

UK YOUTH

DigiKnow Learnings

About UK Youth

With a history spanning **over a century**, UK Youth is a leading national charity committed to ensuring, **all young people are empowered to build bright futures** regardless of their background or circumstances.

We sit at the heart of a **national network of youth organisations**, brought together through our merger with Ambition, to support an estimated **four million young people across the UK**. Together with our network, we offer support, advice and training to equip young people with the **vital life skills needed to engage in education, volunteering and employment**.

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How we offer support

Through our delivery model, we are able to strengthen and grow local services to offer advice, support and guidance to young people by:

- Understanding and building on the strengths and needs of young people

1 
- Offering support and advice to youth service providers

2 
- Running world class skills development programmes for young people

3 
- Measuring impact and sharing learnings

4 
- Influencing policy and funding to prioritise services for young people

5 

UK Youth Social Development Journey

The UK Youth Social Development Journey provides a framework to support and empower young people to develop life skills.



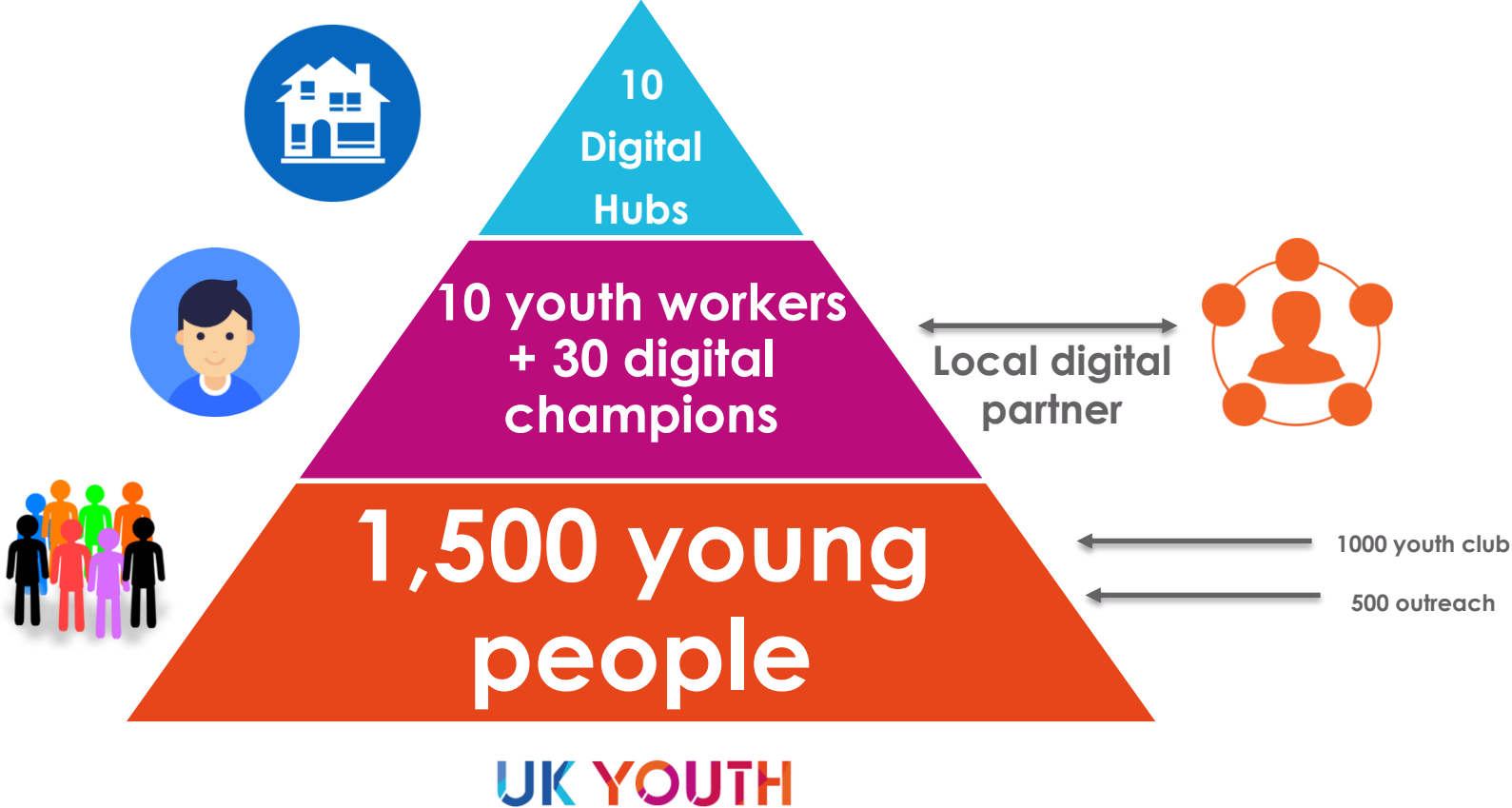
Our *Digital Reach* pilot



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Digital Hubs proposed model



Our approach

Create the space

- Ten youth organisations in digitally deprived areas of England enabled to become bespoke digital spaces.
- Technology provision increased through grant funding, donations, advice and support.
- Digital Hubs accessible through a mixture of regular sessions, open-access outreach events.

Skill up the team

- One lead youth worker and three Digital Champions (aged 18-24) trained in each Hub.
- Digital Champions provide a young person's voice throughout the project and act as peer leaders.
- Training focused on identifying digital exclusion in their local context.

Provide resources

- Online toolkits co-created with young people to support digital skills sessions to embed around existing youth work activities.

