Get IT Together
Final Report for Bristol
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# Table of Contents

Introduction ........................................................................................................................................ 1  
The Get IT Together Programme ................................................................................................. 1  
Get IT Together in Bristol ........................................................................................................... 1  
Objectives ..................................................................................................................................... 2  
Targets and Research Study ........................................................................................................ 3  
Round up of the Project ............................................................................................................... 5  
Project Legacy ............................................................................................................................ 8  
Partner Feedback ........................................................................................................................ 10  
Case Studies ................................................................................................................................ 11  
Appendix A: 5 week course timetable ......................................................................................... 13  
Appendix B: Infographic ............................................................................................................. 14  
Appendix C: Pocket Brief ........................................................................................................... 15
Introduction

The Get IT Together Programme

The Get IT Together programme promotes digital inclusion amongst disadvantaged communities. The approach involves a three year community development process, managed by a full time project coordinator, who works with the local community to:

- Understand the rationale for using ICT and the barriers
- Capacity build and supports local partners
- Plug gaps in provision
- Manage volunteers to support the programme
- Deploy a range of national offerings that support digital inclusion
- Ensure new internet users progress on a learner journey and feel a positive impact from going online.
- Embed the programme in and align with local strategies

Get IT Together has been established through a national partnership involving BT and Citizens Online, along with key local partners. 24 further national partners support the programme with their complimentary offerings, such as free software, internet safety trainings or specific routes to engagement with those who are offline.

Get IT Together in Bristol

Get IT Together Bristol has been funded by BT and Bristol City Council. This has been a strong funding partnership, with Bristol City Council providing hot desking at the Council Offices, along with support for the project from one of the Council’s apprentices

The Bristol project is a partnership between Bristol City Council’s Innovation Team, Citizens Online and BT. The work was led initially by Marius Jennings, and subsequently by full time Project Coordinator, Kerry Bradshaw, and part time Project Officer Julie-Anne Burrows. In August 2014 Kerry left for a two year Voluntary Services Overseas placement in Uganda. Julie-Anne became the part time Project Coordinator, and long serving volunteer tutor, Maria Smith, became the part time Project Officer.

The project has used the close relationship with Bristol City Council to set-up and run courses across most of the libraries in Bristol. The Council’s Innovation Team, led by Kevin O’Malley, has supported the project on a daily basis with access to libraries and council support, including an apprentice.

Bristol City Council has operated a Computer Reuse Scheme for the last four years with the aim of making refurbished PC’s available at low cost to people most in danger of being digitally excluded. In this time the scheme has seen well over 2,000 machines distributed to learners across Bristol. The PC’s come with TFT monitors, and a keyboard and mouse. They are preloaded with Microsoft Windows 7, anti-virus and office software.

As demand has consistently outstripped supply, the City Council worked with Bristol based company Byteback, to reconfigure and re-launch the scheme to be more efficient and responsive. The scheme re-launched in November 2014: [http://www.bytebackitrepair.co.uk/re-use-scheme.html](http://www.bytebackitrepair.co.uk/re-use-scheme.html).
Bristol City Council has also been a founder member of Accessible Bristol (http://www.accessiblebristol.org.uk/), a cross sector partnership dedicated to champion inclusion through technology and accessible digital design. The group was formed in 2011, and shares knowledge, celebrates innovation, and promotes accessibility and best practice.

**Objectives**

The local focus is on increasing digital inclusion in the Bristol area for anyone 55 or over, disabled adults and their adult carers. The Bristol project has worked with Bristol City Council Libraries and a range of local partners, including LinkAge, in the promotion of courses and their hosting. This is done by providing free, basic IT courses at multiple locations throughout the City. The IT courses are offered either by the project’s friendly volunteer trainers at community locations or at a close partner training provider venue.
Targets and Research Study

Get IT Together – Bristol was set comprehensive and challenging targets at the start of the programme designed to ensure that learners did not receive a short intervention, but at least four hours basic internet training to start them on their journey. Through the work of Citizens Online project coordinators and our close partners, our work on the Get IT Together Programme has supported over 20,000 learners in this way, and Get IT Together – Bristol contributed to this goal.

