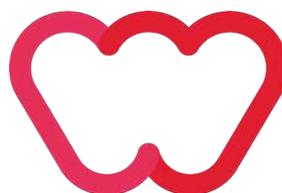


Autumn 2021



Over 23,000
people helped
this year



WaveLength
Fighting loneliness



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



This past year, with the Covid-19 pandemic still dominating much of the first half of 2021, at WaveLength we have continued to meet an ever increasing demand for our services. In response, we've established a number of new partnerships with community-based organisations, ensuring that we continue to reach the people who need us the most. At the same time, we've been working closely with our existing partners to support their important work in the fight against loneliness.

In addition to this increased demand, we have had to navigate a multitude of challenges since the beginning of the year. Price inflation, sourcing of equipment, and importing of goods into the UK have proven more difficult than usual. We're pleased to say that these challenges have not stopped us from carrying out our important work, nor do we expect them to.

One of our main focus points this year has been looking at ways in which we can increase support for our beneficiaries. We undertook several key research projects to improve further our understanding of the benefits of using technology as a tool for combatting loneliness, while also exploring the barriers to digital participation and reviewing subsequent solutions to get more people connected through technology. The key findings of these reports are detailed in this issue of InTune, alongside a report into our successful virtual film club partnership with the streaming giant, Netflix.

Our advocacy work has remained high on the agenda, over the past 12 months, as we continue to campaign for digital equality across the UK. This supports our ambitious but vital goal of getting every household within the UK fully connected to the internet. Inadequate Wi-Fi access and data inequality are proving to be the biggest barriers in overcoming this unhelpful disparity.

There's no doubt we still have a lot of work to do, but we continue to be encouraged and driven by our grateful beneficiaries who are so thankful for our support. All of that thanks goes to you - our wonderful supporters. Your generous contribution not only provides immediate relief to those suffering the impact of chronic loneliness and isolation, but is also paving the way to a more connected society in which everyone, without exception, can reap the benefits technology has to offer. Thank you so much for your continued support.

On behalf of the WaveLength team, and all our beneficiaries, we'd like to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We look forward to working with you throughout 2022 to help even more people profoundly affected by loneliness and isolation.

Together, we can, and will, make a difference.

Donated equipment provides support in challenging times



Blue Triangle is a social care organisation in Scotland with a mission of empowering people to thrive. It uses the power of Public, Social and Private partnerships to support young people and adults through supported accommodation, person centred trauma informed support services, in addition to promoting the development of safe, supportive and connected communities.

WaveLength has partnered with Blue Triangle Port Seton to provide radios and tablets to local service users. This technology has had a huge impact on their ability to connect with loved ones and access important services to support their progress or recovery. Over the past couple of years WaveLength has been instrumental in helping support our service users.

“WaveLength has gifted a number of tablets to our service users, and this has helped immensely to bridge the gap of social isolation and loneliness.”

It has enabled them to stay in touch with loved ones through social media, video calls and chat services, where they would otherwise have little contact with them.

“The use of technology has also helped our service users gain access to online groups, which have been beneficial to their continued support and recovery, while helping us to promote and empower them to be their own digital champions.”

“Many of our service users have taken their WaveLength radios with them to their new accommodation, which for some, is their first permanent tenancy ever.”

“As a small project within Port Seton, we rely on donations from organisations like WaveLength and we are so grateful for all the support we have received over the years and the difference it has made to so many. We hope we can continue this partnership with WaveLength going forward and continue to make a positive impact on the vulnerable people we support.”

Thomas Hall, Blue Triangle Project Worker

Technology helping people feel less lonely

This year, WaveLength donated eight tablet computers to Age Concern Southend-on-Sea to help combat loneliness and isolation by enabling members to stay connected through technology.

Age Concern Southend-on-Sea strives to enrich the lives of older people in the community with a particular emphasis on combatting feelings of loneliness and isolation. The donation of these tablets supports both WaveLength and Age Concern's shared aim of tackling the loneliness crisis.

Tim Leech, CEO of WaveLength said, "We are passionate about teaming up with organisations within local communities to make sure we are effective at reaching those in need. Donating these tablets to Age Concern Southend-on-Sea seemed a perfect fit, as this type of technology will give their members the means to connect with the important people and services in their lives, which in turn will alleviate feelings of loneliness and social isolation which are often prevalent in this age group."

According to Emily Tucker, Manager at Age Concern Southend-on-Sea's Hub Community Centre, the tablets couldn't have come at a better time.

"These tablets will be life-changing for some of our customers, after such an awful year of being shut away from the outside world. We'll be using the tablets to help people keep in touch with friends and family, and do essential tasks like food shopping and ordering prescriptions." said Emily.

To learn more about WaveLength's work with organisations and community groups, or to apply, visit wavelength.org.uk/apply-for-help/groups



Keeping children connected during lockdown



Kettlefields Primary School is a small rural primary school on the Cambridgeshire/Suffolk border.

Due to the Covid lockdowns earlier this year, some of the school's students were identified as being at greater risk of falling behind on their education and becoming socially isolated. These students weren't covered by the Government's assistance program; with some children sharing their family-owned devices with up to 4 siblings. To assist, WaveLength donated five tablet computers to the school, which were then distributed to the students who needed them the most.

