



## LAMBETH DIGITAL INCLUSION FUND

Evaluation of impact and research into wider needs and challenges for digital inclusion

@lambeth\_council



Lambeth  
Digital  
Inclusion  
Network

Linda Jackson,  
Evaluation & Research





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This research and evaluation project and report was a collaboration between We Rise, and Linda Jackson, Evaluation and Research Consultant.

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### About the Lambeth Digital Inclusion Fund

Research from Lambeth Council highlights that around 9% of people living in the borough are digitally excluded. This means that almost 30,000 people in Lambeth don't have access to the devices, connectivity or skills and confidence they need to get online, and the challenges they face by being digitally excluded have been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Lambeth Council is committed to working alongside the voluntary and community sector and local public sector partners to help address this challenge as outlined in the borough's [Digital Strategy](#).

### Pillars of digital inclusion



Technology



Connectivity



Skills, motivation, and support

As part of the response to the digital divide, Lambeth Council established a Digital Inclusion Fund to provide small grants to voluntary and community sector organisations working to address this issue in Lambeth. In total 41 organisations applied to the first round of the fund, and 18 were awarded funding.

The first round of the fund focused on adults and over 300 people were supported with digital access. Through 2021, almost 1000 adults and children have been supported by the Digital Inclusion Fund across the borough.



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### Research and evaluation

Lambeth Council asked We Rise, an organisation which empowers young people to create successful futures and Linda Jackson, an independent research and evaluation consultant, to collaborate on a joint evaluation of the first round of funding.

This research found that the fund had an impact not just on levels of digital exclusion, but that digital inclusion was a gateway to improving people's lives in multiple ways, for example providing access to job searches, health services, and staying connected with families and friends. The value of the Lambeth Digital Inclusion Network in providing support to voluntary and community sector organisations in this work was also highlighted

### Outcomes of the digital inclusion fund



Digital access, usage and confidence



Economic outcomes - employment, education and housing and benefits



Social outcomes - social connections, health, supporting independent living



Other outcomes - legal outcomes/ civil participation, household outcomes.

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## Recommendations

The report makes several recommendations for how the fund can grow its reach and impact going forwards. The research also identifies different groups impacted by this issue and the barriers they face including families where English is not the first language, older people, schools, disabled people and adult carers.

The report concludes with three wider recommendations that will support Lambeth Council and the Digital Inclusion Network to further improve digital inclusion locally:

- Create a simple access point for the community to contact with general digital issues, for example Wi-Fi connectivity or for referrals on to other organisations
- Include assessment around digital access/interest in digital access as part of services' interactions with residents
- Conduct more research into the barriers facing people at the point of crisis and digital inclusion and how this might help preparedness for digital engagement

# INTRODUCTION

As part of the response to a widening digital divide exacerbated by Covid-19, Lambeth Council established a [Digital Inclusion Fund](#). The fund was launched in November 2020 with an investment of £200,000 from Lambeth Council. Of this, £100,000 went to schools and another £100,000 went to fund voluntary and community sector organisations (VCS). The VCS-focussed fund provided 18 organisations with funding for digital equipment, internet connection and training to support their beneficiaries to get online.

Following a successful crowdfunding campaign that was match-funded by [Impact on Urban Health](#), Lambeth launched a second round of funding in January 2021 for schools and voluntary and community organisations with a focus on children and young people. A third round of funding is planned for 2022.

With the support of the Digital Inclusion Fund, almost **1000 people** have been supported across the borough to be more digitally connected.

Wanting to understand the impact of the first round of funding and to explore outstanding issues around digital exclusion to inform the third round, Lambeth Council asked [We Rise](#), an organisation which empowers young people to create successful futures and [Linda Jackson](#), an independent research and evaluation consultant, to collaborate on a joint evaluation. This report describes the process and findings from this innovative approach.



Linda Jackson with members of the We Rise team before their presentation back to Lambeth



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“The Lambeth Digital Inclusion Fund grant has enabled our organisation to fight back inequality and digital illiteracy, delivering the much-needed access to support for clients experiencing financial deprivation and difficulty in communicating and accessing statutory and voluntary organisations services.

During these times of pandemic, it has provided a life-line in communication with our beneficiaries and helped us to combat social isolation.”

Organisation feedback

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## THE RESEARCH AND EVALUATION APPROACH

The collaboration brought together a team of 12 young people aged 16-18 from Lambeth, alongside We Rise coaches and a professional researcher. This approach built upon the lived experiences of the young people and the consultant's technical experiences to draw out new and different insights within a robust evaluation framework.

The process also invested directly in the young people who might otherwise not have had the opportunity to participate in a research project and helped them gain valuable work experience.

## KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

During a scoping exercise between Lambeth Council and the We Rise research team, the key research questions were identified as:

- What impact did the fund have on beneficiaries and organisations?
- What were the learnings from the Digital Inclusion Fund?
- What is the unmet need in Lambeth in relation to digital access?
- What are the recommendations for Lambeth for the next round of Digital Inclusion Funding and wider support?

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## THE THEORY OF CHANGE

The theory of change was co-produced by the We Rise team and the evaluation consultant. The logic model built upon the structure outlined by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's [Digital Inclusion Evaluation Toolkit](#), referencing the three pillars of digital inclusion (i.e., technology, connectivity and training/support) and the different clusters of economic, social and wider outcomes. The theory of change logic model is presented on the next page.

The theory of change helped shape the fieldwork materials and wider evaluation framework, and was tested through the qualitative research.

### Qualitative research

In total, the research included interviews with 22 individuals. This included interviews with organisations that had received Digital Inclusion Funding and their beneficiaries, and organisations and beneficiaries who hadn't received funding, to understand how they tackled digital exclusion and the digital needs they still faced.



Roundtable event with Bell Ribeiro-Addy MP

In addition, the 12 young people in the We Rise research team took part in a round table discussion with Bell Ribeiro-Addy, MP for Streatham, building both a strategic overview of digital inclusion and their own lived experience into the research.



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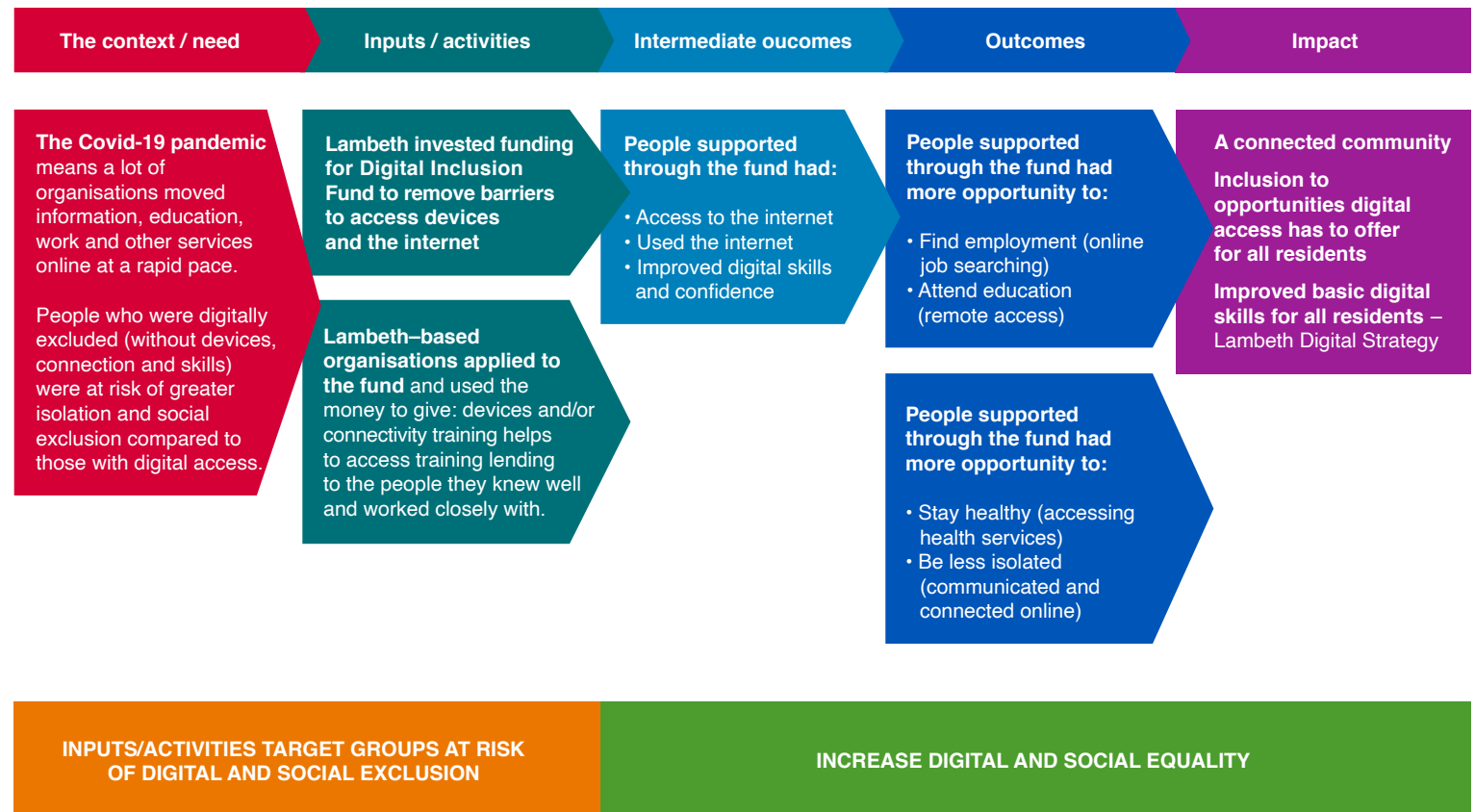
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### DIGITAL INCLUSION EVALUATION TOOLKIT – THEORY OF CHANGE



