

DIGITAL DIVIDE



A GUIDE FOR SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE

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'Digital Divide'

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The Digital Divide is the gap between people with good access to the internet and people with little or no access.

This can impact many areas of life:

Finances – You are likely to pay more for essentials and have less access to ways of saving money if you are not online.

Health – From booking a GP appointment, to looking up medical information, many aspects of healthcare are now online.

Democracy – People who are digitally excluded may lack a voice and visibility as government services and democratic processes increasingly move online.

Employment – Many jobs are now advertised and applied for online only.

Social – More and more of our social lives take place online; particularly during the pandemic. Those without access are at risk of being socially isolated.

Goods and Services – From online shopping to support services, many organisations have moved online and may have neglected offline provision. Like other areas, this has worsened due to Covid-19, forcing many to operate online only for long periods.

It is important to remember that addressing the Digital Divide is not simply about increasing access to devices or internet connections.

It is also about finding ways to make sure that those who can't or choose not to be online are not excluded in the ways described above.

For more information on this, skip to the section on [Good Practice](#).

Local Services

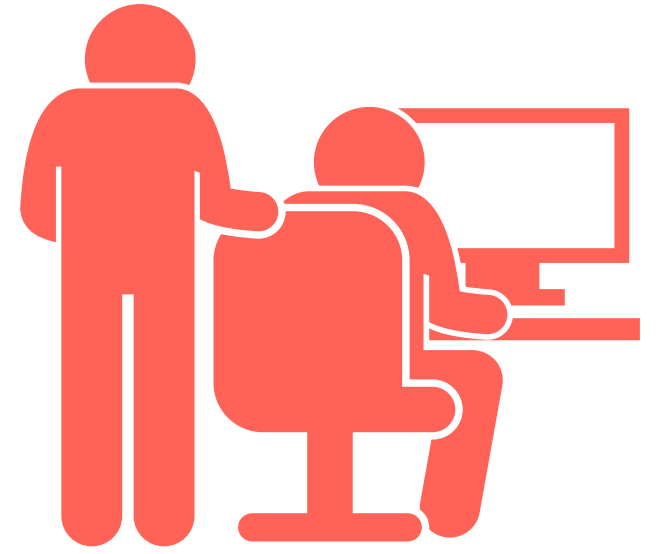
For computer and internet access

South Gloucestershire Libraries

All South Gloucestershire libraries offer free access to computers and the internet.

Drop into your local library, or call 01454 868006 to book a session in any South Gloucestershire library.

Due to Covid-19 some library services may be different from usual. For the latest information you can call 01454 868006 or visit South Gloucestershire Council's website.



Community Learning and Skills Service

Community Learning and Skills Service offer a range of FREE IT, digital and other learning opportunities across South Gloucestershire.

Their courses are free for those aged 19 or older and have few or no qualifications (below Level 2), or have/are recovering from poor mental health.

For further information call 01454 864613 or email community.learning@southglos.gov.uk

Community Calling and Southern Brooks

If you are 40 or over and from a lower income background, Community Calling could help you to get online by providing a refurbished smartphone. You will also receive vouchers to top up the phone with calling and internet credit worth £10 per month, for one year.

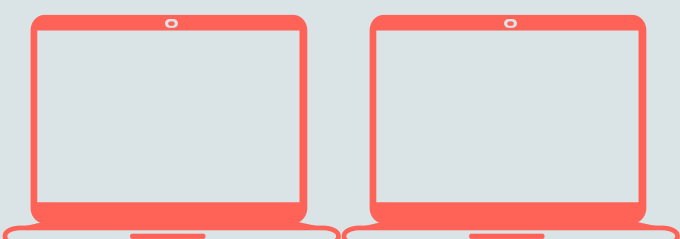
Contact Louise Delmege on 07814 080282

Or email louisedelmege@southernbrooks.org.uk for more information.



