



Impact Review

Let's fix the digital divide - for good.

April 2022 - June 2023




What is digital exclusion?

We believe everyone should be able to benefit from the digital age.


The internet is an essential lifeline, yet millions of people in the UK are digitally excluded - this means that they may struggle to afford or access devices and data, or have limited digital skills.

What is the impact of digital exclusion?

- **Increased social isolation and loneliness.**
- **Harder to access healthcare.**
- **Inability to access government services as more move online.**
- **Reduced access to education and employment opportunities.**

 **48%** of people have never heard of the term 'digital inclusion'

and only

 **7%** are confident they know what it means.¹

1 Public First poll for Good Things Foundation, May 2023

2 Ofcom, Adults' Media Use and Attitudes, 2022

3 Ofcom Communications Affordability Tracker, 2023



4 Cebr, The Economic Impact of Digital Inclusion in the UK, 2022

5 Ofcom, Technology Tracker, 2022

6 Public First polling data for Good Things Foundation, May 2023

Let's fix the digital divide - for good



This impact review is a celebration of all of the people who are shifting the dial on digital inclusion.

When we launched our new strategy in April 2022, the country was in a period of change and the digital divide was deepening. We were buoyed by the energy and ingenuity that Good Things had brought to our emergency responses to deliver sustainable change on the digital divide.

We'd learned a lot and this strategy embedded that knowledge, turning it into the delivery of mobile connectivity data and devices alongside basic digital skills - all in partnership with the incredible National Digital Inclusion Network of thousands of community organisations.

To pursue our purpose: to fix the digital divide - for good, we needed strategic partners and were lucky enough to bring Virgin Media O2, Vodafone and Nominet alongside us, to invest in our strategy.

I'm so proud of all that we have achieved so far, including the mobilisation of the UK's first National Device Bank, and believe that we have developed a scaled and proven solution to help us reach our goals:



Engage 1 million people

by the end of 2025, helping them to benefit from the digital world



To grow and support 5,000 Digital Inclusion Hubs

across the UK, to respond to local needs.

We have taken great strides towards getting digital inclusion on the national agenda. Our advocacy and influencing work has ramped up - highlighting why now is the time to act on digital exclusion. We will continue to shine a light on our community partners, and in 2023, we were able to showcase the work of digital inclusion hubs to the House of Lords Communications and Digital Committee for their report exploring digital exclusion and the cost of living crisis.

We'll continue this awareness raising over the next year, alongside delivering the services and support to enable digital inclusion in communities.

With the support of the National Digital Inclusion Network and our partners, I believe we can fix the digital divide - for good.

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

The highlights: 2022 - 2023

April 2022

Launched our new strategy: Fix the Digital Divide - For Good.

June 2022

Our partnership with London Office of Technology, Get Online London, London's digital inclusion service is announced.

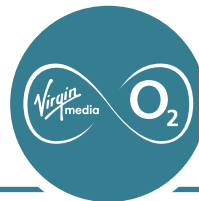


July 2022

Good Things Foundation and People Know How launch 'Supporting people with data connectivity' guide.

Aug 2022

Virgin Media O2 becomes Good Things Foundation's first strategic partner.



Oct 2022

Held Get Online Week, the UK's largest and longest-running digital inclusion campaign.

Nov 2022

O2 launch their Snowgran campaign - keeping people connected at Christmas via the National Databank.



Dec 2022

Vodafone is announced as Good Things Foundation's new strategic partner - with a photography series by renowned photographer, Rankin.



Feb 2023

We gave evidence at the House of Lords Digital and Communications Committee on the impact of digital exclusion in the cost of living crisis.

March 2023

We reached 1,000 National Databanks!

April 2023

We launched a new National Digital Inclusion Network map.

May 2023

Learn My Way - the next generation is launched in English and Welsh.

May 2023

With Circular Electronics Partnership and Deloitte, 'Circular electronics for social good' report launches.


June 2023

Nominet announced as Good Things Foundation's new strategic partner.



