

# DigiKnow

Final Programme Report

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v2.0



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# Introduction

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| Total Learners Helped by DigiKnow<br><br><b>8425</b><br><br>168% of target (5000) | Total Level of Learner Social Exclusion <sup>1</sup><br><br><b>89%</b><br><br>111% of target (80%) | Number of Delivery Partners Recruited<br><br><b>35</b><br><br>107% of target (30) |
|---|--|---|

28% of Stockport’s population (82,000 people) make only limited use of the internet, and a further 13% (38,000 people) don’t go online at all.<sup>2,3</sup> These non users and narrow users – one out of every five people in Stockport – are more likely to be older, disabled, low skilled, unemployed, in poor health, or in other groups at risk of social exclusion and deprivation. They could benefit most from accessing services and information online, but are unable to do so. This combination of restricted internet use and other forms of disadvantage is **digital exclusion**.

**Digital inclusion** describes any attempt to give people the digital skills, confidence and access they need to use the internet in ways that help them to achieve positive outcomes for work, health and life. Research shows that digital inclusion is most effective when it is led by the needs and interests of individuals, rather than delivered to a fixed curriculum; and that more people are engaged in digital skills training when it is embedded within a wider programme of socially inclusive support. Above all, good digital inclusion requires close coordination between local partners, and long-term investment in order to

<sup>1</sup> An individual is counted as socially excluded if they fall into one or more of the following categories: unemployed, low income, disabled, living in social housing, homeless. The percentage does not include individuals supported by libraries, as Stockport Library Service chose not to collect demographic data from learners; nor from Starting Point, who collect impact data separately.

<sup>2</sup> Non-users are defined by the Office of National Statistics as not having used the internet at all in the last three months. Source: Internet Access Quarterly Update, Office for National Statistics licensed under the Open Government Licence v.3.0.

<sup>3</sup> Based on Ofcom data, comparing the national ratio of non- and narrow users to non-use in Stockport. Source: Ofcom, Adults: Media use and attitudes report 2019, available online at: [https://www.ofcom.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0021/149124/adults-media-use-and-attitudes-report.pdf](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0021/149124/adults-media-use-and-attitudes-report.pdf)

help people move from non-use and narrow use, to confident independence.

Delivered between April 2018 and March 2020, the DigiKnow programme was designed to tackle digital exclusion in Stockport, by developing sustainable and coordinated digital inclusion capacity across the Borough. The programme was commissioned and funded by the **Digital Transformation Team at Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council** who also had an ongoing role coordinating activities, promoting the update of digital services, and expanding the reach of the DigiKnow Network. The programme was led by **Good Things Foundation**, the UK's leading digital inclusion delivery organisation, with support provided on-the-ground by **Starting Point Community Learning Partnership**, the DigiKnow Community Ambassador and a local expert in digital inclusion delivery. Starting Point has been responsible for recruiting, training and supporting DigiKnow delivery partners, and has also been responsible for the direct delivery of digital inclusion activities through programmes funded by the Department for Education, Lloyds Banking Group and NHS Digital.

Although supporting local people to use online public services was a key aim of the programme, the Council recognised from the outset the importance of digital inclusion to help people become healthier, happier and better off. To achieve this, and to engage as many socially and digitally excluded residents as possible, 35 organisations across the Borough - 16 of them libraries - were recruited into a **DigiKnow Network** of delivery partners, who offered digital support as part of their wider service offer. All members of the Network were able to draw on a flexible support offer provided by Good Things Foundation and Starting Point.

Although there have been other area-based digital inclusion initiatives in the UK, DigiKnow was unique in its development of a **Strategic Alliance** of local stakeholders, who played an ongoing role in planning, monitoring and coordinating programme activities. As well as the Council, Good Things Foundation and Starting Point, the Alliance includes Stockport Homes, The Prevention Alliance, Disability Stockport, Stockport College, Citizens Advice Stockport, JobCentre Plus Stockport, Nationwide Building Society Stockport, GC Business Growth Hub and Lloyds Banking Group. As this report shows, perhaps the most significant and lasting achievement of DigiKnow has been the increased communication, knowledge-sharing and collaborative working made possible by the DigiKnow Alliance.

Finally, the contribution to the programme of **Stockport Libraries** cannot be overlooked. As one of the most visible public faces of the Council, libraries provide a wide range of advice and support services for local people, including digital inclusion. Collectively, they have made the largest single contribution to the success of DigiKnow, in terms of individuals supported; senior library staff have also been actively involved in the DigiKnow Alliance, and have led on the development of innovative partnerships and practice.

Good Things Foundation's involvement in DigiKnow came to an end in March 2020, but the Network continues to support digitally excluded people, and Alliance partners are working together not only to sustain the DigiKnow Network but also to reach more people than ever before. Alongside the Digital You programme in Salford, DigiKnow is recognised across Greater Manchester Combined Authority as an exemplar of area-based digital inclusion, and is already helping Stockport to achieve the ambition set out in the Greater Manchester Digital Blueprint to increase the number of adults who have all 5 basic digital skills from 78% to 80% by 2023.<sup>4</sup>

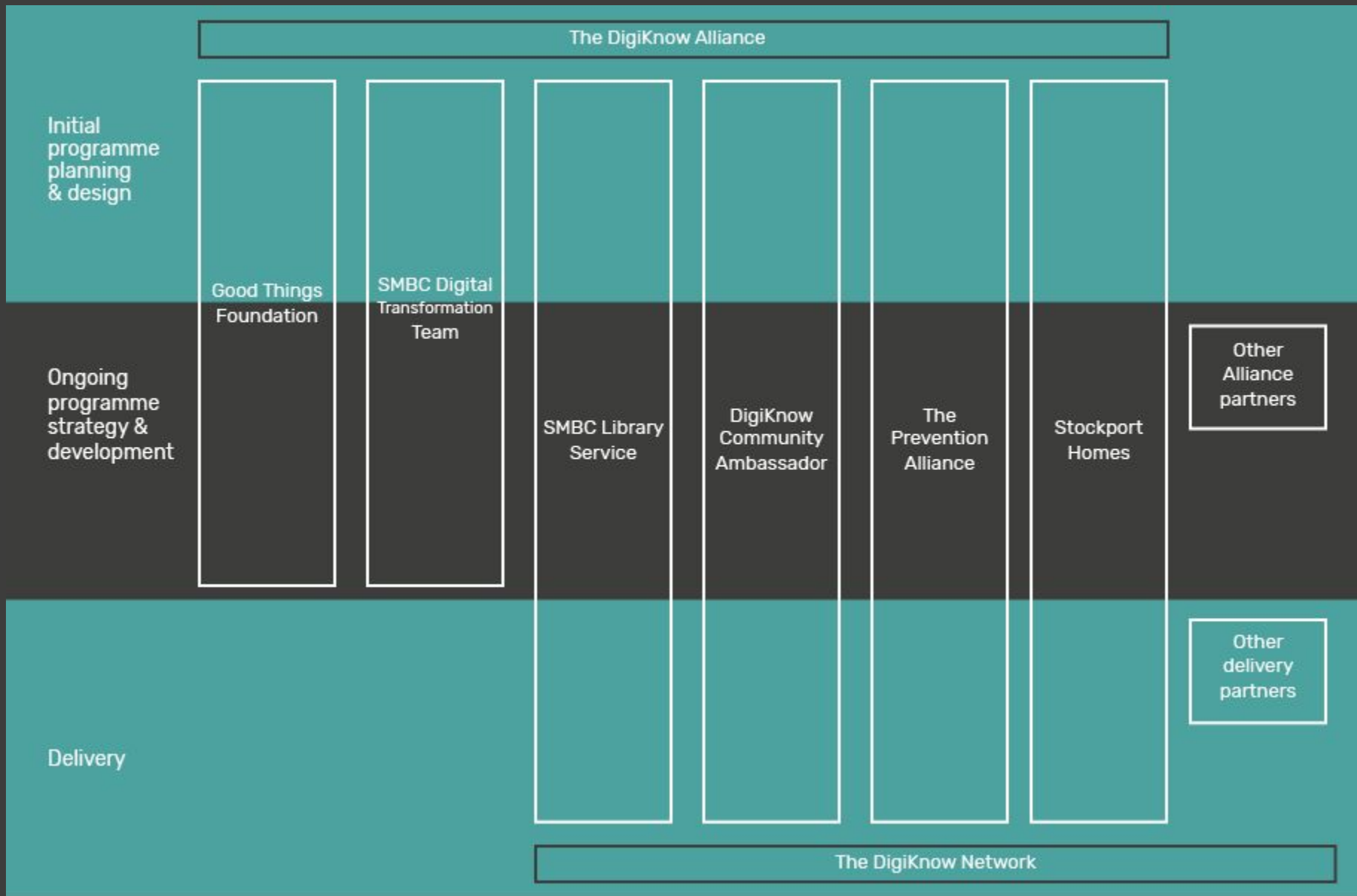
*"When you have Authorities in Greater Manchester coming together to talk about digital inclusion, Salford and Stockport are recognised as the ones who're furthest along that journey, and in Stockport I think that's entirely down to DigiKnow. It's really raised the profile of the Borough in Greater Manchester in terms of digital support." - Martin Roberts, Stockport Libraries*

