

# Intune 2019



**WaveLength**  
Fighting loneliness



A message from our Chairman

**Daniel Smith**

Looking back through our archives, I discovered a letter from one of our early donors who had listened to one of our first radio appeals. They were so taken with the idea of the charity, Wireless for the Bedridden, as we were then called, that they became regular donors, as did their children. In those early years, as is the case in our time, they recognised that media technology has an invaluable role to play in the lives of people who are lonely and in poverty. You can read more about the history of our charity on pages 6 and 7.

80 years on, our mission remains exactly the same: to alleviate loneliness through providing media technology. Everyday technology, which we all take for granted, can help to lift someone out of loneliness when they leave the streets, enter a refuge, visit a day-care centre, or become housebound through ageing or long-term sickness. You can read about some of the people we've helped this year on pages 5 and 10.

Watching television provides comfort and companionship for people who cannot leave the house, such as Clare on page 5. In a hostel or refuge, a communal television brings people together, particularly those who are often not used to socialising and spending time with others. Having a radio playing in the background brightens the atmosphere, removing the silence endured by people who sometimes only hear the click of their heating each day. The gift of a tablet will suddenly open up someone's world by enabling them to talk to friends and family and access online services.

From the ladies of the Inner Wheel Club who managed our stand at the National Radio Show at Earl's Court in 1960, to those many people who donated to us following our early BBC Appeals, WaveLength has always been able to rely on the generosity of its loyal supporters. InTune is a testament to the real and lasting difference you've made to the lives of many lonely people who often don't have anyone else to turn to.

Thank you so much.



A message from our CEO

**Tim Leech**

Our 80th year has certainly been another busy one for the WaveLength team. We released the second part of our research with the University of York, which showed using everyday technology made people feel less lonely and healthier too. We've also developed a new animation which showcases how we work, so that people hear about the support we provide. These developments are all vital for breaking down the misconceptions over the relationship between technology and loneliness. We have seen our media presence grow and continue to explore new ways of working and collaborating with others. As always, I extend a thank you to you all and look forward to the next 80 years of improving the lives of lonely people.

Please pass on InTune or tell a friend about [www.wavelength.org.uk](http://www.wavelength.org.uk)

# Year round up



More and more people are talking about loneliness. In fact, researchers estimate that over 9 million in the UK are lonely at any given time. It's something which can affect us all during our lifetimes. For some people, it can be short-lived. For others, it is more enduring and becomes a permanent part of their life. The gift of technology can help alleviate people's feelings of loneliness - a vital helping hand when people are at their lowest.

This year, through our individual application process, we've supported over 300 people who are lonely because of poor mental or physical health, impairment, or circumstance. The technology we've given to charities and organisations has helped a further 29,390 people around the country.

**327 new people have been helped through individual applications**

**25 new groups have been helped through group applications**

We enjoyed seeing this technology in action when we visited some of these organisations including, Essex Dementia Care, Chess Homeless Hostel in Colchester, Leeds Women's Aid, and Choices Domestic Abuse Services. Here in InTune and on our promotional material, we share some of the innovative ways that different groups are using technology to improve people's lives.

2019 has also seen the re-design of our website, so it is even easier to use. As part of our research with the University of York, we've worked with the media company Digifish who have created a short animation film about our work. We hope this will all help us to lift more people out of loneliness.

# WaveLength in the press

This year we have focused on raising our presence within communities across the UK. This awareness is important so that we reach as many people as possible who may need of our help. We are always looking for new supporters to join us in our fight against loneliness.

## 'Window into the world': Charity connects lonely people through technology

**For 80 years a Hornchurch charity has been finding ways to connect vulnerable and lonely people to the world through technology.**

**APRIL ROACH**  
April Rose takes a look at

WaveLength, High Street, works with domestic violence refuges, young people leaving care, homeless hostels, hospital wards, and day care centres.

The charity provides free tablets, radios and TVs to those who are suffering from loneliness.

For the people WaveLength helps, the gift of technology can be a vital lifeline and window to the world.

The national charity began in 1939 as the Greater London Society For Providing Wireless for the Bedridden and was set up by London

Rotarians to relieve social isolation through the provision of radios.

"The radio is a really good piece of technology because even if people don't have technology or a TV licence, they can still use it," said Cherish Watton, communications officer at WaveLength.

"All you have to do is plug in and play. We find people really enjoy the radio and they become very protective of it."