June 2023

Vodafone launches the Great British Tech Appeal, supporting the National Device Bank.



"In this world, everything is online. You want to go shopping? Shop online. Hospital? Even that's sometimes online. Basically everything is online. Therefore, it's very important to have digital skills and a connection."

Samuel, volunteer and recipient of support from Skills Enterprise

The big numbers

Since April 2022:



1,289

digital inclusion hubs

have been recruited, taking the total number of hubs in the National Digital Inclusion Network to **3,277**.



Just under
£2 million

in grants have been distributed to the National Digital Inclusion Network.



79,217

registrations

have been made for Learn My Way, our digital skills learning platform.



181,798

free SIMs

and vouchers have been distributed from Three, Vodafone and Virgin Media O2 to people struggling to access the internet.



16,203

devices

have been donated by businesses and public sector organisations to Good Things Foundation for refurbishment and distribution through the National Device Bank.

The big numbers

We help those who most need it.

Of the people supported by digital inclusion hubs that are Databanks⁷:



Following support through the Digital Skills Pathway:



Digitally equal

87% of people felt they had access to suitable data and/or a device at the end of the programme, compared to the baseline where **76%** of people couldn't afford a suitable device, and **67%** couldn't afford suitable data for their needs.⁸



Digitally able

More than 9 in 10 participants felt their digital skills had improved or that they were more confident using the internet.⁸



Digitally safe

86% of people felt better able to stay safe online.⁸

⁷ Good Things Foundation, National Databank Interim Evaluation, 2022

⁸ Good Things Foundation, Digital Skills Pathway for Shared Prosperity, 2023. Digital Skills Pathway was funded through the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund with Greater Manchester Combined Authority, West Midlands Combined Authority and North of Tyne Combined Authority.



"My tutor has been supportive and understanding. It has taken me a long time at my pace but I've felt encouraged every step of the way. . . Having internet and a tablet has helped and changed life for me. I feel less lonely now and my mind has new focus. I am enjoying the apps I have on my device. It has become part of my everyday life"

Dianne*, who received support through the Digital Skills Pathway programme

* Dianne's name has been changed


Happier, healthier and better off


Our programmes and services demonstrate how fixing the digital divide helps people to feel happier, healthier and better off:



Happier

Access to the internet through data and/or devices has helped to improve wellbeing through enabling social connection with family and friends, and reducing loneliness.


 **81%** of people felt more connected to family and friends


 **74%** felt less lonely following receipt of data and devices.⁹




Healthier

Following digital inclusion support:⁹

 **63%** of people reported that their mental health had improved,


 **48%** of people reported that their physical health had improved and


 **60%** of people reported that they were better able to manage their health or illness.



Better Off

Following digital inclusion support:

 **2/3** of people wanted to progress to further learning or felt they had better job prospects.⁹

 **37%** of digital inclusion hubs reported that providing free data through the National Databank had helped to ease the financial burden of accessing the internet for their beneficiaries.¹⁰

⁹ Good Things Foundation, Digital Skills Pathway for Shared Prosperity, 2023

¹⁰ Good Things Foundation, National Databank Interim Evaluation, November 2022

National Digital Inclusion Network

Made of thousands of community partners, the National Digital Inclusion Network hubs are all working to tackle digital exclusion. We have demonstrated that a model of local, community-based support is effective for increasing digital inclusion.¹¹

Building the National Digital Inclusion Network's capacity and capability:

Being part of the National Digital Inclusion Network has a positive impact for hubs and their ability to support digital inclusion. From a recent Network Survey:¹²



80% of hubs

agree it helps them support a wider range of people struggling to access or use the internet.



80% of hubs

agree it helps them support more people to build their digital skills and confidence.

This year alone we have distributed just under **£2 million** in grants to the National Digital Inclusion Network, thanks to our funders: Google.org, HMRC, JPMorgan Chase Foundation, London Office of Technology and Innovation, and Yorkshire Building Society.

