[Park View Project website](https://www.parkviewprojectne.com/)

**Park View Project ‘Digital First Aid’ Future long-term plans**

**Digital First Aid Objectives:**

* To enable people with disabilities, older and those digitally excluded to access assistive technology to get online.
* ‘Digital First Aid’ training delivered by disabled people for disabled people
* To improve health, self-care, and choice for all disenfranchised because they lack internet connection.
* North Tyneside community will promote and enable positive health, wellbeing and independence in North Tyneside through increased access to digital health technology.

In the UK, people with a disability are less likely to be online and less likely to have essential digital skills. They face additional barriers to getting online because of their disability; physical and cognitive barriers; inaccessible websites and devices, lack of confidence, financial constraints, educational barriers, fear and misconceptions for more vulnerable people and/or their carers about the dangers of being online.

For people with disabilities the importance of digital skills cannot be underestimated. From connecting and communicating easily with the world around, to improving health and mental wellbeing, learning, self-help and social opportunities; essential digital skills are vital to participate fully in the modern world.

The following proposal sets out an approach which would enhance the Park View Project offer through:

1. Piloting accessible technology and digital skills development
2. Giving community partners users opportunities to volunteer and lead
3. Piloting Digital Health & Wellbeing for the North Tyneside community
4. Piloting ‘Internet Essentials’; self-help skills for the key issues facing people with disabilities

 **Accessible Technology & Digital Skills Development**

**Evidence of Need - Disability & Digital Inclusion**

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/itandinternetindustry/bulletins/internetusers/2020>

Since the Office for National Statistics began analysing UK internet usage, people with disabilities, across all age groups, have been the least likely to use the internet, and the group most likely to stop using the internet:

* *‘In 2019, the proportion of recent internet users was lower for adults who were disabled (78%) compared with those who were not disabled (95%). The difference between internet use in disabled and non-disabled adults was greater in the older age groups. For adults aged 75 years and over, 41% of disabled adults and 54% of non-disabled adults were recent internet users.’* (ONS, ‘Internet users, UK 2019’)

The key striking statistic in ONS data concerns ‘lapsed internet users’ (adults who had last used the internet over three months ago): ***‘Of the 0.8 million adults who had last used the internet over three months ago, 0.4 million were disabled.*’** (ONS, ‘Internet users, UK 2019’)

In 2019, half of the people who last used the internet more than three months ago have disabilities. People with disabilities experience additional barriers to digital inclusion including inaccessible devices.

# **UK Consumer Digital Index 2019** ‘The Digitally Disadvantaged: Key Findings’;

* People with a disability are 35% less likely to have Essential Digital Skills for life, but in the workplace they are equally skilled
* Only 11% of people with a disability use assistive technology (eg. screen readers) when going online and one-fifth (21%) believe there is no suitable technology for their condition to help them go online.

<https://www.lloydsbank.com/banking-with-us/whats-happening/consumer-digital-index/key-findings.asp#DD>

**What is accessible technology?**

 *‘Accessible technology can make it easier for anyone to see, hear, and use a computer. It enables people with a wide range of abilities – including those with disabilities, age-related impairments, or temporary limitations, in addition to novice computer or web users-to adjust technology to accommodate their individual visual, dexterity, hearing, learning, and language needs and preferences or modify their personal technology experience.’*

**(Microsoft Accessibility: A Guide for Businesses and Organisations, page 6)**

**Park View Project could take the lead on accessible technology in North Tyneside**

Some existing digital inclusion initiatives in North Tyneside are set up to help users improve their digital skills so that they can use online services. In North Tyneside, there are no digital inclusion initiatives with accessible technology for disabled users with physical, visual, hearing or cognitive impairments, with the exception of condition-specific - visually impaired at Peary house. Access to accessible technology can help people with disabilities overcome barriers to gaining essential digital life skills.

