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[www.digitalchampionsnetwork.com](http://www.digitalchampionsnetwork.com)

# Connecting Older People

## Tuesday 20 April 2021



## A bit of housekeeping

- ✓ Do keep your video on if you can
- ✓ Everyone will be muted at the start
- ✓ Pop any questions in the chat as we go along and we'll be picking those up regularly throughout
- ✓ If you have a technical issue please put it in the chat
- ✓ We are recording this
- ✓ We'll be sharing the slides and notes afterwards

# Joining us today

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**Sarah Parkes**

Project Manager, Age UK



**Caroline Davies**

Digital Champion  
Age Cymru Dyfed

# Digital learning and skills through Digital Champions

A screenshot of the Digital Champions Network website. The header includes the logo and navigation links for Home, About, and Case studies. The main content area features a large hero section with the text 'Learn. Share. Change Lives.' and 'Digital Unite's Digital Champions Network', followed by a 'FIND OUT MORE' button and a 'REGISTER' button. Below this are four smaller sections, each with a photo and a quote from a Digital Champion. The first section shows Simon, who runs a local computer club for elderly people. The second shows Noella, who helps parents with IT skills at a local school. The third shows John, who works with learners at a retirement complex. The fourth shows Joanne, who joined her organisation's volunteer programme. A 'TAKE A TOUR' button is located at the bottom right of the page.

**Learn. Share. Change Lives.**

Digital Unite's Digital Champions Network

A unique training and support community for aspiring and experienced Digital Champions.

[FIND OUT MORE](#) [REGISTER](#)

**Who are Digital Champions?**

Digital Champions are people of all ages and from all backgrounds and communities.

They help others understand the benefits of using the internet and can show them how to do simple things online that can make a huge difference to people's lives.

You don't need to be an IT whizz to be a Digital Champion, just have a bit of spare time, an enjoyment of being online yourself and a passion to help others.

**What is the Digital Champions Network?**

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[TAKE A TOUR](#)

**Quotes from Digital Champions:**

- "I am slowly realising what effect I'm having"  
Simon runs a local computer club for elderly people.
- "It's not just about helping others, it helps you too"  
Noella helps parents with IT skills at a local school.
- "It's not difficult being a Digital Champion and is so rewarding"  
John works with learners at a retirement complex.
- "It felt good knowing I could make a difference"  
Joanne joined her organisation's volunteer programme.

25 years of digital inclusion through skills

The only organisation that specialises in Digital Champion training and support

At our heart is our award-winning Digital Champions Network:

- Used by hundreds of organisations in the UK
- Combines training and development with project management tools.

# Burning questions

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How can we overcome the lack of equipment and costs of connectivity?

Is there a buddy system for new Champions?

We can't be there to guard against every scam. How do we empower people to recognise new scams in an ever-changing world?

How to recognise older people's limitations

What are the chief barriers?

What is the best way to build trust?

Understanding what they are seeing on their screen?

How is it best to get novice users started? Phone support? Written guides? Other ideas?

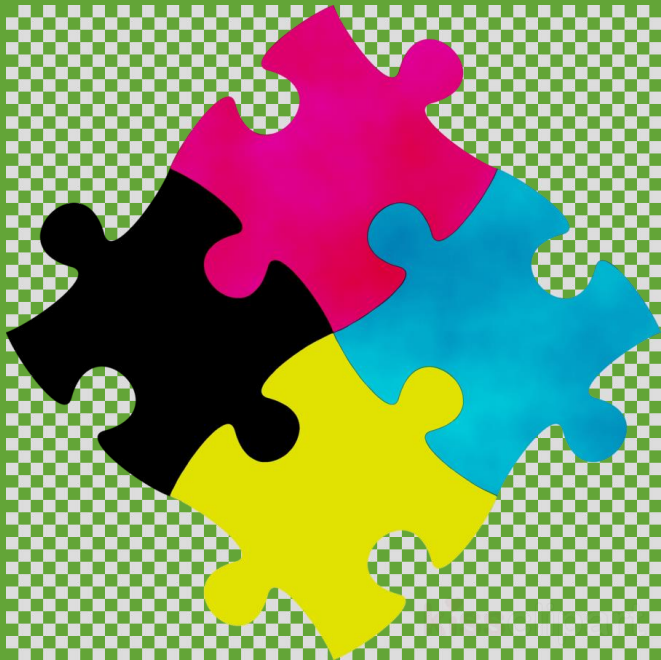
Best ways to help someone who is not only older but also has learning disabilities please

How do we support isolated people with hearing and or speech impairments?

How to help if a person declares 'they don't use the internet'?

Any tips or advice for supporting older people over the phone?

