



Digital Inclusion:

A Roadmap For
Combined Authorities

September 2021



With support from:

Capita

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FOREWORD

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the urgent need for greater digital inclusion in England - to ensure people from all backgrounds have equitable access to devices, sufficient data, and the skills necessary for a digital world.

With this Roadmap, we set out the case for action. We demonstrate our commitment to supporting the development of a new model for digital inclusion at scale.

We have worked with trailblazing Combined Authorities, learning and listening – and hope these inspiring conversations will continue. We also owe much to digital inclusion champions across the UK for their amazing work over many years.

The Roadmap offers an opportunity for leaders in local government to deepen understanding, hear about best practice, and to make a difference to people who may otherwise be excluded from services and civic life.

We hope it inspires regional leaders right across England to lead step-change strategies that help the most disadvantaged people to cross the digital divide.

According to Ofcom figures, at least 1.5 million households in the UK lack internet access at home. The Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2021 shows that 14.9 million people have very low levels of digital engagement. Levels of internet use vary from region to region.

Fixing the digital divide is a complex but solvable problem. National Government support will be vital, backing up vision, decisive action and leadership at regional and local level.

We have a chance, right now, to be truly ambitious when it comes to achieving better outcomes and a 100% digitally included country and nation. Let's make sure we take it.

Helen Milner OBE
Group Chief Executive,
Good Things Foundation



Andy Start
CEO, Capita
Public Service



COMBINED AUTHORITIES AND DIGITAL INCLUSION

Over the past 18 months, our lives have increasingly moved online – homeschooling, remote-working, online shopping, virtual GP consultations, streamed entertainment.

In 2021, 60% of the UK population now has high digital capability, a level that – pre-pandemic – we expected to reach in 2025.¹ But at least 5% of the population remain digitally excluded, with nine million lacking even foundation-level skills.² This holds people back from being able to earn, learn, save money and time, connect and have a voice.

Combined Authorities – with their unique role and reach – have the chance to prevent the digital divide widening and deepening. In fact, digital inclusion provides a powerful focus for partnerships which cut across strategies, sectors and siloes... and which make a tangible difference in people's lives.

“Given the digital age we live in, digital poverty is something we must come together as a region to address... WMCA has now formed the West Midlands Coalition for Digital Inclusion... Everyone across the West Midlands should have access to the internet and digital opportunities”

Andy Street,
Mayor of the West Midlands,
29/3/21³

“I am setting a new ambition to help all under-25s, over-75s and disabled people in Greater Manchester to get online... The new Digital Action Network and the Digital Inclusion Taskforce will be the driving force behind this new ambition to fix the digital divide across Greater Manchester.”

Andy Burnham,
Mayor of Greater Manchester,
17/5/21⁴

¹ [Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2021](#)

² [Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2020 report](#)

³ [Quoted in Good Things Foundation “New Coalition to Tackle the Digital Divide in the West Midlands”](#)

⁴ [“Mayor of Greater Manchester Announces Ambitions to Help Get People Online”](#)

This roadmap sets out the case for action by Combined Authorities in England – inspired by what’s been happening in the West Midlands and in Greater Manchester, under the Mayoral leadership of Andy Street and Andy Burnham.

This roadmap is also testimony to the dedicated, deliberate actions of digital inclusion champions across the UK – in communities, local authorities, libraries, charities and corporates – over many years.

In England, councils like Leeds, Croydon, Salford, Stockport and Wigan have been pioneers. In the North East, IPPR North is helping to map out a regional response to digital exclusion and poverty.⁵ In Wales, a cross-sector Digital Inclusion Alliance Wales is advocating for city regions to invest in basic digital skills.⁶

In Scotland, as well as Connecting Scotland, the Digital Glasgow Strategy has prioritised alignment with COVID-19 Recovery and Renewal Plans. In London, boroughs have formed a coalition with GLA support to tackle digital exclusion.

Leaders are stepping up to the challenge.

We hope this roadmap, produced in partnership with Capita, will help:

- **Start conversations** at a regional level
- **Inspire senior leaders** to integrate digital inclusion into wider strategy and policy
- **Provide practical ideas** for those charged with developing digital inclusion strategies.