The Good Things Foundation has a network of over 5000 UK online centres. The Foundation lists no online centre in North Tyneside specialising in disability and digital inclusion, which Park View is an active member of:

<https://www.onlinecentresnetwork.org/ournetwork/find-centre#/map>

The SIGN directory <https://services.northtyneside.gov.uk/Sign/List.aspx?ID=255&Filter=7> This directory is to be replaced with a new website called Living Well North Tyneside, which will take effect Summer 2021. The directory lists no community services available to North Tyneside residents offering assistive technology support, to help people with disabilities to get online. The limited support available is condition specific. For example, Pearey House Centre for visually impaired people provides accessible technology support only for people with visual impairments.

**Accessible Technology & Digital Skills Training**

Many accessible technology solutions are free and adaptable to individual needs, without the need for additional equipment (see below)..

For people with disabilities, who need help making it easier to get online, ‘My Computer, My Way’ by Ability.Net, is a unique guide to many simple adjustments for laptops, desktops, tablets or smartphones. Simple, free solutions can make a big difference in helping someone with a disability to get online.

<https://abilitynet.org.uk/accessibility-services/adjust-your-computer-change-your-life>

<https://abilitynet.org.uk/free-resources/abilitynet-factsheets>

Training can be delivered based on ‘My Computer My Way’ (and other existing resources);

* 1:1 support for Park View Project users to make their PC, laptop, tablet or smartphone more accessible. Self-help and practical solutions focused training to overcome any specific disability-related barriers to getting online.
* Small group training for vision, hearing, physical and cognitive impairments
* The best free software and apps for PC’s and handheld devices

Most digital skills training in North Tyneside is focused on Desktop/PC skills development. This traditional approach no longer reflects how the majority of internet users get online;

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/householdcharacteristics/homeinternetandsocialmediausage/bulletins/internetaccesshouseholdsandindividuals/2020> Accessible technology training will place equal focus on making smartphones/handheld devices easier to use, in response to changes in how people access the internet in 2019.

**Digital Skills Development**

Good Things Foundation is a social change charity, helping people to improve their lives through digital. They run an Online Centres Network of 5,000 organisations around the UK which provide millions of people with access to technology and support with learning to use it. Park View Project is a registered UK Online Centre, which provides access to eligible grants and resources for both organisational support and access to individual resources for those seeking help to get online. They provide a website of free online courses, built by Good Things Foundation to help people develop their digital skills. Over 30 courses are available including basic courses in using computers and other devices, email, online forms, Facebook, and online public services to help people develop their skills and to encourage people to progress onto further learning.

<https://www.learnmyway.com/><https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/what-we-offer>

There are many other excellent free online learning options:

<https://learndigital.withgoogle.com/digitalgarage>

<https://www.getsafeonline.org/about-us/> <https://www.digitalunite.com/technology-guides>

**How will we get the Accessible Technology we need?** Accessible technology for Park View Project, such as adaptive hardware; touch screens; alternative keyboards and mice; magnification; and screen-reading software, could be obtained through a user-led drive to technology companies for donation of equipment.

Companies who donate goods or equipment, such as assistive technology, can claim full capital allowances tax relief to cover the costs of any donations to Park View project. This will make it much easier to persuade companies to make donations of accessible technology.

<https://www.gov.uk/tax-limited-company-gives-to-charity/equipment-and-trading-stock>

The digital economy is booming and many companies in this sector have strong philanthropic and social commitments. There is a clear business case for technology companies to fund projects that help digitally excluded groups to get online because it will increase their potential customer base.

**Sector Support**

The Technology Sector offers significant support for UK Charities digital development, including:

<https://charityithelp.org.uk/>

<https://www.donatecode.com/>

<https://www.charitydigitalexchange.org/>

<http://itforcharities.co.uk/>

<https://mediatrust.org/communications-support/>

Companies who donate equipment will benefit from;

* Soft advertising & product placement; potentially thousands of people trying out their equipment
* Brand affiliation. People will associate these donors with Park View Project and positive support
* Public relations. Working with the local media/social networks to get maximum publicity for the companies who make donations to Park View Project.
* Companies will be demonstrating their social commitment
* Feedback about products from Park View Project participants

Funders would be more likely to provide to support this approach, if some technology is already in place.

