

Tablets for Survivors of Domestic Abuse



# Overcoming Loneliness

 **WaveLength**

Delivering for the  
Clothworkers' Foundation Livery Fund



## About the Tablet Project

Helping survivors of abuse to overcome loneliness

For 80 years, Wavelength has led the way with delivering change for lonely and isolated people through the use of media technology. We wanted to launch a project, gifting tablet computers to combat loneliness for thousands of adult and child survivors of abuse. In 2017, we were the foremost recipient of the Clothworkers' Foundation Livery Fund. We already knew from our existing work that technology could play a vital role, but this project could do much more. It could transform survivors' lives when escaping an abuser, through to living safe independent lives.

We delivered the project within an 8-month period, but we wanted to do more. We increased the impact and added value by match-funding the grant out of our own reserves. We were able to reach another 1,000 people. Our financial stability and expertise made us the perfect organisation to invest in to deliver meaningful change for lonely people.

Going forward, we need to maintain our outreach and development, while responding to changing social needs. The combination of Wavelength's expertise and stability means that the Clothworkers' investment has had a huge short-term impact, while providing a lasting legacy for thousands of people.

"The project allowed us to develop our application process and the concept of a move-on package of support. We tackled issues relating to data recording, organisational thinking, and methods of working. As a result, we mainstreamed the processes for offering organisational applications and adapted to changing social needs across the country. Overall, the project developed how we give support to people in a more holistic manner."

Tim Leech, WaveLength CEO

 THE CLOTHWORKERS'  
FOUNDATION



"You have no idea what this has allowed me to do. I can contact my family and speak to them via messenger and email so they know we are OK."



## Impact of our Work

Tablets  
gifted:  
**464**

Refuges  
helped:  
**42**

Survivors  
reached:  
**2,000 +**

Cost per  
person:  
**£33**

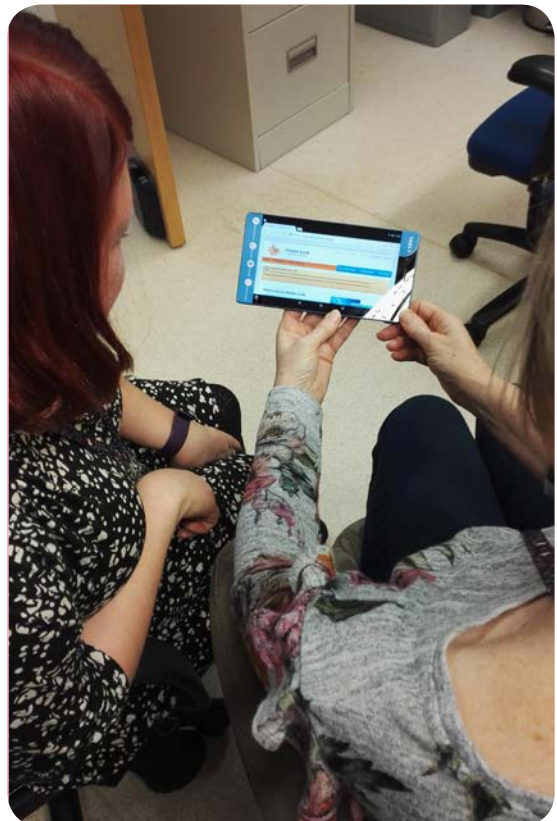
**97%** respondents say tablets reduce loneliness

