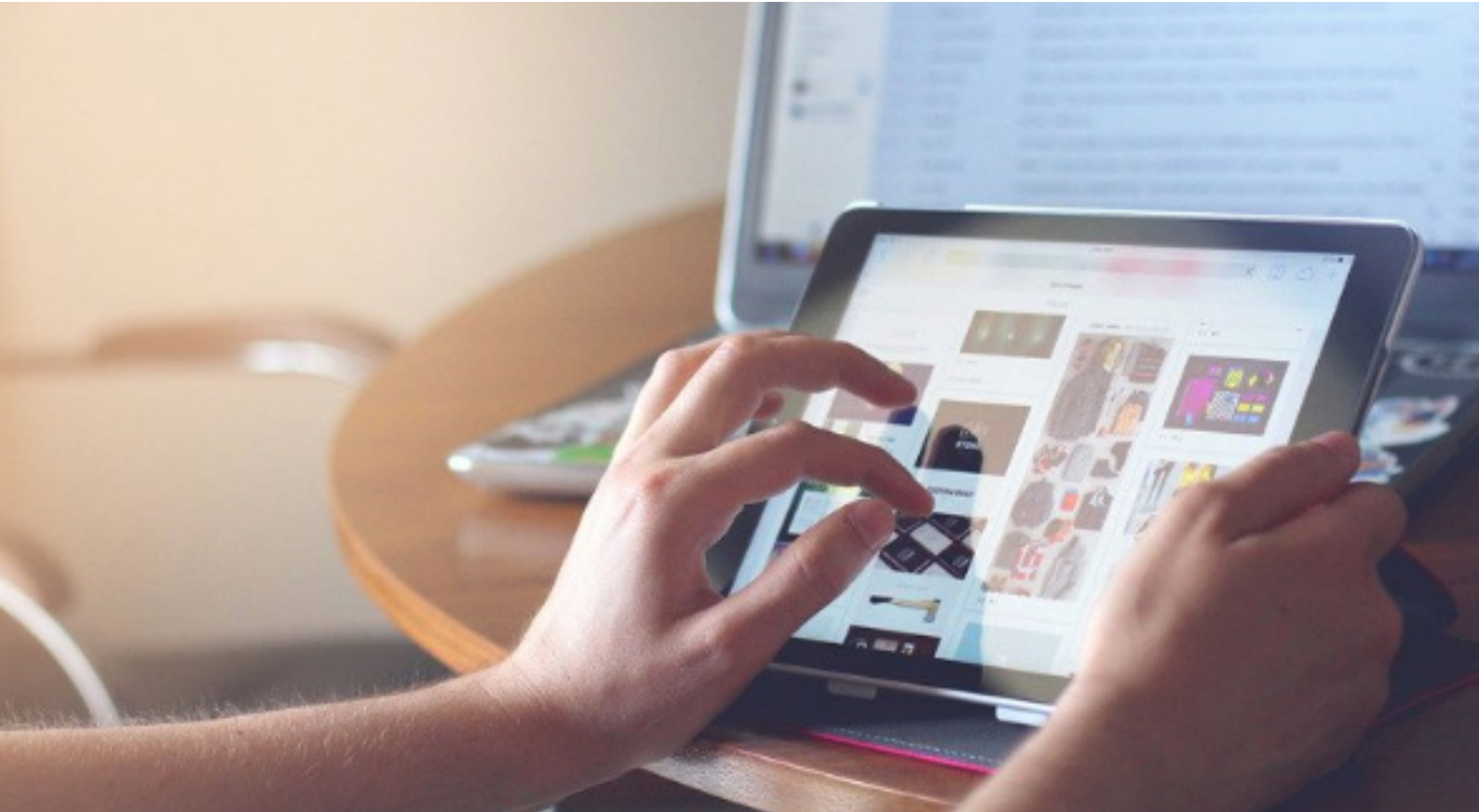


Confidence and connections through first steps into digital

A Social Housing Champions Network case study: Linstone Housing Association



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I take photographs on my phone now. We have a group chat with the family, now I can chat to them all at the same time, and that's just amazing, it's changed my life.

Connie Hyndman, Linstone Housing Association's Community Engagement Worker, describes how the Digital Champion training gave her the confidence to speak with tenants about digital, set up support groups and most significantly, offer one to one support.

Building trusting relationships is key when thinking digital.