5 IPPR North 2021, Addressing Digital Exclusion in the North East

6 Digital Inclusion Alliance Wales 2021

DIGITAL INCLUSION

Digital inclusion means everyone has the device, data and digital skills support they need to live well – and safely – in a digital world. Digital inclusion spans:

- Internet access – affordable data, suitable device
- Everyday skills for life and work, including online safety
- Confidence and motivation to go online, and keep adapting

Digital Nation 2021 illustrates the scale of the challenge and the interplay with wider inequalities.⁷

Among those who are digitally excluded, old age (especially over 75 years) is the main predictor of being offline, but low income is the common factor across all ages. Those more at risk of digital exclusion are aged 65+ (18%), in low income households (11%) and the most financially vulnerable (10%).⁸

- At least 1.5 million households (6% of households) lack internet access at home⁹
- 9 million people still lack the foundation-level digital skills¹⁰

- 14.9 million people have very low levels of digital engagement¹¹

Among those who are digitally included, the benefits are clear. Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2020 analysis found an average annual earnings difference of £2,160 extra between manual workers with the highest and lowest digital engagement; and £720 each year savings on utilities bills to those earning under £20,000 per year with the highest digital engagement.¹²

		North East	Yorkshire and Humberside	North West	West Midlands	East Midlands	East of England	South West	South East	London
Extensive users	% within Region	43.00%	44.10%	43.30%	43.90%	44.20%	33.60%	43.50%	45.00%	45.20%
Limited users (all types)	% within Region	38.00%	27.90%	32.40%	30.50%	31.10%	32.70%	26.50%	27.90%	20.70%

7 Digital Nation 2021

8 Ofcom Adults' Media Use and Literacy 2020/21

9 Ofcom Adults' Media Use and Literacy 2020/21

10 Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2020 report

11 Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2021

12 Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2020 report

Analysis at sub-regional levels, and for some characteristics – especially ethnicity – is challenging. Regional comparison of different types of internet users (comparing ‘extensive internet users’ (green) and ‘limited internet users’ (orange) is captured below for the English regions and London (To note; Ofcom changed its methodology for the Adults’ Media Use and Attitudes survey in the pandemic, so this year’s comparison excludes non-users).

Internet use has increased since the pandemic. Those who remain digitally excluded may be even more disempowered in this context.¹³

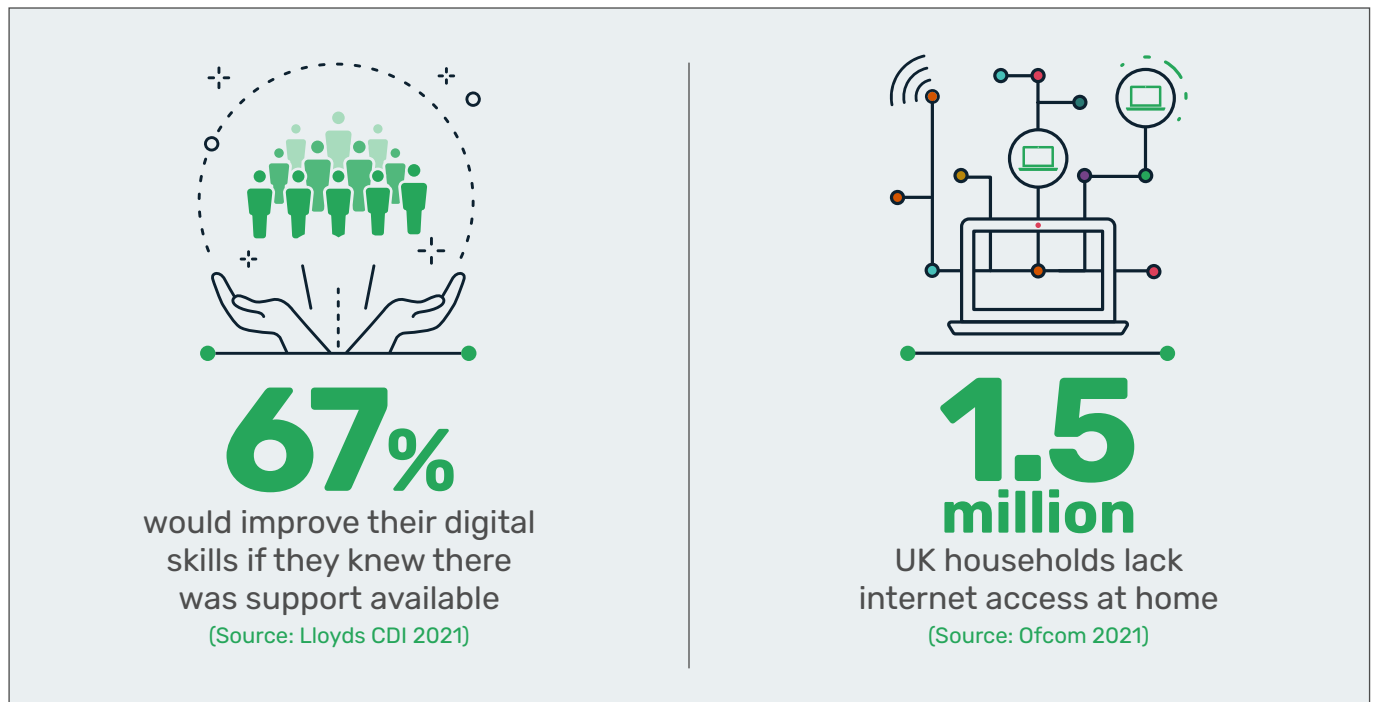
- 1.5 million more people have gone online since last year¹⁴
- 28% digitally upskilled themselves for work related reasons¹⁵
- Three times as many 70-year-olds registered for online banking compared to the previous year¹⁶

