



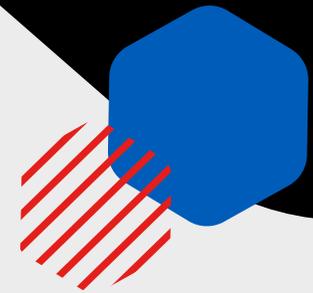
Emergency support to
get the most vulnerable
online during the
COVID-19 crisis

future
.now

 Good Things
Foundation

DevicesDotNow

Interim Impact Report #2: 24 March - 26 June



Investment now is building resilient citizens, communities and a foundation for the future



Helen Milner OBE,
CEO, Good Things
Foundation

The suffering that we have heard about, directly caused from the combined effect of the Covid-19 lockdown and deep digital exclusion has been significant and shocking. DevicesDotNow is continuing to meet this urgent need. Investment now is building more resilient citizens and communities, building a resilient and productive foundation for the future.

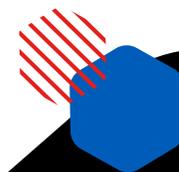
This pandemic - occurring in a digital age - has exposed and exacerbated digital exclusion across the UK. 1.9 million households lack access to the internet, 11.7 million people lack essential digital skills needed to use the internet, there are 11.5 million people without a smartphone, and 1 in 6 adults can't open an app. With this level of digital exclusion it's clear we're facing a public emergency.

Our hyperlocal community partners - the Online Centres Network - continue to impress and humble me. Most of them are facing uncertainty about their own finances and day-in-day-out they are helping people with their complex needs and with digital skills. Peggy, has just had her 95th birthday, and has been helped to learn how to use the internet for the very first time during lockdown using a device and data from DevicesDotNow, and support from a committed volunteer over the phone. I'm so proud of everyone, nationally and locally, who has helped to make DevicesDotNow the success it has been to date.

Digital inclusion is no longer a nice-to-have, but a need-to-have. People urgently need access (devices, connectivity), digital skills and support. Funding today will set us up for a better future. The Government has pledged billions of pounds to provide the country with gigabit-capable broadband, but people will not be able to use this infrastructure without digital skills or personal devices. By investing just 2% of the broadband infrastructure budget on digital inclusion would make significant progress towards a 100% digitally included nation.

Our campaign is now closer to our initial target to help 10,000 people with devices, data and support, due to recently awarded funding. But if you read this interim report and think you can help in any way please do get in touch. Demand is still outstripping supply.

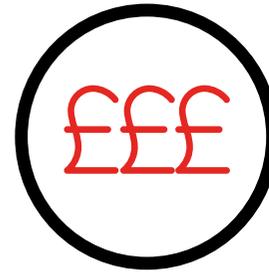
📖 Digital inclusion is no longer a nice-to-have, but a need-to-have. People urgently need access (devices, connectivity), digital skills and support. Funding today will set us up for a better future. 📖