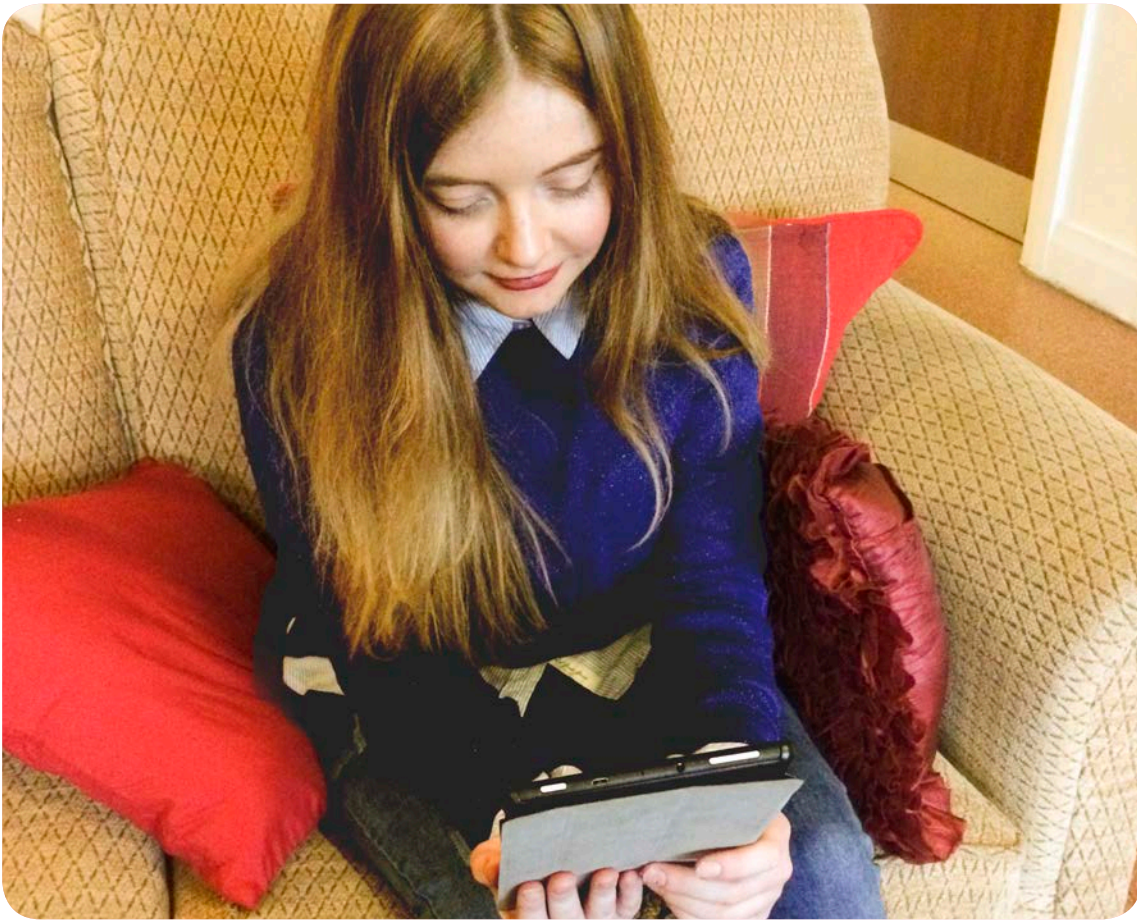
(232 respondents. All survey questions completed two months after receiving a tablet computer.)

**93%** say the tablet helped them move faster into  
independent living

**100%** say that the tablet  
kept their children  
entertained, while they  
focussed on applying for  
work, houses, and benefits

**90%** say that tablets made  
it easier to stay in touch or  
reconnect with their family





## Why this Project is Needed

Isolation is a tactic many abusers use to control their victims. The perpetrator controls the victim by removing external support systems, so that they become increasingly dependent on the abuser. This makes it difficult for the victim to leave. It is in the abuser's interest to restrict victims' access to the Internet, so they can isolate the victim. Consequently, victims of abuse who seek support from refuge centres are often both socially isolated and digitally excluded.

Survivors of abuse are often very lonely. Once they have escaped, survivors are often housed in refuges far from home to keep them safe from their abuser. This means that they are living in a new place, surrounded by strangers, at a time when they are very vulnerable. A tablet computer can be a safe way to communicate and connect with the world around them.

Our project helps survivors during the three main stages of their escape from abuse:

### **1. As they prepare to flee their abuser**

Refuges can use tablets in their outreach work to help victims prepare to escape.

### **2. While living in the refuge**

Survivors can use tablets to:

- Apply for work and housing
- Stay in touch with friends and family
- Prepare to move on into their own homes

Children also use them to do homework and keep up with their studies.

### **3. As they regain independence**

Survivors can receive a tablet to take to their new home when they leave a refuge.



## In the Words of Beneficiaries

Domestic abuse can affect anyone, from any background. The refuges that we work with support men, women, and children of all ages. A new tablet significantly enhances someone's safety, as they are able to carry their personal details with them when fleeing their extreme situation. People can use the Internet to access essential services and keep in contact with friends and relations. This is especially important as refuges do not allow visitors so that they can keep their location confidential. Hear from some of our beneficiaries below:

"I am feeling wonderful. Thank you! I cannot express in words how much this tablet will help me and my boys. As English is not my first language, I do struggle and this will help me greatly. I miss my old tablet that I had to leave behind. The boys did ask if I could replace it but I simply couldn't afford one. Thank you again."

- The Haven

"I like to download books to read which passes time. I can change the language to read on my own. This makes me very happy!"

- Yorkshire Women's Aid

"Wow! What a wonderful gift. I am so thankful to be one of the women to receive your generous gift. It is going to be so beneficial to me when I get a place of my own. We all know the future is the technology, everything we do is online, so when I'm looking for work, emailing CVs, shopping, online banking and even when looking for great, cheap nutritious meals. I'm so very grateful to have this: it's going to be a big part of my daily life."

- The Haven

"Thank you so much for this - I'm quite overwhelmed! I never expected to get anything like this. And it's brand new and just for me?"