**Taking a User-Led Approach:**

Whilst learning to improve digital skills Park View Project user/volunteers would take part in researching/engaging and building case studies, and dialogue, with potential donors.

Digital First Aid Participants will experience the benefits of accessible technology, and become involved in making real changes to their own devices and those of others. Service users can be involved with promoting assistive technology to set Park View Project’s digital offer apart from other organisations.

* Evidence need by working together to identify common barriers to getting online for people with disabilities in North Tyneside/gaps in provision.
* Get people involved in researching accessible technology for Park View Project
* Get people involved in researching IT support available for charities
* Explore community led fundraising activities/donations/social giving/crowdfunding/local tech firms/sector connector/grant giving).

**Free support available for PVP’s Websites:** **Meeting Government Web Accessibility Requirements;**

The Government has made it a legal requirement for websites to meet level AA of the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1)](https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/helping-people-to-use-your-service/understanding-wcag-20) as a minimum. This enables websites to work on the most commonly used assistive technologies - including screen magnifiers, screen readers and speech recognition tools. There is also a requirement to include accessibility help page, that also explains how accessible the service is. Further information is available through the GOV.UK website:

<https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/helping-people-to-use-your-service/testing-for-accessibility>

This includes free tools to check Park View Project website accessibility, such as <https://tenon.io/> and <http://wave.webaim.org/>

Ability.net provides useful information about accessibility help pages (including the ability to embed ‘My Computer My Way’ into websites:

<https://abilitynet.org.uk/blog/three-things-include-your-accessibility-help-page>

Free support for UK charities web development is available from organisations such as;

<https://charityithelp.org.uk>

<https://www.donatecode.com/>

**VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES (Volunteer Online Chum Mentors Scheme)**

**Community Learning & Volunteering: Park View Project’s ‘Digital Champions’**

Learning and volunteering are complementary activities. Digital First Aid will enable access to health skills technology, during the digital skills development process, to empower people to become volunteers.

By involving volunteers from the start of the project Park View Project can demonstrate our intentions to potential funders that this service is led by disabled people, for disabled people. Volunteering in this way will increase independence, raise self-esteem, and improve the health and wellbeing of others.

Equally, the opportunity to volunteer with Digital First Aid - to help other local people with disabilities get online and increase health related knowledge, provides a practical and appealing route to re-engaging adults in learning.

The benefits to Park View Project of this approach;

* Demonstrate that we are positive about disability by creating meaningful volunteering and skills development opportunities for existing Park View Project users
* create a volunteer base that reflects the diverse range of disabled people Park View Project serves and the community in which it is based
* Complementing existing Online Chum mentoring Scheme with the sharing of skills/knowledge
* Increase Park View Project’s capacity through a skills development cascade model to volunteer development

**Digital Champions Skills Profile -** Volunteers will be supportive and positive role models, with an understanding of disability issues through lived experience. Digital Champions will have the ability, and enthusiasm to learn new digital skills, access health knowledge and information, and pass on these skills to others. IT Skills desirable but not essential; a desire to help others explore the possibilities of accessible technology; motivation to inspire other people with disabilities, to gain the confidence and develop the skills needed to use the internet for a healthier life.

