

Scottish Borders Council was instrumental in the success of digital switchover in Selkirk.

Commitment from the top led to the appointment of a Digital Champion and the setting up of a support group to drive the council's involvement and to keep members engaged and informed. Promoting awareness of switchover was threaded through the day-to-day business of several departments.

The council's longstanding relationship with the voluntary sector ensured good community engagement with vulnerable and hard to reach groups. The Border Care community alarm scheme reaches 3,000 people and provided back-up to home carers in promoting switchover. Social care staff used their regular visits to residents' homes to explain the switchover and how people could get help. Training meant that library staff, including in the housebound library service, were well-equipped to answer queries and signpost people to the right place.

The strategic housing team ensured that all housing providers were up to speed and keeping their tenants informed and involved. The Home Handyman service also helped, by giving residents information.

A presentation by Digital UK to the council's management team on what they needed to think about led to the education department providing equipment and information to all their schools. They also encouraged schools to take part in Digital UK's schools project and showed pupils how they could help their elderly friends and relatives.

John Askew, Digital UK's Border Regional Manager, says:

'The successful switchover couldn't have happened without the support and involvement of the council. People were very interested and willing to help.'

Kenneth Lawrie, Head of Scottish Borders Council's Business Improvement Unit, says:

'Engaging your colleagues is a lot easier when they realise that promoting switchover needn't be extra work and can be built into their regular activities.'