

# Investing wisely in technology to help older people get more out of life

“We had the commitment, we had the funding, the question was how to invest wisely in technology to realise our goals.” says Glenn Harrold, Service Development Lead, Loretto Care part of the Wheatley Group. “It soon became clear though that O<sub>2</sub> understood what we were trying to do.”

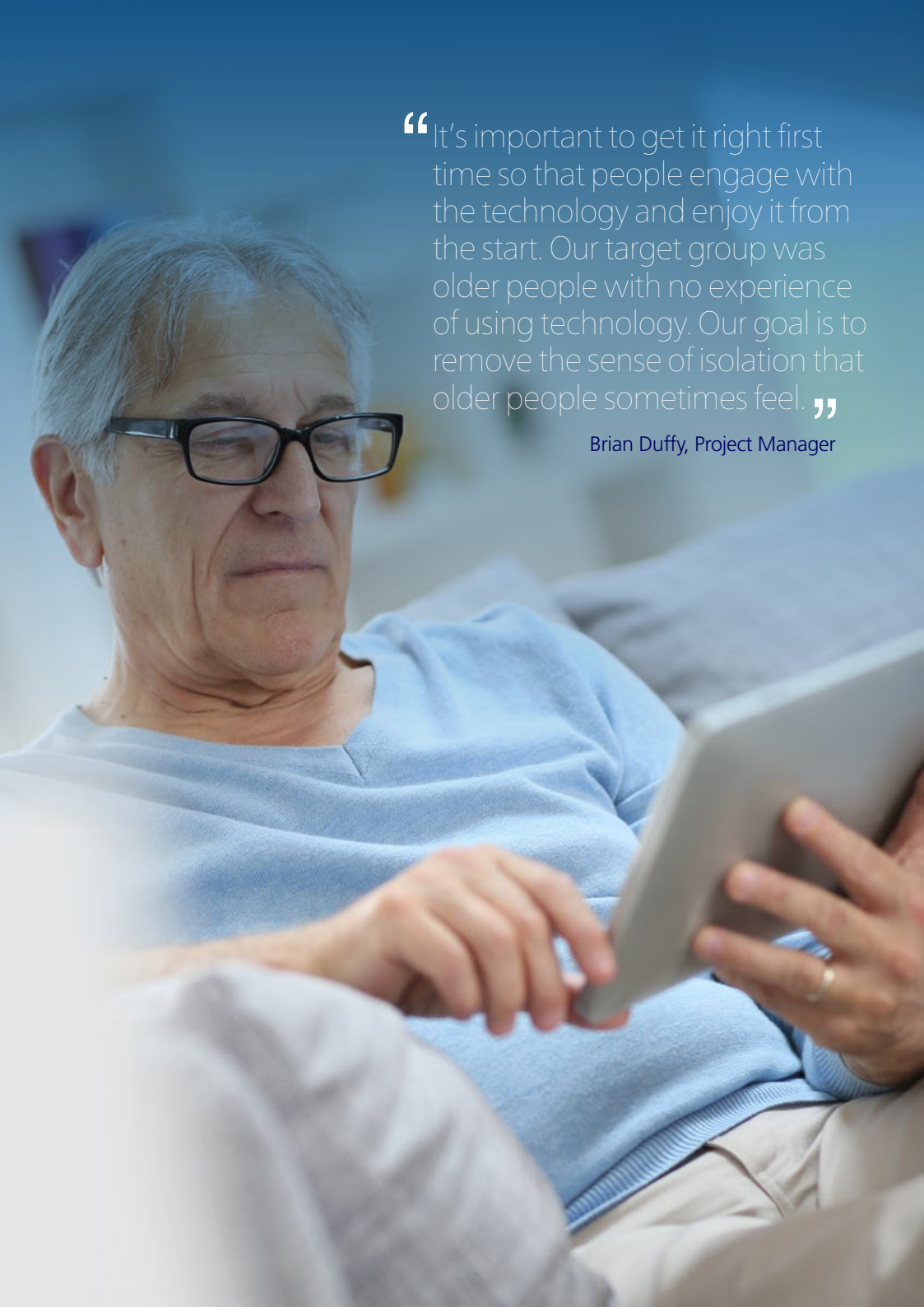
## Delivering a personal service through technology

About eighteen months ago the Scottish government announced a £100m fund to support the integration of health and social care, with £10m set aside for a technology-enabled care fund. Wheatley Group successfully applied for a £22,000 grant to investigate ways to use technology to support people to live longer in their own home.

