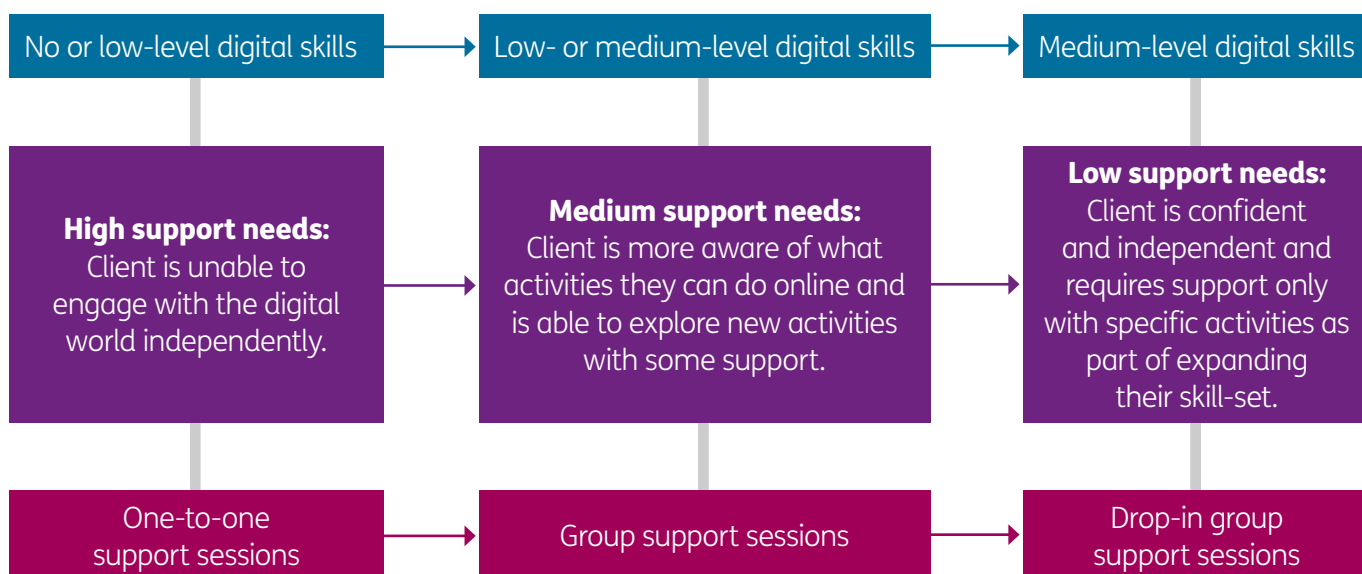
11. Providing skills support

Below we have listed some of the most common advantages of both settings which you can use with the client to decide on the best approach for their circumstances.

One-to-one	Group
POSITIVES	
✓ Learning can be tailored to the client and focus specifically on their goals	✓ The client can benefit from peer-to-peer support, with other members of the group helping out with particular activities
✓ The client has the Digital Champion's undivided attention for the duration of the session	✓ The client is exposed to a diverse range of online activities, that they may not have considered otherwise
✓ The client can feel relaxed to ask questions and get things wrong without fear of judgement	✓ The client can be reassured by being around other group members who have similar experiences
✓ The client can plan a session at a time that works for them	✓ The client can benefit from group social interaction
✓ Sessions can be tailored to the client based on their accessibility needs	

If, at the client's first assessment, they decide that attending one-to-one sessions is best for them, this might change as their circumstances change and they develop new digital skills and become more confident, at which point they might benefit from or prefer group sessions. Regularly check in with the client to ensure the sessions continue to be delivered in an accessible and effective way for them.

Duration and frequency

How the session is being delivered will impact the days/hours of operation.

For one-to-one sessions, a convenient time should be agreed between the Digital Champion and the client. Remote sessions should last no longer than one hour, and face-to-face sessions no longer than two hours. Sessions should be offered on a weekly or bi-weekly (every two weeks) basis to ensure that the client has time to reflect and practice between sessions, but that their motivation and interest is maintained. When ongoing support is needed, session times should remain consistent where possible.

The duration of the support offer will vary depending on the individual needs of the client, and on-going support, in some capacity, should be offered. To achieve maximum potential and encourage independence, one-to-one support should be offered for a minimum of six weeks. Clear boundaries should be established at the start, preferably in writing, to ensure that Digital Champions are not contacted outside of the agreed sessions. You can use the Example Client Assessment form to make a note of those arrangements.

