

Impact Review

2023/24



Good Things



Fixing the Digital Divide: A year of progress

The past year has seen much change, both nationally and for the digital landscape. In 2024, we see a new Government, a persistent cost-of-living crisis, and the accelerating adoption of AI which has reshaped the playing field since we embarked on our strategic journey in April 2022.

Our strategy mission:

1 million people
empowered by 2025

598,000 people
have been supported to thrive
in the digital world since 2022

It's become increasingly clear that the digital divide is deepening, leaving millions without access to the essential tools for participation in our modern society.

However, this need has ignited a remarkable response. We're proud to see a surge of commitment from community organisations and charities stepping up to bridge the gap. We're equally heartened by our collaborations with the private and public sector, including our strategic partnerships with Vodafone, Virgin Media O2, Nominet and Accenture that amplify our impact and reach.

This Impact Review marks a celebration of collective progress. At the start of our strategy period, we had a small engaged network of around 700 hubs and we had reached just under 8,000 people.

I'm pleased to say that we're on track to achieve our ambitious goals:

- We've connected just under 600,000 individuals with support, over halfway towards our target of 1 million.
- The National Digital Inclusion Network has grown to 5,000 hubs, exceeding our initial target.

Our dedication to innovation has seen our products and services go from strength to strength - making it easier than ever for individuals to access support.

We have given out £5.1m in grants to support Digital Inclusion Hubs and our training and events programme has grown exponentially. I'm proud to say that over 300,000 data packages have been given to Digital Inclusion Hubs.

However, millions remain digitally excluded. There are still 8.5m people who don't have basic digital skills to get online, 2.4m households can't afford their mobile phone contract and 1.5m don't have a smartphone, tablet or laptop.

With renewed purpose, we'll continue to advocate for people who are digitally excluded and deliver the highest quality services, hand-in-hand with our incredible network of partners.

We can fix the digital divide - for good.



Helen Milner OBE,
Group Chief Executive,
Good Things Foundation.



A year of Good Things

July '23 – September '23

House of Lords Communications and Digital Committee launches their report exploring Digital Exclusion and the Cost of Living

We launched Digital Nation 2023



October '23 – December '23

Our flagship campaign: Get Online Week 2023

Vodafone launch a docuseries exploring digital exclusion, as part of everyone.connected

Attended Conservative and Labour party conferences

All O2 stores become National Databank Hubs, coinciding with a **Virgin Media O2** campaign to raise awareness of support available



January '24 – March '24

We launched our new online members area for the National Digital Inclusion Network

Refreshed branding launches

Our biggest ever campaign Digital for All went live
Minimum Digital Living Standard for Households with Children report launches

Our new conversation series Digital Futures for Good begins, supported by our Strategic Partners

With NHS England and partners we held a Designing for Digital Inclusion in Healthcare seminar series

Brought together our Strategic Partners and the National Digital Inclusion Network in our Fix the Digital Divide event



April '24 – June '24

NHS framework for action: Healthcare inequalities and mitigating risks of digital exclusion is released

Supported by **Accenture**, our Introduction to AI animation goes live

We brought together the latest data in Digital Nation 2024

Our joint research with **Nominet**, Data Poverty Lab: Phase 3, begins

The Labour Party pledges support for digital inclusion during the Election period



Over half a million people engaged, helping them to benefit from the digital world



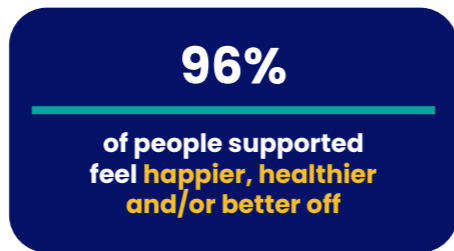
Since April 2022, we've made a significant impact, supporting 598,000 people on their journey to thriving in the digital world. We're on track to achieve our ambitious goal of empowering 1 million people by 2025, closing the digital divide and unlocking a world of opportunity.