It's nothing really to do with IT skills, it's about knowing how to help somebody. That was a big eye-opener for me. It used to freak me out if somebody asked me a question. Since the Digital Champion training I've set up a couple of groups. The Crafty Ladies wanted to use the hub to meet every week for a coffee. They started bringing in their tablets so we'd all sit around the table, we would go back to basics, switching them on, getting them to work, and then we would all sit and use them to do things like check the bin days.

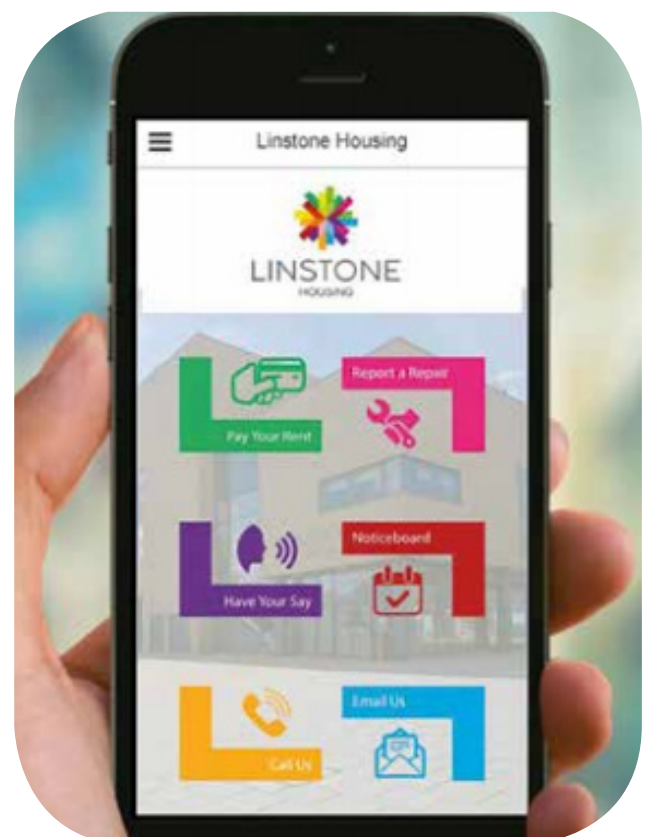
That's what I took away - you don't need to know everything, it's about how you're speaking, building up a relationship with somebody and then doing it with them. It doesn't matter if I don't know, we can figure it out together.

Digital Champion training ensured that digital is now a part of the day-to-day at Linstone.

This morning we ran a course at the health centre and we had our work laptops and a big screen. Before I even thought about it I'd connected the HDMI and it's on the telly and I've got the tablet set up. This time last year, I would've been stressing for days about doing that. A wee light switched on.

It's been the little things for me that have been the most rewarding. I would've been a lot more apprehensive before the Digital Champion Training.

I've helped people set up the association's app. Tenants can download the app, and it tells them all sorts of events, what's going on in their area, and they can pay their rent, ask for a repair.



Sandra Wilkie, a Linstone tenant, had a series of one to one meetings with Connie. Here, she reflects on that experience and describes the life-changing impact of gaining Essential Digital Skills.

My mental health has been really bad and I've been really poorly. I had just lost all confidence, I wouldn't go out the door. My family bought me a tablet, thinking that that would give me a wee interest. I didn't know the first thing about it. I've got a mobile phone and I just know the basics of that, and I don't do anything fancy with it, just phone and text. I met Connie, and I was looking for a wee course to learn my tablet. She said I'm qualified and I don't mind taking you on a one to one.

I've never looked back. I was so nervous about it, I was scared to even touch the screen, in case I knocked everything off. I was scared to put my email in, in case I put the wrong email. I was forgetting my passwords constantly, and I was getting all agitated and my confidence had just went, and Connie just came right down to my level. I don't know how to explain it but that lady's got a gift, and she made me feel so comfortable.

“ She taught me how to go onto Facebook, she taught me how to order online, she taught me how to get all my films and the TV and go onto all the different channels. And I'm like a different person, that wee tablet means the world to me, and it's got me more in conversations, it's got me back in touch with my colleagues at my work.

So as a result, I'm going out and about now, I'm going out for my own shopping and my confidence is building. I'm going for coffee with friends that I had worked with for 30 odd years, that I wouldn't even say hello to before.

