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Independence
Matters:

**Design & Technology
Improving Quality of Life**

Design
Council

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Why Independence Matters?

Independence is essential to everyone's wellbeing. We value having autonomy, choice and control over how we live our lives.

As we grow older we can experience changes that diminish our ability to exercise this choice and control. We may experience changes in our physical and mental abilities or life changes such as retirement and bereavement.

In later life we will want services that help us to navigate these changes, stay independent and live our lives the way we want to. The Independence Matters programme was inspired by this opportunity for business and social innovation.

About the programme

Independence Matters is a collaboration between the Technology Strategy Board and the Design Council to develop inspiring services that promote independence in later life. The programme is specifically aimed at supporting service innovation for older adults as opposed to product development.

At its heart are the following beliefs:

—   There is a significant need for business and social innovation to develop new services for older adults

—   We need to rethink and change deep-rooted negative attitudes towards ageing and old age

—   Creative thinking, design approaches and the innovative application of existing technology can all play a critical role in developing these services.

During the programme we've run two business innovation competitions and one schools competition addressing two key aspects of independence: eating well and social connectedness.

We've used the business competitions to find and support creative and commercially viable ideas for services that can make a difference to older adults. We specifically looked for service ideas enabled by existing technology and informed by the human-centred perspective and methods of design.

When thinking about social connectedness we were interested in intergenerational approaches. This resulted in a schools challenge which brought together different generations, working with design mentors to harness the imagination and creativity of younger peopleand older adults.

Our collaboration

Independence Matters is a collaboration between the Technology Strategy Board and the Design Council.

Together we bring a shared interest in running programmes that stimulate business growth and achieve positive social impact. We believe that design and technology are powerful tools for business innovation and social good.

Technology Strategy Board

The Technology Strategy Board is all about driving innovation. Our role is to stimulate business and technological innovation in areas which offer the greatest scope for boosting UK growth and productivity, as well as improved quality of life for all our citizens.

We promote, support and invest in innovation, development and commercialisation. We share knowledge and stimulate new ideas by bringing people together to address societal challenges and make new advances. We advise government and work with partners to remove barriers to innovation and to accelerate the exploitation of new innovations.

We work in areas where there are clear benefits to business, people and the economy thereby turning the challenges and opportunities of today into the growth sectors of tomorrow.
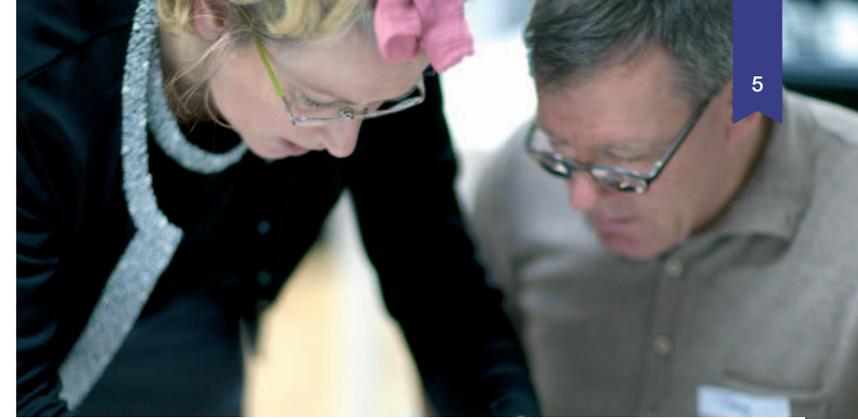
Assisted Living Innovation Platform

Independence Matters is a programme of work within the Technology Strategy Board's Assisted Living Innovation Platform. This is a five year programme that specifically addresses opportunities presented by the global phenomenon of population ageing. We aim to unlock new markets and opportunities for economic growth and quality of life for our citizens. We drive innovation to meet the demand for independent lifestyles, wellness and improved quality of life for the future.

Design Council

The Design Council enables people to use design to transform communities, business and the environment for the better.

As an enterprising charity, our work places design at the heart of creating value by stimulating innovation in business and public services, improving our built environment and tackling complex social issues.

We inspire new design thinking, encourage public debate and inform government policy to improve everyday life and help meet tomorrow's challenges today.