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<sup>4</sup> Available online at: [https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/2656/amca\\_digital\\_blueprint\\_final\\_downloadable\\_presentation\\_feb-2020.pdf](https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/2656/amca_digital_blueprint_final_downloadable_presentation_feb-2020.pdf)

# Structure of the DigiKnow Programm





## The DigiKnow Offer

Each organisation in the DigiKnow Network has a unique structure, purpose and operating model, requiring unique support. The DigiKnow offer comprised a 'menu' of different options, allowing Network members to choose the elements that would best help them to begin, sustain or record their digital inclusion activity:

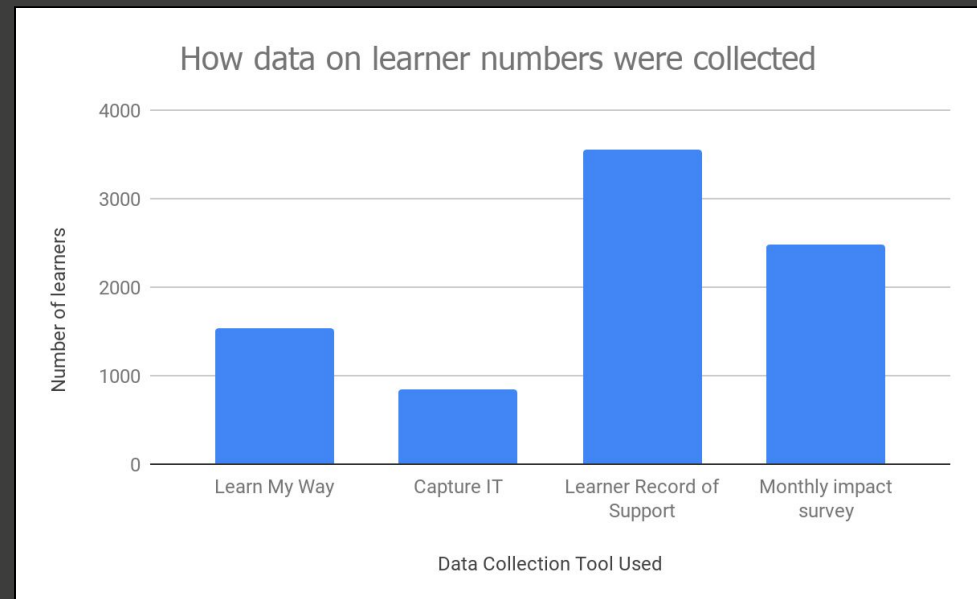
- They were able to draw at any time on **capacity building** advice and support from Community Ambassador Starting Point, including training for Digital Champion volunteer tutors, to help them develop independent delivery capacity.
- Starting Point also provided **lesson plans and worksheets** to help ensure digital skills learning was well-structured and high-quality. Delivery partners could commission new materials based on the needs of their learners.
- If they did not feel they could deliver support themselves, members could instead focus on fundraising, administration and recruitment to support their session, with Starting Point providing **in-reach delivery** of skills training.
- Smaller organisations new to digital inclusion were the main beneficiaries of **£1,500 Activation Grants**, which helped them to buy equipment and cover various setup costs such as marketing materials, secure storage and room hire.
- Sixteen delivery partners made some use of **Learn My Way**, the free online learning platform for foundation and essential digital skills created and curated by Good Things Foundation. Designed for learners with little or no experience with digital technology, the platform includes a range of learning modules and can be tailored to the needs of individual learners. Usage data is automatically collected, reducing the administrative burden on tutors.
- All delivery partners were inducted into the national **Online Centres Network** of digital inclusion practitioners managed by Good Things Foundation, with a separate infrastructure support and funding offer.
- They also had access to a simple **learner record of support**, allowing basic data about learners to be captured on a paper form, which could then be collated in an online spreadsheet for easy reporting. Delivery partners were able to tailor the form as needed.
- Delivery partners were encouraged and supported by Starting Point and Good Things Foundation to participate in the national **Get Online Week** campaign in October. Partners were provided with marketing packs to encourage people to attend one-off campaign events, and a DigiKnow celebration event was held at Stockport Central Library as part of Get Online Week 2019.

# What DigiKnow Has Achieved

## People Reached

8425 people were supported during the two years of DigiKnow programme delivery, against a target of 5000. Support for at least one person was reported by 28 of the 35 active recruited Centres; where organisations recorded no delivery, this was because delivery was led and recorded by Starting Point, with the delivery partner supporting the session in other ways (e.g. paying for room hire, administration, or communicating with learners). DigiKnow delivery partners were able to report their delivery in one or more of four ways:

1. Automatically, through the use of Learn My Way – Good Things Foundation was able to monitor how many learners registered on the platform, against each delivery partner’s unique Online Centre code.
2. Via CaptureIT, Good Things Foundation’s online learner management system for Online Centres; the tool was developed to capture details of learners for whom Learn My Way was not suitable.<sup>5</sup>
3. Through a learner record of support form, which allowed delivery partners to record basic details per individual learner, and could be tailored according to targets and suitability.
4. Through monthly completion of an online impact survey which allowed delivery partners to report overall numbers, and whether individuals were supported in group sessions, 1-to-1, or working semi-independently.



<sup>5</sup> Since CaptureIT is connected to Learn My Way data and uses the same unique identifier, so CaptureIT numbers are included with Learn My Way numbers in this report.

This reporting flexibility has allowed different organisations to record different types of delivery in the most appropriate way: the monthly online survey was used predominantly by organisations offering embedded digital support and already keeping detailed records, while the record of support form was particularly useful for libraries, allowing *ad hoc* digital support to be recorded across the service for the first time.

