



Digital Inclusion Project

Impact Report

Year 3 April 2021 - March 2022

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Who we are

Age UK Hammersmith and Fulham is an independent local charity supporting older people across the borough. Our aim is to promote older people's wellbeing and help make their lives fulfilling and enjoyable by offering a wide range of practical services and activities.

What we do

We are committed to addressing poverty, improving wellbeing, mental and physical health, combatting disadvantages, defeating ageism, recognising diversity, addressing social exclusion and promoting more effective public services for older people.

Digital Inclusion Project

The Internet dominates the modern age and as a result older people can be left at a disadvantage. The generous 5-year funding and support by The National Lottery Community Fund since April 2019 has enabled us to provide digital skills training to reduce such disadvantages and, as a consequence, address loneliness, isolation, poverty and deprivation. It has also helped give access to significant services across the Borough and enable older people to stay connected with organisations, friends and family.

The project connects skilled Digital Champion volunteers with clients to demonstrate the usefulness of technology in their everyday life. Digital skill sessions are provided on a one-to-one basis either in person, online or via telephone. Given that older people often lack confidence in learning digital skills, we adopted a method allowing them to learn at their own pace whether on any device (laptop, tablet, smartphone etc.)

To continue to reach as many clients as possible, we choose to combine the process of learning with social events and activities, such as techy tea parties and social quizzes.

Year 3 - Impact in Numbers

Our Digital Service was used

2,759
times



Digital Skill
Learners

842

Digital Befriender
and Champion
Volunteers

38



Hosted outreach
events, workshops
and online activities

275



Outreach workshops
and online activity
attendees

1338



Learn My Way
Online Training
Portal Enrolments

63

Local Business and
Community
Partnerships

28



Housebound
residents trained

175



How we help

We successfully recruited an IT Trainer to deliver weekly group IT training workshops which offer more structured learning, covering subjects from email best practices to Internet safety. A focus group helped us engage with learners to understand what they wanted digital training on. The Learn My Way curriculum has been incorporated to improve learner confidence with a total of 18 learners attending one of the two weekly classes.

Our outreach program established new partnerships and delivered workshops throughout the borough for Get Online Week 2021. We have also hosted Techy Tea parties (interactive quizzes with tablets), joined the LBHF Mayor's "Virtual Tea Dance", and supported Silver Sunday. We host a Love Music Session (demonstrating the benefit of using YouTube for music), as well as our weekly online exercises such as yoga and chair-based exercises and social activities.

Offering access to learning and activities via a "hybrid" system, as a result of the pandemic has also meant that we have been able to reach people in the centre and at home who would otherwise be isolated.

The Internet Advice Service continues to support residents in investigating affordable broadband and data services. We have also sought schemes to help low-income learners who need data and devices. We identified the need to focus on demonstrating how technology can assist in supporting health and wellbeing. Collaboration with other organisations to promote hybrid health and wellbeing activities (both online and in the centre) saw a pilot Digital Diabetes Service offering.

By the end of March 2022, we assisted a total of 2,019 learners in gaining a digital skill, surpassing the project target of 1,500 over 5 years. We have completed 9 out of the 14 project deliverables. This outstanding achievement has only been possible with our amazing volunteers' hard work and diligence, demonstrating the need for continued support and funding for the programme.



March 2021 Census Support

Highest Census support centre completion rate in London with a total of nearly 300 census forms completed

census 2021

July 2021 IT Room Refurb

The Cybercafe was renamed, the Computer room and refreshed to create a better learning environment



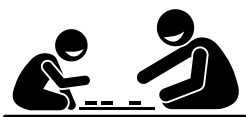
September 2021 Digital Skills @ Shop

The Age UK H&F Shop in the W12 Shopping Centre became a drop-in Digital Skills Training location



November 2021 Golden Gamers

Piloted a fun, blended session of traditional board and online games to address isolation, cognitive function, and dexterity



February 2022 Connect Up

Partnered with Good Things Foundation to deliver the Connect Up, Learn My Way online training portal syllabus

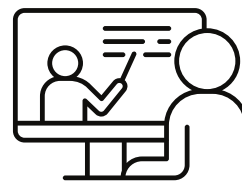


Year 3

Digital Timeline

April 2021 IT Training Sessions

IT Trainer recruited to deliver weekly group IT training classes and workshops to offer free structured learning



