



Fixing the Digital Divide

2022-2025 Impact Review



“What’s clear is that you can’t scale digital inclusion by trying to do it all yourself. The only way to reach the millions still excluded is by working in partnership. That means embedding digital inclusion into health services, housing support, and job centres, as well as community organisations and charities. *Ultimately, it’s about making it everyone’s responsibility.*”

Helen Milner OBE
Founder, Good Things





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From our founder



Helen Milner OBE,
Founder, Good Things

As I pass the reins over to our new CEO, Vicki Sellick, I'm brimming with pride at what Good Things and our partners have achieved over the last three years. As you'll see, we've smashed our targets, but behind the big numbers in this report are hundreds of thousands of people whose lives have been transformed.

Recently, I've met a young man who's overcoming his loneliness and finding work thanks to community support and a free SIM, a woman whose income significantly improved after applying for benefits online using AI, and an older woman who, at 62, realised that the internet definitely is for 'people like me'. At every hub, people speak of the friendship and support they've received from local leaders, staff and volunteers.

The National Digital Inclusion Network is now more than 8,000 organisations strong and this extraordinary partnership has, in just three years, reached over 1.7 million people. And we've taken the National Databank and National Device Bank from simple ideas to scaled, high-impact offers.

We also continue to influence change from the top down. Following the 2024 General Election, we successfully campaigned to get four out of five of our policy asks into the UK Government's Digital Inclusion Action Plan. From our role on the Digital Inclusion Action Committee to launching the IT Reuse for Good Charter and the Data Poverty Lab, we're shaping the national conversation on connectivity and access.

This impact is possible because of the Strategic Partnerships that allow us to deliver deeply and at scale. Thank you to Virgin Media O2, VodafoneThree, Nominet, and Accenture, for providing the insight, innovation and funding that underpins our work.

Together with our partners we've built a formidable foundation. Now it's time for more collaborators to put digital inclusion at the heart of their work, not just bolt it on. We need more funders who understand we're working for the long term. And we need a government that sees fixing the digital divide as an engine for both social and economic prosperity.

Our impact report shows what we've achieved together over the past three years. And, importantly, it shows we're ready for what comes next. As I move from CEO to Patron in 2026, I know Good Things and our partners are ready to grow, deepen and deliver for years to come.



Let's fix the
digital divide
– for good.



“Good Things’ work and mission has never been more relevant. Digital access and inclusion shapes opportunity, access and participation across society. As this report shows, our impact is substantial. The organisation is a powerful mix of campaigning force and enabler of local community action, always focused on the needs of people who are digitally excluded.”

**Liz Williams MBE,
Chair of the Board of Trustees**

Making someone digitally equal every minute

Our impact at a
glance.



Between 2023-25



We reached 1.7 million people



That's someone made more digitally equal **every 60 seconds**, for three years



+8,000

hubs in the National Digital Inclusion Network



+400,000

data connections made,
benefitting over 600,000
household members



+28,000

devices shared



+130,000

people supported with digital
skills through Learn My Way



82%

feel more digitally
able



74%

feel safer
online



92%

of hubs are satisfied
with our support



92%

feel happier, healthier
or better off

Pathways to impact

Digital inclusion works best when support is holistic and delivered in communities. It's not just about getting someone a device, teaching them how to use it, or giving them data. Digital inclusion needs all of these, alongside the confidence that comes from knowing who to ask if you need extra support. That's why digital inclusion is best delivered in trusted, welcoming community spaces.



Access

Getting people connected

The National Databank has grown significantly over the past three years. More than 4,000 hubs are now distributing free data from O2, Vodafone and Three, reaching people who couldn't otherwise afford to stay online. And since launching the National Device Bank, we've scaled distribution, putting devices in the hands of nearly 30,000 people who couldn't afford them.

But access alone isn't enough. Having a device and data doesn't help if you don't know how to use them, or you're too scared to try.



Skills

Building confidence

Every hour, five people use our Learn My Way platform to become more digitally able – so far, we've supported over 130,000 people to build basic digital skills. But we're also looking ahead – researching and working with hubs on the tools and resources they need to support their communities in an age of AI. We've been working with Ofcom to embed media literacy into Learn My Way. And in late 2025, we launched a new resource – the AI Gateway – to help people understand and use AI tools more safely.

Already, our AI resources have been used more than 125,000 times.



**Every hour,
five people use
Learn My Way to
become more
digitally able**



‘Trusted faces in local places’ is at the heart of our approach. We know that community organisations and libraries are perfectly placed to build real relationships, and create the safe spaces needed to support the people other services often find ‘hard to reach’. It’s this consistent, local support that makes all the difference to digitally excluded people.

