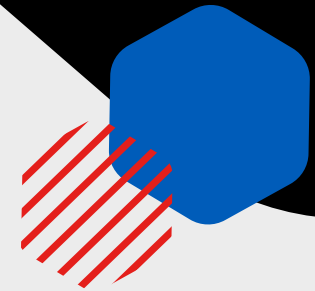




Emergency support to  
get the most vulnerable  
online during the  
COVID-19 crisis

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Good Things  
Foundation



# DevicesDotNow

**Interim Impact Report #3: 24 March - 31 July**

End of campaign report and plans for the future

# Foreword



**Helen Milner OBE,**  
CEO, Good Things  
Foundation



**Liz Williams MBE,**  
CEO FutureDotNow

As we move out of the immediate public health emergency, we take this opportunity to showcase our achievements since the DevicesDotNow initiative began, and to outline our ambitions for the future.

COVID-19 has exposed and exacerbated digital exclusion across the UK with 1.9 million households still lacking access to the internet. We have heard many stories of the huge challenges faced by the people that we support, as well as stories of people adapting to their new normal. What became apparent was how the pandemic left digitally excluded individuals and families isolated and desperate.

Since DevicesDotNow began back in March, we have been overwhelmed by the support and generosity of everyone involved. A huge number of people from dozens of organisations have come together to make DevicesDotNow possible, and without their hard work and dedication it wouldn't have been possible to help some of the most vulnerable households in the UK in such challenging times.

Thank you to our donors for their generosity. Whether a large organisation or an individual contributing through our Crowdfunder page, this financial support has enabled us to do important work.

Thank you to our community partners that work tirelessly to support people in their community and who are facing times of

uncertainty themselves. Their passion and drive, and the support they provide for their communities have made it possible for us to help **11,437 people** and counting.

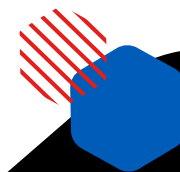
And finally, thank you to the companies that generously donated high quality used devices. These devices have been distributed to community partners to be cleaned, formatted and prepared for vulnerable local people.

What next for the DevicesDotNow initiative? We will continue to support the most digitally excluded people in the UK by working in three areas:

- **Nominet** will lead on building a collaborative effort to distributing refurbished devices to communities through sharing information and top tips through a new Reboot website
- **Good Things Foundation** will embed personal access to devices and the internet in all its future work to ensure that digital inclusion leads to digital equality; and, in August, will begin working with major funders on two large personal access projects
- **FutureDotNow** will continue to advocate for people, and device and data poverty with Government and industry.

Together, working with our partners we will continue to strive for a 100% digitally included nation. We hope this report inspires you to help and contribute in any way you can.

📖 **Together, working with our partners we will continue to strive for a 100% digitally included nation. We hope this report inspires you to help and contribute in any way you can.** 📖



# The story of the DevicesDotNow



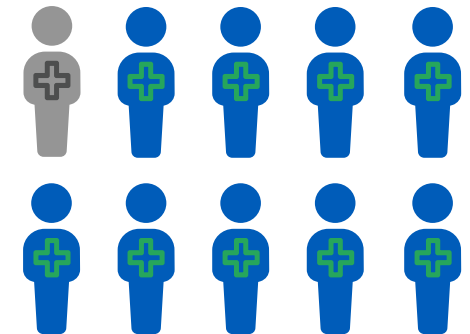
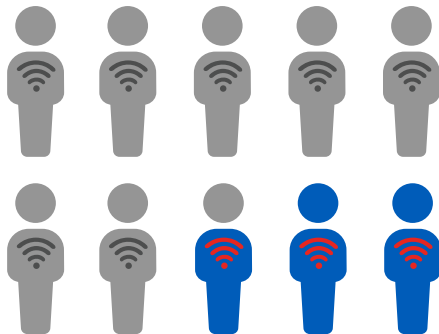
- **4,270** devices allocated to **349** community partners
- Funding secured to support **7,772** further people, via **350** community partners