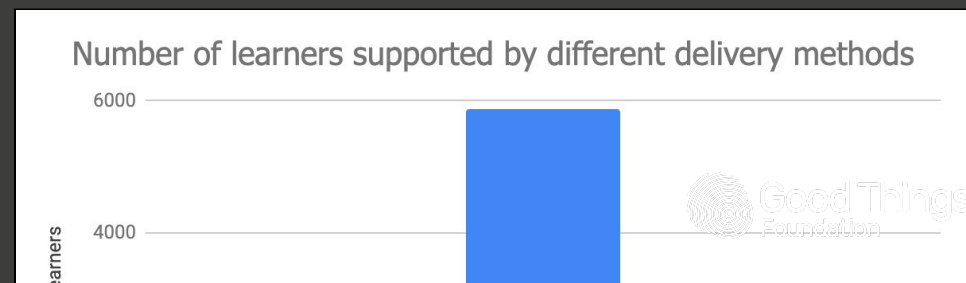
*“The learner record of support has been heavily used, and at a number of libraries it’s really demonstrated a big portion of their work. The statistics we’ve captured are very useful: we were able to include them as evidence of library usage, not just the overall numbers but also what people ask for help with.”* – Martin Roberts, Stockport Libraries

*“It can be overwhelming. We keep track of the work we’re doing with people in great detail. Adding another layer of monitoring meant people were going to push back. In the first instance we used a paper-based system, and it was something that people really didn’t take on board. So we integrated [digital inclusion activity] into our normal database, so that as part of the workflow we could include any digital work we were doing with them. So then I could just run a report from the database every month.”* – The Prevention Alliance

## Flexible Delivery Models

The volume and characteristics of delivery varied widely by organisation. The fact that DigiKnow supported a wide range of models, and counted all of their activity towards targets, is in itself valuable: a more restrictive model would have limited the ability of local organisations to embed digital inclusion within other activities, and failed to recognise good delivery that did not meet predetermined criteria. There is little evidence to suggest one kind of delivery – high versus low overall numbers, or short versus long-term support – is better than another: delivery partners were able to describe the appropriateness and value of their digital inclusion activity in the context of their wider work. DigiKnow delivery falls into three categories: direct delivery by Starting Point (the DigiKnow Digital Ambassador), acute support, and independent community delivery.

## Starting Point Community Outreach



25% of delivery was reported by Starting Point, the DigiKnow Digital Ambassador. As well as regular sessions at their headquarters in Woodley, Starting Point deliver an ongoing timetable of outreach sessions across the Borough in libraries and other locations, as well as some in partnership with several organisations in the DigiKnow network. As a flagship Online Centre with more than ten years experience in digital inclusion programmes, Starting Point's delivery is regarded as exemplary, and learning resources and training developed for their own sessions have been rolled out across the DigiKnow Network. Outreach sessions were open-ended, drop-in style community learning with one fixed-term, themed delivery session of between four and twelve weeks.

### Acute Support

70% of DigiKnow delivery was reported by libraries across the Borough, The Prevention Alliance, and the Digital Support Hubs run by Stockport Citizens' Advice. Demand for this kind of support is driven in large part by immediate, specific need, often arising from crisis situations relating to employment, housing, debt or benefits. Although those supported may not initially realise that digital could help them with their problems, or may expect digital tasks to be carried out on their behalf, these organisations try to encourage confident, independent use of digital to reduce crisis situations and the demand for face-to-face services. Learners may not attend digital learning sessions over a long period of time, but they will be given the digital knowledge and skills they need to resolve their immediate problems, and may be referred on to other DigiKnow delivery if they require longer-term support.

*"In terms of reducing the number of re-referrals into the system, our model has been shown to clearly work. Where people have had decades of support, there is still the expectation that we would do things for people, so it can take them longer to reach a point of independence. It's a change of culture, and digital skills is a big part of that, because without imparting digital skills, any time a given person needs a form filling, they would be returning to the drop-in centre and asking one of our staff to do it for them." - Paul Stevens, The Prevention Alliance*

Delivery in libraries has also included the six-week 'Learner Journey' course, as well as outreach sessions delivered by Jobcentres, although these activities have not been counted towards libraries' DigiKnow delivery. See 'Digital Inclusion in Stockport Libraries', below.

### Independent Community Delivery

The remaining thirteen delivery partners provided small-scale, open-ended skills training in community settings, often offered alongside other forms of support, and characterised by informality and a strong social element. Independent community delivery is generally driven by the energy of a few key individuals - staff or volunteers - as part of wider roles. Although it supports smaller numbers of people and makes up only 5% of overall DigiKnow delivery, it makes a valuable contribution, reaching those who might not otherwise engage with digital, and is especially suitable for individuals who may require long-term support. The dedication of those leading it, and the contribution of unpaid volunteers, means that it is also a sustainable model, requiring little ongoing investment. All but one of the DigiKnow activation grants were made to these smaller organisations, helping them to get their delivery off the ground.

*"The Activation Grant meant I could kickstart the church into doing something around IT support. Being able to say to them 'look, we've got a grant to get some equipment', was enough to get them to agree to the idea. It didn't matter that it was everything we needed, but it got them thinking about it, and convinced them to give it a go." - Geoff Tomlinson, lead tutor and volunteer, Seed Cafe*

*"It's built quite a nice friendship group. It sounds like such a small thing, but when you have people with sensory loss people can lack the confidence to even ask a question. The relaxed, friendly inviting atmosphere makes a big difference. We've got service users who've grown in confidence and become volunteers, friends of friends will turn up, people will come once and then keep coming." - Naomi Mather, Walthew House*

*"Learners will say it was really good to go over things again and refresh things they'd forgotten. Sometimes we'll take two weeks to go through a worksheet, rather than the usual one, just because questions will come up*

*and it's worthwhile for the whole group to answer it. And at the beginning of each session we can ask people if they've had any problems or got any questions with what we covered last time."* – Louise Evans, COGs

## Reaching Those Who Need Help Most

DigiKnow has exceeded its target of 80% of learners meeting at least one social exclusion criterion<sup>6</sup>, but there has been no single method of capturing learner demographics across all DigiKnow delivery, and there are some gaps in the data. Although the learner record of support was originally created with a number of demographic fields, Stockport Libraries (whose delivery makes up 38% of the programme total) felt that collecting such data would be intrusive and complicated without any obvious and immediate need:

*"If we ever apply for funding that asks for demographic information, we might start asking those questions, but we don't need to know that at the moment. If someone starts asking, what level of support have you given to jobseekers, that's something we can look at. But at the moment it's not something we're being asked for."* – Martin Roberts, Stockport Libraries

Similarly, Starting Point (25% of delivery) have helped people exclusively through Learn My Way, which collects only basic demographic data on age and employment status (see Appendix . Although some of Starting Point's delivery has been targeted at specific target groups and there is confidence that it is reaching those who need help most, this has not been quantified:

*"Probably more than half of the support Starting Point has delivered will have been with our tenants. We promote the sessions heavily to them, so it would be good to have a breakdown of tenure and social exclusion so we can check if we're reaching the people who we should be reaching."* – Stockport Homes

Since some organisations exist to support vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, 100% of their DigiKnow activity has by definition helped socially excluded people; this includes Citizens' Advice Stockport and The Prevention Alliance, whose

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<sup>6</sup> Unemployed, low income, disabled, living in social housing, homeless.

combined delivery makes up 31% of the programme total. However, Alliance partners recognise the need for DigiKnow to start to engage with a wider audience, including people in work.

*“Our aim going forward is to look at who we’ve reached so far and why that is, and think about how we might need to change our offer to reach groups we haven’t reached before, while continuing with the work we’ve built up over the last two years.” - Lee Emery, Digital Transformation Team*

These considerations are discussed in more detail in ‘The Future of DigiKnow’, below.