The biggest rise in usage in the pandemic among older people was those already using the internet. There remains a gap between regular internet users aged 65-74 years (75%) and those aged 75 years and over (46%).¹⁷ The full spectrum from low to high use – and regional variation – is evident in Universal Credit claimants: a gap of ten percentage points between areas with the highest and lowest proportions of benefit claimants with very low digital engagement.¹⁸

Two things stand out for Combined Authorities.

First, the dial can shift. According to a measure used in Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2021, the Midlands and Yorkshire and the Humber made the greatest leaps in usage since 2020.¹⁹

Second, and significantly, over two thirds of people would improve their digital skills if they knew there was support available to help them if they needed it.²⁰



13 Ofcom Adults’ Media Use and Literacy 2020/21
 14 Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2021
 15 Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2021
 16 Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2021
 17 Age UK 2021, Digital Inclusion and Older People
 18 Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2021
 19 Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2021
 20 Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2021



JULIE REDUCING DIGITAL POVERTY

Julie from Stoke-on-Trent has her own mobile phone. She would often run out of data. When she and her son were isolating at home with only one device with limited data, she found it hard to keep in touch, shop online or support her son's schooling. [Everyone Connected](#) provided a data-enabled device through her local Online Centre, making a big difference to family life.²¹

JUDY FIRST STEPS ONLINE

Judy had been afraid of technology. Staff at her local library, an Online Centre, gave her a data-enabled tablet through [Everyone Connected](#).²² They helped Judy with digital literacy skills so she can now use it to find information, read the news and download e-books. Judy now plans to attend classes at the library.²³

ROY USING DIGITAL FOR HEALTH

Roy, who is retired, started with virtually no confidence in using the internet. He took part in digital skills classes offered by Digital Champions in Thanet and was supported to use new digital tools. He now uses apps to manage his medication and his GP appointments online and also used an app to see how busy his local hospitals were before visiting an A&E on Boxing Day.²⁴

DILARA DIGITAL SKILLS WITH LEARNING ENGLISH

Dilara first visited Skills Enterprise, an Online Centre, to take part in a community ESOL programme.²⁵ She developed digital skills, building on her English language learning, and became a volunteer. Her volunteering role has enhanced her own work-based skills and Dilara is now studying for a Level 2 qualification in both Health and Social Care and Childcare.²⁶

21 [Good Things Foundation, "Family stay connected during Covid-19"](#)

22 [Good Things Foundation, "Everyone Connected"](#)

23 [Good Things Foundation, "Judy overcomes fears with new device from Everyone Connected"](#)

24 [Good Things Foundation, "Digital Inclusion in Health and Care"](#)

25 [Good Things Foundation, "English My Way"](#)

26 [Good Things Foundation, "How Dilara went from learner to volunteer"](#)

CASE FOR INVESTMENT

Research by Cebr (2018) found an estimated benefit of almost £15 for every £1 invested in helping people acquire basic digital skills.²⁷ The case for investment is economic, moral, and cross-cutting. Combined Authorities have an opportunity to take a strategic view across regional priorities. To look beyond adult skills to consider wider community benefits. To use digital inclusion to drive collaboration.

“Inclusive growth requires us to work together across sectors and places, to grow things other than financial transactions, and to ensure that the value of investments accrues to local people.”

WMCA Inclusive Growth Unit²⁸

Digital inclusion > Inclusive growth

Inclusive growth is becoming more important as regions navigate their way to recovery: “local public, education, business and VCSE partners should work together to assess and address digital skills and equipment needs in their place.”²⁹ At a household, local and regional level – digital inclusion matters across all the key domains of a balanced, sustainable and fair economy. There is potential to build on the fact that many businesses stepped up to help address digital exclusion during the pandemic.