The National Digital Inclusion Network, coordinated by Good Things, is a free membership network. It’s open to any organisation from any sector committed to supporting digital inclusion in their own backyard. The network has grown in both scale and diversity; it now has over 8,000 members. It’s vital infrastructure for digital inclusion – reaching into neighbourhoods across every part of the UK.

Network membership allows each hub to bake digital inclusion support in their spaces, services, and support – shaped by what their community needs, and their own reach, resources and capabilities.

“Coming here has changed everything” Linda and Irene’s story

Cousins by birth and best friends by choice, Irene and Linda do everything together – including getting to grips with the digital world.

The pair arrived at Riverside Learning Centre in Liverpool – part of the National Digital Inclusion Network – with zero computer experience. After getting set up with their own laptops and data, they spent their sessions exploring everything from the basics to understanding AI. And along the way, they found that the hub offered them a sense of community.

“You can’t be miserable in this place – it’s like a little family in a big world,” said Irene. “I never thought I’d learn to use a computer or have an email address.” Linda added, “I was very isolated, but not now. Coming here has changed everything.”

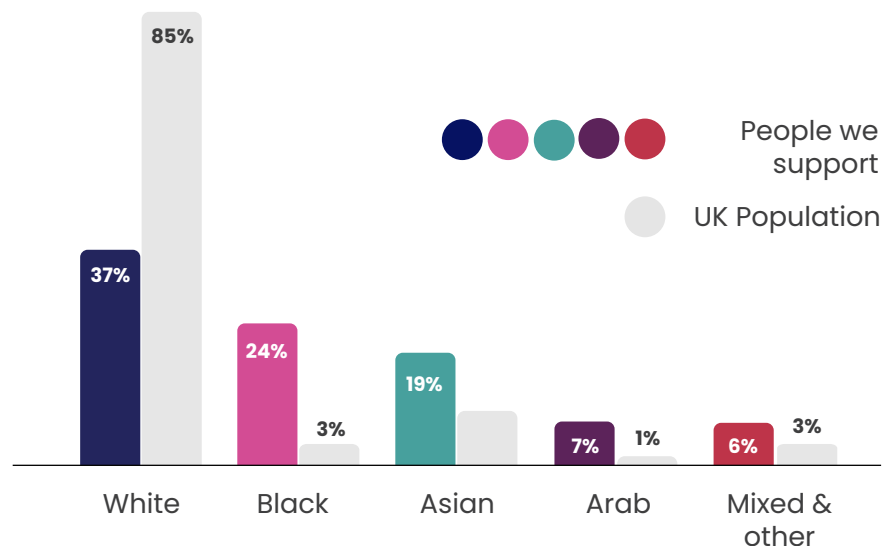


Reaching people where the need is greatest

Digital exclusion hits hardest for those who are already facing some of the biggest challenges, from poverty to disability, language barriers to social isolation. Yet people facing multiple disadvantages are among those where getting online can make the biggest difference.

Across the network, hubs support people from ethnic minorities, disabled people, older people, migrants and refugees, and families struggling to make ends meet. This doesn't happen by accident. It's the result of building a network that reaches into the communities and spaces where digitally excluded people already are.

