

Welcome to our new website

25th February 2012

A very big welcome to the new look Digital Unite website, which we have been working on for quite a while and which I am thrilled we have now launched. I hope it tells you more forcefully, more thoroughly and more attractively what it is we actually do and believe in at DU.






We've been promoting digital inclusion and giving people digital skills – and in particular older people – since 1996. In that time so much has changed in terms in the digital world; we've gone from www-what-is-it to www-with-everything. I started DU teaching classes in cyber cafés. Now people are online on buses and on bicycles, in libraries and lighthouses and dedicated cyber cafés are as rare hens' teeth.

While over 8m people are still digitally excluded there are gladly millions more who are online and who can't imagine not having internet access. Part of our motivation in rebuilding our website was to serve on-liners as well as supporting non-liners (who by the way did coin that term, I am getting used to it, but it is fairly odd).

Being digitally literate doesn't start and end with an email address or a Google search. Being digitally literate means you can keep pace with changes in technology, make judgements about whether new products and services would be useful, or interesting, for you. Being digitally literate means you can stay safe online but also, really importantly, that you're not afraid to be online. We also believe being digitally literate should mean you get something positive, for you, from using technology. That might be really practical – it saves you time and money, it helps you get and stay in work. It might be emotional and social – it keeps you connected to friends and family, especially at a distance, and connects you to new people you wouldn't have met 'in the real world'. I used to bore people senseless by saying digital technology is not good for you like wholemeal bread is, but it can be a force for good if approached with confidence and curiosity and a 'have-a-go' attitude.

We very much hope our new site will help you widen your digital horizons and help you get something more and something new from your life online. I am sure there will be 'bedding down' issues, links that are a little wonky, and so on. Bear with us as we iron out the glitches and please tell us if you spot anything you think we've missed. And finally – enjoy!

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