

# londonage

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# Comment



**Samantha Mauger**  
Chief Executive  
Age UK London

Age UK London have been at the forefront of championing digital inclusion for older people for several years and our new report, 'Wealth of the Web: Broadening Horizons Online', adds to the extensive positive work we have done in the area. We believe that the time has now come for urgent solutions to this issue and we hope our report will kick-start a reduction in the number of older people offline – a shockingly high 661,000 over 55s in 2012.

This edition of London Age summarises the report, the full version can be found online, and David Wilcox also shares his thoughts on a workshop he ran on the day the report launched. The workshop was attended by older people with a variety of digital experiences and the aim was to uncover 'motivational drivers' to encourage them to travel further in their online journey. Jane Hopkins and Robin Christopher also share some successes and ideas in this area from their organisations, Lewisham Pensioners Forum and AbilityNet respectively.

Finally we also celebrate Age UK London's successful day at the Lord Mayor's Show while Transport for London give us a helpful update on their latest campaign aimed at keeping pedestrians safe.

Thank you, as ever, for reading and we hope you find the articles informative and useful. Get in touch to talk about anything that has been raised.

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# Top news

## Age UK London Chair Retires



Glyn Kyle, the Chair of Age UK London since 2007, has retired having completed his term of office. All of us connected with Age UK London will miss Glyn and want to thank him for the incredible job he has done while in that role. Glyn remains a trustee of Age UK. We would like to thank Glyn for all the tireless work he did championing the cause of older people in London. Glyn has been a friend to many older people and older people's groups across London, always making time to listen, and always aiming to make a difference. The testimonies of colleagues upon his retirement were a real tribute to the job he had done and the legacy he has left. Glyn's unique style, his great consideration for others and his thoughtfulness were appreciated by many across the Age UKs in London. We wish Glyn all the best in his future endeavours, of which we are sure there will be many!

## The Liberty

Age UK London has been named as one of The Liberty Shopping Centre's sponsored charities for 2014 and 2015! This will enable Age UK London's Romford Hub to engage and help the Havering community to an even greater extent.



## Know Your Rights

The Mayor of London Boris Johnson is urging pensioners and carers to check that they are receiving all the benefits they are entitled to as part of this year's Know Your Rights campaign. The campaign is run in partnership with Age UK London and the Citizen's Advice Bureaux. The Greater London Authority estimates that around 180,000 older Londoners could be living in poverty and one in three who are eligible are missing out on Pension Credit worth an average £21 a week, or £1,092 a year, simply because they are unaware they are eligible for it, or because they feel too embarrassed to make a claim. This is money that can make a real difference, when it comes to being able to heat their homes during the winter months and budgeting for the weekly food shop. Pension Credit is one of a number of benefits that pensioners and other vulnerable groups in London could be eligible for that could have a positive impact on their lives. 42,000 Londoners are also estimated to missing out on Carer's Allowance worth up to £59.75 a week. The Mayor of London Boris Johnson said: 'One in three pensioners are not claiming Pension Credit, a vital benefit that will make a big difference to their lives, particularly during the cold winter months. It is critical that they have access to the right information about what they can claim. I am urging them and carers across the capital to seek advice now and ensure they get all the benefits and support that they are eligible for.'

# Wealth of the Web

## Broadening Horizons Online

On January 27 2014 Age UK London launched their latest report on the issue of digital inclusion called 'Wealth of the Web: Broadening Horizons Online'. Here, we take a look at the report content and also outline some of the recommendations

**The government's drive to going 'digital by default' follows the technological trend towards online based forms of interactions with service-users. However, there is still a large population of people who are not online and the majority of these are people over the age of 55. 661,000 people over the age of 55 in London have never used the internet – that is 41% of over 55's in the capital.**

Whilst the government agenda focuses on getting the required information into systems rather than up-skilling individuals, there is plenty of research evidence that up-skilling older people in computer competency has clear benefits for them in terms of making cost-savings, having greater choice, overcoming isolation, promoting interests and possibly even combating the onset of dementia.

As part of Age UK London's on-going commitment to raising the voice and addressing the needs of older Londoners, the report provides a summary of a research project targeted at understanding the issue of digital inclusion with respect to older Londoners. From this, recommendations for future action have been proposed across all sectors and across various stakeholder groups in order to promote digital inclusion for interested older Londoners.