The growing digital divide

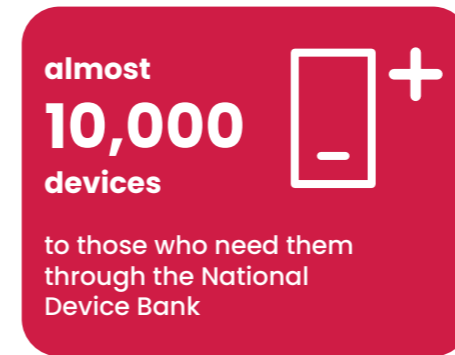
The gap between those online and offline is widening, leaving many cut off from jobs, education, financial savings, online public services and staying connected.

However, there are many reasons why people don't engage with digital:

- Connectivity data costs and access to a suitable device;
- Lack of basic digital skills needed to get online and make the most of their access;
- Barrier of confidence, having never had the opportunity to learn, or fear about scams;
- No motivation, driven by a lack of awareness of the benefits of being online.



Our impact



Over 125,000 data packages given to people experiencing data poverty



In our digital world, data connectivity is no longer a luxury, it's a necessity. Since April 2022, we've distributed 131,272 data packages to individuals and families facing financial difficulties.

A growing network

Our innovative National Databank network acts as a vital lifeline, with hubs now exceeding 2,500 locations including all O2 stores and Virgin Money banks. It addresses the growing issue of data affordability, exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis, unreliable infrastructure, and the need to prioritise basic necessities.

Addressing increasing need

The National Databank makes a huge difference to people's lives. For people making difficult choices when prioritising bills, the offer brings a sense of relief by removing the cost of internet access - helping people stay connected.

Continued improvement and widening reach

In the last 12 months we've made it easier than ever for Digital Inclusion Hubs to help those in need by simplifying our process.

In spring 2024, we trialled a Pop-up Databank campaign in the West Midlands - reaching more people in one week in a targeted location than we have ever done before.

Julie's story

"I felt angry that I was being left behind and cut off from the community. Not everyone can afford to get data, and I didn't know how to use the internet either. I guess I was frightened as well actually, because it's the fear of the unknown. I volunteer at a community group and I didn't want to say I couldn't do things or didn't have the money to do things - it was embarrassing.

But then I received a SIM Card through the National Databank, and they gave me a laptop and showed me how to use all of it as well. Now through the support I've received, I know how to use mobile apps and I can use WhatsApp to talk to friends and family. And there's someone there I can ask for help at the end of the day.

The Hub has that personal touch, and they're very patient with me. Getting the support has been amazing, and it's helped with everything - socialising, online banking, shopping and repairs. It's helped me get out of the house and brought me closer to my family. Now I'm living life on my own terms."



Equipping almost 10,000 people with essential tech



The cost-of-living crisis has intensified the need for affordable devices, with demand for phones, laptops, and computers vastly outpacing supply. We've seen this reflected in a surge of requests from Digital Inclusion Hubs – and we're pleased that almost 400 hubs have joined us to equip their communities.

We know that the people we support don't have appropriate devices to access the internet. The National Device Bank puts recycled and refurbished tech into the hands of the people who need it, unlocking opportunities and connection.

Collaborating to empower individuals and protect the planet

We're grateful for the support of 43 organisations, including 14 who have incorporated device donations into their regular tech refresh cycles. This collaboration ensures a steady flow of devices to those who need them most.

The National Device Bank delivers this impact while promoting environmental responsibility.

Since we launched the National Device Bank we have:

Diverted around

100,000 kg

of e-waste from landfills

Prevented an estimated

8 million

tonnes of CO2 emissions, contributing to a greener future

Jonathan's story

"I didn't have any friends or family here when I arrived as an asylum seeker. I felt isolated, frustrated and sad.

The support from Learn for Life has been a huge blessing – having the laptop from the Device Bank means I can connect to essential services and I couldn't afford my own device otherwise.

Having this device – along with data and skills support – has also made me feel more connected to the people around me.

Now I'm able to do my coursework and create presentations on the laptop. I recently graduated in English and I'm now studying for more advanced qualifications."

Almost 100,000 people supported to learn essential digital skills



Digital literacy is crucial in today's world, yet a staggering 8.5 million UK adults lack the basic skills for online tasks. Since April 2022 we have supported 98,158 people to learn new digital skills.

Time constraints, resource limitations, language and literacy barriers, and fear of online dangers can create significant obstacles. And new research reveals 45% of households with children fall below the Minimum Digital Living Standard, highlighting a digital skills gap affecting both parents and younger generations.