Digital inclusion > Adult education

The devolved Adult Education Budget focuses on digital skills for work and specialised roles, alongside Essential Digital Skills Qualifications³⁰ mainly delivered in further education colleges. Digitally excluded people can need more help to overcome barriers like data poverty and low confidence or motivation. Digital inclusion is best delivered in and with communities: trusted, friendly and local support to take first steps online. Combined or Local Authorities can bridge the gap between informal, community-based learning and formal provision – building a pathway for digital skills progression.

²⁷ Cebr (2018). *Economic Case for Digital Inclusion*

²⁸ New Midlands. “Inclusive Growth: Economic Success is More than Transactional”

²⁹ New Local (2021). *Shifting the Balance*

³⁰ Department for Education. *Essential Digital Skills Framework*

Digital inclusion > Employability

Digital skills can be learned at work, yet only 23% of employees say they have had digital skills training from their employer.³¹ Most jobs need digital skills just to apply. 92% of businesses say that having a basic level of digital skills is important for employees, whilst 76% of businesses say that a lack of digital skills would affect the profitability of their business.³² Supporting young people and those who are unemployed or economically inactive into work needs both digital inclusion and digital skills training. Personalised support helps people build the digital resilience needed in a changing labour market.³³

Digital inclusion > Community integration

The Integrated Community Action Plan (2019)³⁴ outlined actions to boost English language (ESOL) skills to reduce isolation and improve work prospects for marginalised, minority communities. People with ESOL needs who are digitally excluded face extra barriers, particularly families with school-age children. Combined Authorities can design a more inclusive approach: digital literacy *within* an ESOL context.³⁵

Digital inclusion > Ageing and older people

While 24% of over-75s in England increased their use of technology in the pandemic, those who were already digitally excluded (42%) remained so; four in five said lack of digital skills was a barrier.³⁶ Someone may be able to video call their family, but lack the skills to book a health appointment. Not everyone can or wants to be online; this doesn't detract from ensuring access to local support for those who want to do so.

A COMMUNITY SKILLS AND SUPPORT PATHWAY

Good Things Foundation has developed an approach to bridge the gap between informal, community-based digital skills provision and formal, publicly-funded Essential Digital Skills Qualification training in FE colleges. Many of those with no or low digital skills are unlikely to access formal training, but have an acute need for digital inclusion. This will build a community skills and support pathway into further education and work.

Digital inclusion > Disability and accessibility

Assistive technology and accessible design reduce disabling barriers and open up equality of opportunity. The intersection of poverty and disability means many disabled adults, children and families are locked out. Websites and online services still fall short of meeting accessibility standards or being suitable substitutes.³⁷ Equity here means keeping multiple channels open alongside increasing digital inclusion.

Digital inclusion > Health and social care

Building digital health literacy is now a priority for patients, carers and the health and care workforce.³⁸ Supporting people to build these skills can progress public health priorities, the prevention agenda, self-care and management of long-term conditions.³⁹ Good Things Foundation estimated a £6.40 return to the NHS for every £1 invested.⁴⁰ Community 'digital health' hubs offer a practical model to achieve this and tackle health inequalities.⁴¹

31 FutureDotNow (2021). [Unlocking the essential digital skills opportunity](#)

32 World Skills UK (2021). [Disconnected: exploring the digital skills gap](#)

33 Good Things Foundation (2021). [Shocks, Knocks and Building Blocks : Power Up \(2019\). Improving Digital Skills For Employability](#)

34 Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019). [Integrated Community Action Plan](#)

35 Good Things Foundation. [Supporting digital inclusion of adults with low English language skills](#)

36 Age UK 2021. [Digital Inclusion and Older People](#)

37 Scope 2020. [Test reveal biggest councils failing on legal web accessibility websites](#)

38 Healthwatch England 2021. [Digitally excluded people's experience of remote GP appointments](#)

39 NHS Digital. [Digital Inclusion for Health and Care](#)

40 Good Things Foundation. [Digital Inclusion in Health and Care](#)

41 Good Things Foundation. [Digital Inclusion in Health and Care](#)

Digital inclusion >
Housing

Partnership with housing providers can improve the quality of life and wellbeing of communities.⁴² Rapid impacts can be delivered by developing targeted approaches, and creating a community of practice to design and deliver digital inclusion initiatives. There is exciting scope for regional action on data poverty across housing providers, industry and local authorities, such as subsidising community broadband.