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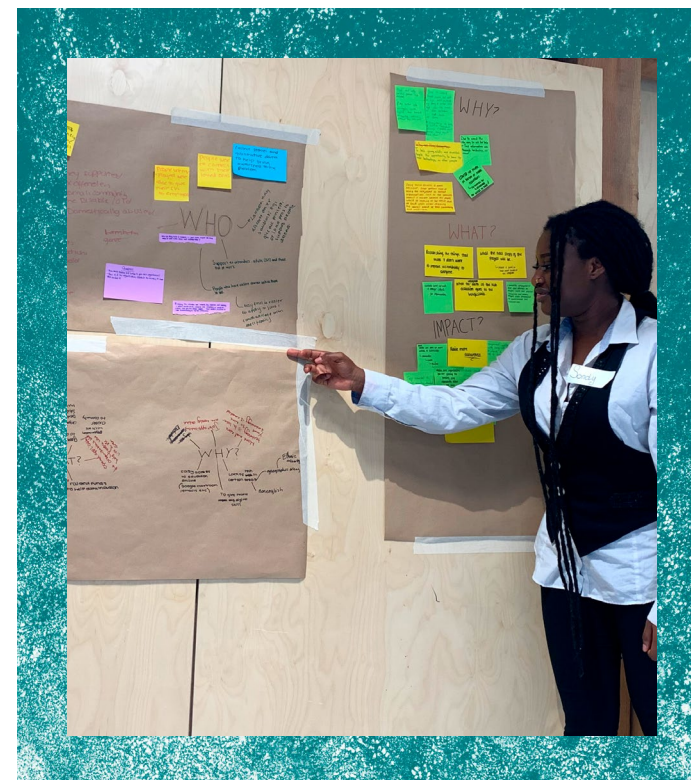
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### Presentation to Lambeth

On Friday 23 July, the We Rise team presented their findings to Lambeth Council and other guests with an interest in digital inclusion. This included a social media campaign designed by the We Rise team to share case stories and other insights gathered through the research.

### About this report

This report follows the broader structure of the We Rise research team presentation to address the key research questions identified by Lambeth. It brings together analysis of project evaluation forms submitted by organisations that received funding from the Digital Inclusion Fund alongside data from qualitative interviews.



Scoping out the theory of change

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# ABOUT THE DIGITAL INCLUSION FUND, ROUND 1

The first round of the Lambeth Digital Inclusion Fund opened for applications between the 1 and 14 December 2020. Organisations were invited to apply for between £1,000 and £5,000 to support costs associated with devices (e.g., laptops and tablets) and connectivity (e.g., dongles and MiFi) that organisations were then to supply directly to the people they worked with. Training and other forms of skills-support were funded alongside the distribution of devices and/or data. Successful applicants were also invited to join a Lambeth-wide Digital Inclusion Network managed by the council.

The first Fund received applications from 41 organisations across Lambeth. These organisations worked with beneficiaries from a wide range of different community groups, including disabled people, refugees, homeless people and people for whom English was not a first language. While well established in their work, these organisations were often responding to a new set of digital needs facing their beneficiaries triggered by the uncertainty and flux of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Of the organisations that applied, 18 were awarded funding. Of these, 16 spent part or all of their grant in ways to support digital inclusion for their beneficiaries, whilst one organisation delayed the spend whilst they set up their activity and another returned the grant unspent. The ways in which organisations spent their funding and reasons for delays or returned grants are explored in the following report. The first round of funding supported over 300 people.

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Organisations that received funding were required to return a project evaluation form six months after they received funding. These forms have been analysed and included in this evaluation. Organisations were also asked to return equalities data on the beneficiaries they supported directly through their digital projects. Only 9 organisations returned equalities data on beneficiaries, and some of the returns did not contain any usable data, so there are significant gaps in this data set (for example, an organisation that works exclusively with Disabled people returned a form with 40 ‘prefer not to say’ responses for each question, so Disabled beneficiaries were presumably undercounted by at least 40).

More support and simpler documentation will need to be provided in future rounds to make it easier for organisations to provide this key information.

Acknowledging these limitations, highlights from the data that was collected include:

- Older people were underrepresented with 199 beneficiaries between 18 and 54 and only 18 beneficiaries 55 and older (11 prefer not to say).
- Out of the 80 beneficiaries with disabilities or long-term health conditions, 47 had mental health issues, learning difficulties, or neurodiversity, and 37 had long term health conditions. Physical impairments, visual impairments, and hearing loss/Deaf beneficiaries were underrepresented with only 12 beneficiaries with these types of disability.
- In terms of ethnic groups, white British people and Black British and other Black backgrounds made up nearly all beneficiaries with very low representation from other ethnicities.

These insights and gaps identified will inform the focus for following rounds of funding.

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Whilst the organisations reported upon the numbers of beneficiaries that benefited from the projects directly, they also made the point that there would be a longer legacy for their digital inclusion activity. In particular, organisations such as [St Mungo's](#) that set up loaning systems commented how the investment would support even more beneficiaries in the longer term:

**“With your generosity, we have been able to purchase laptops and Mi-Fi units to digitally connect people within this service. Residents at the service can sign out a laptop for when they require and then return it for others to use, meaning that people will benefit from the devices for years to come.”**

*St Mungo's*

The next section explores the impact of digital inclusion, before examining organisations' experiences of delivering digital inclusion activity funded through the Fund and key learning.



**Clear Community Web**



# THE IMPACT OF THE DIGITAL INCLUSION FUND

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Organisations and beneficiaries explained how the impact of digital inclusion was not just around single outcomes. Instead, digital access offered a gateway to multiple outcomes, for example providing access to job searches and staying connected with families and friends. It also allowed different members of the same household the opportunity to pursue different interests depending on their own personal situation or need. The following extract from [South London Refugee Association's \(SLRA\)](#) evaluation form describes the multiple benefits of digital inclusion in detail.



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## Case study: multiple impacts of digital inclusion

“Interviews with the clients showed that all used the access to internet for a variety of purposes, including SLRA services, education for themselves and/or children, communication with solicitors and other advice providers, health care, and communication with family and entertainment.

This meant that they were able to reduce their isolation over this period through being able to communicate with family and friends as well as being able to attend SLRA’s groups and those of other organisations. Through being able to access school/college or training, they have been able to increase their confidence and skills to give them better opportunities going forward. This was backed up by being able to attend ESOL classes and homework club, which were really targeted for our beneficiaries and gave them specialised support to help them achieve their full potential.