Our reach by ethnicity



48

The average age of someone who uses our services

Our reach by age

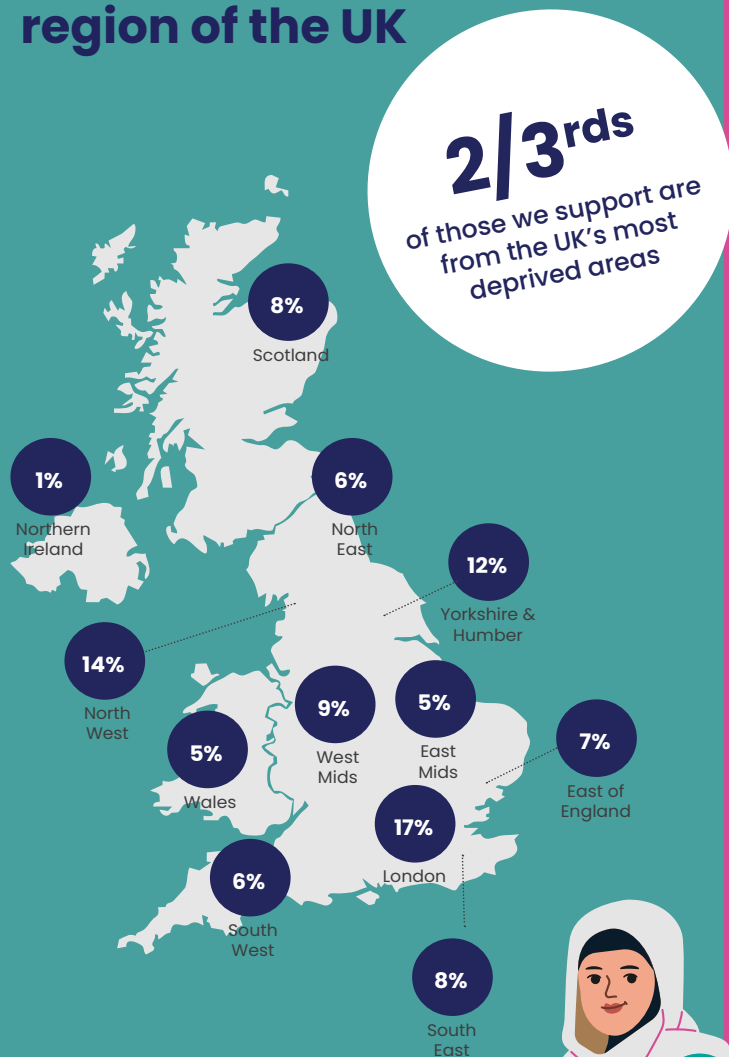
40% under 45

34% aged 45-64

17% aged 65+



Our reach by region of the UK



A year with Malika

To understand how the long-term impact of our work unfolds, let's meet Malika. Malika is a creative, entrepreneurial 30 year old. She moved to Birmingham from Pakistan for her husband's job. She hopes to find work, and her dream is to set up a business selling the handbags she makes.

NOV '24 Finds the hub

Malika feels isolated and wants to learn English. A friend tells her about the Hub. Malika joins their classes. She finds community and support.

"I learn, make friends and feel very relaxed."

JAN '25 Joins computer class

Malika struggles with online tasks in her classes. The Hub staff invite her to their computer class where she begins using Learn My Way.

"A computer is difficult. I read, but I don't understand."

APR '25 Learns digital skills

Malika learns to send emails, use online banking, shop safely and complete online tests. The staff support Malika to sell a handbag she made online.

"I can confidently use the computer."

OCT '25 Looking ahead

Malika passes her English test and is excited to return to classes at the Hub. She plans to take her Life in the UK test and work on her business.

"I have more confidence and good English."

AUG '25 Learning by doing

Malika makes social media videos for a friend's business. She learns lots and buys a tablet. Her friend sadly moves away.

"It was a bit scary before I started doing the work. Now I am confident."

JUL '25 Practicing skills

The hub loans Malika a tablet. She uses it to prepare for the English test in her visa application. She finds great work experience in a local fabric shop.

"I have been watching videos online about the test."

Trusted faces in local places

Building the
ecosystem for
digital inclusion



The National Digital Inclusion Network

At Good Things, our infrastructure goes far beyond technology to include the people and places that make digital inclusion work.

Our UK-wide network of community partners is providing the social infrastructure to deliver digital inclusion in neighbourhoods all across the UK. It includes public spaces like libraries, migrant support organisations, community centres, local authorities, housing associations, GPs, maternity wards and food banks. And its reach extends into the private sector too, with hubs in high-street branches of O2 and Virgin Money. These are the places people already trust, and already visit – and that’s why they work. We know visitors to a library in rural Lincolnshire are facing different challenges and opportunities than people coming to a migrant support centre in inner-city Manchester. So our network model supports each organisation to deliver what their community needs most.

We support them with training and resources, from sessions to help hubs prepare for the landline switch off to providing opportunities to represent their community at a national level. All of this is helping existing hubs deepen their impact and is why 92% are satisfied with the support we offer.

In 2023, we set out to grow the National Digital Inclusion Network to 5,000 hubs. We’re now at more than 8,000. The network has expanded in tandem with the rapid digitalisation of everyday services and the advancement of new technologies like AI. And this growth has been mirrored by an increasing need for support as communities continue to face ongoing challenges like cost-of-living and unemployment.

Meet the Hubs

Gloucestershire Rural Community Council (GRCC)

In the Gloucestershire countryside, poor mobile signal is a fact of life. GRCC tackled this head-on by training people in their rural community to use WiFi calling. As well as distributing devices and data where they’re needed most, they’ve created a WhatsApp group where community members can practice their skills and build community. It’s practical, it’s community-led, and it works.