## Today's session



Engaging the unengaged

Teaching remotely

Kit and connectivity

Digital Champion support

Accessibility barriers

Security and safeguarding



# Quick poll

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**Have you been helping older people online remotely in the past year? If yes, how's it going? If not, how come?**

- It's going well and we're cooking on gas
- We're giving it a go and doing okay so far
- We've done a little but would like to do more
- We've started but facing lots of challenges
- We wish we had but it's feeling too tricky to even try
- We've parked it and waiting for our doors to re-open
- Something else

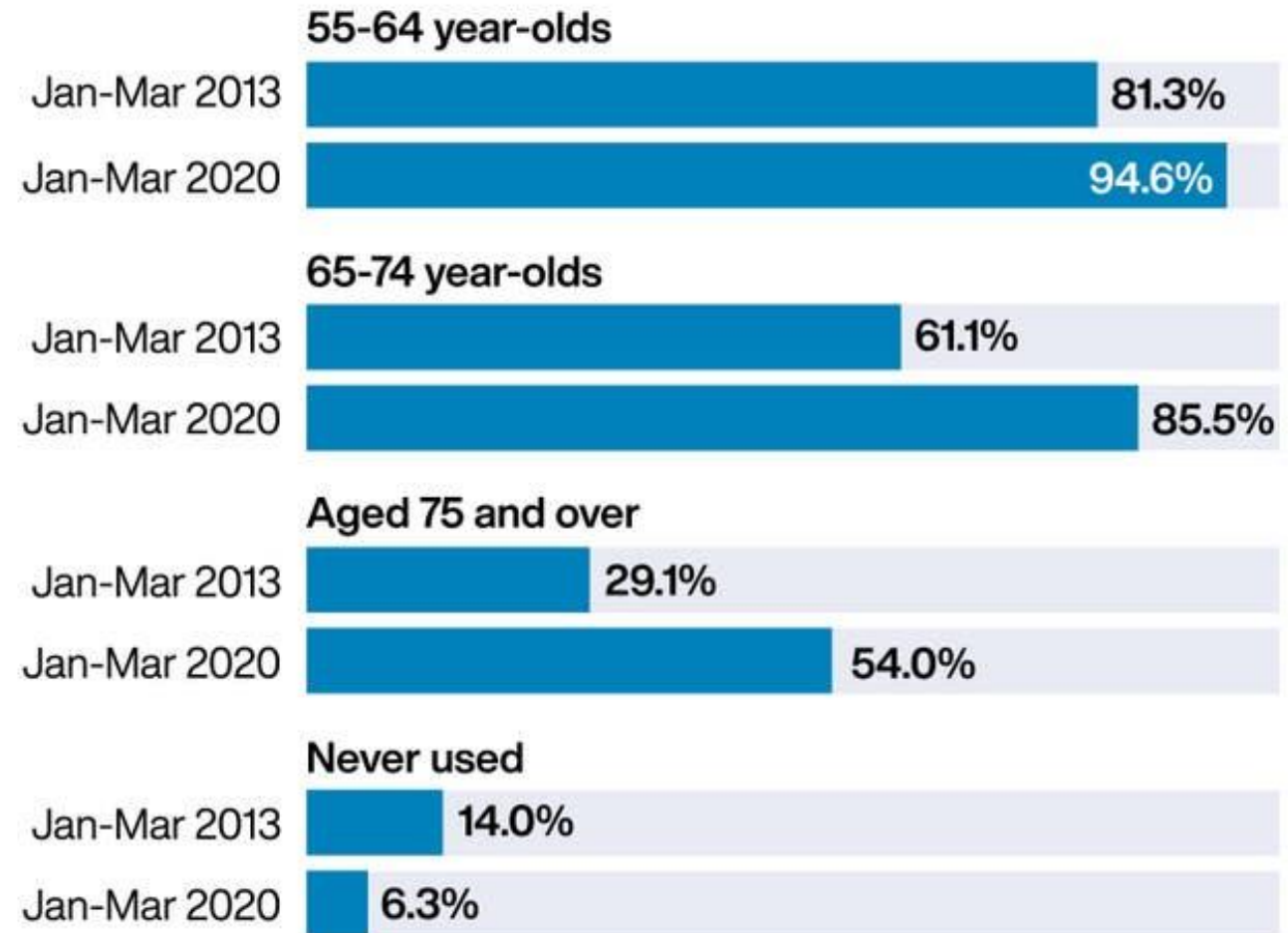




# Internet use amongst older people is rising

The proportion of those aged 75 years and over who are recent internet users nearly doubled since 2013, from 29%, to 54% in 2020.