**Digital Champion/Peer-Mentoring Role**

* Testing the best online digital skills courses; learning new skills and providing feedback about the effectiveness and accessibility of these resources. This will assist us in choosing the best digital skills courses for the service.
* Digital Champions will develop skills to work 1:1, or in small group settings with Park View Project learners. Being supported to help others engage with accessible technology, digital skills, digital health & ‘Internet Essentials’ training (I.E., Volunteer Online Chum Mentoring)
* Helping people to develop self-help skills by signposting to reliable online information and resources
* Be part of a “Digital Befriender system” for participants who may lack confidence, or need additional support, to get online and learn new skills (Volunteer Online Chum Mentoring Scheme)
* Digital befrienders will be supported to research and deliver practical solutions based on their relevant interests and experience (e.g. helping others with dyslexia to use accessible technology to get online).
* Learn how to develop web content for the Park View Project’s website. Including posting relevant disability-related information and updates to people using our website. This content will focus on positive health, accessible technology, and signposting and community events.
* Take part in Focus Groups; helping to steer the direction and the priorities of ‘Digital First Aid’, playing an active role in planning, design and implementation
* Research into the latest statistics, research and technologies for disability and digital inclusion.
* Helping to fundraise and identify funding opportunities. For people with disabilities the cost of devices, internet access and specialist software can be prohibitively expensive

**PROJECT PILOT PROPOSAL- DIGITAL FIRST AID**

**Promoting and Protecting Health through Digital Technologies**

In the UK, models of health and care are struggling to cope with the challenges of disability and an ageing population. Digital health and care technologies are now recognised as key to the solution in tackling this crisis.

Digital technologies can offer limitless possibilities; empowering us to track, manage and improve our own, and families, health. Park View Project can take the lead in harnessing the positive potential of digital health technology, to promote and protect the health of people with disabilities in North Tyneside

**Evidence of Need**

**Key health and care barriers** experienced by people with disabilities in North Tyneside include:

* Problems accessing health & social care services due to disability, mental health, social background and education
* Long waiting times and cutbacks to services, impacting the most disadvantaged in our community
* People with disabilities and health conditions being unaware of the help and support available to them; how to find reliable information (local & national) about health/treatment/wellbeing/services; passive recipients of health/care services; barriers to engaging with services
* Social isolation, physical inactivity, low levels of access to support, poor diet and lifestyle, low confidence.

**Local & National profiles of health inequality:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-profile-for-england/chapter-5-inequality-in-health>

<https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/State%20of%20the%20Area%20Report%202019.pdf>

On 7 January 2019, The NHS published it’s **‘NHS Long Term Plan for Digital Transformation’**. The NHS outlines key targets for empowering people through digital health:

* *‘People will be empowered, and their experience of health and care will be transformed by the ability to access, manage and contribute to digital tools, information and services.’*
* *‘We will provide a trustworthy place for people to find health information, apps and register to access NHS services.’*
* *‘The NHS App will create a standard online way for people to access the NHS. The app will work seamlessly with other services at national and local levels and, where appropriate, be integrated into patient pathways.’*
* *‘Support for people with long-term conditions will be improved by interoperability of data, mobile monitoring devices and the use of connected home technologies over the next few years.’*

**North Tyneside CCG’s** **‘North Tyneside Digital Roadmap’** describes a 5-year digital vision, setting out how communities will harness technology to support sustainability and transformation in health. The CCG’s ‘Local Vision’ is for the **‘digitally empowered patient’** who uses digital technology to ‘enhance the ability for service users to self-care’.

<https://www.northtynesideccg.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Northumberland_and_NorthTyneside_LDR_V7pdf.pdf>

**Unlocking the Digital Front Door – Keys to inclusive healthcare (National Voices publication)**: [file:///C:/Users/My%20PC/OneDrive%20-%20North%20Tyneside%20Disability%20Forum/Desktop/Unlocking%20the%20Digital%20Front%20Door%20NHS%202021.pdf](file:///C%3A/Users/My%20PC/OneDrive%20-%20North%20Tyneside%20Disability%20Forum/Desktop/Unlocking%20the%20Digital%20Front%20Door%20NHS%202021.pdf)

**The Good Things Foundation**, working in partnership with the NHS Widening Digital Participation Project, has undertaken a three year national pilot exploring how digital participation can improve health outcomes (North Tyneside was excluded from this pilot):

<https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/projects/nhs-widening-digital-participation-phase2>

**Existing Digital Health Services in North Tyneside**

No organisation in North Tyneside currently offers access to digital health skills or information, through a holistic digital skills development approach for people with disabilities.