**846**  
donated devices  
distributed to community  
partners for refurbishment

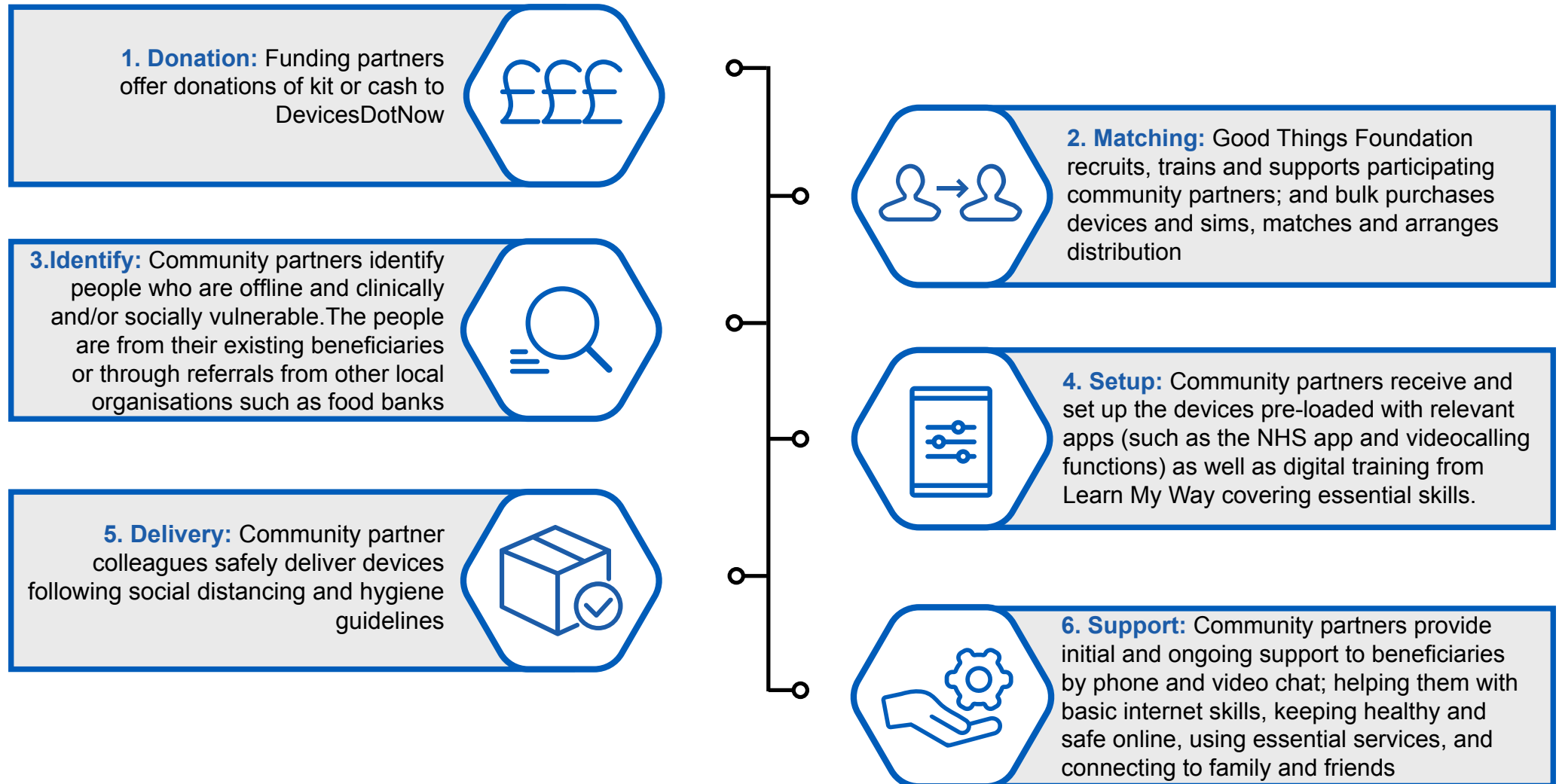


**400**  
additional data packages  
allocated to people through  
**40** centre partners



# DevicesDotNow: A six stage process that works

DevicesDotNow, working with delivery partner Good Things Foundation, rapidly operationalised a six stage process that could help thousands of people. An initial pilot of getting devices, sims, and support to 1,000 people was rapidly implemented and the process iterated. This process is now tested and ready to scale to support at least 5,000 people a week when/if funding is donated or made available. This process is being used today with the current donations.



**We depend on donations from businesses, foundations, and governments to reach as many people as possible.**

# Impact Insights

Through DevicesDotNow and by working closely with community partners, over 4,000 people have been given access to devices and data. Through surveys, interviews and network insights, multiple areas of impact have been identified from the project.



## Maintaining Employment Momentum

Receiving a device meant beneficiaries were able to continue efforts associated with their career progression. People had developed skills, habits and taken part in courses when at community organisations, which helped them in their career journeys. Having a device meant they could now continue with these.