Cherish shared the story of one of their beneficiaries, an elderly woman who would wrap up her radio every



night before she went to bed as it was so precious to her.

As technology developed over the years, so has the charity. In 2010 it changed its name to WaveLength to encompass the range of technology which the charity now provides.

Cherish described technology as a "window into the world".

"[Loneliness] affects people across all age groups. A BBC survey showed that it was the 16 to 24 group that self-identifies as being the most lonely.

"Every solution is different



In 1964, a visitor to this lady said, "This is the first present of its kind she has received in her whole life, and how wonderful she felt about. She requested me to thank you, to put it as her own words, 'from the bottom of my heart' on her behalf."

Below: Ken Hay the chairman, Marmaduke Hussey, chairman of the board of governors at the BBC, the Mayor of Havering, and Bob Tonlin the vice-chairman at the opening of WaveLength's offices in Hornchurch in 1992.

Photos: WAVELENGTH

## Tim Nokes Christmas run

Tim gave up part of his Christmas Day to take on a 15 mile run raising money for WaveLength.

## Personal trainer raises over £350 for charity

A man ran 15 miles in London to raise money for a Hornchurch charity recently. Tim Nokes took on the challenge on Christmas Day to raise money for WaveLength, a charity which gives televisions, radios and tablets to people who can't afford them, to help fight loneliness.

WaveLength support people who are lonely due to age, illness or disability, or by circumstances which make it hard for them to leave the house or meet new people. Tim, who splits his time between Bournemouth and London, said: "I have always been into fitness and have used it to treat my own mental health problems.

"As this was about fighting my own loneliness, I decided it would be great to find a charity that worked against loneliness and its devastating effects.

"I instantly loved what they stood for, connecting people through technology. This was something I continue to use in my own life, social media is a great tool for connecting with people all over the world and it has certainly helped me form new friendships and support groups."

Tim Leech, CEO of WaveLength, said: "We'd like to extend a huge thank you to Tim Nokes for running 15 miles for WaveLength. We know that Christmas can be a challenging time for people, so it's fantastic to see Tim using his experiences to take positive action. Tim's donations will allow WaveLength to continue giving technology people who are lonely across the UK."



## Celebrating our 80th Anniversary

To mark our 80th year of fighting loneliness, we wanted to promote our work and showcase our long history. We invited editors from the Romford Recorder newspaper to take a look at our photos, radios, and newsletters.

## Loneliness charity calls on groups to raise £80 to mark 80 years of work

**A Hornchurch charity is asking people to raise £80 for the 80 years it has been using technology to support lonely people in the borough.**

WaveLength is the high street as celebrating its 80th anniversary this year. The national charity gives televisions, radios and tablets to people who can't afford them and are lonely because of age, illness, disability or by circumstances which make it hard for them to leave the house or meet new people.

For the month of April, WaveLength is asking for hundreds of £80 for the 80 years it has been helping people to a

groups in the borough or outside to help support the vital work WaveLength carries out to reach those in need.

Tim Leech, chief executive of the charity said: "For our 80th Anniversary we are celebrating all the hard work the charity has achieved through loneliness and asking our supporters, family and local businesses to help raise £80 for the charity."

"The work we do is vital for those in need and we only believe ourselves but other businesses people's health and well-being, this is essential to our vision."



Cherish Watton, WaveLength CEO, Ken Hay and Bob Tonlin at the 80th anniversary event.

Both sides will now get up to London Borough to receive social isolation through the generosity of the borough.

Right: Loneliness for people across the country with the help of our emergency supporters.

"In our 80th year, we'll call on our emergency supporters to raise £80 for the 80th anniversary of WaveLength to celebrate the work of our emergency supporters."

We worked closely with the University of York to research how our gifts of technology help to reduce loneliness. We created a detailed report as well as a short animation which showcases the important work we carry out. To see the full animation, please visit [www.wavelength.org.uk/animation](http://www.wavelength.org.uk/animation).



## Meet Clare



“ I have found the TV to be invaluable as it is a real companion to me when I am bedbound and stops me from feeling lonely. I really enjoy tuning into my favourite programmes for entertainment and learning. The TV has made such a positive difference to my life. ”

Clare suffers from health issues such as Spina Bifida and Osteoarthritis which can often leave her bedbound and confined to her flat for long periods of time. After leaving prison, Clare told us how it was difficult to adjust to life outside, leaving her feeling lonely. Her TV from WaveLength made the world of difference.

