



Good Things Foundation



Reboot UK: Social outcomes powered by digital

January 2018



Contents

Executive Summary	3
Our Impact	4
Background	6
Problem	6
Key Findings	8
Impact for Individuals	9
How individuals grew digital confidence	11
People got better at using the internet	12
People were more comfortable using the internet without help	13
People used the internet more often	14
Progression and wellbeing	15
Reboot UK support helps Grimsby resident cope with stress and depression	16
Impact for Communities	17
Centre brings Hope to Liverpool man with paranoid schizophrenia	19
Community connector	20
Conclusion	21

Executive Summary

In the UK, there are 11.5 million people without basic digital skills, and 15.2 million people aren't making full use of the internet.

Issues of digital exclusion are exacerbated amongst those who are socially excluded.

Reboot UK is a consortium project, funded by Big Lottery Fund, and delivered by Good Things Foundation in partnership with Family Fund, Mind and Homeless Link. The project sought to investigate the transformative powers of digital for groups of people in poverty, helping them to improve their health and wellbeing.

Reboot UK aimed to address three key problems:

For individuals: Entrenched digital exclusion amongst vulnerable people (carers, homeless people and people with mental health needs) makes it harder for them to break free from dependency on support services.

For communities: A lack of resources, staff skills or time to build digital inclusion practice into their sector support means practice isn't changing fast enough to meet the changing needs of the digital world outside.

For society: Not having clear evidence or tested models to change practice means more immediate demands are often met before digital skills needs.


As part of the Reboot UK programme, we aimed to demonstrate the following positive outcomes:

For individuals:


 Participants have increased digital skills and digital confidence

 Participants have improved confidence and wellbeing

For communities:




 Specialist mental health and homelessness services have a better understanding of how to embed digital skills delivery in their existing service offer

For society:



 Increased understanding of how to embed digital skills in Third sector grant-making and project delivery

How we did this

Between March and September 2017, Reboot UK supported 35 organisations to deliver digital support to excluded people. Those people experienced

-  Recovery powered by digital
-  Re-integration powered by digital
-  Improved outlook powered by digital.

Reboot UK is the only national programme to provide digital skills support to these audience groups. It worked by helping:

-  23 Online Centres (specialist digital inclusion centres) to support severely excluded audience groups
-  12 specialist homeless, mental health, and carers services to support people with digital technologies.











Through these organisations, we supported **1,412 multiply excluded people** to develop digital skills.

The project also engaged **26 organisations** through the community connector programme, as well as raising the profile of digital exclusion within the homelessness sector.




Our impact

The Reboot UK programme had a range of positive impacts, on both individuals, communities, including:


For individuals:

-  Providing an introduction to learning through radically informal support
-  Helping people to develop an understanding of how to stay well
-  Helping people to develop goals, and changing their perceptions of the future
-  Support to reintegrate into society
-  Support for people to develop new skills
-  Help to engage meaningfully with digital technology
-  A reduction of the need for support to use technology
-  Support for entry into employment
-  Encouragement of frequent internet use
-  Support for recovery from addiction

For communities:

-  The creation of localised digital support
-  Profile raising of community assets and approaches
-  The development of new and novel community engagement practices
-  An approach which saw the threading of digital skills through specialist support
-  The creation of communities of support (driven by peer mentors)
-  The expansion of digital activities based on user needs
-  The use of organisation's social and professional networks to build awareness of digital technology issues

For society:

-  A programme legacy of raising the profile of digital support within the homeless sector. The connector uses the social and professional connections between organisations to build an awareness of issues around digital technology. It aims to support frontline workers to think about why they should provide digital support to their clients, and how they do this.



Background

Reboot UK is an innovative consortium project that aims to support groups of people in poverty to realise positive health and wellbeing outcomes by improving their digital skills. The consortium has been managed by Good Things Foundation, together with partners Mind, Family Fund and Homeless Link.

Phase 1, an intensive 12 month test and learn pilot, was delivered between September 2015 and August 2016. It explored how digital can be used as a powerful engagement tool for multiply excluded people. The second phase of Reboot UK built on and responded to the findings from the first phase.

Problem

Reboot UK responded to two issues:





-  a lack of digital skills among multiply excluded groups
-  a lack of appropriate support for these people

By improving the community of support that is available to these people it addressed their individual digital needs.

Reboot UK was developed in response to the digital skills needs of multiply disadvantaged people. It is the only national programme designed to exclusively support three excluded audience groups: homeless people, people with poor mental health and low-income carers.

These three target groups were chosen because their needs are unlikely to be met by current digital inclusion initiatives. We also believe that these groups have a significant amount to gain from increasing their digital confidence and their subsequent use of the internet.

Data from Citizens Advice suggests low use of the internet among clients with mental health problems¹. There are conflicting reports around the relative digital skills of homeless people. Although some studies report both high skill levels and high levels of device ownership in that community, others contradict this². Although there is some conflict on this point, all reports agree that homeless people face specific barriers to internet access. These include lack of:

-  money for mobile data
-  accessible charge points for devices
-  appropriate skills support
-  accessible Wifi

¹ Access Denied' Universal Credit and Digital by Default, Advice North Yorkshire and Citizens Advice (2013) <http://www.yorkcab.org.uk/Digital%20by%20Default%20-%20Full%20Report.pdf>, accessed 17.11.15.

² St Mungo's Broadway reported that 48% of their clients do not have the necessary digital skills to complete an online form, in recent evidence presented to the Work and Pensions Committee: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmworpen/479/479vw26.htm>, accessed 13.10.15.




Our experience of delivering Reboot UK highlighted the lack of experience and resource amongst specialist services. For mental health and homelessness services, digital support is often a new support offer.

Carers experience different problems and digital plays a part in addressing these. Carers might find it hard to communicate with their disabled child or experience flash points which make day-to-day life hard. Digital devices can support carers by making life with their disabled child easier.

Reboot UK enabled services to support the wider digital needs of their clients. In doing so, it provided a new digital support route for multiply excluded individuals.



Key Findings

Between March and September 2017, Reboot UK supported 35 organisations to deliver digital support to excluded people. Those people experienced

-  Recovery powered by digital
-  Re-integration powered by digital
-  Improved outlook powered by digital.

We worked with Family Fund, Mind, Homeless Link, and the Online Centres Network (community based organisations supporting people to overcome social exclusion through digital) to make this happen. We worked together to reach carers, homeless people, and people with mental health needs.

Reboot UK is the only national programme to provide digital skills to these audience groups. It worked by helping:

-  23 Online Centres to support severely excluded audience groups
-  12 specialist homeless, mental health, and carers services to provide support with digital technologies.