Our recently revamped digital skills platform Learn My Way helps people to master the basics of internet access, discover the possibilities of online tools and resources and gain motivation to continue their digital learning journey. Delivered in Digital Inclusion Hubs, support is tailored to meet the needs of those seeking help.

As tech advances, people may feel left behind with their digital skills, so we have developed topics including helping the people we support understand the basics of Artificial Intelligence (AI).



Minaj's story

" I knew how to use a computer but not very well. My son used to try and show me but I couldn't get to grips with it before discovering Learn My Way.

I was struggling mentally and it was only because I saw a digital skills course advertised that I got the push I needed to get out the house. I actually think if I hadn't done that I would probably be dead now because my mental health was so bad. When you haven't got that connection with the outside world it is really isolating. I wouldn't go to shops or interact with people. But through learning digital skills and then volunteering I learnt how to interact with people in the correct way and now I love it."

National Digital Inclusion Network: 5,000 strong and growing



Since April 2022, we have grown the size of the National Digital Inclusion Network to 5,549 members – marking the achievement of the target we set ourselves for the end of the strategy period.

This national movement to fix the digital divide provides a vital role in supporting people to overcome digital exclusion. Based in communities, Hubs are safe, trusted spaces where people can build confidence in using digital through tailored digital support.

Staff and volunteers in Hubs offer holistic support, addressing not just digital needs but also wider challenges faced by those seeking help.

Being part of the National Digital Inclusion Network enables Hubs to build their capacity to deliver more digital inclusion support, through grants, training and other resources.

We regularly bring together Hubs from across the country, enabling them to connect and learn from each other as well as increasing their understanding of the wider digital inclusion landscape, with access to more knowledge, research and funding opportunities.

12%

of Hubs are in the areas of greatest need*

178

training, meet-up and other support events delivered to members of the Network

88%

of Hubs are satisfied with being a member of the National Digital Inclusion Network

*These are local authorities with high deprivation (with higher population density) and with historically lower coverage by the network.

Hafsha's story

“ Our work as a member of the National Digital Inclusion Network has helped us support learners, patients, communities, volunteers and families, all benefitting from our holistic community delivery with a friendly face they know and can trust.

Because we're local we understand the cultural barriers and for people to be a part of this club adds tremendous value – day in and day out we see the impact of the learners growing in confidence; improving their parenting and relationships, connecting with digital and improving their quality of lives.

SmartLyte – Get Families Talking – is so proud to be part of the National Digital Inclusion Network – the funding, resources and peer support we get from being a part of the Network is phenomenal. We wouldn't be able to serve the local community on the same scale without it.”



Our manifesto to fix the digital divide

With a new Government in place, we will continue to advocate for people who are digitally excluded and the community organisations in the National Digital Inclusion Network who provide vital support for those in need. To prioritise digital inclusion, we developed five key actions:



Collaboration, and co-investment, is key.

A collaborative effort between Government, businesses, civil society, and the public sector is essential to fix the digital divide. This investment will unlock a £13.7 billion economic benefit for the UK.



In this AI age, all adults need essential digital skills.

With the rise of AI, equipping all adults with essential digital skills is crucial. We urge the Government to review and invest in digital skills programmes and support informal, community-based learning which our data shows supports people holistically, meeting them where they are.



To support people and the planet, we should all be reusing tech for social good.

We believe that Government should lead the way by reusing end-of-life devices by joining our National Device Bank movement alongside the businesses, councils and public bodies already donating their old tech.



Make internet access affordable for all.

Connectivity is essential, but many are locked out. The Government should innovate to ensure that internet access is affordable for everyone - through exploring cutting VAT on social tariffs - helping those on the lowest incomes.



Signposting to local support from the National Digital Inclusion Network.

As more NHS and Government public services move online, support to ensure that people can access digital inclusion support is vital. Government service providers, such as Jobcentre Plus could signpost people to their nearest hub.

Thank you

We would like to thank everyone who has supported us in achieving this great progress in the last year.