COMMUNITIES INCLUSIVE BROADBAND PROJECT

This two-year project provided 100-200 low-income households with free broadband Internet connection and a Google Chromebook digital device, basic digital training, and ICT support. It had rapid benefits for participating families in four areas: Home Schooling and Learning; Work and Employability; Physical and Mental Health Wellbeing; Time and Costs Savings.⁴³

GMCA AND OLDER PEOPLE

Over-75s are a target group for the GM Mayor’s Agenda for Digital Inclusion. In response, GMCA Ageing Hub identified “the one thing” that will make a difference: a GM-wide programme, starting with a person-centred conversation to provide social connections, offer of a minimum of six months of 1-2-1 digital skills support, a phone-based troubleshooting service, community drop-in spaces and printed “how to” guides, and a pre-set up tablet with connectivity.⁴⁴

Digital inclusion >
Digital transformation

Digital transformation is about using digital technologies to change the way services are delivered. In the public sector, digital transformation without digital inclusion widens inequalities. Local people need the access, skills - and trust - to use online services. Technology teams are vital in championing inclusive digital transformation, but the digital inclusion agenda is better held elsewhere, so it does not get siloed.⁴⁵

Digital inclusion >
Levelling up

The pandemic has revealed “our increasing reliance on technology as a society, as communities and as individuals; and the significant disadvantage experienced by those who are not sufficiently digitally connected”.⁴⁶ Levelling up requires regional action so nobody is left behind in the digital revolution, everyone has the skills to succeed, and every community has somewhere to get trusted support. There has been a seven-fold increase (35%) in the number who want local support with digital skills.⁴⁷

42 UCL Institute for Global Prosperity. *Stories of Change from the Connected Communities Inclusive Broadband Project*
 43 UCL Institute for Global Prosperity. *Stories of Change from the Connected Communities Inclusive Broadband Project*
 44 GMCA. *Ageing Hub*
 45 IPPR North 2021. *Addressing Digital Exclusion in the North East*
 46 Carnegie UK Trust (2021). *Learning From Lockdown*
 47 Lloyds Bank UK Consumer Digital Index 2021



FUTURE PROOF: SKILLS FOR WORK

Good Things Foundation worked with community partners – Online Centres – to test a blended model of holistic support and digital work skills, and build in the use of digital skills and careers resources. All-round support, responsive to individual circumstances and needs, helped people build digital work skills and the digital resilience they need in a changing labour market.⁴⁸



48 Good Things Foundation (2021). *Shocks, Knocks and Building Blocks*

GETTING STARTED

There is no one-size-fits-all. The suggestions below come from the experience of talented, passionate people who have driven digital inclusion in combined authorities, local authorities, and communities.

Combined Authorities and other devolved administrations can add value through:

- 1 understanding** the challenge and regional landscape [↗](#)
- 2 convening** local partners and facilitating collaboration and practice sharing [↗](#)
- 3 securing** investment into the region [↗](#)
- 4 coordinating** and resourcing action on policy, strategy and delivery [↗](#)
- 5 championing** change regionally and with national policymakers [↗](#)

GMCA'S DIGITAL EXCLUSION RISK INDEX (DERI)

DERI maps the risk of digital exclusion and is intended to give policy makers and others a better indication of digital exclusion risk in their area.⁴⁹ It can be layered with local datasets to target interventions. The work was pioneered by Salford Council and expanded nationally to allow for comparison and to support other areas. GMCA is open to feedback and happy to help others to use the tool. The methodology and data are available via GitHub⁵⁰