The devices and data also helped those beneficiaries who were able to look for voluntary or paid work to access job sites, CV writing workshops and gave them the ability to do interviews online if necessary.

The devices and data were also crucial in providing some respite for some parents during these unusual and intense times as their children could access entertaining and educational activities online. As many of the families we work with live in cramped and unsuitable accommodation, this could be really important for the mental health of the adults.”

*SLRA evaluation form*

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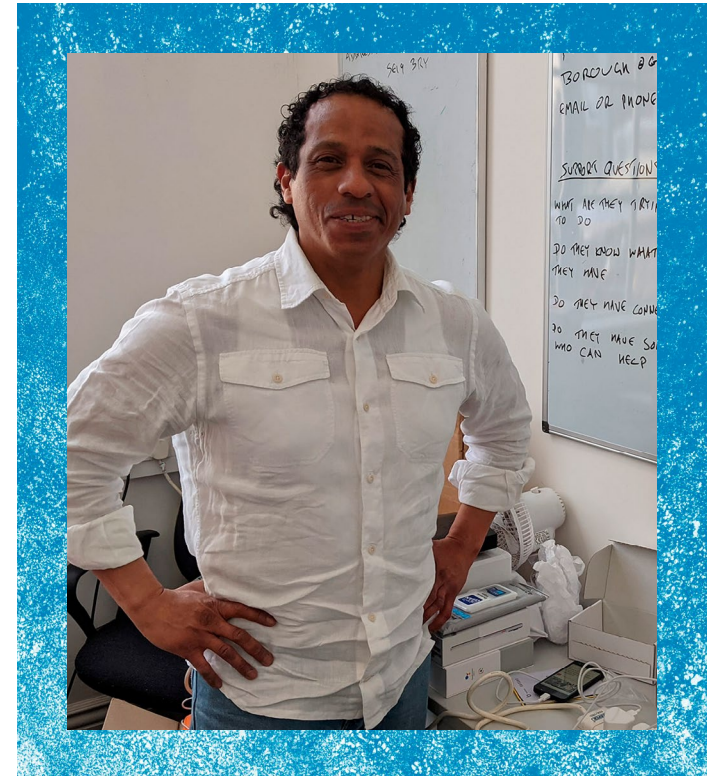
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The multiple impacts of digital inclusion was also described by [Respeito](#):

“Through this grant the beneficiaries are able to: attend online meetings with support agencies (i.e., Respeito, Social Services, domestic violence specialist organisations); access emails, EUSS accounts, Universal Credit accounts, contact with children in care, attend video GP appointments, look for work, CV writing, contact with children’s schools, help children with homework, learn English [and] combat isolation by attending online activities.”

*Respeito evaluation form*

Whilst keeping this holistic picture of impact in mind, this section presents a more thematic overview of impact. It reviews the outcome areas identified in the theory of change, namely: digital, economic, social and wider outcomes. It also explores the impact on volunteers and the organisations that received Digital Inclusion funding.



Clear Community Web



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# IMPACT ON BENEFICIARIES

## Digital access, usage and confidence

The evaluation revealed a range of ways in which beneficiaries increased their digital access, through different kinds of devices (either lent or given), different routes to connectivity and multiple forms of training and ad hoc support to get online. Overall, organisations that received digital inclusion funding reported how people's digital skills and confidence increased through their digital activity, with one example from [Raw Material Music & Media Education](#), below:

**“Participants developed their proficiency in using basic internet browsers and Zoom. This was a major outcome for some participants who have never had access to a smart device before”**

*Raw Material Music & Media Education evaluation form*

For more digitally literate individuals, including the young adults supported through the [Dwayne Simpson Foundation](#) digital lending library, access to devices and connectivity was enough for the beneficiary to get online.

For others with lower levels of digital skills, organisations described how tailored and ongoing support helped people have repeated attempts to get online, to build up confidence over time.

Another important element of digital usage was the ways in which access enabled beneficiaries to get online in their own private spaces and time. This emerged as an important indicator of equality, as it meant that beneficiaries could work or socialise online in the evening or spare time. There were some limits to this access however, particularly notable for organisations which lent out devices with software that limited browsing behaviour or asked beneficiaries to sign contracts about usage.

The nature of digital impact varied however depending on the individual's starting point. In this way, having digital access didn't necessarily mean that they were proficient by the end of the period.

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**“The impact of this work has been varied as each person has been unique.”**

*[Clear Community Web](#) evaluation form*

Instead, digital inclusion was described more as an individual and lifelong journey of investment and learning rather than a ‘quick fix’.

### **Economic outcomes – employment, education and housing and benefits**

Digital access was not an end in itself. Rather, it enabled beneficiaries to maintain engagement with different parts of their lives as they moved online during the Covid-19 pandemic. This section explores the impact of digital inclusion on employment, education, and other economic outcomes.



## Employment

Interviewees reported a positive impact on a range of employment outcomes. For example, organisations described how beneficiaries were able to get online to search for jobs, apply for jobs, check emails for progress and/or to tailor their CVs. People were also able to attend training at their own pace and in their own time to increase their employability. Beneficiaries from [Centrepoint](#) in Lambeth described the impact of digital access on their employment and learning:

**“I am currently looking for a job within the construction sector and this laptop enables me to apply for jobs within construction, apply for training within construction and do my online trainings from the comfort of my own home.”**

*Centrepoint evaluation form*

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## Education

Organisations that supported children and families with digital access described how the individual child used the laptop to engage with school and learning. These organisations also noted how their support enabled a household to have multiple access points, meaning that larger families could have more of their children online at the same time rather than having to share devices between them, such as described in the feedback received by [Community Tech Aid](#):

**“Children forced to self-isolate during the school term were able to continue their studies from home; those attending school no longer have to compete for access to a computer to do their homework. [One beneficiary told us], ‘I have four children so they can do work at the same time instead of waiting’”**

*Community Tech Aid evaluation form*

**“I have found the laptop very useful, especially when I started my apprenticeship. Due to the fact that I sometime when finish work late and did not have time to always use the PC in the learning room. Having the laptop has helped me get more work done and to do more work at my own pace and time.”**

*Centrepoint evaluation form*

Organisations also described how digital access enabled people to work when their jobs moved online. For these beneficiaries, being able to join Microsoft Teams by laptop rather than through their phone gave them more consistent access to meetings and helped them feel more professional.

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Young people in full-time education described how devices meant they were able to continue their learning and complete their homework in own time, and use the laptop for other ways, for example by finding part-time work or connecting with friends:

**“I am in full time education and looking for a part time job whiles studying and this laptop enables me to complete my course work on time, do extensive research at the comfort of my home and apply for part time jobs while studying.”**

*Centrepont evaluation form*

There were several examples of young people who would have had to drop out of education had they not had digital access provided by the Fund. Organisations described how they supported their beneficiaries to complete a range of courses from short courses and AQA certificates to a PHD in religion and philosophy from the Open University.

Dropping out of their education would more likely have acted as a further barrier to employment, as described by Community Led Action:

**“There was one client informed us that she could not do her course she is registered with due to lack of device and how to use Zoom or Microsoft team. We have provided the device to her and taught her how she can use the device and other applications. She was able within the life of the project to successfully complete her training and got employed. She said that without this help she would have dropped the course and left without getting employed.”**

*Community Led Action evaluation form*

The fund also supported beneficiaries to access existing training provided by organisations such as [Raw Material Music & Education](#) as they moved their offer, services and courses online.



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## Housing and benefits

Organisations that worked with people in temporary or unstable housing such as [St Mungo's](#) described how the people used their support to help find housing, by participating in online bidding or completing housing forms:

**“The laptops have also been beneficial for helping clients to make progress with their housing. One individual was bidding for council housing which was difficult to do on his phone as he had to complete forms. The laptop has enabled him to make progress with bidding and he has now completed the required forms.”**

*St Mungo's*

Similarly, other organisations described how their beneficiaries were able to set up benefit payments over the internet, reducing their arrears and increasing their financial independence.