Design Council Challenges

The Design Council's Challenges team runs competitions that use design to address societal issues. We show how design can create practical solutions to complex problems and stimulate opportunities for enterprise.

Seven inspiring services for later life

Service development in action

Our business innovation competitions have funded a total of seven teams to develop service ideas for older consumers.

In selecting the winning teams, we looked for ideas that engaged and empowered older adults. We looked for people with a passion for innovation and for working with prospective users to turn ideas into reality.

After six months of development, we have seven new services at proof of concept or in the early stages of operation. They each support independence, choice and autonomy in different ways. Some focus on enabling older adults to play an active role in their community, in particular beyond their immediate peer groups. Others focus on learning new things and making new connections.

We believe they represent inspiring examples of the services that older adults will want more of in the future.

— They embody positive attitudes towards age and later life

— They provide tangible examples of new service models

— They have the potential to operate sustainably without ongoing grant funding

— They demonstrate the power of design methods and the innovative application of existing technologies for supporting business innovation.

2000+

The number of older adults the seven services have spoken to over the course of Independence Matters.

400+

The number of older adults the seven services have worked with directly to develop their services.

Working with older adults and building relationships

Collectively the seven teams have spoken with more than 2000 older adults and worked closely with more than 400 older adults to develop their ideas. Each team has painstakingly built up a dedicated community of core supporters who have taken a leading role in the development of the service.

Service design

Drawing on their research with older adults, the teams have developed their understanding of the service experience they need to provide and the values of their service. They have been busy designing and live testing each element and interaction of their service — both online and offline — to reflect this. Each service has been piloted in real time, with user feedback continually fed into its development.

Business plan

Examining the trade-offs between social impact and financial viability has been a key theme for all seven teams. They have been market testing their service propositions and developing the business plans that underpin these. As social enterprises, a key question for several teams has been about determining the potential purchaser of their services — commissioner versus consumer — and the evidence base that this requires.

Technology

Each of the services is enabled by existing technology. The teams have gradually built online platforms to support their services as they have evolved. They have focused on first understanding the human interactions that the technology needs to support, and then developing the simplest version of the technology required to support these.

The Seven Services
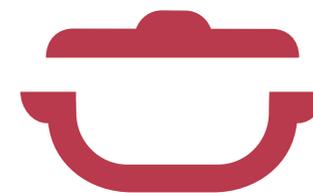
casserole
REIGATE & BANSTEAD

Casserole is a unique food sharing network, bringing local communities together around delicious home-cooked food.

Why it matters

Lots of people are keen to volunteer in their local community but lack time and aren't able to make the regular time commitment that more traditional volunteering opportunities often require.

However, many people cook at home regularly and are happy to cook an extra portion of food and deliver it to someone close by who needs it.

Casserole provides a new way for people to 'micro volunteer' as well as promoting connections between people of all ages in a local community.

Community
Matters

> *Out of the two services I've tried I'd rather pay more money to Casserole for meals than to meals on wheels, I get to meet someone like Katie and also the food is nicer. Since I've met Katie I've tried lots of different types of food.*
>
> **Betty, 80**
> Diner

How it works

Casserole lets you choose when you cook and share an extra plate of dinner, however often it suits you.

In return, you get to become part of a growing community of avid home chefs in your area while making a real difference in your community.

On the flip side, if you are someone who struggles to cook for yourself, perhaps due to disability, limited mobility, illness or even a short term problem like a broken leg, Casserole will help connect you with local home cooks who will deliver fresh, homemade meals, served up with a bit of friendly neighbourliness for you to enjoy.

Next steps for Casserole

The Casserole team are preparing to release the first version of their website in mid May and aiming to recruit more users within towns across Reigate & Banstead borough. A planned roll out of the service across Surrey is planned after the summer with the support of Surrey County Council.

To find out more, visit the website www.casserolehq.org

> *I really like the idea of bringing more people together in the community around food — it's what attracted me to Casserole in the first place. Shared dining experiences have been the fabric of communities since forever, and if we want to "rebuild" communities, food seems like a good place to start.*
>
> **Katie, 30**
> Cook

The team

Murtaza Abidi, Rachel Karasik, Jason Cooper and Ed Davey
FutureGov

LEAGUE of MEALS

League of Meals helps everybody to cook better and waste less by sharing older adults' knowledge and tips about home-cooking through digital channels, and in collaborative cooking sessions.