## Better Ways of Working

### Increased Delivery Quality & Capacity

The offer to the DigiKnow Network, and the work of the DigiKnow Alliance, have led to significantly better ways of working, both within and between organisations involved in the programme. In particular, the role of Starting Point as DigiKnow Community Ambassador has been critically important in ensuring high-quality delivery across the programme. Their support has been tailored to the needs of individual delivery partners, and has included attending new sessions until staff and volunteers are confident to work independently, ongoing meetings and advice on how to approach delivery, and the provision of structured session plans and learning materials. Their ten-year experience running digital inclusion activity across Stockport means that they are well-connected and respected, allowing them to establish new activities and respond to problems quickly.

*“Starting Point plans the sessions and shares the sessions plans with the group, and if the group has a suggestion for a session or theme they will take this on board. They provide training for our volunteers when needed, and we link up with them for Get Online Week and other online events. Ryan has help with funding grant applications, and refers tenants to the group from the surrounding area.”* - Louise Evans, Stockport Homes

*“I think Starting Point are fantastic at engaging on the ground. They have lots of connections in the community and they’re trusted. They’re the right organisation to carry on building over the last two years.”* - Mohammed Mustafa, Stockport Homes

### The DigiKnow Alliance: Coordination, Partnership and Sustainability

At a strategic level, the Alliance is recognised as having made an invaluable contribution to how delivery has been organised. Area-based initiatives always run the risk of duplication of effort, or the failure of different organisations and services to connect and offer integrated support. Through regular meetings and ongoing communication, informed by frontline insights

provided by Starting Point, the Alliance has been able to overcome these problems and ensure that activities across the Borough complement each other:

*"I think the Alliance has been valuable in defining priorities, helping us to be aware of what's going on elsewhere and making sure there's no overlap in what we're all doing. It's given us a direction and it's added a lot of value."* - Mohammed Mustafa, Stockport Homes

*"There had always been a lot of organisations in Stockport who wanted to help people get online but it was always a bit ad hoc, there was duplication, and there wasn't a proper cohesive offer. DigiKnow has also given a real focus and a cohesive approach to how we're supporting individuals, and we have confidence that people will be sent to the most appropriate location, whether it's detailed IT support or a quick answer."* - Martin Roberts, Stockport Libraries

As well as fostering closer collaboration across the Alliance, the clear brand identity and call to action of DigiKnow has also led to the creation of valuable new partnerships and referral pathways:

*"DigiKnow has given us a foot in the door for getting new partners involved. I personally recruited Stockport College, the Jobcentre, Lloyds Bank, Citizens' Advice. It was the demonstration of DigiKnow as a concept that helped to get them on board, and without it I think there's no way that could have been achieved."* - Martin Roberts, Stockport Libraries

Finally, the Alliance plays a critical role in the sustainability of digital inclusion in Stockport, and is especially important in creating a structure that helps to preserve partnerships, communications and plans outside of a specific funded programme or piece of activity. Funders and focus change over time; the Alliance can ensure that what is most valuable about DigiKnow is maintained and grown, and the core principles are not forgotten.

## Digital Inclusion in Stockport Libraries

Stockport Libraries' digital inclusion work is exemplary. The library service has played an active role in the DigiKnow Alliance, as well as leading on the development of a number of innovative, practical delivery partnerships. Libraries' activities are diverse: statutory services operate alongside advice centres for debt, employment and other issues, local Councillors' surgeries, and a busy calendar of learning and social events. Digital inclusion plays a part in all of these, from basic help with completing online forms through to a six-week 'Learner Journey' course aimed at internet novices. Libraries are often the first port of call for local people in difficult circumstances, and digital technology is often part of the solution:

"Difficult enquiries mean that staff have to remain calm in a moment of crisis, sit them down at a computer and help them find the information they need, and if appropriate they'll take them to a more private area. In some of our libraries we also have advice colleagues who can give people more detailed information about things like benefits." - Martin Roberts, Stockport Libraries

In addition to this core offer, senior library staff have recruited several important partners to the DigiKnow Alliance and Network - Stockport College, the Jobcentre, Lloyds Bank, and Stockport Citizens' Advice - which has led to a further expansion of libraries' digital offer: Libraries have been used by Lloyds Bank to deliver their Digital Academy programme, and by local Jobcentres to provide employability and digital skills training to long-term jobseekers. These activities, and the Learner Journey have not contributed towards libraries' DigiKnow delivery, which has been reported exclusively through Learn My Way and the DigiKnow learner record of support form - the latter having provided a simple, practical way for library staff to keep track of the volume and nature of demand for help with digital. Stockport libraries' achievements through the DigiKnow programme have helped to raise their profile locally as a provider of broad-spectrum support services, and demonstrated what a modern library service can and should be.

*"The big thing we got off the ground in September was the work with the Jobcentre, who started delivering training for people who've been unemployed for more than thirteen weeks, including digital skills. That was a real boost for us, the Jobcentre said that working in a library environment was very good for them, and a number of people who came to the sessions went on to join the library service. It's a good partnership working for us, with an organisation delivering training to a core group who need help with things like Universal Credit*

*and improving their job-searching skills. DigiKnow has helped to show other partners what the library service can bring to the table, that libraries are a place of learning.” - Martin Roberts, Stockport Libraries*

# The Future of DigiKnow: Observations & Recommendations

DigiKnow has achieved a great deal in two years, and Alliance and Network partners are now looking to the future. The DigiKnow brand is recognised across the Borough and beyond, and is generally seen as a collaboration between equals rather than a Council-led project. The core of the Alliance - Starting Point, Stockport Homes, the library service and the Council's Digital Transformation team - have built an excellent working relationship, that puts them in a strong position to expand the reach of the programme. Overall, the Alliance is aware of where DigiKnow needs to be strengthened, and the recommendations in this section are made in response to their own observations.

## Reaching Those Most in Need

There is a perception among Alliance members that DigiKnow has been successful in supporting older people, but now needs to do more to reach those of working age. This is partly true: the programme's more intensive, longer-term delivery - by Starting Point and smaller community partners, accounting for 30% of total activity - has engaged mostly retirees. A much larger number of people have been supported through acute services, including a higher proportion of individuals in the labour market, but this support tends to be lighter-touch, and focused on helping people to use digital to solve immediate problems. The Prevention Alliance recognises that some clients may not make an instant switch to independent use of digital services, and provide longer-term support for this cohort; and the library service can signpost acute cases to their Learner Journey. However, broadly speaking there is currently a division in DigiKnow between long-term digital support (accessed by a smaller proportion of mostly older people), and short-term support (accessed by a larger proportion of people of all ages, for whom short-term digital support is part of the solution to short-term crisis). Both types of support are valuable in themselves, but long-term support needs to be accessible to all. It is important to note that several small-scale community-based delivery partners have stated they have the capacity to support jobseekers, if these were referred to their services. Finally, local Councillors have played an important role in supporting local residents to access digital skills, by signposting them to DigiKnow provision.