**Digital First Aid - for Health & Wellbeing**

* Building on assistive technology, and essential digital skills development, so people with disabilities can benefit from digital health
* Training will focus on giving people with disabilities the self-help skills to find reliable information about any health and wellbeing issues; learning how to manage symptoms, treatment, peer support, and relevant services and specialist websites/apps.
* Training will also enable people to access online NHS recommended self-help strategies for positive health; healthy living, improving lifestyle and condition management.
* Park View Project users will become what the NHS calls - ‘digitally empowered patients’ - who can use NHS online health services; to book appointments, order prescriptions and use self-help tools such as digital health apps
* Digital health can offer social opportunities for the Park View Project community to get healthy together, and link into wider community partners activities
* Access to Park View Project’s online learning program: Community Reporters, which is designed along the lines of ‘Citizen Journalism’ where topic-led self-development enhances basic digital skills.

The benefit of digital health is that resources have already been created, tried and tested by NHS professionals. ‘Digital First Aid’ training will focus on developing the self-help skills to use access and use these online tools for better health. ‘Digital First Aid’ is about building lifelong self-help skills for positive health and well-being - A self-led approach to taking control.

**Resources available for Digital Health Skills Development at Park View Project**

***1) Self-help skills for lifelong health and well-being in the digital age***

Informal learning, in supportive In 1:1 or small group sessions, can teach people how to access the best online resources for better health and wellbeing. Here are a couple of examples of the topics, and websites that can be covered:

* **How to find trustworthy and reliable online health and wellbeing online**

<https://www.nhs.uk/> <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/> <https://web.ntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp/>

* **How to address any issues with Health and Social Care Services:**

<https://www.cqc.org.uk/> <https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/nhs-services-and-treatments/what-is-pals-patient-advice-and-liaison-service/>

* **How to find support for health and wellbeing in North Tyneside**

<https://services.northtyneside.gov.uk/sign/> <https://mycare.northtyneside.gov.uk/web/portal/pages/home>

Digital Health provision will be driven by the Park View Project users’ interests and needs, to support engagement, and motivate digital skills learning. Digital health training sessions can be focused on specific health conditions identified by Park View Project users. For example, currently it is estimated that 8.5% of the population (aged over 16) in North Tyneside are living with diabetes, which is known to precipitate other chronic conditions such as cardiovascular disease, kidney disease, depression and blindness. Park View Project users could take part in digital training sessions about diabetes, based on the best online information and resources from trustworthy sources including:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/diabetes/>

<https://www.diabetes.org.uk/>

<https://riskscore.diabetes.org.uk/start>

<https://www.stopdiabetes.co.uk/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/category/diabetes/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/free-fitness-ideas/>

[Https://www.northumbria.nhs.uk/our-services/diabetes-and-endocrinology/](https://www.northumbria.nhs.uk/our-services/diabetes-and-endocrinology/)

<https://www.desmond-project.org.uk/>

***2) Digital Health Apps for Self-help skills for life-long health and wellbeing (Supporting NHS Digital Transformation Agenda)***

Digital health apps are designed to help individuals to take steps, including exercise and positive behaviour changes to self-manage improved health and wellbeing. Many apps are free and can be downloaded to participants’ phones. I’ve received excellent feedback from encouraging people to try the apps for the last year; one person described a mental health app for anxiety management as “better than counselling”. This can be taught 1:1 and in small groups of people - to enable access and use the NHS App Library for better health outcomes.

**The NHS Apps Library (multiple health issue apps)** [https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library](https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/) is an excellent resource of NHS reviewed tools to help people manage and improve their health. There is no service in North Tyneside apparently using the NHS Health Apps Library as part of their health and wellbeing offer. Health Apps are available to improve self-management of a wide range of health conditions and issues including dental health, diabetes, first aid, healthy living, learning disabilities, memory and communication, NHS Services, online health community, respiratory needs, and sleep.

