

ClearCommunityWeb – Case Study May 2020

Since the beginning of the Covid-19 crisis we have helped over 100 people stay connected online, many of these vulnerable or working with vulnerable groups.

[ClearCommunityWeb](#) is a social enterprise that provides digital skills training, advice and support services in South East London.

We take a learner-centred approach, working directly with community groups, older people, vulnerable adults and carers. Giving vital support in overcoming their fears and anxieties of technology, take ownership, promote independent living and be active in their communities.

Caspar Kennerdale (Director) explains, *“We create a non-pressured environment where “no question is too basic” and we all learn together. If we don’t know the answer to a question, then we find out together. This empowers people to find the information for themselves and help others.”*

Our response to the Covid-19 crisis has been rapid. Many of our service users are vulnerable adults, in isolation and feeling marginalised from the rest of society. As the internet becomes the main way to have meaningful contact with their loved ones, and the outside world.

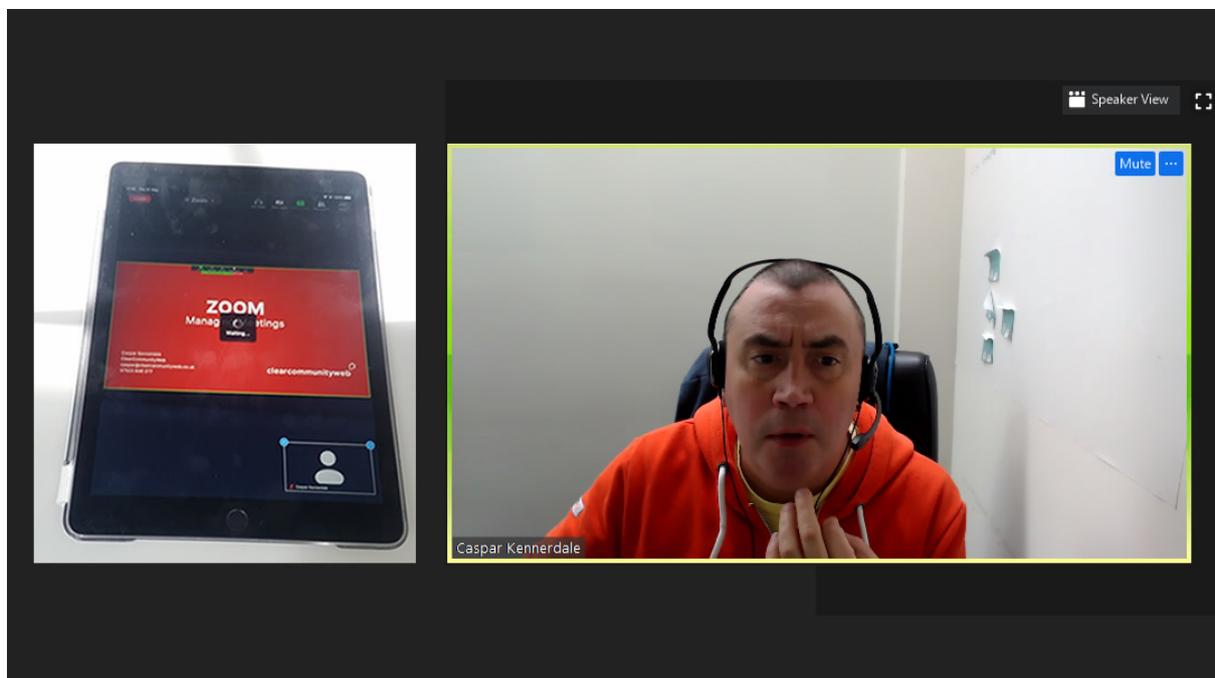
Before the lockdown, we prepared our service users for how we would provide support remotely. Listening to their concerns, we ran introductory online shopping classes at *Upper Norwood Library Hub* in Crystal Palace which have helped people keep their independence while staying safe at home.



Since lockdown, we have facilitated virtual group classes. This has given people the opportunity to see familiar faces, share positive stories and be part of a community. Every class is structured around local activities, it has been reassuring for people to see shops open and services available amid the overwhelming media reports.

Our [Digital Skills for Seniors](#) classes have allowed service users to progress, develop their skills and learn from each other. Every week we share a new video or website they have found based on their interests, so far, we have explored cooking recipes, local history and VE Day celebrations.

We also run classes on how to use [Zoom](#) for older people, beginners but also those looking to facilitate larger meetings. Rather than a webinar, they are very hands on. Caspar explains, *"you get to play with all the knobs and buttons without fear of making a mistake"*.



The intensity of this crisis has seen a dramatic increase in the need for our services. We provide one-to-one support in partnership with local community groups and charities to ensure vulnerable adults in isolation can speak to their care and support workers online.

Working on a local level has meant we have been able to reach more people. Distributing posters in the area and working closely with other organisations has been a key part of this process, making referrals and signposting people to other services.

Safeguarding vulnerable people online is paramount. Security, privacy and safety has always been a critical part of our work. All staff and volunteers are DBS

checked, follow strict safeguarding policies and procedures to protect our service users from harm.

Caspar explains, *"We will need to learn to trust people again. All Organisations moving forward must be safe and secure. We need to interact in an honest way as we become more reliant on the internet and each other."*

ClearCommunityWeb has quickly adapted to a new normal, we have been working hard to expand our reach across the boroughs, with new projects and classes that meet the growing needs of the people we serve.

Currently, we are looking into sourcing donations of equipment and preparing for in person services post-lockdown, keeping everyone connected during this crisis, and beyond.

Georgina Foster, Project Co-Ordinator

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