Making It Click:
Supporting people with low internet use

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Good Things
Foundation

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MAKING IT CLICK: SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH LOW INTERNET USE

Good Things Foundation is working to fix the digital divide, at a point when the global challenge of digital exclusion remains unacceptably high. In the UK in 2021, 10 million adults still lack the most basic digital skills, 1.5 million households lack internet access, and 2.5 million struggle to afford broadband connectivity.[1]

Following the shock of the Covid-19 pandemic, it has never been more important to help everyone benefit from the digital world. The vast majority of us live our lives online, and work online, so being cut off from the internet can have devastating consequences. Digital exclusion affects life chances and employment prospects, and reinforces inequality.

Digital technology will keep evolving, and so will the digital skills we need. **But closing the gap for those furthest behind is critical**. Good Things Foundation helps people have better lives through a mixture of free devices, free connectivity data, and free community-based digital skills learning. We work with community-based partners in towns and cities across the UK, helping them reach and support those in need in the communities they serve.

This partnership model reflects the strong correlation between digital exclusion and wider vulnerability. Helping people address digital exclusion needs a holistic, 'whole person' approach, and a relational model of support based on trust. Small nonprofits and other community-based organisations are well placed to reach the most vulnerable and build digital inclusion into their personal journey.

Make It Click was a programme targeting those who have made the move online but lack digital skills and use the internet only in limited ways. It was delivered by Good Things Foundation between 2018 and 2021, made possible by a grant from Google.org.

The programme was unique in its focus on **limited users**: the millions of people in the UK who use computers and the internet, but do not have the skills and confidence to make the most of digital technology for work and personal life. They represent a 'hidden group': according to Professor Simeon Yates at the University of Liverpool, those "most likely to be overlooked in the development of policy and practice to address digital inequality."[2]

With the support of Google.org, from 2019 to 2021 through Make It Click Good Things Foundation was able to distribute and manage more than £1 million in grants to 235 community partners across the UK, who have **helped over 25,000 limited users to improve their digital skills and employability**.

To support high quality learning, a Make It Click learning portal was created[3], allowing the programme's beneficiaries to create a tailored digital skills learning journey based on high-quality curated content from across the

1 Digital Nation 2021. Sources: Lloyds Bank Essential Digital Skills Report 2021; Ofcom Adults' Media Use and Attitudes Report 2021; Ofcom Affordability of Communications Services 2021.
2 New analysis of ofcom 2020 data
3 Make It Click

internet. As well as beneficiaries supported by community partners, **Over 21,000 people used these resources independently to improve their digital skills**.

Crucially, Make It Click also allowed Good Things Foundation to **learn more about limited/ narrow internet users, and what works in helping them progress**. The aim was to generate new insight and evidence that can inform practice in digital skills and inclusion in the years ahead.

- We found that although limited internet users are a distinct group from those who are completely offline or lack any digital skills, the two groups **share some common features**: similar socio-economic characteristics, material/motivational barriers to engagement, and barriers reflecting their individual circumstances.

- We also found two broad groups of limited internet users: those with lower skills and confidence, requiring non-judgemental engagement through community-based organisations to build their confidence and motivation to learn; and those with **higher skills and confidence**, more likely to use self-directed learning tools.

- Finally, we identified points that distinguish limited internet users from those who are completely offline or lack any digital skills: a higher proportion of **younger people** among limited users compared to non users; and a strong interest in learning digital skills for **work and employability**.

Like every organisation, Good Things Foundation and our community partners faced the huge challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic, which began shortly after Make It Click moved into delivery. In response, **we pivoted the programme model**, temporarily relaxing grant requirements for our community partners, sharing best practice in developing remote models of delivering support, and sourcing and curating high quality online resources that

responded to new and immediate needs – for example, guides on working remotely from home for workers on the UK Government's furlough scheme. We also mobilised a device distribution model for beneficiaries without internet access in their homes, which has since become a mainstream element of Good Things Foundation's model.

Through the generous support of Google.org, Good Things Foundation has been able to establish and learn from the first programme of its kind to target limited users of the internet, and support them to increase digital skills and employability.

As well as supporting a large number of people in the hidden group of limited internet users, the Make It Click programme has:

- **Created new insight** about the hidden group of limited internet users not normally targeted by digital skills programmes, including their demographic characteristics and support needs;

- Explored the use of **targeted local and national engagement campaign**s to reach and activate limited internet users as digital skills learners; and

- **Built an extended learning pathway** for basic digital skills through the curation of digital skills resources from across the internet – the Make It Click portal – building on Good Things Foundation's existing Learn My Way platform for foundational and entry level digital skills.

We hope that the insight and learning in this report is helpful to other digital inclusion organisations, policymakers, businesses and nonprofits as they continue their work, shaping the programmes and services that help those furthest behind to build the digital access, confidence and skills to thrive in our digital world. Together, we can fix the digital divide.

REACH OF THE MAKE IT CLICK PROGRAMME

235
Community partners

25,084
Beneficiaries supported by community partners

21,744
Beneficiaries using the Make It Click portal independently

95,632
Total unique users of the Make It Click portal

GOOD THINGS FOUNDATION AND THE ONLINE CENTRES NETWORK

Good Things Foundation is a leading digital inclusion charity working in the UK, Australia, and beyond. We work in cities, towns and communities to help people thrive in a digital world.

Our model embeds digital inclusion in local support for the most vulnerable, and since since 2010 we have helped over 4 million people benefit from digital.

The Online Centres Network in the UK is made up of more than 2,000 independent, hyperlocal community partners, delivering a range of support to people facing digital exclusion together with wider social and economic vulnerabilities. Partners include community centres, social enterprises, small charities, adult learning organisations, social housing providers, public libraries, faith-based organisations, and more. Although there is no 'typical' member of the network, all share the vision of using digital technology to improve people's lives.