For group sessions, the session date(s) and time(s) should be agreed based on the local need. Focused group sessions should last no more than two hours, including a break, and drop-in sessions should last a minimum of two hours to ensure that clients have the flexibility to attend and engage with the support offering. Group sessions should, at a minimum, be offered bi-weekly (every two weeks) and should remain at a consistent time and location and be on offer on a long-term basis.

Ensuring accessible delivery

For both remote and face-to-face sessions, you'll need to consider accessibility requirements to make sure the sessions are suitable and accessible for all older people who might want to engage. Ahead of planning a session, it's important to understand the accessibility requirements of the attendee/s. You should have this information from the client's referral.

Some things you could do to make sessions using video calling more accessible include:

- Provide any resources you'll be using during the session in advance (for example, instructions or presentations).

- The 'Chat' function on video calling can be helpful but if someone is using a screen reader due to sight loss, it reads this out over the presenter which can be confusing. In a group setting, encourage the use of the Q&A function on video call platforms instead, or allow time for people to ask questions directly on the call.

- You can add subtitles to PowerPoint presentations using the 'Subtitle' function in PowerPoint, or some companies provide paid subtitle services. If you're using Zoom, you can use the 'ASL interpreter' function to capture subtitles. Use a headset on the call, to ensure the subtitles are as accurate as possible, as it avoids background noise being picked up.

- Making sure you have your camera on means that older people who rely on lip-reading can see your mouth.

- Make sure the older person knows how to turn up the volume on their computer and on the call to make sure it's the right volume for them.

- Slow down your pace – it can be trickier to follow information and instructions on a video call, so slowing down your pace means that the older person has more time to take in all the information.

- Record any video calls (with the client's permission) so that people can watch them back if they need to.

For face-to-face sessions, you will need to find a venue that is accessible to anyone who might want to come. You might need to consider how people get there and how people can move around the building for example. It's important to plan ahead and find out whether any expected attendees have accessibility requirements to help you understand what a suitable venue will look like. Researching local venues in your area and spending some time thinking about different people's access requirements when developing your service will mean you can find the right venue quicker. If you don't know the venue, it's worthwhile visiting them before you book them, to check they meet your access requirements. Accessibility requirements you might want to consider include:

- How people can travel to the venue.

- Available parking.

- How people can move around the venue (including step-free access and lifts).

- Facilities at the venue (including accessible toilets and seating).

- Hearing induction loop availability.

After an event, you might want to ask people for feedback about whether the venue met their needs. This will help you plan for future events.

If you need more help, useful information on accessibility is made available by specialist organisations, such as RNIB, AbilityNet, Guide Dogs and Scope.

Creating and following a person-centred learning plan

The Age UK network is committed to taking a person-centred approach, which means respecting and valuing older people, and supporting them to lead the lives they want. We want to ensure that employees and volunteers delivering digital inclusion services are equipped with the skills, knowledge and confidence that they need to ensure a consistently person-centred approach.

What is a person-centred approach?

The premise 'nothing about me, without me' is at the heart of the person-centred approach. A person-centred approach ensures we can see the world through the older person's eyes, and that the learner is always involved in their own learning path, by deciding what they want to learn and how.

We have developed an easy to remember acronym to explain the principles of delivering learner-led support (LEARN):

L Listen to me and what I want to achieve.

E Enable me to recognise and develop my own strengths.

A Assist me to do as much as I can for myself.

R Respond to any new learning needs I may have.

N Nurture my learning journey to enable me to continually develop.

Step-by-step person-centred engagement:

1. Ahead of the session review any information you have on the client e.g. the Example Client Assessment, as this will help you understand the client's needs and plan their support.

2. Ask the older person what it is they want to achieve or what it is they want to learn. This might be a specific digital skill e.g. 'send an email', or it might be a task or goal that can be achieved through digital means e.g. 'stay in touch with my friends and family'. If they don't know what they want to learn specifically, ask about their interests and hobbies as this will be a good starting point. This is included in the example Client Assessment Form.

3. Next, you need to listen to the older person's response, identifying what their key goals are and how digital might be able to support them to achieve them. Be sure to listen to what it is the older person is interested in, as this will be key to finding 'a hook' for learning new digital skills and maintaining their interest.

