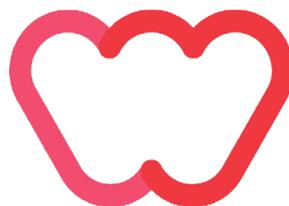


Intune 2020



WaveLength
Fighting loneliness



A message from our Chairman, Daniel Smith and our CEO, Tim Leech:



To say the least, it has been an unusual year. We do wish everybody a very Happy Christmas and hope that, even under these trying circumstances, you can connect with family and friends and find the support of those around you. We think about those who do not have this contact in their lives and are reliant on members of the community or the pieces of technology which they have, such as a radio or a television, to bring comfort in those lonely hours when they most need it.

It is probable that, in the circumstances we now find ourselves, an organisation like WaveLength has never been better placed to respond effectively. Technology is very literally at the heart of providing help for everyone at the moment. WaveLength's wide experience and years of dedication in the field of mitigating loneliness, through technology, are coming to bear as we help many people around the country.

This year has certainly been a challenge for WaveLength, - one that we have risen to enthusiastically with initiatives such as: providing tablets and CD players in care homes; radios for over 70s who are self-isolating, to provide some comfort and companionship; and tablets to victims of domestic abuse, a crime which sadly has increased over the last year.

In November 2019, many donors wrote to us sharing their genuine concerns about the impact of the planned removal of the text and data element of BBC TV's red button. Since then, WaveLength has joined with other organisations running a successful campaign to retain many of the red-button features. For anyone who doesn't have access to the internet, the red button services can be an especially important support, particularly for those with Alzheimer's and early onset dementia. This demonstrates that WaveLength's work is not just about the provision of equipment but also strategically representing the interests of beneficiaries and preventing erosion of vital accessible services.

WaveLength would very much like to help more people. The level of need is increasing and it is going to be a difficult time as we move forward. Financially, the Charity is stable at the moment. We receive no funding from government or the National Lottery, even though the importance and impact of our work are well proven. We must go back to our generous donors once again, to ask for donations and support to see us through this uncertain period. This will enable us to reach out and provide life-changing benefit to those in need, our beneficiaries, today, tomorrow and into the future. Your support and donations will be crucial to the ongoing success of WaveLength's important work.

May I wish you a happy and peaceful Christmas; a connected one, a comforting one and one that brings you together — family, friends, loved ones and those within your community.

Year round up

5,200 new people have been helped through individual applications and the Over 70s radio scheme.

25,000 groups have been helped through group applications.

During the pandemic, there has been a flourishing amount of available support appearing online. Though we recognise that this is not a complete substitute for face-to-face contact, seeing your neighbours, meeting friends or taking care of people in your community, at this present time, it is a godsend to be able to do these things virtually. Unfortunately, this facility is not available to everyone. WaveLength has been doing what it can to provide technology items, making sure that people who cannot afford equipment, are still able to contact their loved ones.

WaveLength has led initiatives this year to help people in care homes such as Chevington Lodge Care Home in Norfolk, an organisation which seeks to link younger people with older people.

WaveLength was able to provide radios and CD players so that the residents have the company of a radio when face-face visits were no longer possible, due to the lockdown. Other equipment, such as tablets were also provided in order to help them maintain a level of connection with their friends and family.



In addition to the work we have done with care homes, we were able to support organisations such as Autism Pin, a Waltham Forest charity which supports BAME families who have children and young people with autism and other disabilities. With WaveLength's provision of tablets, their beneficiary group was able to continue to have access to a community that understands their specific needs and enables and empowers them to participate within the wider community in which they live.

This year, through our over 70s radio scheme and our individual application process, we've supported over 5,200 people who are lonely and isolated because of poor mental or physical impairment, victims of domestic abuse and people who have been homeless. In this edition of InTune 2020, we share stories from just some of the thousands of people we have helped, and explain how technology has improved their lives.

Donate online at www.justgiving.com/wavel

Top tips to staying healthy during COVID-19

As the lockdown eases in the UK, there is a real risk of a loneliness epidemic. The crisis has made it increasingly difficult for people to maintain social connections, especially older adults and those with underlying health conditions since the government has told them to 'self-isolate' from the outside world.

What to do if you are feeling lonely during the pandemic:

Online

If you have access to internet at home and/or forms of technology, going online is a great way to maintain social interactions with people. Consider doing Zoom meetings with friends for supper, pub evenings, virtual sports etc. This can ease any heightened stress or anxiety you may be feeling during this crisis. Or you can visit [meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com) to help you to find people in your area who share mutual interests.

