



Digital Unite

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Digital Inclusion is everyone's business

Why digital inclusion is at the heart of smart places and smart communities



What IS digital inclusion?

An Enabler?

“Approaches to digital inclusion can benefit from recognising it as an intermediate policy outcome rather than an end in itself.”

[British Academy Digital Inclusion Policy Brief](#)

A Utility?

“If Internet access is a precondition of managing one’s healthcare and maintaining social and economic participation, then it should be reclassified as an essential utility.”

Careful Trouble [Digital inclusion: from sticking plasters to sustainable progress](#)

A Living Standard?

“We define a Minimum Digital Living Standard as the basket of “digital goods, services and skills” that facilitate an individual’s digital capabilities to effectively live a life they value.”

[Minimum Digital Living Standard \(MDLS\)](#)

Our digitally excluded nation

- 18m people have 'low' or 'very low' digital skills
- 54% of the workforce cannot complete all the digital skills tasks deemed essential for work
- 27% of households with children have parents without the skills for understanding and managing digital risk.
- £63bn = the amount digital skills shortages cost the UK each year: digital inclusion is the gateway to digital skills.



DI and public services



Digital inclusion efforts need to be woven through the core services of councils and their partners (including VCS organisations and Integrated Care Partnerships) for them to be truly sustainable.

Critically, digital inclusion should be positioned as a means through which the intended outcomes of these partners and strategies can be better realised, rather than another ‘ask’.”

Local Government Association (LGA) + DMS 2023 Report about [The role of councils in tackling digital exclusion](#)



How do public services deliver on DI? By considering DI as supply and demand



Digital inclusion as customer service

Embedding DI into every interaction with all customer facing teams

Raising DI awareness x-organisation + at all levels



Build digital inclusion awareness and capacity in all delivery teams

Embedding DI into every delivery consideration

Create internal Champions: support and resource them



Scale
Across teams and services

Own
Drive DI from within

Embed
Write it into job descriptions, bring into the compliance set

DI supply and demand in action



Digital inclusion as customer service

“The [Digital Champion] programme has helped us equip staff as well as volunteers to make every contact count for digital inclusion and support as part of other roles.”

[NHS England DC programme 2023](#)



Build digital inclusion awareness and capacity in all delivery teams

“We have given all staff in branch libraries access so they can build up their confidence and knowledge and give day to day support for customers. It is working! “ [Cumberland Libraries](#)



Scale and ownership

“Including Champions as part of our strategy has been very helpful. Champions help to extend reach, bring diverse perspectives and skills, grow our capacity for supporting people in our communities.”

[NHS England DC programme 2023](#)

DI hopefulness and the Bigger Picture



Britain will not fully benefit from the social and economic potential of science and technology without government leading by example. So, DSIT is to become the centre for digital expertise and delivery in government, improving **how the government and public services interact with citizens.**

We will act as a leader and partner across government, with industry and the research communities, to boost Britain's economic performance and **power up our public services to improve the lives and life chances of people through the application of science and technology.**"

[Peter Kyle MP, Sec of State, DSIT](#) (bold is mine)



What can you do next?



Read our Manifesto series

On the [Digital Unite website](#)

On [Emma's Linked In](#) – where you can tell her what you think!



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