Our journey



June - July 2017

- > Research
- > Recruitment
- > Project set-up
- > Theory of Change



August 2017

- > Hub selection process
- > Confirmed 10 Digital Hubs
- > Resources review
- > Consultation and co-design day with hubs & young people



September - October 2017

- > Create curriculum resources
- > Skill up young Champions to deliver to peers in hubs
- > Support hub with technology provision and expertise needed to deliver

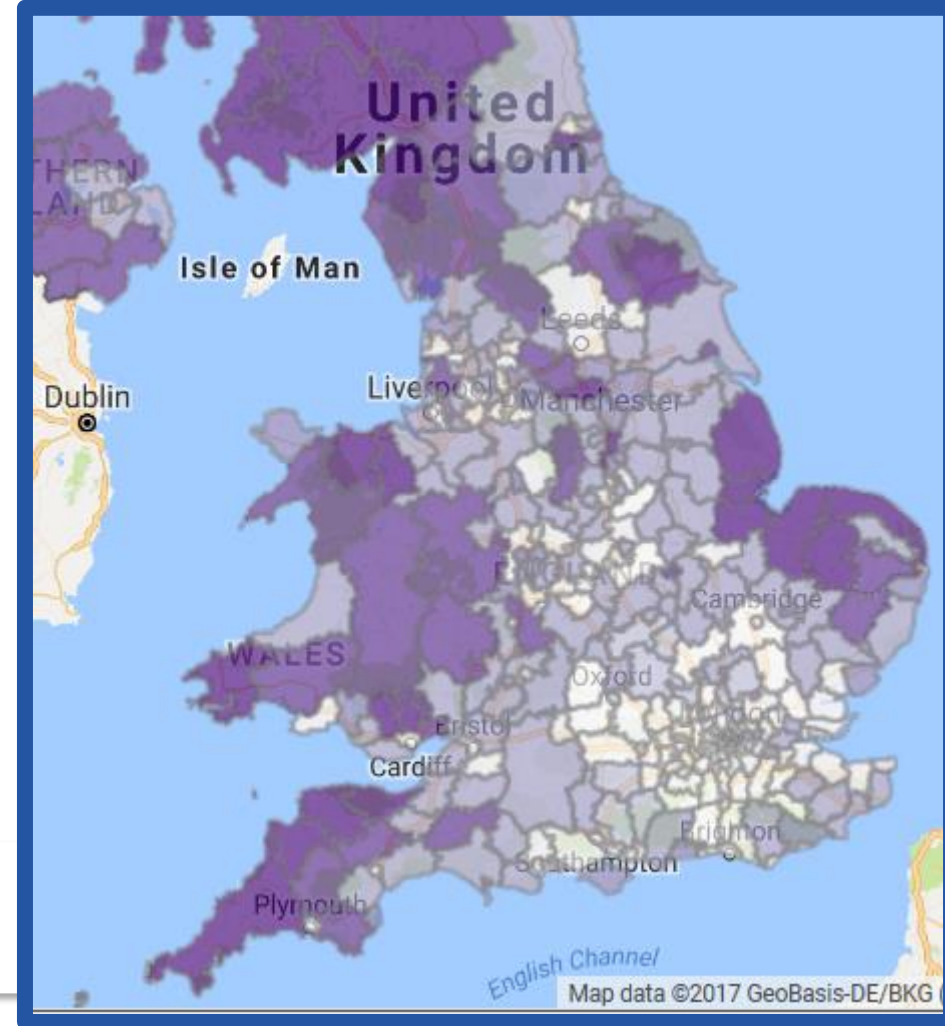
Oct - Mar 2018

- > Champions delivering
- > Toolkit in action
- > Target 1500 participants

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10 Selected Digital Hubs

Digital Heat Map



A range of front line organisations as hubs



Hubs identified local need

Rurality

Scarcity of resources

Lack of
education

Low literacy

Poverty

Lack of access to
technology

Generational
and cultural
differences

Lack of digital role
models

Homelessness

Digital not explained
in way that people
understand

*Need to access
online
government
services*

Fear of digital –
restriction of use

Disability

Learning
difficulties

We co-created our resources

Mobile devices needed

Digital skills by stealth

Staff training

Flexible resources

Link to existing provision

Offline activities too



We created themed online toolkits



Set-up



Enterprise



Creative



Citizenship



Money




Wellbeing



Safety

We designed a learning journal

 **Journal**

Digi Know is a programme that explores how digital skills can help young people to achieve their goals in life. Whether you are looking for a job, trying to manage your money better or looking for more creative outlets in your life, Digi Know brings together the best resources for you to improve your digital knowledge and skills to help you thrive in a digital world.

This journal is for you to **reflect on your current skills and abilities in digital, record the activities you cover in your sessions and note down what you've learnt.**

We hope you enjoy the Digi Know sessions and look forward to seeing how you plan to use your new digital skills to help you towards your next goal!

Reflecting on your goals

What short-term goals do you have that digital skills could help you with?

1. _____

2. _____

Reflecting on your digital skills

How would you rate your digital skills out of 10? Where would you most like to improve?

What devices do you have access to in your current situation?

smart phone _____ Laptop _____ Desktop _____ Other _____

How important do you believe digital skills are in your life? /10

 **Journal**

 **Recording my journey**

Tick which themes you have covered and (roughly) how many hours you spent on each.

 Set-up <input type="checkbox"/> _____ hours	 Creative <input type="checkbox"/> _____ hours	 Citizenship <input type="checkbox"/> _____ hours
 Money <input type="checkbox"/> _____ hours	 Wellbeing <input type="checkbox"/> _____ hours	 Enterprise <input type="checkbox"/> _____ hours

The best thing about Digi Know was:

Something new I learnt during Digi Know was:

Improved technology provision

Hubs were granted up to £2000 to spend on improving technology provision in their organisation. Most Hubs put the grant towards laptops, tablets & remote WiFi



DONATION FROM



NOMINET

12 laptops & distributed across
the Hubs based on need



Having funding and donations for equipment gave us more devices for our delivery. This meant we could work with larger groups of young people at one time, whilst giving them each an individualised experience. The remote devices (laptops and tablets) we purchased have enabled us to deliver outreach in the community, taking the programme to young people not already engaged in our service.