At present, there remain a number of obstacles that make it difficult for older people to become digitally included: lack of interest; fears of making a mistake and perception of being unable to learn; financial cost; fears for safety and privacy;

lack of training and support; physical or cognitive impairment; and personal attitudes and beliefs.

This list of obstacles may seem daunting, but there are also a number of drivers that appear to assist with facilitating the digital inclusion of older people. Whilst it is recognised that these drivers will have a greater or lesser impact and relevance to different people, they offer understanding for what changes can be employed to support older Londoners to get online. Drivers include: curiosity and an appetite to learn; specific interests and hobbies; family support; independence and inclusion; work experience and studying; group and club membership; training and support; and personal attitudes and beliefs.

### A model of digital inclusion

Whilst these drivers and obstacles have been implicated in many studies, older people represent a very diverse population with varied levels of experience and engagement with computers. Nevertheless, research has found certain shared commonalities in participant-response that has enabled the development of categories, or typologies, to distinguish between different, but commonly encountered, views on digital inclusion. Drawing together common themes from other research enables the development of a 'model of digital inclusion' representing typologies defined by confidence with and regularity of computer use.

**Offline and uninterested** – characterised by: negative associations, feeling that it is



unnecessary, low awareness of online capabilities, cynical about technology.

**Offline but interested** – characterised by: fears of low knowledge/making a mistake, perceived financial constraints, fear of safety and privacy, uncertainty of relevance to lives.

**Restricted use but online** – characterised by: single-use functionality, desire for training, desire for on-going support, curiosity, sometimes feeling 'pushed' online.

**Expansive use and online** – characterised by: positive associations, attended good quality training, high exposure to computers, particular online goals.

Fundamentally, and although this is a simplified model, this raises the question of how older people can be supported, if they wish to do so, to 'move' through the stages of digital inclusion – from being 'offline and uninterested' to being 'offline but interested', from being 'offline but interested' to having 'restricted use but online' and from having 'restricted use but online' to having 'expansive use and online'. It also raises the idea that the

relevant obstacles and drivers mentioned will have different pertinence for older people depending on where they currently are in this model and that any interventions that wish to be successful need to be targeted to the right people.

### From 'Offline and Uninterested' to 'Offline but Interested'

'Curiosity' is a key aspect of this fundamentally motivational transition. Older people do not necessarily subscribe to the widespread belief that the internet can provide benefits to them and they do not necessarily have its presence and use as a 'social norm' in the same way that other generations do. Whilst some people have felt resentment at being 'forced' online to avoid 'missing out', the incentive of a motivational 'hook' that has encouraged participation of so many would seem a far more positive form of promoting interest. Whilst these 'hooks' are as diverse as the interest and hobbies of individuals, there is much that can be done by all sectors in order to avoid alienating older people from seeing themselves as being a part of it.



**From ‘Offline but Interested’ to ‘Restricted Use but Online’**

Whilst motivational aspects are key in transition one, the means and practicalities are also of importance through this transition as financial implications of computer ownership, training, accessibility and maintenance need to be addressed. Of particular note, training needs to be targeted at an introductory level that is reactive to the learner’s pace and interests as positive initial experience is key in encouraging online use to those who have made the step. Funders have a clear role here and issues related to accessibility for all have obvious relevance.

**From ‘Restricted Use but Online’ to ‘Expansive Use and Online’**

Higher level training is relevant here to up-skill those who have engaged with computers but want to know more and there is a mass of literature on training design that, aligned with the preferences highlighted through interviews with older people, should equip providers for delivery. Opportunities for older people to act as trainers should also be encouraged as having someone with perceived similarities who has achieved something has the potential to inspire. Benefits of

using computers to do things typically done offline such as making savings on insurance, product purchase and linking in with social networks can also be communicated here to enable those who already have a level of computer-competency to make the decision of how far they wish to take their level of engagement.

**Recommendations**

The report itself gives nearly 50 recommendations for a variety of stakeholders; older people, the Age UK London network, other voluntary sector organisations, regional and local government, funders and the private sector. Below is a summary of the recommendations for each stakeholder group and a key, example recommendation.