Through these organisations, we supported **1,412 multiply excluded people** to develop digital skills.

The project also engaged **26 organisations** through the community connector programme. The programme raised the profile of digital exclusion within the homelessness sector.

Reboot UK has an impact on individuals, communities, and society. It does this by providing targeted support to excluded groups. The progression benefits for individuals have wider impacts for society. The process of engaging these groups with digital technology is transformative for organisations and communities of support.

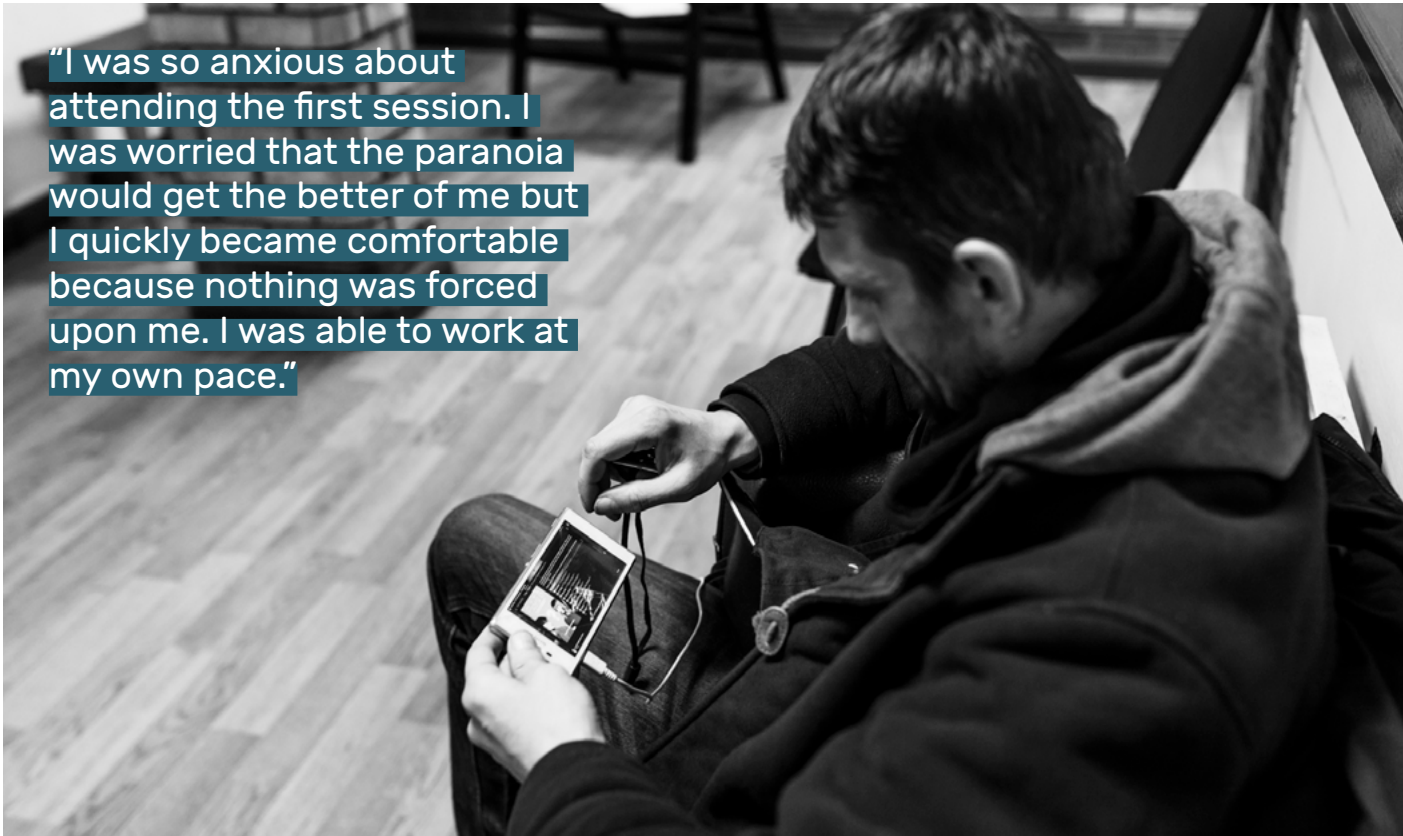
Impact for Individuals

If someone is homeless, a carer, or suffering from poor mental health, then they are likely to encounter additional barriers to digital technology. These include:

- Low confidence
- Anxiety
- Complex caring responsibilities
- Precarious disposable income

Digital support for these groups is scarce. Reboot UK addressed this by providing flexible and diverse digital support through trusted services.

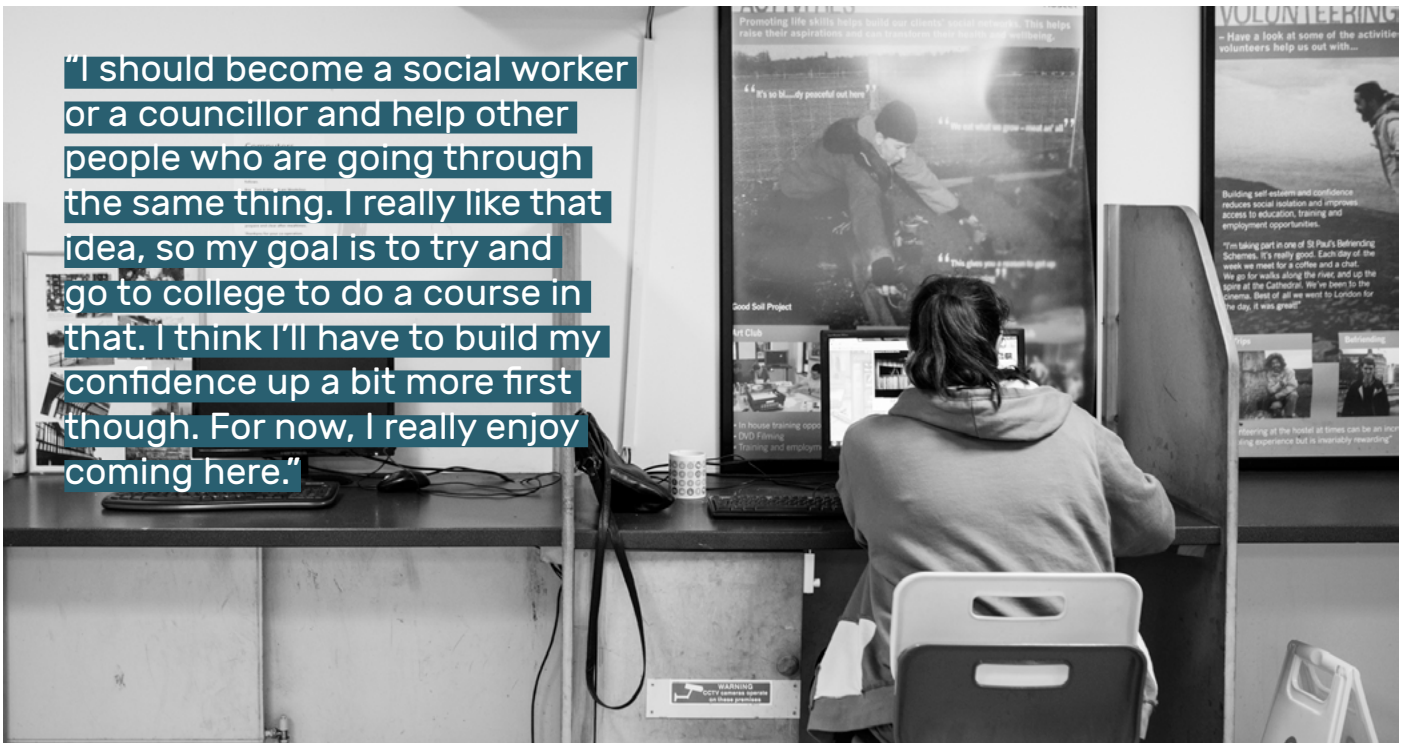
This created huge individual impacts. For some participants, the project has provided an introduction to learning. Centres like CPO Media and the Hope Centre provide radically informal support for their clients. This is crucial for people like David, who suffer with schizophrenia:



"I was so anxious about attending the first session. I was worried that the paranoia would get the better of me but I quickly became comfortable because nothing was forced upon me. I was able to work at my own pace."

David was able to develop new skills, despite doubting himself: "I never thought I'd be able to get myself along to them, never mind actually learn something new." For David, and many others like him, Reboot changed how they think about their future. They now know that they can learn new things, new opportunities are open to them, and they have found support that works.

Carly found something similar. She still suffers with depression, but she has started to set goals for the future. She sees the support offered through Reboot UK as a stepping stone:

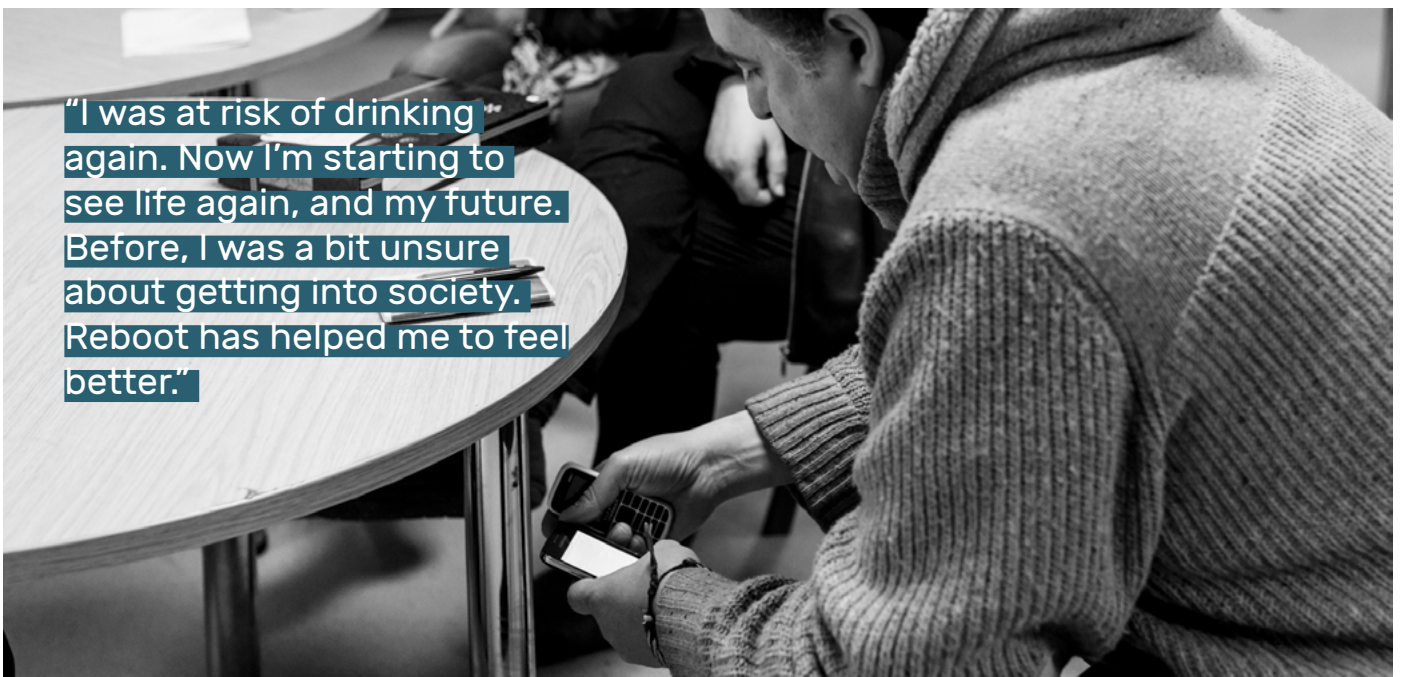


"I should become a social worker or a councillor and help other people who are going through the same thing. I really like that idea, so my goal is to try and go to college to do a course in that. I think I'll have to build my confidence up a bit more first though. For now, I really enjoy coming here."

For carers like Rona daily life can be a struggle. Complex caring responsibilities mean that most of her time is spent addressing the immediate needs of her child. Understanding digital technology has helped to mediate the relationship between her and her thirteen year old son.

His behaviour is sometimes hard to manage. Now he has an iPad, he's "definitely happier" and more chilled out. This small change takes the pressure off Rona. Now she has a bit more space to manage everything in the house.

For people like Ross, digital technology helps them to understand how they will stay well by helping them to understand how their life can look. This is empowering:











"I was at risk of drinking again. Now I'm starting to see life again, and my future. Before, I was a bit unsure about getting into society. Reboot has helped me to feel better."

Digital inclusion supports recovery. For addicts, people who are recovering from an addiction, and those who have experienced a period of poor mental health, reintegration into society is important. For more chaotic participants, the first step might just be participation. For others, it is the feeling that they are in control of the things – like housing, or benefits – that help them to be part of society. For others, understanding digital technology opens up future possibilities. It gives them the confidence to plan for the future.