By working with community partners from across the network, Good Things Foundation is able to reach and support different geographic and demographic communities to achieve a range of outcomes including digital skills, employment, accredited and informal learning, better health, and financial capability. Wherever possible, partners take a person-centred, holistic approach that helps individuals to overcome multiple barriers as part of a single, integrated support journey.
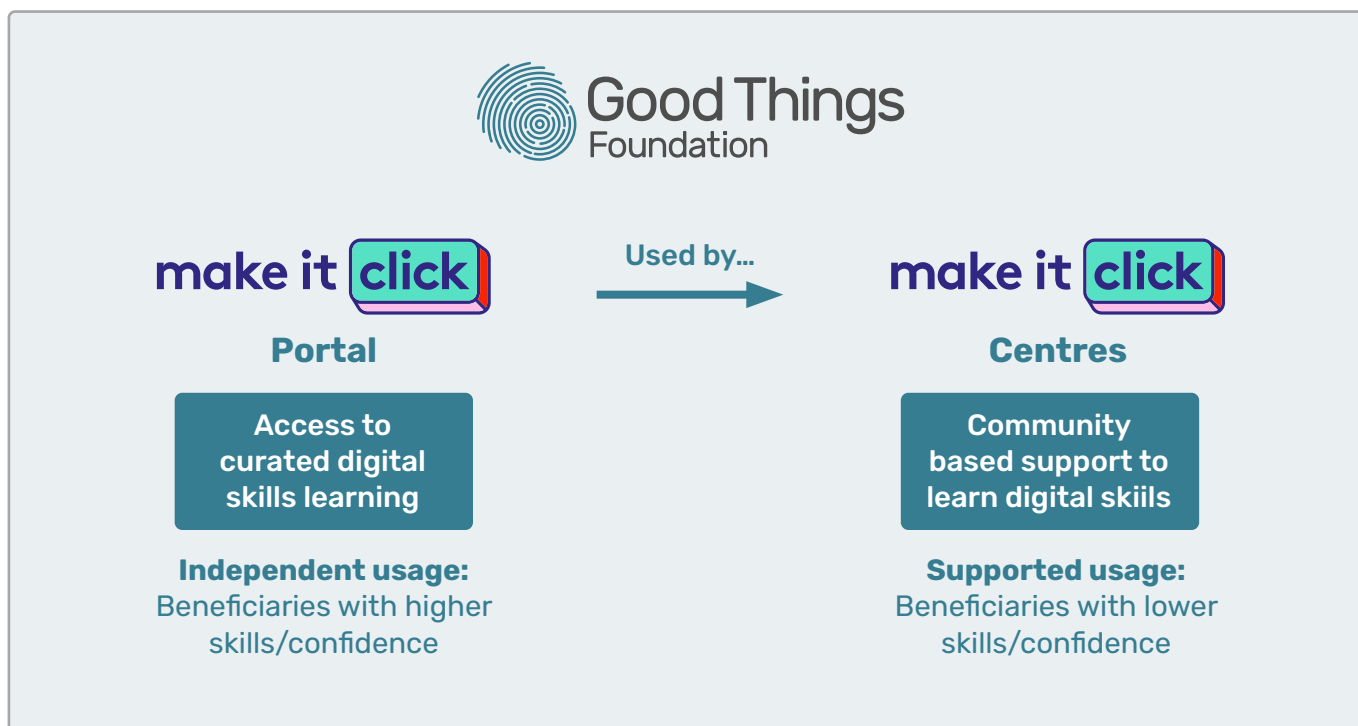
THE MAKE IT CLICK MODEL

Make It Click engaged and supported limited internet users in two ways:

• For beneficiaries with lower skills and confidence, through a network of **local community-based organisations**, supported by a curated set of digital skills resources and support and training from Good Things Foundation;

• For beneficiaries with higher skills and confidence, through **independent usage** of the same curated set of digital skills resources.

Both engagement routes were underpinned by targeted local and national campaigns, and the use of Make It Click programme brand assets by local community partners.

Local community partners were selected through an assessment process which required them to provide evidence of their track record working with beneficiaries in the target audience of limited users, and their intention to work with beneficiaries to increase digital skills and employability.

A total of £1,022,604 in grants was distributed to 235 organisations during the programme, ranging from £1,250 to £20,000 per grant. The distribution of grants was staged: firstly mirroring the operation of Google Digital Garages in three UK cities, beginning in and around Sunderland in North East England, before being expanded to Portsmouth and South East England, Belfast and Northern Ireland; and secondly rolled out through three national funding rounds.

Good Things Foundation

make it click

Portal

Access to curated digital skills learning

Independent usage: Beneficiaries with higher skills/confidence

Used by...

make it click

Centres

Community based support to learn digital skills

Supported usage: Beneficiaries with lower skills/confidence

Community-based learning

Local community partners engaged and supported beneficiaries through a holistic, 'whole person' approach, a relational model of support based on trust, and a focus on making digital skills learning relevant to individual needs and goals.

This model reflects Good Things Foundation's experience in working with beneficiaries facing digital exclusion: and the insight that digital exclusion is typically part of wider vulnerability, so needs to be addressed alongside other forms of exclusion, as part of helping people have better lives.

Through Make It Click, community partners helped learners to address underlying problems which might prevent them from achieving their digital skills learning goals, and offered 'open-ended' support with no fixed curriculum. By delivering this support, community partners were able to build motivation and create tailored digital skills learning journeys for individual

limited users. 63% of Make It Click learners received support for more than four weeks, and 38% for more than eight weeks.

Beneficiaries engaged with a Make It Click community partner in different ways: because they were already being supported by the community partner in other ways (36%), through word of mouth recommendation (26%), and via referral from other local or national organisations (22%).