**The ‘NHS App’** [**https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/nhs-app/**](https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/nhs-app/) Increasing patients uptake of the NHS App is a core element of the NHS long term plan for digital transformation. The NHS App allows people to book GP appointments, order repeat prescriptions, check their symptoms, view their medical record, register to be an organ donor and choose how the NHS uses their data. 95% GP practices are registered with The NHS App.

**One You - Healthy Lifestyle Apps.** The NHS offers recommended digital healthy lifestyle apps, and self-help resources, on the One You website <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/apps/>

**Free Health & Wellbeing Apps from many excellent examples) -North Tyneside CCG Mobile App:** <https://www.northtynesideccg.nhs.uk/your-health/mobile-app/>

This award winning app has many features including;

* Calling practices directly at the touch of button to book appointments
* Finding contact details for local GP’s, care homes, hospital departments and other NHS services
* Viewing ratings and key indicators for NHS services
* Health A-Z for comprehensive information on conditions and treatments using content supplied by NHS Choices
* Finding where you can get treatment for your condition
* Getting the latest health news
* Tracking long term conditions by using existing free technology

**Fitness: Google Fit’ App:** <https://www.google.com/fit/> Through the Google Fit app, the World Health Organisation is looking to reach more people with its recommendations for physical activity, and showing why moving more is good for your health.

**3) Park View Project Community leadership for Digital Health** *Working together to improve health & wellbeing with North Tyneside in partnership with North Tyneside Disability Forum user groups):*

Notes: NTDF’s positive approach to health & wellbeing is at the heart of all core services; from the Young People’s Project, Health & Wellbeing Club to the Look After Yourself Project. Digital First Aid participants will be encouraged and supported to participate in the wider Park View Project offer.

NTDF has already had great success with digital health through its weekly ‘Couch to 5k’ group activities. There is enormous potential for digital health at NTDF because of the Charities' approach to increasing individual and community resilience through health and well-being activities. Digital health gives everyone at NTDF the opportunity to take part and get healthier together. Digital Health also gives opportunities for NTDF users to engage in ***‘Micro-volunteering’*** activities. ‘Help From Home’ defines micro-volunteering as: *‘Small, quick, low commitment, on-demand actions that benefit a worthy cause’ The actions might be a task that could be accomplished as a whole unit from start to finish by one person or it might be an action that could be broken down into its component parts where an individual is just one of many people performing the same task to achieve an end result. 10 seconds to 30 minutes is all you need to help out a worthy cause!’* <http://www.sheffieldvolunteercentre.org.uk/uploads/files/Microvolunteering-_Help_from_Home.pdf> Volunteering App that attracts young volunteers to your cause: <https://www.parkviewprojectne.com/volunteero-app>

* **Park View Project Health App of the Week’**: Encouraging the NTDF and wider community participate in trying out a new health app each week, people across groups can share their progress and encouragement to improving health together. At the end of the week participants can have the opportunity to test and rate health apps through simple feedback and reviews. Health app reviews/recommendations can be posted online by Park View Project’s Digital Online Chum Mentors. For example, building on ‘Couch to 5K’ by trying out walking apps such as ‘Active 10’ and ‘Charity Miles’ (which makes a charitable donation for every participant mile walked).
* **Park View Project Gold Awards**: Users rate and recommend the best health apps for the community. (Gold/silver/bronze winners recommended by the community i.e., Charities/LA agencies/Health etc., or anyone who wants to participate on a flexible panel of judges)
* **Park View Project YouTube Channel - Social Impact** provides non-profit organisations with a free YouTube channel. Potential to develop a Digital Health channel with the best positive health, wellbeing and lifestyle videos, chosen by partner community organisation users to benefit the wider community of disabled people. From exercise videos (yoga, tai-chi), to wellbeing (mindfulness, managing anxiety), to practical ‘How To’ videos for independent living (such as healthy eating or home organisation tips). The YouTube channel can be used to deliver free health and wellbeing activities at Park View Project drop in services making resources available for people at home. <https://socialimpact.youtube.com/>
* Park View Project Digital First Aid participants/volunteers can take part in finding the best health and social care resources available for North Tyneside residents and the NTDF community. Community partners respective websites could include a **‘Digital First Aid - Good Health’** section, with links to the best health websites and apps, based on a user led feedback and review system alongside Park View Project’s web platforms.
* Develop a **‘Digital First Aid Kit’** - best websites for advice/support to address issues on specific conditions facing disabled people. The project could ask participants to review apps, websites and give simple feedback as part of Micro-volunteering.