**Recommendation:** *the job clubs operated by the Council and Stockport Homes need to become a formal part of the DigiKnow programme, with those managing the clubs recruited to the DigiKnow Alliance and to the Network. This integration would allow the Council to count digital support through job clubs towards total DigiKnow impact; foster cooperation, knowledge sharing and referral routes between employability and digital inclusion services; and help to tailor the DigiKnow offer to the needs of working age people. This should include an audit of supply and demand for digital inclusion services, so that spare capacity is used and gaps in provision are identified; and co-creation with different working age groups (e.g. jobseekers, people in work looking to improve their workplace skills) to develop a support offer which is practical and appealing. In addition, Jobcentres – already engaged with and benefiting from DigiKnow – should work with Alliance partners to develop an offer to jobseekers that not only connects them with relevant and valuable digital learning opportunities, but also gives them the time and space to pursue these without fear of sanction.*

*“We want to start reaching out to people who work but still receive benefits, the ones on the threshold of surviving from month to month. A lot of them don’t have time to focus on digital training because they’re working to put food on the table. The strategy of the project [with GMCA] will be to engage with this group and improve their digital skills, for their careers but also for things like personal finance.” – Martin Roberts, Stockport Libraries*

*“The tech group is working great and I wouldn’t change it, but I do think we could branch out and look at another audience, like next steps for job skills. This is just at the idea stage, but the plan is to work with the Jobcentre and employers and get them in to hold workshops and show people know about opportunities and services to help them enhance their skills for employment, and understand what they need to do to make sure their job roles are accessible. I really do think there is a need for it, and I do think it will draw in some of the younger ones, who are a difficult group to reach as they don’t usually need help with the technology.” – Naomi Mather, Walthew House*

*Finally, the importance of Councillors as trusted intermediaries who can refer people to DigiKnow support, should be recognised and promoted. Instances of referrals leading to successful support should be identified and highlighted through case studies, and details of the ever-growing DigiKnow offer should be communicated to Councillors on a regular basis; Councillors should also be able to feed into strategic and delivery planning, drawing on their firsthand experience of*

*problems faced by local people. The referral system should be rolled out and promoted as much as possible with any other Council staff, who may come into contact with individuals who could benefit from digital inclusion services.*

## Demonstrating Reach & Impact

### Quantitative Data

Demonstrating the collective impact of DigiKnow as a programme remains an ongoing challenge, due to the volume and variety of delivery taking place across the Network, and the several ways in which digital inclusion can be recorded. For the purposes of future funding and partnership opportunities, DigiKnow needs to be able to continue to collect and collate impact data from across the entire programme, and present it in a single, accessible format.

***Recommendation:*** *The Alliance should create and maintain a shared single record that pulls together data from across the DigiKnow Network, so that programme-wide impact can be monitored and used to demonstrate the collective impact of all delivery partners. Simple, relevant demographic data should be included in the learner record of support wherever it is used, including Stockport Homes tenancy and employment status. Standard, comparable data should be collected from learners using all of the different elements of Stockport Libraries' digital offer, so that the combined impact of their work can be demonstrated. Although it might not be possible to collect demographic data from all recipients of ad hoc digital support in libraries, it would be incredibly valuable to do so for a short period, possibly limited to the Central Library, so that there is at least some demographic data on library users. Finally, organisations providing digital support as part of wider support (Citizens' Advice Stockport and The Prevention Alliance), should be encouraged to analyse their records to identify correlations between demographics and digital support needs..*

### Qualitative Data

Alliance Partners recognise the importance of increasing the number of DigiKnow case studies. The new case study process being rolled out across Stockport libraries is to be welcomed, but it needs to be part of a programme-wide strategy. Case

studies should provide compelling evidence that programme activities are helping specific types of people; that specific programme activities are having an impact; and that specific outcomes are being achieved.

***Recommendation:** a new planned and structured approach to collecting and organising case studies, carried out across the DigiKnow Network; detailed recommendations on this process are made in Appendix 4. As well as individual beneficiary case studies, it should be possible to present as case studies the characteristics and process of different DigiKnow delivery models, to support future funding and partnership opportunities, and explain how the programme helps to achieve different quantitative impact measures; the descriptions of models in this report should provide a starting point.*

## Promoting & Measuring Channel Shift

Although Alliance partners recognise the wide range of ways in which digital technology can benefit Stockport residents, there is a strong motivation to encourage 'channel shift' away from traditional phone and face-to-face services and towards online transactions. Although channel shift has taken place over the course of the programme, the change has not been large and it has not been possible to separate the impact of DigiKnow from that of other activities, such as the redesign and promotion of online services.

***Recommendation:** Alliance partners interested in channel shift of their own services should work with Starting Point to carry out simple user research with service users who do not currently use digital channels, to find out why not, and what might encourage them to make the change. Focus groups and surveys (which can be carried out during regular contact points, for example with vulnerable social housing tenants) will provide data that will help to develop a channel shift roadmap. DigiKnow Network members should be also supported to measure the impact of their delivery on channel shift. Alliance partners should also consider external sources of evidence of the impact of digital inclusion, in making the case for ongoing investment in DigiKnow; see Appendix 1.*

## Building the Community-Based Network



Although small at the moment, the community-based element of DigiKnow is worth sustaining and building – which requires very little investment. Small organisations have shown that a small amount of funding can go a long way, when combined with the dedication of staff and volunteers who are able to make room for digital support within their roles. Even if individual organisations make a minor contribution in terms of people reached, they could have a significant collective impact – and provide specialist, open-ended training for older people, disabled people, and people with health problems.

**Recommendation:** *the Community Ambassador should continue to recruit smaller, community-based members to the DigiKnow Network, and offer advice, information and training to help them deliver. If possible, the Alliance should make available a further round of activation grants to new Network members, or existing members looking to expand or improve their delivery. Since funding so far has largely been spent on devices, any attempt to secure and distribute refurbished devices would also be welcome. Corporate partners should be encouraged to support smaller community partners as part of existing CSR programmes.*

## Sustainability

Communication, partnership working, shared objectives, standard tools for delivering support and measuring impact – these are the things that are most regularly cited as the achievements of DigiKnow, and the ones which are mostly important for the sustainability of the programme. Funding to support delivery is obviously essential, but the collaborative nature of the model helps to maintain funding, rather than the other way round – as demonstrated by Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council securing funding from GMCA as a result of their DigiKnow activity. The DigiKnow model provides a lasting structure which creates opportunities for innovative ways of working. Finally, several interviewees said that it was important that DigiKnow be seen as a collaboration between equals, rather than a Council-led project – although there was some disagreement around the extent to which this had been achieved.

**Recommendation:** *the Alliance should continue to meet, plan and coordinate, whatever is happening in the Network; reducing strategic activities when delivery is low will only make it more difficult to revitalise delivery. An audit of what different partners can offer should be carried out at least annually, with Alliance partners committing to an individual pledge, which should include core activities such as attending Alliance meetings. Attempts to secure funding or partnerships*

*should always be based around what the Alliance and Network can do together. Whether through internal or external sources, there should be ongoing funding for a dedicated role to monitor, coordinate and facilitate delivery, and act as an intermediary between Alliance and Network.*

# Appendix 1: Directory of Resources

## Strategic Resources

Local Digital Skills Partnerships: A Playbook for Local Partners: comprehensive resource aimed at local authorities to create and sustain a local digital inclusion movement:

[https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/sites/default/files/v0.3\\_local\\_digital\\_skills\\_partnerships\\_a\\_playbook.pdf](https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/sites/default/files/v0.3_local_digital_skills_partnerships_a_playbook.pdf)

'The economic impact of Basic Digital Skills and inclusion in the UK' - a report by Good Things Foundation and CEBR, which identifies a wide range of economic benefits arising from digital inclusion, including but not limited to channel shift:

[https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/sites/default/files/the\\_economic\\_impact\\_of\\_digital\\_skills\\_and\\_inclusion\\_in\\_the\\_uk\\_final\\_v2\\_0.pdf](https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/sites/default/files/the_economic_impact_of_digital_skills_and_inclusion_in_the_uk_final_v2_0.pdf)

'Improving Digital Health Skills in Communities' - evaluation of the first two years of the Widening Digital Participation programme funded by the NHS and delivered by Good Things Foundation, describing a successful community-based digital health inclusion model, and including a description of health-related channel shift savings:

[https://nhs.goodthingsfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Improving\\_Digital\\_Health\\_Skills\\_Report\\_2015.pdf](https://nhs.goodthingsfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Improving_Digital_Health_Skills_Report_2015.pdf)

## Delivery Support Resources

Digital Inclusion Cards: designed to be used by first-time tutors looking for ways to introduce new audiences to digital; there is an emphasis on activities which are fun, informal and social:

[https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/sites/default/files/digital\\_inclusion\\_cards\\_website.pdf](https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/sites/default/files/digital_inclusion_cards_website.pdf)

Your Guide to Helping Older People Use the Internet: a comprehensive, printable guide; although designed for use with older people, many of the principles and tips are applicable for all kinds of digital inclusion activity:

[https://www.onlinecentresnetwork.org/sites/default/files/a6\\_your\\_guide\\_to\\_helping\\_older\\_people\\_use\\_the\\_internet.pdf](https://www.onlinecentresnetwork.org/sites/default/files/a6_your_guide_to_helping_older_people_use_the_internet.pdf)

Your Guide to Using Games to Teach Tablet Skills: a similar guide to the one above, but with a focus on using ultra-informal learning and gameplay as a way to engage the most reluctant:

[https://www.onlinecentresnetwork.org/sites/default/files/a6\\_your\\_guide\\_to\\_using\\_games.pdf](https://www.onlinecentresnetwork.org/sites/default/files/a6_your_guide_to_using_games.pdf)

Doing Digital Inclusion: Disability Handbook; a shorter guide to engaging and supporting disabled people with digital technology:

[https://www.onlinecentresnetwork.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/disability\\_handbook-with\\_links-final.pdf](https://www.onlinecentresnetwork.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/disability_handbook-with_links-final.pdf)

## Online Learning Tools

The Digital Skills Directory (<https://dsd.learnmyway.com/directory>): a collection of content curated by Good Things Foundation, with a focus on digital skills for the workplace; includes resources to help people develop their skills with word processing and spreadsheet software.

Google Digital Garage Online Courses (<https://learndigital.withgoogle.com/digitalgarage/courses>): a range of free learning content designed to help users grow their business or advance their career. Learning can be by individual module or whole course.

## External Research & Data Sources

Ofcom's Adults Media Use & Attitudes Report - a major national survey covering internet use and non-use, and a good source of information to make the case for digital inclusion:

<https://www.ofcom.org.uk/research-and-data/media-literacy-research/adults/adults-media-use-and-attitudes>

Lloyds Consumer Digital Index - an annual study of transactional, behavioural & attitudinal research and the UK's measure of Essential Digital Skills for life and work:

<https://www.lloydsbank.com/banking-with-us/whats-happening/consumer-digital-index.asp>

## Appendix 2: How the DigiKnow Offer Has Been Used

|                            | Delivery Support | Lesson Plans | Activation Grant | Learn My Way <sup>7</sup> | Used Record of Support Form | Received Digital Champion training |
|----------------------------|------------------|--------------|------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Age UK Stockport           |                  |              |                  | •                         |                             |                                    |
| Alvanley Family Practice   | •                | •            |                  | •                         |                             | •                                  |
| Citizens Advice Stockport  |                  |              | •                |                           |                             | •                                  |
| COGS Computers Online      |                  | •            | •                | •                         | •                           |                                    |
| Inspire Group              | •                | •            | •                |                           |                             | •                                  |
| Men in Sheds               |                  |              | •                | •                         | •                           | •                                  |
| Oldham Drive Lunch & Learn | •                | •            | •                |                           |                             | •                                  |
| Starting Point             |                  |              |                  | •                         |                             | •                                  |
| Stockport College          |                  |              |                  | •                         |                             |                                    |
| Stockport Homes            | •                | •            |                  | •                         | •                           | •                                  |
| Stockport Libraries        | •                |              |                  | •                         | •                           |                                    |
| The Prevention Alliance    |                  |              |                  |                           | •                           | •                                  |
| The Seed Cafe              | •                |              | •                | •                         | •                           | •                                  |
| Village Web Company        | •                |              |                  | •                         |                             | •                                  |
| Walthew House              | •                |              | •                | •                         | •                           | •                                  |

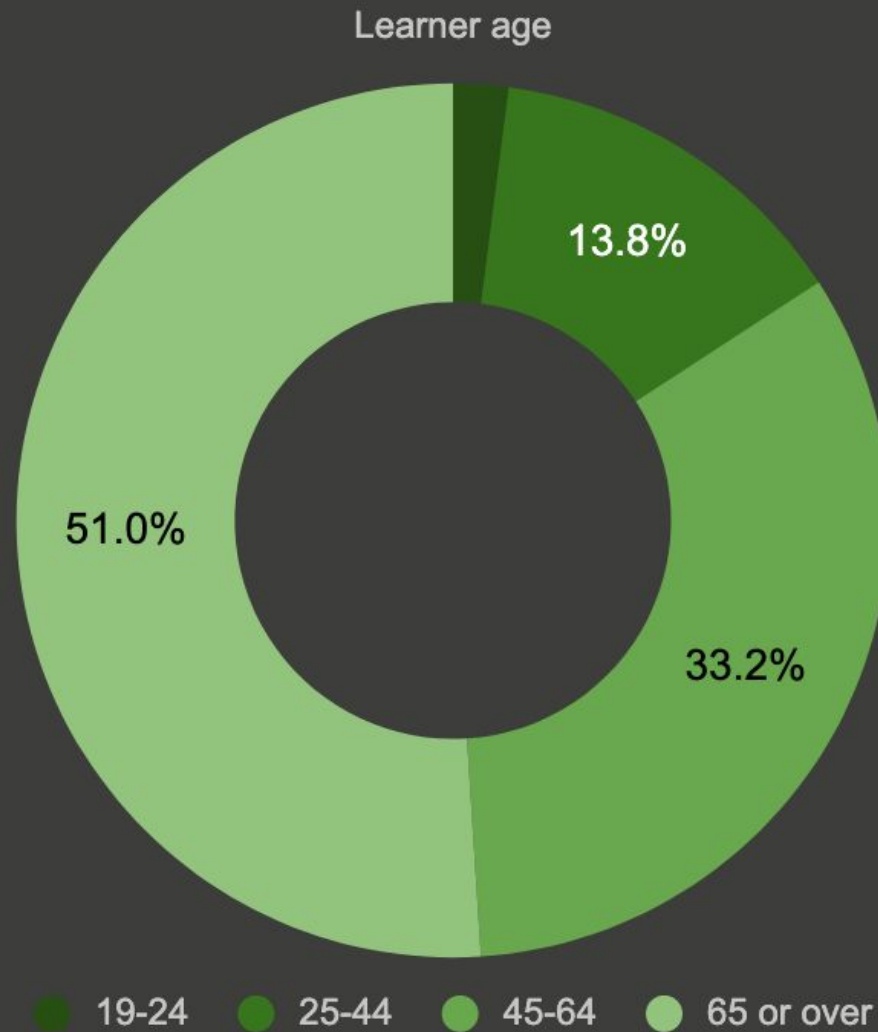
<sup>7</sup> Discounting Citizens' Advice Stockport and The Prevention Alliance, with only one registration each.

