



OneDigital



DIGITAL SKILLS
PARTNERSHIP
LANCASHIRE



OneDigital

Developing digital skills in rural areas

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Community of Practice

The One Digital partnership



Why Digital Champions?



Digital Champions provide essential personal, long-term digital skills support...



Digital Champions are an extremely effective digital inclusion solution...



The UK is going 'digital by default' but bringing everyone online is getting harder...

Digital Champion models

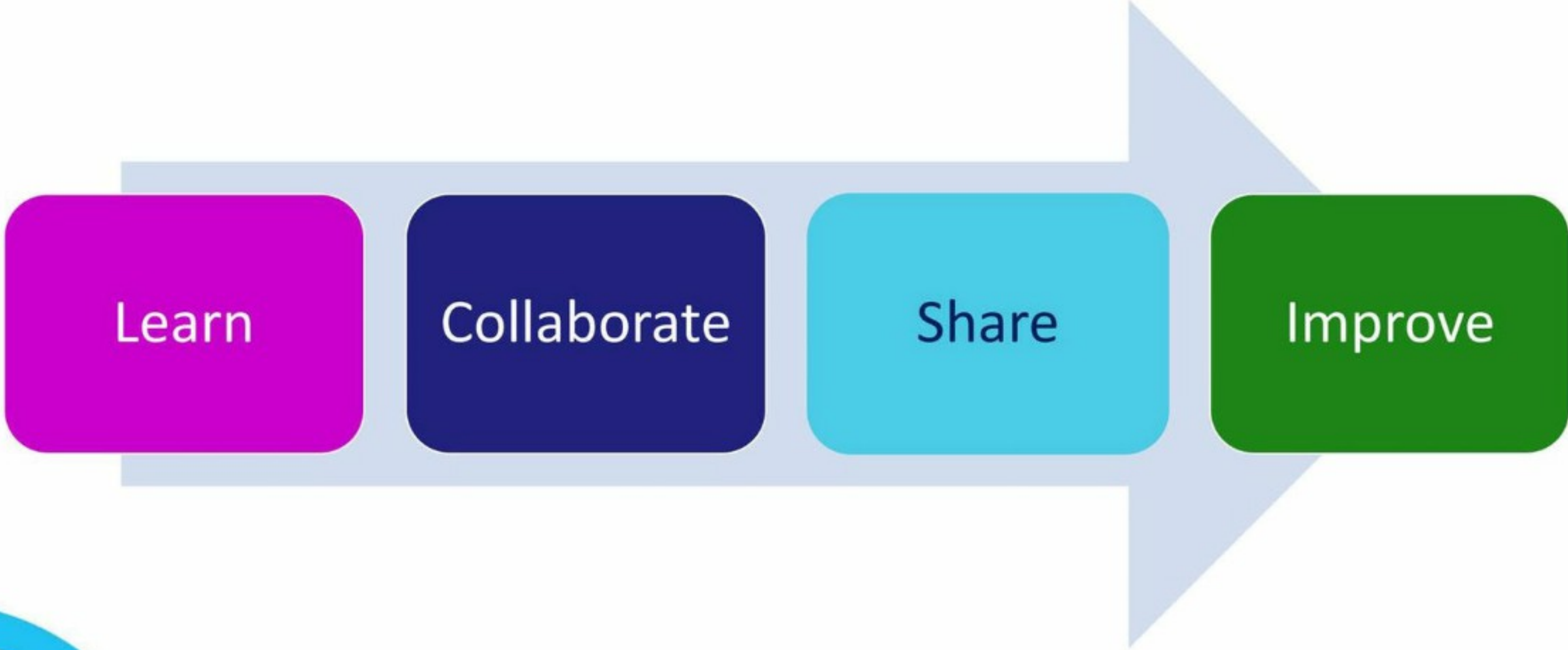
Volunteer

Professional



Embedded

Sharing learning through the Community of Practice



Resources – Knowledge Hub

<https://onedigitaluk.com>

@OneDigitalProg

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Why #digitalrural?