Nature

Nature is always your friend. Having some natural objects at home to hold and look at such as shells, stones, leaves, cones and seedpods can be hugely beneficial to an individual's mental health. This helps to keep your mind focused on something and it may also be a good relaxing technique. Short walks in green outdoor spaces, such as the park, can immensely improve your mood. You could do this with a friend, a family member or even on your own.



Hobbies around the house

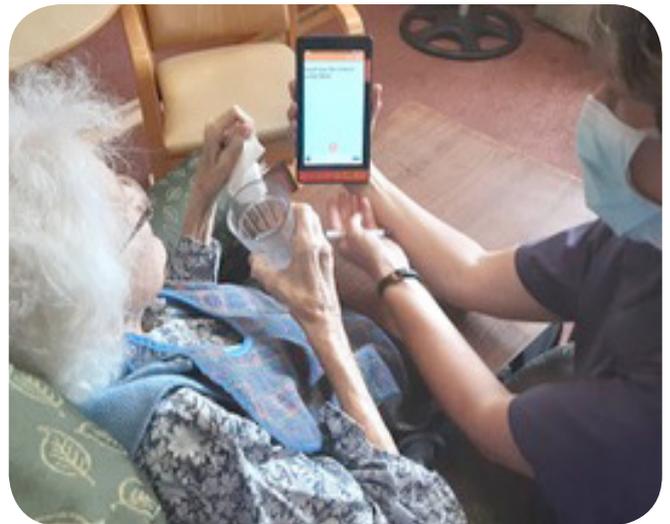
Doing things that you have a natural passion for is one of the simplest ways to alter your feelings and emotions from negative to positive. Consider creative writing. Focus on good events. Try and write out how you feel and how you would like things to change. Alternatively, you may want to talk about these things with friends or family - people you trust - either in person or over the phone. If you enjoy baking, needlework, drawing or painting this will keep you busy, improving your skills making you feel less lonely. Being creative is very therapeutic and a good source of stress relief.

Meet Friend in Deed, Norfolk

Friend in Deed has been a registered charity since November 2018. Their values are similar to WaveLength, to reduce loneliness. They also promote kindness through intergenerational friendships, connecting younger and older people. Since March 2020, WaveLength has given the centre 10 tablets, 10 radios and 10 CD players.

“The use of equipment from WaveLength in the last 9 months has made such a difference in terms of the well-being of the residents. When seeing friends and loved-one’s face-face wasn’t possible, seeing them via video call was the next best thing. The tablets have been valuable in not only maintaining social connections, but in helping those who are visually impaired. Kelly Lindsay who works for Friend in Deed said “A lady has been using the tablet to write messages to the care staff and then holding it up for them to read.”

“Being able to supply care homes with equipment that can reduce loneliness and increase connections was incredible. COVID-19 has isolated care home residents more than ever and we are so grateful to Wavelength for linking up with us. Our aims are to reduce loneliness and promote kindness and collaborating with Wavelength helped us achieve this.”



Meet Autism Pin, Chingford

Autism Pin is a self-funded charity, supporting African families that have children with autism and other disabilities. At the start of lockdown, WaveLength awarded 5 radios and 2 tablets for young people to use. Ola, founder of Austim Pin said “When we delivered the tablets to the families they were so happy. It came at just the right time and really helped them to develop their communication and sensory skills”.



“One parent said it really helped to improve their child’s mental health as he is now fighting less with his sibilings and there have been changes in his behaviour since he got the tablet. Things have improved not just for the son, but for the whole family as I believe autism doesn’t just affect the child but the whole family.”

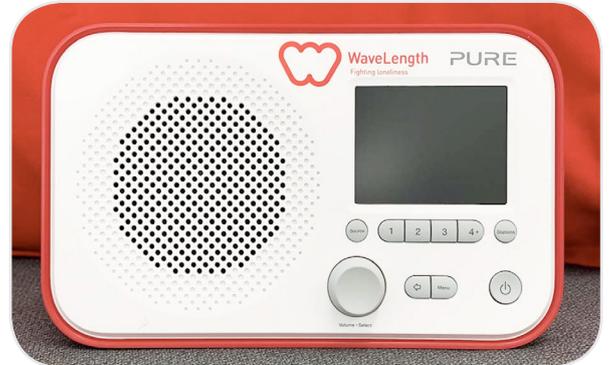
Radios for the over 70s



The Coronavirus (Covid-19) has had an unprecedented impact across the world. In the UK, the past 7 months have been transformational and many people did not fully anticipate the range of impacts that this virus could cause.