The targets also ensured that the project worked with local community partners to build and support existing training and access, avoiding duplication and adding both value and longevity. Volunteers and tutors were used to support these goals and targets for recruiting volunteers were included in the project plan.

The programme’s impact has been evaluated, not just on the number of people trained, but also on the wider and longer term outcomes e.g. finding employment or going onto further education/training. For more details of the measures and outcomes, please contact Emily Harper, Head of Research & Programme Manager, Citizens Online.

Longitudinal Study Results

The two year longitudinal study is running alongside the project delivery. Each learner completes an entry and exit form, and a sample of learners is then contacted by phone at 3, 6, 12 and 24 months to assess the impact of the training. The results of the study have been extremely positive, with an overall success of 74% online two years after training.

Across all of the Get IT Together projects, broadband uptake has increased, from 60% at entry, to over 80% for those who have taken part at two years. Analysis shows that access to a home internet is vital for regular internet use. For those without access at home, libraries and community centres have provided a place to get online. In Bristol, the libraries have proved extremely popular as a resource for online activity.

Locally, the results show that the Bristol project has been working successfully with older people. There is support from family and friends for over half of learners, and the links with the Local Council have led to this being the most used Government Service in Bristol. Learner confidence has increased as a result of the training and this has been a factor in predicting long-term Internet use.

A pocket-brief has been produced to show the results of the longitudinal study in Bristol and this has been included in Appendix B.

The results of the study have been used to inform a social return on investment evaluation carried out by Just Economics, on behalf of BT and has calculated:

Social return on Investment of the Get IT Together Programme

This has been calculated at £3.70 for every £1 invested and demonstrates an excellent result for the programme which demonstrates the impact that the projects make to a range of stakeholders including the learners themselves, volunteers and tutors engaged by the programme, and the state.

Value of digital inclusion

The value of being online to a new user is £1,064 per annum. This comes from having more confidence, making financial savings online, new job seeking skills and a reduction in social isolation. For an advanced user this figure is £1,756 per annum. This comes from being online more and being able to do more activities. For a professional user, the figure is £3,568 when combined with the benefits for an advanced user. This comes from being able to work remotely and the wage premium to those who use IT at work.

1Please email info@citizensonline.org.uk
2 http://www.btplc.com/Betterfuture/ConnectedSociety/Valueofdigitalinclusion/index.htm
Round up of the Project

The Bristol project has been based on direct delivery by a team of skilled and motivated volunteer tutors - 3 Volunteer Bristol celebrating 30 years. In the last year, the project has recruited four new volunteers and had two previous volunteers return to the team. Some volunteers come from a teaching background whilst others have developed skills in the role. The project has provided training and mentoring as appropriate, with extra support given to one volunteer who was fast tracked onto the Diploma in Education and Training (formerly known as DTTLS).

The project has increased the promotion of the courses through the Citizens Online website, project webkit, and social networking. The project also appeared on local radio (BCFM), and the team has put up posters on high streets. A large mail out was completed in the summer, to 189 local organisations that may be accessed by older people.

The Bristol project has worked in different ways to deliver digital inclusion opportunities:

1. 5 week (10 hour) timetabled courses
2. Taster sessions (to recruit learners)
3. Bespoke courses (to suit organisation)
4. Signposting
5. Home tuition

1. 5 week (10 hour) Timetabled Courses (See Appendix for details)

Most venues have been in local libraries to help them deliver their Digital Offer4, increase footfall and encourage new membership. Bristol Libraries has started a major consultation exercise (online survey5) about the future of provision, and all learners are being encouraged to request more digital inclusion activities.