Our achievements to date



2370 devices
allocated to **202**
community partners



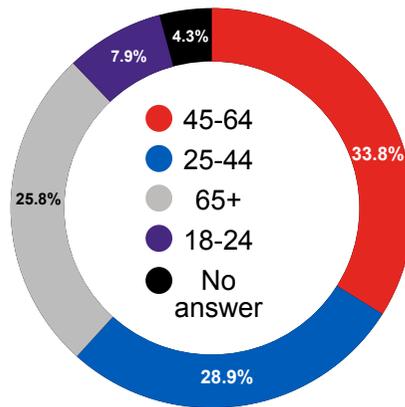
£752,825.20
Fundraising
total

People reached

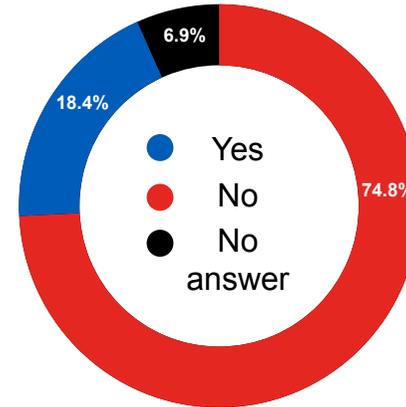
Demographics of people reached



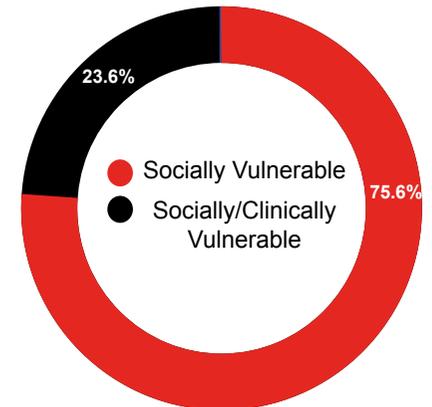
Age Group



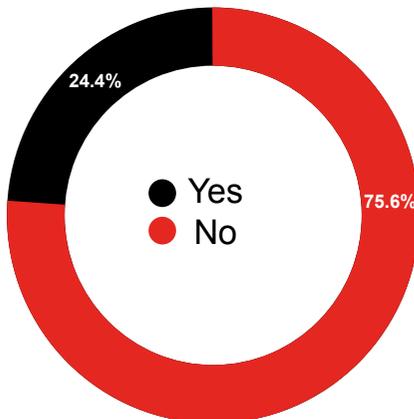
School-Age Children



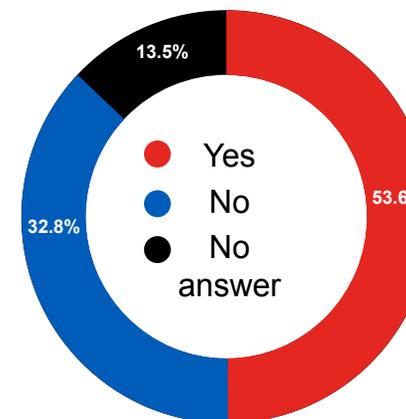
Socially/Clinically Vulnerable



Received NHS Letter

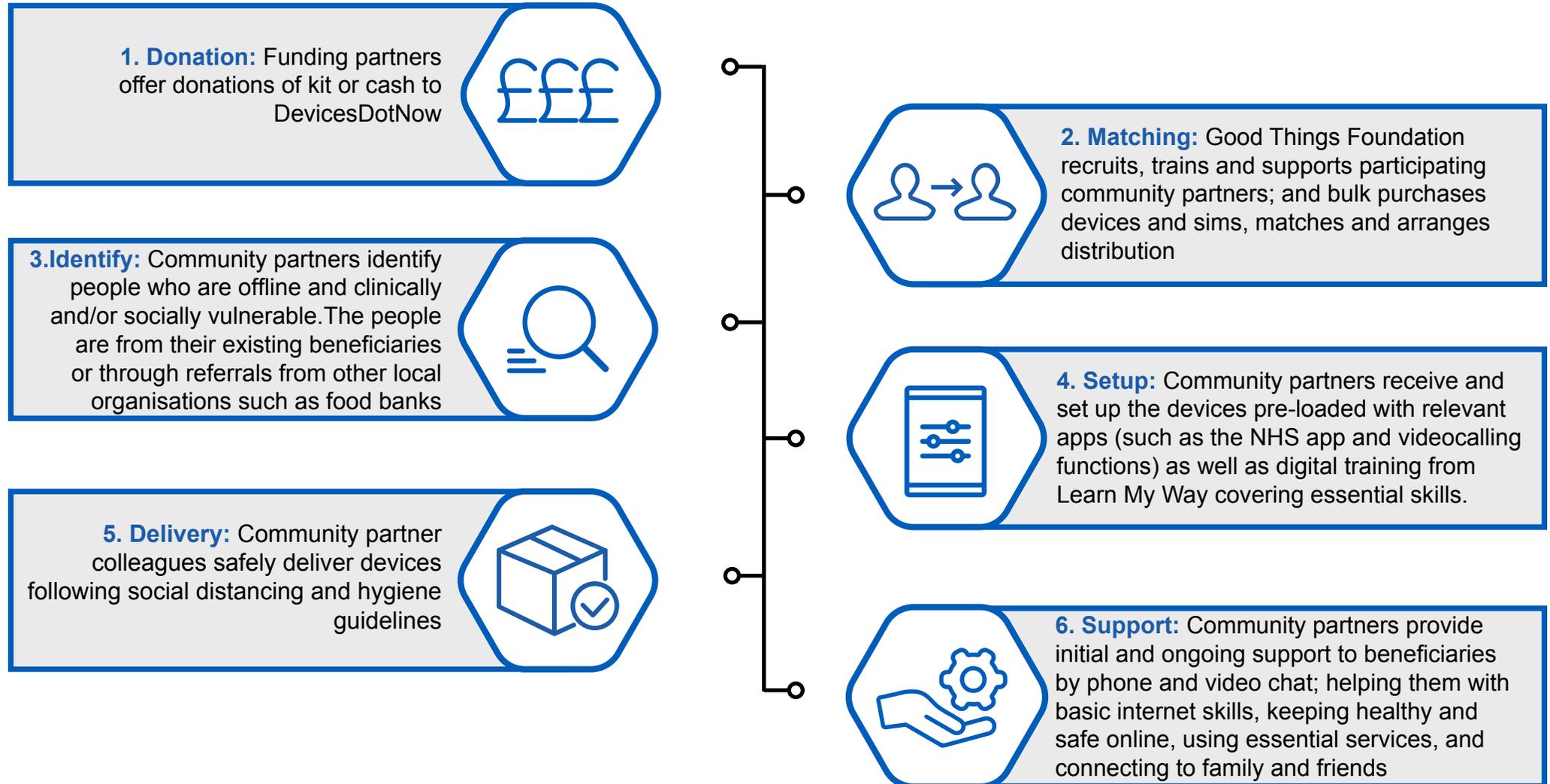


Fully Self-Isolating



DevicesDotNow: A six stage process that works

DevicesDotNow, working with delivery partner Good Things Foundation, rapidly operationalised a six stage process that could help thousands of people. An initial pilot of getting devices, sims, and support to 1000 people was rapidly implemented and the process iterated. This process is now tested and ready to scale to support at least 5000 people a week when/if funding is donated or made available. This process is being used today with the current donations.



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

Impact Insights

Over the last few months devices with internet connectivity provided through DevicesDotNow have been a valuable lifeline of connection for hundreds of beneficiaries. Through survey feedback and follow up discussions with Centres supporting the deployment of devices and from beneficiaries themselves, a range of thematic areas of impact have emerged from the DevicesDotNow project.



Connection

Devices have enabled people to stay or become connected to loved ones and the people or organisations that provide essential support.

82% of people say they have used the device to keep in touch with family and friends

By being able to use video calls on the device, it has made me feel closer to family and friends. I live alone and have previously been feeling lonely”



Learning

Many people have been able to continue learning or even start new learning journeys as a result of having access to a device. Devices have also been a imperative for families that had been struggling with homeschooling during lockdown.

80% of people are more confident in their digital skills as a result of receiving a device

The device has allowed Aisha to get enrolled on a biology course, an interest of hers since school. The tablet is a godsend, not just socially but also academically”



Something to do

People who received devices have benefited from a welcome distraction from the anxieties and boredom that came with the lockdown. This has had a positive impact on their mental health and overall wellbeing.

28% of people had never used the internet before receiving a device

Lucy was feeling very lonely, bored and low before she was given her device. She is not always the most communicative person, but she loves drawing, painting and writing. The tablet has allowed her to do all these things while keeping a little more in touch with people”



Economic Activities

Devices have allowed people to carry out a range of financial and economic activities either independently or with the continued support offered by community partners. This resulted in reduction of some of the stresses and concerns that had built up over recent months.

90% of people say that the device has had a positive impact on their life.