**Recommendations for older people**

Older people themselves have an obvious role to play in making the transition to using modern technologies and, in particular, those who have made this change in later-life have a great deal to contribute to those who are deterred by fears of operation-complexity, safety and privacy.

- Older computer-users can help by providing their

‘story’ of how they crossed the digital divide as well as describing what particular functions of computer-use are valuable to them.

**Recommendations for the Age UK London network**

As a pan-London charity representing older Londoners, Age UK London is clearly in a strong position to assist with co-ordinating implementation of recommendations across the capital. Local Age UKs, with their capacity to link in with individuals at a local level also have a vital role in operationalizing recommendations within communities to assist those who wish to, to manage the transition to digital inclusion.

- Having had had success in facilitating MiCommunity programmes as an intergenerational solution to digital inclusivity, Age UK London have all the materials readily available to support the wider application of this model across the capital. Age UK London and local Age UKs should ensure that they use evaluation methods that really capture what aspects of the programme work best and which work less well so that this learning can feed back into the relevant knowledge streams and assist with refining course-design.

**Recommendations for other voluntary sector organisations**

The voluntary sector as a whole has a great deal to contribute in providing support mechanisms for older Londoners who wish to get online through contributing to the pool of digital inclusion research knowledge, linking with local government, linking with private sector organisations, providing information, advice and sign-posting, and supporting programmes and initiatives to provide hands-on support.

- Through provision of support to older Londoners, voluntary sector organisations should ensure that robust and consistent evaluation methods are utilised to draw comparisons between initiatives and to build a picture of what works and for

whom it works best.

**Recommendations for regional and local government**

As the ‘Digital by Default’ agenda continues to be rolled out, regional and local government have a clear role to play in ensuring that the transition runs smoothly and that those who do not have computer access and/or competency are not disadvantaged by this.

- Information regarding the ‘Digital by Default’ agenda should be communicated through non-computerised channels to give older Londoners plenty of opportunity to make decisions and plan.

**Recommendations for funders**

Whilst there is evidence that programmes have had success in assisting older people to get online, these programmes tend to target those users who both have an existing interest in computers and who are known to networks.

- Support research designed to contribute to the literature and gain a greater understanding of the motivational transition from being ‘offline and uninterested’ to being ‘offline but interested’.

**Recommendations for the private sector**

As the largest proportion of the population that is not currently online and who will continue to have computer-access and use incentivised, older people represent a potentially under-targeted market that the private sector can target both for their own benefit as well as prospective consumers of all ages.

- Incorporate older people representatives as co-designers and testers of products to ensure user-friendly operation.

You can read the full report, as well as a report summary, on the Age UK London Website. If you would like a hard copy please contact Danny Elliott on [delliott@ageuklondon.org.uk](mailto:delliott@ageuklondon.org.uk) or **020 7820 6778**.

# All Digital Adoption is Personal

**David Wilcox, editor of [www.socialreporter.com](http://www.socialreporter.com)**, a website about how social media might be used for social benefit, ran a workshop for older people before the launch event of the 'Wealth of the Web: Broadening Horizons Online' report. Here, he gives his take on the day and also shares what he learned.

**Some 50 people joined us in exploring how older people, or indeed anyone, might be encouraged to engage with digital technology and the Internet – without a screen in sight. Instead we used bits of card, flip charts and a lot of animated conversation. The aim was to start conversations around the research we carried out for Nominet Trust last year into technology in later life, and hopefully spark ideas for ways forward.**

My colleague, Drew Mackie, and I ran the workshop as part of the Positive Ageing in London launch event for Age UK London's 'Wealth of the Web' report. I think people enjoyed themselves, and we gained some useful human insights to add to those in the broader scoping report written by Ben Donovan.

The challenge for the session was how to offer people online opportunities, digital devices and support when everyone's interests are different. The Government wants more people online for their own benefit, and to digitise public services, but one size doesn't fit all.

*The Government wants more people online for their own benefit, and to digitise public services, but one size doesn't fit all.*

So Drew used his iPad mini to create some wonderful cartoons of Alice, Jenny, Faisal, Eunice, Sam and other characters who we introduced to groups in our workshop. Their first task was to fill out our starter description of their character, identify the main life challenges and opportunities that they faced.