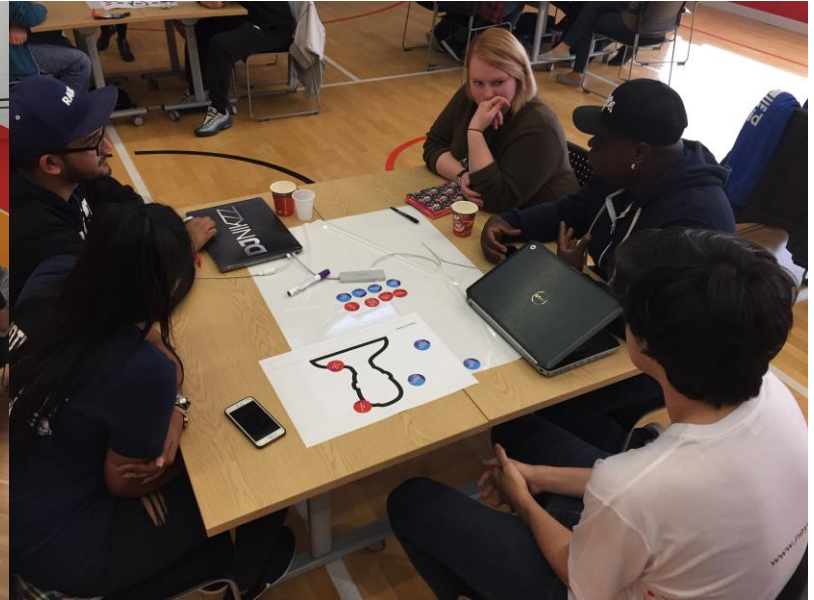
Youth worker, Newcastle

Champions recruited and trained

Each Hub recruited three Digital Champions – young people aged 18-25 who are digitally savvy and looking to take on a leadership role with their peers through the programme.

UK Youth trained Digital Champions in three local training days. Training focused on:

recognising digital exclusion, **empathising with the need** & **facilitation skills**.



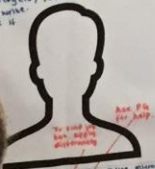
Somerset Digital Champion Training



NEET
No motivation
Traveller background
Lack of inspirational Parent/Guardian

no skills
limited access to library or job centre
Rural environment

Go to library/school to ask for help for writing a paper CV.
- Actively visit employers/job centre.
- Hand in CV-handwritten.
- Pop back to check if received CV.