Islington GP Federation

Health services are increasingly digital, and that creates new barriers for people who can’t get online. The Islington GP Federation has trained ‘NHS App Ambassadors’ as a way to embed digital inclusion into their support. Providing digital inclusion in healthcare settings is a positive step to ensure health services don’t exclude people who are already struggling.

“

“I used to ask my grandchildren for help but now I can do it for myself. I love it! I’ve ordered a repeat prescription on the NHS App and it was really easy.”

How partnerships make this impact possible

Solving digital exclusion takes collective action; no single organisation can do it alone. In the last three years, we've seen impact deepen and grow through innovative partnerships with industry and in the devolved nations and regions. These collaborations help to spread, strengthen, and support digital inclusion infrastructure – so more people can get online and feel the benefits in their lives.

The National Digital Inclusion Network is becoming a 'network of networks'. By working with regional partners, like Liverpool City Region, and national partners, like Libraries Connected, we're making it easier for people to access digital support wherever they live.

Digital Communities Wales

In Wales, we've been proud to partner with Cwmpas to deliver Digital Communities Wales, a national programme funded by the Welsh Government. Partnerships like this mean we can coordinate efforts, combine expertise, and share learning. We've helped to grow digital inclusion support across Wales, and played an instrumental role in developing the Minimum Digital Living Standard for Wales.

Left: The former Secretary of State Peter Kyle, and former Minister Chris Bryant at BGFM – part of the National Digital Inclusion Network. Overleaf: Bran, community radio host.

“We've partnered with Good Things for over six years and continue to work together. By combining our organisations' skills, knowledge and expertise we're able to deliver a really impactful national digital inclusion programme across Wales. This work has been strengthened by the Welsh Minimum Digital Living Standard research and pilots which have drawn on the UK research.”

Jocelle Lovell, Director of Inclusive Communities, Cwmpas



“My life has turned around” Bran’s story



Leaving a seven-year marriage shadowed by coercive control, Bran was left with nothing but the clothes on her back. She was consumed by anxiety and uncertainty, finding herself suddenly sleeping on her mother’s sofa.

Her turning point came from community support provided by a network hub: BGfm community radio. BGfm provided Bran with the digital lifeline she needed – a laptop and data connectivity – as part of holistic support. They nurtured Bran’s passion for horticulture by providing gardening tools and access to a community garden.

Empowered by these tools and this sanctuary, Bran enrolled in distance learning with the Royal Horticultural Society and secured a job as a radio presenter at BGfm. Bran now hosts a drivetime slot dedicated to gardening and sustainability. Her journey is a testament to the power of holistic support.



The National Databank

The National Databank is a powerful example of what happens when competitors choose to collaborate, and when industries innovate with civil society.

Founded with leadership from Virgin Media O2, the databank was bolstered by Vodafone and Three joining to donate mobile data, and catalysed by early Data Poverty Lab work with Nominet. Now, it's become an ambitious and transformative response to data poverty that's proving we can tackle the digital divide at scale.

Free mobile data is distributed by Good Things through more than 4,000 local Databanks, providing a lifeline out of data poverty. This award-winning partnership has already given more than 400,000 free mobile data packages to people in crisis or facing challenging situations, creating a ripple effect that benefits their entire families. It's a model that works – and it was even recognised by the UK Government in its *Digital Inclusion Action Plan: First Steps* as a key way to tackle the digital divide.

“Data poverty is a significant barrier affecting the communities we serve. Collaboration is the key to lasting, meaningful social change and our partnership with Good Things and the National Databank is critical to this mission. It allows us to tackle data poverty at a national scale, building deep-rooted trust and delivering tangible, life-changing outcomes for thousands of people across the UK.”

**Dana Haidan, Chief Sustainability Officer,
Virgin Media O2**



“Now I feel more free”

Zeinab’s story

Zeinab arrived in the UK in June 2023 seeking asylum. She’d left everything behind in Iraq. Whilst she found safety in the UK, she was also completely isolated – with no device, no data and no way to contact her husband or family.

The isolation was quietly crushing. She felt frustrated and cut off from everyone she loved. Then she found Learn For Life, who gave her a laptop and free data by connecting her with the National Device Bank and the National Databank.

Now Zeinab can speak to her family, access support services and start rebuilding her life in the UK. That’s what digital inclusion makes possible.

“ [When I received the laptop and data], I started crying. It was such a big thing for me, as before it, I couldn’t speak to my husband or my family. Now, I feel more free.”