We then offered the groups a deck of 18 cards with some online activities that might help. Each of the cards had a brief description of a possible activity, and then on the back we gave two or three examples of websites or tablet apps that could be useful.

We asked the groups to describe what devices their character used at present, what key challenges and opportunities they faced, and to choose three or four of the cards. After that we asked how the life of their character might be changed if they adopted the ideas on the cards, and then to consider which device might be most appropriate – desktop or laptop computer, tablet, smartphone, smart TV or games console – and what sort of support might be useful. Would they, for example, benefit from access and training at the local library or online centre, if that were available, or get the help and encouragement they needed from friends and family?

*We asked the groups to describe what devices their character used at present, what key challenges and opportunities they faced, and to choose three or four of the cards.*

Groups identified challenges and opportunities, possible online activities, and then described the difference they might make.

The aim of the workshop sequence was to emphasise that technology is not the best place to start. First consider the individual, their attitudes, interests and skills – and then what online activities might be beneficial. At that point you can look at the



Some of the workshop attendees creating their character

range of websites, apps and other options available, what devices and support might be appropriate. We did all of that in an hour and a quarter.

## The discussion brought home to me several key points:

- People may be fearful, with some justification, of the risk of going online. Can you trust sites with personal information? Guidance and support on that is essential.
- The process and costs of getting personal access are confusing. It is difficult to compare different home broadband and mobile broadband offerings, and monitor usage.
- Even those with computer skills may find upgrading to a new machine problematic, because much will have changed.
- Tablets like the iPad and Tesco Hudl are increasingly attractive because they are more intuitive to use, and the apps provide a quick route into useful activities.
- Organisations offering access and support may find

it difficult to keep up with the move to tablets. Help is just as likely to come from friends and family.

- At the same time, libraries and centres are enormously important for social learning and support.
- 'Techy tea parties' run by Age UK London with corporate sponsors, and their Micommunity intergenerational learning programme, have been very successful.

*One size doesn't fit all. It's not just a choice between laptop or tablet, smartphone or smart TV.*

Overall I believe that the key message was that all digital adoption is personal. Whatever the broad policies and programmes in place, everyone is different. One size doesn't fit all. It's not just a choice between laptop or tablet, smartphone or smart TV. It's about what apps may be useful, and how to move from one to the other. It's about how to develop the digital literacies to live in an increasingly technology-dominated world.



Drew and I are really grateful to Age UK London and Positive Ageing in London for the opportunity to try out the game, and to everyone who took part. The game is part of a proposal to Nominet Trust for a Living Lab of games and online resources for the Life Transitions challenge.

*Overall I believe that the key message was that all digital adoption is personal. Whatever the broad policies and programmes in place, everyone is different.*

I'll be writing more later about that on my blog, and other possibilities for taking forward the momentum we achieved at the workshop. If you are interested in applying the game to your work, do get in touch.

Read more from David at [www.socialreporter.com](http://www.socialreporter.com)

This article first appeared on David's blog, along with photographs, transcripts of the worksheets and more. It can be found at [www.socialreporter.com/?p=2803](http://www.socialreporter.com/?p=2803). You can contact David on [david@socialreporter.com](mailto:david@socialreporter.com)

## Delivering Digital Enlightenment to Lewisham's older residents

**Jane Hopkins**, Secretary to the Lewisham Pensioners Forum (LPF), writes about the work LPF do to tackle digital inclusion amongst older people in the borough.

**An estimated 7.63 million adults, 15% of the UK population, have never used the internet. The over-60s form the largest proportion of this shocking statistic with the over-70s identified as the least frequent users of digital technology.**

Less than a third (29%) had ever accessed the internet compared to 99% of 16-24 year-olds. Given their higher incidence of disability and social isolation, the over-70s are the very age cohort most likely to benefit from being online to upload information on health and service provision and link into social networking sites. In the foreseeable future, digital competency will become the key factor in prolonging independent living within the community. The inability of older people to use computers confidently or engage effectively at a digital level has profound implications for their chance to play a full and active role in national, local and mainstream civil society, ensure that their views and preferences are 'heard' by politicians and participation with commercial and financial organisations to shape services and tailor goods that meet their specific needs.