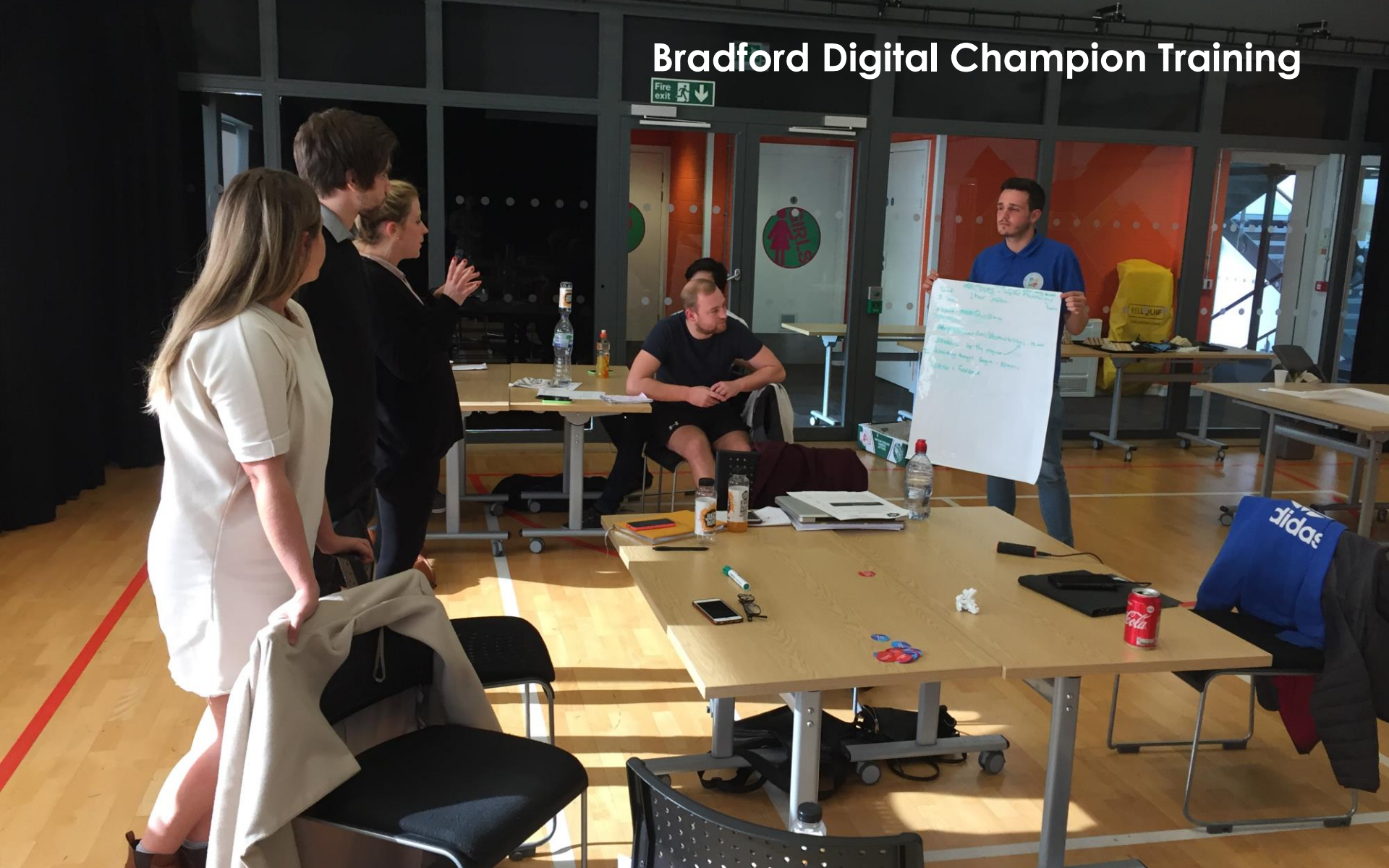


Ask PG for help.
Ask PG for help to write CV.
Ask PG for help to write CV.

CV handwritten/typed - Use appropriate word to get response on what CV has been accepted.
Ask for communication about interview.



Bradford Digital Champion Training



“The training was very effective in enlightening us on digital exclusion, a topic rarely openly spoken about - I hadn't realised how easily it could affect young people without many of the opportunities we take for granted, and how dramatically it could impact on their lives and opportunities”

- Digital Champion, Somerset



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Who we reached



**Two Hubs experienced delays in Feb/March due to the snow and are continuing delivery in April. We anticipate reach at the end of April to be approximately 1100.*

Breakdown of reach



84



65



156



124



94

Hubs delivered in different settings with a range of engagement types which affected their overall reach number during the pilot. Some key factors at play:

- Open access spaces vs targeted outreach
- Staffing ratios for young people with additional needs
- Equipment provision
- Cost of hiring space
- Travel logistics and cost for rural areas
- Staffing changes / absences



87



57



116



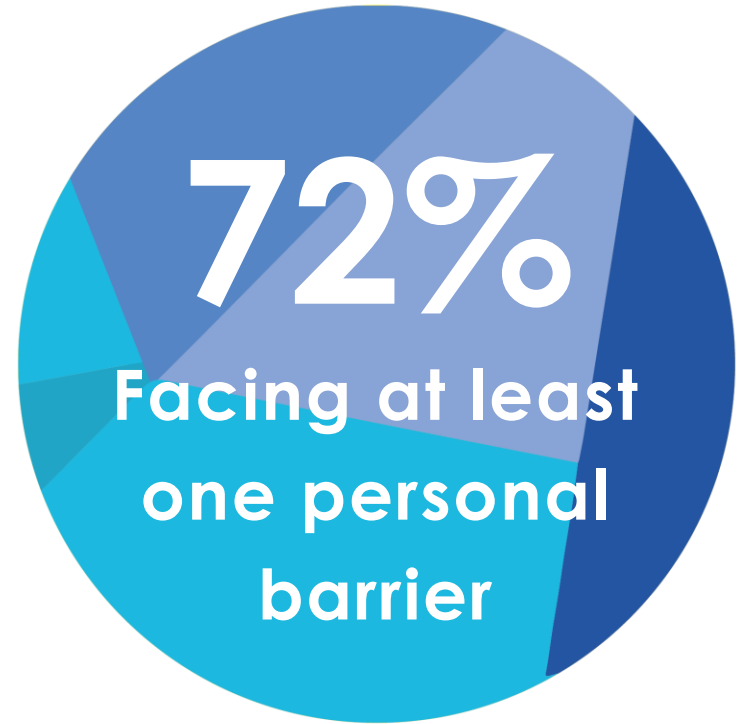
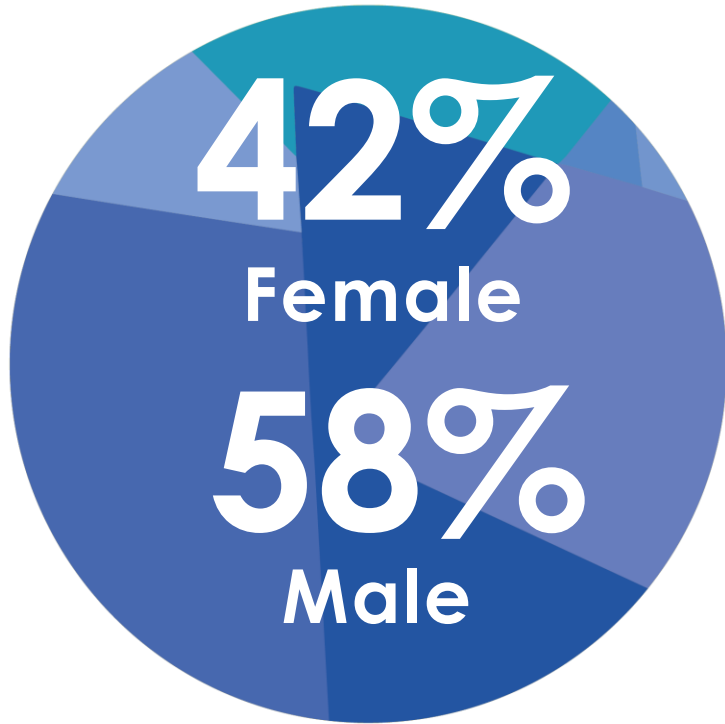
58