🗨️ *Mark has been able to look for jobs during the lockdown period and found a job online through Facebook that has led to a work trial. 🗨️*



## Building personal resilience

COVID-19 knocked many people's confidence and for those without devices, they were without support structures others had access to. By receiving a device, beneficiaries of DDN developed a sense of security, independence and started to rebuild their confidence, all vital components within social inclusion efforts.

🗨️ *Kirstie has serious mental health problems and has been very isolated with no access to the internet and unable to access our online support group. By receiving a device, she has now been able to rejoin our depression peer support 'Friends in need' and connect with her friends and support network. 🗨️*



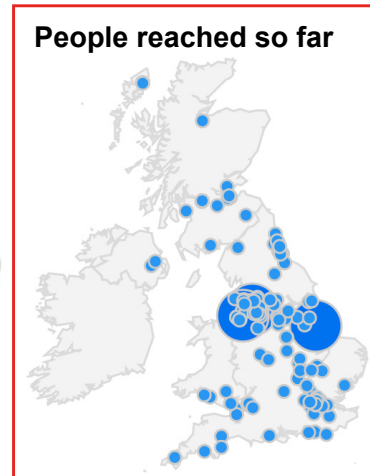
## Data Poverty

Findings suggested that data poverty could play a role in furthering the spread of COVID-19. Prior to receiving devices, people without data were going, often with their family, to other houses to use WiFi. In addition, people were travelling long distances on public transport to access free WiFi hotspots in town centres.

🗨️ *He needs a mobile device to help his learning and he is no longer able to access Wifi without going to friend's houses. 🗨️*

# Untapped demand - more people to reach

## Demand for devices



With funding secured to help a total of over 11,000 people we will help most of the people on this map (although some funding is linked to specific geographies). Online Centres are still telling us of unmet demand.



*We chose beneficiaries by considering each individual's circumstances and the guidelines of the project. We distributed the devices equally across the community and considered the referrals from British Red cross and other local organisations. Our aim was to foster sentiments of equality and diversity through this project and we believe we have been successful in doing this. If we had more devices it could have been easier to accommodate more people in the community.*



**Fareeha Usman, Being Woman**

Community demand for our help is acute. From within the Online Centres Network we have received requests to help over 8000 people who are most vulnerable as a result of digital exclusion and social isolation. Our inbox is overflowing with requests for devices, each one with a compelling human story at the end of it.

To reach one person costs between £200 and £300 depending on devices and the market availability of lower cost devices.

We will meet our immediate goal of helping **10,000** people

To help **50,000** people we need approx **£10m**

To help **100,000** people we need approx **£20m**

DevicesDotNow is a collective and collaborative campaign and is reaching people everyday.

To help one person makes a huge difference to their lives. Every donation matters.



# What next?



Throughout the DevicesDotNow campaign, we have come to understand some of the challenges related to processing donations of used devices. For this reason, we have worked hard to understand the key steps and activities you would need to consider in order to set up a process for refurbishing used devices at a local level. We've captured this step by step, welcome to the REBOOT platform.

The platform will be live very soon for you to access and to download the steps specific to your scenario (e.g. you might be a school, an academy, a community foundation wondering how to source devices to support those in your community).

The REBOOT platform will offer an insight into the key steps to consider and also provide an opportunity to collaborate with others who are doing the same, learning from each other along the way and also from those who have already started their journey.

This turned into a project called Reboot, and we are looking forward to the launch of the handbook and a new website soon.



As soon as the lock down began, Good Things Foundation was overwhelmed with urgent requests for help for people who couldn't afford access to the internet to cope with Covid-19 and social isolation.

Critical to Good Things' approach is a deep partnership with a UK-wide network of grassroots community organisations that provide inspiration and support to local people to help them to gain the basic digital skills they need to thrive in a digital world, including access to the internet at their physical locations. Covid-19 took that physical lifeline away.

Moving forward and having delivered over 2,400 devices and connectivity to vulnerable people through that hyperlocal network, Good Things Foundation will now embed the 'personal internet access' element into bids and proposals for future digital and social inclusion activity. A device and a connection to the internet, alongside having basic digital skills, is now a critical element of digital inclusion and a fundamental need for everyone. In August we will begin this ongoing work, + helping over 7,000 more people to gain support and devices, and delivering projects which deliver digital inclusion, alleviate data poverty and drive digital financial capability.