The Lewisham Pensioner's Forum (LPF) has witnessed the creeping exclusion of its less digitally-confident members with alarm. However, our collaboration in 2012 as the UK partner in a two year, EU-funded project, 'Social Inclusion and Dignity in Old Age' has focused our attention and goaded us into long overdue action to revisit the existing Information and Communications Technology (ICT) provision across our borough and

devise innovative, sustainable ICT solutions that could be delivered to our members on a low/no cost basis in collaboration with local stakeholders such as TUC funded 'Union-Learn', local secondary schools, Goldsmith's University Student's Union and the University of the Third Age.

*The inability of older people to use computers confidently or engage effectively at a digital level has profound implications on their chance to play a full and active role on national, local and mainstream civil society*

We wanted our ICT programme to tackle the three major hurdles blamed for the low adoption and confident use of technology in older age; affordability of equipment, software and home broadband connection, the historical skills-gap and failure to appreciate the benefits of being online. Our target group of learners were in their 70's, formerly employed in low-paid manual public sector jobs who had never encountered computers during their working lives unlike our 'baby boomer' members without access to a computer at home. None of the group had any doubts about the value of being online. They were desperate to learn how to communicate with distant friends and family, often overseas, using email, Skype and other social media sites, research information, catch up on missed television programmes, download books, store photos and even shop or bank online from the comfort of their homes. None of them expressed any burning desire to write, create and



An LPF member using a computer

save documents, all areas covered at length by traditional ICT courses.

A comprehensive audit of all ICT training schemes across the borough confirmed our suspicions that the majority were too expensive, restricted to 'NEETS' groups or unappealing in style and content to the older adult learner. Cuts in library staff meant that the 'Learn Direct' pre-loaded programmes using headphones freely available on library terminals lacked the level of personal support required to reassure the unconfident beginner. Lewisham's adult education service, CEL, ran a range of day-time 'silver surfers' ICT classes but they were proved too expensive for many members despite concessions. We therefore decided to design our own bespoke course specifically targeting the 'digital timid' without a home computer that would be designed to overcome their lack of confidence and anxiety by ensuring that the learning process matched the learner's preferred pace along with guaranteed individual support to 'nudge' and encourage perseverance.

We launched our pilot course in May 2013 in

collaboration with Goldsmiths University who generously provided free access to one of its computer suites. It consisted of five, fortnightly one-hour sessions with each partnered with a student volunteer, a 'buddy', who sat alongside them offering encouragement and guidance as they worked through set tasks at their own pace. Participants were assigned an email address, shown how to use a keyboard and mouse and then guided to investigate popular websites that provided practical information on health and welfare benefits, online shopping and London's public transport system. The final session took place at the participant's local library to transfer learnt skills to unfamiliar but free-to-use community terminals. The participants whose ages ranged from 65-87 all reported feeling far more confident about using the internet following the course and had enjoyed meeting up socially in an unfamiliar environment. Buoyed by their positive feedback, we embarked on our second course in November 2013, which proved less successful given the limited number of buddies electing to volunteer their time and their unpredictable attendance. We still intend to run

the course on a termly basis once a new cohort of 'buddies' is recruited.

Invitations to attend 'Techy Tea Parties', the brainchild of Age UK London, hosted by large corporations as part of their community engagement are highly prized by our membership and hugely oversubscribed because they marry up opportunities to master digital equipment within the context of a social outing. LPF takes full advantage of all offers, even using limited funds to hire a community minibus to convey our less mobile members to such events.

Due to funding cuts, LPF has been forced to approach unfamiliar bedfellows in the corporate sector in the search of one-off funding for extra amenities such as five cheap-end tablet computers for in-house training use. We have met with a deafening silence to date apart from a major electronic retailer who we approached in 2013 to propose a local partnership and suggestion of a dedicated sales assistant prepared to offer jargon-free advice on equipment suitable for the needs and purses of older people, free

personalisation of their purchase and an on-site 'techno-surgery' that has resulted in an invitation from the local manager to discuss the matter further. It would appear that most corporations are far more comfortable making donations to large national charities trusting the 'trickle-down' effect rather than small grassroots organisations. It is a shame as it is agencies like LPF that get information out to its 1400 odd members via old fashioned, hard copy, bi-monthly newsletters hand-delivered to save on postage that are best placed to identify and recruit groups most in need of ICT training. Older people wanting to learn 'how to access the internet' are unlikely to be recruited onto courses advertised over the internet!