## Internet users in the UK



PA graphic. Source: ONS

Figures are for people who have used the internet in the last three months



Helping  
people with  
digital skills  
became  
crucial

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**The Covid tipping point...**

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**Staying safe**

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**Staying informed**

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**Staying connected**

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## Are older people now braver and bolder with technology?

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*“One of my learners, who is 80, had a mobile phone and only switched it on for emergencies. Now she’s using WhatsApp and video calling her friends and family.”*

# Remote support is here to stay

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- ✓ Reaches more people than ever before
  - Both helpers and those being helped
- ✓ Inclusive for those with limited mobility or other accessibility barriers
- ✓ Saves time

The future of digital skills support will combine face to face and remote support.

But just how do you successfully help older people remotely...?

# Engaging the unengaged

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Remote support sessions work better for some older people than face to face

- Housebound
- Physical health
- Mental health
- Travel and time

# Engaging the unengaged

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But it can be harder to get the message out about the services that you offer and how people can get involved

- Embedding with existing support
- Relationships with other organisations
- Leaflets – food boxes, medicine drops, targeted leafleting
- Online activity targeted at friends and family

# Kit and connectivity

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Having a great cohort of Digital Champions to deliver remotely is great, but you'll also need the technology to support both your volunteers and the older people they are supporting.

- Tablet loan scheme – accessible devices, set up prior to tablet drop off
- Staff and volunteer technology – phones and tablets
- Other technology – stylus pens, tablet cases, keyboards
- Remote access



# A Digital Champion's Journey



Hi there, I'm John. I've found myself with some spare time this year and thought I'd try something new. I signed up as a Digital Champion for Age UK. Let me tell you how it works!

## 01 Become a Digital Champion

A Digital Champion helps support older people improve their digital skills. Don't worry though – we're properly trained to get others online.

## 02 Get online training

The training was very important and I attended it online. It was facilitated by my local Age UK/ Age Cymru partner.

## 03 Get matched with an older person

I told my local Age UK/ Age Cymru partner what sort of things I like doing. They use this information to try and match you with an older person.

## 04 Get introduced to an older person

I was put in contact with Peter. He's 79 years old, also interested in football and was keen to learn how he could videocall his grandchildren.

## 05 Send information sheets

I posted Peter some easy to read instructions and we went through them together, over the phone.

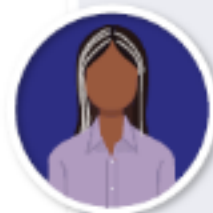
## 07 Older person has online independence

Now Peter video calls his grandchildren regularly! I'm still here to help if Peter comes across any problems.

## 06 Hold regular sessions

Peter and I spoke every Tuesday. This gave Peter a chance to practice his new skills in video calling, and also gave me a nice opportunity to get to know someone new!





Hi there, I'm Priya. I volunteer in the community. But recently a lot of our meetings are being held online. I want to be able to participate in the meetings, but I'm not quite sure how.

## 05 Receives information sheets

We then had a call and went through the instructions together. At first, I found it quite confusing, but Lauren was very patient and understanding and we went at just the right pace!

## 07 Independent online

Now, I'm so pleased that I'm able to join my online meetings again!

## 06 Attends regular sessions

I had a few more calls with Lauren, and I was able to practice in between calls using the instructions I had!

## 04 Gets introduced to Digital Champion

I explained to Lauren that I was having trouble joining a lot of my online meetings and she sent me some really clear instructions in the post.