Every time I speak with Ray, he’s over the moon that he has managed by himself to sort out his online banking and can now order his own medication”

Untapped demand - more people to reach

Demand for devices



This map shows the geographic spread of requests to date



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



Fareha Usman, Being Woman

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

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

To meet our immediate goal of helping **5830** more people we need **£1.5m**

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

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

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

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

100% digitally included UK and a resilient economy



**Sir Peter Estlin,
Chair, FutureDotNow**

The COVID crisis and the DevicesDotNow campaign have highlighted widespread digital exclusion and data poverty in the UK. I'm calling on companies to find inventive new business models to create a 100% connected UK and a resilient economy.

The FutureDotNow coalition was designed to bring the best of UK business to boost people's digital skills. My hope was that major companies could come together to empower everyone to thrive in a digital nation.

That mission still stands, but we're not alone in seeing our plans turned upside down by COVID-19. I'm so proud of how fast we and our coalition members mobilised the DevicesDotNow emergency campaign to reach thousands of the most vulnerable households with the devices, connectivity, and support to get online.

But soon our emergency response will need to transition to a sustained effort to build a 100% digitally connected UK. And it's clear to me that there's a long way to go to make that a reality.

It's easy to assume that digital exclusion is either a technical problem or an issue that only affects older people. But I've been taken aback by the scale of the demand for our help, from communities in cities as well as the countryside, and from young adults as well as the elderly.

This is fundamentally a question of social deprivation. And as the economy suffers the effects of the pandemic there's a real risk that the digital divide becomes a chasm, cutting off those who can least afford it at a time when life online has become such a big part of our new normal.

One challenge has come into focus over the past months: data poverty. 1.9 million households don't have any internet access, fixed or mobile, due to affordability. Many were previously using free Wi-Fi in community centres which are now harder than ever to access. And we've heard appalling stories of too many people faced with the choice of buying data or food.

That's a grave social problem, as the most marginalised are disconnected from loved ones and from essential online services. It's a public health risk, as it undermines their ability to follow continued social distancing rules. And it's an economic issue, as it stops people finding or getting back to work.

But it's also a direct challenge to UK business. Companies are increasingly expected to deliver for shareholders and for society, and are aware of the responsibility and the opportunity to create a connected country that leaves no-one behind.

There are examples of overcoming data poverty springing up around the world – from AT&T's \$10 packages for lower income households in the US, to Optus allowing customers to donate their data in Australia, and BT offering 6 months of free Wi-Fi hotspot access to the most in-need children in the UK to support their schooling.

COVID has shown us that being online is essential. And it's also demonstrated that the UK is far from 100% connected. As we look beyond the pandemic, we must harness the power of business to create a digital recovery that includes everyone.

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Connected and shielding during lockdown

- **Emma Harvey, 35, Middlesbrough**
- **Shielding due to severe asthma**
- **Able to use the device to manage her health online**
- **#DevicesDotNow**



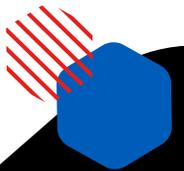
Emma Harvey, 35, is staying connected whilst shielding, thanks to a free tablet and data plan from the DevicesDotNow initiative.

Emma has severe asthma and was advised to shield for a period of 12 weeks in line with government guidance. During this time Emma has sadly lost a close relative, and her mother-in-law, who also cares for her daughter, has been admitted to hospital. Emma's daughter is now receiving emergency respite care.

Dealing with the loss of a loved one whilst feeling unable to get in contact with family and friends has been particularly hard for Emma. She tells us: "I have a pay as you go phone but the data plan is limited, so I can't really use the internet. I was worried about not being able to have regular updates about my daughter and relatives."

After sharing her worries with a contact at local community organisation the Hope Foundation, Emma received a tablet and data plan provided through the DevicesDotNow initiative. She says: "Before I had the tablet, I was only able to text my relatives but now I've found new ways to stay connected. I've tried Zoom, Facebook Messenger, Whatsapp and email."

