



# EXTENDING OUR HAND INTO **THE COMMUNITY**



clearcommunityweb 

IMPACT REPORT 2020-2021



## OUR MISSION

To help people develop their digital skills, awareness and confidence in order to learn new things, live more independently and connect with their community

## OUR VISION

A society where people have equal access to information and services, where technology is not a barrier, and everyone can be safer online.

## OUR VALUES

### PEOPLE FIRST

We place people at the centre of our work and understand individual challenges

### INCLUSIVE

We provide safe spaces for people to learn, share and connect

### SUPPORTIVE

We provide individual assistance at critical times

### RESPECTFUL

We work without prejudice and respect peoples differences

### EMPOWERING

We help people to become more independent and enable them to find their own solutions

### OPEN

We are transparent with the way we work and the information we provide

**ClearCommunityWeb CIC** help people feel more confident and comfortable with technology through classes, workshops and individual support.

We primarily work with older people, vulnerable adults and carers in South London.  
We also work with families.

We partner and build relationships with organizations to help them reach their communities by providing training and expertise.  
We also provide volunteering and work opportunities.

# Summary of the year

## Lockdown brought a year of extreme highs and lows.

The sheer frustration at the barriers people faced through the pandemic, both social and digitally, really helped to focus the work we do: building confidence, developing awareness and providing access to support and services.

On this backdrop we have been able to plot a path on which we can now build a road ahead.

From piloting some small projects at the Upper Norwood Library Hub in 2019, we now have key partnerships across Lambeth, Croydon, Southwark & Bromley. We have also delivered work into the boroughs of Kensington and Chelsea, Hackney & Camden.

Our flagship class, Digital Awareness for Older People, hit a high with over 25 participants, we have trained over 280 people to use Zoom and conducted 285 individual support cases.

We have also launched a program of short courses and 'Digital Life Skills' webinars and have built a team of staff and volunteers with a home in Foresters Hall, Crystal Palace.

This stability now allows us to establish ourselves and continue to provide pivotal support to local residents and organizations.

Reflecting on the year past is a difficult one for me as I'm constantly striving forward but hopefully the pages that follow celebrate some of the work we have done and demonstrate the impact we have had.

**Caspar Kennerdale, Managing Director.**  
**July 2021**

**11.9m people (22% of the population) do not have the digital skills needed for everyday life in the UK and will reduce to 8% by 2030\***

\*Lloyds Consumer Digital Index



**“Our partnership with ClearCommunityWeb to advance digital and social inclusion for older people and the most vulnerable in our community has supported our vision for greater inclusion and cohesion.”**

**Margaret Adjaye**  
Upper Norwood Library Hub



# Digital awareness for older people

“It is a welcoming group, who are very willing to share their knowledge and digital tips and dilemmas.”

## Our weekly zoom-based class has now become our flagship!

As lockdown was announced, 'Digital Awareness for Older People' was launched as a means to stay in contact with older residents who had attended the 'Digital Skills for Seniors' class at the Upper Norwood Library. We literally didn't know when we were going to see them again.

After a busy week encouraging the class to download zoom and reassuring them it would be alright, we really had no expectation beyond 'giving it a go'. At best we thought a couple might persevere but had resigned ourselves to parking the class.

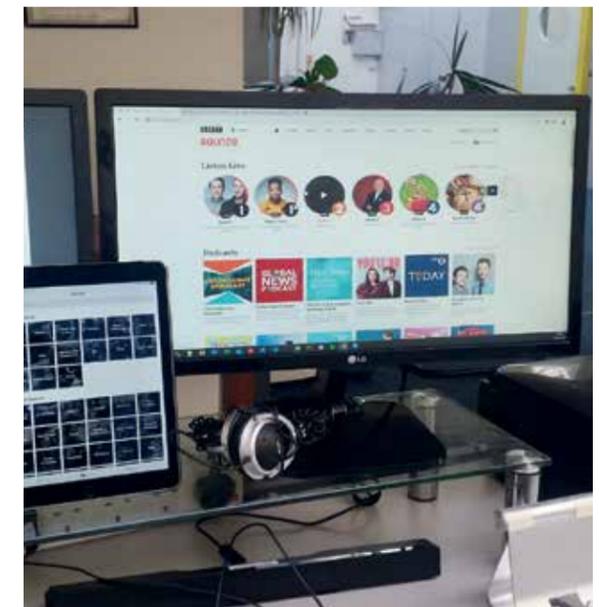
However, 6 people turned up to that first session and so we continued. There was a lot of uncertainty about how to get food, prescriptions, and the like with no idea how long it would last. We continued to improvise, and numbers started to increase.