Why it matters

The team's early research with older adults yielded insights about the power of cooking and sharing meals to facilitate social interactions and engage people of all ages.

League of Meals brings its members into the current topical discussions around sustainable food and provides an opportunity to showcase what we can learn from this generation.

The service addresses the issue of food waste with a positive attitude by tapping into the older adults' can do attitude.

By sharing the skills and experience of League of Meals members, the service aims to help people to cook better and save money, and focus on skill and intuition over recipes.

Sharing **Matters**

How it works

League of Meals is passionate about adding the voice of an older generation to the sustainable food movement.

We bring older adults together to cook and share their ideas and tips for cooking, not with a recipe, but with the ingredients to hand, making the most of ingredients rather than letting food go to waste.

The content is shared with the wider public through digital channels. The team are currently experimenting with different ways to create and present this content in an engaging format.

I most enjoy preparing different dishes. The fact that I'm cooking among people from different cultures means I learn about different recipes.

Joshua

The team

Johanna Kollmann and Emily Underwood
Sidekick Studios

Next steps for League of Meals

The team are organising an intergenerational event with partner organisations. They are also building tools for regularly sharing the content developed with League of Meals members with the wider public. Their vision is for a service that helps both older and younger people cook better and waste less through home-cooking knowledge.

Really nice soup made to a tasty recipe! The dumplings were amazing as well and now I know what to do with my pumpkin seeds. Nice atmosphere, lovely chat and guests.

Supper club attendee

Friendship
Matters

Gusto

Gusto is a self-help co-operative based in Shropshire where members can do more of the things they love, try new experiences and meet new people.

Why it matters

The traditional model of social care looks at providing for a need, and rationing this.

Gusto focuses on how people want to live in later life and supports them to develop new behaviours and relationships to do so.

Gusto's vision is a resilient, active, vibrant community of older adults.

The springboard for the idea was the formation of People2People, a spin-out social enterprise led by social workers, and the recognition that the future of social care lies in enablement and building independence and resilience.

How it works

Gusto enables more adults to thrive in later life by encouraging them to:

Get involved — Gusto lets members know about activities going on in their area that they might enjoy and puts them in touch with a Gusto Ambassador to be their key contact and friendly face.

Meet new people — members are put in touch with others who they might get along with or who could give them a bit of support.

Share skills — members are encouraged to share the things they are great at with other members, through organised activities and events.

Where I live there is a community centre and so I hosted a Gusto Coffee Morning, it was a roaring success — over 25 people came.

I would now like to run a cooking session where people come along, cook together and then eat together.

John, 78

The team

Jo Kilcoyne, Arren Roberts, Ian Drysdale and Stephen Chandler
Shropshire Council

Sarah Dillon and Mark Donovan
People2People

Friday
Tech Partner

Next steps for Gusto

Pilot Gusto in Shrewsbury and beyond to measure the longer-term impact on the members' lives. As part of this the team will be developing a new approach to behavioural metrics and measurement.

What have I got out of Gusto? Love and happiness. Friendship and meeting up to share experiences.

Carole, 62

Hi Jim,

As the days get cold it's tempting to want to huddle down for the winter and hide away from the world. Rubbish we say! There's no better time to get out there, try something new, warm yourself up and meet some new people. Beat those winter blues with Gusto!

I noticed the following activity coming up, and thought you would be interested...

Wroxeter Roman Village is a historic English Heritage site, 20 minutes from Shrewsbury. We're arranging a visit, hosted by Peter, for members on February 4th at 3.00pm and thought that you might like to come along?

If this takes your fancy, call me on 07511 139932 and I'll take care of the rest. If you need help getting there, I'll be able to arrange a lift with another member, or provide some travel suggestions.