114

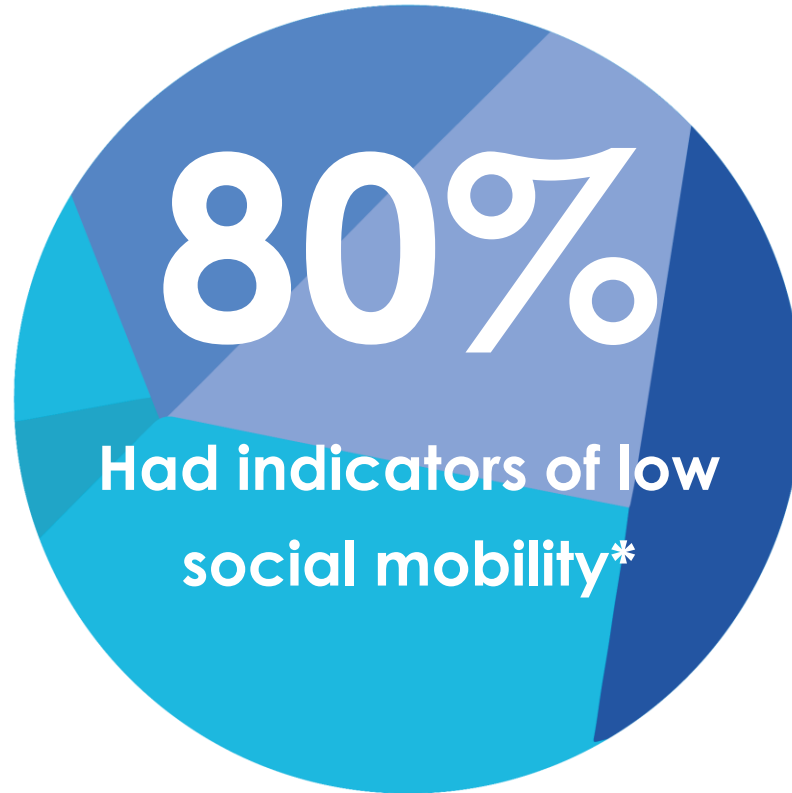


**Completion means fulfilled at least 6 hours of DigiKnow curriculum*



Most Common Additional Barriers

- 53% were from areas of high deprivation
- 38% were of low educational attainment
 - 32% were from a low income family
- 27% had **Behavioural, Emotional & Social Difficulties (BESD)**
 - 24% were **Special Educational Needs (SEN)**
 - 23% lived in rural isolation



**From 30% IMD, 30% SMI or facing at least one personal barrier*

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A circular graphic composed of several overlapping, semi-transparent segments in various shades of blue and teal. The segments are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and movement. The text is centered within the circle.

57%

Participated through
outreach youth work

A circular graphic composed of several overlapping, semi-transparent segments in various shades of blue and teal. The segments are arranged in a way that creates a sense of depth and movement. The text is centered within the circle.

43%

Participated
through open
access provision

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OPEN ACCESS EXAMPLE

When we delivered in our open access sessions, we didn't always know the starting level of young people's digital skills, so we used the first session to explore this. We were really surprised that a lot of young people didn't have even the basics like using a search engine properly.

Somerset Rural Youth Project

OUTREACH EXAMPLE

Delivering DigiKnow, we tested new ways of outreach working in our community. We partnered with a local training provider working with NEET young people and dropped in to deliver DigiKnow sessions in their centre. This meant we could work with a group who really needed these skills the most.

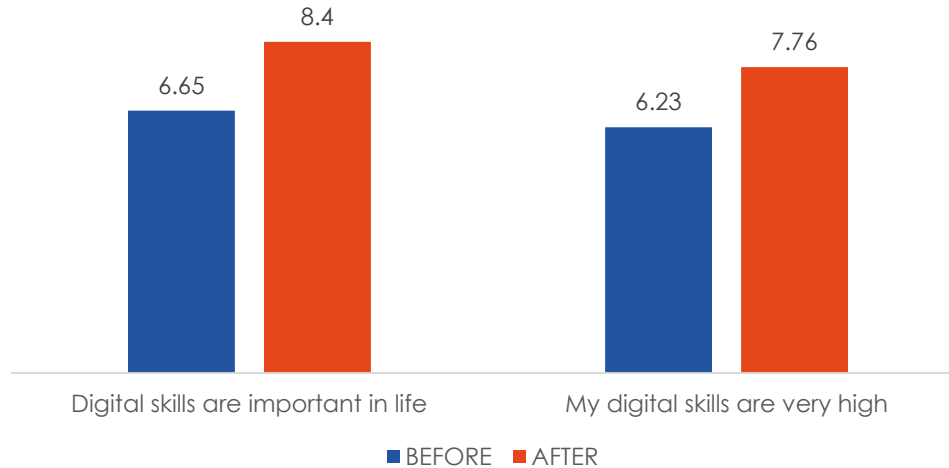
Open Youth Trust, Norwich



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Impact

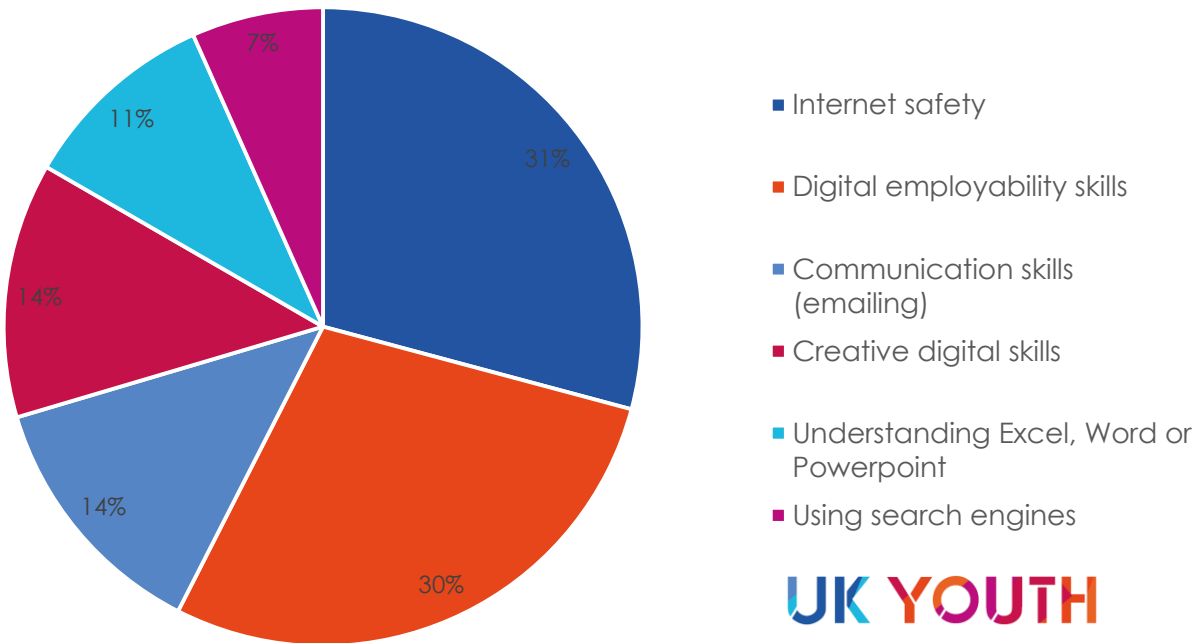
DigiKnow improved young people's digital skills