– Zeinab



Facing the future: AI literacy

AI has the potential to widen the digital divide, and to help close it. Since 2023, we've been working closely with Accenture to ensure that digital inclusion support keeps pace with rapidly evolving AI technologies.

We recognised that AI was shifting the goalposts for digital inclusion – not only in people's homes, schools, and workplaces, but also in the trusted community spaces which offer digital inclusion support. With community partners, we researched the links between AI and digital inclusion, and how digital, AI, and media literacy connect.

Launched in 2025 with Accenture, our AI Gateway – a free, interactive learning

platform – aims to demystify AI for everyone, including people with lower digital confidence. The AI Gateway offers accessible, bite-sized content that reflects everyday life, and allows people to learn and practice AI skills in a way that suits them. Early signs of engagement are positive with over 13,000 visits already. And, together with Ofcom, we've also developed new content to build media literacy and AI awareness on Learn My Way – building this into basic digital skills support.

“AI will shape the next era of social and economic progress, but only if everyone has the skills to use it with confidence. With thoughtful inclusive design, AI can expand access to services and serve genuine human needs. Our partnership with Good Things reflects a shared commitment to help close the UK's digital divide and ensure digital change benefits everyone.”

Dal Channa, UKI Corporate Citizenship Lead, Accenture

The Accenture logo, featuring a stylized chevron symbol above the word "accenture" in a lowercase, sans-serif font.



“ I’ve learned to use ChatGPT and it’s been really helpful. It saves time on everyday things like shopping”

– Phillip

“I’m not afraid to go online anymore” Phillip’s story

Phillip describes himself as “old school.” He never saw the point in learning technology because his wife was always the “internet guru.” But after she died, he realised how much he’d come to rely on her. Without her, Phillip felt left behind in an increasingly digital world. He wanted to reconnect.

Through Smartlyte, part of the National Digital Inclusion Network, Phillip began attending free digital skills sessions. He’s even started exploring AI tools like ChatGPT; something he never imagined he’d do.

From grassroots to government

Driving awareness,
action & influence



Get Online Week

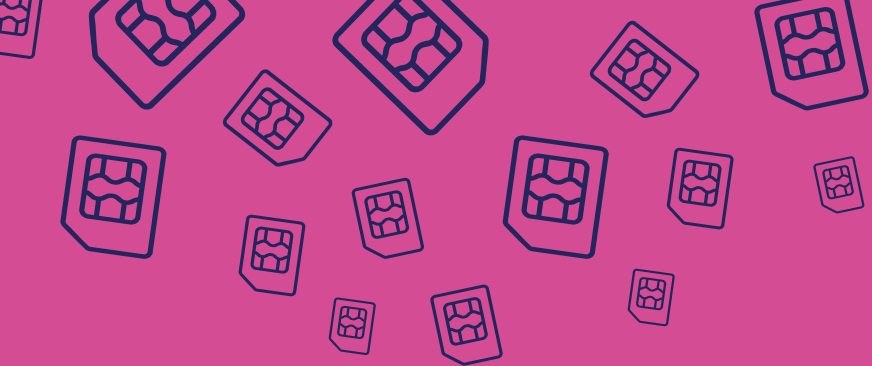
Every October, we mobilise the National Digital Inclusion Network for a national effort to get people digitally connected, and celebrate the urgent, incredible work being done in communities across the UK.

In 2025, Get Online Week sparked over 1,000 events across nearly 500 hubs – more than one event an hour for the entire month. This grassroots effort, from community centre drop-ins to library device giveaways, brought 12,000 people through the doors, with over 7,000 receiving hands-on support to get online.

Minister Baroness Liz Lloyd launched our 2025 campaign at an event bringing together government, industry, and civil society leaders. With their support, and the support of our strategic partners, Get Online Week has helped raise the profile of digital inclusion across the country. In the last year, we've reached more than half a million people, with coverage from The Telegraph to The Times, highlighting the importance of fixing the digital divide, and how we can achieve this together.

Top right: Minister Baroness Liz Lloyd at our Get Online Week launch event. Bottom right: Natasha Nelson, Digital Inclusion Coordinator with a learner at Stratford Library during Get Online Week



A decorative graphic in the top left corner featuring several SIM cards of various sizes and orientations, some with internal circuit patterns visible, set against a pink background.

Snowing SIMs

O2's Christmas campaigns have shone a bright light on the National Databank, highlighting data poverty at a time of reflection and giving.

The latest campaign, Snowing SIMs, ran throughout winter 2024-25. It promoted the National Databank across O2 stores, garnered over 300 pieces of media coverage, and boosted public awareness of our work. The campaign broke through in ways we could never have achieved alone, raising the issue of data poverty to a wider public just as the government was preparing to launch its Digital Inclusion Action Plan.