We reached out to other organizations such as Croydon Voluntary Action, Croydon BME forum, Crystal Palace Community Trust and Age UK Croydon to assist their beneficiaries get online and the word spread.

We have since gone on to deliver 42 classes with 51 different learners popping in. A total of 442 attendances. We also have 2 volunteers, David & Eulalee who have taken up the role after being regular learners in the class.

We had to adapt the nature of our classes. We wanted to help build confidence and for people to feel safer online so they could connect with support services, communicate with family and to explore their local area which was now shut off from those shielding.

“A safe place to ask basic questions and get things wrong”

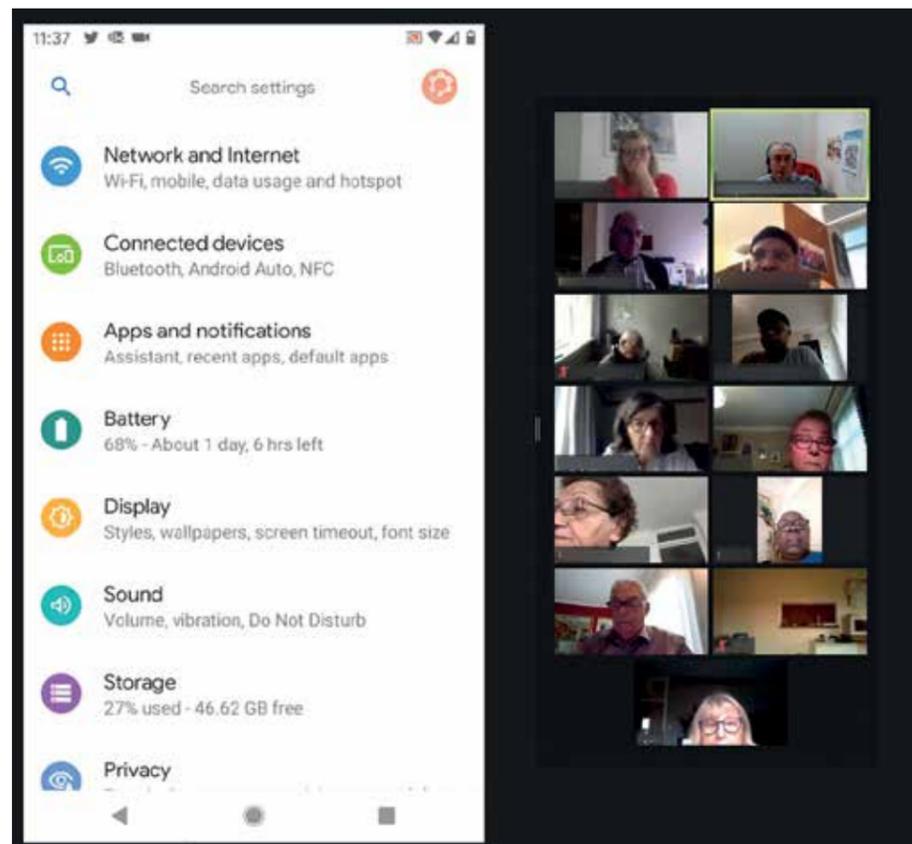


## It's less about learning digital skills and more about becoming aware of what is out there and how to use it.

Over the year, we have covered subjects including WhatsApp, syncing photos from your phone, completing the census, test and trace, Google Maps, Social Media, QR Codes and recovering passwords.

We now include monthly sessions, focussing on Scams and Online Safety where we encourage the class to share their experiences and examples. We also have an active WhatsApp group where the class asks and answer questions.

Teaching online is different from teaching in person and we needed to understand this. For example, you can't observe what an individual is doing as you are not in the same room but you can more easily demonstrate to a group by sharing the screen of different devices.



