Share with Purpose

INCLUSIVITY AT THE HEART OF DIGITAL COMMUNITICATIONS

A Blog With Aaron Cue

www.recruitwithpurpose.co.uk

Recruit with Purpose

Share with Purpose

MEET AARON CUE

Aaron is Head of Digital Communications at London and Quadrant, a housing association based in the South East of England

Aaron is a member of L&Q's digital communication team, and has been pivotal in ensuring their services, both offline and online, are inclusion to their communities.

Read on to learn about Aaron's journey and digital inclusion.

Recruit with Purpose

Share with Purpose

Digital Inclusion: A Conversation with Aaron Cue at L&Q

In today's increasingly digital world, it's clear that access to technology is no longer a luxury — it's a necessity. As more services move online, those without the skills or resources to participate risk being left behind. Digital inclusion is about ensuring everyone, regardless of age, background, or circumstances, has the tools, skills, and support needed to navigate the digital world.

To understand how organisations are addressing this challenge, I had the opportunity to speak with Aaron Cue at L&Q, a housing association committed to providing equal access to services for its diverse community of residents. Aaron has a unique perspective on digital inclusion, having worked in digital roles for over twelve years, with experience in the Football Association, BBC, and the Press Association. Having grown up in social housing, he's particularly passionate about ensuring that people in similar situations have access to the resources they need to thrive.

In our conversation, we touched on how L&Q is tackling digital inclusion, the barriers they're working to break down, and the lessons they've learned along the way.

Recruit with Purpose

Share with Purpose

Aaron, you've been working in digital for over a decade. What was it about digital inclusion that drew you to L&Q?

I've always been values-driven in my career, so I wanted to work somewhere where I could give back. Growing up in social housing, I feel a strong connection to this sector. When the opportunity came up to join L&Q, it felt like the perfect fit. I was able to come in with an opportunity to expand and improve our digital communications offer, growing my team and increasing our reach. It was an exciting time to help shape how they could provide digital services to residents who might face barriers in accessing traditional services.

What does digital inclusion mean to you?

Digital inclusion is about creating a community where everyone has the technology, skills, and environment to fully participate in the digital world. It's not just about providing access to the internet, but also about building confidence and ensuring people feel empowered to use digital tools. For housing associations like L&Q, we're in a unique position because our residents come from diverse backgrounds — many are older, from lower socio-economic groups, or speak English as a second language. These groups often face barriers to accessing digital services.

At L&Q, we're committed to making sure no one is excluded because of who they are or where they come from. Our goal is to offer a range of communication channels, both online and offline, so everyone can get in touch with us in the way that works best for them. This is key to ensuring that digital inclusion doesn't mean forcing people into one mode of communication.

Recruit with Purpose

Share with Purpose

How do you ensure that residents have a choice in how they engage with L&Q?

It's not about pushing everything online; it's about giving residents options. We offer a suite of channels to communicate with us: telephone, email, online portals, social media, web chat, and more. This ensures that no one feels excluded because they may not be comfortable using one particular channel. For those who prefer face-to-face interactions or need assistance, we want to make sure that our team can free up time to engage directly with them in the community.

Providing self-service options online can also give residents more control over their transactions, and it helps reduce bottlenecks, allowing our colleagues to focus on those who need more support.

What are some of the challenges you face when it comes to digital inclusion?

One of the biggest challenges is perception. There's a common assumption that older residents might not be comfortable with technology, but we also have younger residents who have their own preferences when it comes to communication. If we only offer one channel, like phone calls, we're potentially excluding an audience who struggle to use this channel.

We don't want to push everyone into the same mould — it's about meeting residents where they are, whether online or offline.

Another challenge is trust. For many residents, especially older ones, online transactions can feel intimidating. We need to build trust by offering clear, accessible information and ensuring that their personal data is secure. "People" is one of our values so It's also important to maintain the 'human feel' when we interact. Our website and digital channels need to feel approachable and welcoming, not corporate and impersonal.

Recruit with Purpose

Share with Purpose

How does L&Q ensure that the content and services it offers are accessible to everyone?

Accessibility is a top priority for us. We make sure that every piece of content on our website is easy to read and understand. We've done a lot of research to ensure that the language we use is simple, clear, and welcoming for all residents. When we change how we communicate, we're proactive about letting residents know what's happening.

We also gather feedback from residents regularly. It's not just about us telling them what's happening, but also about giving them the opportunity to share their thoughts and experiences. We listen to their feedback and act on it to shape our services. This creates a loop of continuous improvement, ensuring that our digital services are aligned with the needs and preferences of our community.

What role do you see digital inclusion playing in the future of L&Q and the wider community?

Digital inclusion isn't just about providing services — it's about empowering residents to build skills that will help them thrive in the future. At L&Q, we're also working with partners to offer free digital skills training and support for residents looking to get back into the workforce. Our goal is to make sure that residents are digitally literate, so they can access opportunities and continue to grow, both personally and professionally.

Digital inclusion also helps create a stronger sense of community. We're building online spaces where residents can engage with one another, share advice, and support each other. It's not just about building homes — it's about building communities, both offline and online.

Recruit with Purpose

Share with Purpose

What advice would you give to other organisations looking to improve their digital inclusion efforts?
My key advice would be to always put inclusivity first. It's easy to get caught up in the latest tech trends, but the inclusive aspect is far more important than the digital aspect. The technology should fit into an inclusive service environment, not the other way around.

Make sure you're offering the same level of service across all channels — whether online or offline. Digital isn't always the answer, and you shouldn't make it your default just because it's convenient. Be mindful of your data. If it's inaccurate, it can create bad first impressions and frustrate residents.

Lastly, be transparent. If something is changing in how you communicate with residents, let them know in advance, and give them a chance to provide feedback. Change fatigue is real, and it's important that residents, and colleagues feel informed and involved in the process.

How do you keep up with the pace of change in the digital space?
The digital world moves quickly, and it can be challenging to keep up. But at L&Q, we're always thinking about the future. We're constantly evaluating how our digital services are performing and whether we're meeting the needs of our residents. We're committed to evolving with our community, ensuring that we're always inclusive and accessible.

Recruit with Purpose

Share with Purpose

Key Takeaways

Aaron's insights highlight that digital inclusion is not just about providing access to technology, but ensuring that all residents feel confident, secure, and empowered to use it. By offering a variety of communication channels, building trust, and maintaining a human touch, L&Q is creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for its community.

Digital inclusion benefits everyone — not only by improving access to services but also by empowering individuals with the skills they need to succeed in the future. As Aaron reminds us, inclusivity is at the heart of it all. If you can build an inclusive service environment, digital tools can fit in seamlessly, making life easier and more connected for everyone involved.

Have a story to Share?

Want to learn more about social housing and Share with Purpose?

Get in touch with the Recruit with Purpose team!

Henry
Director of Social Housing

James
Director of Housing Technology

Ben
Senior Consultant
Housing Technology

Alex
Senior Consultant
Housing Technology

Bronte
Senior Consultant
Housing Technology - Contract

Recruit with Purpose