Digital Futures

Our visual podcast series, Digital Futures for Good, brought high-profile voices into the digital inclusion conversation, during a period of political transition.

Our Chief Executive, Helen Milner, interviewed guests including Baroness Martha Lane Fox, Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham, AI thought-leader Nina Schick, and Emma Revie, Chief Executive of food poverty charity, Trussell. The series explored themes from AI for inclusion, to digital health and the NHS, to the links between digital and financial inclusion. Guests were asked for their policy priorities, sparking ideas and opportunities for the UK Government to address digital inclusion in their sectors.



Above: Helen Milner interviewing Baroness Martha Lane Fox for the Digital Futures for Good series. Bottom right: Julie, supported with digital skills support at Learn For Life, for our Digital For All campaign

Digital for All

In 2024, we launched our Digital for All campaign, a month-long multi-channel push to take our message to the mainstream. With free billboard space donated by JCDecaux and digital campaign support from our partners, we reached new audiences with the message that digital inclusion support is available, and changes lives. More than 12 million people learned about this through outdoor advertising, while our digital content generated over 4.5 million impressions.



Advocacy, evidence & policy wins

The national policy and funding landscape for digital inclusion has shifted significantly over the last three years, and we're proud of the leading role we've played in making that happen. Through a mix of research, evidence-led advocacy, and convening the right people, we've been able to catalyse action and push for real innovation.

But there is still so much more to do. In a climate of political, technological, and economic uncertainty, this work is more challenging, and more necessary, than ever. Fixing the digital divide for good needs more than the work of Good Things and the National Digital Inclusion Network; it requires cross-sector collaboration, joined-up leadership, and genuine systemic change.



House of Lords Inquiry on Digital Exclusion

Alongside providing spoken and written evidence, we hosted members of the House of Lords Digital and Communications Committee at a local network hub. This gave them the chance to hear directly from staff and people with lived experience about the daily realities of digital exclusion, and why local support is so vital.



NHS England Framework for Action on Digital Inclusion

As part of the VSCE Health and Wellbeing Alliance, we use our expertise and evidence to help shape NHS England's first-ever framework for action on digital inclusion. This paved the way for the NHS to formally recognise that digital access is a fundamental part of healthcare.



Minimum Digital Living Standard for Households with Children

Our collaboration with the University of Liverpool, Loughborough University and others produces the first holistic, household-level benchmark for digital inclusion, defined by members of the public. The research revealed an estimated 3.7 million families fall below this standard.



Shaping the UK Government's Approach to Digital Inclusion

We brought together over 100 experts from across the UK for a series of roundtables. Through these sessions and briefing papers, we helped shape the government's thinking on everything from affordable access of data and devices, basic digital skills and confidence to the design of digital services.



UK Government's Digital Inclusion Action Plan: First Steps

Signed by five Secretaries of State, this plan reflected four out of five of our policy asks, including a formal commitment to the importance of community-based digital inclusion support.



Welsh Government's Digital Inclusion Wales Service

The Welsh Government launched a groundbreaking new national advice and support service, with the Minimum Digital Living Standard for Wales at its heart.



UK Government's Financial Inclusion Strategy

Working through the Treasury's Financial Inclusion Committee, we helped secure vital recognition for digital inclusion. Our partnership with Virgin Money was highlighted in the strategy as a leading example of how to do this right.



IT Reuse for Good Charter

In partnership with VodafoneThree, Deloitte, and the Dept. of Science, Innovation and Technology, we launched the first government charter to promote the refurbishment and reuse of business devices. The charter was inspired by the National Device Bank and VodafoneThree's Great British Tech Appeal, among others.

4/5

of our policy asks were included in the UK Government's Digital Inclusion Action Plan.



Commit to making old UK Government devices available to families and adults who need them



Lead a cross-sector digital inclusion action plan



Remove significant barriers to digital inclusion and skills to help people into work