## Appendix 3: Delivery Reported by Centre<sup>8</sup>

|                                  | Learn My Way Registrations | Helped outside Learn My Way | Total per Centre |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Libraries (total)</b>         | 54                         | 3190                        | 3244             |
| <b>Citizens Advice Stockport</b> | 1                          | 2254                        | 2255             |
| <b>Starting Point</b>            | 2105                       | 0                           | 2105             |
| <b>The Prevention Alliance</b>   | 1                          | 371                         | 372              |
| <b>Walthew House</b>             | 37                         | 75                          | 112              |
| <b>COGS Computers Online</b>     | 15                         | 85                          | 100              |
| <b>Men in Sheds</b>              | 58                         | 7                           | 65               |
| <b>Stockport Homes</b>           | 10                         | 55                          | 65               |
| <b>Age UK Stockport</b>          | 63                         | 0                           | 63               |
| <b>Alvanley Family Practice</b>  | 16                         | 0                           | 16               |
| <b>Village Web Company</b>       | 15                         | 0                           | 15               |
| <b>The Seed Cafe</b>             | 3                          | 6                           | 9                |
| <b>Stockport College</b>         | 4                          | 0                           | 4                |
| <b>Total</b>                     | <b>2382</b>                | <b>6043</b>                 | <b>8425</b>      |

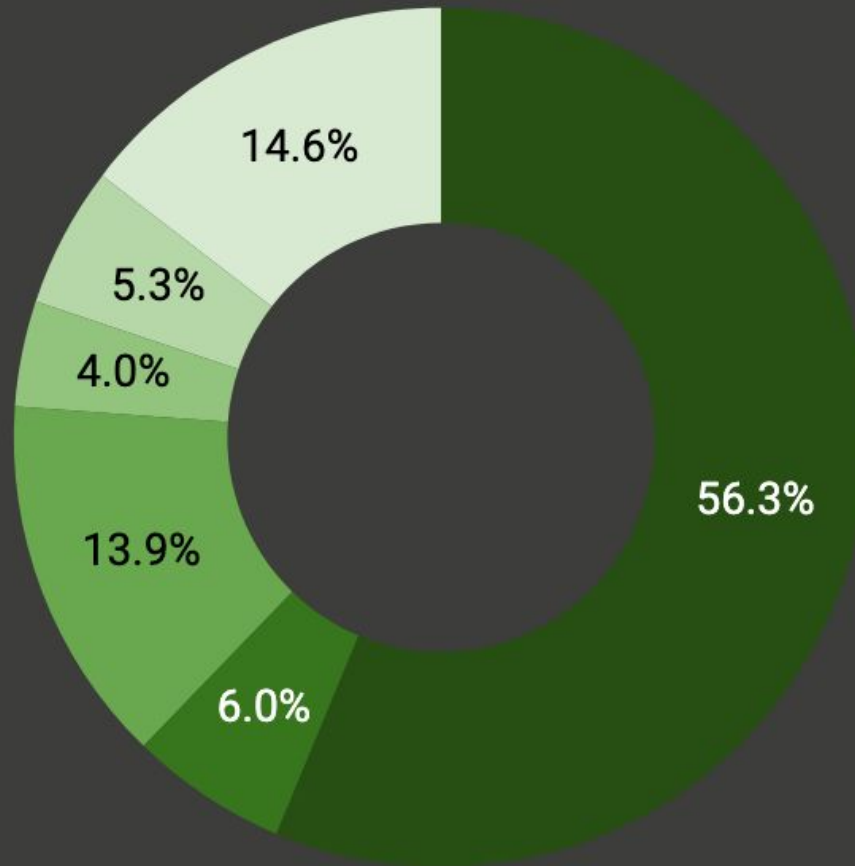
<sup>8</sup> Does not include seven organisations in the DigiKnow Network where any delivery was carried out by Starting Point and counted towards their total: Oldham Drive Lunch and Learn, Signpost Stockport for Carers, Cheadle Heath Community Centre, Inspire Group, Jean Buyers Community Hub, Saz Media, Stroke Information.

## Appendix 4: Learn My Way User Demographics



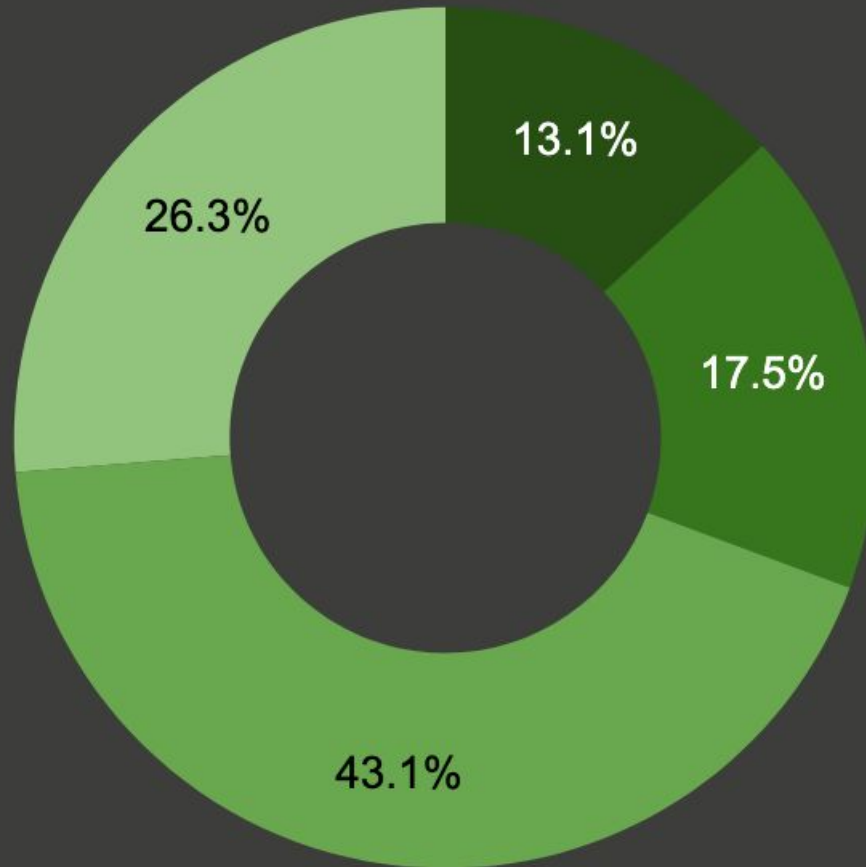


### Learner employment status



- Retired
- Not in paid work and not looking for work
- Not in paid work and looking for work
- Self employed
- Employed and looking for work
- Employed and not looking for work

### Learner self-reported skill level at engagement



- Never been online
- Less than basic skills
- Basic skills (e.g. use search engine)
- Higher skills (e.g. online transaction)

## Appendix 5: Case Study Process

1. Identify key themes for case studies. This can be carried out through consultation with beneficiaries, Network and Alliance partners, who can identify the most important things that case studies can evidence. This could include engagement of specific target demographics, type of support received (e.g. long-term attendance at a community-based session), or outcomes (e.g. channel shift, improved health management, reduced loneliness and isolation).
2. Analyse all existing case study data against themes identified in stage 1. Bear in mind that data from one individual can contribute to more than one case study, or more than one individual can contribute to a single case study.
3. Ensure that key staff in delivery organisations are briefed about and engaged in the case study process, so that powerful stories don't slip through the net. Identifying good case studies should be a mutually beneficial activity, as useful to the organisation they come from, as they are for the wider programme. Establish with delivery partners the kind of case studies they might be able to identify, against which themes.
4. Write a case study interview script that follows a semi-structured format, with a small list of questions giving the interviewer space to ask additional questions as required. Questions should establish:
  - Context: about the individual, what problem(s) they faced, why they started seeking help from a delivery partner.
  - Mechanism: what support they received from the delivery partner, and how this affected them. Change might have been practical (e.g. made it easier to access the internet), pedagogical (teaching a specific skill), or psychological (increased confidence and motivation), or a combination of these.
  - Outcome: what has changed in the individual's life as a result of the support they've received; outcome(s) must include at least one that relates to the relevant theme. A useful exercise would be to map outcomes to themes, again with the input of delivery partners; for example case studies of health and wellbeing could contain outcomes as diverse as better self-management of long-term health problems, reduced visits to a GP, reduced need for medication, greater happiness, more social contact, greater levels of physical activity, or healthier diet.
5. Audio record interviews so the case study's story can be told in their own words.