In conclusion, be prepared for lots of false starts, be persistent, develop supplicant knee pads when you go begging and abandon any sense of shame. However, the rewards outweigh any of the tribulations once you witness the joy expressed by an older learner on finally mastering a longed-for task and their eagerness and confidence to proceed to the next.

**Beatrice (87) a former local councillor and Principle Officer** for Westminster Age Concern in the 1970s and current formidable activist on behalf of older people's issues was so frustrated by her lack of digital skills that she volunteered for our first techno-buddy course in June 2013 determined to overcome her anxieties about 'breaking the computer'. She had already survived several attempts by family members to teach her without success and fortunately without lasting animosity! However, the patience and knowledge shown by her 'buddy' helped her to gradually overcome her inhibitions. Beatrice reports that the lack of pressure to keep up with lesson and not being 'rushed' helped enormously. 'The freedom to go back over something I didn't first understand was really important,' she said, as well as feeling that the group was, 'all in the same boat.' To the horror of some, Beatrice has gone from strength to strength practising the skills learnt on the course and building on them to the point of now being online, exploring and researching websites and emailing from home with her new interactive and unthreatening tablet computer presented by her family at Christmas. Once she has mastered its functions, she states that she will proceed to the next level... watch this space!



# Including Everyone In An Online Future

**Robin Christopherson**, Head of Digital Inclusion at AbilityNet, tells us about his organisation's vision of a digital future where mobile devices are central.

**With daily internet traffic via mobile devices routinely outstripping that of more traditional computers, there is now no doubt in anyone's mind that mobile computing is the future as well as the present, but it is less widely appreciated that the very unique requirements of computing on the go will inevitably help everyone, regardless of age or impairment, get online. Let me explain.**

In the US the disabled community have a word for the able-bodied. They call them 'Tabs' ('Temporarily able-bodied') which is increasingly applicable with an ever-aging population. But it has particular significance in the context of mobile computing.

*Trying to read small text on a small screen with poor colour contrast on a sunny day is an inconvenience and a frustration that the average busy mobile user won't put up with.*

Computing on the go means accessing content and services in extreme environments. Trying to read small text on a small screen with poor colour contrast on a sunny day is an inconvenience and a frustration that the average busy mobile user won't put up with. So you make the text and colours on your app or website large and contrasting so users can see it better when out and about (or at least I hope you do). Now consider - those very same requirements we've just outlined for able-bodied users on the go are also needed not occasionally but all the time for

people with a vision impairment, dyslexia or who have just misplaced their reading glasses.

Remember when mobile internet access first came out and people were happy to pinch and zoom on a webpage to make the text large and then swipe around to see the whole page? Now people demand websites to be simple and clear on a small screen without the need for a lot of scrolling so they match the simplicity of mobile apps. This necessity for ease of use is directly benefitting the less confident or less able-bodied user. Having a website or app that is simple and straightforward enough for someone on the move to buy a gift for someone in two minutes will also be a gift for people with a learning difficulty or disability who would otherwise struggle with complexity. Never forget - your older customers have real money to spend and lots of choice where to spend it.

The parallels are endless. Imagine you are driving and you can't interact with your phone for any length of time. This makes you effectively temporarily physically and visually impaired and the choices of voice command and speech output that many apps offer are things that users who are permanently physically or visually impaired also benefit from or rely upon.

*Never forget - older customers have real money to spend and lots of choice where to spend it.*

So there is no distinction between being temporarily or permanently disabled when it comes to mobile computing - and the sooner



everyone realises that the better. And for that reason the very word 'accessibility' isn't ideal as it has obvious associations with disability. We prefer to talk about 'inclusive design' or 'everybody technology'.

In the next few years screens are going to get smaller (Google Glass and smartwatches) and environments even more extreme as people are able to interact with their wearable technologies in environments where you wouldn't even be able to take your phone out of your pocket. Whilst older users may not be the first to don Glass they will undoubtedly benefit from the clear advantage simplicity and ease of use such computing will demand. They will also have more ways to monitor their health through such devices should they choose to wear them.