Originally, the tutor and learner resources were based on the BBC Webwise and First Click. These have since been developed. Learners are also encouraged to access ‘self-teach’ online resources to continue their learning journey (e.g. digitalunite)

3 https://twitter.com/COL_Bristol
5 https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/MMDNF3K
2. Taster Sessions

Taster sessions have been delivered at sheltered housing schemes and local events including Celebrating Age Wellbeing Days, and LGBT days. The sessions generated interest and built partnership relationships.

3. Bespoke

Work has taken place with local organisations to design and deliver context specific digital skills courses. These have been for Digital Champions and learners, and are usually a combination of the two.

Julie-Anne delivered a three week course at a sheltered housing scheme, for a mixed ability group. Learners either joined one of the courses, or became ‘digital champions’ to teach other residents.

Another sheltered housing scheme had two unused desktop computers in the resident’s lounge. A five week course was set up using Get IT Together laptops, and included Digital Champion training so that learners could support other residents. The unused desktop computers were then brought back online and were ready to use.

4. Signposting

The project has developed close links with other ‘peer’ providers including St Werburghs Community Centre, Connect Lockleaze; and local training providers, such as learning centres.

Julie-Anne and Maria were able to signpost potential learners, and refer support organisations, to the most relevant opportunities. A large number of calls were from jobseekers aged 55+ unable to access workclubs without the necessary basic IT skills. Tutors often provided additional support during and after classes, as well as promoting Job Hunting on Learnmyway.com and National Careers Service websites.
5. Home tuition

Two of our tutors have provided learners with one to one home tuition for an hourly fee. This can just be a one off, or involve weekly visit over a period of months. This option has been taken up by people who are too advanced for the basic courses, have Windows 8 OS, or want help with setting up or troubleshooting their own devices. It has also been taken up by our learners as a follow on from the courses, often they are people with additional support needs (disabilities, recent bereavement) or those with poor short memories.

Summary

The Get IT Together – Bristol project has had a direct impact on the life of individual learners. Making the first call is often difficult. Older learners are often prompted to get online by younger family members. Often the caller will say that they are ‘too old to learn’ or do not have the confidence to try – the project’s work starts there.

Julie-Anne has ensured right from first contact that learners feel supported and encouraged. Each tutor has the pleasure of watching skills and confidence grow, and new friendships develop.

The courses have been very popular and frequently oversubscribed, yet this is the tip of the iceberg in terms of helping older people get online.

In the last year Get IT Together – Bristol has mainly enrolled women on to the sessions. Digital inclusion activities also need to address the specific needs of older men, and a recent report recommends services designed specifically for them. Isolation: The emerging Crisis For Older Men Report

The Computer Reuse Scheme has seen over 2,000 machines distributed to learners across Bristol. As demand has consistently outstripped supply, the City Council has worked with Byteback to reconfigure and re-launch the scheme to be more efficient and responsive. The scheme re-launched in November 2014: http://www.bytebackitrepair.co.uk/re-use-scheme.html

Project Legacy

Our project has had invaluable support from Kevin O’Malley Partnership Development Manager at the City Innovation Team (part of the Bristol Futures directorate). He is an active digital champion, and will continue to raise the digital inclusion agenda across areas including as Economic Regeneration, libraries, and Landlord Services / Tenancy Support.

The project has actively promoted The Digital Champions Network for Housing (DCN4H) to local social landlords.

The ethos of the project continues to be increasingly important, and with the approaching roll out of Universal Credit ever more urgent. It will require a joined up approach and partnership working. It will involve making best use of available resources and new opportunities.

The day to day work in promoting and delivering courses had already created links (see image below), and relationships at an informal grassroots level. This was developed further at the Digital Inclusion Network event held as part of Get Online Week.

Digital Inclusion Network

An event was organised at Bristol City Hall to enable digital inclusion stakeholders to meet up and find out more about provision in Bristol, and national opportunities.