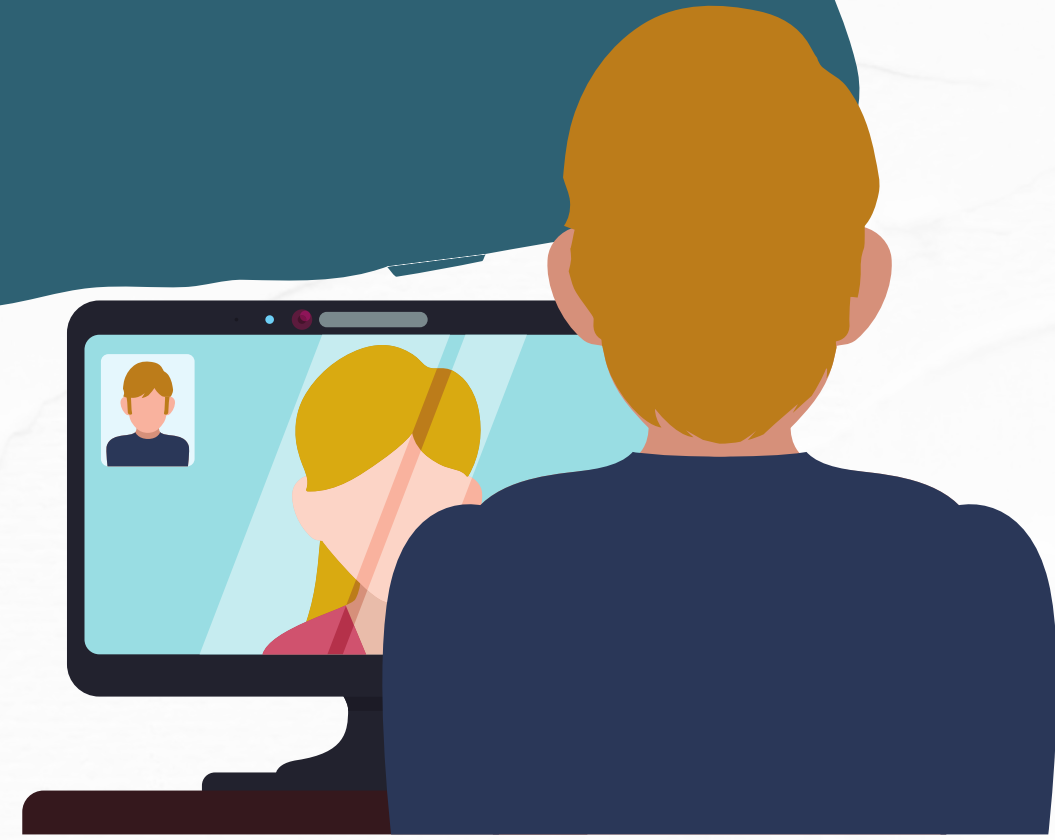
Laptop Loan Scheme

Community Learning, Juice Community Project in Cadbury Heath and other partners have teamed up together for a new a laptop loan scheme. You could receive support to get online with help from volunteer Digital Champions and the chance to borrow a laptop.



Contact: Tel: 01454 302302 | Email: hello@juicecic.com
Tel: 07768 293842 | Email: samantha.jones1@southglos.gov.uk