August 2021 Digital Diabetes

Won NHS bid to assist with delivering digital skills training whilst promoting diabetes self-management



October 2021 Co-op Community Cause

Nominated as a Co-op community cause to fund the replacement of the 4 obsolete loan / outreach tablets



January 2022 Essential Digital Skills

Partner with LBHF Adult Education Service to offer free EDS Certification training



Overcoming challenges

Covid-19 heavily impacted Outreach Workshops

There was the need to display continued caution concerning Covid-19 whilst delivering outreach sessions and visiting external locations. Services were, however, delivered online where possible as large groups proved difficult to manage, especially if there was no Volunteer Outreach Assistant present. As we have a small, limited supply of 8 tablets, we sought funding to replace 4 of the ageing devices.

Volunteer Recruitment

As our Digital Champions are successfully gaining employment after engaging with our service; there is the need to constantly recruit to meet the demand for digital skills training. This can be both financially challenging and time-consuming, due to the loss of a skilled volunteer force. We however piloted delivering a service in our shop on Saturdays, enabling some Digital Champions to continue their volunteer journey with us.

Low GP surgery engagement

As we try to focus on health and wellbeing, we sought support from local GP surgeries to assist GDPR with diabetic participant referrals. However, the unfortunate lack of engagement despite numerous emails and visits has resulted in limited participant uptake for the sessions from those who could benefit the most from the free service.

Limited form filling services within the Borough

As the demand for accessing public services online grows, so does the digital skills gap among residents. Our Digital Champions unfortunately do not have the required expertise and knowledge to support all clients to successfully complete welfare benefit forms. There is the need for specialised training and supervision in dedicated form filling besides digital support. A funded program of form filling would be welcome.

Home visits for Digital Support

There is still a demand for funding to deliver support at home for people who struggle to access services at the centre, either due to health or disabilities.

“
Thank you for the presentation, I hadn't intended to stay, as I was feeling sorry for myself, but I am glad I did! For me, the most important outcome of your visit is my appreciation of the usefulness of a tablet. The model you brought was a giant version of my phone and so easy to use. Also, the City Mapper app was most interesting. I downloaded it as soon as I returned to my flat. - Ian
”

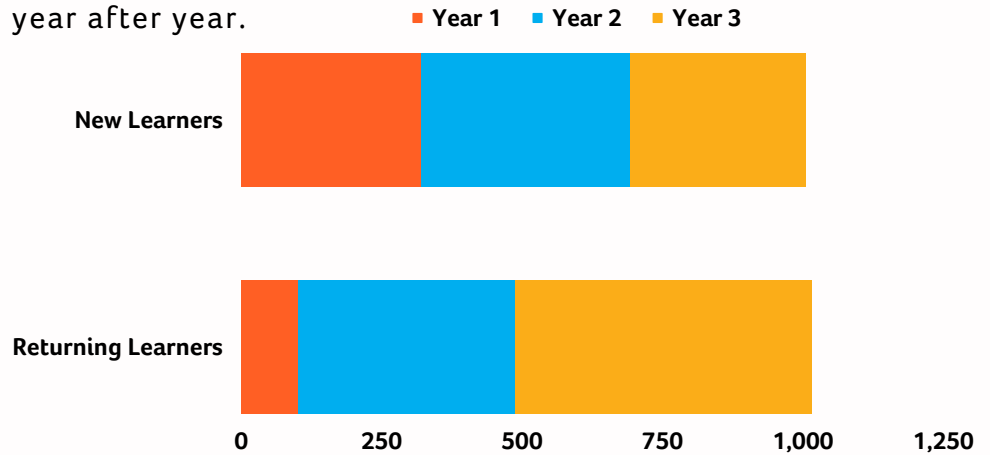


“
I'm so sorry but I am not able to attend class today, I have an Hospital appt. But I'm so happy for myself! I have learned how to send emails to you. See you next week, bye Sally xx
”



Annual comparisons

Year 3 has seen a significant 37% increase in returning learners compared to Year 2. The structured training programs delivered by the IT trainer and the EDS certification programme have contributed to this significantly, showing that learners are building their confidence. As highlighted by the graph below the project is continuing to gain momentum year after year.