20 people attended from both the public and third sectors. They were providers, referrers or potential allies. Many of those that sent apologies were part time staff from tiny organisations, the very people that are needed to access support and connections.
LinkAge is committed to working with Get IT Together - Bristol to ensure continued support in the field of digital inclusion for the over 55s in Bristol. As an organisation they do not have any financial resources to take on this work, so a ‘cost neutral model’ has been designed. Following a series of constructive meetings, an agreement has been reached, and a formal hand over process put in place.

Balbir Nirwan will be the project lead for LinkAge (based at the Beehive hub), and is supported by Sarah Sztumpf, a longstanding volunteer tutor. Sarah will assist for a three month period to ensure the successful transition of the programme to LinkAge.

Get IT Together will provide:
- Templates of forms, letters
- Learner and tutor resources
- A bespoke spread sheet designed to monitor course enrolment, attendance, marketing and income generated
- A laptop and phone for use for ‘course coordinator’
- Laptops for use for learners and events
- Current Get It Together volunteers (LinkAge will undertake further volunteer recruitment, training development and succession).

For the first six months they will deliver six of our current 11 courses, at venues closest to their hubs. This will enable their development workers to target promotional activities to existing and potential LinkAge participants. Learners will be charged £15 each to cover room hire, volunteer expenses, administration, and equipment maintenance and Wi-Fi charges.

After six months, there will be a project review. Linkage may consider increasing the scale of delivery of the current five week course, or developing further professional courses and informal computer clubs. They may also decide to develop new projects and work with previous partners.

All future provision would be tailored to take advantage of Lottery Fulfilling Lives funds awarded to Bristol Ageing Better, with AgeUK as the lead partner. With four themes and 16 strands, the five year project aims to tackle and prevent the social isolation of older people. Once the programme officers are recruited, workshops will be held to facilitate collaborative ‘bidding,’ with organisations able to get involved as ‘providers, advisors, or supporters’. Digital inclusion is a recognised ingredient in most of these strands and LinkAge as a proactive, collaborative, ‘older people led’ organisation is an ideal advocate.

The future is looking bright, with potential for different universities to work together. Bristol’s ‘University of the 3rd Age’, members already run their own computer groups in community venues. Bristol is now a ‘City of Service’ which offers potential for large scale digital champion training within our two mainstream universities.
**Partner Feedback**

Kevin O’Malley, Innovation Team, Bristol City Council told us:

“Bristol is a melting-pot of people, cultures and ideas. World-leading digital creative industries flourish here and the city’s productivity is virtually unrivalled nationally. But we recognise that too many citizens and communities remain outside of this success. Increasingly digital inclusion equates to social, financial and democratic inclusion as more and more jobs, services and opportunities require digital skills or are made available through digital channels.

Get IT Together - Bristol has played an important part in bridging these digital divides that hold back the city from achieving its full potential.

The City Council would like to extend thanks to all of those involved in making Get IT Together Bristol such a successful and impactful programme. We are indebted in BT who funded this important work, Citizens Online have provided sure and sound leadership to the programme, our coordinators Marius, Kerry, Julie-Anne and Maria have contributed boundless enthusiasm and energy, but perhaps most of all we would like to recognise the work of our marvellous volunteers, without whom none of this would have been possible.”
Case Studies

Terrence Higgins Trust

Get IT Together - Bristol approached the Terrence Higgins Trust when they set up a new support group ‘50+ Health, Wealth and Happiness Project’.

The project offered capacity building support to enable them to set up and run their own ‘get online’ activities.

This is especially important for people who need information about available emotional and financial support, medical advice, and using social media to prevent isolation if they become ill.

Julie-Anne delivered a training workshop to explain how to set up and run workshops.

This short piece of work demonstrates what can be achieved with minimal input and maximum benefit.

Milestones Trust

This was one housing organisation that immediately responded to the offer of help with digital inclusion. All ‘group homes’ were to have a laptop so there was a training need for staff and clients.