4. Assess what skills the older person already has: you don't want to sound patronising repeating things that the client may already know. During the session, you can use the Digital Skills Assessment Worksheet.

5. Lastly, respond to the goals they have identified, bearing in mind their interests and existing skills, and together, create their learning path using the Session Delivery Template (see page 70).

Example Digital Skills Assessment

To better understand the existing skill set of the client, you could use a Digital Skills Assessment. In this example, you could read through the set of tasks with the older person you are working with and ask them how confident they feel:

Do they feel confident? Do they need more practice? Or are they simply not interested in this topic?

You can then use these responses to determine what needs to be covered in sessions.

Resource #15: Example Digital Skills Assessment

Task	I feel confident doing this	I would like more practice	I am not interested in this
I am able to turn on a device			
I am able to connect a device to the safe and secure WiFi network			
I am able to connect to the internet and open a browser to use websites			
I am able to identify secure websites			
I am able to keep information accessed online secure, making use of secure passwords			
I am able to update and change passwords			
I am able to communicate with others via my device e.g. via email or other messaging apps			

11. Providing skills support

Task	I feel confident doing this	I would like more practice	I am not interested in this
I am able to identify suspicious links and know how to respond to them			
I am able to use video calling tools			
I am able to use social media platforms e.g. Facebook			
I am able to set privacy settings on social media and other accounts			
I am able to buy goods or services online			
I am able to access and use public services online			
I am able to use different payment methods online			
I am able to manage my money and transact online securely			

Session Delivery Template

This session delivery template can be used flexibly by Digital Champions to help them plan what each client would like to get out of a particular session. Keeping a record of session delivery templates can also help track learning and for the Digital Champions to understand the progress the client is making.

Resource #16: Example Session Delivery Template

Session Delivery Template			
Learner name			
Digital Champion name			
Session date			
Session number			
Session topic			
Session aim/s		Achieved?	☐
		Achieved?	☐
		Achieved?	☐

11. Providing skills support

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Lesson plan</td><td></td><td>Time</td><td>Objectives</td><td>Notes</td></tr>
<tr><td>Introduction</td><td>e.g. 10 mins</td><td>e.g.</td><td>e.g. key vocabulary</td></tr>
<tr><td>Activity</td><td>e.g. 40 mins</td><td>e.g.</td><td>e.g. resources, key questions</td></tr>
<tr><td>Conclusion</td><td>e.g. 10 mins</td><td>e.g. recap learning, check that goals have been met</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Next steps</td><td colspan="4">e.g. plan for next session</td></tr>
</table>

Other useful session resources

Name	Description	Paid/free resource	Link
AbilityNet	AbilityNet supports people of any age, living with any disability or impairment to use technology to achieve their goals at home, at work and in education. They do this by providing specialist advice services, free information resources and by helping to build a more accessible digital world. You can call the AbilityNet free helpline on 0800 048 7462 to ask anything about how computers can be adapted to meet the needs of disabled people. You can also call the free helpline to get in touch with their network of 'IT Can Help' volunteers who provide disabled people with help with everyday IT needs.	**Free**	www.abilitynet.org.uk
Digital Unite	Digital Unite provide an award-winning range of 400+ how-to-guides, covering a whole host of different digital topics. Written by subject matter experts, and updated daily, the guides are perfect for supporting others with digital skills or improving your own knowledge. Digital Unite also host the Digital Champions Network which provides Digital Champion e-learning and resources.	**Free:** You can access the how-to-guides for free on the Digital Unite website. **Paid:** The Digital Champions Network is a paid membership.	www.digitalunite.com
RNIB	The Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) are one of the UK's leading sight loss charities and the largest community of blind and partially sighted people. They host a Technology Resource Hub where you can access the latest technology facts, tips and guides. You can also speak to one of their Technology for Life Coordinators by calling 0303 123 9999 or emailing tfl@rnib.org.uk	**Free**	www.rnib.org.uk
The Good Things Foundation	The Good Things Foundation are a social change charity that help to improve the lives of people through digital. Their 'Learn My Way' website offers free online courses, helping people to develop digital skills to make the most of the online world. Access this at www.learnmyway.com	**Free:** Although, some of the online courses you need to register with Learn My Way to access.	www.goodthingsfoundation.org

12. Technology provision

How can I use this section?