- 17% or over 9 million people live in rural areas
- Rural areas have digital challenges of lower broadband speeds & lack of access to training
- Higher than average proportion of older people
- 22% of the rural workforce work from home
- Nearly 30% in England and 40% in Scotland of employees in rural areas work in micro-enterprises
- Good practice to share from Citizens Online & Age UK projects



Learning outcomes



Workshops – Round 1

Working with older people in rural areas	Age UK/Age UK South Lakeland/Age UK Lancashire
Digital Champions in rural communities - Highland & Gwynedd	Citizens Online
Facebook digital skills training	Lancashire Adult Learning & Freeformers
Developing digital hubs in rural areas	Cora Project (Lincoln University) & A1 Community



Workshops – Round 2

Connectivity in rural Lancashire	Superfast Lancashire, B4RN & Community Futures
The role of libraries & community spaces in supporting digital learning in rural areas	Lancashire libraries, Clackmannanshire Third Sector Interface & One Digital CoP
Access to digital health services	Healthier Lancashire & South Cumbria & Good Things Foundation



What do you want to learn today?

Learn about what works and what doesn't in rural digital inclusion

What others are doing to support Digital Inclusion in other rural areas

Examples of good practice that can be replicated within Lancashire.

How to engage with partners across Lancashire

To learn more about the needs in rural communities and understand how we at Freeformers can contribute and help.

What's going on in other rural areas, what works? What doesn't?

About other examples of good practice that we can use in our work

Refresh knowledge of digital inclusion practice and networking with others

I am writing my dissertation on digital inclusion/ the digital divide for elderly people and would like to network



What do you want to learn today?

Best practice which has been adopted

More about partners and their offers.

How to sustain after project work is finished

How we can better channel the resources and stakeholders we're involved with to improve digital skills in rural areas

About digital health services - how to reach rural residents.

Resources available to overcome digital rural challenges.

Networking and connecting with others who could help us spread the digital health message via digital champions; learn about innovative/creative ways to promote digital inclusion

Engaging more in rural areas to increase digital skills provision and achieve a sustainable model similar to what has been implemented already in our more urban areas

Different approaches to engaging hard to reach groups in rural areas



What do you want to learn today?

To learn, understand issues of digital inclusion in rural areas and find ways to tackle this broad issue.

Meet local DI practitioners and hear from firsthand experience what works and what the challenges are

Good practice from others who have delivered digital inclusion in rural areas. How is a rural area defined? Networking locally and nationally

Hope to learn about Best Practice of others & gain more knowledge to help our local inclusion work.

What considerations need to be made when working in rural areas

Partner working and sharing best practice

How to broaden our engagement with adults in rural areas. How to overcome connectivity barriers as well as individual concerns about online safety and the like.

I work as a teacher and our learners are from deprived and sometimes rural areas. This is the direction that Lancs Adult Learning are going and the focus of this session seemed appropriate.

To hear about best practice from across the country which could be useful from a Lancashire perspective

What do you want to learn today?

From others experience of working within rural communities

Issues rural areas are facing and reasons for exclusion.

Learning more about what is happening already in Lancashire and across the UK.

Current local work that is happening in regards to digital inclusion in rural areas

Methods other organisations use to engage groups/communities in rural areas.

Breaking down barriers for accessibility & inclusion to digital skills.

Engaging with volunteers

Is funding the answer? If there was massively increased funding, would this solve the issue of digital exclusion? Should this be at a local/national level?

Support available.



What do you want to learn today?

Key factors in removing barriers to digital inclusion.

More about different ways to engage learners

practical experiences of delivering digital inclusion activities.

How to ensure that communities become part of the solution to their digital needs.

Would like to learn more about social inclusion and how to encourage local community and individuals fo allow appropriate support

Transport

Lack of critical mass of learners



What are the main challenges & barriers to working in rural areas?

Cost to support

Connectivity

Fear

Connectivity speed

Lack of connectivity

Lack of quality internet provision for homes and at local community buildings

3G/4g not spots / poor signal strength and inconsistent signal

Connectivity. Culture. Motivation.

Connectivity Equipment
Connection speed Training
Dista



What are the main challenges & barriers to working in rural areas?

Connectivity, financial, transportation, training, isolation.

Understanding the need to be digitally connected in the future, along with the sporadic spaces between communities

Community involvement to achieve a sustainable mode

Transport

Lack of physical connectivity

Culture..attitude vs community

Identifying and reaching those in need of digital skills support

Stable or having any internet connection at all

Cost feasibility can be an issue



What are the main challenges & barriers to working in rural areas?

Lack of critical mass of learners

Connectivity

Accessibility

Transport

Getting suppliers to work together to ensure connectivity coverage

internet connection

Costs of travel

Transport links

Transport



What are the main challenges & barriers to working in rural areas?

Culture - sometimes a feeling of being self-contained and not needing digital as a connection to a wider community/resources

Cost of transport

Available community venues / cost of opening them up / logistics of opening up

Engaging with the most rural people. Connectivity. Physical access to digital information.