Emma has also been using the device to manage her health online: "I've downloaded the NHS app and have been ordering prescriptions for both myself and my partner. It's easier to manage my anxiety by talking to people who can support me. I now feel connected with the outside world and not just forgotten about."



Urgent device donation eases Diana's worries

- **Diana, 54, from Middlesbrough**
- **Limited access to money and data**
- **Felt cut off and isolated from the outside world**
- **#DevicesDotNow**



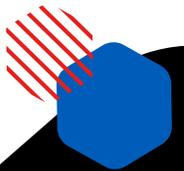
Diana, 54, lives in Middlesbrough after moving here from Nigeria a few years ago. Before lockdown Diana was an active member of her community, attending church regularly and supporting people seeking asylum in her local area by volunteering at OpenDoor North East. Through her connections at church, she was put in touch with Sue and John at the Hope Foundation who were helping her with her English language and IT skills.

Once the UK went into lockdown Diana was completely isolated, she lives alone and has had to shield due to a number of health reasons. Diana is also seeking asylum so has limited access to money and data. "I have a pay as you go phone but I was worried about when my credit would run out and what would happen to me. I felt cut off" Diana told us.

Shielding meant that Diana's everyday activities, like grocery shopping and picking up her medication, felt almost impossible. During lockdown she didn't receive her emergency food parcels from the local council and not having data on her phone to find a contact number to resolve the issue left her frustrated.

Diana shared her worries with the team at the Hope Foundation and through the DevicesDotNow initiative they provided her with a tablet and free data. The Hope Foundation has been using Google Classroom to continue their regular sessions online and have been providing their most vulnerable students with free devices through DevicesDotNow.

Diana tells us, "The device has benefited me in lots of ways. I have been able to access information on the NHS website, as well as connect with people through Zoom and Facebook in Middlesbrough and Nigeria. I love the device, it makes sure I am connected to the outside world and I can continue to learn"



Peggy building resilience with her new digital skills

- **Peggy, 95, from Bishop's Stortford**
- **Had never used the internet before Covid-19**
- **Uses her new device for online personal training sessions**
- **#DevicesDotNow**



Peggy, 95, from Bishops Stortford is relishing learning new digital skills after receiving a tablet and free data from the DevicesDotNow initiative.

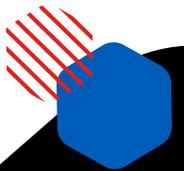
Before the outbreak of Covid-19 she enjoyed seeing family and friends, playing the piano and her attending regular personal training sessions. She tells us, "I have lived alone for a long time but I have missed talking to people locally. It's not quite the same talking to them on the phone compared to meeting them in the flesh. I miss going out for lunch with my friends. Until recently I used to play piano accompaniment for ballet classes and help out at local schools."

Peggy's volunteer trainer, Harry, suggested that she could continue their sessions via video call, but she had never used the internet before. Peggy says, "I was given a mobile phone by my family but I did not learn how to use it. They would show me what to do, but other than making phone calls I could not work it without them."

Harry put Peggy in touch with local Online Centre Computer Friendly who suggested she would benefit from the DevicesDotNow initiative.

Since receiving her DevicesDotNow tablet Peggy has started to learn how to use the internet on her own for the first time. "I have started to receive emails from my family and just started to look for things online using Google. I love number puzzles and have started playing some on the tablet - this is a terrible time waster! I have been shown how to use Skype for video calls, which I hope my trainer will be able to use for his lessons."

"I am very grateful and pleased that I was put forward to receive this tablet, I have wanted to learn how to use technology for a long time. I'm looking forward to exploring all the things that are available online."



Some of our many supporters to date

Funders



Some of the community partners who are helping beneficiaries



The DevicesDotNow campaign has been stood up by **FutureDotNow**, **Good Things Foundation** and some brilliant people who've been furloughed and decided to devote their time to the cause, thanks to support from:



DevicesDotNow

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For more information and to support our work:

futuresdotnow.uk/devicesdotnow

crowdfunder.co.uk/help-the-vulnerable-stay-connected

To keep up to date with the campaign:

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

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

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