Best wishes,
Jo (Gusto Co-ordinator)

Get Historic with Gusto
A visit to Wroxeter Roman City

14 Mytton Rd.
Shrewsbury
Shropshire
SY3 8XQ

Gusto

Home Matters

ROOM FOR TEA

Room for Tea is a new kind of home-sharing network which connects guests in need of short-term, affordable accommodation in London with hosts who have spare capacity in their homes.

Why it matters

Room for Tea benefits and connects two different groups – interns and older adults. Research by the Room for Tea team shows that over a third of unpaid interns working in London are unable to live at home free of charge or afford to pay rent.

Older hosts using the service benefit from additional income and the opportunity to share their home with someone, on a flexible basis to suit their needs.

How it works

Once a host is registered and verified, an online profile is created which can be viewed by guests who have signed up to Room for Tea.

Hosts and potential guests can get in touch via Skype, and if both parties are happy, a match is then made. Guests and hosts are encouraged to share their hobbies and interests with each other.

Room for Tea also offers guests and hosts the chance to link up with each other at events, meetings and online groups, to encourage them to form a network of contacts for their time in London and beyond.

It was a pleasure having Natalie around — we spent a good deal of time chatting, and she was the perfect guest. She now knows who Engelbert Humperdinck is, and I understand a bit more about collaborative consumption!

Mike
Host of Natalie, Enfield

The team

Milena Bottero
The Settlement

Joseph Smith and Tom Tobia
FutureGov

Room for Tea is different from other home-sharing networks I've used, because my host was really open to the experience being about more than just rent, and I in turn was open to more than just having a place to stay.

Natalie
Guest of Mike, Enfield

Next steps for Room for Tea

Recruit more hosts to meet expanding demand from guests. Implement dual business model and develop new partnerships. Expand the service to support social gatherings between the Room for Tea community of guests and hosts.

To find out more, visit the website
www.roomfortea.com

The Amazings

The Amazings serves up classic and curious skills to learn that you wouldn't find anywhere else. They take the life experience of passionate older adults and turn it into unique experiences.

Why it matters

The Amazings originated from initial research the team undertook when thinking about developing a different idea targeted at an older audience.

They were struck by how many vibrant, interesting and interested older adults they met and how little opportunity there was for them to share their skills and experience or socialise outside of their peer group.

The Amazings aims to help people identify their 'amazingness' and share it with others, of all ages.

Experience Matters
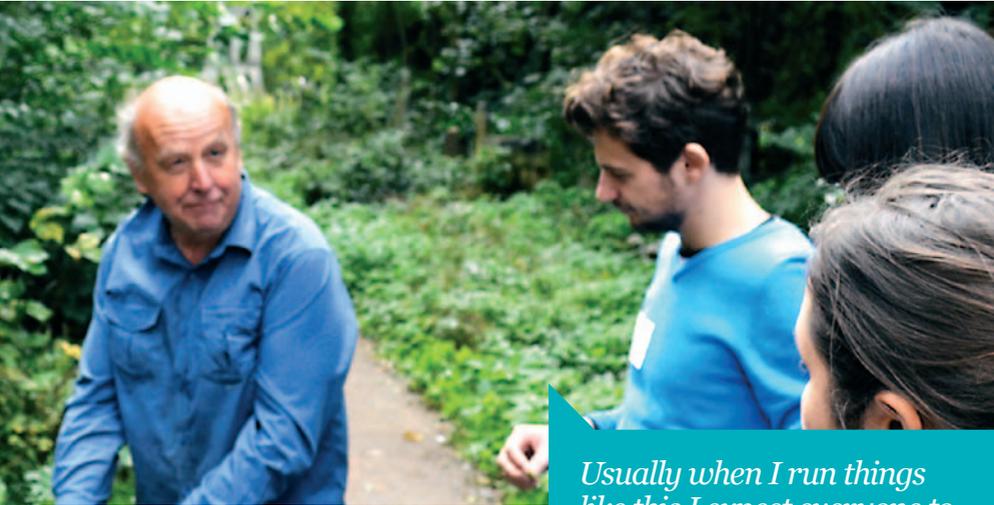
How it works

The Amazings enable any retired person with an amazing skill (and that doesn't need to be underwater ukelele playing, it could be dancing, knitting, laying the perfect brick wall, astronomy — any kind of talent or knowledge) to turn it into an event.