To better understand how to provide sufficient technology for service delivery and older people

In addition to the core technology you already have in place, an Age UK digital inclusion support service will be able to best reach those clients most at risk of digital exclusion with the following technology in place:

- Devices and connectivity for clients without access (to be provided through a Tablet Loan Scheme or through community settings, for example tablets made available for use in Age UK community centres).

- Accessories to ensure the accessibility of devices, for example tablet cases, keyboards and stylus pens.

An Age UK Tablet Loan Scheme (TLS) provides digitally excluded older people with a tablet device and connectivity for a fixed period (usually 6–8 weeks). For more information on how to set up a Tablet Loan Scheme in your organisation, please see our Tablet Loan Scheme Pack.

13. Beyond support

How can I use this section?

To better understand how to support older people longer term

To access useful project resources which support the longer-term support provision

Useful project resources

- Technology Chart (page 77)

Flexible and ongoing provision of support

When someone reaches the goals they identified in their Client Assessment, it's worth checking back in with them to see whether there is anything else they want or need to learn, or whether they have any additional needs.

It might be that since engaging with the digital inclusion support service, they have now identified more ways in which they could benefit from being online. Or it might be that they have now recognised a new challenge which they need to address online, for example seeking health information.

You will likely be restricted in your capacity to provide ongoing support depending on the funding you have available, the service parameters, the number of Digital Champions you have supporting the service, and the number of older people who might be waiting to access support. It's important to offer ongoing support to people in some capacity, to provide the opportunity for them to continue developing new skills and troubleshoot any online challenges they come across whilst online, to prevent them 'giving up'. It is important to remember that the service should encourage independence, rather than dependence on your support so the more efficient the service is, the better results you can achieve for the older person and the organisation as a whole.

If you can provide regular ongoing one-to-one support, that's great! If not, be sure to let the older person know about any group and drop-in sessions you have scheduled that can provide more ad-hoc support moving forwards. It's also worth looking back at your Horizon Scanning exercise to understand what other support is available via other local service providers. These services may not have been suitable for the older person at the point of referral, but it's worth revisiting this to see if anything has changed.

Guidance on purchasing technology for independent use

Following engaging with support, some older people may want to purchase their own technology but might need some advice on what technology is best for them. When having a conversation with someone about purchasing technology independently, it's important to remain impartial and not endorse specific manufacturers or devices. The role of the digital inclusion support service should be to support the client to make an informed decision. To guide the conversation, it's helpful to ask:

Q: What technology do you already have (if any), including devices and connectivity?

Do you find this easy or hard to use? Some older people may be familiar with a particular device or brand and prefer to stick with this. Alternatively, some older people may wish to find a simpler or cheaper device.

Q: What do you want to use the device for?

Different devices have different pros and cons, so it's important to get a device that's suitable for the activities it's intended for. See our Technology Chart to help older people decide which type of device is best for them.

Q: What is your budget?

This should not only consider the one-off cost of a device and accessories, but also the longer-term cost of connectivity.

Q: Do you have any accessibility needs?

If so, what functions might you need the device to have to make sure it's easy to use? See page 78 for key accessibility considerations.

Technology considerations:

- **Cost:** According to Which?, the best-value tablet models sit in the £100–200 price range, with one costing around £150 normally having sufficient speed and screen quality.[11]

- **SIM-enabled or WiFi only enabled:** Some tablet models are SIM-enabled, meaning that you can insert a SIM-card to access data on the device. These are often on a pay-monthly plan with a phone provider, and SIM-enabled tablets are generally more expensive than WiFi only tablets. WiFi only tablets can only be connected to external data sources, for example a MiFi device, or personal or public WiFi. Remember, if using public WiFi you'll need to consider the additional security risks with it being 'public'.

- **Screen size:** Devices are measured by screen size, diagonally from corner to corner. A larger screen may be more accessible for older people, but it could mean it weighs more or is harder to handle.

- **Screen quality:** Measured in pixels per inch (PPI), resolution helps to determine the quality of the images on a screen. Look out for at least 200 pixels per inch and Full HD if the device will be used for watching films or TV.[12]

- **Speed:** This usually relates to the processor and the RAM (Random Access Memory) of a device. Dual-core, quad-core or octo-core processors and a minimum of 2GB of RAM for a tablet or smartphone and 4–8GB for a laptop or PC, will allow for faster performance.