## Meet Llamau, Cardiff

Llamau supports young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. WaveLength gave radios, televisions, and tablets for young people to use in a shared lounge. This communal area however brings its own set of challenges. The nature of social dynamics and visiting policies mean that young people tend to stay in their own rooms, which has a negative impact on their well-being.

Without the TV, the lounge would have been a pressured environment. Young people may have felt under pressure to be in a quiet room, with people they don't really know when they have just moved in. They would have likely retreated to their own rooms and continued to be very isolated.



“ The young people were really grateful and surprised that organisations were encouraging use of the internet, apps, social media. It sparked lots of conversations around isolation and loneliness. The tablets have helped socially and personally as young people are keeping in touch with family and friends. ”

# Take a look at our journey so far...

The charity is set up by the Rotary Club and the BBC with the name '**Greater London Society for Providing Wireless for the Bedridden**'.

The BBC selected us for its broadcast appeal. This was made by Dr Leslie Wetherhead and led to donations of over £4500.

1939

**THE 'WIRELESS FOR THE BEDRIDDEN' SOCIETY (INC.)**

1947

We changed our name to '**Wireless for the Bedridden Society**'.

2010



1998

We changed our name to '**WaveLength**' to better represent the range of technology we provide.

BBC radio presenter John Humphrys made an appeal for the charity.

2014

2016



We gave out tablet computers for the first time to the homeless charity '**The Passage**'.

We released the first part of our research with the University of York. It found that our gift of technology helped to reduce loneliness.

Help celebrate our 80th year of fighting loneliness by donating and



The Archbishop's wife, Mrs Geoffrey Fisher, made an appeal for us leading to donations of over £5000.



On 13th November 1957, we gave out our 5000th radio to a Mrs H, who lived in North London.

1949



1955

1957

The first issue of our newsletter 'Bedside World' was shared with the public, reaching over 10,000 people.



1992



1979

We moved offices to Hornchurch, which were opened by the BBC's Chairman of the Board of Governors, Marmaduke Hussey.

Richard Briers from 'The Good Life' made an appeal for us.

2017



2019

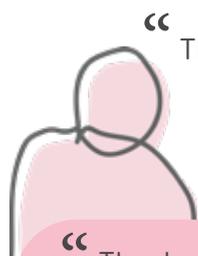
The future

We campaigned with women's refuges around the country to change licensing rules for women's and men's refuges so they only need one license per refuge.

Today we are celebrating 80 years of providing media technology to those in need.

**WaveLength will continue to fight loneliness with the help of supporters.**

# How technology fights loneliness



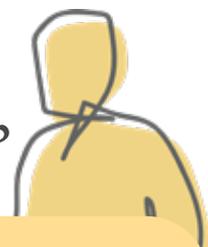
“ The TV has transformed my life, giving me great companionship. It is also very informative and educational. A big thank you! ”

“ The donations of radios and tablets have helped individuals to combat loneliness when they are at their lowest points. They provide people with a form of relief and escape. ”

“ The tablet has been so beneficial for my daughter emotionally and for her life academically. ”



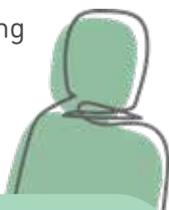
“ The TV provides residents the opportunity to be around each other with no particular agenda and just enjoy the company and feel less lonely. ”



“ The tablet was a godsend, as I felt quite isolated, especially at night when the children were in bed. The tablet helped me escape and also to research some self-help tips. ”



“ The radio helps when I am cooking as it blocks out hearing voices and I can concentrate on the music when I am cooking. ”



“ The radios have really helped the clients to socialise with one another and the clients are feeling less isolated as they have something to do. ”



“ Having a tablet has made such a difference to our lives. My children were taken away from their schools and friends and are now able to reconnect with the world. ”



# Everyday technology fighting loneliness report

Using survey data collected from over 180 people over 2 years, our latest research undertaken by the University of York shows that individuals rated their own health more positively after receiving and using their new piece of technology.

Accelerated by the often-negative and insensitive discussion of technology, this new report broadens our understanding of this, as yet, little-researched area. The report, by Professor Martin Webber, Director of York's International Centre for Mental Health Social Research, shows that technology can have a positive influence on the life of someone who is lonely. The benefits are increased for people who are in a bad financial situation, experience poor physical and mental health, and are therefore at the greatest risk of suffering from loneliness. Crucially, the extent of people's loneliness did not vary by gender, region, or age.

