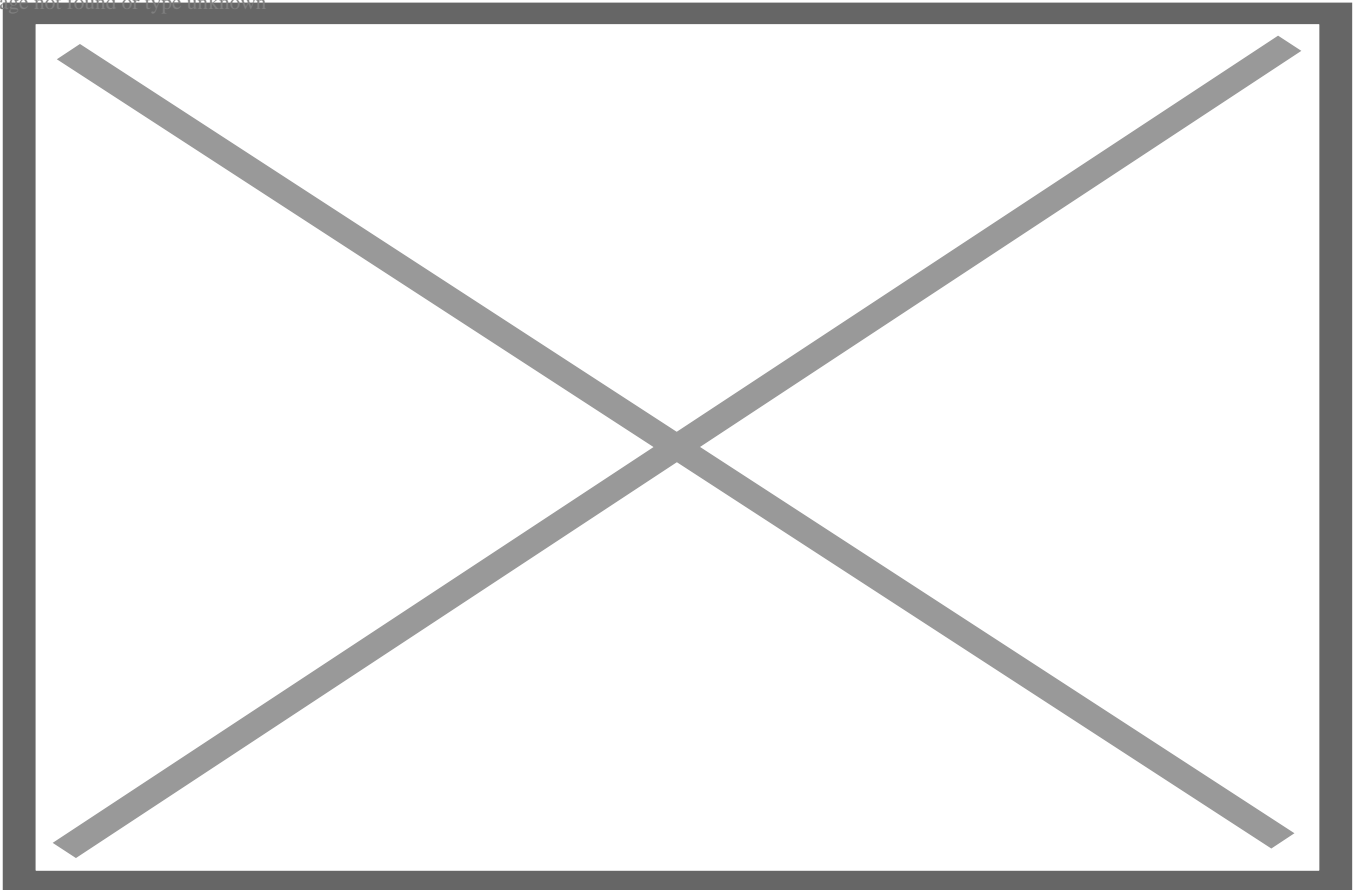




How to face your fear of computers

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Computers would leave him cold. Now Revd Derek Lund is warming to them – thanks to the creative collaboration between MMHS and tech support group AbilityNet.

This 86-year-old Society resident was about to pack in his PC. Then [Roof 'n' Roots](#) dropped on his doormat. Derek read the story about our new initiative and phoned [AbilityNet](#).

‘I’m making progress – and sticking with it’

They put him in touch with one of their network of 300 volunteers, Scott Thomas. Derek experienced a breakthrough. ‘I’m making progress – and sticking with it,’ he enthused.

Previously, Derek had tried attending other computer classes. The first session focused on making Christmas cards. ‘I didn’t even know where the space bar was,’ he said.

He tried a second class. ‘Everyone knew how to boot up the computer and how to cut and paste – even though it was supposed to be a beginners’ lesson. I was out of my depth.’ Derek felt he was the only beginner. ‘It was a disaster,’ he said.

Friends would say, ‘You don’t want to be bothering with that at your age!’ For computer work at home, he’d call on wife Kathleen who used computers when she worked as a nurse.

Now AbilityNet is changing Derek’s world. ‘I get up every day to see what emails have come,’ he explained. ‘I’ve got an interest in it now.’

‘If I want to contact MMHS, I can send them an email rather than phoning or posting a letter. There’s still a long way to go, but Scott will keep teaching for as long as I need.’

Scott is a software consultant, and works on a voluntary basis with AbilityNet. ‘Derek is very easy and very calm about it,’ he said of his student’s attitude.

‘As soon as they get going, you can’t stop them!’

Fear stops older people from making friends with technology, said Scott. ‘It’s fear of the unknown – the fear that they’re going to break something and it’s going to turn out badly.’

The key is to help older people move beyond that fear and realise they can’t break anything. ‘As soon as they get going,’ said Scott, ‘you can’t stop them!’

Soon, Kathleen can rest a little as husband Derek does more computer work on his own. As we were about to publish his story in *Roof 'n' Roots*, the couple were celebrating their Diamond Wedding! Maybe Derek ordered the flowers on his computer? You can also find this article in [the Spring 2021 edition of *Roof 'n' Roots*](#).

Category

1. Our residents

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