LOCAL AUTHORITY ROLES

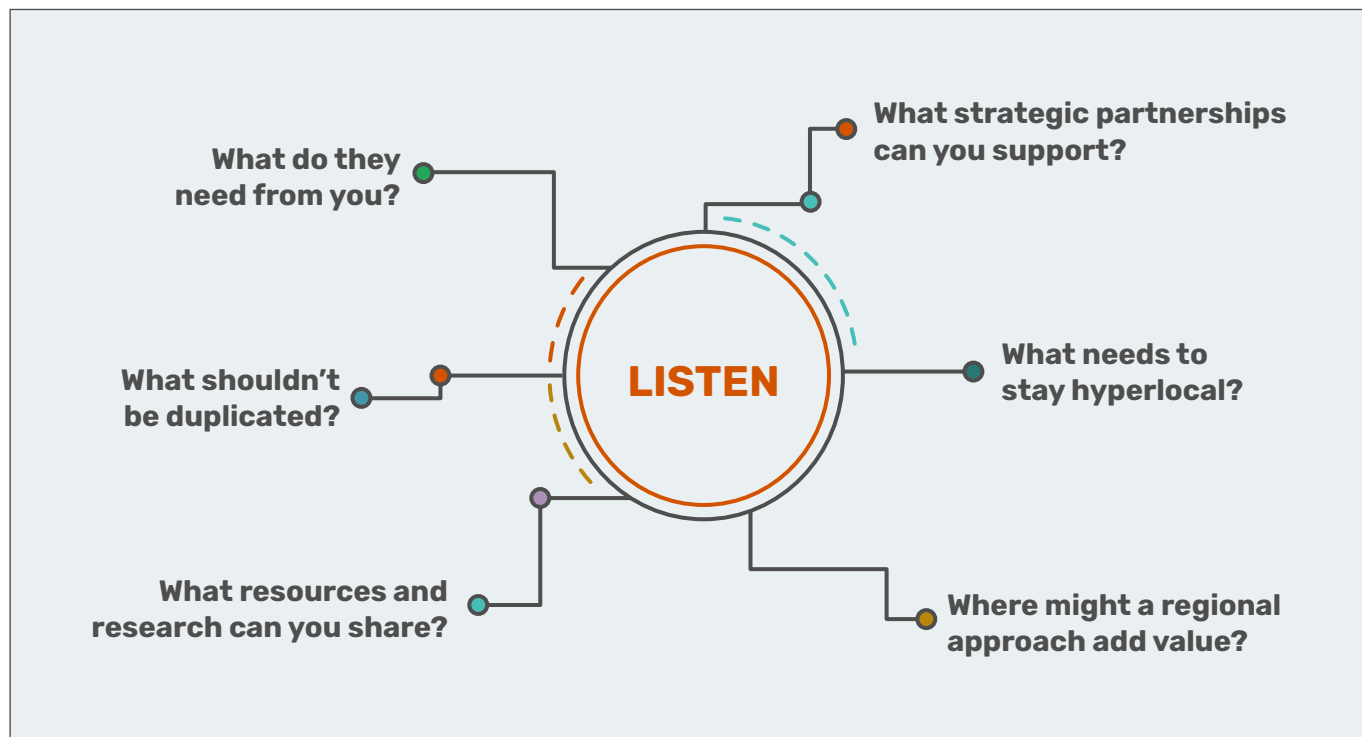
[Digital Inclusion Toolkit](#) created by Leeds and Croydon councils with MHCLG support resonates with Good Things Foundation's work with local authorities in Leeds, Salford and Stockport. Local Authority roles in digital inclusion include:⁵¹

- Securing strategic buy-in
- Building strategic alliances
- Appointing a dedicated local digital inclusion ambassador
- Grant-funding voluntary and community partners.

⁴⁹ GMCA Digital Exclusion Risk Index

⁵⁰ DERI on GitHub

⁵¹ MHCLG Digital Inclusion Toolkit



1 Understanding the challenge

Within the Combined Authority

- Seek early buy-in and commitment from senior leaders, identifying where the CA adds value
- Convene CA leads – especially leads for strategy, engaging communities, uptake of services
- Map the fit between digital inclusion and other regional priorities, like inclusive growth
- Define the opportunity and scale of the challenge, using data and wider intelligence
- Agree the lead and senior sponsor - not in digital transformation or IT teams

Within/between local authorities

- Listen to what your local authorities are already doing, their challenges and needs
- Identify shared priorities - e.g. at-risk groups, improving skills, data poverty, funding flows
- Agree what needs to stay local, and where regional leadership might add value.

- Create a repository of evidence, tools, data and resources – for LAs and others to use
- Agree standardised metrics and regular reporting to track progress across LAs

With communities and the voluntary sector

- Map the landscape of voluntary, community and social enterprise players in this space
- Find out who is part of the Online Centres Network, their roles and their needs⁵²
- Learn how the voluntary and community sector works with LA commissioners
- Learn how the sector works with Adult Education Budget-funded digital skills providers
- Convene a citizens' panel to understand local needs and priorities⁵³

⁵² Online Centres Network is free to join and supported by Good Things Foundation

⁵³ West Midlands Combined Authority. 'Citizen's Panel to help guide Covid-19 Recovery

2 Convening and facilitating local stakeholders

- Bring people together across a mix of sectors, including arts, business and health
- Convey the opportunity and potential benefits to the region - consider a task force
- Encourage peer groups/working groups to drive action and report back
- Map pathways from community-based support to formal digital skills provision
- Encourage local, joined-up approaches - harnessing community and wider assets