Alicia Gadsby, Head Teacher at Kettlefields Primary School, was extremely grateful for the donation:

"We would like to thank WaveLength for their very kind donation of five tablets to the school. These have really helped some of our more vulnerable children to stay in touch with their friends and access schoolwork throughout the lockdowns. This has prevented children from becoming isolated and lonely and has allowed them to progress with their learning despite the challenges of the last year."

Parents of the students were grateful too – this is some of the feedback we received:

"I have really appreciated the tablet computer because it has helped to keep my son connected with his friends during the lockdown."

"We are still using the tablet a lot since the children returned to school as they now use it for home learning."

"My child has been able to keep up with work, thank you."

Tim Leech, CEO of WaveLength said, "We know that lockdowns are particularly hard on school aged children, who are used to seeing their friends every day. The impact of social isolation on this age group is significant, and can be very detrimental to their mental wellbeing. By donating these tablets we've helped to reduce this impact by allowing the students to remain connected to their peers as well as their education. It's great to hear such positive feedback

Research and Reports



As a charity focused solely on reducing loneliness and isolation, it's essential that we regularly review and evaluate the impact of our work and keep up to date with the progression of loneliness within UK society. We need to have confidence in our approach to tackling loneliness to ensure that the services we offer continue to have maximum impact.

Over the last 12 months WaveLength has undertaken a number of research and evaluation projects.

Report: Barriers and 'what works' solutions to Digital Participation for All

To better understand the barriers to digital participation, WaveLength commissioned Professor Leela Damodaran, Professor Emerita of Digital Inclusion and Participation, School of Business and Economics at Loughborough University to undertake a research project on this important subject. The resulting report was published in April this year, identifying the main barriers to digital participation while offering practical solutions to overcome them.

The report concluded: "While there are many significant barriers to digital participation, there is also significant 'know-how' available to address the issues successfully. Rich detailed knowledge based upon extensive research and practice exists to inform changes which can achieve the digital participation not only of older people but of many other digitally-disadvantaged people in society."

WaveLength has sent a copy of this report to relevant Government contacts and advisory groups for consideration.

Research and Reports

Report: Covid-19 – Preventing Loneliness through Technology

Following an unprecedented year for WaveLength's services, we undertook a study to measure and evaluate the impact of our services throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. The findings were positive and reaffirmed the effectiveness of our service delivery through tailored individualised support. This is how we achieve a 95%-98% success rate in terms of equipment usage.

It is widely believed that technology has a negative impact on our overall emotional wellbeing and contributes to feelings of loneliness, yet this is something we strongly refute. Our report shows the opposite to be true – technology is an essential tool in the fight against loneliness and isolation, and it's the most effective replacement for face-to-face interaction.

It's also a common misconception that the main barrier to digital participation is a lack of digital 'know-how' or unwillingness to embrace new technology. In fact, the most common barrier is technology ownership; or lack thereof.

Report: Radios for the over 70s

In March 2020, WaveLength launched a radio distribution scheme for the over 70s to relieve loneliness and isolation during the first lockdown and to help them feel more connected to the outside world. More than 5,000 people received a radio, the benefits of which were evaluated by Professor Julie Barnett and Estelle Corbett from the University of Bath.

Survey results from 142 respondents showed the radios were not only successful in reducing levels of loneliness, as measured by the UCLA loneliness scale; but also increased feelings of companionship and self-rated health. Feelings of isolation and being left out both decreased. The most significant decrease in feelings of loneliness was recorded in those aged 83 and over, and women recorded the greatest improvement over time in decreasing feelings of being left out.

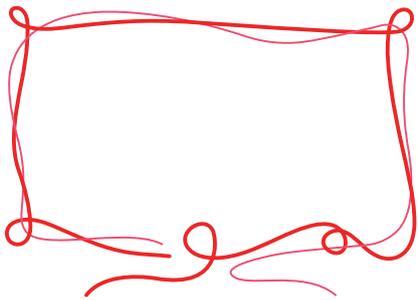
WaveLength x Netflix virtual film club

Earlier in the year we partnered with streaming service Netflix to launch a virtual film club. The aim of the club was to bring together people from all walks of life to discuss films in a social environment while simultaneously reducing social isolation and feelings of loneliness. Netflix generously provided 100 tablets and Netflix subscription codes to allow our beneficiaries to participate.

The film club was hosted by BBC Radio 1 film critic, Ali Plumb. Club members watched and reviewed six films in total, and the feedback we received was incredibly positive.

*Thanks to Organic Publicity for facilitating this partnership.

Messages of thanks



The TV has had a positive impact on my life as I very rarely leave my home and this offers me some company. It has helped me cope with loneliness.

Since receiving the TV my life has improved because I feel less disconnected from the world. Thank you so much for the TV, your charity has made a difference to me and I'm sure to so many others.

The TV I received from Wavelength has made such a difference in my day to day life. Sometimes it stops me from feeling stressed & stops me from thinking of my family & situation. I was so excited to receive it. Thank you.