One final prediction related to these smart phones we'll all be carrying. For the older or disabled the ability for them to make semi-smart devices (such as thermostats, microwaves, bathroom scales, blood pressure or glucose monitors) more inclusive is not insignificant. Because they are increasingly able to connect to them (via wifi or Bluetooth) our smartphone could be the larger display of a device that would otherwise be difficult to see, or

the voicebox of a device that would otherwise be mute, or the remote control of a device that would otherwise be too fiddly to use.

Users are already demanding to be able to control the heating in their home from the comfort of their bed using an app on their phone. They want to be able to track their heart rate or blood pressure over days and weeks and again it's an app that does this and thus connectivity is required. It won't be the disabled or elderly that will be driving this agenda, but they will be benefitting from it disproportionately if a little bit of good practice in inclusive design is observed along the way.

Does all this mean that a smartphone or tablet are essential possessions for older or disabled users in order to feel included in a digital future? Not necessarily - but there's no doubt that they are becoming more useful, affordable and smarter every day.

*There's no doubt that they are becoming more useful, affordable and smarter every day.*

Find out more about AbilityNet at [www.abilitynet.org.uk](http://www.abilitynet.org.uk)

# Age UK London at the Lord Mayor's Show 2013

**Forty older Londoners took part** in the parade for Age UK London and, despite some rain, enjoyed every minute of celebrating and demonstrating that older people in London are full of the 'Energy of Life'.



**An Age UK London float took part in the Lord Mayor's Show 2013 on Saturday 9 November. We had been very excited about this for months and the planning finally came to fruition.**

The new Lord Mayor, Alderman Fiona Woolf, only the second lady Lord Mayor in the history of the City, had set the theme for the parade as 'The Energy of Life' which allowed us to celebrate and demonstrate the energy and contribution of older Londoners to life in the capital.

Almost 40 Older Londoners were on our float, one of around 150 entrants. Amongst the marching bands and groups of people on foot, our float was in high spirits throughout, despite the rain.

The parade route covers 3.25 miles and our band, consisting of an accordion and saxophone, accompanied an enthusiastic choir who sang 'Maybe it's because I'm a Londoner' and 'Lambeth Walk'.

*The City set the theme for the parade as 'The Energy of Life' which allowed us to celebrate and demonstrate the energy and contribution of older Londoners to life in the capital.*

As well as musicians, our older Londoners included campaigners, volunteers, carers and workers and they are all huge contributors to London.

# Taking Care On London's Roads



**Did you know** twice as many people are killed on the road when they are not on a crossing? Transport for London tell us about their latest pedestrian safety campaign.

**Road safety is an issue for everyone in London. Whether we drive, walk or cycle, we all need to look out for each other, especially now the days are shorter.**

The majority of pedestrian related road collisions occur within 50 metres of a crossing, so going a little out of your way could save your life. This is particularly important for people who are less mobile, with recent figures showing that people over the age of 65 make up approximately 40 per cent of all pedestrians killed on the roads.

Transport for London (TfL) is working hard to ensure that pedestrians stay safe on London's roads. Earlier this year the Mayor of London and TfL published 'Safe Streets for London', a new road safety plan which sets out a clear path towards helping to reduce death and serious injury on the capital's roads. The plan, which covers the period until 2020, builds on the solid progress made by TfL, London's boroughs and the police over the last decade.

*Transport for London (TfL) is working hard to ensure that pedestrians stay safe on London's roads.*

Using detailed analysis of road collisions in the capital, the plan will ensure that the right measures are being taken to reduce casualties. TfL aims to further reduce death and serious injury on London's roads by introducing and achieving a target of a 40 per cent drop in people

being killed or seriously injured by 2020. This will allow the capital to make significant progress towards the ultimate ambition – a London road network free from death and serious injury.

*Give yourself enough time to get across the road and use road crossings whenever possible*

To help deliver this reduction, TfL has recently launched a new campaign to raise safety awareness among different road users. Top safety tips include:

- Give yourself enough time to get across the road and use road crossings whenever possible.
- Be seen – wear something bright, especially at night.
- It can be hard to judge the speed of vehicles – before crossing look both ways and check traffic speed and distance.
- When not on a pedestrian crossing, avoid crossing in front of stationary vehicles, especially lorries and vans.
- Look out for cyclists and motorcyclists – they can travel quickly on the inside or outside of stationary traffic.

