Session: 3
Room: Ellen Pinsent Room

Session title : Digital Inclusion is a Con

Session leader : Pauline

Volunteer to continue conversation after :

Notes taken by : Rachel

Notes

What do we mean by digital inclusion? And how different is this to accessible design?
- Things that help people get access to digital
- May not be direct access to digital, could be proxy access too through others
- Digital inclusion may be via analogue, but it's about being able to benefit from digital
- How do you help people navigate in the digital world without forcing them to use

Consumers duty - you're not allowed to deny access
- Not well known, and a lot comes down to cost which is why this may not happen

Just providing the tool doesn't mean that they are included

Disagree with user needs and wants definition, because it's not clear what is a want or need may be
- There is a need underneath people wanting to use digital technology
- There is a limit to what we can do and we need to understand the responsible too

You lose people when you say that it's digital by default and by the types of tech you're providing - not everyone wants to use AI, so forcing people to means that they will disengage

Example given: Unless you really meet someone who wants a blue badge, and they can't get it they feel so bad, they feel worried about breaking something, about not being able to use online systems

We need to ask who is it optimising for? Because it's not always who you've built the system for

Digital Unite is an organisation who runs digital inclusion champions, but there aren't enough of them

We need digital champions at one end to help others who can do what they need to do, and then the other end we need to have digital trustees

Design of the services:
Design the service however people need it, for instance if they need to talk to someone on the phone then provide this

"Government inclusion programmes are a con" - how inclusive design is done in government isn't working at the moment

Confidence - if you're not confident digitally then you don't feel like you can say "this isn't a good service"

What is the impact of saying everyone needs to be digitally included - especially when you don't know who is being excluded from the service

Should we be asking: Is my digital inclusion schema a con?

Digital isn't just online - what about whatsapp? Or ereaders? When we say digital we often mean websites - but what about other technology we have?

What do we mean by social exclusion? It's not just devices and the internet, there's lots of other ways to be excluded so need to expand what we mean by being excluded

Examples of when a project is inclusive?
People who were digitally and socially excluded - they wanted to see how they could improve the service and have people come along to appointments. That involved going into the community and worked with the team who made sure they didn't say digital

"Digital will be a solution but not the only solution"

Discussed about different generations using different digital products: for instance people who are still using ceefax

A good first step is asking "have we considered people who may not have a mobile phone?" when you're trying to
We need to get better as promotion awareness and enforcing the standard about accessible services - make sure everyone can use the service