The past four critical months have offered a number of learnings about the human impact of digital exclusion. FutureDotNow has been able to call upon the talents and generosity of our coalition partners to make DevicesDotNow a reality.

We're not stopping there. We will continue to be ambitious about the economic impact of digital skills and digital inclusion. We know that essential digital skills is one element of our digital inclusion framework that includes: Infrastructure, Personal Access, Skills, and Will (Motivation).

The legacy of DevicesDotNow will continue through our work at FutureDotNow - we will continue to working with our industry partners and Government to raise awareness of the needs of the nation, to bring evidence of the impact that can be achieved for the economy and for society, and to advocate for a 100% digitally included UK.

# Partnership for a 100% digitally included UK



**Liz Williams MBE,**  
**CEO FutureDotNow**

COVID-19 has highlighted the human impact of digital exclusion like never before. The personal stories behind DevicesDotNow hammer that home.

John used to rely on a local online centre for internet access, until lockdown plunged him into isolation and mental health challenges. As a registered carer for his brother, he's now using the device we provided to stay in touch with friends and family and to look for jobs. Peggy was unable to do online shopping before she received his device. She was forced to walk miles to the shops at the height of the pandemic, despite being elderly and especially at risk.

As the immediate public health emergency passes and social distancing restrictions start to ease, it's clear that digital will continue to shape our daily lives – whether it's ordering a pint in the pub through an app, accessing the essential services that are increasingly online-only, or keeping up with loved ones who have become harder to visit in person.

And yet, despite new levels of dependency on digital, the UK doesn't have a national strategy to deliver 100% digital inclusion. Today around a quarter of the UK population don't have the digital skills the government define as essential for life and work. Tackling that is, arguably, a national emergency; critical to recovery, future resilience and growth. A key to resolving national economic productivity challenges but also for community and personal prosperity and wellbeing.

As we reflect on what we've learned through DevicesDotNow, the coronavirus and lockdown provided new insights into the opportunities we have as a national to harness digital to build a recovery that works for everyone.

We saw the UK's strategy of sustained investment in digital infrastructure pay off. If you had access, connectivity wasn't an issue. In fact, despite unprecedented spikes in demand, the UK's telecoms networks performed brilliantly throughout the crisis. The issue was more human. It was about personal

access to the telecoms network. Having a device, having enough devices within a household and having the right device for the task in hand. A smartphone is brilliant but not great for education purposes! And it was about access to data. We learnt a huge amount about limited users of the internet on low data packages, who constantly topped up via free WIFI hotspots that disappeared overnight as the nation locked down. Often leaving them having to make unpalatable choices about buying data or food.

And we saw huge changes in motivation. As people scrambled to find new digital ways to do the things that mattered, from zoom church services, to family quiz nights, from working from home to staying in touch with grandchildren. Before Covid, the UK had a massive motivation gap. Lockdown changed that. We have the opportunity to capitalise on that newfound will and use it to help everyone build new skills. The digital skills they'll need to participate fully in the UK's reopening. It's often staggering to those that can, but today, around 12% of us cannot open an app. On the bright side, 78% of people recognise that their need for digital skills has increased due to Covid and 57% want to continue building our skills now that lockdown is over.

We have a massive opportunity, FutureDotNow is calling for a public / private partnership to deliver a 100% digitally included UK. Today we're some distance away. But we're working with our corporate partners to inspire, challenge and support them to motivate and upskill their employees, customers, and communities. And we're asking Government to make a 100% digitally included UK a cross-cutting policy priority.

COVID-19 has shown how essential digital skills are to us all, we must come together – government, business and civil society – to urgently invest to step change the UK's digital capability to secure our recovery, and ensure everyone can get back to their best in life and work.

**As the immediate public health emergency passes and social distancing restrictions start to ease, it's clear that digital will continue to shape our daily lives**





# DevicesDotNow in the News

## Reasons to Be Cheerful Podcast: 1st June

"Helen Milner from the Good Things Foundations talks about how lockdown has exposed new digital divides."

[Listen now >](#)

## DCMS Select Committee

Several appearances in DCMS special committee meetings and quoted in the Impact of Covid-19 on DCMS sectors report (**published on 23rd July 2020**)

[Read the report >](#)

## Evening Standard: Two million UK households don't have access to the internet — meet the organisation trying to change that: 5th June

"We have a clear six-stage process that will enable someone to get online and have the data they need to access critical sites - whether that's health information, the ability to shop, or just the ability to see a face," says Williams. "And there's ongoing support from those community organisers. It's very much powering up the community that knows what's needed with the essential digital kit to help them go about the work."