So far we have completed the following 9 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in 3 years exceeding the 5-year targets:

- Interventions (Actual 6242 / Target 4100)
- One-to-one digital learners (Actual 2559 / Target 1500)
- Housebound learners (Actual 2405 / Target 80)
- Outreach attendees (Actual 3372 / Target 440)
- Hosted outreach events (Actual 20 / Target 20)
- Outreach workshops (Actual 269 / Target 210)
- Local business partnerships (Actual 39 / Target 20)
- Community & faith partnerships (Actual 20 / Target 20)
- Collaborative meetings (Actual 179 / Target 150)

We will continue to work to achieve the following additional 4 targets over the remaining 2 years. 160 Learn My Way enrolments, a podcast service, 220 Digital Champion and Digital Befriender recruitments.

We use the Department of Education's Essential Digital Skills Framework to categorise all interventions. All 2,759 interventions were categorised with the highest percentage, 46% highlighting that the majority of sessions focus on learning how to use technology to communicate. Digital Foundational Skills at 28% and Transacting at 17% showing an increase in more online shopping and banking. Handling information and content 4%, Problem Solving 3%, Being safe and legal online 2% are areas that the IT training and EDS course will be focusing on in the coming year.

Feedback from surveyed learners resulted in 90% feeling more confident in their digital skills after their training.

Meet Maurice

Maurice is a keen traveller and has lived in Hammersmith & Fulham for over 30 years. He enjoys walking throughout London, exploring the globe, and keeping up with the latest news.

At first, Maurice wasn't sure how to keep up with everything he needed to know, but then he discovered Age UK Hammersmith & Fulham. We hold regular Digital Skills and Internet Advice Sessions to teach those unfamiliar with technology to navigate their devices and become more confident on the internet.



"I remember I started visiting Age UK Hammersmith & Fulham because I heard they had a computer room. I wanted to keep up with the news and, more specifically, learn about Alzheimer's. I was blown away by the immense amount of information at my fingertips, and I've been learning ever since. Initially, I did not have a smartphone either - I do now." Maurice chuckles ... And that was just the beginning! Maurice has been learning and using computers ever since that first visit over ten years ago, and today he uses his smartphone to keep up with the news, shop on Amazon and eBay, and stay in touch with friends and family.

We thought a peer to peer experience for our newer digital skills learners might be helpful. So, we asked Maurice to share his experience at one of our Digital Skills Sessions. "First, I thought it would be helpful for attendees to know that you're in a whole new world when it comes to online shopping. You can get your hands on things that you can't usually get, and it doesn't take much time or energy at all. I've found that this is a powerful asset for growing my CD and record collection. I have a big love for all things classical music, and looking forward to a parcel is always fun—almost like an early Christmas gift, but way better!"

"I also wanted to make sure that I didn't forget any important points about online safety and security measures. This has concerned me a lot in the past, and I'm sure I'm not the only one who's worried about getting hacked or ripped off. First of all, I wanted to mention that the more time you spend online, the easier it will be to tell what's legitimate and what's not. It takes practice! Plus, as much as I try to find them, I hardly ever come across many scams—or any at all. Just be careful where you shop. Don't be scared. Inform yourself properly, and you'll learn there is a section of the net just for you and your special interests. Please take it step by step. Pop down to the activity centre on Greyhound Road if you need help. It's an incredible amount of fun."

We wish everyone could enjoy the internet as much as he does!

so...what's next?

Although we have had a fantastic year of great achievement ... there is still so much more to do!! We like to dream BIG, so these are some of the things we have in store for Year 4.

- **Develop the Digital Volunteer journey**

We provide standard training for all volunteers via our in-house online training portal. However, there is a need for us to better support our Digital Volunteers with regular up to date training to ensure that they are delivering best practices to our learners and also develop additional soft skills.

- **Podcast**

We will work alongside our learners to explore creating a podcast service ... so watch this space.

- **Funding for home support**

There is an ever-increasing need to provide troubleshooting support for residents at home with technical issues. We will be investigating what partnerships and funding are available.

- **Develop a staff training program**

Staff IT training is just as important as client support. There is a need to continually invest in workforce IT skills to ensure that they have both the required tools and know-how to work effectively.

- **Robust feedback collection measures**

We will be investigating how to automate feedback collation for our services to continually improve.

2022 | MARCH

Can you help?

To meet service demand, we require additional funding to support low income learners with suitable devices / data connectivity, provide home support and pay for extending staff additional working hours.

DONATE



... and if you have some free time to spare, why not volunteer with us!



Contact Us

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