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



I can now watch movies and video call Meet WaveLength beneficiary, Elizabeth

I can now take my tablet to the local library or job centre and contact my family which makes me feel less stressed about their safety. The tablet is also compact & easy to transport as I don't have internet at my house.

Having the radio is very enjoyable. It was lovely having it on and listening to people talking together; it breaks the silence when you live alone.

"I grew up in an era before TV, so the radio played a very important part in my life. I am now a widow living alone, and the Wavelength radio is much appreciated"

The radio has helped me so much, I'm starting to sing again and the day goes so much quicker. It's a comfort.



Meet WaveLength beneficiary, Elizabeth

Elizabeth is 57 years old and lives alone in the Westminster borough of London.

Like many others in her situation, Elizabeth was impacted heavily by the Covid-19 lockdowns and found herself feeling lonely, isolated and depressed.

Back in February, when Elizabeth visited her local council to discuss some matters, she mentioned her desire to purchase a tablet when she could afford to. Fortunately for Elizabeth, the council worker knew about WaveLength and submitted an application on her behalf, recognising how it could help alleviate the loneliness and isolation she was experiencing.

When the tablet arrived, Elizabeth was “overjoyed”.

“The tablet has been like a lifeline for me. I’m not exaggerating at all when I say that,” Elizabeth said.



“My daughter-in-law taught me how to use it and now I use it every day,” she added.

“I really enjoy watching music videos; I find music so much more stimulating than sitting on the sofa watching TV, which I was doing a lot before I received my tablet. I can also listen to the radio through it while I cook, and use Google when I need to look something up.”

Elizabeth also has some health conditions which have made her feel anxious about going out in public again after the lockdowns.

“Because I have arthritis and diabetes I’ve been afraid to go out, but I feel so much happier now I have the tablet. It has really cheered me up!”

Having experienced first-hand how technology reduces feelings of loneliness and isolation, Elizabeth would like to see the Government do more to equip older people with devices like tablets. She believes they are essential in order to function in today’s society, and she would like to see elderly people in particular being supported to use this type of technology.

Supporting women in need in Broxtowe



Broxtowe Women's Project is a charity in Nottinghamshire that exists to help women living in the Borough of Broxtowe who are experiencing domestic abuse. The organisation provides a confidential helpline, outreach service, training courses and drop in sessions, all aimed at empowering women and to help them survive domestic abuse.

Working with Broxtowe MP, Darren Henry, WaveLength donated a bundle of equipment to Broxtowe Women's Project to help the organisation's clients feel less lonely and isolated. The donation consisted of two TVs, five tablet computers, and two radios, which were distributed by the charity's outreach workers to ensure they reached the women who needed them most.

Colette Byrne, CEO of Broxtowe Women's Project said, "We were thankful to Darren Henry for speaking to WaveLength on our behalf, and of course very grateful to WaveLength for providing technology that will help to reduce loneliness and isolation for some of our families most in need.

"Since receiving the items, and giving them to women we knew would most benefit, we know the difference they have already made.

"One woman, who is on our Wellbeing program, said she has been using her tablet to download and read more books; giving herself much needed opportunities for relaxation, education and self-care."

Support our work

As a charity we rely on generous donations from caring and compassionate individuals, companies and groups to continue our vital work. By donating to WaveLength, you are making an immediate difference to someone's life, helping to alleviate their feelings of loneliness by connecting them to their loved ones and the outside world.

Technology is one of the most effective tools for combatting loneliness, yet so many people across the UK are living without basic everyday items such as radios, TVs and tablets. We want to change that, but we can't do it without your help.

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

Post

Simply complete the enclosed donation form, or post a cheque to WaveLength at the address below.

Monthly Direct Debit

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

Fundraise for us

Why not put on your trainers and run a race, or show off your baking skills by hosting a bake sale or coffee morning at your workplace? Your fundraising efforts can help raise vital funds for WaveLength, so that together, we can continue helping people in need to feel less lonely and more connected to the outside world.

Contact us

WaveLength
159a High Street
Hornchurch
Essex
RM11 3YB
01708 621101
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 shared accommodation. This helps residents feel less lonely.

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

Thank you for your support.

Find us on youtube at [WaveLengthCharity](#)

Find out more

WaveLength is the UK's oldest charity tackling loneliness and isolation through the provision of technology. We give radios, televisions and tablets to people experiencing hardship to help them overcome loneliness. The people we support are lonely because of age, illness, impairment, or through circumstances which make it hard for them to leave the house or meet new people.

Over the last 82 years, we've worked with domestic violence refuges, young people leaving care, homeless hostels, hospitals, day care centres, schools and community organisations.

As demand for our service grows, we're looking to expand our support to beneficiaries while continuing to champion the cause for those experiencing loneliness. By establishing The Loneliness Foundation Fund, we're strengthening our commitment to tackling loneliness in the UK, and we look forward to sharing more details about this exciting initiative with you soon.

WaveLength Charity Ltd
159a High Street
Hornchurch
RM11 3YB

Telephone: 01708 621 101

Email: info@wavelength.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 207400