## Social outcomes – social connections, health and supporting independent living

The evaluation revealed a series of ways in which digital access had a positive impact on social outcomes. Again, many of these were intertwined with other outcomes, particularly as being able to access opportunities online generally increased individuals' confidence or self-esteem.



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## Connect, socialise and have fun

Being digitally active enabled vital online contact with other people, particularly during lockdown or periods of self-isolation. Whether this contact was driven by work or play, organisations and beneficiaries described how this helped reduce their social isolation and even gave them opportunities to have fun.

For example, beneficiaries were able to use their devices and data to download music or films to keep them entertained or occupied in the evenings. They were able to virtually connect in private spaces or as organisations moved their services online – with various stories of quizzes, events and discos, parties for children and families, and even online meet-ups between friends to do crosswords or puzzles.

**“As well as following our learning programmes, our students kept the Go Anywhere, Do Anything project going by moving online, and they had some fun sessions including quizzes, discos, fancy dress evenings, virtual trips, and much more, usually out of usual working hours.”**

### *Share Community*

Organisations working with people experiencing points of crisis or who were in recovery described how online methods actually helped beneficiaries to reconnect with their family members.

Online methods of connection offered an immediate, cost effective and safe alternative to face to face contact. This is explored in more detail in the following case study from [Hestia Housing and Support](#).

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### Case study: Reconnecting family through online calls

“Service users have been able to use these tools to engage with support that would have otherwise been unavailable to them. One service user has been able to reconnect with his family safely over Zoom, and is now visiting them regularly as a result of this reconnection.

Service users have been able to connect with their families without geographical and financial barriers. For example, one service user has been able to connect with his family in Newcastle, which would not have been possible without these tools.... It was not anticipated that service users would be able to reconnect with estranged family through the use of digital technology.

One service user was estranged from his family due to his substance misuse, and the perceived physical threat that he posed to his family as a result of his chaotic behaviour when using. This service user was able to reconnect with his family using the laptops provided, without the physical threat causing a barrier. This service user is now in regular contact with his family, even attending the gym and cinema with his father. This has had a big impact on his confidence and recovery. This would not have been possible without digital technology.”

*Hestia evaluation form*

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## Health outcomes

There were a number of ways in which the research showed a link between digital inclusion and improved health outcomes, for example, being able to book a GP appointment online rather than queue at the surgery. Additionally, video conferencing with health professionals, such as GP's, helped to reduce the risk posed by visiting health centers:

**“Service users have been able to receive faster access to medical support through video calls to health professionals, including quicker access to prescriptions that support their recovery from substance misuse.”**

*Hestia project evaluation form*

Other examples of health outcomes included sustained engagement between a beneficiary and a service as it moved online.

This was particularly notable for organisations that provided drug and alcohol support, such as the [Nehemiah Project](#) who described how the Digital Inclusion Funding meant they could continue to support their beneficiaries as part of their longer-term recovery:

**“The grant helped us to deliver the 12-week recovery programme online through Zoom by way of a SMART TV in the Residents dining area. This enabled one of our staff who was shielding from COVID-19 due to health reasons, to deliver the 12-week group programme and provide one to one support.”**

*Nehemiah project evaluation form*



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Organisations and beneficiaries described how digital access improved outcomes around mental health and wellbeing. This was the result of staying occupied during the pandemic, by being able to connect with family and friends and generally feeling less alone or isolated. There were many examples of the positive impact on mental health and wellbeing, with the following example from a [Centrepoint](#) beneficiary showing the holistic impact of digital inclusion:

**“The gift of a laptop from Centrepoint enabled me to search and find a job... [It also] came with a sim card and data so I was also able to keep myself occupied through the pandemic by communicating with family and friends through social media and completing online short educational courses to keep my brain functioning, which is good for my mental wellbeing.”**

*Centrepoint Project evaluation form*



**Clear Community Web**

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## Supporting independent living

Organisations such as [Share Community](#) that supported beneficiaries with learning disabilities described how digital access helped people with their practical skills, which in turn supported their independent living:

**“The cohort of students using the laptop are currently 0.8 below average in Practical skills as measured by our outcomes star. Using the laptops will increase their proficiency in using the laptop as a tool to become more independent.”**

*Share Community*

Organisations who worked with people with autism described how their beneficiaries often enjoyed interacting via Zoom, which enabled them to open up and be more relaxed with other people compared to how they felt during face-to-face meet ups.

There was also evidence that digital inclusion helped some organisations to connect their beneficiaries with other services or organisations across the community including foodbanks or referrals to other training providers.

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## Other outcomes - legal outcomes/ civil participation, household outcomes



### Legal outcomes/civil participation

There were several examples whereby digital inclusion enabled wider civil participation. For example, refugees were able to actively check their case status and a group of women who had never used a computer before were supported to complete their census online.



### Household outcomes

When digital access was a success, the research described more empowered and connected households leading to greater independence for all members. Organisations described how multiple access points and training helped families to build stronger bonds together and take pressure off relationships. Indeed, organisations noted the importance of the wider household when considering digital inclusion, and noted that more work needed to be done to ensure household-level access.

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## A lifeline

For some beneficiaries, the multiple and overlapping benefits of digital inclusion was a lifeline. This was summarised by a [Clear Community Web](#) beneficiary:

“Having access to a laptop has been a lifeline. I had to rapidly move into temporary accommodation during lockdown and this tool allowed me to manage my affairs, engage with a solicitor and arrange new housing for my son.”

*Clear Community Web evaluation form*

In these ways, the research validated the assumption that digital access prevented widening social inequality for some of the people in highly vulnerable circumstances in Lambeth, as explained by [Centrepont](#) below:

“We have realised for young people’s personal development it is a necessity that they have access to the internet and their own devices so they are not disadvantaged compared to their peers.”

*Centrepont project evaluation form*



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If Covid-19 and the lockdown exacerbated the need for digital inclusion, the Digital Inclusion Fund supported organisations to kickstart or accelerate their response. Organisations were clear that the Fund was available at the right time for them to make a difference, and that it enabled them to learn more about their beneficiaries' needs to help them in future. As [St Mungo's](#) commented:

**“The funding we have received will provide a lasting legacy in our service and we will continue to support clients in accessing fundamental technology that we often take for granted.”**

*St Mungo's evaluation form*

Additionally, organisations were able to combine the Digital Inclusion Funding with other pots of money or resources, from other organisations and/or the wider community coming forward and donating other devices for recycling.

This was noted by [SLRA](#):

**“When it became known that we were providing devices, other organisations got in touch as they had devices to donate and were looking for those in need to donate them to.**

**This was incredible.”**

*SLRA evaluation form*

This culture of giving back was also seen within the organisation with examples of members who received digital access support then deciding to volunteer or mentor other members through their digital journeys. There is even an instance where a volunteer secured part-time paid work in IT. As well as the funding received through the process, organisations also noticed the importance of the Digital Inclusion Network.

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This helped introduce organisations to different people throughout the council, from which have developed some collaboration and relationships. The extract from [Clear Community Web](#) below was typical of this feedback:

“This work has enabled us to deepen relationship with other organizations and through this we have delivered more support across the Borough and we now have a part time Teaching Assistant who is also a member of Mosaic Clubhouse.”

*Clear Community Web evaluation form*

Being able to increase their work around digital inclusion – both through the Digital Inclusion Network and through their own networks, helped organisations raise their profile. The [Dwayne Simpson Foundation](#) for example, described how the Digital Inclusion Fund enabled them to quickly respond to their beneficiaries’ needs, which in turn raised their profile as a responsive and needs-driven organisation.



Having a more detailed understanding of the digital inclusion needs facing their beneficiaries – and a clearer view of the complexity of needs – meant that many organisations funded through the Digital Inclusion Fund agreed that they would continue to support their beneficiaries around digital inclusion in future.

# LEARNING FROM THE DIGITAL INCLUSION FUND

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Lambeth  
Digital  
Inclusion  
Network

Linda Jackson,  
Evaluation & Research



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The evaluation was interested in what worked well and less well in supporting beneficiaries through the Digital Inclusion Fund and how this learning could support organisations tackle digital exclusion in future. This section presents the learning.