## 03 Gets matched with Digital Champion

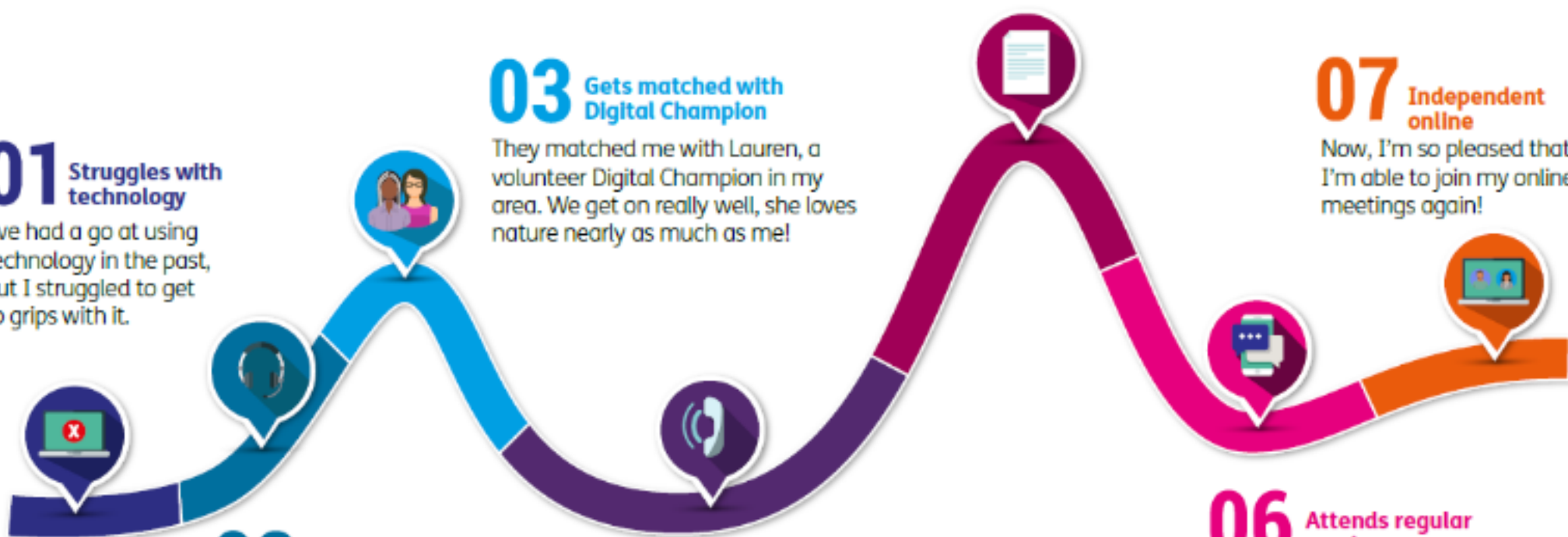
They matched me with Lauren, a volunteer Digital Champion in my area. We get on really well, she loves nature nearly as much as me!

## 02 Gets in touch with local Age UK/ Age Cymru

My daughter recommended I got in touch with Age UK. They asked me about my digital experience and what it was that I wanted to learn.

## 01 Struggles with technology

I've had a go at using technology in the past, but I struggled to get to grips with it.



# Overcoming accessibility barriers

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Whilst remote support can in fact be more accessible to those with accessibility barriers, some considerations need to be made.

- Digital Champion understanding of barriers
- Accessible technology and resources
- Flexible approach

We are working to understand more...

# Safeguarding and security

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Safeguarding of the Digital Champions and the older people they support is vital.

- Older people may be more fearful of engaging with support remotely
- Older people engaging from their home environment may bring safeguarding issues to the fore
- Digital Champion training and ongoing support
- Online security for all

# Lessons learned

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- ✓ Draw on lived and volunteer experience
- ✓ The value of a local approach
- ✓ Trusted brand
- ✓ Additional training and resources are needed
- ✓ Remote delivery tends to take longer
- ✓ Continue to invest in the wellbeing and ongoing support for Digital Champions
- ✓ The future is blended

# Tips and tricks for remote support

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- ✓ Keep sessions informal and fun
- ✓ Co-ordinate the purchase of technology across the organisation
- ✓ Recruit Digital Champions with the right knowledge and skills to deliver the remote role
- ✓ Provide written accessible instructions and guides
- ✓ Keep sessions 1-2-1, at least initially, and agree the session time and length in advance
- ✓ Keep learning

*"I don't know what I would have done without Age UK in recent months. I am so determined to remain independent for as long as I can, and my shopping was my biggest worry. I can even check my substitutes on my shopping order now!"*

**Sylvia, 83**

*"Using this service has completely opened up my life. I have done things I would never have been able to do if this service hadn't been available to me."*

**Debbie, 62**



*"I can't believe what I have done in such a short time, considering I knew nothing in July of this year."*

*"I was on a bit of a desert island before all this."*

**Michael, 73**

# Tales from the frontline

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# Some useful resources

- [Age UK – A-Z of computing](#)
- [NHS - Communicating with someone with dementia](#)
- [Microsoft – Guide to accessibility adjustments](#)
- [AbilityNet Factsheets | AbilityNet](#)

## [From Digital Unite](#)

- [Using Zoom for digital skills support](#)
- [How to help others as a remote Digital Champion](#)
- [10 Top Tips on keeping remote support Safe](#)



# Another quick poll

So, has this webinar got the cogs turning? How do you feel now about helping older people with digital skills remotely? Do you think remote support is here to stay? Tell us what you're thinking. (You can choose more than one)



- The session has sparked new ideas
- I'll be sharing what I've learnt today with others
- I'm keen to help more older people remotely now
- I could do with more advice on helping older people remotely.
- Providing remote support to older people still feels tricky to me
- I reckon remote support is here to stay

# Time for questions

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# Our next webinar

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## The future of digital skills support

Tuesday 18 May at 12pm

Register today!



**superhighways**

harnessing technology for **community** benefit



# Thank you for coming

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We'd love to know what you thought about today's session



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