Reasons To Get Online



1

Stay in touch or reconnect with family and friends



2

Research a hobby or your family history

3

Keep yourself entertained and discover new interests



4

Book GP appointments and find new information about your health



5

Stay on top of bills and manage your finances easily from home

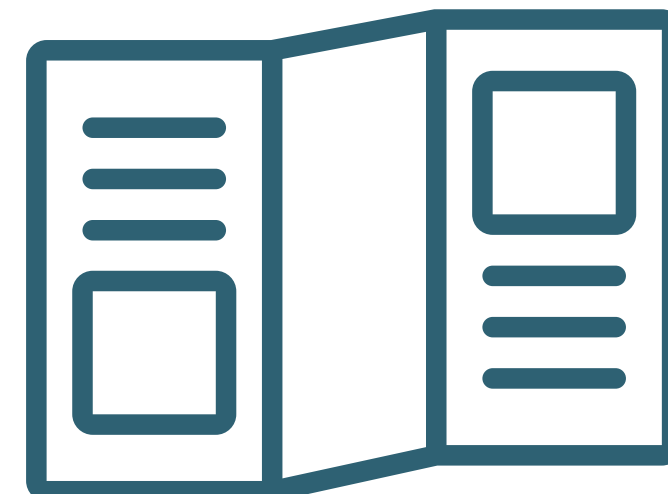


Good Practice

Tips for groups and organisations

Promote Your Group or Services Offline

Using Facebook or other online services can get great results and really help to build a community and raise awareness of your work. Be sure, however, to take some time to promote what you are doing to people who may not be on these platforms, or online at all. It is important that these people are aware of and included in your work.



Local Newspapers and Magazines

Local printed media may feature your work or promote a service for free if you contact them. 'The Voice' is published in many areas across South Gloucestershire. 'The Week In' is also widely read across East Bristol which includes some areas of South Gloucestershire.

Reach Parents Through Local Schools

Designing and printing a flyer to promote your work is a great way to reach people not online. Local schools may be able to distribute flyers through students' books bags. Building a good relationship with schools can also increase awareness of your group and generate referrals, they may know parents who could benefit from your services.



Include a Phone Number

Always try to include a phone number when advertising your work. This may be hard if you are a small volunteer run group. You could include specific times people can call between, or invest in a separate phone which can be shared, or turned off with a voicemail activated when not in use.

Become a Digital Champion!

When you are speaking to people about the benefits of getting online, make sure to use accessible language and not unfamiliar jargon. Even terms like "you are on mute" might feel like common sense to us, but can be very confusing to people new to digital devices. You can find out more by looking at the information featured on the 'Advice and Skills' page of this booklet.



Tablets Aren't Just For Swallowing

Information about the different devices available



SMARTPHONES are mobile phones that also perform many of the functions of a computer, typically having a touchscreen, internet access and letting you install useful applications.



DESKTOP COMPUTERS are personal computers designed for regular use at a single location on or near a desk due to their size and power requirements.



LAPTOP COMPUTERS are portable personal computer with screen and keyboard with all the letters and numbers, and some different symbols, on it.



TABLETS are computers that are in between the size of a laptop computer and a smartphone. They usually have a touch screen. For example, this could be an Apple iPad, Android Tablet or a Kindle Fire.

Advice and Skills

Where to get further help and advice

Digital Unite have created hundreds of 'how to' technology guides, which cover lots of different topics including 'computer basics', 'using the internet' and 'easy read' guides.

These guides can be found by typing
www.digitalunite.com/technology-guides
into your browser.

Ability Net have created simple 'how to' guides to make your device easier to use. They offer step by step instructions on how to adapt your phone, computer or tablet to meet your needs.

These guides can be found by typing
mcmw.abilitynet.org.uk
into your browser.

Learn My Way has free courses for you to learn digital skills to stay safe and connected.

These courses can be found by typing
www.goodthingsfoundation.org/learn/learn-my-way
into your browser.

Case Studies

Hear from people who have got online

"Zoom was introduced to (me) during first the lockdown by my daughter who stayed with me for 5 months and was able to build up my confidence in using it.

I was able to join services, a coffee morning each week and the more I used it the easier it got. Messenger Video calls to my grandchildren, including my disabled grandson who has very little speech and loved to see me when he was unable to visit. (I) send my grocery order to my granddaughter, use YouTube and look up clothes etc on internet although (I am) not confident to carry out transactions.

I would advise anyone to persevere as it is a great bonus when you are sat talking to four walls!"

Ruth, South Gloucestershire Over 50s Forum Member

"When I joined the Digital Skills Course at Yate library with South Gloucestershire's Community Learning and Skills Service last year, it was just before the Pandemic hit.

I was President/Liaison Officer of the Gloucestershire County Referees' Association and a school Governor and it became apparent that all meetings were going to continue by Zoom as lockdown hit.

I had a little difficulty signing in but the skills I gained from the Digital course allowed me to play a full part in all of my online meetings. There's still room for improvement, but it's a good start. Thank You!"

Bill, South Gloucestershire Community Learner

This booklet has been created by

