

Digital Buddy Task Outline

Background

Digital exclusion has always been an issue for older people, particularly for those living in the boroughs we serve which are the 3 poorest areas to live in the UK for the over 65s.

Being able to get the cheapest utility deals, bid for more suitable social housing or simply find out about what’s going on in their area is something many of us take for granted. The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the digital divide between those who have the means to access the resources and opportunities available on the internet and those who do not.

At Age UK East London, we know that teaching anything to anyone is always much more successful when there is a relationship and trust between trainer and trainee. We also know that it takes more than one or two isolated sessions to really learn a new skill. We have combined our befriending project with our Digital Inclusion work to create a new volunteer-led programme of remote support which aims to give older people the skills and knowledge they need to get online.

This is a new programme, and we are testing it as a pilot to ensure we are getting it right. During this pilot phase, we will be asking for regular feedback from our Digital Buddies as well the people they support.

Commitment	<p>Minimum of 3 months from start of befriending match, includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30-minute informal interview (via Zoom) • Willing to undertake an enhanced DBS check • 2-hour core training session (Induction) • 1-hour per week to include Digital Buddy call with client plus submitting a short online report on how the call went • 1-hour per quarter peer group supervision
Purpose of Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop a friendship over the telephone with an older person. • To use a basis of shared interests to support the older person to get online with the support of printed materials provided by Age UK East London. • To support the older person to work towards their chosen digital inclusion goals e.g., using Zoom, search engines etc. • To provide feedback to aid programme development.
Support Provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full remote training and induction provided. • We will complete the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) application with you. • Supervision and direct contact with the Volunteer Co-ordinator. • Join and participate in peer support groups and meet other volunteers to share experiences and good practice. • Social and celebration events.

Skills and attributes Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good communication with a friendly approachable manner • Solution focused • Good listening skills • Reliable and committed to do at least 1 Digital Buddy call a week for the committed period • Ability to navigate the internet via smart phone, tablet and/or PC • Applicants must be over the age of 18
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn new skills • Meet people • Make a difference • Gain confidence

The Digital Buddy Volunteer Journey

Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You return an application form to Louise Ogle (louise.ogle@ageukeastlondon.org.uk) and specify which volunteering role you are applying for.
Week 2 - 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are contacted by the Volunteer Coordinator at Age UK East London to arrange a Zoom call where you will complete a DBS application and discuss both the role and the service.
Week 3 - 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You are booked onto the next available core training session where you will meet our Digital Inclusion Officers. • You receive a DBS application form in the post to your home address. • You complete the form and return it to the Age UK East London office via post for processing.
Week 4 - 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You attend the induction training and await your DBS certificate to be issued via post to your home address.
Week 8 - 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your DBS certificate arrives in the post to your home address. • You send a photo/scanned copy of your DBS certificate to the Volunteer Coordinator at Age UK East London along with your date/time availability to volunteer. • You are matched to a client and your first call is organised for the following week. You will receive a client profile ahead of your call as well as next steps via email.
Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You carry out weekly calls and/or Zoom calls with the client which we anticipate will take around 1 hour per call. • You may cover the following: Zoom, joining zoom activities, using emails, using a search engine, learning YouTube etc. The topics vary

	<p>depending on the client's interests and goals which you will learn in your introductory call and during your ongoing sessions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You attend quarterly peer-supervision sessions, facilitated by Age UK East London staff, via Zoom to meet other volunteers, resolve issues or questions and share good practice.
<p>Once match ends</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You speak with the Volunteer Coordinator at Age UK East London about the possibility of being re-matched to another client, or ending your volunteering with us.