91% of hubs agreed that the Digital Inclusion Capability Grant had helped them to achieve better outcomes for people struggling to access or use the internet.¹³

We have held **43** training and meet up sessions for hubs, co-designed and co-delivered by experienced hubs in the National Digital Inclusion Network.



“Good Things have been an amazing partner in the development of our digital inclusion services as an organisation. We couldn't have done it without you!”

Digital inclusion hub in Scotland

¹¹ Good Things Foundation, Digital Skills Pathway for Shared Prosperity, 2023

¹² Good Things Foundation, National Digital Inclusion Network survey, May 2023

¹³ Good Things Foundation, Digital Inclusion Capability Grant Round 2 Evaluation, July 2023

Digital Skills and Learn My Way

Learn My Way

1 in 5 adults do not have basic digital skills.¹⁴

Good Things Foundation developed Learn My Way, a free platform for digital learning, providing digital skills and increased confidence to those supported by the Digital Inclusion Network. Since 2011, more than **1.65 million** people have registered to use Learn My Way.

In spring 2023 we launched the new and improved Learn My Way, offering bitesize topics to help people to make the most of the online world. Subjects include:

- Using a device
- Starting to go online
- Staying safe and using email.

Through to:

- Working online
- Using social media
- Managing health and money online.

Learn My Way has been used by **1,839** digital inclusion hubs to help people gain digital skills.

Improved digital skills, along with data and devices, don't just affect one person. Being digitally able improves people's confidence and skills, enabling them to speak about things affecting them and the people around them:

"Sometimes people will say 'Now I can help my child with their homework' or they can go to the school and maybe talk to the teacher because it's given them that confidence."

Digital inclusion hub in West Yorkshire

1.65 million

people have registered to use Learn My Way

Learn My Way has been used by

1,839
digital inclusion hubs

¹⁴ Lloyds Banking Group UK, 3rd Essential Digital Skills Benchmark, 2021

National Databank

‘A food bank for connectivity data’

The National Databank, launched July 2021 by founders Good Things Foundation and Virgin Media O2, supported by Vodafone and Three, is now providing support to 1,221 National Databank Hubs across the UK.

The first cross-sector collaboration of its kind in the world, the National Databank provides free SIMS and mobile data (as well as talk minutes and texts) to people experiencing data poverty and vulnerable people in need.

14% of people often run out of mobile data before their contract ends.¹⁵

We have seen an increasing demand for free data and since April 2022, we have distributed **181,798 free SIM cards** from O2, Vodafone and Three to people struggling to access the internet.

In the last year the National Databank has won the Positive Impact Award for Technology at the New Statesman Awards and the Best Community Initiative Award at the CorpComms Awards as well as receiving several nominations.



14% of people often run out of mobile data before their contract ends¹⁹



181,798 free SIM cards have been distributed

“Asking family and others to borrow their data felt burdensome. [Now] I’m able to do it all online – check my balance, check my gas and electricity bills. The cost-of-living crisis is hard but access to the internet makes life so much easier.”

Elhum* who received data via the National Databank

¹⁵ Public First poll for Good Things Foundation, 2023
* Elhum’s name has been changed.

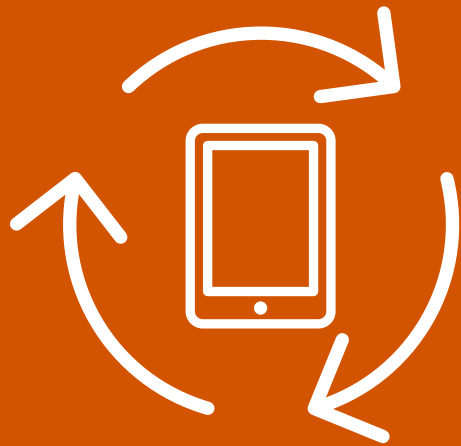
National Device Bank

This year Good Things Foundation launched the National Device Bank with leading sustainable electronic refurbishing company Reconome - wiping and refurbishing corporate technology to donate to those who are unable to afford a device.