WaveLength's services have never been more in demand, helping the lonely and isolated. WaveLength launched a radio distribution scheme for the over 70s who were vulnerable and self-isolating. Radio is such a personal medium. We know from our work that a radio set brings comfort and is a helpful tool in relieving loneliness. It is a common misconception that every home has a radio. However, within the first few hours of the launch of our scheme, it became evident that this is not the case.

In just the first day after launch, we had over 90,000 people visit the WaveLength website and by day two we had received over 9,000 applications. This was an overwhelming response which highlighted the need for support. The scheme showed an outpouring of concern and thoughtfulness from people who were nominating their grandparents, friends and neighbours to receive a vital radio set.



We received over 9,000 applications in just two days.

90,000 people visited WaveLength's website.

WaveLength was able to help over 5,000 people through the Over 70s Radio Scheme.

We are aware that there are going to be further challenges ahead and we need your support and donations to help us continue our work and banish loneliness.



Radios for the over 70s

Our staff worked tirelessly to support those most in need, prioritising those who did not have a radio or broadband access, and those who were living alone. Over 70s who were caring for others were also placed in the high-need category.

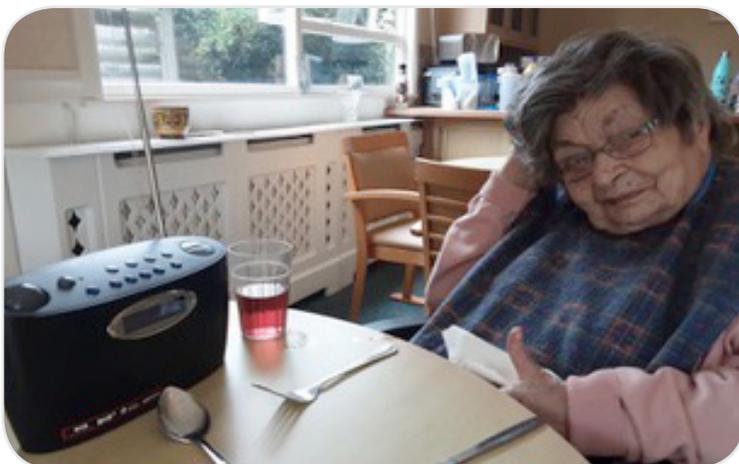
Overall, Wavelength was able to help over 5,000 people through the Radio Scheme!

Prior to the outbreak, we had been working with the UK Government for some time. We had already requested that every home should receive a basic broadband link as standard, providing access on a means-tested basis. This would help those who otherwise could not afford to get online. However, to date, no positive action has been taken.

If the UK Government, OFCOM, data service providers and others had granted free minimum broadband to homes in need, we would have been able to launch a project providing pre-loaded tablets, helping isolated people to link in with their community, family, friends and neighbours. However, this has not been made possible, so, to provide some company, companionship and access to local and national news and developments, WaveLength decided to provide radio sets to lonely people.

We know that there is much more need out there and we are keen to help more people as funds permit. Although, we have applied for funding from the National Lottery and UK Government to help us deliver, this has not been forthcoming.

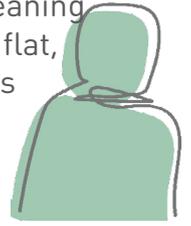
There are undoubtedly going to be further challenges ahead. We shall continue to work closely with other charities, UK Government and communities. We are continually learning so that we can understand how best to adapt and respond to the needs raised by the pandemic.



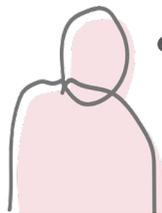
How technology fights loneliness



“June always has her radio on, meaning she has a little company in her flat, whereas before it was always silent.”



“The TV has stopped me feeling so lonely and so sad. I have more to look forward to. I feel less isolated and my mood has improved.”

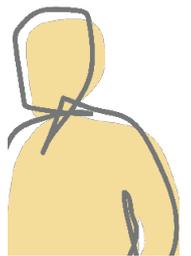


“I use my tablet everyday. It has been a lifeline during lockdown too. It has helped me to develop my IT skills. I really want to thank everyone involved!”

“Since receiving a tablet, I was able to re-connect with my family and children.”

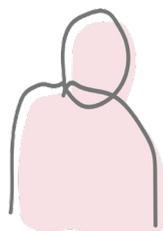


“I feel more accompanied and I like having the TV on at home, even if it's just in the background. I also enjoy watching documentaries and the news. This has especially helped me during lockdown. I would've struggled without a TV.”