- **Storage:** The internal storage is the amount of space that there is to keep images, documents, videos and music. This is particularly important when purchasing tablets or smartphones, as apps and operating systems can take up a lot of space. Older people who use lots of apps could find 4GB or even 16GB to be constraining. However, it may be possible (usually at an extra cost) to expand storage space through internet-based cloud storage services, and some tablets also have memory card slots to add more internal space.
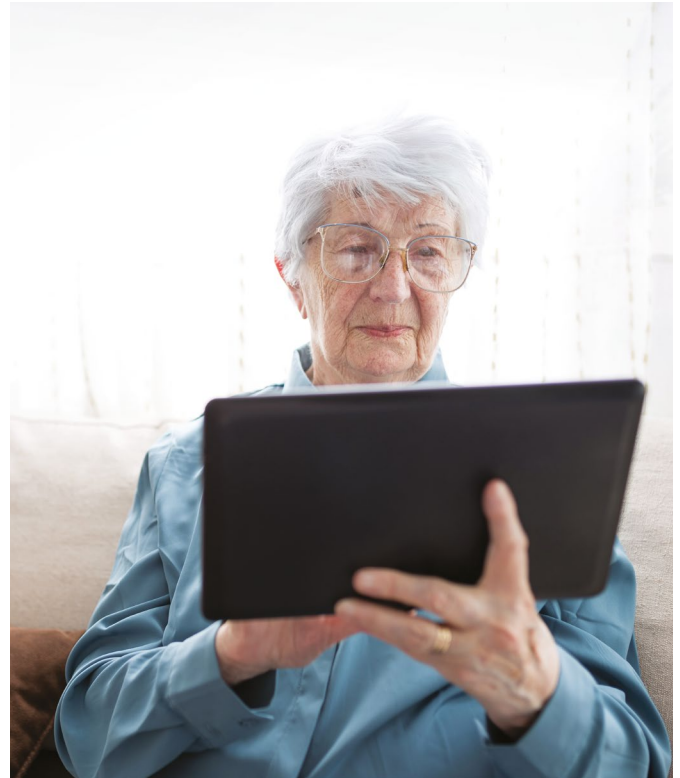
- **Data and connectivity considerations:** Internet access will ensure older people get the most out of their device. Options include WiFi in the home, MiFi devices or SIM cards that provide mobile data for enabled smartphones or tablet devices. NOTE: All tablet or smartphone devices should ideally be 'unlocked' from a specific provider, enabling the user to choose a suitable provider and connectivity option for them long-term.

- **Accessories:** For touch screen devices, stylus pens and keyboards may be useful to ensure the older person gets the most out of their device. Cases and screen protectors will also ensure the device is kept safe and reduces the risk of damage.

Use the **Technology Chart** to help decide which technology is best for the older person you are supporting. The Chart helps you to consider the variations across different devices, but you will also need to work together with the older person you are supporting to prioritise what features are most important to them.

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11 www.which.co.uk/reviews/tablets/article/how-to-buy-the-best-tablet-afk4Y6e45YiO

12 www.johnlewis.com/buying-guides/tablets-buying-guide

Device	Size	Using the device	Connectivity	Your activities							Affordability
				Make video calls	Use apps	Watch TV or films	Read books	Take photos	Edit documents		
Smartphone	Small	Touchscreen	SIM – Pay As You Go (PAYG) or Pay Monthly MiFi WiFi	✓	✓			✓			£ – £££
Tablet	Medium	Touchscreen Easy to add accessories	SIM (PAYG or Pay Monthly) (specific SIM enabled models only) MiFi WiFi	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			££ – £££
Laptop	Large	Mainly used with a keyboard and mouse	MiFi WiFi	✓		✓			✓		££ – £££

13. Beyond support

Accessible technology

If someone has specific accessibility barriers that they need to consider when purchasing technology, the technology they buy might need to have certain features and capabilities, to ensure it's easy for them to use. You'll find lots of this information in the product details or the product description. If you are unsure about whether a device is suitable for someone with accessibility barriers, you can find more information and get help from AbilityNet, a charity dedicated to supporting anyone living with any disability or impairment to use technology to achieve their goals at home, at work and in education.