**“There is something incredibly rewarding about helping people to gain confidence in using technology.**

**What might seem easy to most people, are victories to our students.**

**Sending their first selfie to a loved one on WhatsApp, changing the font size on their smartphone so they can read it, using Zoom so we can see their face not just the top of their head, replying successfully to an email, completing the census online, spotting a scam text and knowing what to do with it.**

**If our classes can help them make these steps then we have done a great thing.”**

**Sue Gauge, Programme Coordinator**

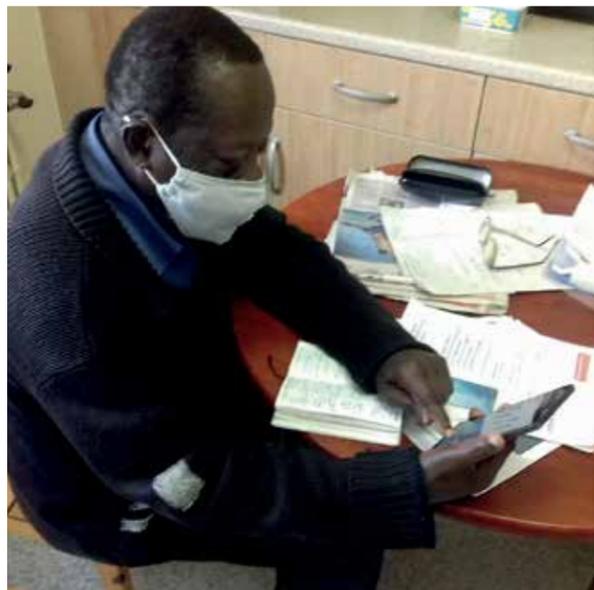


# Community Tech Support

Between March 2020 and March 2021 we received **285 support cases**

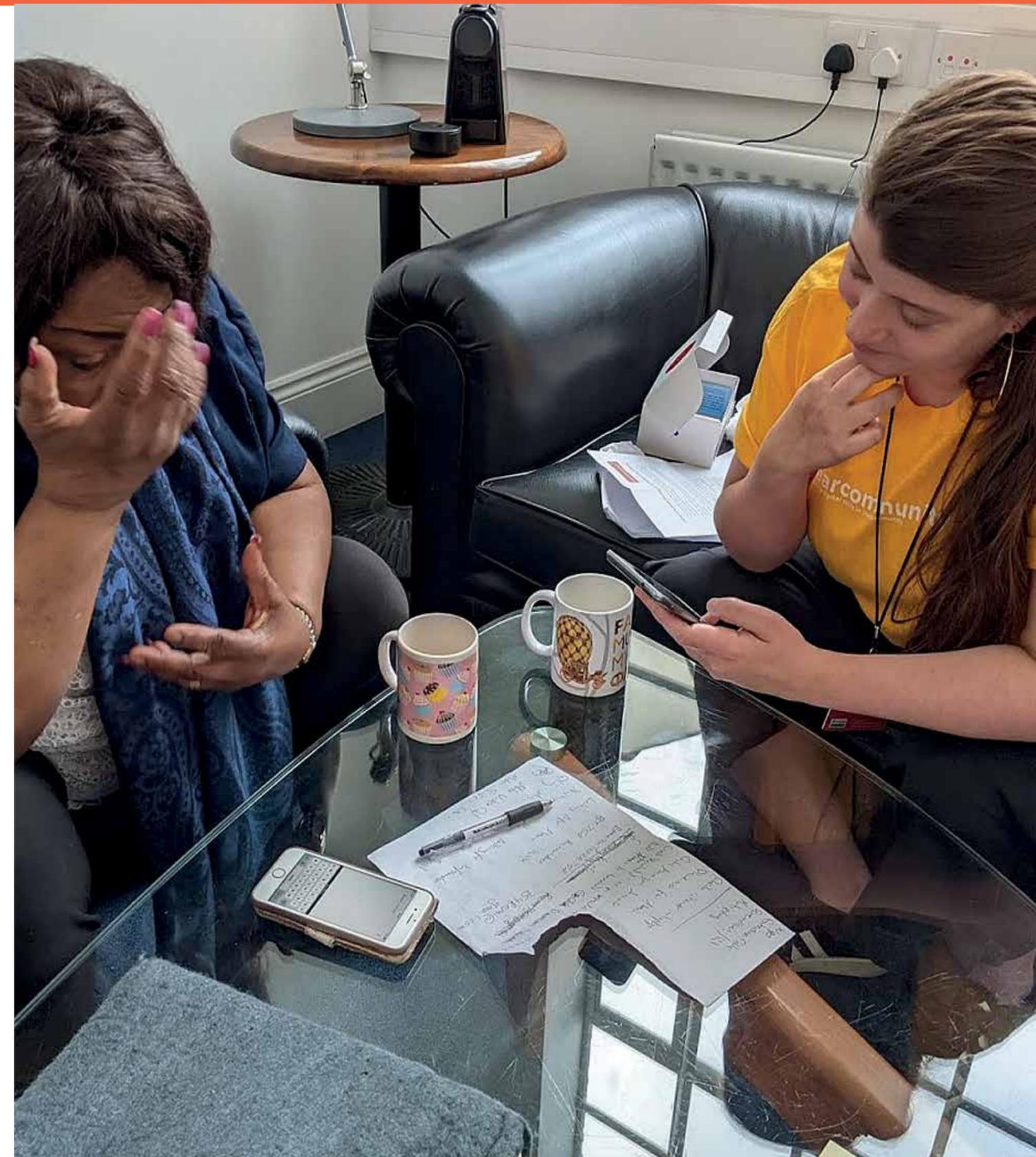
**At the beginning of the pandemic, we expanded our tech support service to provide virtual, telephone and home support with PPE.**