The Make It Click portal

Alongside onboarding and training from Good Things Foundation, community partners were supported by the Make It Click portal, a curated collection of digital skills learning resources. The purpose of the portal was to bring together high quality digital skills learning resources from across the web, with a focus on digital skills for employability, making it easy to find, access and use resources relevant to a digital skills learning journey.
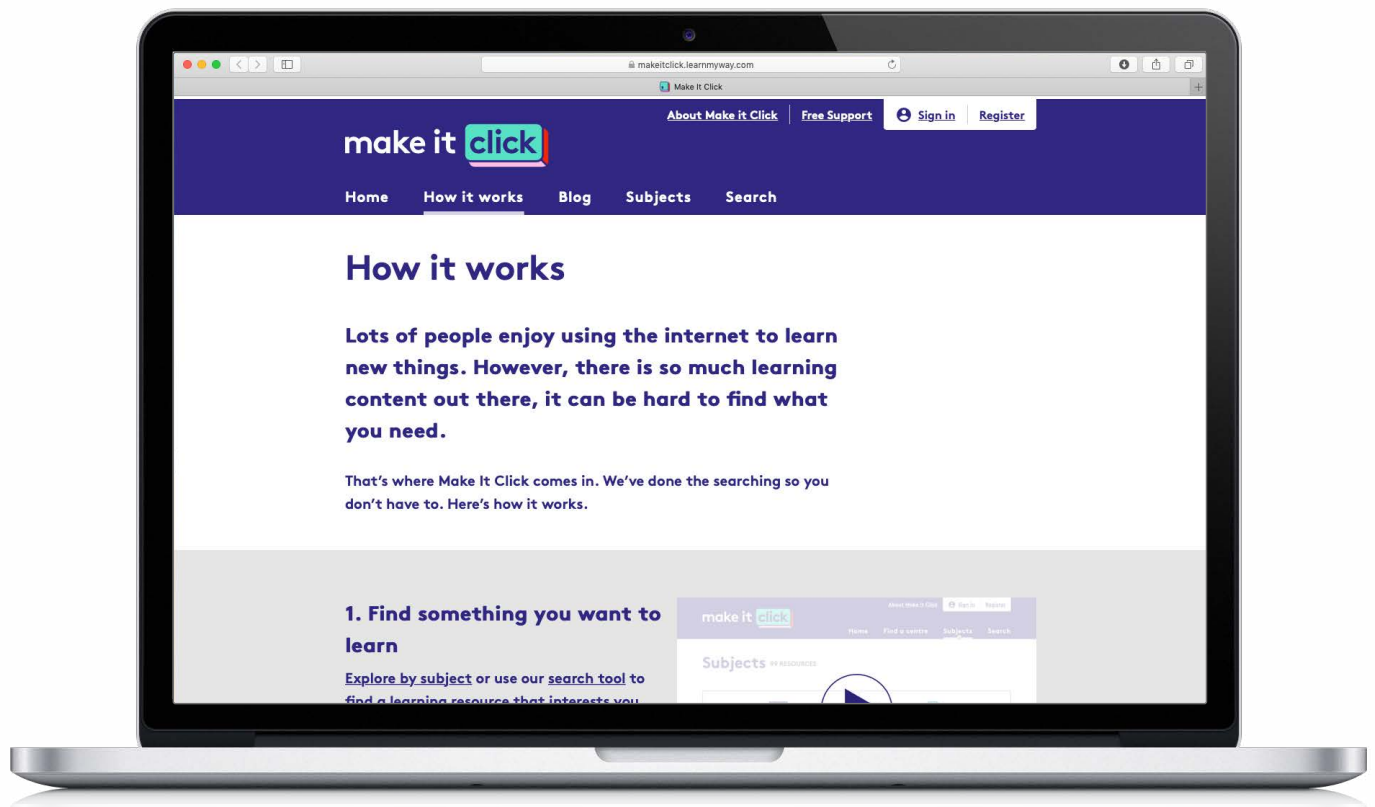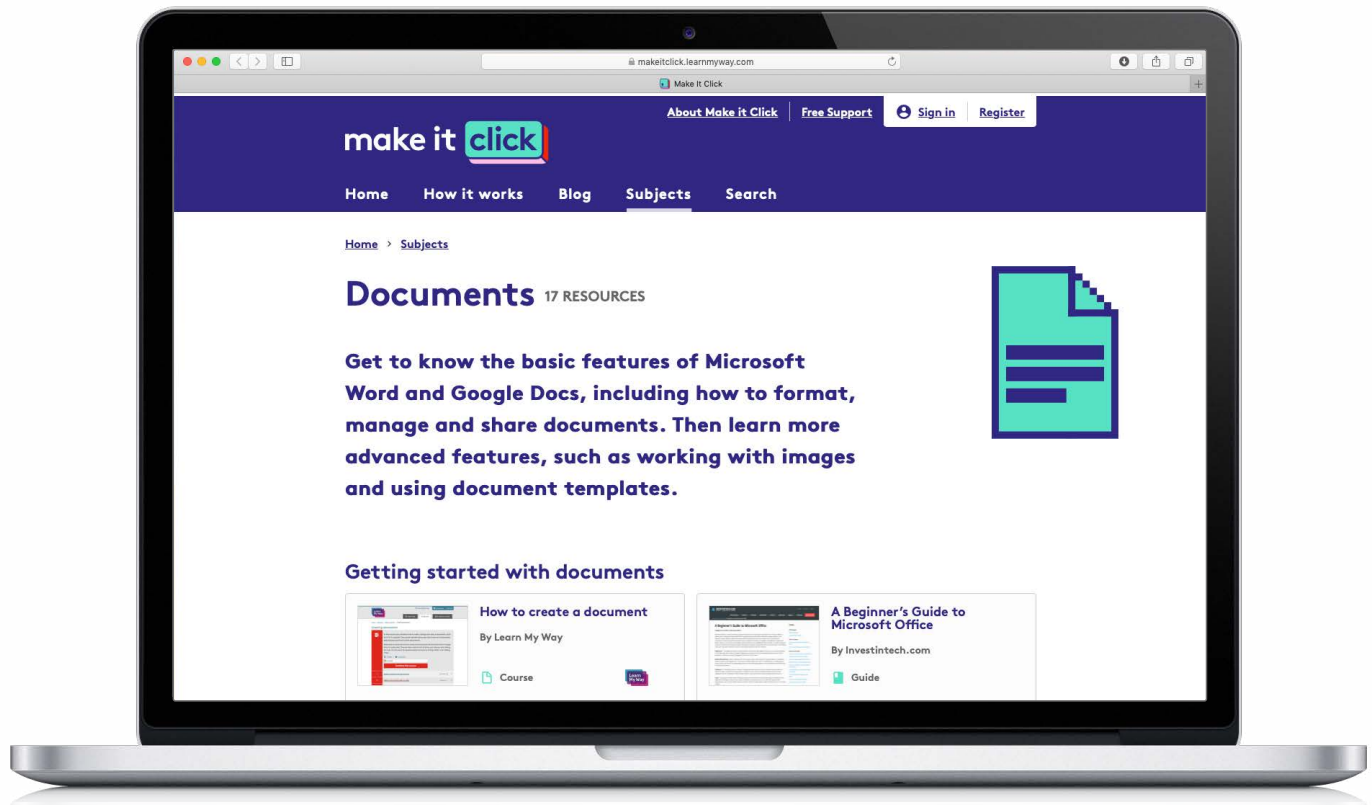
Resources linked on the portal included video tutorials, step by step guides and blogs. The Make It Click portal was also designed to be used in parallel with, or in sequence with, Good Things Foundation's existing Learn My Way platform, which contains proprietary content on foundational and entry level digital skills.