Accessibility considerations:

VISION

- ✓ I can make the text larger
- ✓ I can magnify the screen
- ✓ I can change the colours
- ✓ I can change the fonts
- ✓ My device can talk to me

HEARING

- ✓ I can enable on-screen captions
- ✓ My device can detect important sounds, for example adjusting the volume, the volume balance or enabling audio in mono
- ✓ I can make the sound on my device clearer
- ✓ I can connect my device to my hearing aids

MOTOR

- ✓ I can change the mouse and trackpad functions to make them more accessible for me
- ✓ I can change the screen functions (for example, rotation)
- ✓ I can change my touch and hold functions
- ✓ I can control my device with my voice
- ✓ I can attach accessories, such as external keyboard

COGNITIVE

- ✓ I can make the text larger on my device
- ✓ I can magnify my screen
- ✓ I can change the colours on my device, for example the text and background
- ✓ My device can talk to me
- ✓ I can control my device with my voice

14. Measuring performance and impact

How can I use this section?

To better understand service outputs and outcomes

To access useful project resources which support capturing service outputs and outcomes

To consider ways in which data can be analysed to support service learning and development

14. Measuring performance and impact

Outputs and outcomes

We aspire to ensure that the Age UK digital inclusion support service is of a consistently high standard. All Age UK digital inclusion support services should monitor service performance and measure impact. Before determining how the service should be monitored, the local service outcomes must be agreed.

Monitoring and reporting provide insight and intelligence to the service and the wider organisation. It is recommended that output and outcome measures are reported monthly and Year to Date, and that they are used to inform improvements to the service delivery methods, training requirements, future monitoring, etc.

Outputs

Outputs refer to what your service does and who it reaches. Example output measures you may wish to adopt include:

1. The number of awareness raising or promotional activities delivered.

2. The number of (older) people reached through awareness raising or promotional activities.

3. The number of digital skills support sessions delivered.

4. The number of older people reached and supported through digital skills support sessions.

5. The number of older people benefitting from the tablet loan scheme.

6. Change in confidence and skills of older people.

7. The number of volunteer Digital Champions recruited and trained.

8. Change in confidence and skills of Digital Champions.

9. The number of partnerships developed with external organisations.

10. Change in confidence and skills of internal and external staff.
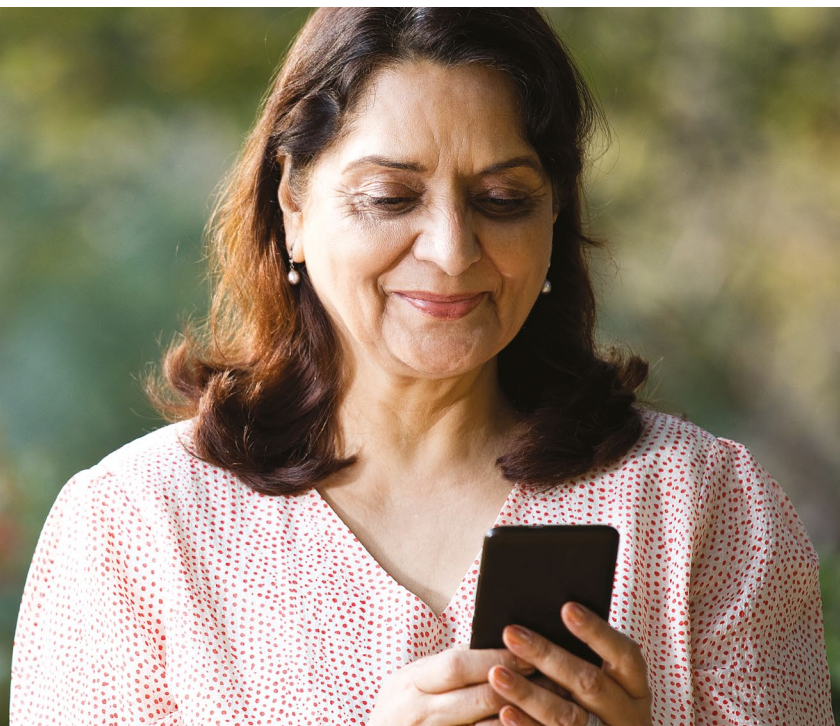
14. Measuring performance and impact

Outcomes

Outcomes refer to the changes, benefits, learning or other effects that result from the service. A range of formal validated scales are available to demonstrate the Age UK digital inclusion support service outcomes. These scales can be incorporated into data capture tools.