Two taster sessions were attended by a total of 45 staff and clients – together.

Everyone learnt as individuals, it was interesting to see staff ask clients for help. From this start the project identified staff and clients who could get more involved.

Get IT Together delivered a three day course where one client went onto provide one to one support to staff and deliver a presentation on Facebook. This was developed into three half day courses, which could be rolled out across the organisation.
84-year-old Pat uses her typing skills to get online

The Get IT Together – Bristol team has been delivering free IT classes at Henbury Library on Thursday mornings. The group has five regular learners, the oldest of which is local resident Pat, who is 84-years-old.

When Pat first came to the group, she had never used a computer before and was keen to learn how to get online. She used to work as a secretary and had typing skills but lacked the confidence to use a computer. She told the project team: “I want to keep my mind active as I get older so I thought I’d join the computer club to learn new things and meet people.”

During the second week, the class were shown how to use keyboards and how you use it to interact with a computer. To do this, the class played a keyboard exercise game to get familiar with the letter locations.

Although the game is useful and fun, unfortunately it has a bad colour combination at the beginning for people with sight issues – red on a grey background. To combat this, Pat pulled out a magnifying glass and used it to read the first letter. Once she had done this she could read the rest of the letters as they were coloured white on a grey background.

She put down her magnifying glass and she was off! The game tracks your speed and accuracy, and Pat started of tying five words a minute, but in no time was typing 35 words a minute, which is faster than the average secretary.

Everyone in the class congratulated her, and this gave Pat a massive confidence boost, as she had assumed she would never be able to use a computer.

She went away from the class with a great sense of achievement and a desire to learn more about computers and the internet.

Pat commented: “I was so surprised, it all came flooding back, I used to be a secretary and use a typewriter and the keys are all in the same place on a computer!”

Pat is not scared of computers anymore and she is enjoying learning new skills. Her confidence continues to grow and she is looking forward to using Google to look for other clubs and societies she can join in her local area.
Appendix A: 5 week course timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>LEARNERS</th>
<th>VENUE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MONDAY</td>
<td>2-4pm</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Jennings Court (Link Age) Housing 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4-6pm</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Knowle Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TUESDAY</td>
<td>10-12pm</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>J3 Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.30-12.30pm</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Stockwood Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3-5pm</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Tithe Barn Shirhampton (Link Age)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEDNESDAY</td>
<td>2-4pm</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Central Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10-12pm</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>The Beehive Centre (Link Age)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10-12pm</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Henbury Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-4pm</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bedminster Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRIDAY</td>
<td>10-12pm</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Redland Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10-12pm</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Henleaze Library</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B: Infographic

To find out more about how our project has made a difference in Bristol

Visit our website: www.citizensonline.org.uk

Our project has made over 20,000 people aware of the benefits of being online

Get IT Together

Bristol has helped 2100 People get online

£148,000 of additional equipment has been made available in Bristol

66 volunteers have supported us in Bristol to help people get online Thank you!
Appendix C: Pocket Brief

For learners without home broadband:

- **Have you used the Internet in the last 3 months?**
  - 3 mths: 20%
  - 6 mths: 30%
  - 12 mths: 40%
  - 24 mths: 10%

- **Are you encouraging others to use the Internet?**
  - No: 50%
  - Yes: 50%
  - Already use: 0%

- **Where will you use the Internet?**
  - Library: 30%
  - Friend’s house: 20%
  - Community centre: 50%

- **Which Government Services do you use?**
  - Local Council: 60%
  - Jobcentre +: 20%
  - NHS Direct: 10%
  - Housing: 10%

- **How confident are you using the Internet?**
  - Very confident: 10%
  - Quite confident: 20%
  - OK: 40%
  - Not confident: 20%
  - Not at all: 10%

- **How confident are you now?**
  - Very confident: 40%
  - Quite confident: 30%
  - OK: 10%
  - Not confident: 10%
  - Not at all: 10%