[Read the article >](#)

## Independent: The government's plan for schools has to be better – increasing internet connectivity will help more children, 17th May

"The best thing that the government could and should do is to fund the institutions that are seeking to close the educational and digital divides and to expand connectivity to those who did not have it previously, by distributing devices to those that need them. Campaigns like DevicesDotNow have already distributed over 1,000 devices and are ready and waiting for government investment to expand the scheme nationwide."

[Read the article >](#)

## CNN: Almost half the world is living through this pandemic without the internet, 7th June

"I wasn't coping at all. I was very lonely and depressed when lockdown first started, but since I've had the tablet ... when I'm feeling lonely, I can talk to my grandchildren or my daughter. I've got contact with them constantly, because

they're always online."- Annette

[Read the article >](#)

## Guardian: Digital divide 'isolates and endangers' millions of UK's poorest 28th April

"The scale of the problem is staggering," says Helen Milner, the chief executive of the Good Things Foundation, a charity that tackles digital exclusion in the UK. "Pay-as-you-go customers without the means to buy data are finding themselves shut in their homes, facing social isolation with no means of communicating with the outside world."

[Read the article >](#)

## Telegraph: 'Disappointing' lack of IT support for the elderly during lockdown, 9th May

Helen Milner, the chief executive of the Good Things Foundation, said: "If you are an older person living independently, you're often living alone. The whole world has been cut off from them."

[Read the article >](#)

## Make a Difference Campaign: 8th July

BBC Breakfast

BBC News / BBC World

BBC Radio - could change to BBC Local Radio Stations x 17



# Caring for carers during lockdown

- **Helping carers with digital skills**
- **Have had to find new ways of working**
- **#DevicesDotNow**



Carers are improving their digital skills and ability to access online information and support thanks to the DevicesDotNow initiative.

Caring Together is a leading charity supporting carers of all ages across Cambridgeshire, Peterborough and Norfolk. It provides information and advice, runs community services and campaigns for carers to have better choices.

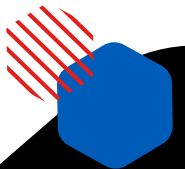
In March, at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in the UK, Caring Together had to drastically change how it operates in order to maintain the support the charity offers. Since March it has supported over 1,200 people through its specialist carers' helpline and has run virtual Zoom sessions for 236 carers.

The pandemic has had a profound effect on the carers' lives. Andy Barber, Engagement Manager at Caring Together tells us: "COVID-19 means we are unable to hold face-to-face groups, but much more than that, COVID-19 has massively impacted the lives of carers. Many families who had help from other people saw this disappear due to shielding and social distancing, increasing their caring duties and decreasing their ability to take a break."

Caring Together - a member of the Online Centres Network - received some tablets for their carers through the DevicesDotNow initiative. Andy tells us: "Carers have been able to access information about the health of the person they care for, such as online GP consultations, mental health support, or the latest guidance around shielding and accessing support. Other carers have been able to join in with virtual carer groups that we and other organisations are running."

As lockdown eases, Andy and the Caring Together team are adapting to their new way of working. "Each stage of easing of the lockdown will look a little different and we are mindful that things are different for carers – some people will be shielding for quite some time, and others may take time to feel confident to head out or go to a group again. We know the impact on the physical and mental health of many carers, and the people they look after, has also been significant. That will be something we need to continue to support them with for some time."

"And given the impact on the economy and therefore funding at both national and local level, we're going to be providing support in very challenging circumstances – for the carers we work with and for us as a charity."



# James expanding digital horizons with help from his daughter

- **James's daughter providing digital support**
- **Manages Universal Credit account**
- **Applying for jobs online**
- **#DevicesDotNow**



James O'Dell, 57 from Liverpool is finding his way in the online world thanks to some digital support from his teenage daughter.

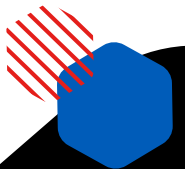
James has been visiting Kensington Community Learning Centre CIC, a BT sponsored Online Centre, since 2016. During this time he received support on learning how to use a laptop, but when the UK went into lockdown this was no longer available to him. Because James doesn't have the internet at home, he was identified as somebody who would benefit from receiving a tablet from the DevicesDotNow campaign.