Average participant rating of digital skills before and after DigiKnow



Specific digital skills learnt by young people through DigiKnow

Skills learnt by participant because of DigiKnow



The graph shows the results from survey data when participants were asked, if any, what top three new digital skills or abilities they gained as a part of DigiKnow. Themes around learning how to keep safe on the internet and learning digital skills needed for employment (e.g. CV writing and online job applications) were the most common.



90%

Learnt at least
one new digital
skill or ability

75%

Learnt at least
two new digital
skills or abilities

46%

Learnt at least
three new
digital skills or
abilities

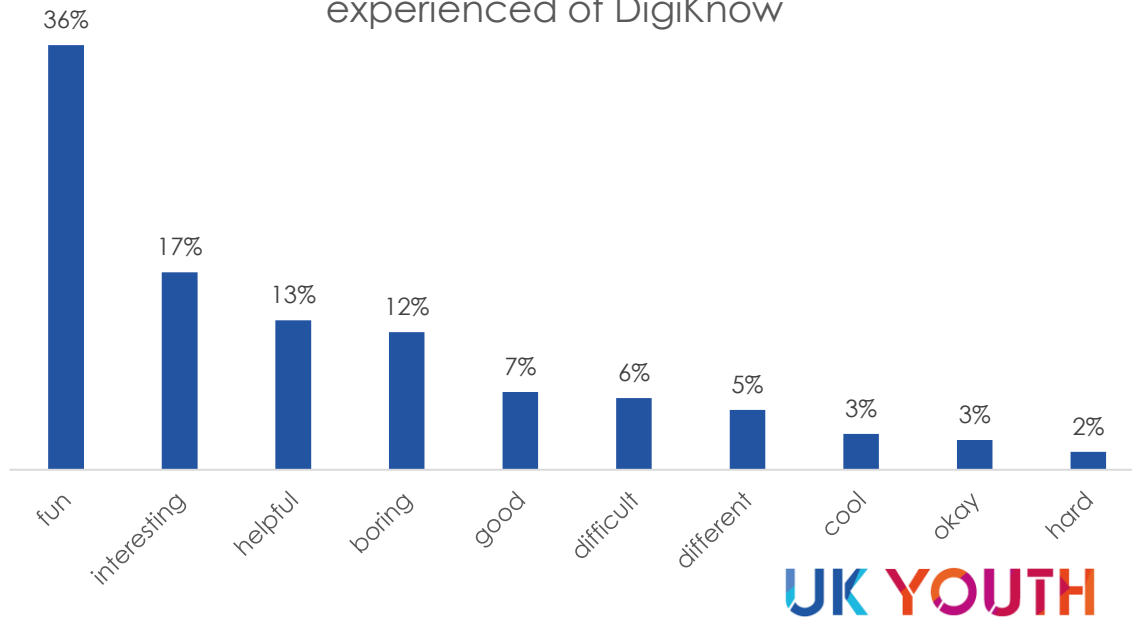
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What were the most common skills young people were exposed to for the first time because of DigiKnow?

	SKILLS
1	Creativity (e.g. music creation, design)
2	Finding information (e.g. news, research)
3	Employment (e.g. finding jobs)
4	Managing Money (e.g. online banking)
5	Online shopping (e.g. music, food, clothes)

Words young people used to describe the programme

Three words to describe participants overall experienced of DigiKnow



The graph shows the results from survey data when participants were asked which three words they would use to describe their overall experience of DigiKnow. Whilst the most common words used were **fun** and **interesting**, a number of young people also used the word boring! Working with hard to reach young people, it is expected that they may find certain aspects of skills programmes less engaging.

What did young people say about DigiKnow?

'Technology isn't just for socialising'

'I have gained more important knowledge which would help and protect me in the future'

'I learnt a lot that I didn't know about computers'

'I now know a lot more about internet safety and the other types of methods people use on the internet to try and scam'

'I have learnt new things which I will use on a day to day basis'

Participant case study: Bradley, 16

Prior to taking part in DigiKnow, Bradley had told the youth centre staff about his drug use and low attendance to his alternative education provision. He did not want to participate in conversations which may have an educational purpose and would remove himself entirely when the digital sessions were taking place.

Staff asked Bradley if he would be willing to help out with the programme and equipped him with an iPad to teach other young people about their digital footprint. Bradley really enjoyed being empowered with this opportunity and it led him to wanting a job or an apprenticeship.

Bradley said he doesn't like lessons but this didn't feel like one.

Because of DigiKnow, Bradley now has the skills to write a CV, sign up for job sites, conduct research about the job and the company, use google maps and submit online applications. Bradley is continuing his search for employment and continuing to attend his current college course until September, when he aims to get an apprenticeship in mechanics.