### What worked well – the enablers of impact

The application form process was straightforward, but could be more widely advertised and have other routes beyond just written applications

Organisations that were awarded Digital Inclusion funding tended to be very positive about their experience of applying to the Fund. In particular, they described how the application form was straightforward and gave room for organisations to talk about the needs facing their beneficiaries.

**“The application form was simple and easy to use.”**

*Organisation interview*

Organisations also agreed that the funding came through quickly once it was awarded, and described the added value of being part of the Digital Inclusion Network, as a chance to meet new people, collaborate, cross-refer and build upon each other's skills.

One organisation found the leaflet by chance and recommended that the Fund was more widely advertised in future, potentially online and through different networks. The two-week application window was also seen as fairly tight, particularly for those that heard about it at short notice.



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The research also revealed that not every organisation was comfortable with written application forms. These interviewees suggested there might be different means to apply, including telephone and/or video discussions.

**The Digital Inclusion Fund worked well when organisations tailored their support to the individuals they worked with, building trust and taking time to understand their needs**

For many organisations, the Digital Inclusion Fund was an opportunity to learn more about the needs facing their beneficiaries and revise their support accordingly. Having the time and resources to research where their beneficiaries were on their digital journey – and the flexibility to reshape their approach – was a valuable component of the Fund. Indeed, the organisations that returned funding also noted how they learnt more about their beneficiary needs through the process.

Organisations described a wide variation of digital skills and readiness amongst the cohort they worked with, from people who were confident online, people who had devices/connectivity but not the skills to use them (or vice versa) and those people who did not want to be online or use the internet. This learning meant that digital support worked well when it was personalised to the individual, rather than taking a generic approach.



[Clear Community Web](#)

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As well as understanding the individual's digital readiness, organisations described the importance of seeing the individual as part of the context of the wider household. Interviewees described the roles of different people around the beneficiary, whether that was the carer, wider family or other key workers, and how their digital readiness could act as a wider gateway or barrier to access. Recognising this, [Share Community](#) used their family liaison officers to provide household support:

**“The major challenge is where the disabled person is living in a situation where nobody else is digitally literate and where there's no broadband access. We now have a small team of family liaison officers so that we can work more holistically with our students and their families and support networks.”**

*Share Community evaluation form*

Ensuring that everyone in the household had digital access was a key finding in the research and remains an outstanding area of need explored later in this report.

**The Digital Inclusion Fund worked well when organisations offered a package of support which continued over time.**

Organisations described how technology and data alone were not a ‘quick fix’ to digital inclusion, particularly for those who needed support to build their digital confidence and skills. As [Disability Advice Service Lambeth](#) (DASL) explained:

**“Giving someone a device with data is not a quick fix, it takes time to support them, especially if they do not have support from friends, family or neighbours.”**

*DASL evaluation form*

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In these ways, organisations recommended a package of support which looked at all three pillars of digital inclusion, of devices, connectivity and training/support. Organisations also noted that this worked best when this support took place over the longer term, both to support beneficiaries' depth of understanding but also because their needs or technology could change over time.

**Having people with lived experience delivering training and support helped beneficiaries**

Organisations that had people with lived experience as volunteers described how this gave added value to their beneficiaries. For example, one organisation working with disabled people recruited a disabled volunteer with IT expertise to deliver their training, which was particularly useful for other disabled people looking to get online.





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## Case study: interview with a Disability Advice Service Lambeth (DASL) volunteer

“Between 1996 – 2008 my career was in IT support, predominantly around desktop support and expertise in Microsoft Office and Excel. I worked at three investment banks, a software company and a global city law firm. But unfortunately, in 2008 I got diagnosed with Lupus so I couldn’t fulfil my function at work. By 2017 I felt I was 90% ready to re-join the workforce and I must have applied to over 100 jobs but because of my medical career break, employers didn’t want to know.

With some mentoring from a Shaw Trust programme, I thought I’d leave the city alone and I began to think of schools and charities - and that’s how I came across DASL. They were recruiting for a digital inclusion role so I was picked up by the volunteer coordinator who persuaded me to try it out. I started in November, originally for three months and we’re coming up for the year now. They are such a great bunch of people at DASL, so focused on Lambeth and concentrated on all disabilities including hidden ones like Lupus.

It started with the volunteer coordinator saying, ‘I’ve got a person who has a computer but desperately wants to get on the internet; will you talk to her?’ It was helping people who haven’t used a computer before or don’t have smart phones, to get online and improve their lives.



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The volunteer coordinator was good at matching me up with disabled people, like another visually impaired person who I helped use Zoom. For smart phones, a lot of visually impaired people use iPhones but I use Android, and with a text message I can press a microphone and dictate my message and spell check it and send it without having to type anything. And when people say it's a nightmare using the keyboard, I say no, just press the microphone. You may have to correct a few things but it will cut down the time and stress.

DASL like me as I can empathise with visually impaired people who can say, 'oh it's too hard for me', and I can say, 'I'm in the same boat and I can walk you through this'. I have the patience to do this, which is what I've been doing for the last 30 years, and I enjoy doing it."

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The Digital Inclusion Fund generated a multiplier effect when combined with other resources

Organisations described two ways in which the Digital Inclusion Fund generated value beyond the actual sum of the grant. Firstly, [Clear Community Web](#) described how the funding from the council alongside that of the voluntary sector enabled them to deliver a stronger service.

**“The Lambeth Digital Inclusion Fund plugged a vital gap in the digital support work we provide across the Borough. Each person we support has their own set of needs and challenges they face and we have found the combination of support from the council and voluntary sector has ensured our work goes to the right place and the right time.”**

*Clear Community Web evaluation form*

Secondly, [Community Tech Aid](#) combined funding from the Digital Inclusion Fund with that of a charitable funder, which meant that they were able to strengthen and widen their offer to more people across the borough

## What worked less well - barriers to impact

The research also explored the barriers to impact, presented next. It is worth noting that these challenges tend to relate more generally to the complexity of tackling digital exclusion rather than specific concerns with the Digital Inclusion Fund.

### Not everybody was ready for digital support

The research revealed that individuals were at different stages of readiness for digital support. This meant that in some instances pre-engagement work was necessary before the three pillars of digital inclusion (technology, connectivity and training/support) could take place.

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There were instances where this pre-engagement was successful, for example [Hestia Housing and Support](#) helped beneficiaries understand why digital access might be beneficial to them before moving onto digital support:

“We have learnt that an investment of time is needed to encourage service users who are not familiar with digital technology to be able to gain the skills and confidence to use these tools. Many of the service users at [the site] have not been used to what is possible through accessing digital support, and were very sceptical when it was first discussed. By working with service users to explore the options together, staff have been able to provide the service users with the skills needed to explore this as a means of support, and to trust the positive impact it can have.”

*Hestia Housing and support evaluation form*



[Clear Community Web](#)

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However, there were instances where beneficiaries were not ready for pre-engagement, or organisational resources didn't allow for the investment. Two particular groups emerged through the research.

### People in or at the point of crisis

An organisation that worked with homeless people who were not in supported housing and/or who were sex workers and/or suffering from addiction, described how these beneficiaries were not at the right point in their journey to consider digital inclusion. This might be because their circumstances prevented ongoing digital access – for example people who didn't live in supported housing having to charge up laptops at a centre – but most often because they had more pressing and basic life needs that they were trying to tackle as their first priority.

### People who didn't want to go online/didn't see the importance of digital inclusion

Another group of people were those that quite simply didn't want to go online and/or those who didn't see the benefits of digital engagement upon their lives.

People fitting this profile emerged across all beneficiary groups, although organisations tended to point to older people, carers or other people facing more immediate pressures, as most likely candidates. Organisations could either invest time in pre-engagement activity to support their readiness for digital access or focus on those who were more ready to engage.



