# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**#StayConnected**

**Charities help islanders stay connected
and strengthen #GuernseyTogether**

The Association of Guernsey Charities has teamed up with *We All Matter, Eh?*, and other local charities and businesses with an initiative called **#StayConnected**, which offers older and more vulnerable islanders access to tablets/iPad and WiFi devices for use during the COVID-19 crisis. This is to directly promote the advice from experts that, in these challenging times, it is important for family and friends to stay connected for everyone’s wellbeing.

The Association has received significant support from the community and businesses for the **#StayConnected** project, including:

* Sure Community Foundation generously donating 40 WiFi devices and 20 Sim Cards to spearhead the first wave of the campaign
* Galaxy CI is assisting to source more second-hand tablets for phase 2
* ResolutionIT has were rapidly responded to the needs of the community by offering to assist charities, and has provided technical support in setting up the first 10 tablets
* Deloitte LLP have loaned us 20 iPads for use in the project

There have also been private donations of second-hand devices, which will be used to assist as many people as possible. There have also been private donations of second-hand devices, which will be used to assist as many people as possible.

The AGC has also set up a funding page - **#StayConnected** – on its online donations platform [www.giving.gg](http://www.giving.gg) to enable donations to be made to purchase useful items for this initiative

The Association of Guernsey Charities is the body that represents the Bailiwick’s voluntary and charitable sector. It has worked hard over recent weeks to liaise with more than 320 of the island’s charities, to offer help and support through these very challenging times.

The campaign has been led by Karen Blanchford, *We All Matter, Eh?* and Sector Representative for the Association of Guernsey Charities. She said, “Loneliness is difficult at the best of times, but this is especially true for many people at the moment. By using technology, we hope that seeing friends, families and support groups faces will provide some comfort and support for the next few months. Thank you Health Connections and Swoffers who will arranging the distribution of the devices. We are extremely grateful to all the charities and businesses supporting this project. Phase 1 has been inundated with requests, and we would welcome more donations of tablets, iPads, wifi devices or SIM cards. Financials donations can also be made via our www.giving.gg [event #StayConnected](https://giving.gg/donate/event/5877/-StayConnected---providing-contact-options-for-older-islanders-and-their-families-and-friends). Thank you to everyone involved”.

Malcolm Woodhams, Chairman, Association of Guernsey Charities, said “We all know how important it is for communities to pull together in times of crisis or emergency. This campaign will make a real difference to the lives of many people in our island, especially now, when some may feel particularly isolated and lonely”.

Age Concern Guernsey Chairman, David Inglis said: “We have been grateful to offer internet access to Age Concern Guernsey Members as a result of this initiative. Staying connected with friends and loved ones will make a precious contribution to reducing any impact of social isolation at this difficult time. We want to encourage all older adults to stay at home and find new ways to keep in touch.”

Karen Jagger, Sure Community Foundation “*We All Matter, Eh?* was quick to identify a need within the community that the Sure Community Foundation has been happy to support. The communities within our small island are very important to the Foundation, being able to connect people digitally to reduce the feeling of isolation from friends and family was a given for the Sure Community Foundation”.

John Clacy, Partner, Audit and Assurance at Deloitte said “ We are delighted to be able to help with this great cause and we hope the 20 iPads make a real meaningful difference to those households. Connectivity is so key at this time and we thank Karen and the charities for making this happen”.

Olly Duquemin, CEO, Resolution IT said “In these unprecedented times, it’s essential we all work together to get through this together. We know that technology can play an important part in keeping us connected, allowing us to continue to interact, whether that be for social or work needs.  We are happy to have helped **#StayConnected** and remain open to helping others where we possibly can.”

"Health Connections is happy to partner with any organisation or initiative that enable people in the Bailiwick to be connected to support and information, which is especially vital these days as more and more people become isolated".

If anyone has a working WiFi tablet device that they would like to donate, please contact Karen Blanchford by emailing mail@charity.org.gg with details of the item.

Financial donations can be made through the AGC Giving.gg website at

https://giving.gg/donate/event/5877/-StayConnected---providing-contact-options-for-older-islanders-and-their-families-and-friends

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**Further details:** Karen Blanchford Telephone 07781 467316

**Note for editors:**

Karen Blanchford is the Disability Sector Representative for the Association of Guernsey Charities and Partnership Director for We All Matter, Eh (GDA) and is co-ordinating this project and the #DonateAnHour of your salary project to support the community and our local charities at these times.

To assist accessibility, please ensure all Hashtags# have a capital letter for each new word. #GuernseyTogether #StayConnected

The **Association of Guernsey Charities** (AGC) was formed in 1984 as the umbrella organisation for the Voluntary and Charitable Sector in the Bailiwick of Guernsey. The main functions are to support, champion, and connect the sector. It represents the sector within the island, through engagement with government, business, professional bodies, and the public. Bona-fide local organisations can apply to join the AGC (with a single joining fee of £10). It currently has more than 320 member charities. The Association directly contributes in two key areas, volunteering and fundraising, for which it operates two sub-brands: volunteer.gg and giving.gg.

MISSION: To help volunteers and charities throughout the Bailiwick of Guernsey build and develop, so that people and organisations can achieve their aims and make a positive difference to our community.

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