“The TV made a world of difference to me. Before you awarded it to me, I would sit and look out of the window and then go to bed at 5 pm. Now I have a lot of things to”

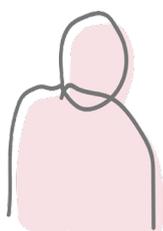
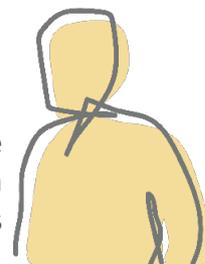
Message of thanks and support



"Without the TV I would be going crazy during the pandemic. It has been a real life saver and a blessing for me. I can't thank you enough for providing me with this TV."

"I am able to keep my mind occupied, which is a wonderful thing. I've learnt quite a lot of things, such as cooking and researching."

"Getting the TV and radio made me feel like somebody cared. It's been such a long time since anyone has been kind to me and it made me feel worthy."

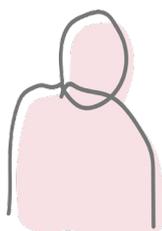


"The tablets have been so beneficial in cutting through the stress, loneliness and isolation in the house during these tough, restricting times."

"I spend a lot of time at home on my own and the TV makes me feel like there are other people with me and it makes me feel happier."

"I had to move to a new area, the television has been great for helping me with loneliness."

"It has improved my sheltered accommodation and it has made my flat lovely. Thank you very much!"



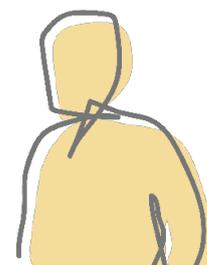
"The TV has made such a difference as I live alone and get very lonely."

"I feel more connected with my family and able to keep up to date with my friends on Facebook."



"The TV helps me relax in my new home and get used to living in this country."

"Listening cheers you up. I hadn't realised when you have been without a radio what a big difference it makes. You don't feel so much alone or worry so much because there is something else to listen and think about."



Meet Roy

In August this year, we awarded a TV to a man called Roy who is a victim of domestic abuse.

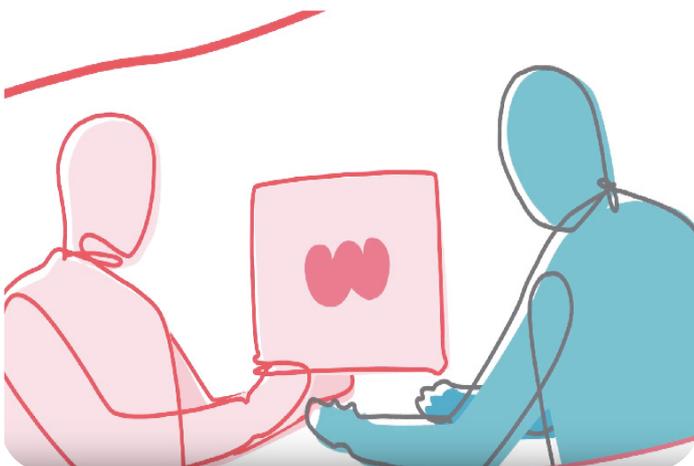
Roy recently separated from his wife of 30 years, he only had his clothes and not a lot else which meant he had to start his life all over again. When he first moved into his new flat he explained that not having a TV or any forms of technology isolated him from the outside world.

“Having a TV to ‘keep up to date’ and ‘up to speed’ with things has been really helpful. I use it to watch the news and when I’m pottering around my flat, I’ll put the TV on even if it’s the radio station, it’s there in the background and it makes the place feel a bit more homely.”



Wayne's story

Wayne suffers from many health conditions and is blind in one eye and has very poor eyesight in the other eye. Wayne regularly has to rest his other eye so, having a TV also gives him something to listen to such as the radio station when his visual field is not that good.



“ I really appreciate getting that TV, it was a life-saver and just at a perfect time because of the lockdown for me as a vulnerable person. Having a TV makes me feel a lot less lonely because it gives me some form of entertainment and the sound in the background feels up the emptiness of the room.”

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.

Post

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

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01708 621101

Email: info@wavelength.org.uk

£60 buys a tablet for a resident who needs to apply for jobs, contact family, and enables their children to keep up with schoolwork.

£120 buys a TV for a communal area in a shared accomadation. This helps residents feel less lonely and takes their mind off things.

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

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

Our primary concern remains the safety of both our beneficiaries and our team. Accordingly, following the lockdown announcements our office is now closed and unmanned.

Therefore, if you would like to donate, please do so via Direct Debit, standing order or Bank Transfer.

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