Helping people set-up and use devices, accessing old accounts, installing applications and ensuring they were safe from virus and malware, we received 285 support cases between March 2020 and 2021.



These were primarily referrals from local charities, housing, NHS/ CCG partners, support & recovery services, libraries, link workers/ social prescribers, mutual aid & food banks alongside self-referrals.

Measuring this work and the privacy of beneficiary data is paramount. As such we have adopted Salesforce as our system of case management and have developed a safeguarded process.



This service has helped us reach out to a wider community as well as those that were already isolated at home or house bound due to illness or disability.

The impact of COVID on mental health has been undeniable and those that have been digitally excluded have faced additional anxiety caused by a lack of connectivity, the right device and the ability to use it.

This, in turn, accentuates concerns and fears around privacy, security and trust.

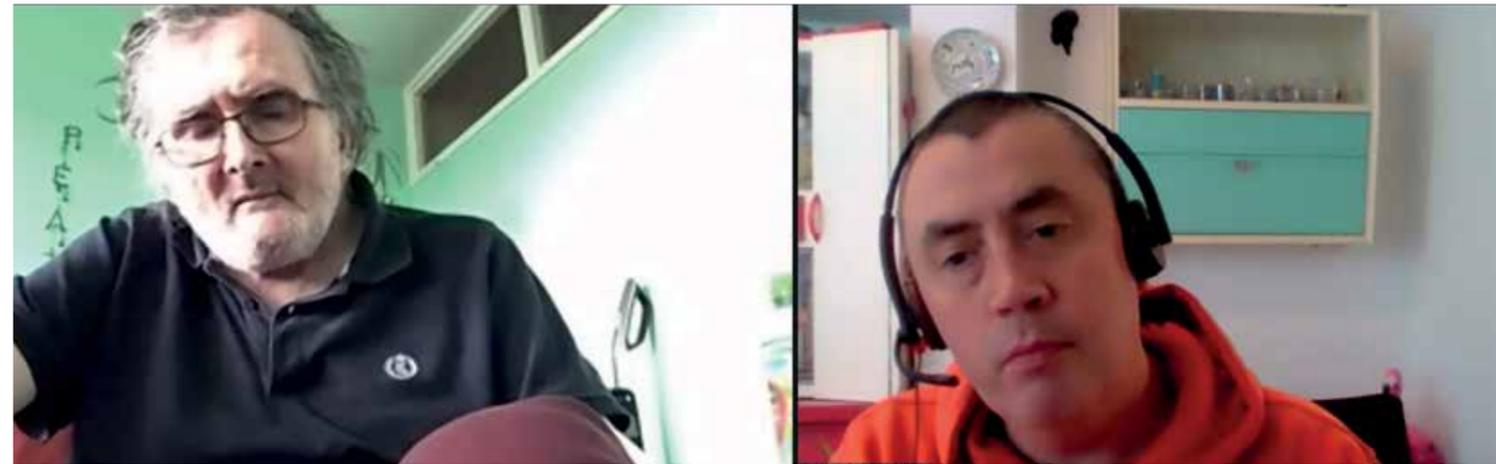
A fantastic opportunity to learn and bridge some of this gap has been lost through incomplete or inadequate support, the wrong donation and, in some cases, feeling coerced to 'go online'.

