



## Tackling the digital divide

Hear from all the partners

### Stockport College, Community Computers, Mastercall Healthcare, Banter and Brews all working together to tackle the digital divide.

**Stockport College** is an educational institute in Stockport providing further education and higher education to those aged 16 and over. It provides educational opportunities for the community including; school leavers, adults, and businesses.

**Community Computers** refurbish redundant IT equipment and make it available to schools, community groups and to individuals who are on the frontline of the digital divide. Community Computers is a core partner in the Stockport DigiKnow Alliance.

**Mastercall Healthcare** is a multi-award-winning Social Enterprise organisation, providing a range of 'out of hospital' healthcare services across the North-West of England & Nationwide; in Stockport this currently includes the contract for out-of-hours GP cover.

**Banter and Brews** is a male support group, offering members a safe and relaxing space to sit, chat and enjoy activities, while having a brew and a biscuit. Coming out of the pandemic lockdown the group has mushroomed into 4 groups, now meeting in Reddish, Brinnington and Heaton Norris. The groups consist of men of all ages, a small number with learning disabilities, and a larger number in need of support with their mental wellbeing and various aspects of life; many are not digitally enabled.

At a Stockport College Partners meeting, Adrian from Community Computers was introduced to Kay from Mastercall Healthcare. Mastercall have a strong social value ethos, and the conversation led to a partnership whereby 49 laptops that had finished their working life were donated to Community Computers.

The laptops were all cleansed of data and then 50% of those that were suitable, were refurbished and added to a pool of devices made available to the local community to directly tackle the digital divide.

"It was fantastic working with Community Computers to help tackle digital exclusion within our local community. Support groups like Banter and Brews are a lifeline to many and knowing we have helped in a small way is great. We look forward to continuing our partnership with Community Computers supporting similar groups and targeting in particular the more deprived areas of our community."

***Kay Carter, Marketing & Brand Manager / Social Value Lead at Mastercall Healthcare.***

"We appreciate Community Computers efforts to recycle IT equipment, this reflects our shared values of environmental consciousness and responsible corporate citizenship. By conscientiously disposing of outdated or unused technology, we are not only reducing electronic waste but also minimising our carbon footprint, this aligns with our vision for a greener sustainable future.

***Jonathan Ritchie CIO/Director of Digital Innovation at Mastercall Healthcare.***



A request came to Community Computers from Banter and Brews for support. Community Computers was able to donate 2x laptops from its pool of available devices, to facilitate the running of the groups and for key volunteers to go out to visit group members in their homes or in a community setting, to support them with different online functions including arranging medical appointments!

"This will really help our members to access the connections that will make a big difference to their quality of life."

***Steve Hall, founder of Banter and Brews.***

“It is great to be able to partner with Banter and Brews and to give them the tools that will support them to ensure their members are not being left behind. It is great to see the donated devices that we have been able to refurbish, find a new home where the impact is so easy to see, and where the digital divide is being so clearly overcome.”

***Adrian Nottingham, Business Development Manager at Community Computers.***

On a follow up visit to Banter and Brews, Steve spoke to Adrian about the need for the group to improve their online presence now that they have the kit to make this possible. Adrian was able to complete the circle by introducing them to Michelle at Stockport College who is now working with Steve to explore how students might help the group as part of their educational experience. Win, win, win!

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