Our report calls for more attention to be given to the benefits that everyday technology can bring to some of the loneliest people. Not everyone can afford to buy technology which many of us take for granted. It is just as important for funding to cover the purchase of

equipment, alongside training. Our report also urges for free access to a minimum standard of broadband in order to connect greater numbers of people via smart televisions and tablet computers.



“My accommodation is less lonely - **it fills the void.**”

“It has made a massive difference to my life - **indescribable!**”

“It has connected me with the **outside world.**”

**People felt less lonely after receiving technology.**

**As people's loneliness decreased, they felt healthier too.**

**The extent of loneliness did not vary by gender, region or age.**

## Meet Shelley

Earlier this year, we gave a brand new Amazon Fire tablet and cover to a woman called Shelley.

Shelley's life completely changed 4 years ago. She had a car accident, which left her with significant brain injury and the loss sight in one of her eyes. Tragically, she lost her daughter in the car accident and her marriage subsequently broke down. Shelley's life changed entirely, losing her previous support systems - and facing life with significant health conditions.



**“Shelley was extremely pleased and excited at the prospect of being able to do so many things. I can't tell you how pleased she was. She was so excited to get up today and get her Internet sorted, which means a lot.”**

## Meet the Umbrella Centre, Canterbury

The Canterbury Umbrella Centre was established in 1987 to support individuals leaving long stay hospitals as part of the “care in the community” initiative. It now provides support to people with mental health problems. They run activities and programmes that promote good health and mental well-being. Since May 2018, WaveLength has given the centre 10 tablets.

“The last 18 months using the tablets has seen an enhancement in people's IT skills and has enabled them to connect with long lost family and friends without the pressure of face to face interactions. They are also valuable in the creation of social relationships for members as they interactive shared tablet interests. These are all factors that help reduce social isolation.

The impact on on our older users is huge as they can see they are quite simple to use and are able to use them independently. They also encourage younger users to come in and open up to us while using the tablets.”



**“The tablets have enabled them to connect with long lost family and friends without the pressure of face-to-face interactions. We have a lot of members with mental health and learning difficulties. The tablets are easy to use with the touch screen by those with visual impairments.”**

# Support our work

As a charity we rely on donations from supporters, companies, and groups to continue our vital work. By donating to WaveLength, you are helping to provide individuals and organisations with media technology which is crucial in their fight against loneliness. We couldn't achieve this without your help!

There are many ways to donate and fundraise for WaveLength. All donations help to continue the work we do.

## Phone or post

Call to make a donation over the phone, complete the attached donation form, or post a cheque to the address below.

## Monthly Direct Debit

If you would like to make a regular donation on a monthly, quarterly, or annual basis, please call the number below.

## Leave a gift in your Will

If you would like to leave a gift in your Will, you can add WaveLength as a legatee. For further information please call us.

## A one-off Christmas gift

Give someone the gift of comfort and companionship this Christmas by sending a one-off donation using the donation form attached.

## Fundraise for us

Why not put on your trainers and run a race, or show off your baking skills and hold a bake sale or coffee morning to raise vital funds for WaveLength. We encourage supporters to be as creative as possible to find fun ways to raise money. If you are holding a raffle or a fancy dress day, think of WaveLength when raising money.

## Contact us

WaveLength  
159a High Street  
Hornchurch  
Essex  
RM11 3YB

01708 621101

Email: [info@wavelength.org.uk](mailto:info@wavelength.org.uk)

**£40** buys a radio for a communal area in a refuge or hostel. This helps residents to relax while cooking and keep in touch with the world.



**£50** buys a tablet for a resident who needs to apply for jobs, contact family, and enables their children to keep up with schoolwork.

Thank you for your support. If you would like to opt-out from receiving In-Tune, please contact us.

## Find out more

WaveLength is the UK's oldest loneliness and technology charity. We give radios, televisions, and tablets to people living in poverty to overcome loneliness. The people we support are lonely because of age, illness, or impairment, or by circumstances which make it hard for them to leave the house or meet new people.

In the last 80 years, we've worked with domestic violence refuges, young people leaving care, homeless hostels, hospital wards, and day care centres.

We thank you for helping us to celebrate our 80th Anniversary.

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