These are all challenges we strive to overcome and our work focusses on building confidence and becoming a trusted friend.



We focus on 4 things:

**Making people safe**  
**Solving problems**  
**Extending skills**  
**Access to services**



**“I lost both my mother and daughter to the virus and was unable to leave my house. With your assistance I was able to access bereavement support by video.”**

**“I love being first contact and having an opportunity to get to know our community, understanding the issues and barriers our beneficiaries face and being able to resolve a problem”**

**Eve Miller-Biot, Operations Coordinator**



# Elsie's Story

**Elsie felt more connected to the community, safer online and her anxiety around using technology had reduced.**

## **Elsie is a regular in our Digital Awareness for Older People class and wanted to learn something new.**

She was interested in purchasing a tablet but has never used one before. As part of the Digital Horizons programme, she was loaned a tablet to try it out for herself and joined the 8-week introductory course.

Although Elsie was confident using her smartphone, it took some time to familiarise herself with a new device. She was given door-step support to help her get started, connect to the internet and find her way around the home screen.

Through the weekly classes, Elsie learnt the basics of how to use the tablet. She found the classes on changing settings, downloading applications, watching videos, taking photos and getting directions particularly useful.

Elsie used the weekly activities provided to help her practice using the tablet in her own time. Inspiring her to look for videos about International Women's Day and documentaries by David Attenborough on YouTube.

Going forward, it has helped her build on her confidence to explore, navigate and problem-solve when using the tablet.



**“Digital Horizons is an excellent programme to attend, if you are nervous about anything digital, you will be assisted with tender loving care from a team of experts.”**

# Our Programmes

Throughout the year we have delivered a program of short courses (Digital Horizons and Laptop Self Care) and webinars (Digital Life Skills & Staying Safe Online).

We have covered subjects such as how to recognize scams, password managers, online office apps, online banking, organising email and using comparison websites.

Homes for Lambeth, Hackney Carers, Family Friends, Crystal Palace Community Trust and the Carers Information Service have all commissioned Digital Life Skills webinars.

We have found these to be a great way to broaden the impact of our work, partner with other organizations and, importantly, to understand the areas of need for our learners.

This community based learning provides a space to learn the fundamentals not taught elsewhere, a route to develop the skills to undertake accredited learning or broader subjects such as online safety.

We focus on life skills and access to services and support. Our approach, where possible is to work communicate at a peer level, encouraging the sharing of experiences and understanding individual challenges.

**“I feel a sense of pride in what I have achieved so far, but there is so much more I can learn. I want to continue this online journey it has given me a new lease of life”**



**80%** of attendees **feel more confident** and **75%** have **learnt something new**

# Zoom Training

We have **trained over 280** people to use Zoom

## Suddenly Zoom was everywhere and we knew we could help

Over the year we trained over 280 people to use Zoom; everyone from trainee counsellors, bereavement services, teachers, community groups, town hall meetings and, most importantly, the people either shielding or locked down at home.

A priority was to help organizations create a safe space for participation, which in turn enabled us to assist more adults experience long term mental health issues and other harder to reach residents.

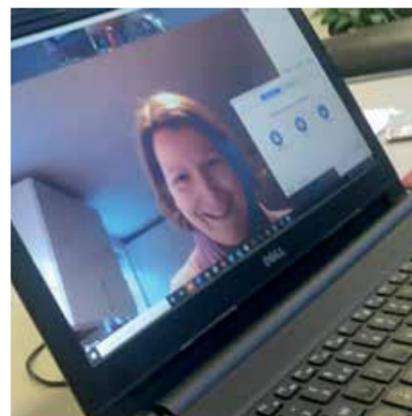
We provided 17 dedicated training and practice sessions for people wanting to use Zoom for the first time, as well as for VCS and non-profit staff members wanting to use Zoom as a safeguarded way to facilitate larger groups. 208 attendees came from Croydon, Southwark, Sutton, Lambeth & Lewisham.