Topic	Scale	Link
Digital knowledge, skill and confidence	Essential Digital Skills Framework	GOV.UK (2018)
Loneliness	The UCLA 3-Item Loneliness Scale	Campaign to End Loneliness (UCLA Loneliness Scale, 2004)
General wellbeing	The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scales – WEMWBS	Warwick Medical School
	ONS Wellbeing Scale	ONS

Example Age UK digital inclusion support service logic model:

Need

42%
Nearly half of all older people 75+ do not use the internet.[1]

15%
Only 15% of this age group say that they would like to use the internet more[1]

Lack of skills was cited as a key barrier to participating online by 79% of older people aged 75+[1]

Access to the internet is lower among older households, particular where there is one person aged 65+[2]

Priorities

1. Inspire and motivate older people to get online

2. Support older people to develop the digital skills to get online

3. Support older people to access affordable and accessible technology to get online

Inputs

- Financial resource
- Dedicated delivery staff
- Volunteers
- Training for staff and volunteers
- Delivery resources for staff and volunteers
- Digital skills learning resources for older people
- Wider organisational buy-in
- Technology (hardware and connectivity)
- Community networks and partnerships

Outputs

Activities
- Awareness raising activities
- Delivery of 1:1 and group support, face-to-face or remotely
- Provision of accessible technology (hardware and connectivity)
- Training frontline staff
- Recruitment and training of volunteer Digital Champions

Participation
- Older people
- Frontline staff & volunteers

Outcomes (Impact)

Short Term
- Improved confidence & motivation of older people to engage with the digital inclusion service
- Improved digital skills & confidence
- Improved access to affordable and accessible technology
- Increased understanding of the barriers that older people face with regards to digital inclusion
- Improved ability to support older people to overcome digital inclusion barriers

Medium Term
- Improved skills and confidence to continue independent learning and problem-solving
- Increased number of older people safely and securely engaging with online tools
- Older people have improved access to wider information and essential services
- Improved staff and volunteer capabilities to deliver wider services
- Organisation-wide approach to embedding the delivery of digital inclusion services within the wider service offering established

Long Term
- Improved overall wellbeing
- Increased independence
- Reduced risk of social isolation
- Improved management of finances and economic savings
- Improved self-management of health through access to health resources and services
- Reduced pressure on wider services
- Improved service efficiency and savings
- Improved awareness of Age UK and the network as digital inclusion service providers for older people
- Improved influencing power of Age UK and the network

External Factors
Lack of access to or availability of financial resource, prohibitive cost of technology, the acceleration of technological change

Assumptions
Frontline staff and the community are motivated and able to support the delivery of digital inclusion activities for older people.
Older people engaging with the service activities have the mental capacity and physical ability to learn new skills and engage with online tools.

References:
[1]Age UK: Digital inclusion in the pandemic March 2021
[2]ONS: Internet access – households and individuals, Great Britain: 2020

Capturing data

Capturing data is important to prove the value of the service, for example to funders, and to better target and identify clients (see more here on how to use data to improve the diversity of your services). Capturing data can also help you better understand the key issues in your area and for your service users, so you can shape your service accordingly.

Data capture tools

When thinking about what data capture tools you should use, think about ways in which you can capture a good mix of quantitative data (numerical and measurable) and qualitative data (written information, such as quotes). While quantitative data, such as the number of older people reached by the service, is important as it provides a clear headline, qualitative data, such as case studies, enable you to understand the richer detail.

Data capture tools you could use include:

- Referral Cards
- Client Assessments
- Session Delivery Plans
- Service Surveys (for both Digital Champions and clients)
- Interviews with Digital champions and clients (case studies)

The table below shows example types of data you might want to capture, and why and how this could be done (examples of some of these data capture tools can be found on Brand Hub). When deciding what data you need to capture, consider the specific parameters of your service, gaps in your current knowledge, as well as reporting requirements set by the funder. Asking too much data from people may put them off providing any at all, so make sure you only capture the data you really need. It goes without saying that all data capturing approaches must consider the most up to date Data Processing/Sharing regulations.