WMCA's GREAT DIGITAL CATCH UP PROPOSAL

At West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), their Coalition for Digital Inclusion is bringing public, private and third sectors together to secure investment. WMCA is seeking local business contributions into an £8m fund to improve digital skills and address digital inclusion:

- £4.5m to provide grants of between £2,500 and £20,000 over 2 years for 200-300 VCSE sector organisations to work with 100,000 people in disadvantaged communities.
- £1.5m to grow and support a network of organisations (public, private and VCSE sector) to help people in disadvantaged communities to take their first steps online.
- £2 million Connected Devices fund to provide data-enabled devices and help digitally excluded people to start budgeting for data over the longer term.

3 Securing investment for digital inclusion in the region

- Simplify funding streams and identify intervention points, such as Adult Education Budgets
- Establish private sector appetite for partnerships in the region, e.g. to reduce data poverty
- Connect corporate social responsibility offers with the needs of community organisations
- Submit proposals to UK Government and innovation funds to pilot regional digital inclusion
- Consider how to leverage the Social Value Act to support digital inclusion in the region

4 Coordinating and resourcing action across the region

- Agree the lead CA digital inclusion role - e.g. coordinate funds, join up policies, challenge
- Consider a digital inclusion lead in each Local Authority (even ward) to be a local champion
- Facilitate skills sharing, learn from best practice, and draw on existing assets and experts
- Commission efficient grant-making and management processes for community partners⁵⁴
- Drive progress: taskforce, working groups, regular reporting, formalising governance

54 Leeds City Council, 'Securing investment for a digital inclusion project' in Digital Inclusion Toolkit

5 Championing change regionally and nationally

- Secure political buy-in for digital inclusion at the heart of regional recovery plans
- Secure senior executive buy-in so digital inclusion is woven into all CA strategies and plans
- Agree ambition with regional partners and define deliverables, roles and responsibilities
- Engage national policymakers - promote approach, seek policy alignment, pilot funding
- Develop a national voice with other Combined Authorities to close the UK’s digital divide

GMCA DIGITAL INCLUSION TASKFORCE

GMCA recognised the need to drive collaboration around a digital inclusion agenda, with the goal of a 100% digitally enabled region. Their Digital Inclusion Agenda for Change⁵⁶ established a Digital Inclusion Taskforce, made up of local and national government, voluntary sector, industry and academics, to offer opportunity to the estimated 1.2 million digitally excluded adults.

LEVELLING UP THE WEST MIDLANDS

WMCA’s prospectus for community recovery, “Levelling-up the West Midlands” launched in November 2020 and sets a bold ambition for digital inclusion in the region: “To ensure that every household in the region has affordable devices and connectivity as well as the support and confidence necessary to access services online and with safety”.⁵⁵



⁵⁵ WMCA Levelling-up the West Midlands
⁵⁶ GMCA Agenda for Change



GMCA DIGITAL SKILLS DELIVERY

GMCA is bridging the gap between funding of adult digital skills and the Essential Digital Skills Entitlement. Acting on feedback from local employers that EDSQ Level 1 was not enough to help adults enter the workplace, GMCA extended the entitlement to EDSQ Level 2. Funding had been allocated (pre-pandemic) to drive local initiatives and commission a Digital Inclusion locality lead. A grants programme was devised to help community organisations fund their provision.

TIME TO ACT

Now is the time for Combined Authorities to act on fixing the digital divide.

It is a complex challenge, and a solvable problem. National Government support will be vital, as well as leadership at Combined Authority and Local Authority level. Digital inclusion needs to run through regional recovery and renewal plans - going beyond adult skills or digital transformation strategies. Funding is vital for community partners - both for targeted delivery and to sustain social support.

Good Things Foundation is the UK's leading digital inclusion charity, having worked for over a decade to help people become digitally able, equal and safe, so they can be happier, healthier and better off. We stand ready to support this agenda, through our UK network of community partners, our free-to-use adult online learning tools, and our national advocacy and campaigns.

Now is the time to act together.

"We need projects that build into programmes that grow into culture change so that in the next decade digital inclusion is built into every policy area, every rollout of services, everything we all do. This is a fixable problem, so we must and should fix it."

Helen Milner,
Group CEO, Good Things Foundation,
Dec 2020⁵⁷

To request a further briefing or a workshop on the Roadmap, please get in touch with Catherine Mills, Head of Partnerships and Fundraising at Good Things Foundation, catherine.mills@goodthingsfoundation.org.