They split the proceeds 70/30 in exchange for providing the marketplace and the advertising. The Amazings believe everyone has a bit of amazingness in them, and want to help them share it.

The team

Katie Harris, Marie Ullstrom, Rich Brown and Felix Cohen
The Amazings

Nikki Sherry and Adil Abrar
Sidekick Studios

Usually when I run things like this I expect everyone to be retired, but I can't believe so many young people have shown an interest. It's fantastic.

Terry, 72

Next steps for the Amazings

Recruit more Amazings! Develop links with potential industry partners to create a pipeline of Amazings.

Scale the service up in London with a view to expand nationally. Expand the service proposition to offer group activities to companies.

To find out more, visit the website
www.theamazings.com

YOUNG, MEET OLD. LEARN SOMETHING AMAZING

CROCHET WITH BERNADETTE

WEDNESDAY 23RD MAY
7:00PM - 9:00PM

£20

GET STARTED

You get to a certain age and everyone just expects you to want to hang around people your own age. I want to meet new people — the problem is that you never normally get an opportunity to spend time with younger people.

Bernadette, 62

MEET 2EAT

Food Matters

Meet2Eat is a new regional service for older adults that teaches a range of domestic, nutrition and kitchen basics to those that need it most, in a social setting.

Why it matters

Some older adults may have historically relied on their partner, family or care network for shopping, cooking and eating.

If their situation changes they may not be equipped with the skills or knowledge to cook or shop for themselves, which can lead to malnutrition.

Meet2Eat empowers the older adult to boost their own nutritional knowledge and skills in a new social way.

The team believes this progressive approach to eating, shopping and cooking helps blend modern nutritional thinking with the domestic needs and culinary habits of older adults.

How it works

Meet2Eat engages with a variety of older adults, but primarily those whose circumstances mean that they have limited nutritional skills or confidence.

People can be referred to the service via a GP, family member or carer. The Meet2Eat team also hope to create a following of active members that elect to join the service as an extension of their social activities.

The service is delivered through a combination of interactive demonstrations, group and solo activities and guided learning. A bespoke Meet2Eat app is used to evaluate each individual's particular needs and experience in conjunction with a structured course book called 'Your Recipe'.

The team

Ben Davies, Adam Eager and Simon Levi
Rodd Design

Adrian Jevans
VISION Culture CIC

Sue Guilding
Nutrition Consultant

Next steps for Meet2Eat

Meet2Eat are interested in connecting with Primary Care Trusts, local authorities and other organisations who can support the recruitment of guests to the service.

The team are exploring how the development of online tools could broaden the service reach and are seeking financial support to help deliver the digital platform.

I live alone, and need to improve my eating now I've been told I have diabetes. I've always needed to eat better food but don't really know what to cook, or how to cook!

I took part in the five week Meet2Eat and now I feel much more confident and enthusiastic about cooking and trying new things.

George, 70

THE AFTER WORK CLUB

The After Work Club is a new social network for men who don't want to be 'retired'. It aims to inspire, connect and empower them to do something amazing with this time in their lives.

Why it matters

During their initial research the team were struck by stories they heard from retired men about how they missed the structure and social network that employment provided. They also heard how retirement is changing, with many people now working part time, or undertaking consultancy or portfolio work.

The After Work Club was inspired by the opportunity to provide a service that helps older men make the most of retirement. It aims to help develop and sustain health, happiness and social connections in later life.

Ambition
Matters

How it works

The After Work Club provides inspiration, connections, impetus and tools to help redefine retirement.

Discover — Read inspirational stories

Hear from other retired men about trips, expeditions and ventures they've undertaken after retirement.

Do — Join events, start events, get involved

From each story, there is a related event where After Work Club members can sign up and join a group to try their hand at something new.

Connect — Talk, learn, discuss and build a network

Members will be able to make public commitments to a goal, create milestones, groups, followers and events to support them in achieving it.

Share — Meet, share and inspire others

Regular talks bring members together in person to share their experiences.

There's a chap across the road who retired before his wife did. He was at a bit of a loose end, so I invited him along to the club, and introduced him to some people. He's there all the time now, and goes to the gym with a couple of the other guys. He just needed a little push to get going again.