We also ran dedicated training sessions for Age UK Croydon, Croydon Mencap, Croydon Commitment, Rowland Brothers, St Christopher's Hospice, Croydon BME Forum, CALAT and the Red Cross.

We developed a series of free to access Zoom resources and were commissioned by both Highgate Counselling Centre and Age UK Croydon to develop a training guide for volunteers, which included safeguarding guidelines.

In March we were invited to talk at a Digital Unite seminar on the use of Zoom creatively and safely from a Digital Champions perspective. We subsequently ran some direct training on using breakout rooms for their network.

We continue to help people with this technology and will continue to use it to deliver classes into 2022.



**“Expert support to our Young at Heart group; our effort to curb the isolation and loneliness felt by the older generation in Croydon.”**

**We continue to meet weekly, and without their efforts, lockdown would have looked, and felt, very different for this group.”**

**Andrew Brown**  
Croydon BME Forum



# Homes for Lambeth

## We now provide a programme of support across Lambeth housing estates.

“We are commissioned by Homes for Lambeth to provide a programme of support for their most isolated or disadvantaged residents.

We help them to deliver an iPad loan scheme, digital awareness classes, critical support and family safety webinars.

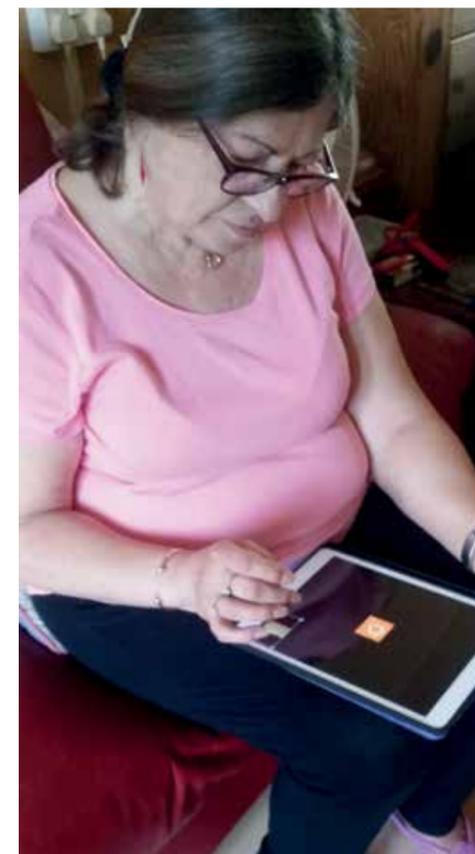
Our weekly class has been instrumental in helping them stay connected and to access other programmes delivered by Homes for Lambeth.”



**“I have found working on Digital Horizons with Homes For Lambeth, in addition to running the course ourselves, has really helped to develop the content, resources and support to meet the needs of different groups.**

**I have been able to improve the course with learners’ in mind, to create a programme that responds to a range of challenges people face in their digital learning”**

**Georgina Foster, Programme Coordinator**



**“The team have been innovative in safely delivering equipment, training and IT support to learners. This has enabled residents who would have otherwise been digitally excluded to connect with friends and family, local services and essential information throughout the pandemic.”**

**Wendy Bohan**

**Social Investment Programme Coordinator, HFL**



# Distributing Devices

**“I don’t know where I would be without this phone. It was a life saver in dark times and what might seem small and basic was a real challenge. Thank you, you were there when we needed it”**

**During the summer of 2020, we received 30 Lenovo Tablets and Google Smartphones via the Good Things Foundation to provide internet access for the first time to vulnerable adults.**

We developed a volunteer program matching a resident with a device and a structured 8 session program to help that resident learn the basics and then to access other classes.

The price of connectivity, ability to get a contract and the quality of service were all factors that were underestimated at the beginning of this period, rendering many donated devices redundant.



We have since gone on to partner with Millennium Community Solutions and Community Tech Aid to distribute refurbished mobile phones and tablets via the ‘Community Calling’ program with HubBub and O2 providing connectivity.

Through funding from the Lambeth Digital Inclusion Fund we also run a Laptop Loan program for adults, long term unemployed.