By **curating** existing digital skills learning resources, rather than **creating** new resources, the Make It Click team at Good Things Foundation was able to quickly and continuously improve the site during the programme, making it more relevant and usable both for community partners and for beneficiaries learning independently without the support of a community partner.

Digital skills learning resources were chosen for inclusion on the Make It Click portal based on the following principles:

• Resources should be free to use and available to everyone

• Resources should be simple, appealing, and engaging, so people can start learning or using them easily

• Resources should be practical and help people to get things done, with real-life benefits

• Resources should feature no or very little advertising, so that learning content is clear with minimal distractions

• Resources should use plain English where possible, so that content is clear and easy for most people to read.

The flexibility of this curated content model was especially important during the first UK Covid-19 lockdown in 2020, when large numbers of UK workers were put on furlough, required to work from home, or found themselves suddenly out of work. Rapid user testing with community partners led to new content and categories being added to the Make It Click portal, helping people to get to grips with these sudden changes in personal circumstances.

Marketing and Engagement

Supporting the engagement of beneficiaries to the programme, Good Things Foundation worked with consultants Peter & Paul, Ardmore and Barley Communications to design and deploy a marketing and engagement campaign targeting limited users. This included targeted local and national campaigns, including social media marketing and out-of-home advertising; and the use of centrally designed Make It Click programme brand assets by local community partners. Local campaign activity was deployed in Sunderland, Portsmouth and Belfast, mirroring the Google Digital Garages operating in each city.

The digital element of the campaign was rolled out in five cycles, each targeting a subset of limited users:

- **Cycle 1:** Furloughed workers

- **Cycle 2:** Small business owners and sole traders

- **Cycle 3:** Young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs)

- **Cycle 4:** Full-time parents returning to work

- **Cycle 5:** General online learning advertisements

This model proved effective at engaging people with higher levels of education (Further Education College or University), those already studying or in part-time work, and younger learners - all groups less likely to recognise their digital skills gaps, or to need or seek out support from a local community partner. It was less effective in engaging beneficiaries supported by community partners, reflecting their lower skills and confidence, and sometimes a lack of digital access. This underlines the importance of the community-based model of engagement to reach and support those furthest behind.
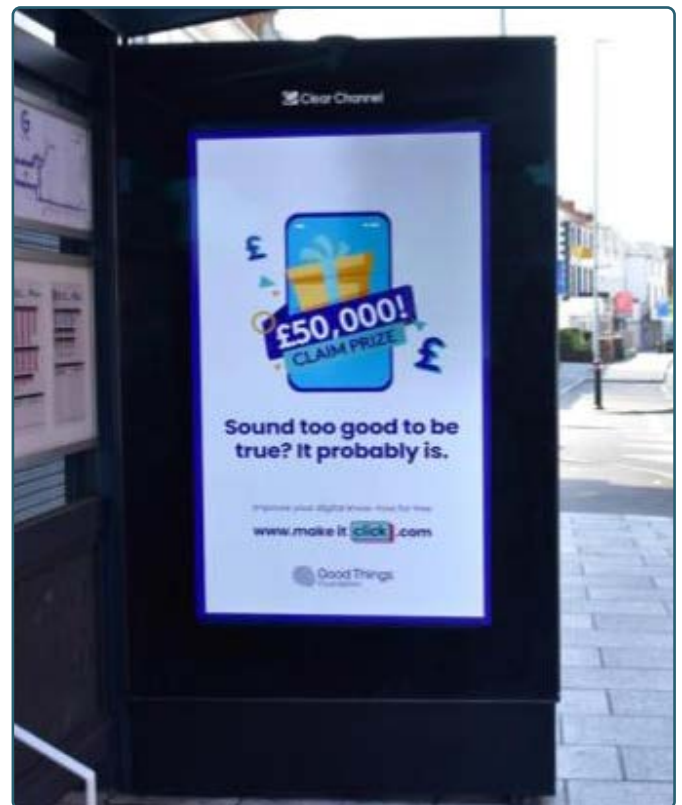
Measurement and Evaluation

A range of data was collected through Make It Click to allow evaluation of the programme's impact, explore 'what works' in engaging and supporting the target audience of limited users, and support continuous improvement,

All beneficiaries were required to complete a **baseline survey** exploring their employment goals and digital learning goals, as well as their source of awareness of the programme. A further **impact survey** collected demographic data alongside information about changes to skills and motivation, as well as a range of employability outcomes.