The government initiative, called Living it Up (LiU), is a digital health, care and wellbeing project that will provide personalised advice on improving and managing health and wellbeing. It will use familiar technology to match an individual's needs and interests with information, local services, social activities and events in their community.

“We work with 2,500 people a week but we're determined to provide a personalised service. We want every person to feel our service is personal to them, even in the face of local authority funding cuts. At the same time we want to inspire staff to embrace new ways of working.”

Glenn Harrold,  
Service Development Lead,  
Loretto Care part of the Wheatley Group



“It's important to get it right first time so that people engage with the technology and enjoy it from the start. Our target group was older people with no experience of using technology. Our goal is to remove the sense of isolation that older people sometimes feel.”

Brian Duffy, Project Manager



## Adapting technology for people who really benefit from it

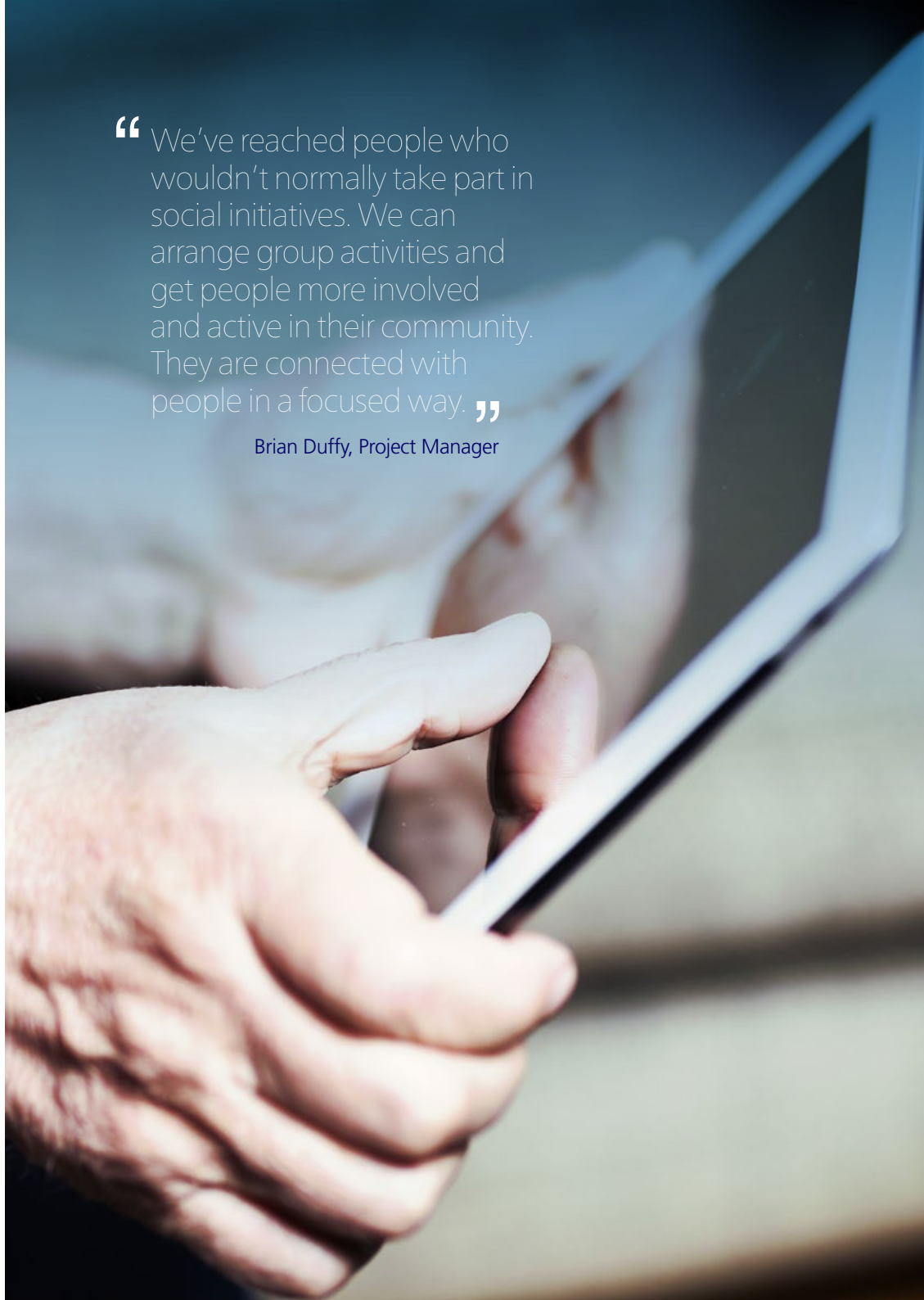
Wheatley were really lucky to have Brian Duffy, a Project Manager, seconded in from Glasgow City Council to oversee the project - he has developed excellent local relationships, and has been the driver to make the project, and specifically how the technology was used, a success. Brian explained, "there was a lot to consider but when we talked to O<sub>2</sub> it soon became clear that they understood what we were trying to do and would give us the support we needed. They helped us pick the right tariff for comprehensive 4G coverage, and the right devices – in this case Apple iPads."

