

(1. PASS IT ON LOGO SLIDE)

Pass IT On's Work in a nutshell: (2. WORKSHOP SLIDE)

- We are a very small charity – based in out-buildings in my mother's garden.
- We source donations of used computer equipment from members of the public & local businesses.
- This equipment is then refurbished (securely wipe data, upgrade...)
- Then the computers are adapted to suit the individual needs of people with disabilities who live in the EH postcode area.
- Clients receive their computers for free (they only pay for specific adaptations if they can afford it) - wherever possible we use freeware.
- Our clients are of all ages (4 to 94!)
- Eligibility criteria are that an individual is unable to access publicly available IT (eg local library), so clients may have a physical disability, profound learning disability, severe mental health problem, or be house-/bed-bound due to chronic illness.

Why is Pass IT On Needed?

1. Computers are essential – I couldn't list all the things I use mine for, includes:
 - shopping
 - reordering prescriptions
 - catch-up TV
 - keeping in touch with friends
 - photography (hobby)
 - signing petitions
 - banking
2. Concern re "digital divide" – (3. STATS SLIDE A)
 - 2009 Scottish Household survey -> 19% of healthy, able-bodied people don't use internet
 - Scottish Gov digital strategy to tackle this, UK-wide initiatives like "Race Online 2012"
 - BUT (STATS SLIDE B) among people with some form of long-term illness, health problem or disability >50% do not use the Internet
 - instead of getting smaller, (STATS SLIDE C) this gap has more than doubled since 2005
3. This is especially problematic as disabled people often reap extra benefits from computer access – it can increase their equality, independence, quality of life. Eg:
 - (4. 1 CLIENT SLIDE) if housebound can maintain independence - eg shopping / banking online
 - if can't hold a pen can express thoughts in writing without having to dictate
 - if can't speak can communicate on an equal basis via e-mail and instant messaging / use as voice output system

- (5. 3 CLIENTS SLIDE) education - develop literacy & numeracy
- deaf can talk to other sign language users using Skype (can't use phone, many profoundly deaf people have very limited English language skills)

4. But:

- off the shelf computers are not accessible (6. ADAPTATIONS SLIDE A) - keyguard, high contrast stickers, large keys, joystick trackball, head pointer
- And adaptations are expensive (ADAPTATIONS SLIDE B - PRICES) – for comparison, a standard keyboard is only £8. Plus specialist software is very expensive...
- And few disabled people know what's available or even how to use the accessibility options within Windows
- Further, disabled people are particularly likely to be on a low income (and often have higher than average living costs)

How did Pass IT On Start?

- Sandy & I used to work for a large residential disability organisation
- I worked as a researcher at the University of Stirling in relation to the problems faced by people who have severe communication difficulties
- We had a meeting with a Speech and Language Therapist regarding a client Sandy and I had both worked with who wanted to use a computer as his communication aid
- During this meeting we discussed the increasing movement from large scale residential homes to independent living meaning that many disabled people no longer had access to computer suites
- I stupidly said.... (7. "YOU ONLY NEED A VOLUNTEER" A)....
- We set up an informal project within the disability organisation (with 0 budget) – and quickly learnt a lot (flood of inappropriate donations - 40 Amstrad PCWs)
- ("YOU ONLY NEED A VOLUNTEER" B) Sandy was made redundant a couple of years later – we thought this was the end of the project but, encouraged by others, we set up independently
- Became a registered charity in Oct 2002 (coming up for 10 year anniversary)

What's so good about Pass IT On?

- It fills a huge gap – there is no other similar provision – our service dovetails perfectly with U Can Do IT & IT Can Help, which will hear about later
- Computers are set up individually (eg we created a grid using HTML for a girl with autism who loved birdsong – her mother was amazed that she came over to see the computer, while we were still there, when she heard the birdsong)
- Environmental impact (we divert about 4 tonnes per year from the waste stream) – we have no shortage of offers of equipment!
- Volunteers (1.5 staff – I'm a volunteer 2.5 days a week) – approx. 40 volunteers – no shortage of volunteers either (8. VOLUNTEERS SLIDE)
- We also provide Work Placements for people with extra support needs – friendly, informal atmosphere

- We've set up an in-house achievement award for vols & work placement people (9. CELEBRATING VOLUNTEERS SLIDE)
- We sell surplus refurbished computers to local community at low cost (target marketing at those on low incomes / start-up businesses / charities)
- Low cost repairs for local community

Case Studies

- Client: (10. CLIENT CASE STUDY SLIDE) – This client was an asylum seeker who was terminally ill. He couldn't hold a telephone on his own – or afford to make phone calls back home. We set up his computer with Skype and before he died he was able to see and speak to members of his family who he hadn't seen for over a decade and who he thought he would never see again.
- Work Placement Trainees: (11. WORK PLACEMENT TRAINEE SLIDE) – This work placement trainee had been bullied at school and was socially very reserved. At first he wouldn't take his coat off, and hardly spoke at all. He was determined that he would never go back into any form of education. With a great deal of support (including from one of our other trainees) he attended 3 free training courses at the Volunteer Centre through Pass IT On and then, one day, came to say he would be moving on from Pass IT On as he was going to college! He did a 2 year course in computing at Telford. Once he had finished, he came back to ask if he could volunteer for us again since when he has been coming to help us refurbish computers every week.
- Volunteers: 3 have recently got jobs in IT sector having come to us to develop skills when unemployed.

(12. PIO FUTURE SLIDE) Where are we now?

Many developments:

- 7 months ago raised enough funds for part-time administrator – as a result we have reduced the time clients spend on our waiting list time from average of just over a year to 6 months.
- Just heard we have secured 40% of Sandy's salary for 2 years (it is always an ongoing fight to get funding)
- We have volunteers making things from redundant bits of computer to sell & raise funds (heat sinks make business card holders / hard drive cases = bookends / individual keyboard keys as fridge magnets and badges (ctrl/alt/del) / harddrive heads as Christmas tree decorations / resistors as earrings)
- We met with the Scottish Government senior civil servant in charge of executing the digital participation part of the Digital Strategy – to explain our model and recommend it is replicated