Cultures and attitudes

Language

Connectivity, but also deprivation that can lead to not accessing devices

Poverty

Fear



What are the main challenges & barriers to working in rural areas?

Engaging the community.

Age

Tackling perceptions in terms of need for individuals to be digitally connected in the future. Along with the vast distances between communities.

Availability of resources

Cost of getting online as well as connectivity

Unable to afford kit, so even if they go to the workshops they are unable to practice the skills they learn

Lack of awareness of changing infrastructure - e.g. citizens being told faster connections not available, and then assuming this is the case forever - i.e. not checking again at a later date or being informed.

Bring the learning to the community

Free courses



What are the main challenges & barriers to working in rural areas?

Using mobil mifi devices

Customers not changing provider (possibly due to digital exclusion?) when told fibre connections not available because current provider doesn't offer it, despite fibre connections being available.

Lack of motivation to wanting to being online/lack of knowledge on benefits from being online

Understanding their needs and delivering the relevant training

Lack of awareness, desire, knowledge, skills

Lack of delivery infrastructure - fewer organisations, less venues

Using libraries

Free food

Kit.



What are the main challenges & barriers to working in rural areas?

Working from GP surgeries

Working from sheltered accommodation homes. The WiFi does not support more than 5 people at one time.

Human interaction. Teachers teaching what they want to learn

Motivation, culture, access to WiFi & fast broadband, affordability

Using local football clubs community rooms facilities

Connectivity, cost, & accessibility



What solutions have you found to overcoming the barriers?

Connections

Home visits

Local IT volunteers

Hub / spoke model of delivering support

Collaboration with other partners and groups is key.

Flexible delivery - in community settings as well as home visits

Trusted brands such as libraries

Strong partnerships

Set up a digital hub in the Market as a focal point for individuals to travel to, to gain support.



What solutions have you found to overcoming the barriers?

Making sure that courses are well planned in advance. Free. And have offline options available for learning.

Utilise groups such as scouts / cubs to allow residents to attend their venues to receive digital skills support from younger people

Traditional advertising.
Community newspapers,
libraries, leaflets

Finding the motivation of a person that open the door to wanting to develop digital skill.

Local Digital Champions
(college students etc)

Finding hooks to encourage people.

Networking and finding volunteers with skills who will share learning. Contacting companies who help provide funding to overcome barriers such as transportation, venues etc

Training front line staff

Necessity as a motivator -
some things **HAVE** to be done
online



What solutions have you found to overcoming the barriers?

Partnership with Citizens advice to provide digital help centres in community centres. Supporting with online applications etc as well as providing digital skills training

When culture/perception is an issue, you have to reach people where they're at, and use the 'hook' that best entices them ...

Canvassing in venues such as libraries and GP surgeries

Going to them...not expecting them to come to you...

Partnership working is essential with as many local community groups as possible.

Environment important...

Training frontline staff as digital champions (sheltered housing staff)

Small groups at social enterprise cafes, village halls. This is much more beneficial rather than one to one

Opening up a weekly 'drop in' centre for those claiming Universal Credit who need help with any relevant digital problem. This was also successful in a residential housing venue for the elderly.



What solutions have you found to overcoming the barriers?

Accept some will not get online and be vulnerable

Purchased MiFis (mobile wifi hot spots) to enable connectivity at digital sessions - but thus is yet to go live and wont know if they work until i switch them on!

Smaller organisations more successful than...important to create and build relationships.

One on one support. Expensive but effective

Finding the hooks that work especially for groups of older people

Local organisations....more knowledgeable about issues.

Creating resources banks i.e. laptops, printers for smaller organisations to use

Developing village halls with IT suites connection was an issue. Some just weren't used. Keeping isoftware up to date

Going out to people in their community



What solutions have you found to overcoming the barriers?

Having a trusted person delivering the sessions

Find out motivation to getting involved

Hook, reaching out to people in a trusted environment, with a trusted person.

Realise not everyone will want the same from digital



Have you tried anything that did not work in practice? What would you do differently next time?

Engagement numbers can be a challenge ie numbers attending workshops.

Used language that was jargon and didn't address the motivation.

Tablet loans schemes.....loaning to individuals quite difficult. Better to smaller organisations/trusted intermediaries.

facebook. social media session

Structured learning courses - need for flexible, person-centred learning

Mixed success with GP online. Work with the right surgery who have set targets

Check WiFi before

Open sessions. If transport and logistics can be an issue need to have a clear WHY. Shift timings to allow for start and end times during cheaper travel times.