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Supporting digital inclusion is difficult, complex and takes time and investment

Whilst the Digital Inclusion Fund gave organisations the opportunity to investigate and tailor their response to their beneficiaries' needs, it also uncovered the scale and complexity of it. This was noted throughout organisational feedback and summarised by [Zetetic Housing](#), below:

“Because of the nature and complexity of many of our tenants' conditions and level of capacity, it has not been as simple as just installing the devices and showing tenants how to use them. Many of the tenants also suffer with extreme anxiety about change, change to routines and meeting new people. After access to the tenants was once again allowed it has taken time to arrange and make the first visit as we have had to consider and take into account the disruption to each tenant's daily routine.

Also some have not yet felt able to leave their rooms to meet the trainer. For them this is a relationship that must develop at a slower pace than usual, and so the whole process of teaching basic skills as well as working with the tenant as well as support staff to create a learning plan based on their individual needs and likes will be fairly slow.”

This was important learning but it also meant that progress towards digital inclusion could feel slow or take longer and greater resources than originally anticipated.

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### Changing circumstances of beneficiaries – with other ways of filling the gaps

There were several examples whereby organisations described how their beneficiary circumstances changed between the point at which they applied to the Digital Inclusion Fund and the point at which they began to reach out to beneficiaries.

Family members, schools and other organisations occasionally ‘filled the gaps’ particularly in terms of hardware (although one organisation described how their technology savvy young people had turned to a pay-by-installment service to purchase their laptops). In these ways, individual needs were resolved by the time the organisation began to deliver their plan.

Other organisations described how the people they had nominated for support had changed their mind about receiving it, with instances of increasing beneficiary anxiety over whether

they could ‘do it’ or not. This situation was often exacerbated by additional lockdowns or other circumstances out of organisations’ control.

### Identifying the right devices/connectivity took time and was a learning curve

One of the challenges faced by organisations was tailoring the type of devices or data to the individual. Organisations, such as Community Led Action, described instances of trial and error, where they worked to find the most appropriate equipment and software to meet the needs and skills of their different beneficiaries.

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“There were challenges as to type of devices that best suits them. After we first bought four Chromebook notebooks, we have realised that most of [our beneficiaries] did not suit this type of device except the younger ones. Then we had to change our plan and use the remaining 11 devices to get a computer that has Microsoft office.”

*Community Led Action evaluation form*

This situation was exacerbated by shortages during the early pandemic but also complicated by finding the best software to help troubleshoot or maintain the device remotely without the participants having to physically return the device each time they had a problem. Wider support for organisations to identify devices, data and protective software would be well received.



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### Data could be better/more strategically managed

A similar point was raised around managing data, particularly by the [South London Refugee Association](#) (SLRA) who described how clients tended not to use all of their monthly data, which could have saved money for the organisation or been deployed to other beneficiaries if their clients' plans had been adjusted to their actual usage. As they described:

**“A dedicated person – staff member or volunteer - who regularly checks in the usage of each client would be helpful. There should be a way of redistributing data available to those who need it, perhaps through group plans, which we will look into. I feel there could be a place for a borough wide scheme to help spread data usage but I recognise the complexities of this.”**

*SLRA evaluation form*

This situation was echoed by [St Mungo's](#) who found that Mi-Fi was the most tenable option for providing localised Wi-Fi access to their clients. However, the Mi-Fi units did not have a data limit and so the organisation had to ensure that the allowance was appropriate for their needs.

### Lending with conditions could put people off

Organisations that lent out devices had to make a number of decisions around how best to manage the process, both in terms of asking beneficiaries to look after the technology but also around safeguarding or managing their beneficiaries' Internet activity. This included questions around whether to download software to limit browsing activity or preparing contracts or agreements around usage for beneficiaries to sign before receiving a device.

There are examples where organisations initially downloaded software which proved too restrictive and which then had to be deleted or revised. Whilst beneficiaries tended to accept the need for some terms and conditions around their devices, there was one example of a young person who decided not to sign a contract, meaning that they then went without the device.



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In these ways, organisations had to consider how to best balance the risk of safeguarding alongside digital inclusion for the cohort they worked with.

### Language affects digital literacy

Throughout the research, organisations stressed the impact of language barriers upon digital literacy, with the specific point that access was made more difficult or complicated depending the extent to which beneficiaries spoke English. As the [SLRA](#) explained, it could be difficult to pinpoint whether the barrier was digital literacy or language-based. As such, they were considering adding some technical elements to their ESOL teaching to help overcome this barrier.



Clear Community Web

### Organisations' commitment to make the grant work

Whilst the evaluation revealed an overwhelming sense of positivity to Lambeth for the Digital Inclusion Fund, organisations also noted the scale of their own commitment required to make the grant work. For example, organisations had to re-deploy staff or volunteers, not to mention spend money and/or time promoting the activity to beneficiaries. Whilst this tended to be viewed as a good use of time and resources given their beneficiaries' needs, organisations would value Lambeth's support to raise awareness of their and other digital projects and help them source volunteers who might be able to support projects in future.

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Lambeth  
Digital  
Inclusion  
Network

Linda Jackson,  
Evaluation & Research



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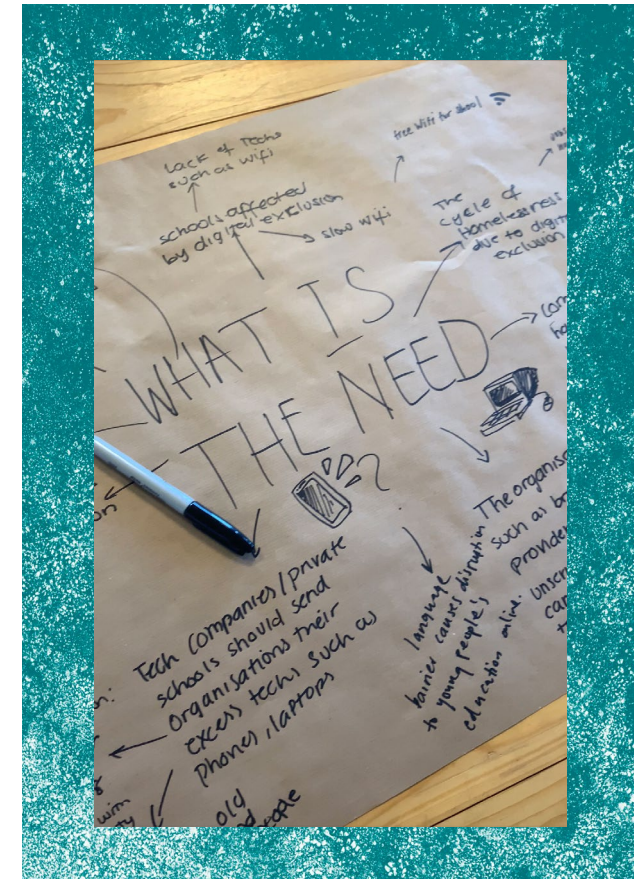
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“It’s no longer a luxury now, it’s a need.”

*Older person in Lambeth*

The research also explored outstanding digital need facing different groups in Lambeth through a series of interviews with organisations and their beneficiaries and also involving the lived experience of the We Rise team. Whilst the issues of digital inclusion vary at individual level, this section presents a series of case studies and findings which illuminate some of the outstanding challenges.



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### Families where English is not the first language

Several of the We Rise research team were from families where English was not the first language. They described how the language barrier complicated an already difficult situation, particularly when it was an older relative who found technology confusing in general. These young people described how their parents and grandparents relied upon them to help and how this could be disruptive to their own learning, particularly during online school times. This caused frustration for both the young people and for their relatives who wished to be independent.

**“My mum doesn’t have English as a first language so when things moved online she didn’t understand it. She is in college and needs a lot of support to fill out work online. I’m worried about what will happen when I’m not there to help with forms - then what will happen?”**

*Member of We Rise team*

This illustrated the need for more digital training and support services for people who don’t have English as a first language, potentially combined with ESOL support. This would not only benefit the individual receiving the training but would reduce pressure upon the wider household.

### Older people

As with all cohorts, the research revealed a vast divide between older people with the digital access, skills and the motivation to go online and those without, with factors such as caring status, health and English-speaking skills having as big an impact on digital inclusion as much as age alone.

As such, whilst going online was not desired by everyone, the research revealed a cohort of older people with appetite to improve their internet skills, particularly when so many areas of their lives had moved online during the pandemic. It also revealed their frustration on having to rely on family members to support them, echoing the findings above.