Since April 2022, over 16,000 devices have been donated to Good Things Foundation for refurbishment. **4,429** have been given to 267 hubs to distribute to people in their community, with more on the way.

Donations to the National Device Bank don't just benefit people, but the planet too:

In the UK, there's an estimated **1.5 million tonnes** of tech discarded every year, and **only 52.2% is recycled**.¹⁶



By donating to the National Device Bank, less tech ends up in landfill, and more devices get into the hands of those in need. In just one year, corporate device donations to the National Device Bank, including laptops, mobile phones and tablets has prevented:



**3,054,424.5
CO₂e emissions**



**29,830.9 kg
of e-waste**

We are thankful to businesses and local authorities, such as Microsoft, London Borough of Redbridge, HSBC, the Metropolitan Police, Western Power Distribution, Ocado Group, Deloitte and Which? who have been major contributors to the National Device Bank this year.

“We support a brother and sister [with learning disabilities] and they don't live in the same home. They both received a device and the support team were getting them to talk to each other... I can't relate just how important and how rich that must be for them, to have that ability to connect.”

Staff member at a hub supported by the National Device Bank

¹⁶ Wrap, Switched on to value: Powering business change. Waste and Resources Action Programme, 2017

Our strategic partners



We bring together a group of strategic partners, working together to help fix the digital divide. Our partners support our strategy to engage 1 million people, working in partnership with 5,000 digital inclusion hubs to provide access to data, devices and digital skills.

Thank you to Virgin Media O2, Vodafone and Nominet, for supporting and collaborating with us, and for showing a fantastic commitment to our ambitious goals:

Virgin Media O2



Our first strategic partner, we have been working with Virgin Media O2 since 2021 when together we set up the National Databank. Supporting Good Things Foundation fits in with Virgin Media O2's Better Connections Plan - the company's sustainability strategy to create a better, more connected and greener world for everyone.

This year, one highlight has been celebrating hitting the milestone of 1,000 National Databanks - supporting people with mobile data who are at risk of digital exclusion.

[Read more](#)

Vodafone



Good Things Foundation and Vodafone are aligned by the goal to fix the digital divide - with Vodafone's everyone.connected campaign aiming to ensure that all households can access digital technology and benefit from connectivity.

In December 2022, we announced our partnership with Vodafone with a photography exhibition with renowned photographer, Rankin.

One highlight from this year has been working together on the Great British Tech Appeal, supporting the National Device Bank by getting devices into the hands of people who need them.

[Read more](#)

Nominet



After working together during the Covid-19 pandemic emergency response, we formed the Data Poverty Lab to find sustainable solutions to data poverty. This year, our Data Poverty Lab fellows developed three thought-leadership pieces exploring how we talk about, and solutions to, data poverty and whether the internet is an essential utility.

In June 2023, we announced our strategic partnership with Nominet.

[Read more](#)

Shifting the dial

Good Things Foundation is making great strides to fix the digital divide, but we can't do it alone. We are proud to partner with businesses, communities, and the public sector to take action on digital inclusion. We are looking for partners who share our vision and are looking to support our innovative and impactful charity.



For every **£1 spent** on digital skills support, there is a **£9.48 return** on investment.¹⁷

We know that when we invest time and expertise to fix the digital divide, we're supporting people to improve their lives: to be happier, healthier and better off.

So let's do it together.

Interested in finding out more about our strategic partnerships and how your organisation can get involved and help fix the digital divide?

Contact us:

✉ partnerships@goodthingsfoundation.org

☎ 0114 349 1666

¹⁷ Cebr, The economic impact of digital inclusion in the UK, 2022



"Just like the English language, the world of computers was foreign to me; I had never used a computer before and I didn't have access to the internet. I was given a tablet, which I used to practise my digital skills. Suddenly, I discovered a new world, one filled with information, knowledge, wonders, amazing facts, and puzzles. After completing some courses on Learn My Way, I realised that computers could impact my life on every level. I'm excited about continuing to learn so I can improve my chances of finding work and accessing the other benefits that technology can offer."

Ali, who received digital skills support and access to a device