How individuals grew digital confidence

Reboot UK supports multiply excluded people to engage with digital technology. It does this by providing a huge range of support options through hyper-local community support and specialist services. Reboot UK is not about computer classes. The programme reframes what digital support means by using digital to engage learners in social activities, skills for independent living and progression. It does this by running:

-  a karaoke in a wet hostel (a hostel that allows alcohol)
-  a 1-1 peer support programme
-  a befriending service
-  digital skills drop-in
-  a cooking club
-  a coding group
-  a house bidding group
-  peer-run job support

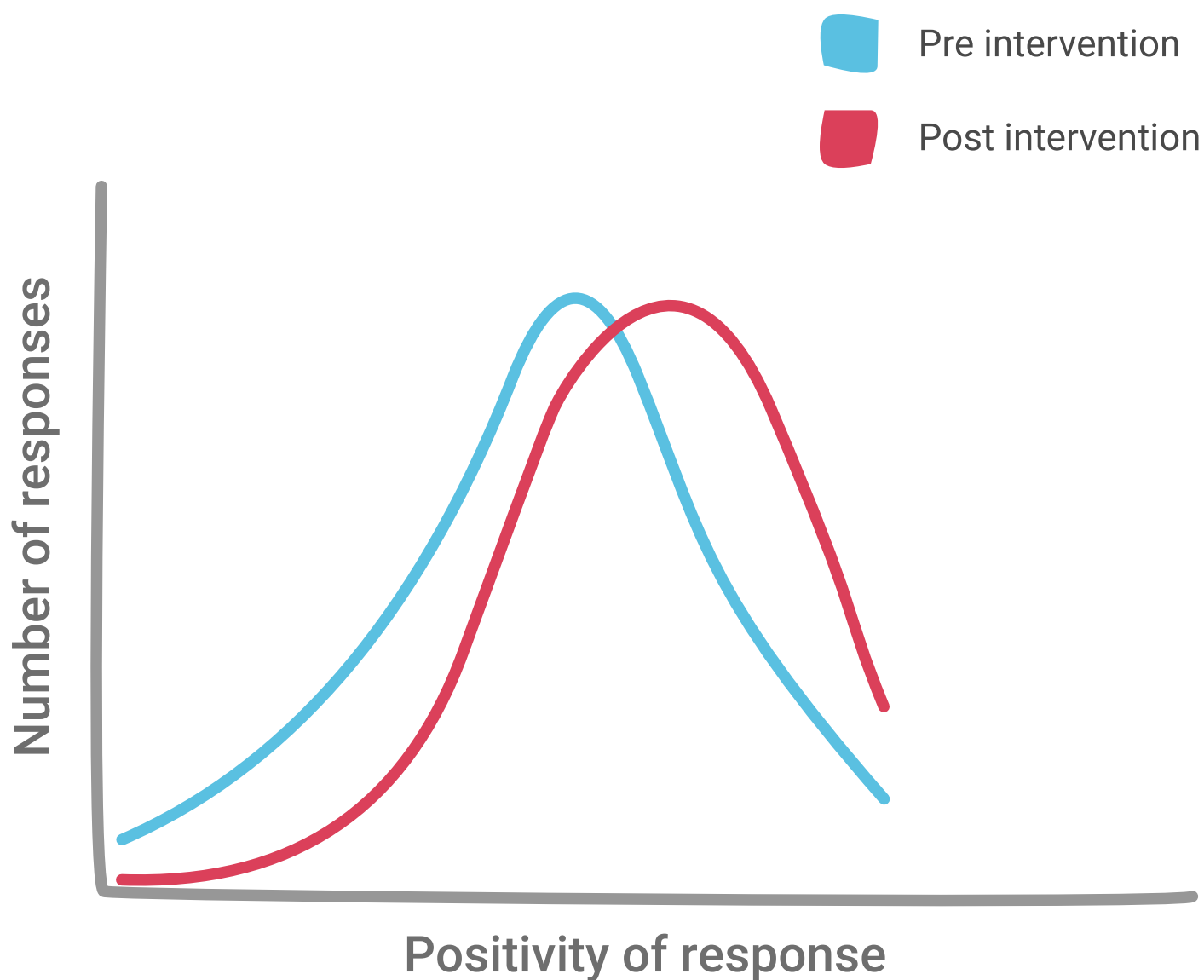
We measured the effect of these interventions by asking participants to rate their own experience of digital technology.

People got better at using the internet

This graph shows how people rated their ability to use the internet.

Each line shows how many people responded to each score. A general trend is described by the curve, which shows the distribution across the range of scores.