Tom, 63

The team

Emma Gasson, Deborah Szebeko and Zoe Bierman
thinkpublic

Karen Prothero and Ruth Baker
Fitness Industry Association

Howard Sharman
Consultant
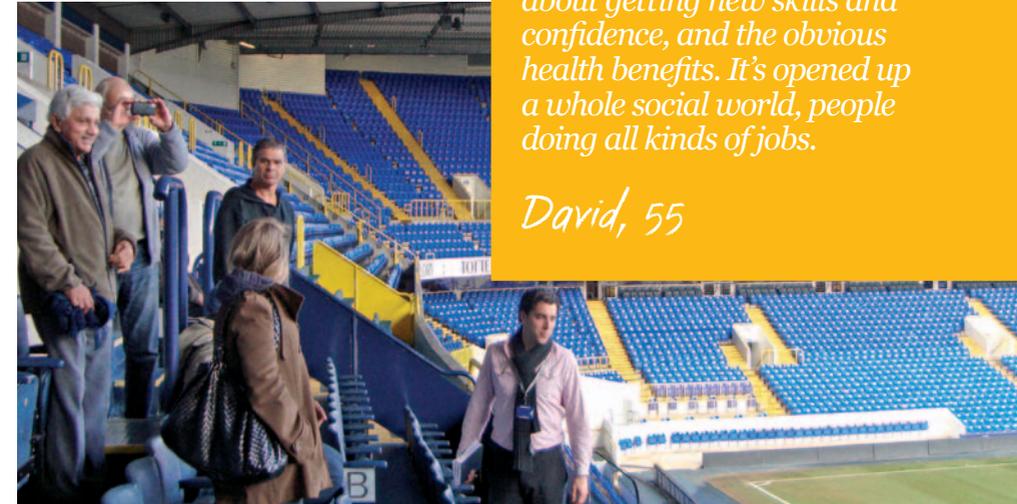
I feel good about my age, I feel about 18-19, about to embark on a new adventure. I think you need a bridging project, something to give you a goal and structure.

My wife persuaded me to do swimming. For me it was about getting new skills and confidence, and the obvious health benefits. It's opened up a whole social world, people doing all kinds of jobs.

David, 55

Next steps for the After Work Club

Increase following of After Work Club members and support them in connecting both online and offline. The team are also interested in developing links with potential business and media partners.

To find out more, visit the website
www.theafterworkclub.co.uk

Reflections and Learning

Changing attitudes through our schools competition

Our schools challenge brought together different generations, working with design mentors to harness the imagination and creativity of younger people and older adults.

Students from schools around the UK worked with older adults in their local community to come up with ideas for helping older adults stay better connected to their friends, families, communities and younger generations.

Who connected?

15 schools

300 young people

150 older adults

15 design mentors

The five finalists

Stoke Newington School, London

Essa Academy, Bolton

Farnham Heath End School, Surrey

Govan High School, Glasgow

Hope Valley College, Peak District

## The winning idea...

Enrich

Stoke Newington School worked with older adults in their local community to develop the idea for Enrich.

Enrich is a club where older adults and young people meet on school premises to take part in activities including cookery, dance and gardening. The service was launched in October 2011 and is currently run by the school's students.

Reflections on developing services for independence

Some reflections from the teams on their experiences during the programme.

Age really is just a number

'When we were doing some of our early user-research around older adults' cooking and eating habits we were struck by how little use it was looking at age.

Life stages or changes was a much more powerful indicator for us when we developed Meet2Eat.'

Meet2Eat

'This picture is of me and Terry after an hour long spinning class and I think it's clear who came off worst. After spending time with older men of varying ages and backgrounds, we decided to focus our energies on developing a service for men in the first 1–2 years after retirement.

Regardless of age, this was the period that we kept hearing the same stories from people about. For us that's when we knew we'd found the opportunity to do something useful.'

The After Work Club

'They are just like us, it's just their age is a bigger number.'

'Older people are so similar to us but we treat them as if they're aliens.'