⁵⁷ Good Things Foundation "Time for Ministers to Turn Words into Action"

GLOSSARY

Data poverty: data poverty is the inability to afford a sufficient, private and secure internet connection to meet essential needs and not being able to live well in a digital society.⁵⁸

Digital divide: where previously this may have referred to a binary online/offline divide, it now encompasses the gap between limited users of the internet - using the internet for very few things (e.g. social media only) and extensive users or those with high digital engagement.

Digital exclusion: digital exclusion refers to those who never or rarely use the internet, whether through lack of skills or lack of access to devices and connectivity. Digital exclusion correlates with wider social and economic disadvantage, such as low income, unemployment, language barriers; and older age.

Digital inclusion: digital inclusion is about making sure people have the access, skills or confidence to use the internet to do things that benefit them day to day. Actions include supporting people to improve skills and confidence to go online, and providing access to suitable devices and sufficient connectivity.

Digital literacy: digital literacy skills are a combination of digital skills, plus critical thinking skills and an understanding of the types of behaviour that are appropriate online - overlapping with media literacy.

Digital transformation: the strategic adoption of digital technologies to improve an organisation's or a sector's productivity, deliver better customer services and release cost and efficiency savings.

Essential Digital Skills: this refers to the skills included in the UK government Essential Digital Skills framework, and related qualifications, which cover 5 areas: using devices and handling information, creating and editing, communicating, transactions and being safe and responsible online.

Limited users: Prof Simeon Yates identifies clusters of people using the internet but in a limited way - at risk of being overlooked by policy makers: "social and entertainment media only" users (often younger); "Limited (social media only)" users and "Limited (no social media)" users.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Good Things Foundation, Data Poverty Lab

⁵⁹ Prof Simeon Yates, New Analysis of Ofcom 2020 data

RESOURCES

Toolkits and data

Carnegie UK Trust:
[Learning From Lockdown](#)

Good Things Foundation:
[Digital Nation UK 2021](#)

GMCA:
[Digital Inclusion Risk Index](#)

Lloyds Bank:
[Lloyds UK Consumer Digital Index 2021](#)

LOTI:
[Mapping Digital Exclusion Toolkit](#)

Mastercard:
[Inclusive Growth Score](#)

MHCLG, Leeds City Council and Croydon Council:
[Digital Inclusion Toolkit](#)

Ofcom:
[Adults' Media Use and Attitudes Report 2020/21](#)

Regional and national strategies

Greater Manchester Combined Authority:
[Digital Inclusion: agenda for change](#)

Greater Manchester Combined Authority:
[Digital Inclusion Taskforce](#)

West Midlands Combined Authority:
[Digital Roadmap](#)

West Midlands Combined Authority:
[Inclusive Growth Unit](#)

West Midlands Combined Authority:
[Levelling up the West Midlands](#)

West Midlands Combined Authority:
[Digital Inclusivity Map](#)

North East: Addressing Digital Exclusion in the North East
[IPPR North](#)

Glasgow City Region:
[Digital Glasgow Review 2020](#)

Wales:
[Digital Inclusion Alliance Wales Agenda for Digital Inclusion](#)

UK:
Good Things Foundation
[A Blueprint to fix the digital divide: 2021](#)

Post-Covid recovery

Carnegie UK Trust/UNICEF UK:
[Closing the Digital Divide for Good](#)

New Local:
[Shifting the Balance](#)

Skills

Department for Education:
[Adult Education Budget Funding 2020-21](#)

Department for Education:
[Essential Digital Skills Framework](#)

Good Things Foundation:
[Improving digital skills for employability](#)

Good Things Foundation:
[Shocks, Knocks and Building Blocks](#)

Good Things Foundation:
[Supporting digital inclusion of adults with low English language skills](#)

Health

Good Things Foundation:
[Health inequalities and digital exclusion: Briefing paper](#)

Good Things Foundation:
[Digital Inclusion in Health and Care: Lessons Learned](#)

Healthwatch:

[Locked Out: Digitally Excluded People's Experience of Remote GP Appointments](#)

NHS Digital:

[Digital Inclusion for Health and Care](#)

Data poverty

Good Things Foundation:

[Data Poverty Lab](#)

Local Trust:

[Making Connections: Community-Led Actions on Data Poverty](#)

Older people

Centre for Ageing Better:

[How has Covid changed the landscape for digital inclusion?](#)

Age UK:

[Digital Inclusion and Older People: how have things changed in a Covid-19 world?](#)



For more information
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