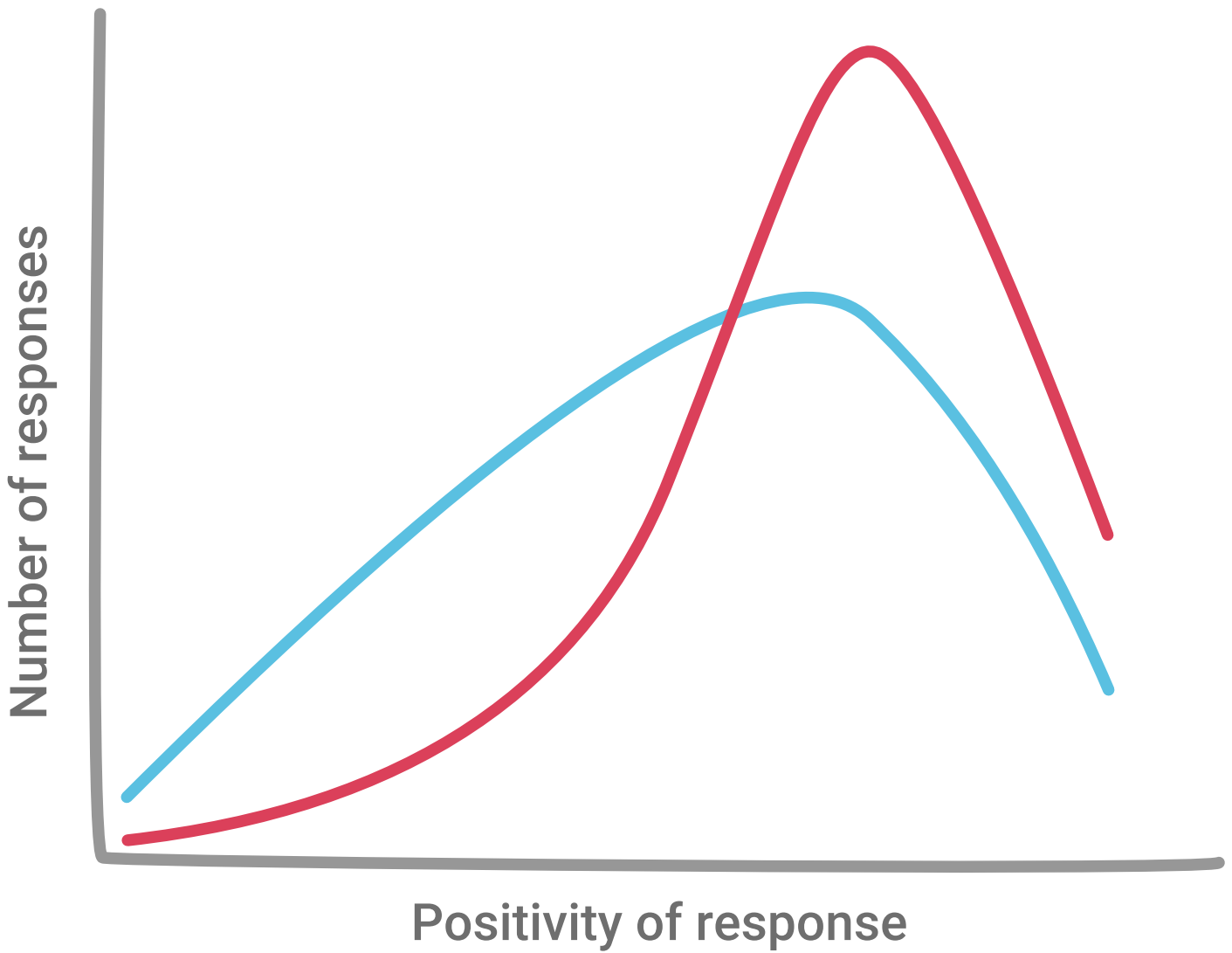
In this graph, the profile of each curve is very similar. The change is in where the curve sits on the score. This graph shows a shift in the mode (the most common response). This shows a population shift. After the intervention, more people highly rated their own ability to use the internet.



People were more comfortable using the internet without help

The graph shows a clear distinction between responses pre- and post-intervention. The pre-intervention shows a much less pronounced mode. This might suggest that people's perception of their own confidence is unclear before they are supported.

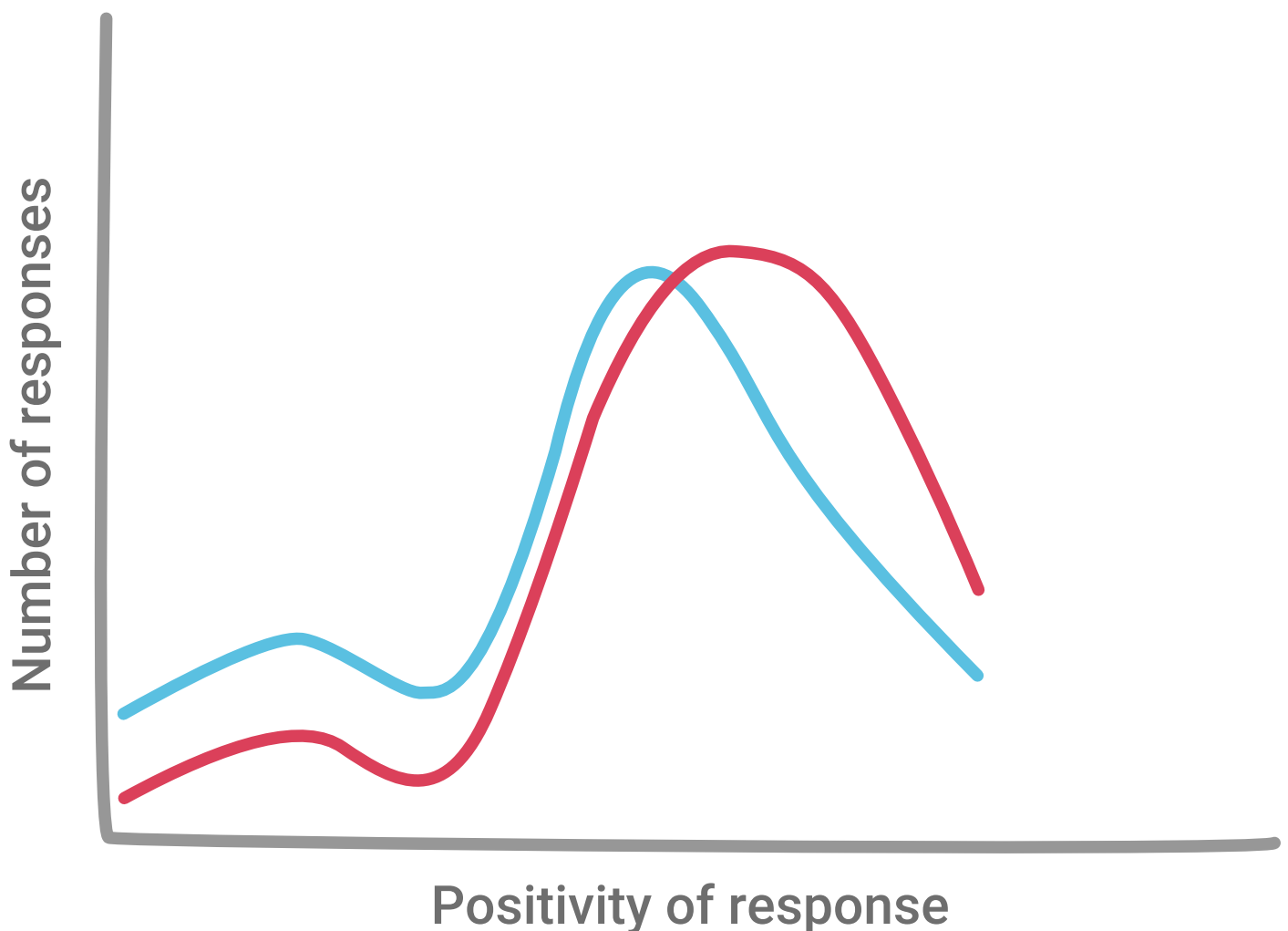
After the intervention, there is a spike in the number of respondents scoring highly. The mode is in a similar place, but the curve suggests that people who scored low in the first survey were much more confident after the intervention. Those who scored highly in the first survey didn't show as great an increase, which suggests a natural ceiling in self-perception. The intervention created a clear improvement for people who reported at the low end of the scale.



People used the internet more often

This graph shows two spikes. There is a clear mode on the right of the graph. The difference between lines show that Reboot UK helps more people to use the internet more often.