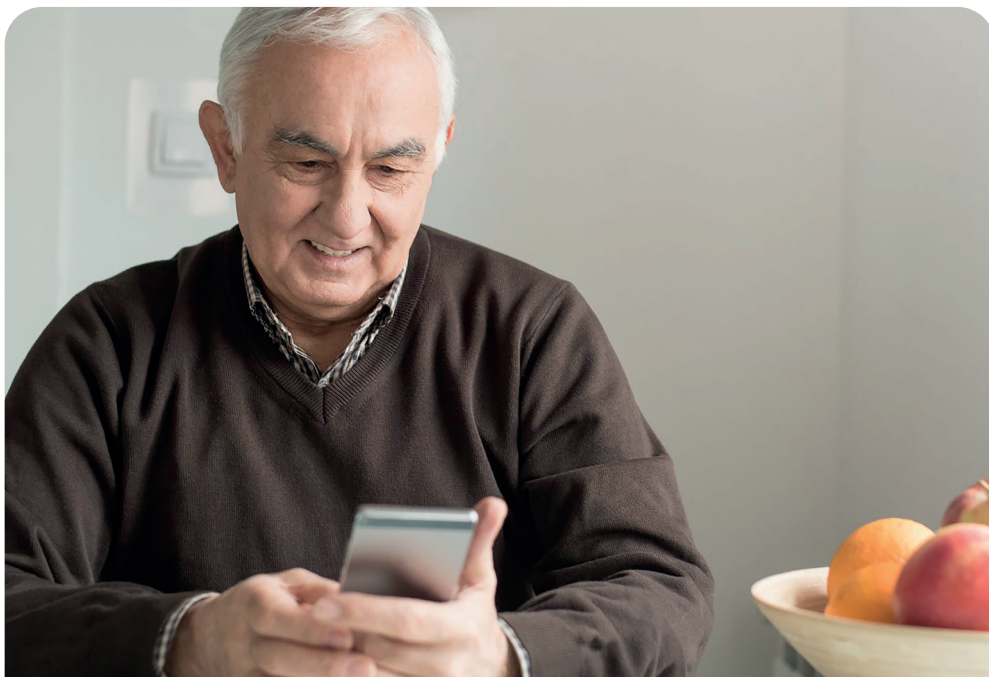


Co-invest in community-based digital inclusion support

Leading by example to tackle device poverty

Our experience in scaling the National Device Bank with Reconnome – alongside research with the University of Liverpool and Deloitte – gave us the evidence we needed to call on the government to tackle device poverty. We asked them to lead by example and refurbish devices for reuse for people who can't afford them.

Together with VodafoneThree and Deloitte, we pledged to develop a world first: a government charter that encourages UK organisations to rethink IT asset management. The goal is to reduce electronic waste, promote circularity, and get quality refurbished devices into the hands of people and families who need them most. In 2025, the government officially launched the IT Reuse for Good Charter, supported by a playbook that supports organisations on their device reuse journey.



“Tackling digital exclusion is a core commitment for VodafoneThree, and while we've unlocked thousands of devices through the Great British Tech Appeal and Reconnected, we know that no single company can move the needle alone. Developed in collaboration with Good Things, DSIT, and Deloitte, the IT Reuse for Good Charter is built on the belief that expertise is more powerful when shared. By uniting through this partnership, we turn corporate responsibility into a collective force, ensuring that every person who needs a device has the tools to thrive in a digital world.”

Nicki Lyons, Chief Corporate Affairs & Sustainability Officer, VodafoneThree



Influencing policy through the Data Poverty Lab

The Data Poverty Lab, our research partnership with Nominet, is exploring the root causes of data poverty and what we can do to end it for good. By combining academic research and fellowships with the lived experiences of the APLE Collective, we've sparked fresh thinking, new resources, and shaped policy recommendations for the Digital Inclusion All Party Parliamentary Group. Our latest Data Poverty Lab 2025 report is currently driving the national debate on how internet access should be understood and supported in the UK.

“As an organisation committed to a safer, more secure and trusted Internet, Nominet deeply values the power of data in driving social change. We believe that effective digital inclusion starts with evidence. Good Things' focus on insight and evaluation ensures advocacy is grounded in real experiences. When we measure what's happening on the ground, we can direct resources more effectively and influence policy in ways that lead to lasting change.”

**Chris Ashworth, Head of Public Benefit,
Nominet**

nominet

Measuring and identifying digital inclusion

Building on our Digital Nation series and the Minimum Digital Living Standard research, we coordinated a series of workshops to tackle a persistent challenge: inconsistent, inadequate, and confusing population data on digital inclusion.

Working with the University of Liverpool and supported by experts from across the sector, we tested and published the *Indicators of Digital Inclusion*. The indicators consist of three questions that provide a much more holistic understanding of barriers people face. They're already being used by others in survey research and customer service triage to better identify vulnerabilities.

The *Indicators of Digital Inclusion* is the first collaboration delivered through our new What Works? Co-Lab. It signals our commitment to solving digital inclusion challenges through a combination of fresh ideas, solid evidence, and dedication to sharing what works to fix the digital divide.