Alongside quantitative data collection, **interviews and focus groups** were conducted with learners and centres throughout the programme, supporting improvements to offline and online learning pathways. Good Things Foundation also worked with a community partner in Sunderland to train a cohort of learners as **peer researchers**, who carried out interviews with potential beneficiaries across their community and co-produced a report and a set of seven design principles to help support people with limited digital skills.[4]

> *"Through the project I also went to the Google Garage, and did about twelve courses there, which I really enjoyed. They did a lot of stuff about how to start your own business; maybe in future the Garages and the Make It Click website could give advice on how to start making money from hobbies, for keen crafters like me."*
>
> **Make It Click peer researcher**

All of the data and evidence collected during the programme helped the Make It Click team to develop a more detailed picture of limited internet users. This is a diverse audience, and what works for one beneficiary – whether in terms of engagement or support - might not work for another. Reflecting this diversity, the Make It Click team developed several **learner personas**, which have helped to crystallise insight about this 'hidden group', and have been used to inform improvements to delivery.

Design principles for supporting limited users to engage with digital skills

These principles were co-produced with peer researchers in Sunderland, North East England – people who themselves have limited digital skills and face barriers to learning:

1. Provision of free online courses

2. Provision of centre based support where people can get help from a tutor

3. Being able to get help from friends and family

4. Maintaining individual choice as limited users prefer online courses at home where web chat and tutor help is available

5. Having help with transport costs to attend classes

6. Provision of free, local supported courses which people can attend in their free time

7. Incentives to complete courses i.e. given a device of their own at the end of the course so they can continue to learn and be online.

Wider support from Google

Good Things Foundation was pleased to receive in-kind support from subject matter experts through the GoogleServe initiative: Googlers volunteered to support Make It Click delivery at Online Centres in London, and also carried out a UX audit of Learn My Way, the Good Things Foundation basic digital skills learning platform which linked to the Make It Click website.

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4 Clicking on in Sunderland: Peer research findings and recommendations for Make It Click. Good Things Foundation 2020.

Debra from Belfast

Debra Smyth works as an office manager for a tourism business in Northern Ireland, and was furloughed due to the Covid 19 pandemic. She received support from one of our Make It Click support centres.

"My IT skills were fairly good to start with and I use Excel, Word, Powerpoint, etc. I have also carried out social media and marketing tasks in my job, but I don't have the qualifications to prove this. With Christine at Make It Click, we identified gaps in my knowledge around website security and how to look for jobs online."

Make It Click has not only taught Debra new skills, it has helped her in other ways. Being at home looking after her two children, the programme also provided Debra with the opportunity to do something for her mental health. She says: *"Home schooling can be stressful, especially as my eldest son has autism, so I needed something to do that was just for me."*

"I can get very anxious because of the current situation, but the Make It Click courses have helped me to focus and calm the mind; it's a distraction from the chaos of life. It has given me a sense of purpose; it's something I have done for me. It's empowered me to have goals and I have started writing a blog about my experience."

Space to Breathe

Space to Breathe is a social enterprise based in Sheffield, UK, specialising in mental health and wellbeing support.

"This has been a really useful and effective grant so I wanted to say thank you. We've been able to support people engaging with our ongoing courses in becoming more digitally confident and growing their skills… We've also been able to support people in our Sheffield Small Business and Self Employed Group and the business section of Make It Click has proved really popular. We've also been able to run another series of Creative Presentations on Zoom and Dealing with Digital Anxiety sessions and these have proved very popular and helpful to people."

INSIGHT: LEARNING ABOUT LIMITED USERS

One of the key objectives for the Make It Click programme was to **learn more about limited internet users, and what works in helping them progress**.

Working with community partners and directly with beneficiaries, Good Things Foundation set out to generate new insight and evidence about this hidden group, exploring their needs, the barriers they face to greater digital engagement and skills development, and what approaches can unlock development and progression. This process of exploration is important from the perspective of digital inclusion. As technology keeps evolving in the years ahead, there will be a continuing need to review and update practice in digital skills and inclusion, both for those furthest behind and for everybody in society.

The insight developed through Make It Click also built on the report 'The Real Digital Divide?', published by Good Things Foundation in 2017[5], which contained an initial demographic analysis of the limited user cohort carried out by Professor Simeon Yates of the University of Liverpool, drawing on data from Ofcom, the UK's communications regulator. Professor Yates updated this analysis in 2020 in partnership with Good Things Foundation[6].

This analysis showed that limited users could be broadly defined as **people who use the internet infrequently, and only for a small number of activities**. Using this definition, around 14% of UK internet users were limited users: more than 15 million people, almost twice as many people who don't go online at all. The analysis also showed that limited users are much more likely than non-users to be of working age and active in the labour market, but also more likely than average to be unemployed, and to have lower educational attainment.