The spike on the left of the graph suggests that there is not even distribution across the scores for this question; people either seem to score low or high. There are very few responses in the middle of the range. Although low responses are reduced after the intervention, there are still some people who don't use the internet very much. With this question, the responses are constrained by other circumstances. If people do not use the internet more, it might be because there is an issue of access. These people may be unable to use the internet more because they do not have consistent or independent internet access.



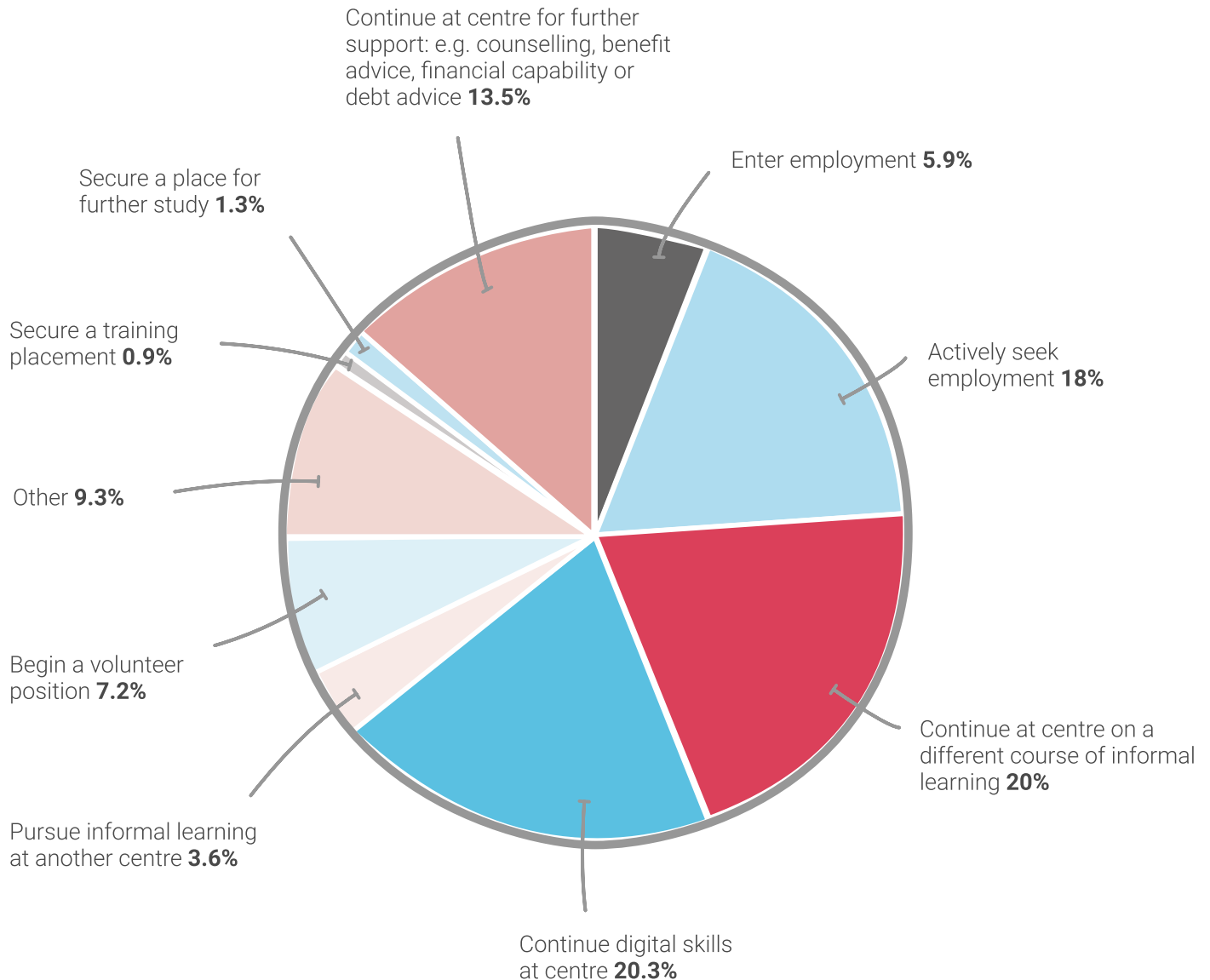
Progression and wellbeing

We measured wellbeing through self-rated measures. Against these measures:

 84% of learners showed improved wellbeing

We also recorded the progression that learners made, following the Reboot UK intervention. As we might expect, a large proportion of learners moved on to further support delivered through the organisation they were supported by. 5.9% of participants entered employment after the intervention. This is a good outcome for a very complex audience group. An approximate comparison might be with the 3.9% of ESA claimants who find work without intensive support.

The New Economics Foundation suggests that wellbeing is dependent on having some control over one's life and having a sense of purpose. This graph aims to show how Reboot UK has helped people pursue goals, and seek opportunities which provide this purpose and control.



Reboot UK support helps Grimsby resident cope with stress and depression

Carly Smith, 36, from Grimsby, has been visiting a women's group at her local Online Centre as part of the Reboot UK project and has found the support invaluable.

Carly first visited CPO Media after it was recommended to her by the Jobcentre.

She explains: "I decided to come along because it sounded good and I thought that it would help me get out of the house. Because of my depression I often just can't face the day. That's how depression makes you feel."



As well as depression, Carly also suffers from stress. Because of what she's going through, sadly her children have been removed from her care.

Carly was really nervous about going to the Centre at first, but since she initially set foot through the door, she's found attending CPO Media enjoyable. It's even helped her to become more positive.

Carly explains: "The group helps me to get out more. If I wasn't coming here I'd probably still be in my bed feeling moped and thinking about how much I don't want to go out or do anything. It's not just the days I'm at the centre either, it gives me a little bit of a boost on other days too."

The group at CPO Media - learners, staff and volunteers - provide real support to each other and for Carly, that support is vital.