Quotes from our schools competition

Language is really important

'We put up a thread on Gransnet when we were looking for potential hosts and got a really negative response.

It showed us early on how important it was to get the language exactly right when defining and describing Room for Tea and not to make any assumptions about an older audience.

As our service proposition has evolved we've removed all reference to age from how we describe the service — it simply isn't relevant. 'Old' is not how our hosts wish to identify themselves and although we're interested in recruiting older hosts, we're interested first and foremost in finding great people so that's what the language we use reflects.'

Room for Tea

There's a strong desire to contribute

'We've tried to make it clear right from the start that we want Gusto members to take a leading role in developing and delivering the service. We see our role as being about facilitation rather than management.

A lot of existing provision for helping older adults socialise or connect seems to fall into the trap of delivering services 'for people' where they're passive recipients.

We know that the success of Gusto — both as a consumer experience and as a viable enterprise — depends on recruiting a diverse group of members. That includes recruiting members of the community who want to play an active role.'

Gusto

Services with a broader audience

'Initially when we were planning Casserole we were thinking about it as a service where the 'cooks' were likely to be younger people or families and the 'diners' would be older adults.

We've found that not only is this not the case, but even the distinction between cooks and diners is unhelpful. There are older adults who want to cook for others, but might sometimes enjoy being a 'diner' too. One of our younger 'cooks' had a baby and then asked if she could become a 'diner' for a while.

In designing a service that takes particular account of the needs of older adults, we've created something that is appealing to lots of different people. It's great for us as it makes for a richer community of members and also it's more interesting for them.'

Casserole

It's impossible to make assumptions about how people will use technology

'You can't really make any assumptions about technology. In our core group of users there are some people who are avid iPad users and others who don't even have an email address.

Our approach is that this doesn't matter — the service can be accessed both online and offline and actually we've learnt valuable lessons from developing both options. And our older users still expect us to have technology — they want to look us up and see a professional, credible looking website, even if they then call us to register.'

Gusto

'We tried testing different ways of introducing guests and hosts to each other — through paper references, a face-to-face introduction or a Skype call.

Our hunch was that people would prefer the face-to-face introduction as it didn't involve technology but in fact it was the Skype call that worked best. The reason? Hosts felt they got a good sense of the person from a Skype call and it was easier to say 'no' to a potential guest they didn't feel was a good fit than when they had met them face to face.'

Room for Tea

You need a physical presence first

'The Amazings began with three of us walking around Hackney wearing sandwich boards saying 'Are you Amazing?'.

It was a great way to start recruiting Amazings but also a great way of having conversations about what we were trying to do.

You have to be able to understand the human experience and the values you need to deliver first, before you can build the technology to support it.'

The Amazings

Invest in building relationships

'Involving our older early adopters — our pioneers, as they refer to themselves — has been key to our approach.

The focus of our service originates from working with the older adults. While we provided a vision and context, we listened, collaborated, and allowed themes to emerge.

Design your service in a way that allows room for people to shape and adapt it. Community work, building relationships with partners, establishing trust with customers, all that will take time, which must not be underestimated. You'll spend a lot of time not building your product or technology, but talking to people.'

League of Meals

Why design and technology?

Design and technology improving quality of life

Good design shapes the things that we interact with, be they products, services or environments, until they are useful, usable and even delightful.

To achieve this, designers need to develop a deep understanding of the, often latent, needs and wants of people.

The creative tools, techniques and processes which designers are trained in help them to generate new ideas and creative solutions to difficult problems.

Technology is a powerful tool for business innovation. Service enterprises, especially social enterprises, start with people. The innovative application of existing technologies is particularly valuable to these enterprises for its ability to enable human interactions and to do so at scale and relatively cheaply.

The sum is greater than the parts

Independence Matters was founded on a belief in the combined power of design and technology as highly effective tools for business innovation.

Looking back at the end of the programme, what is striking is the extent to which both design and technology have been deeply intertwined in the development of the services we have funded. The teams have drawn on attributes from both design — being creative, visual, human-centred, iterative — and technology — being innovative, scalable and empowering.

To develop compelling business propositions, particularly in the social enterprise sphere, we believe we need to promote and support a greater proximity between these two areas.

Notes

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