

Tech and Tea - low level digital skills programme

Inspiring Communities Together

Aims of work

- To reduce social isolation in older adults over 65 years of age living in Salford
- To introduce older people to the benefits of digital technology
- To support participants to think about their own health and wellbeing and how technology can be an enabler

What you did

Tech and Tea is a five-week low level digital skills course funded by Salford City Council (Public Health) and Salford Clinical Commissioning Group aimed at older people over 65 years of age living in Salford

The sessions are delivered in community assets across the neighbourhoods of Salford ranging from care homes, community centres, churches and even a public house. Since 2015, we have delivered Tech and Tea in 81 community assets across Salford.

Through-out the course, participants explore how to use tablets and laptops based on what is important to them this could be exploring their football club, searching the history of Salford to finding out where to get the best buys from. The programme is built on a digital skills framework and supports people to learn skills ranging from how to Google to creating and sending emails.

Each course is facilitated by a paid tutor and volunteer wellbeing champions who engage people in a wellbeing conversation using the five ways to wellbeing alongside helping with issues regarding the use of technology. Since 2015, 173 wellbeing champions have taken part and given 2,607.5 hours of volunteering time.

Time is allocated for refreshments and conversation with all those who attend asked to complete the campaign to end loneliness questionnaire at the start and end of the course.

Rather than delivering in central hubs which can be harder for the older population to get to, Tech and Tea works with some of the most vulnerable hard-to-reach older people in our community. 48% identified as living alone and 36% identified as having a disability.



Our 1,500th participant receiving their certificate

'S' is 81 years old and lives in Worsley and Boothstown. He took part in the second Tech and Tea course we ran at St Mary's Church in Ellenbrook.

He was a regular church goer until his wife passed away a year ago. He heard about the course through the church newsletter and decided to get involved.

He was very nervous when he first arrived but was comforted by the number of people he knew and was able to relax.

He said, "It's been nice to catch up with people again".

Since the course finished he has received a tablet and has been able to keep in touch with his friends through email and has begun attending Church again.



Conclusion

- 35% of those who completed the before and after questionnaire have recorded a reduction in isolation while taking part in the course.
- 95% of participants now spend more time using technology since going on the course.
- 1,110 participants have completed a Wellbeing Plan