"I don't know if I'm more confident now," she explains. "The stress still really gets to me and

Impact for Communities

Reboot UK is the only national programme to provide digital skills to these audience groups. It works by helping:

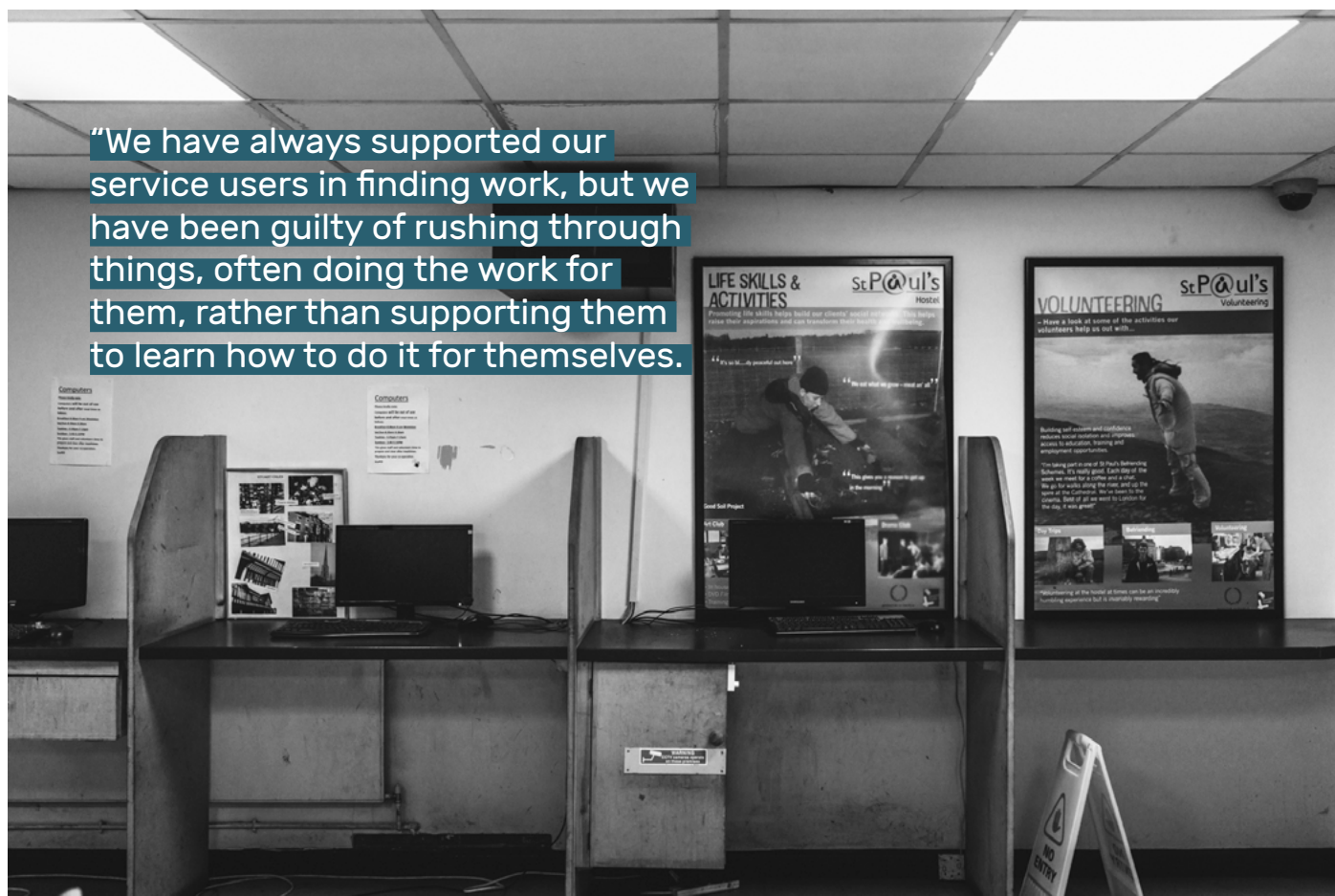
- Online Centres to support severely excluded audience groups
- Specialist homeless, mental health, and carers services to provide support with digital technologies.

Reboot worked to develop communities of support within centres. It also developed a place-based approach to digital skills support through the Community Connector scheme.

Reboot UK supports communities by creating localised digital support. Online Centres worked to raise their profile within communities, with excluded groups. As a result of this, more people in insecure housing are accessing community support at Online Centres like Computers within Reach and FEE Café.

The process of providing digital support pushed specialist services to focus on engagement and progression. As a result, it changed the way that they provided support. Specialist services have huge demands on their time. This often means that they are responsive to clients, and prioritise immediate needs over development needs.

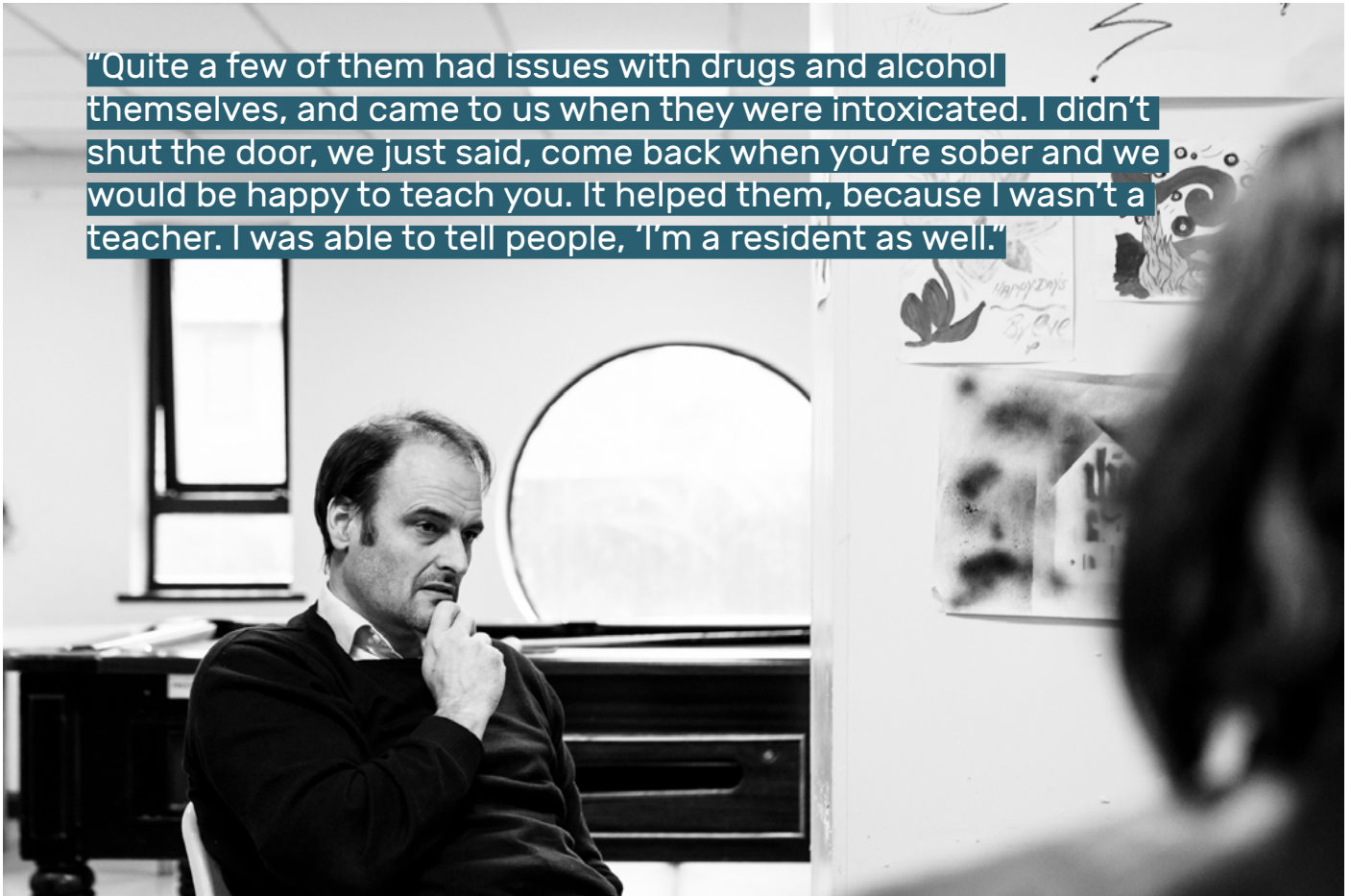
This is pragmatic but it may not address underlying causes of exclusion. Reboot UK allowed organisations to refocus their support. Wintercomfort, a day centre in Cambridge, talked how they managed this change:



Digital skills are skills for independent living. By helping clients to develop these skills, they are supporting them to be independent members of society. In a similar way, Reboot UK supported the Basement to flip their advice sessions with homeless clients. Rather than being passive, Reboot UK clients were supported to look for jobs, find food banks, and bid for houses on their own.

Reboot UK creates communities of support. The project engaged 88 peer mentors this year. They galvanised engagement even with complex clients. A peer mentor at Changing Lives said:

“Quite a few of them had issues with drugs and alcohol themselves, and came to us when they were intoxicated. I didn’t shut the door, we just said, come back when you’re sober and we would be happy to teach you. It helped them, because I wasn’t a teacher. I was able to tell people, ‘I’m a resident as well.’”



Peer mentors led the development of new programmes. They led classes, and developed new activities. Reboot has helped the proliferation of digital activities by supporting a test-and-learn approach. This has helped organisations to find new ways of providing digital support which support clients in ways that they want to engage with.

Centre brings Hope to Liverpool man with paranoid schizophrenia

David, 39, from St Helen's has worked as an electrician all his life. But personal problems mean he's recently found himself unemployed.

"I suffer from paranoid schizophrenia," explains David. "When it comes to interacting with other people it gets too much for me and because of that I'm now out of work."

David heard about The Hope Centre - an Online Centre based in Merseyside - and decided to go along and get help to improve his computer skills. He built up his CV and tried to overcome his paranoid schizophrenia by mixing with other people.



He says: "When I was an electrician I used computers a lot but that was many years ago and my knowledge was very limited. I looked at the sessions and decided to go along to a class, mainly so that I could be around other people and conquer my paranoid schizophrenia."

"I was so anxious about attending the first session. I was worried that the paranoia would get the better of me but I quickly became comfortable because nothing was forced upon me. I was able to work at my own pace."

Even though David only goes to the centre once a week his knowledge has come on leaps and bounds and he's now able to send emails from his tablet device to his dad.

"I feel really good with what I've been able to achieve so far," explains David. "I've been telling my girlfriend and she's really happy for me. I've surprised myself with the computer classes because I never thought I'd be able to get myself along to them, never mind actually learn something new."

David would like to continue going to The Hope Centre and encourages anyone else living with a mental health issue to get themselves along to their local Online Centre too.

He says: "If I wasn't coming to The Hope Centre, I would be sat on my own at home all day watching TV. It gets me out and about, meeting people. I'd say to anyone else who struggles with paranoia and anxiety to give it a go. It helps you to come out of your shell and interact socially."

"Mixing with different people at the Centre has helped me with my paranoia for sure. It's been really good for me."

Community Connector

The community connector programme was developed with Evolve Housing + Support, a homelessness service and supported housing charity in London. Reboot UK transformed the way in which Evolve Housing + Support provided digital support to their residents. The purpose of the community connector programme was for Evolve Housing + Support to share their experience of Reboot UK with other homelessness services in London.

We took a place-based approach to create a close, geographically defined community of homelessness services delivering digital inclusion. This was conceived to create a high density digital inclusion network. Density is important as the more that digital technology is raised in natural networks, the more likely it is that organisations will find encouragement from their peers to provide digital support.

The connector programme was conceived as a progression route. It was run by a Reboot UK alumnus, who has gone from Reboot client, to peer mentor, to community connector.

Over two months, Evolve Housing + Support engaged with 26 organisations across London. All of these organisations support homeless people in some way. They are day centres, hostels, housing organisations and faith charities.

The connector programme created the initial engagement through a face-to-face visit, conversation, or a workshop. For some, this was their first introduction to the concept of digital exclusion. For others, the connector programme introduced them to best practice in digital inclusion, and enabled them to think about ways in which to provide support through their own organisation.




The legacy of this programme is raise the profile of digital support within the homeless sector. The connector uses the social and professional connections between organisations to build an awareness of issues around digital technology. It aims to support front line workers to think why they should provide digital support to their clients, and how they do this.

Conclusion

Reboot UK has had a number of positive benefits on the most vulnerable in society, working and impacts have been felt by individuals, communities, and by the wider society.

Following to the conclusion of the programme, we are now looking to the future, and for opportunities to use these findings to continue having an impact.

Reboot UK is the only national programme to provide digital skills to multiply excluded groups. The programme worked to help specialist services to understand:

-  the value of providing digital support
-  how to provide digital support
-  who in the same community could help to support clients.

Lessons from Reboot UK can be used by a range of organisations supporting vulnerable people to use digital to improve their lives. Some of the findings from Reboot UK can be embedded into delivery, however we have found funding for local organisations meant they could ring fence funding and so could prioritise this work. We would recommend that funders think about how they can embed digital when commissioning programmes for these groups.

We have proven through this programme that digital support is fundamental for all, but particularly for the most vulnerable groups. It is not an additional skill, but a skill that supports independent living.

Good Things Foundation, together with consortium partners Homeless Link, Family Fund and Mind will continue to look for opportunities to use these findings, through embedding the lessons and approaches learnt, and through developing new programmes and partnerships.