5   The real digital divide
6   New analysis of Ofcom 2020 data

Through Make It Click, Good Things Foundation has been able to build on this analysis with insight and experience of community partners and beneficiaries working 'at the front line'. This has shown that limited internet users are a very diverse group including people of different ages, with different levels of education and types of employment, and with different learning goals. The group of limited users engaged by Make It Click were more likely than average to work in offices, sales or service, management or senior administration, or even professional or higher technical work – but being in relatively skilled or senior job roles does not necessarily translate into broad, confident use of the internet, and limited users also comprise many in lower-skilled roles.[7]

Reflecting this diversity, Make It Click has shown that there is **no 'one size fits all' solution for this audience**: some limited users had a clear, specific goal in mind; others had a much vaguer (but not inaccurate) sense that digital skills would help them in their careers, even if they were not sure how. Among learners surveyed as part of Make It Click evaluation:

- 28% of those learning for work didn't know if they needed an ICT qualification - rising to 35% of jobseekers, and 44% of those with no existing qualifications.

- 39% of learners who said their main reason for learning was to develop workplace digital skills said they didn't know **at all** what they needed to learn. This rose to 43% of those with education below Level 2, and 49% of those with no qualifications.

For these limited users, it's clear that basic orientation – helping them understand exactly what they need to know – is an essential first step on the learning journey. General motivation by itself cannot lead to good outcomes – another reason why holistic support is so important for many limited users.

"I did a Microsoft Office course at Adult Education a few years ago, but I need more practice in using it. It has been a long time since I had a full time career job, and since having children I have worked part-time. With the rapid changes in IT there are now many basic gaps in my knowledge."

"I'd like to feel more confident when working with younger staff members who have received training or education at a higher level."

"I would like to learn about stuff that would help in an office type job."

Overall, the data and evidence collected through Make It Click has revealed some additional insights that build on the analysis of limited internet users carried out to date. These insights are set out below.

The first key insight is that although limited internet users are a distinct group from those who are completely offline or lack any digital skills, the two groups share some common features:

- **Similar socio-economic characteristics** – both non users and limited users are more likely to be older, have lower incomes, and have lower skills and low literacy confidence more generally.

- **Significant barriers to engagement** – both groups typically face material and motivational barriers to learning which need to be overcome.

- **A personal set of barriers** – digital exclusion is highly individual, with each person experiencing their own personal combination of barriers (access and accessibility, data, skills, motivation, confidence around learning and technology, life events, as well as barriers such as lack of time and caring responsibilities).

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7   Comparable data on occupation is not collected by Ofcom so this may not be representative of the wider population of limited users in the UK.

The second key insight is that it is possible to define two broad groups of limited internet users:

- Those with **lower skills and confidence**, less sense of what they need to achieve, who are often dealing with other problems associated with social exclusion and deprivation, and may be in crisis. They are most likely to be engaged by and benefit from non-judgemental, open, flexible, person-centred support provided by community based organisations.

- Those with **higher skills and confidence**, who are more likely to be in work, happy to learn independently, who are more likely to use self-directed learning tools, and who have well-defined and immediate needs.

Finally, we identified points that distinguish limited internet users from those who are completely offline or lack any digital skills:

- Firstly, there is a higher proportion of **younger people** among limited users than among non users – for example, young people just using social media or internet gaming but not making use of other capabilities of the internet.

- Secondly, limited users are more likely to see the workplace as a catalyst for learning new digital skills - so employability is an effective 'hook' for their engagement.
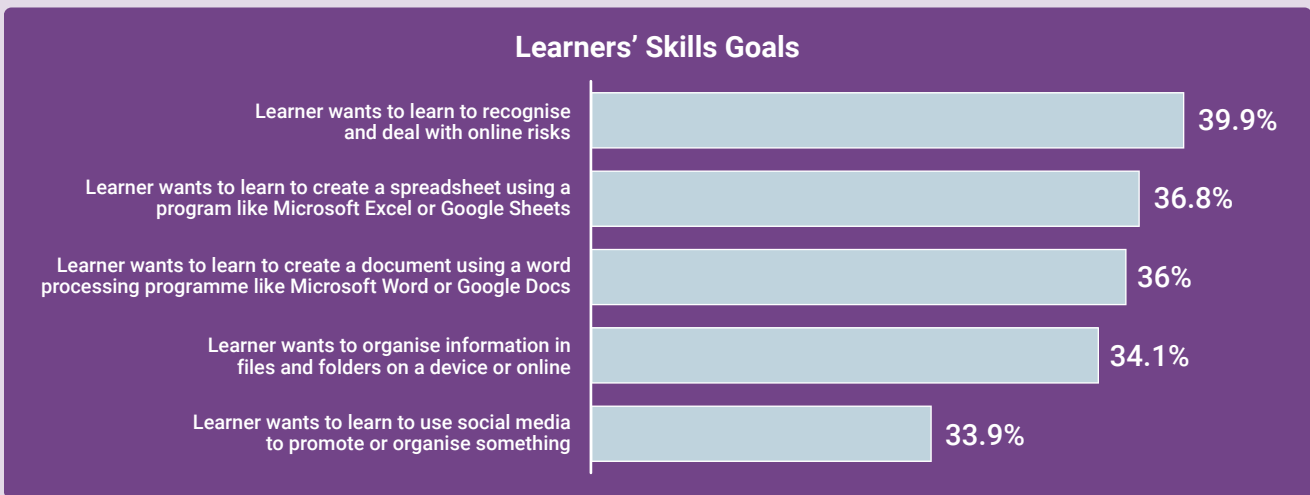
Underpinning these insights, data collected through Make It Click showed some interesting patterns and trends in beneficiary characteristics, learning goals, and the outcomes the programme helped them to achieve. These are based on selected findings from analysis of baseline and impact data for beneficiaries supported by community partners.

Learners' Employment Goals

Goal	Percentage
Learn new skills for a future job	35.8%
Enter into employment	26.9%
Any other goal	24.9%
Learn new skills for current job	22%
Get a better paid job	11.9%
Change career	8.2%
Become self-employed	6.8%
Learn to run own business better	4.8%

Learners' employment goals reflect the diversity of Make It Click beneficiaries: similar proportions were either trying to enter/re-enter employment, or to build skills needed for their current job. In the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic, there was increasing demand from workers who had either been furloughed, or who needed to learn the skills to work remotely; interest in changing career or finding better paid work decreased in this period, while many people were trying to stabilise their circumstances.