James tells us, "I have been using my tablet to job search with the help of my daughter, I have never used a tablet before so it was a little different. My daughter has been showing me how to do things on the tablet such as use my Universal Credit account, use my emails and I am now using Facebook with her help.

Debbie Derbyshire, Manager at Kensington Community Learning Centre CIC has also been supporting James with his device. "I received the tablet from Debbie, she has been ringing me to make sure I was ok as we could not attend the centre. Debbie asked me if I had internet at home or a device and when I said no she told me that I could have an internet ready device to use at home"

James is now expanding his horizons with his new device, "If I didn't have the tablet I really don't know what I would have done. I am unable to work so the tablet has given me access to the internet and I am learning new things. I have just signed up for Facebook with the help of my daughter and am really enjoying it, seeing as I've never used it before."

"I feel happy that I was given the opportunity to receive the tablet as it will help with my daughter being less bored as she can use it too. I am still going to go back to KCLC as I enjoy the company and it gets me out of the house."



# New tablet helps Hilary reunite her family

- **Was given a device after the library closed and she no longer had access to the internet**
- **Reunited her parents over Skype after being separated due to COVID-19**
- **#DevicesDotNow**



Hilary, 59, from Wincle, Macclesfield has found new independence with a device and data from the DevicesDotNow initiative.

Internet access has never been something that Hilary has had at home, and due to lockdown restrictions she was unable to go to her local library after being closed to visitors. She tells us: “I have only ever been able to use the internet at the library. I used to go to the work hubs in Congleton and Macclesfield every week to use the internet and get help.”

Hilary lives with her elderly parents in Wincle, which is a very remote location - and with no neighbours at all she felt completely isolated. “My mum has been in the hospital throughout lockdown and we’ve been unable to visit her.”

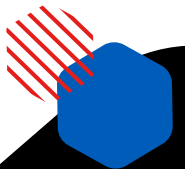
Through Cheshire Learning Partnership, Hilary was identified as someone who could benefit from a device and free data through the DevicesDotNow initiative - and she says “it has changed my life.”

“Before having the device I had to drive to our local shop and just hope it was open. Now I can look up which shops are open at what times and I’ve been able to follow what’s been going on with the coronavirus locally.”

Hilary’s contact at the centre has been really supportive, “When Adele came to drop the tablet off she had already put some things on there for me, like Facebook and Skype. Later that week Adele rang me again and talked me through how to use Skype. We then had a Skype call which was amazing!”

“It was my dad’s 89th birthday during lockdown. My mum was still in hospital so by his birthday my dad hadn’t seen my mum for over 11 weeks. I arranged a surprise Skype call for them with the nurses’ help. Even though Adele had shown me how to do it, I still found it tricky but we got there in the end. It was fabulous, I hadn’t told my dad (in case I couldn’t get it to work) so he was really surprised! It was wonderful and it made me laugh when my mum asked ‘does your dad know I can see him?’”

“It’s been wonderful to have the device. I don’t know how I would have managed without it. I am looking forward to getting back to the work hubs to see people and get help with my job search, but for now, I am happy to continue using my device at home.”





# DevicesDotNow: Some of the people we've helped

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# Some of our many supporters to date

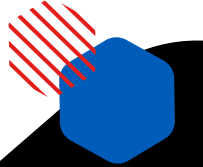
## Funders



## Some of the community partners who are helping beneficiaries



Thank you to the amazing team gathered from FutureDotNow Coalition partners and other friends who worked really hard to make this wonderful impact happen, some of whom gave their time for free, and the majority of whom juggled the long hours alongside other work: Abbi, Adam, Angela, Amy G, Amy W, Camilla, Catherine, Chris A, Ciara, Deborah, Diana, Duncan, Emma, Gabi, Helen, Holly, Inez, Jemma, Jenny, Joe, John, Jordan, Kate, Laura, Lewis, Liz, Louise, Martha, Megan, Michael, Sital, Steph, Paulina, Pete, Roger, Rob, Rob S, Rosa, Vanessa, Vic, Vinous



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# DevicesDotNow

## Interim Impact Report #3: 24 March - 31 July

End of campaign report and plans for the future

For more information and to support our work:

[goodthingsfoundation.org/devicesdotnow](http://goodthingsfoundation.org/devicesdotnow)

To keep up to date with the campaign:

[@futuredotnowuk](https://twitter.com/futuredotnowuk) [@goodthingsfdn](https://twitter.com/goodthingsfdn)

[#DevicesDotNow](https://twitter.com/DevicesDotNow)

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