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"Thank you, thank you, thank you!!!"

"We would like to send our sincere thankfulness for the gift given by you to our family. It has been a privilege being in the refuge, but unfortunately we only have one phone between the 5 of us. This tablet will allow us to access different programmes when it comes to doing homework with the children. As well as sitting together as a family and being able to work together. We really appreciate the tablet and we will make the most of it."

"I've been waiting to go to a new school. This tablet has been really good so I don't get bored. It's much funner than doing nothing - it gives me lots to do."



"The tablet helped me get more information. Therefore I feel more informed of my rights when my ex-husband challenges me or makes demands of me."

"It's been great, I've managed to contact my family, I can't thank you enough."

"It's been so helpful. Leading up to exams is a stressful time anyway, so this has been amazing - being able to access online GCSE Bitesize revision at home."

"My little one is very happy with the tablet. It gives me a little extra time to get things done!"

"I would like to say thank you for your gift of the tablet. We have been without an internet device for some time now, since my last tablet broke. My little girl used to enjoy the C-beebies app where she played educational learning games. I am very much pleased, we will now be able to download this app again for her...it will add another dimension to her learning experiences."

"My eldest child has been playing lots of educational games and he is really pleased!"

"With my son off school it has kept him up to date with his reading and education. It has helped a lot."

"You have no idea what this has allowed me to do. I can contact my family and speak to them via messenger and email so they know we are OK."

"Thank you for our tablet. My little girl loves watching programmes and playing games on it and I can search the internet and stay in touch with my family and friends."

## In the Words of Refuges

Our tablets provide a lifeline to women and men. Not only do they offer practical benefits, but they also facilitate intimate moments too. One of our refuge centres commented how technology offered a “much-needed distraction”, creating “moments for children and their mums to relax together”. Having access to tablets also allows children to complete their homework and prepare for exams. Here we share some feedback received from staff at refuge centres:

“The women I have worked with have used the tablets in many different ways. They have specifically helped women to stay in touch with friends and family they have moved away from. This reduces loneliness and isolation and helps the women on their journey into independent living.”

- Northern Ireland Women’s Aid

“We have a woman and her child who recently arrived and have asked for a device they can use to watch TV and for the 12 year old to use for their homework for their new school. The child is the mother’s carer and, due to mother’s anxiety, they rarely leave the flat and do not make use of the communal facilities. Both are extremely isolated.”

- RISE

“Oh my goodness, you have no idea of the joy and relief we see on their faces when I hand one to them. They said they feel less isolated from friends and family.”

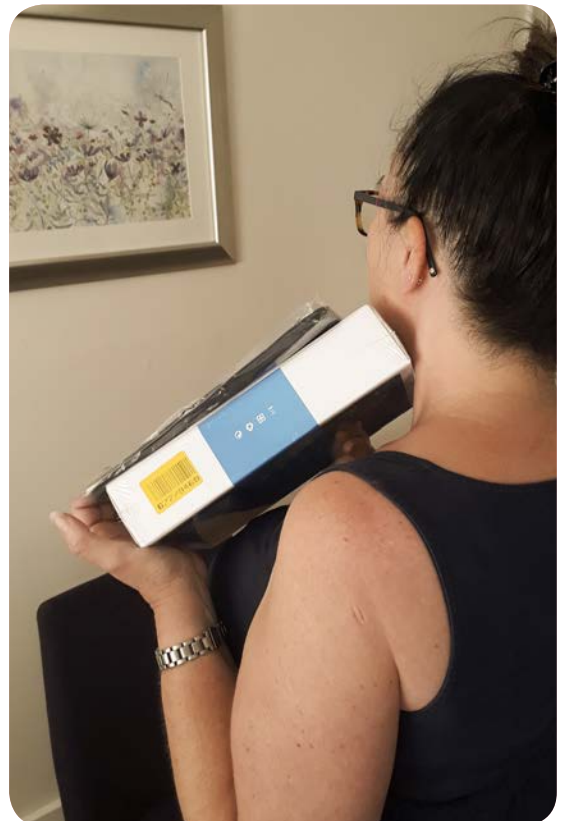
- East Midlands Domestic Abuse Service

“The lady just looked at me dumbfounded as she could not believe that someone could give her something brand new like that. She was completely overwhelmed. She said that it will make such a difference to her, she can teach the children how to use it sensibly to find things out, as well as keeping herself occupied and searching for homes.”

- East Midlands Domestic Abuse Service

“All the women and children have used the tablets. They have enabled women to find new homes, access benefits and information, find education and employment, and communicate with friends and family they have had to move away from due to domestic violence.  
Thank you.”

- Northern Ireland Women’s Aid



Find out more

To find out more about WaveLength's work contact us using the details below:

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