14. Measuring performance and impact

Data subject	Data type	Why capture it?	What to capture?	How to capture it?	How often?
Service Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Quantitative	Top line figures help to demonstrate the broader impact of your service on the community.	For example: • No. of older people reached through awareness raising activities • No. of volunteers Digital Champions recruited • No. of older people supported	Keep records of older people who engage with your service, either through Charity Log, Excel or other monitoring tools.	Throughout programme delivery, e.g. monthly.
Client	Quantitative: Demographic data	Understand who your target audiences are and ensure that you are reaching a diverse group of people in your area.	For example: • Age • Sex • Gender • Ethnicity • Disability • Living status	These questions can be included in a referral form or questionnaire.	At registration or referral only
	Qualitative: Client goals and progress	Measure the impact of the service on the client and make adjustments to provision if required.	For example: • Goals • Change in internet use • Change in digital skills • Progression through different service offerings	Use information gathered through the client's referral and within sessions to capture information and track the development of the client. Feedback from Digital Champions can also support this. Questions could ask about any change in attitude, confidence and skills, and future learning needs.	Every session

Client (cont.)	Qualitative: Client service feedback	Understand the strengths and weaknesses of the service.	For example: • What support was accessed? • Whether the service met their needs and why • Topics covered • Further learning needs	This data can be captured throughout and at the end of the clients engagement. You could capture this through surveys or questionnaires.	Dependent on length of support provision. If someone is accessing support long-term, it's sensible to check-in with them mid-way through.
	Qualitative: Client case studies	Gather detailed stories to share with funders to demonstrate impact and share with prospective Digital Champions or older people thinking about getting involved. Use client case studies to understand more about their experience with the aim of improving it.	For example: • What was their situation before engaging with the service? • How and why did they get involved with the service? • How have they benefitted from the service? • What is their situation now? Has it improved as a result of their improvement? • Quotes	Hold interviews with a small number of older people. Ensure you have consent to share their story externally if you plan on doing so.	Ad hoc
Volunteer Digital Champion	Qualitative and Quantitative: Volunteer Digital Champion record form.	Better understand your Digital Champion cohort and ensure that you are reaching a diverse group of people in your area.	For example: • Age • Sex • Gender • Ethnicity • Disability • Living status	This data can be captured via the application process for volunteer Digital Champions.	At application only.

Volunteer Digital Champion (cont.)	Qualitative: Volunteer Digital Champion feedback	Understand more about volunteer Digital Champion experience with the aim of improving it.	For example: • What do volunteer Digital Champions like/dislike about the role? • Do volunteer Digital Champions have any additional training needs that haven't been catered for? • Do volunteer Digital Champions feel satisfied in their role? • Do volunteer Digital Champions have any recommendations for the development of the service?	This data can be captured at regular points throughout service delivery through sharing surveys or questionnaires.	e.g. 6-monthly – yearly
	Qualitative: Volunteer Digital Champion case studies	Gather detailed stories of volunteer Digital Champions to share with funders to demonstrate impact and with prospective Digital Champions to encourage them to get involved. Use volunteer Digital Champion case studies to understand more about their experience with the aim of improving it.	For example: • What was their situation before engaging with the service? • How and why did they get involved with the service? • How have they benefitted from the service? • What is their highlight from their engagement with the service? • Quotes	Hold interviews with a small number of volunteer Digital Champions. Ensure you have consent to share their story externally.	Ad hoc

14. Measuring performance and impact

Data analysis

While it is important to ensure you are capturing data about your service, you will also want to set aside time to analyse this data to ensure you are gathering learnings and able to make improvements. We have outlined some example data you may want to analyse. However, please note this is not an exhaustive list.

Service audience:

- Diversity data – this will help you assess whether you are reaching people most in need, and/or to identify underrepresented groups.

Awareness raising and promotional activities:

- Conversion rate between awareness raising activities and older people accessing support – this will help to assess the success of awareness raising activities.

- Referral source data – this will help to work out which promotional activities are the most successful.

Digital support sessions:

- Average session number – this will help to understand length of support needed and better plan Digital Champion capacity.

- Feedback – ensure co-creation with older people, adjust delivery accordingly.

Tablet loan scheme:

- Average length of loan – this will help to understand the length of support needed and better plan loan scheme capacity.

- Feedback on post-loan goals – this will help to inform your future delivery approach to ensure that older people exit the loan project with increased digital skills and confidence.

Notes

Notes

Age UK
Tavis House
1–6 Tavistock Square
London WC1H 9NA

0800 169 87 87
www.ageuk.org.uk