Engagement in rural areas sometimes results in low numbers making workshops/classes unfeasible. Funding bids have failed where demand still exists.



Have you tried anything that did not work in practice? What would you do differently next time?

Set up courses with adult learning providers that the job centre refuse to refer customers to . Still baffled as to why as it was a Digital inclusion and Employability Course.

Assuming a one-size-fits-all approach - different communities have different needs, and so a bottom-up, agile approach that engages people in a way that meets their needs is better than a top-down pre-planned delivery 'package'

Having the correct resources..maybe having a focus grp in the areas to better understand the issues and the needs

Have alternate learning plans in case connection fails

Care needed on terminology - people on Facebook thinking they don't use the Internet

Relying on resources being made available by third party e.g. community donation

Better use of language to break down barriers

Ensure give people the chance the learn on their own devices - often theirs looks different to training devices

Jargon is a barrier. Avoid using the word "Digital"





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Age UK - older people - Top 3 learning tips & resources

Digital exclusion still an ongoing issue despite increasing no older people online

Have more than one mifi available

Use of MiFi units to overcome connectivity barriers

group based sessions are good if assessable as this helps

Roaming digital champions on buses and trains

Use the internet to learn about the internet

Learning from other organisations experiences



Citizens Online - Gwynedd & Highland - Top 3

Learning tips & resources

Blend of types of digital champions.

Mifi have more than one so Vodafone and EE

Find the influencers

Partnerships

how important it is to keep the digital sessions going to new users aswell as on going support



Facebook training - Top 3 Tips & Resources

Be aware, educate yourself on safety and keep it ongoing

Make sure you educate yourself about the current trends

Knowing what's happening in other areas with statutory and 3rd sector



Digital Enterprise Hubs - Top 3 Tips & Resources

Use local venues- jd
wetherspoons - free wifi.
Mobile venues.

Don't wait for the community
to come to you, go out into the
community

Need to upskill staff and
volunteers in hubs on online
privacy, safety and security for
users



Connectivity - Top 3 Tips & Resources

The power of communities working together.

When designing or implementing programs you need local engagement and planning to be sustainable

Need local engagement with Local Plans when designing infrastructure.

Maximise use of partnerships with organisations providing digital support



Libraries/Community Spaces - Top 3 Tips & Resources

Top 3 learning points from session: Involve wider community in embracing digital & communicating events/training Think about sustainability from the start of a project Partnership working key - share locations!



Digital health services - Top 3 Tips & Resources

NHS orb app and orcah to
access recommend health
apps and digital health tools



What did you learn today!

We're not alone in our goals to support people in rural areas connect and skill up!

Partnerships are very important.

The amount of information and resources available and to access in relation to health

The challenges that are actually faced in rural communities. Understanding the pressures that exist.

We are not alone - so many orgs facing the same challenges, & working toward the same goals

Importance of community engagement in the delivery and take up of digital infrastructure

The same problems exist throughout all rural areas

What are others are doing and how they've been successful with digital inclusion in rural areas

There are lots of very smart passionate people working on this agenda - has revived my faith that more can be done!



What did you learn today!

Options regarding connectivity in rural areas and the key considerations surrounding this.

Going to where people are is key for engaging with rural communities

It's good to talk and to share.

Many different topics but small number of common themes - lots of cross learning

There's lot of great stuff but often we don't know how to find it so meeting like this are vital

Similar barriers to working in rural areas identified by many.

Its great to see so much work going on for digital inclusion and we can all work together to achieve connectivity throughout Lancs

For those with English as a second language, digital often means 'numbers'. Associating it with 'digit'

Shared learning through well developed meaningful partnerships is essential.



What did you learn today!

The importance of listening to service users needs and appropriate planning to meet them.

Digital health apps and ease towards social prescribing very interesting and will be promoted

It is clear there are many people and organisations aware of these issues. And many suggestions to make it happen, now let's make it happen! (Or continue to happen!)

Really useful insight into how to engage learners in rural areas with digital skills - great ideas

importance of partnerships to bridge the gap in the knowledgebase for those living in rural communities

Potential new local partners & organisations to engage with. New ways to reach out into the local community. Plenty of fresh ideas

Different methods of approach and the importance of networking, excited to get started

Idea of needing access to dummy accounts for all kinds of public / commercial services for DC demonstration purposes e.g. Universal Credit



How would you rate the event?