What we've learned and why it matters

Reflections for our future strategy



Poverty and inequalities are the biggest predictors of digital exclusion

"Our work confirms the overlaps between digital exclusion, deep poverty, and inequality across all ages and life stages. Over 66% of our digital inclusion delivery happens in areas of high deprivation.

Risks of being below the UK Minimum Digital Living Standard include low socio-economic status, area deprivation, being in single-parent or large households, or households led by someone with a disability or minority ethnicity. Our work with Trussell shows the significant overlap between deep poverty and digital exclusion. Given the growing demand for devices and data, we need to explore sustainable solutions. Convening and collaborating with partners is how we can achieve this".

**Sital Mistry-Lee, Associate Director
Digital Inclusion Delivery, Good Things**



The dial is not shifting fast enough

"While our services have successfully reached 1.7 million people over the last three years, the scale of digital exclusion remains immense. Eight million people still lack basic digital skills, and two million households struggle with connectivity costs.

To address this systemic challenge, we need better quality data and a deeper understanding of digital exclusion's full impact. The three Indicators of Digital Inclusion we've co-created through our What Works? Co-Lab will provide an evidence base to better profile excluded populations and customer groups. This can ensure that support, alongside systemic change, empowers more people."

**Katie Heard, Head of Research & Data
insights, Good Things**



Sustained, targeted support is essential

“Our research shows that while access to devices, connectivity, and core digital skills are foundational, they’re insufficient on their own. Belief barriers, trust in digital services, and personal confidence are also fundamental enablers.

To make digital inclusion truly work, our findings point to three truths. First, people need support for a significant time to build confidence that sticks. Second, people benefit most from holistic support. Third, systems and support should be delivered in ways that help people learn and grow at their own speed, making sure they feel supported by every product and service they use along the way.”

Jo Reynolds, Research and Evaluation Manager, Good Things



A place-based, community-led approach is what works

“Our work continues to show the profound value of a local, community-led approach, rooted in trust and deep neighbourhood knowledge, to engage people whom other services may find harder to reach.

Community hubs are vital, trusted places, witnessing firsthand the challenges people face navigating a digital world. By offering hubs targeted training, we enable hubs to build their capacity and capability, and their case for funding. We’ve found that strong regional and national partnerships are a valuable and effective way to share learning, resources, and strengthen community support.”

Isobel Thomas, Head of Community Partnerships, Good Things



AI has shifted the goalposts for digital inclusion

“Over a third of UK adults have lost confidence in their online abilities since the rise of AI tools. We’ve expanded our work into new territory – AI awareness, and AI and media literacy.

We’ve found that while AI can be intimidating, it isn’t an immovable barrier. With the right support, people with foundational skills can find real value in AI tools. Yet community staff and volunteers often feel overwhelmed, and unsure how to help others navigate this landscape. Closing the gap is urgent if we want to ensure everyone has a trusted place to turn when they don’t know what to believe online. With Libraries Connected, we are now testing and learning how to do this.”

Mary Booth, AI Gateway and Learn My Way Product Manager, Good Things



Supporting digital inclusion delivers real social value

“What encourages me is that we’re seeing more and more businesses looking for ways to generate meaningful social value by contributing to the places and people around them.

Digital inclusion stands out because when more people can participate online – to learn, work, shop, bank and stay healthy – the whole system works better for communities, for public services, and for business. Our impact review shows that by working together on shared goals, we can deliver impact that changes lives, supports communities, and helps to drive lasting change across the country.”

James Muscat-Sharp, Director of Business Development and Partnerships, Good Things



Digital inclusion needs to be baked in, not bolted on

“Our evidence and advocacy are coming together around a simple, powerful message: If we want to fix the digital divide, digital inclusion needs to be baked in, not bolted on.

We need sustained, holistic support delivered at the point of need. Community hubs deserve to be properly resourced to do this, but we also need to reduce the burden they carry. This means rebalancing responsibility for digital inclusion so it is shared with government, industry, the NHS and the public sector. That’s why our new strategy includes a greater focus on driving systems change through building evidence, catalysing innovation, and joining with others to get digital inclusion baked into the systems and policies, services and provision that shape people’s lives.”

Dr Emma Stone, Director of Evidence and Engagement, Good Things





Thanks

First and foremost, thank you to the 8,000+ organisations in our National Digital Inclusion Network who show up and do this work every single day in their local communities. You're the ones making digital inclusion happen.

This impact wouldn't have been possible without the partners, funders and collaborators who've worked with us over the past three years.

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