TfL and the London boroughs are carrying out a huge programme of works to improve pedestrian safety and make the capital's roads safer for all. TfL's business plan sets out how an unprecedented doubling of the budget for London's roads over the next 10 years will be spent, rising from a planned £1.9bn to around £4bn. In partnership with the



boroughs, TfL will focus this investment into proven and innovative road safety measures.

In addition, all pedestrian crossings and road junctions are constantly reviewed to ensure they are safe and accessible. This includes installing pedestrian countdown timers at traffic signals across London, which tell people how long they have left to safely cross the road.

The Mayor and TfL have also long supported 20mph speed limits and have worked with local boroughs to fund hundreds of residential 20mph zones. Currently, around 19 per cent of all roads in London are 20mph, which equates to more than 1,500 miles.

*The Mayor and TfL have also long supported 20mph speed limits and have worked with local boroughs to fund hundreds of residential 20mph zones.*

TfL will continue to work with boroughs to identify other areas where 20mph limits could be introduced, and will always consider 20mph limits where appropriate on their own road network. They are also expanding the use of Legible

London walking signs and continue to deliver pedestrian improvement schemes including Tottenham Hale, Highbury Corner, Elephant & Castle northern roundabout, Waterloo roundabout and Vauxhall.

*These new campaigns, as well as our wider road improvement work, will help us with our ambition of a 40 per cent cut in deaths and serious injuries by 2020.*

Ben Plowden, Director of Strategy and Planning at TfL, said: 'Reducing casualties among all road users is a major priority for TfL and the Mayor. These new campaigns, as well as our wider road improvement work, will help us with our ambition of a 40 per cent cut in deaths and serious injuries by 2020. They will encourage individuals not only to look out for each other, but also take additional responsibility for their own safety on London's roads.'

For more information go to [www.tfl.gov.uk/roadsafety](http://www.tfl.gov.uk/roadsafety)

# IN THE HOTSEAT

**Q&A** **Kathleen Egan**, Programmes & Capacity Manager at Age UK London, shares her thoughts on working with older people.

## **How did you come to be working for Age UK?**

I've worked in the voluntary and community sector for over thirty years including freelance for a number of local Age UKs for ten years. Most of this time has been spent creating new services that respond to the changing needs of older people. At Age UK London I now have the opportunity to look across London as a whole to see how we can learn from one another and share ideas and best practice.

## **Why are older people's issues important to you?**

Being treated with dignity and respect is important at all ages but not always forthcoming from policy makers and those who provide services. Sometimes we need to make our voices heard and make clear recommendations as to how to influence change.

## **What projects do you offer?**

I run a number of projects for Age UK London including our Fit 4 Purpose Programme, funded by London Councils. It aims to strengthen over 400 older peoples' organisations in London by informing and skill sharing. The project helps them

effectively manage income reductions by providing them with the knowledge and skills to broker partnerships, 'stay afloat' and most effectively serve their users. We run a wide range of practical support workshops which help organisations identify and pitch for funding and ensure their sustainability through robust governance and quality service delivery.

## **What one thing would you ask the local borough to do to improve things for older people?**

Getting their voices heard on local issues that directly affect them from Welfare Reform, changing health services to transport provision.

## **What has been your best experience in working with older people?**

Making sure there are robust mechanisms for getting older people's voices heard – that are fully inclusive for those who can't leave their homes or who don't have access to social media.

## **What is your vision for the future of your local Age UK?**

Making sure the services we support are wanted and make a real difference to older people's lives.

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*London Age highlights issues which affect older people in the capital. It is produced to support Age UK London's mission to improve the quality of life for older Londoners and to enhance their status and influence.*

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Age UK London works across the capital to improve the quality of life for older people and to enhance their status and influence.

*If you have any comment on the magazine content or ideas for the next issue, we'd love to hear from you: [delliott@ageuklondon.org.uk](mailto:delliott@ageuklondon.org.uk)*

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