Learners' Skills Goals

Skill	Percentage
Learner wants to learn to recognise and deal with online risks	39.9%
Learner wants to learn to create a spreadsheet using a program like Microsoft Excel or Google Sheets	36.8%
Learner wants to learn to create a document using a word processing programme like Microsoft Word or Google Docs	36%
Learner wants to organise information in files and folders on a device or online	34.1%
Learner wants to learn to use social media to promote or organise something	33.9%

The range of **learners' skills goals** was surprising, and indicates the breadth of skills which are increasingly expected by employers. Many learners wanted to improve everyday word processing and spreadsheet skills, and qualitative research suggests that this was largely due to a lack of training opportunities in the workplace; while a less common reason was manual workers wanting to retrain due to age or health problems. But the interest in social media is striking; external data and Good Things Foundation's own qualitative research suggest that this is less because of how many jobs currently require these skills, but rather because workers feel that social media skills are more likely to make them employable, and make their skillset more 'future proof'.

Employability Outcomes

Outcome	Percentage
Learned new skills for a future job	41.1%
Started informal learning which will help your career	35.1%
Learned new skills for a current job	34.6%
Taken on new responsibilities at work	24.7%
Gained work experience	23.6%
Started a qualification which will help your career	22%
Started part-time employment	18.1%
Increased my income from employment	16.1%

Employability outcomes broadly match baseline goals, but with some interesting differences. In particular, more learners went on to find work experience and start either an accredited qualification or an informal course of vocational learning, than intended to do so at baseline. Again, qualitative data show how the Covid-19 pandemic motivated furloughed workers to achieve learning goals whil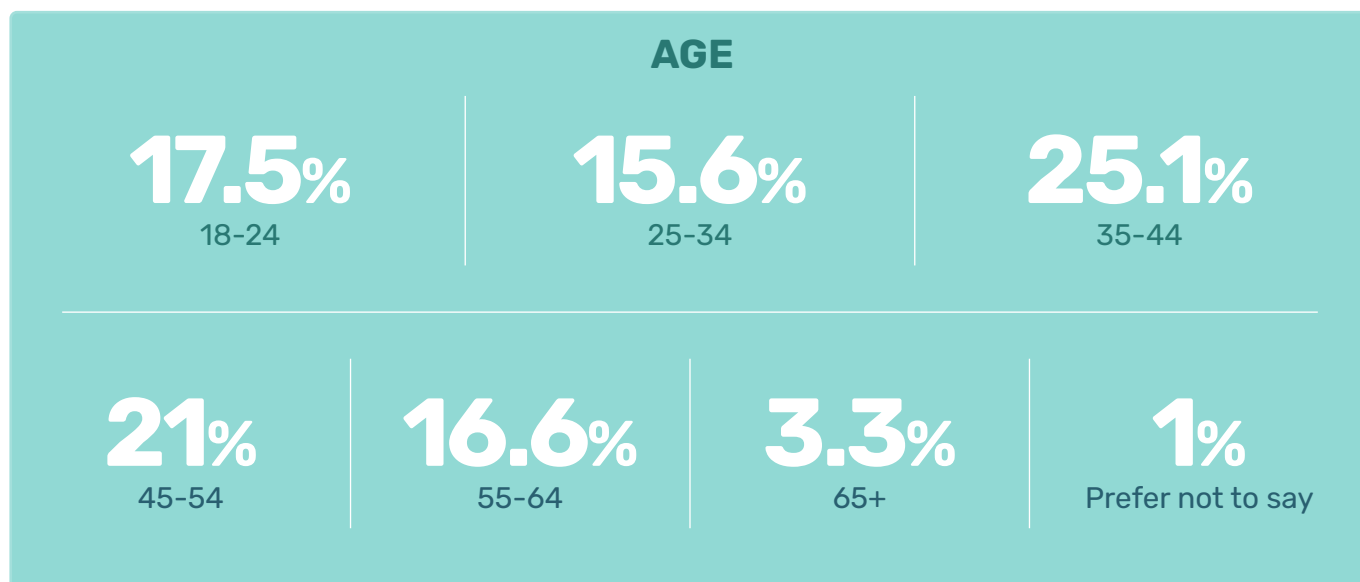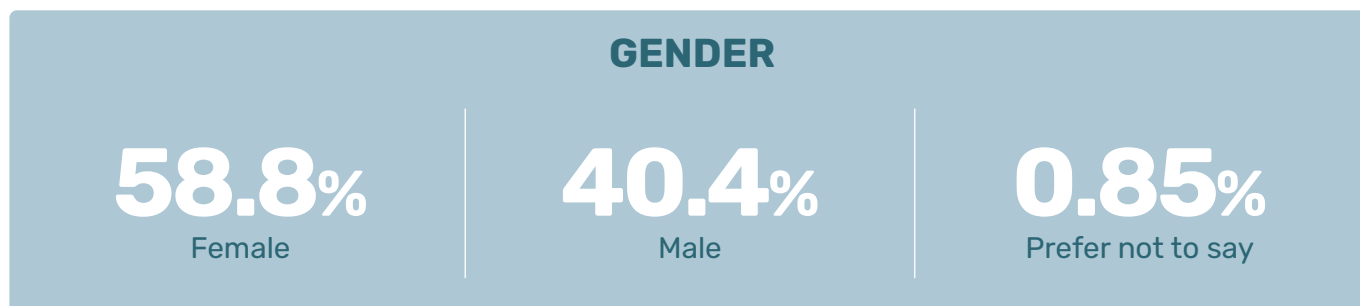e they were not working, but this trend is also evidence of the effectiveness of community-based provision: the value of person-centred engagement which helps to grow people's confidence and motivation to learn - and keep learning. With many community partners offering in-house learning opportunities, including qualifications, over and above their Make It Click provision, this enabled learners to progress to further learning.