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### Case study: interview with older person in Lambeth

“I am 73 and I am struggling to get on the Internet. I want to do courses online but I’m not able to do it. I look after children in my Ministry, from 4 years old to 17. And there are a lot of courses I would like to do, like child psychology. I want to improve myself and do courses online but I get stuck halfway.

I was trying to renew my visa to go to abroad as I’ve always gone every year to visit my family. I got completely stuck and had to ask my nephew to do it for me. And you can’t keep on calling people to stop what they’re doing when you need help - you want to do it for yourself and feel comfortable. At the moment it is very frustrating.

I’ve got the access. Access is not a problem! It’s how to do it. Most of the things I do for my work as a Minister is to go on Zoom. I’m getting better now as I keep doing it but sometimes it just drops and I don’t know how to go back. So, I miss some of the information. And I don’t know what’s been said.

[What I want is] to be actually trained on how to do it. I can go out for training or it could happen at home. I would be so grateful. I want to do it! I don’t want to keep ringing people every time! I’ve got the gadgets but it’s the knowledge. I’ve even got a printer. But ask me how to do it and I don’t know.

The world we are living in now, everything is on the internet. Even to buy things! This is the time of pandemic and you can’t go outside, you have to buy things online. I need these skills to live in the pandemic. It’s no longer a luxury now, it’s a need.”

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## Schools

During the roundtable session with Bell Ribeiro-Addy MP, the We Rise research team described their experiences of moving schooling online, particularly during the first and subsequent lockdowns. Whilst many of these issues related to digital access from the home, the team explained how access was still an issue since schools had reopened. For example, some schools in the borough had poor or patchy WIFI and equipment could be old or not enough to go round. Similarly, the young people agreed that they needed new equipment in schools and that donated, second-hand technology was not good enough for education. Young people also described how teachers had to rapidly adapt to virtual learning during lockdown, with some teaching staff still lacking the digital skills they required.

## Disabled people

The research included interviews with disabled adults and organisations that worked with disabled adults and young people.

### Disabled adults

Several of the organisations funded through round one of the Digital Inclusion Fund worked with disabled adults, and much of the learning has been explored in this report. However, there was also appetite from one organisation to view digital inclusion under the wider umbrella of Assistive Technology (AT) and for Lambeth services to coordinate a wider push to support more disabled people to get online.

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## Case study taken from an interview with Reverend Gail Thompson, Chief Executive Office, Millennium Community Solutions

“Millennium Community Solutions is the only assistive technology (AT) charity in Lambeth. When I say AT, this includes online access as well as things such as keyboards, screen readers, speech recognition tools etc. With AT you have to know what you need, how to access it and what’s the best thing for you. At the moment we’re writing a tool kit on what software and hardware is available as there’s a whole wealth of stuff you can get to make life easier that people don’t know about.

The pandemic only served to highlight the people who were disabled or elderly who can’t get online. And now it’s business as usual and we’re still here. I have MS and I have had it for 33 years. Not once have Lambeth [social care] mentioned AT to me. They talk only about grab rails or a ramp.

I love tech. All my house is wired up. But what happens, when you have a disability or an acute disability like myself, is that the social worker and physio come and do their reports but they never include AT as part of it. And that’s where I knew there was a need for more information around it - to get online, use the computer hands free, get online hands free.

AT is about the whole person, it’s not just about digital exclusion. One lady wanted to volunteer online to get a job. She needed a computer but she didn’t have a place to sit and use it. So, we bought her a laptop and a big leather armchair.

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## Case study taken from an interview with Reverend Gail Thompson, Chief Executive Office, Millennium Community Solutions

Another chap was referred from Age UK, Lambeth. who said, I'm an author and I want to write a book but I can't type any more as I can't use my right hand on the keyboard. So, I said, why don't you use speech recognition? And he was like what's that? And he's since rang me up and said I can write my book now! It's not just jobs, or just education, it's about self-worth.

The recommendation is that there is an AT person in government or local government who knows or cares about this, who can say you can get this or that to meet your needs. Someone who cares. We also need more money to do these things, a fund we can tap into.

And in Lambeth, social workers can start with a tick box when they visit to ask, are you online or not online – and would you like some advice to get on line? I'm not asking to change the whole [system] but if they could include that on their form, that would be a good starting point."



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### Disabled children and young people

An organisation that supported young people with disabilities described how the pandemic had particularly affected the young people they worked with.

**“Young people who struggle in school, had the pandemic make things ten times worse for them.”**

### *Organisation Interview*

This resulted in staff having to ‘visit homes and doorsteps’ so these groups of people did not feel completely isolated or unable to reach out to people. As a result, the organisation provided their beneficiaries with devices so they could communicate virtually and connect with schools which also helped improve their independence and mental health. For example, Alexas helped people research and visualise different ingredients and recipes to help support healthy eating. The organisation explained how more digital support and access for this cohort was required to support their continued independent living.



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### Adult carers

Interviews with organisations that received Digital Inclusion Funding described the importance of ‘people around the individual’ who acted as a gatekeeper to a beneficiary and who often needed their own support to get online. An interview with an organisation that works with carers in Lambeth revealed the many benefits of getting carers online, particularly in terms of maintaining a network of support and reducing their isolation. However, they also described many barriers, including the size of a carer’s mental load and how their digital access needs could be overlooked in order to support the people they care for..

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## Case study: interview with an organisation that works with carers in Lambeth

“I talk about caring as if it’s spinning plates. You’re trying to keep plates up for your own life, work, hobbies, laundry, cooking, but not only do you have your own plates, you also have plates for someone else - and they have more plates, as they have doctors or hospital or other things on top. For carers there’s a lot of information they have to pick up - and so quite often learning a new skill is not something they can do, especially in a short time period.

We support carers with lots of different caring responsibilities so there are many issues they face around digital inclusion. For carers of children who were digitally excluded any tech in the household was used for their children’s school work. This meant that the carers themselves were isolated from other adults as their support moved online. This is the same for carers of adults with digital exclusion. The needs of the adult become greater than the carer, so the tech goes to the cared for, rather than the carer to access support.

Then there’s the cost of caring. Purchasing technology and access to broadband is very expensive. Many carers access foodbanks and so there’s no way they can access tech and the internet as well. Having something which lays out the cost of [digital access] and how it fits into a budget would make access to online support much easier for carers. There’s such a fear of going into debt, and they have so little lee-way for it to go wrong.

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An issue that arose for carers was the multiple platforms out there – Zoom, Meet, Teams - and how they had to learn each one to access different forms of support. I had carers decide not to join in our activities as it was on a different platform to what they were used to. They say ‘I’m used to this; I’m going to stick with this’. Certainly, some older carers have refused to access tech and haven’t accessed any support from us because they decided they don’t want to learn it.

Our experience using a Google Meet format is that it was a couple of months before carers felt confident using it, and they often needed phone call support before they were able to join themselves without help. Clear Community Web did doorstep support which really benefitted carers who were not confident in using tech and where telephone support wouldn’t help them.

Supporting families, carers and households in accessing appointments online is something which is really important. There needs more work to support people to use video chat rather than telephone as a lot more can be communicated that way. We need to make digital access as close to a home visit as possible. And if they have the skills to access a doctor online it would give them the skills and confidence to access a community group. That could open it up.

A social worker is a touch point where digital inclusion could be explored, or a care coordinator for mental health has a lot of influence within the family so they can understand and identify who in the household is excluded digitally. The Carers Assessment could include a point around digital inclusion. As lockdown has ended, we are still finding carers who are excluded and in need of devices. So absolutely, a fund that helps that is needed in future.”



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It is worth noting that the previous case study relates to older carers, and, whilst there might be overlapping issues with younger carers, more research is required to understand their specific needs.

