



Welcome

Welcome to the second edition of **Digital Inclusion Now**, the quarterly e-zine from DC10plus, a network of local authorities and partners dedicated to promoting social inclusion through innovation and technology.

It has been a very busy few months. We co-hosted the third **National Digital Conference**, where the newly-appointed Minister of Digital Inclusion, Paul Murphy MP, addressed 200 delegates from the public, private and third sectors.

We have been helping the Cabinet Committee to develop its digital equalities strategy and have also been working closely with the UK Digital Inclusion Team to develop an online portal which will provide best practice examples of projects that use technology to enhance social inclusion. The DC10plus and I look forward to seeing the publication of the 'Delivering Digital Equality - an Action Plan for Consultation' and how the DC10plus network can contribute to the delivery of digital equality.

We are currently developing our new website and are keen to hear about innovative projects/initiatives that are making a real difference to people's lives. Please do **visit us** and tell us your news.

Keep ahead of developments at the **DC10plus blog**.

I hope you enjoy this issue of Digital Inclusion Now.

Stephen Dodson, DC10plus Director



Distance no object

Two Connectivity projects have been launched in Sunderland, offering the community sector alternative methods of virtual networking.

FlashMeeting allows two or more people in any location with access to the internet to hold a virtual meeting. Users receive a link to the web address and a unique password from the FlashMeeting server then simply click on the link to enter into the meeting at the arranged time. It is not necessary to have a web camera to take part in the meeting and while waiting for their allotted time to speak users can contribute by using text chat, the whiteboard or emoticons and vote on issues raised in the meeting. Replays are instantly available.

For those who prefer to communicate in an informal 'chat room' environment, Hexagon uses the same base technology as FlashMeeting but meetings are not scheduled or recorded and sessions can be left open.

[Read more>](#)

Picture: FlashMeeting in action

FREEDOM 4 Milton Keynes

Connect MK is taking action to bring WiMAX broadband services to residents and SMEs in Milton Keynes, entering into partnership with FREEDOM4, the wireless broadband provider.

The programme is encouraging the building of new broadband infrastructures in Milton Keynes. This has enabled Connect MK to partner with Leon School and Sports College as well as its feeder schools to help provide broadband services to school children and their families free of charge, a move that is hoped will foster improvements in educational attainment.



Picture: Steven Jewell and Cllr Philip Gerrella with pupils at Leon school

Bridging the divide

East Manchester is the UK's largest urban regeneration area and the focus of the Eastserve project, which aims to bridge the digital divide and provide residents with the means to re-engage with civic life, as well as transforming the delivery of public services.

Thanks to Eastserve, a wireless broadband network has been built which provides an online community service to schools and other public centres. The service is then relayed to homes in the area. The 'clusters' communicate wirelessly via a radio dish antenna connected to a wireless bridge.

In this way, more than 2,000 homes in the East Manchester area form one of the largest 'community-based' all-wireless broadband networks in Europe and the largest community regeneration initiatives using digital technologies in the UK. The initiative has enabled residents to use their new skills to improve their access to training and jobs.

[Read more>](#)

Keeping IT in the family

Digital Birmingham is leading an initiative aimed at encouraging families to use IT and discover the benefits of email, the internet and digital photography, using a set of illustrated comic guides provided to school children.



It has been developed in partnership with Microsoft and is linked to the Government's Universal Home Access agenda, established to increase ICT skills in families and communities which may have a poor understanding and take-up of computers and the internet.

The initiative has been launched in six secondary schools. Birmingham City Council deputy leader Paul Tilsley, who heads up the Digital Birmingham partnership, said: "Research has shown that there is a wealth of benefits to be gained when older family members are taught how to use computers and the internet by their children."

[Read more>](#)

Picture: The characters of the 'Keeping IT in the Family' campaign

Digital Inclusion Minister visits Nottingham

Digital Inclusion Minister Huw Irranca-Davies MP visited Nottingham in June to learn more about DC10plus Flexible Working projects, such as homeshoring.

By using broadband and VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) technology, homeshoring offers people the opportunity to work from home and is suited to people whose lifestyles are more home-based, including the over 50s, women returning to work and those on Incapacity benefit.