Champion spotlight: Sagar, 20



DigiKnow allowed Sagar a platform to share his digital expertise with the young people attending their club. He sought creative ways to “sneak” digital skills acquisition into an informal setting.

Sagar was recruited as a Digital Champion on the DigiKnow programme through his work with Waterfront Sports & Education Academy, where he volunteers as a Multimedia and IT Technician. Waterfront SEA is an open-access provision for young people, using sport as the engagement point.

We increased their digital skill through necessity - they wanted the playstation to work, so we worked together to fix it!



Hub spotlight:

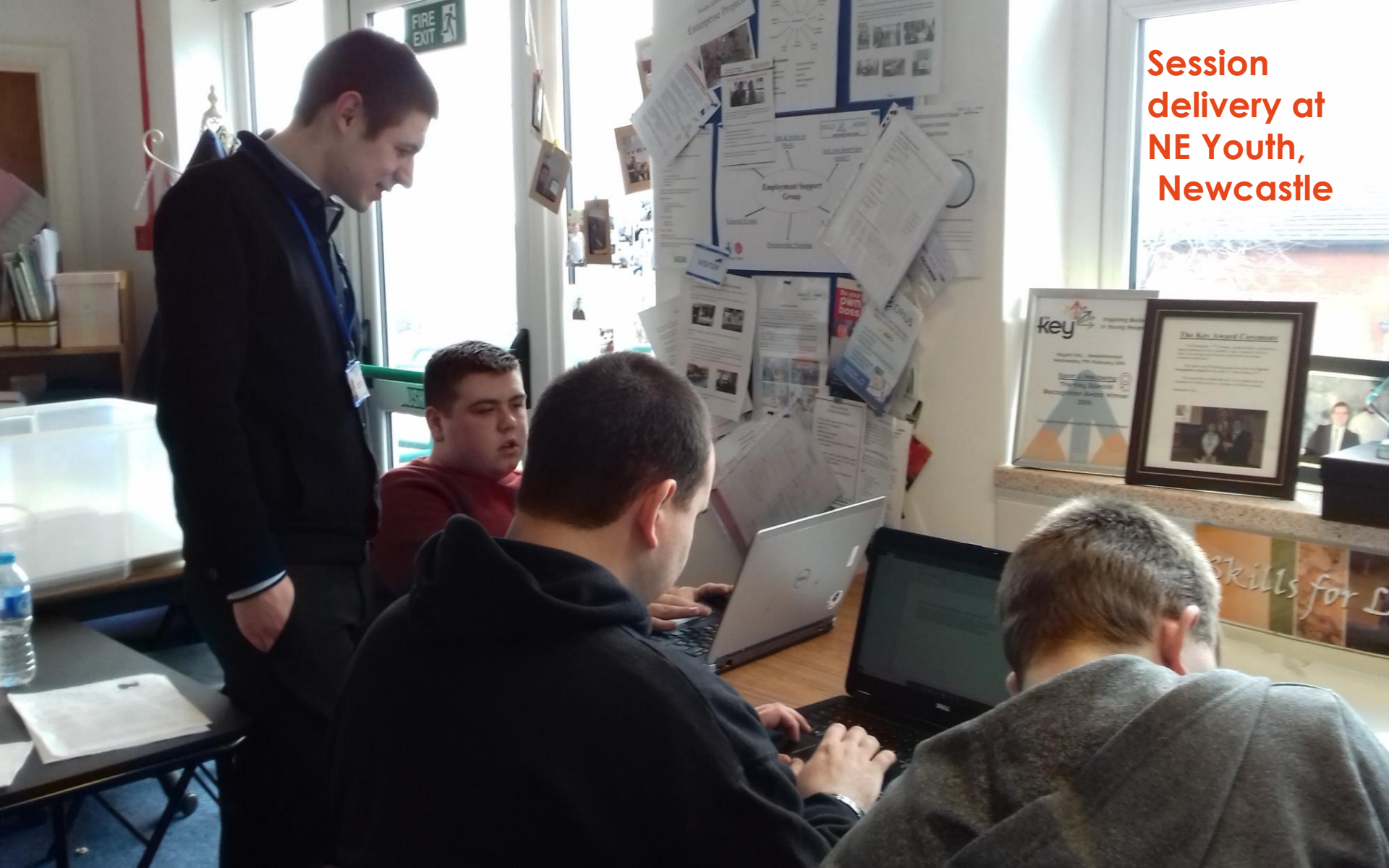
DCAS, under Derbyshire County Council, is a creative studio offering open access workshops in music, arts, drama and media for 11-25 year olds.

Through DigiKnow, the DCAS staff put a digital lens on the creative activities young people were already engaging in. Dance groups filmed their routines to reflect on their performance and through this process, learnt to download and save files across devices. Media groups were exposed to programmes like logic and Photoshop during sessions. Youth worker Lucie said:

“by starting them off with pretty advanced and exciting software, we piqued their interest and they wanted to learn – from there, we worked backwards to teach the basic digital skills that are the building blocks to the advanced stuff.”



Session delivery at NE Youth, Newcastle



Coming from a rural area, I'd always focused on the infrastructure issues with digital inclusion – that it's all about access.

Being part of DigiKnow has brought our awareness to the skills side of inclusion and got us working creatively to use what provision we have and look for opportunities to increase skills.

Beyond the pilot programme we're continuing to use the DigiKnow Wellbeing Toolkit to work with young people around online safety and device addiction.

Youth worker, Minehead Eye



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Learnings

Debriefing the pilot

At the end of the pilot delivery we brought Hubs together for two debrief sessions – one face-to-face workshop and one virtual meeting. Eight of the ten Hubs attended a debrief session .