Our Strategic Partners:



Our funders and supporters:

Air IT
BJSS Sheffield
Cwmpas
Gloucestershire
County Council
Google.org
His Majesty's
Revenue &
Customs (HMRC)

Hot Topics
JCDecaux
JPMorganChase
Foundation
Liverpool City
Region Combined
Authority
London Office of
Technology and
Innovation

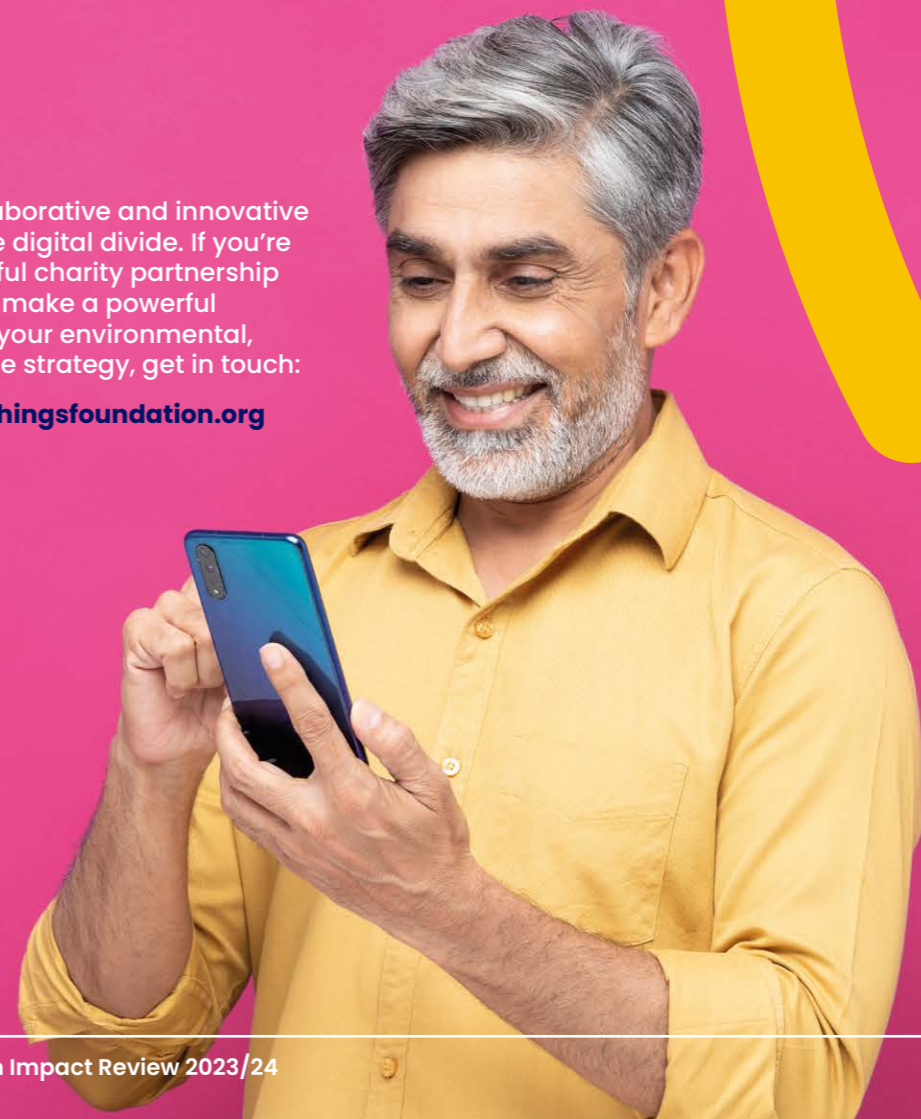
MBNL
Money Wellness
National Grid
Nest Corporation
Netcompany
NHS South East
London Integrated
Care Board

Okta for Good
OneID
Pauline Meredith
Charitable Trust
through Ludlow
Trust Company
People's
Partnership
Reach

Supported by the
Mayor of London
The Metropolitan
Police Service
Virgin Money
Welsh Government
Yorkshire Building
Society

We're looking for collaborative and innovative partnerships, to fix the digital divide. If you're looking for an impactful charity partnership with purpose that will make a powerful contribution towards your environmental, social and governance strategy, get in touch:

partnerships@goodthingsfoundation.org



Get in touch to find out more about
partnering with Good Things Foundation

e: partnerships@goodthingsfoundation.org

w: goodthingsfoundation.org