The Minister first visited the BEST Centre, a partner in the pilot project taking place in the Boxtowe area of the city. After meeting community members involved in the pilot, the Minister discussed issues of ICT training, funding and flexible working with project partners.

Later, the Minister met with local stakeholders at BioCity to discuss digital exclusion and Local Area Agreements before addressing national stakeholders at a digital equality workshop.

[Read more>](#)

Picture: Digital Inclusion Minister Huw Irranca-Davies MP learning more about homeshoring



THE NATIONAL DIGITAL INCLUSION CONFERENCE 2008 REACHING THE FINAL THIRD



29th APRIL 2008
THE BREWERY, LONDON

Reaching the Final Third

The National Digital Inclusion Conference 2008 saw more than 200 delegates from the public, private and third sectors getting together to discuss how to help the final third of UK adults who remain off-line to access the opportunities and benefits of technology. DC10plus hosted an interactive afternoon session, running a workshop on achieving inclusion through innovation.

Stephen Gowland from Sunderland City Council, the Digital Challenge winner, addressed the conference on partnership and action, and Stephen Dodson spoke about policy and strategy. He concluded: "Next year, we want to be here talking about tactics to reach the final quarter, having made a lasting and significant dent in the remaining digital divide. If we can work together, if we can keep up the energy and momentum from the Conference, we really can make a difference."

Click to view the [conference report](#) or [webcast](#).

DC10plus has ambitious plans for the fourth National Digital Inclusion Conference. We are keen to gather your feedback about this year's conference and your comments regarding next year's agenda – please email [Civic Regeneration](#) with any thoughts.

Digital developments

Directgov is expanding its award-winning mobile service. Working with NHS Choices and Businesslink, Directgov provides people with access to public services information via its own dedicated shortcode number - 83377.

Currently, the service enables people to find their nearest health services, such as pharmacies, opticians and Accident & Emergency departments, to search for local council contacts and even to receive travel alerts.

Directgov will soon launch a Passport Office search service, providing people with all the information they need to complete their passport applications.

In the pipeline are services for specific audiences; the Blue Badge search will help badge holders to find their nearest disabled parking bays, petrol stations and disabled toilets.

To get Directgov on your mobile, just text 'MOBILE' to 83377 (standard network rates) and to learn more about the service, visit the Directgov [website](#).

Digi-snippets

Tackling Social Exclusion Through Partnership

DC10plus are proud to be supporting Inside Government's National Social Exclusion Event, Tackling Social Exclusion Through Partnership - Removing The Barriers, taking place on 22nd October, QE11, London. For more information on this event and to register, visit http://www.insidegovernment.co.uk/other/social_exclusion/

Silver Surfer of the Year 2008 - Nominations extended till Thursday, July 31st

Do you know a 'Silver Surfer' who is using the Internet and email? Perhaps they have set up a website, or made a real-space where others feel comfortable to come and discuss and learn about all things digital, perhaps overcoming difficulties with learning or mobility or they may have kept a family together against the odds. If so, enter them for Silver Surfer of the Year at <http://www.digitalunite.net/ssd/?page=ssy>

e-Government National Awards 2008

The e-Government National Awards 2008 recognise and praise the best in public sector ICT and e-Government across local / central government, non-departmental public bodies, non-governmental organisations and other deliverers of e-government services. Make your nominations online at www.e-governmentawards.co.uk/

Remember to visit our [blog](#) to keep up to date with developments from the DC10plus network and industry.



And, finally ...

The DC10plus supports smarter working practices, demonstrated through our Flexible Working programme. See how 'work smart' your organisation is by using the [Workwise UK Smarter Working Adoption Ladder](#)

How web safety savvy are you? Try [BECTA's quiz](#) and test your knowledge of internet safety.

Visit our website www.dc10plus.net – the network for change
Keep to date with developments at the [Dc10plus blog](#)

The DC10plus network is keen to hear about projects, news, events and innovative projects/initiatives that are making a real difference to people's lives through good sense and good practice.

If you want more information
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