The debrief sessions focused on:

- Sharing learnings from across the different regions
- Our theory of change – challenging our assumptions
- What did we learn about digital exclusion in young people?
- What would a dream programme look like?

“It’s quite rare in our job that you get a chance to reflect, today’s been a great way to do that.”

Youth worker, Bradford YMCA

DigiKnow Debrief Session, Sheffield

When the person who is delivering the training is learning too, the barriers of "I can't do it" are broken down.



What have we learnt from DigiKnow?

About Young People

- Young people may have a tendency to overestimate their digital skills and abilities. Perhaps because “you don’t know what you know.”
- Young people may be particularly skilled in areas of digital communication, e.g. Snapchat, but may lack digital skills in other areas, such as setting up an Email address or using Microsoft Word
- Even if young people have access to digital devices, a lot of them lack digital skills, e.g. knowing their way around a keyboard, as they are more comfortable using a smartphone for everything.
- Digital fear is a big barrier for some young people, who feel embarrassed to share the things they don’t know. Fear can be the hardest point to overcome, but once it is, motivation is unlocked and then skills can be picked up relatively quickly.
- Most young people were more motivated when they had a specific digital skill which they wanted help with (as opposed to a general motivation to improve.)
- Younger age ranges could be included in the programme as earlier intervention is needed to prevent a lack of digital skills in later life.

What have we learnt from DigiKnow?

About the wrap around support

- Training needs to go to people at multiple levels of the organisation so that it is embedded.
- Peer educators are of ranging starting points and will need differing amounts of support. Champions and youth workers should be trained together and both involved in session planning & delivery.
- Technology infrastructure in the youth sector is patchy. A review of provision and funding/donations to improve is vital to deliver this work consistently.
- Resources need to be available in multiple formats (e.g. online and hard copy) and should be flexible to deliver across themes, rather than a structured session plan.
- Targets for this pilot were high. In some cases this caused stress and shifted focus from quality to quantity. Future programmes should start with low reach numbers to allow organisations to establish an approach and learn from the ground up what a realistic reach is for them.
- Setting engagement hours is not most appropriate measure for digital skills acquisition as paces vary drastically. Outcomes based engagement more appropriate.
- Surveys were particularly challenging for this group of young people. Alternative evidence-collecting such as portfolios or video diaries could be explored to measure impact.

“I think having the target of 150 participants was hard. Because you’ve got that number in your head and that’s the target. If you’re behind you get that sort of anxiety and it becomes more about quantity rather than quality.”

Youth worker – Donut Creative Arts Studio

Best practice we've learnt

- Most successful delivery involved embedding digital skills into relevant activities that young people were already engaged in. Seeing opportunities to teach a skill based on real-life problems (such as a PlayStation breaking) was organic and highly effective.
- Champions who are digitally savvy and motivated by technology can add significant value through peer-to-peer support.
- Digital skills do not necessarily need to be taught by a digital expert. When the trainer explored with the young person, and they learnt together, this was a good way of getting over digital fear together.
- Using innovative new technology is a great way to spark interest for disengaged young people. “Being the first to find out” about new tech is a powerful engagement tool. You can then work backwards to unpick the basic skills behind more advanced content.
- Where there was a strong rapport between participant and trainer, engagement and motivation was higher. This was easier to achieve in the open access settings, as outreach work is more temporary.

We tried outreach work in the local McDonalds, where lots of young people hang out to use the WiFi. We used iPads and a drone to engage them and spark their curiosity, and then showed them some quick tips to improve their skills. It's tricky though because you might not see that young person again, or if you do it's weeks later.

Canal Boat Adventure Project

Recommendations

- There is a need for a common language around the issue of digital inclusion and skills for the future – the vocabulary is currently inconsistent and confusing, especially for a young audience in non-academic environments.
- Front line staff need easy-to-use diagnostic tools to help recognise the young people who most need support with digital skills. The Basic Digital Skills Framework is not currently meeting this need and we suggest more work needs to be done to develop the framework and guidance for use.
- Improving the digital maturity of charities and front line services is a priority. These organisations are reaching the target audience but are often under-resourced both in technology and skills. We need a consistent framework for organisations to benchmark their provision and skills against. We also need to seek to unlock ways to enable donations of technology to get to where it's most needed.
- Trusted relationships are vital when working with hard to reach young people – programme design need to recognise this and skill up the right people, building in sufficient time for new relationships to be nurtured.
- Feedback from Hubs has made a strong case for digital skills interventions to target younger age groups as well as 16-24 year olds.

“As an organisation, we now understand the need for young people in our area to be supported with their digital skills. For the participants, it’s been useful for them to reflect on the skills they have, what they need to develop, and how digital skills can not just help them in education and employment, but in their everyday life”

Youth Worker, Somerset Rural Youth Project.

UK Youth's digital future

UK Youth is committed to helping young people and the organisations who support them to be fully included in a digital-by-default world.

We have built a number of partnerships to deliver digital skills programmes and have now tested interventions covering basic to advanced skills including digital citizenship and safeguarding.

Being part of Nominet Trust's Digital Reach has enabled us to develop our thinking around our wider digital strategy, helping us to understand how we can lead transformational change in the youth sector while continuing to reach thousands of disadvantaged young people.

We are keen to continue to grow our partnerships in this space and build on our portfolio of digital programmes. We look forward to reading the *Digital Reach* report and being part of shaping the next steps in digital inclusion for young people.

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Microsoft **UK YOUTH**


micro:bit

 **STEM**
AMBASSADORS

“If we’re not careful, in 20 years time we’ll be picking up the pieces that others forgot about. We have a responsibility to include young people from all backgrounds in the conversation on how their future is being shaped through the advancement of technology.”

Youth worker, Bradford YMCA

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Thank You

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