**‘Digital First Aid - Signposting and ‘Self-Help Skills’ - training for key issues facing people with disabilities.**

Cutbacks to services and the closure of advice agencies/charities have left many disabled people without access to vital support around key issues including welfare benefits, housing, money, and caring issues. An empowerment approach would enable people to gain the skills to get online and access self-help:- how to find trustworthy sources of information, signposting to advice and available support for key disability-related issues that are known to have a major impact on quality of life and wellbeing. 1:1 or small group training can include how to make the most from websites such as GOV.UK and North Tyneside Council. The aim is to reduce reliance on services, which may be cut back, or no longer available to users, by using the internet and assistive technology where needed, to achieve better outcomes.

**Method:** Deliver 1:1/small group learning to signpost for key issues facing disabled/older people

**Disability Benefits & Housing ‘Digital Self-Help Skills’ training**

* Exploring websites such as GOV.UK, North Tyneside Council, Turn2us, Shelter, Disability Rights UK, Citizens Advice to find trustworthy and reliable information about benefits and housing issues.
* ***DWP’s ‘Digital By Default’*** strategy; training in how to access online welfare benefits (such as Carers Allowance/Attendance Allowance)
* Using online benefit calculators/better off calculations; Turn2Us, GOV.UK, Entitled To
* Learning where to access additional available resources; e.g. access to work, grant search, Blue Badge online, gas/water rate reductions, Cinema Cards, Carers Cards, help to save/lifetime ISA
* Navigating North Tyneside Councils website (Housing advice and online services, paying rent, moving home, reporting issues etc., GOV.UK & Shelter to access reliable information.

Similar training could be delivered, signposting to the best online information and support from trustworthy sources, for carers, financial security and disability issues.

**EVALUATION**

**Outputs-**

* Park View Project based access to digital skills development for people with disabilities through assistive technology
* Access to internet based health resources and support via the internet on phone and/or computer (1:1 and group support)
* Increased health knowledge and skills
* Increased social interaction opportunity
* Increased ability to support self and others - Increased self-help/advocacy skills. Reduced reliance on services.
* Personal development such as self-confidence, life skills, self-esteem, communication skills, etc.,

**Outcomes-**

People with disabilities will experience-

* Ability to access digital information (number of people utilising assistive technology/ number developing digital skills/ number accessing health related and other information)
* Increased health and emotional wellbeing/quality of life (health and wellbeing scale)(ratings for health information, websites and apps accessed)
* Increased social interaction and wellbeing (number of people taking part in Park View Project opportunities/number of volunteers supporting others)
* Increased ability to self-support (number of people trained about and/or signposted to digital resources/services/support)

**Feedback to inform Evaluation** could also include the following questions:-

What new skills did you develop? What information was most useful to you? I.e., Internet skills, adaptations to technology (assistive technology); health information; signposting to other services. How did you use your digital (internet) skills - Apps, information, getting support, health improvement (how did your health get better). How did you get involved with Park View Project activities; learned about social opportunities; went to social opportunities; supported other people; spread the word about digital support. How many other people did the projects and other community partner’s support? How specific individual’s supported?