# Recycling and Upcycling

Between January and March 2021 we  
**refurbished or distributed:**

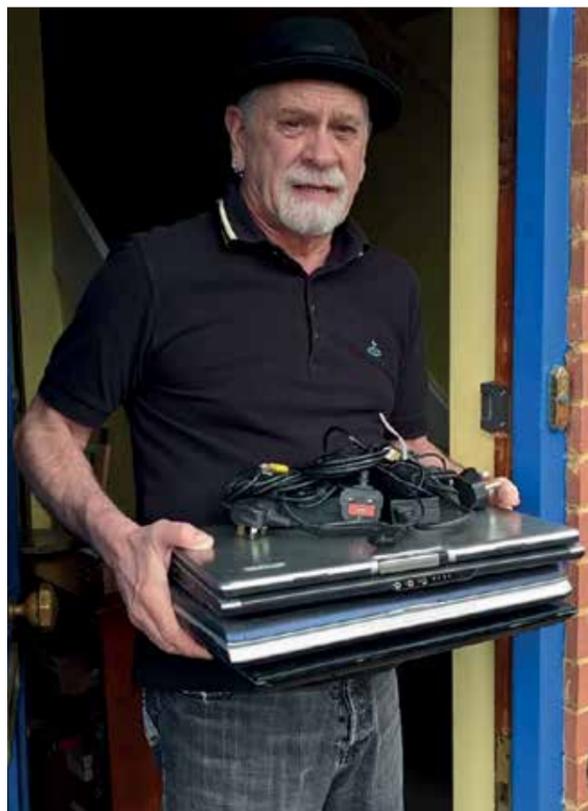
**Members of our community can now donate their old devices for us to 'clean', refresh and redistribute.**

This has been a fantastic way to help more people by clearing away stuff that is difficult to recycle, redistributing it where we can and developing our volunteering program.

All data is wiped and devices are safety checked and what we cannot use ourselves is then donated to Community Tech Aid or ethically recycled for parts.

Our refurbished laptops have helped local residents in respite care, young families in New Addington and care workers in Lambeth.

**45 Smart phones**  
**32 Tablets**  
**18 desktops**  
**12 Laptops**



# Partnerships & Funding

We have worked with many organizations including:



“As a supporter of our local community and independent retailers, we are really aware that many of our local residents need more support navigating the online world.

ClearCommunityWeb does such an important job with their training, outreach and provision of equipment. We love what they do.”

**Kate McGhee,**  
 Founder & Co-Director of Shop SE19, Crystal Palace.



“We are great admirers of ClearCommunityWeb because they are providing a vital service for many who are disenfranchised by our continuing move towards being online for everything we need in our daily lives.

Their commitment to ending digital exclusion is something we need more of!”

**Noreen Meehan,**  
 Director of Crystal Palace Festival and arts charity,  
 The Great North Wood Collective



Our funders are:



# Helping organizations

**Our work also involves providing guidance and training to organizations, as well as a suite of professional web services.**

Throughout the year we have helped to develop online safeguarding procedures, digital volunteer training and organizational training to better help service user and beneficiaries digitally.

Our work with both Age UK Croydon and Highgate Counselling Centre best demonstrate this.

We have also been commissioned to create websites for organizations such as Action Against Hunger, Making Music, Family Friends, Community Managed Libraries Network, Archibald Corbett Library and Waging Peace.

We also provide a website maintenance service as well and Office 365 set-up and management.



**“ClearCommunityWeb worked with us to create a bespoke suite of training materials, equipping our teams to support clients to get online as well as enabling us to signpost to their existing courses and information.**



**We have formed a strong working partnership between our organisations which will continue to benefit older people across the borough.”**

Jo Dunbar  
Age UK Croydon



# Volunteers

**“The Tea and Tech events have enabled me to engage with an interesting part of the community I wouldn’t have otherwise, and give me the confidence to develop my own projects.”**

**Our work could not be achieved without the direct and tireless work from volunteers.**

From upcycling devices, assisting in classes, picking up donations, social media planning and keeping the office in check we literally couldn’t live without our team.

They have stepped forward from our immediate community, helping them connect, contribute or develop new skills. We also have volunteers who have joined us directly after attending our classes and are now crucial to providing peer support and small group learning.

We all have had first-hand experience of the benefits to volunteering and its impact. Scaling this programme up over the next year is one of our strategic aims.



**“I can learn something as well as give back”**

[www.clearcommunityweb.co.uk](http://www.clearcommunityweb.co.uk)

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