### Other needs

The research identified a range of other needs which fell across specific cohorts, included below:

- Printing: with the closure of libraries in particular, interviewees described how printing services could be difficult or expensive to access
- Guidance over devices/data: as identified through the evaluation interviews, identifying appropriate devices and data could be a trial and error process. This could act as a barrier to people on low incomes and/or low confidence in trying out new technology
- A single access point with Lambeth: interviewees described how they would like a route to share their digital issues with Lambeth, from wider connection issues to trouble-shoot specific problems
- Reliable broadband access for all: the research revealed a greater ask for stable WIFI across the borough, for organisations, schools and for individual homes.

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For the organisations and beneficiaries supported through the Digital Inclusion Fund, the overarching feedback was of positivity and gratitude, in recognition that Lambeth pulled together funding and the network at the point at which organisations and beneficiaries needed support:

**“I think it’s wonderful.”**

*Organisation Interview*

**“Thank you for this fund because it’s made a big difference.”**

*Organisation Interview*

As well as tackling immediate issues, the Digital Inclusion Fund gave organisations the opportunity to research the digital needs facing their individual beneficiaries and the space to trial, error and tailor a response. The network also brought organisations together to share their experiences - and there is significant appetite from many interviewees for this to continue, even once projects have completed their funding.

The research also highlighted the importance of digital inclusion more widely, particularly as so many aspects of life moved online during the pandemic. As the We Rise team presented during the final presentation to Lambeth, **digital inclusion allowed people to live the lives they want to lead.**

**“It allows people to be self-sufficient.”**

*Organisation Interview*

**“It opens up possibilities for many people.”**

*Organisation Interview*

However, the experiences of the different organisations revealed the challenges around achieving digital inclusion.

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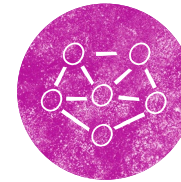
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The three pillars of digital inclusion support:



Devices,



Connectivity



and Training/Support

were critical components to increase digital access. Yet these often had to happen alongside each other, and for the longer term for them to have an impact on digital access.

In these ways, the research revealed there was neither a quick fix for digital inclusion, nor was it an end in itself as people's needs (and technology) changed over time. It also required input and investment from organisations beyond the value of the Digital Inclusion grants.



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Perhaps the biggest barrier to digital inclusion, the one which could not be tackled through the three pillars, was readiness for digital inclusion. The research revealed multiple barriers for those spinning the greatest number of plates and for those at a point of crisis, not to mention those beneficiaries who simply didn't see the benefits of digital inclusion. For these individuals, pre-engagement work had to happen first, alongside more holistic support, before people understand why and how digital inclusion could be of benefit to their lives.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

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# RECOMMENDATIONS

This section starts with a provocation around the current model before looking at more specific recommendations that emerged from the research.

## A provocation

The evaluation revealed an overwhelmingly positive response from organisations that received Digital Inclusion funding and how it helped catalyse or kick start a response to tackle their beneficiaries' digital needs. As local, trusted organisations with strong beneficiary relationships, these organisations maximised the value of the funding they received with their in-kind support.

However, the evaluation also revealed the scale and complexity of digital inclusion, with significant challenges lying outside the scope of the individual organisations and/or small grants. Similarly, the research revealed that there are individuals in the borough who haven't been reached through the funding, which suggests some inequity in this type of small grant-funded approach.

Whilst the research did not generate concrete recommendations for a different model of provision, these considerations – plus the human rights matter of digital access – warrants a debate with Lambeth and the Digital Inclusion Network (included funded organisations). This could explore a future approach in more detail taking an asset-based approach, building on the strengths and resources of the people and places within Lambeth. This would help understand the collective capacity across the borough and how they map against the three pillars of digital inclusion so that it meets the wider need over the longer term.

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A place and asset-based approach to tackling digital inclusion



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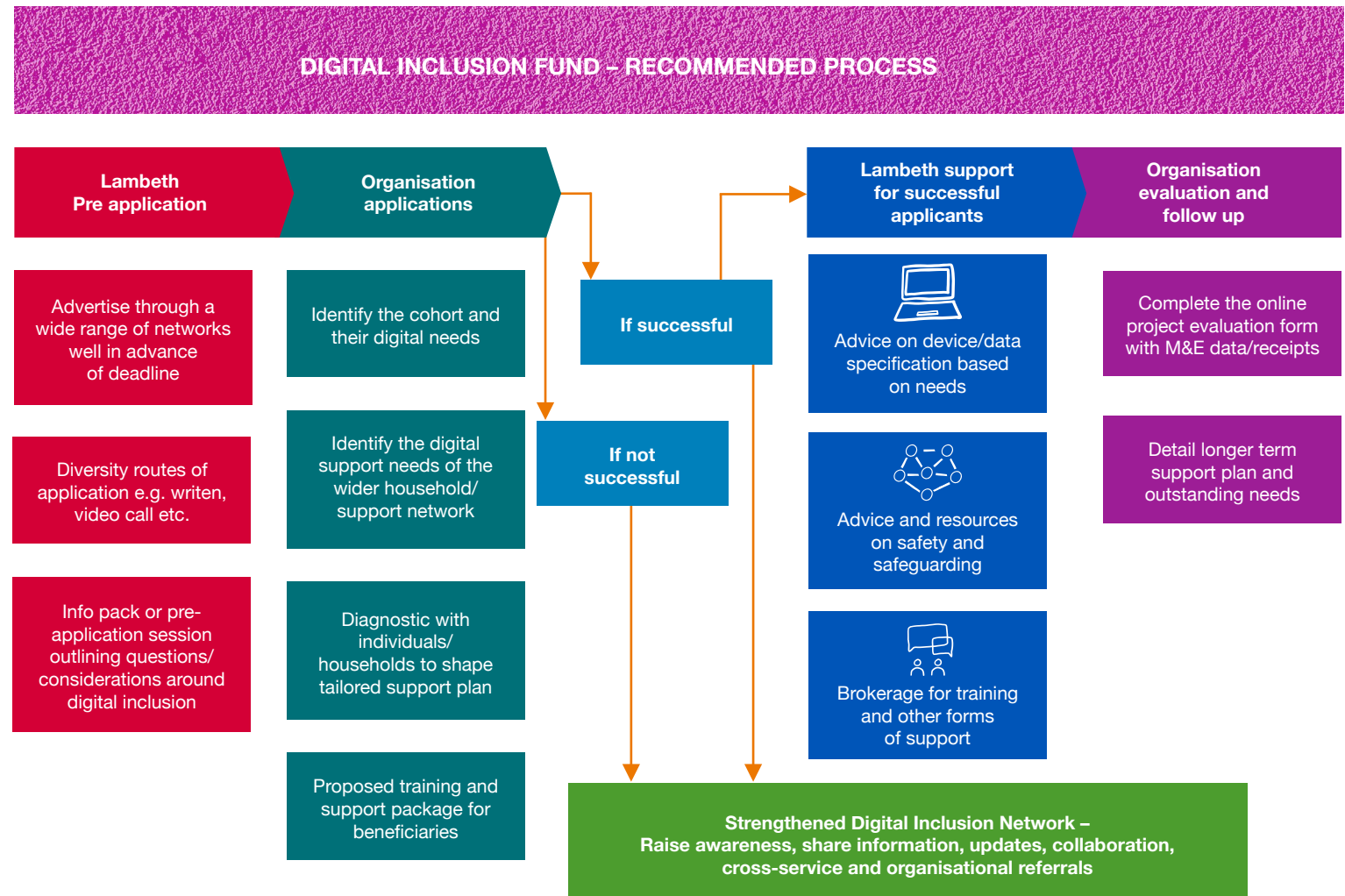
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### For future rounds of the Digital Inclusion Fund

For future rounds of the Digital Inclusion Fund, the evaluation suggested a number of recommendations around how to improve the overarching process. These are illustrated by the diagram below.



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## Other recommendations for Lambeth Council and the Digital Inclusion Network:



1. Create a simple access point for the community to contact with general digital issues for example Wi-Fi connectivity or for referrals on to other organisations



2. Include assessment around digital access/interest in digital access as part of service interactions with residents



3. Conduct more research into the barriers facing people at the point of crisis and digital inclusion and how this might help preparedness for digital engagement



Lambeth  
Digital  
Inclusion  
Network

**Linda Jackson,**  
Evaluation & Research