Digital Skills Assessment form: [Digital Skills Assessment Form 2021.pdf](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5CMy%20PC%5CDropbox%5CDigital%20Skills%202021%5CDigital%20Skills%20Assessment%20Form%202021.pdf)

Mental Wellbeing Assessment; Quality of Life Score [(WEMWBS short-form](https://www.corc.uk.net/media/1245/swemwbs_childreported.pdf)) could be used pre and post involvement. All are available free of charge.

**SURVEY MONKEY** to be used to gather and scores for apps, websites and resources

**PILOT** - There are two distinct groups identified in the flowchart below, and a small pilot could be run with each group simultaneously. 1) Those that already have basic internet skills and those who need training to develop basic internet skills. Assistive technology will be offered for both groups. The PVP could become the first peer mentor volunteers, once they have gone through the above Digital First Aid process. People from group 1) could be signposted into PVP as volunteer Online Chum Mentors Scheme.

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**Appendices**

**1a: Digital First Aid Flow Chart**

 Does the person have basic internet skills at initial assessment?

 **Consider assistive technology information and adaptations**

 NO

 YES

 Any health concerns for this person?

 Any health concerns for this person?

 NO

Offer basic digital skills development & healthy lifestyle resources

 Signpost

 YES

Targeted health resources used in digital skills development

 Signpost

 NO

Healthy lifestyle resource awareness

 Signpost

 YES

Targeted health resources awareness

 Signpost

VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES - Digital First Aid

 - Social and volunteering activities

**1b: What do we mean by a seamless journey between online and offline community participation regarding increasing social circles of support and online learning.**

***Blending on-line & off-line interactions:***

For many individuals, day-to-day life is lived through a blend of online and offline interaction. Conversations started face-to face with friends move to SMS on the way home, onto social network site chat later and perhaps at some point to a Skype call. Snapshots of a social event taken on a smartphone might be uploaded to the web, shared, liked, discussed, and then shown around on a screen at the next face-to-face meeting, extending engagement as content and conversation seamlessly shifts between online and offline. *Yet the majority of services and support for disabled and older individuals are delivered either offline or online, with strong dividing lines between the two*. Blending offline and online support can happen in many ways. It might be driven by a facilitator taking a ‘blended facilitation’ approach to amplify face-to-face work with young people by sharing it online. Or it might involve using the web to connect people to meet to share ideas and experience offline. Many areas of the country now have hyperlocal online websites – such as the London ward-based Haringey Online. <https://harringayonline.com/>

***Use digital tools to enable peer to-peer learning***

In the Internet age, education doesn’t have to be top-down or only available in formal settings. Digital tools can support peer-to-peer learning, where young people and adults are both teachers and learners – sharing their experiences and knowledge with each other. It can be easier to learn from someone with similar experiences to you and who is able to communicate information in more accessible ways. Digital peer-to-peer learning might take place online, through social networks and social media such as used by a recent Innovation Labs project (www.innovationlabs.org.uk) which aims to create digital tools that support young people’s mental health. It describes how co-design approaches: “... get service users and professionals to think about how someone other than them will experience a service or application, both before and after it’s been developed. Using these tools results in a better understanding of what is important for service users when they interact with the product or service. This in turn leads to more well-rounded ideas. The Internet has the potential to revolutionise learning. Webcast lectures or inspirational clips from TED Talks (www.ted.com/talks) demonstrate the power of the web in supporting self-directed learning and providing access to high quality education resources. Peer-to-peer learning complements these one-to-many forms of online education with opportunities for many-to-many learning, where ‘everyone has something to teach, and everyone has something to learn’ (a motto adopted by ***SchoolOfEverything.com https://schoolofeverything.com/*** ). Confidence is important for effective peer-to-peer learning: both the confidence of ‘teachers’ and the confidence of learners. ***Adopting these approaches is an ideal methodology for older and disabled people, but only if additional tools for supporting this seamlessness between offline and online is available – Assistive Technology.***

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