All key insights were shared with community partners during Make It Click, and used to evolve practice during the programme. The peer research in Sunderland was a powerful addition to this insight - helping to shape the design of campaigns and the Make It Click learning portal, as well as deepening understanding of individual barriers and what works in addressing these. Looking ahead, Good Things Foundation will continue to use and build on this evidence to shape practice in working with limited internet users, both those supported by community partners and those learning digital skills independently.

BENEFICIARY DEMOGRAPHICS

Beneficiaries supported by community partners only[8]

GENDER

58.8%
Female

40.4%
Male

0.85%
Prefer not to say

AGE

17.5%
18-24

15.6%
25-34

25.1%
35-44

21%
45-54

16.6%
55-64

3.3%
65+

1%
Prefer not to say

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

31.3%
Unemployed

17.3%
Part-time employed

9.6%
Full-time employed

4.9%
Studying full-time

7.9%
Zero hour contract

8%
Self-employed

13.8%
All other

7.1%
Prefer not to say

8   From the Impact survey collected between January 2020 and December 2021, only beneficiaries supported by community partners included.
Total sample size: 1,524.

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19

From early 2020, Good Things Foundation and the Online Centres Network faced the huge challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic, which began shortly after Make It Click moved into delivery.

In response, with support from Google.org we pivoted our approach, temporarily relaxing grant requirements for our community partners, sharing best practice on remote models of delivery, and sourcing online resources that responded to beneficiaries' immediate needs - for example, guides on working remotely from home for workers on the UK Government's furlough scheme. Good Things Foundation also mobilised an emergency device distribution project, through which Make It Click beneficiaries without internet access were able to access devices; this has now become a mainstream element of our model.

Covid forced Make It Click community partners to move away from purely face-to-face delivery models which were tried, tested and familiar. Many community partners were on the front line of the Covid emergency response, dealing with problems created or exacerbated by the pandemic including loneliness and isolation, poor mental health, and poverty. These challenges drove higher levels of demand for the support that community partners provide, but not for needs that could easily be met remotely, and not necessarily at point of first contact. Potential beneficiaries were frequently focused on resolving crisis situations, rather than thinking about long-term learning and employment goals.

To meet the unprecedented challenge of the pandemic, Make It Click community partners – like many community organisations across

the UK – **pivoted to new models of delivery**, with remote support combined with socially distanced community contact often the first line of engagement with beneficiaries. Throughout this period of adaptation, they showed huge resilience, creativity and commitment.

At the same time, a new type of **independent digital skills learner** emerged. Thousands of jobs were disrupted, with workers being placed on furlough, required to work from home, or finding themselves suddenly out of work. Many of these workers turned to online learning as a route to professional development while face-to-face learning services were unavailable; others needed urgent help using hardware and software to work well remotely. In the wake of the first UK lockdown in March 2020, the proportion of people being supported by the Online Centres Network who were limited users rose from 38% to 61%, almost all of whom were learning without support in their own homes.

The demographic profile of these new digital skills learners further demonstrated the diversity of the limited internet user population. They were significantly more likely to be educated at or above FE college level, and be currently or very recently employed in roles which required regular computer use. They were primarily interested in learning digital skills for the workplace, and had a much clearer idea of what they needed to learn, compared to learners supported by Make It Click community partners.

As well as different needs, this group of learners also faced different barriers. Although they were motivated and had a good understanding of their skills gaps, their work commitments normally made it impossible for them to engage with the kind of support available from Make It Click community partners: this was evidenced by the fact that only 9.6% of learners in centres were in full-time employment.

Reinforcing insight from the programme more generally, the Covid-19 pandemic clearly highlighted demand for digital skills learning amongst two broad groups of limited internet users, both of which Make It Click supported.

First, were those with lower skills and confidence, and less sense of what they needed to achieve, who were more likely to be engaged by community partners, and were often dealing with other problems associated with social exclusion and deprivation. Second, were higher skilled limited users, who were more likely to be in work, learning independently, and with well-defined and immediate needs.

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CONCLUSION

Through the support of Google.org, Good Things Foundation has been able to establish and learn from the first programme of its kind to target **limited users of the internet**, and support them to increase digital skills and employability

From 2019 to 2021, Make It Click supported over 25,000 limited internet users through community-based provision, and over 21,000 independent users of digital skills resources curated from across the internet.

In the process, the programme has:

- **created new insight** about the hidden group of limited internet users not normally targeted by digital skills programmes, including their demographic characteristics and support needs. This insight will be used to inform the design of next generation services, training and support provided by Good Things Foundation to community partners, so that the Online Centres Network can continue to support this important audience in the years ahead.

- **Built an extended learning pathway** for basic digital skills through the curation of digital skills resources from across the internet - the Make It Click portal - building on Good Things Foundation's existing Learn My Way platform for foundational and entry level digital skills. This will be embedded into the next release of Learn My Way, expected in 2022, providing an all-through learning experience for basic digital skills suited for both community partner and independent use.

- Explored the use of **targeted local and national engagement campaigns** to reach and activate limited internet users as digital skills learners. This learning will be used to support the design of future campaign models deployed by Good Things Foundation.

We hope that the insight and learning in this report is helpful to other digital inclusion organisations, policymakers, businesses and nonprofits as they continue their work, shaping the programmes and services that help those furthest behind to build the digital access, confidence and skills to thrive in our digital world. Together, we can fix the digital divide.

For more information about
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Good Things
Foundation