"We provided iPads that were ready to use by keeping the design simple – just one icon to launch a web page with their picture and password entry so people could get started right away. Icons allowed them to directly access our offices for various services. People were contacting relatives abroad, using apps that enhance memory skills, shopping, accessing news, and looking at travel timetables. We've trained staff to show people how to do even more when they are ready."

"When we tried two traditional PCs within our click-and-connect centre, the level of interest was dramatically lower compared to the iPads. It's to do with the interface. People have embraced the tablet devices as they are personal and directly relevant to them. Some residents have even bought their own iPad and people are using them for more and more activities such as planning trips to see friends and family they've reconnected with."

"For the future, there'll be more and more we can do –repeat prescriptions, online appointments and so on but, for now, we've achieved our key objective of getting the technology established among people who really benefit from it. It's helping them live life to the full and enjoy all there is available to them. That is a good investment."

"It's rewarding seeing the difference it makes to people's lives. We're seeing something we have invested in coming into reality and making a real difference. Staff motivation is high. People are using the technology in a way that means something to them and materially affects the quality of their life."  
Glenn Harrold, Service Development Lead, Loretto Care, Wheatley Group.



“ We've reached people who wouldn't normally take part in social initiatives. We can arrange group activities and get people more involved and active in their community. They are connected with people in a focused way. ”

Brian Duffy, Project Manager



## About Wheatley Group

Wheatley is Scotland's leading housing, care and property management group. It comprises six social landlords, two care organisations and two commercial subsidiaries. The Group spans 17 local authority areas across Central Scotland, providing homes and award-winning services to over 200,000 people.

The Group exists to help people improve their lives, investing in homes and neighbourhoods, some of which are the most deprived in the UK. It creates opportunities for people who live in their communities to reach their full potential. For example its largest social landlord, GHA, has invested £1.2 billion over the past ten years to improve more than 70,000 homes. The investment project was the largest of its kind in Europe and created or supported more than 9,000 jobs, two thirds going to people in Glasgow.

Through its partner Loretto Care, Wheatley Group is looking to develop more specialist care and support services to help more people as they grow older and need greater support.

Read more customer stories at:  
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