6. Ask the case study to complete a consent form which clearly states why they are being interviewed, how their story will be used, and whether or not they will be anonymous.
7. Good photography makes a huge difference to the impact of case studies. The cost of a single day's professional photography can create images which can be used in presentations, reports and web content over a long period. Alternatively, amateur photographers working or volunteering at delivery organisations could be asked to capture images.
8. Although individual partners may create case study content, ultimate responsibility for writing and editing should belong to one individual (with strong writing skills), who can ensure that case studies have a standard pattern and 'tone', and that, taken as a whole, they provide a comprehensive picture of the range of circumstances, needs and outcomes across the DigiKnow programme.



## Appendix 6: Case Studies

### Geoff, Seed Cafe, Marple Methodist Church



Geoff became part of the DigiKnow programme after he attended a Digital Champion one-day course in Woodley, run by Starting Point Community Learning Partnership - the Community Ambassadors for DigiKnow. It was recommended to him by The Prevention Alliance, part of the DigiKnow Alliance. Geoff really enjoyed the training and off the back of it, decided to sign his organisation - Seed Cafe - up to be part of the DigiKnow network, offering digital skills support to people in his community. He applied for a DigiKnow grant and used it to buy equipment and a lockable cabinet. Thanks to his new Digital Champion skills and equipment, Seed Cafe is in the process of establishing their group to start delivering that vital support.

### Patricia Bristow, Starting Point

Due to Patricia's caring responsibilities, caring for both parents and uncle until they sadly passed away - she unfortunately fell very behind with IT. She had completed a few courses around 20 years ago and technology had changed greatly during this time. Having no relatives to ask for help, Patricia needed to search for a group who would be able to support her with her digital skills. She started attending IT sessions run by DigiKnow alliance partner Starting Point. "I found the sessions very helpful. We used Learn My Way, which took me through different topics gradually increasing my knowledge and allowed me to work safely online. There was always someone there to ask if I got stuck."

Patricia suffers from hearing loss so can often struggle with mainstream learning. “I realised that during the sessions I’d have to turn the volume up very high and was afraid of disturbing the other students in the room. I didn’t have a computer or tablet at the time but really wanted to be able to attend the sessions at home.

“I could have borrowed a tablet but I realised I’d have to have the volume turned right up, which would disturb other people in the room. I needed to find out how to listen remotely, which is when I discovered Naomi’s tech group at Walthew House. I’ve been continuing at the Starting Point group and I’m going to purchase an iPad, which Naomi is going to show me how to use.: I’ve had help to buy my laptop and to set it up from Starting Point, while Walthew House have given me one-to-one help with listening remotely and compatibility between hearing aids, laptops and smartphones.”

“As well as the tech group at Walthew House there were other events, like workshops on making the most of your hearing - which was the first thing I heard about Walthew House - and a course about lipreading, which my audiologist thought was a very good idea. It’s a real gift, and very touching, to see how the people at Starting Point and at Walthew House, are helped. I’ve tried to help both groups in very small ways.”

“Both groups have a lovely atmosphere. Ryan is really helpful and Naomi is incredibly proactive, and makes sure she includes everybody. Both groups have become like a family - and for me, with no family, that’s a real gift. I feel comfortable there, we look after each other, it’s given me something in retirement which nothing else has given me. Going to these groups has improved my spirits as much as my computer skills.”

“I was surprised to find out my new laptop had a touchscreen, which I don’t know how to use - having no children or grandchildren to ask, this might have made me feel anxious, but instead I know I can turn to either Starting Point or Walthew House to help me learn.”

“It’s inspiring to see how people with disabilities can become proficient users of technology.”

“What’s been provided in the community really has been invaluable, and I know if I have problems in the future I know where I can turn to help. It’s been a turning point in my life.”

“The group at Walthew House was very welcoming. The volunteers and other learners were very friendly, there were refreshments.”

“Walthew House has formal presentations – the first one I went to was about how to protect yourself online, and it was given by a lady who ran a Google Digital Garage. Another one was given by NHS Digital about their app, which is what made me want to get a laptop – I realised that one day there’d be things like online GP consultations, and I’d need that sort of technology at home.”

“Sometimes they have an exhibition of technology that can help people with sensory loss – I’ve been to one given by Optelec, which provides technology which can read printed materials, and also one about Amazon Alexa, which I think could be really helpful to me, since I can ask it to repeat things slowly.”

“I received a letter from the Prime Minister about Coronavirus – ‘stay at home, protect the NHS, save lives’ – and a leaflet from Stockport Council. And they both give details of useful websites and email addresses you can contact. Before I had my laptop, I couldn’t have done that; now I can. And even though we’re in lockdown, Ryan at Starting Point has been in touch to say that help is still available from one of their volunteers, who got in touch with me yesterday to see how I was getting on with my computing; Naomi has also offered support from a Walthew House volunteer if I need it.”

“I’m very grateful to Stockport Council for helping to provide the DigiKnow programme, as well as the staff and volunteers at Starting Point and Walthew House. It’s been a tremendous gift.”

### **Bob Dunkerly, Starting Point**





When 85-year-old Bob Dunkerley suffered a stroke at his local Online Centre in Stockport, he soon realised that the support he receives there and the online world could be major lifelines for him. After learning more about his conditions and using the internet to improve his health, his positivity and 'go get 'em' attitude soon rubbed off on the staff and volunteers at the Centre, who now consider him a 'role model' and an inspiration.

Bob joined his local Online Centre, Starting Point, in 2015 after a friend mentioned the computer classes to him. Bob explains: "She just happened to mention that she was going to lessons with laptops. Before I retired, I went through five redundancies. I did everything from working in the coal mines to being an electrical engineer. None of my jobs required me to have digital skills. In fact, I was almost completely unaware of them. I never had any call to go online.

"When my friend told me about the classes I liked the sound of it, so I went up and had a word with the guys there and they invited me along to one of their sessions."

When Bob first went along to the centre, his aim was to catch up with the digital world and learn how to connect with people. Bob had faced many barriers to getting online, but his main barrier, according to the team at Starting Point, was 'not knowing what he didn't know'.

Bob explains: "I've learned so much at the classes and I've really enjoyed it, but in the beginning, I really had no idea where to start. I didn't know how to do an email, for instance, I didn't use Facebook and I'd never shopped online. I much preferred to just go out and do my shopping - I'm a bit old-fashioned that way."

The team at Starting Point described Bob as a quiet and unassuming man, who didn't realise just how much digital skills could change his life until his life was threatened.

Bob explains: "I can remember quite vividly what happened. I was at Starting Point and I'd just been to the toilet. I was on my way back to my computer class, when I tried to open the bathroom door with my right hand, I just couldn't move it. As soon as it happened, I knew what was wrong - I was having a stroke."

Bob managed to open the door with his other hand, approached his tutor Dave, and managed to mumble “Dave. Stroke”.

“He sprung into action,” explains Bob. “He didn’t panic or anything. He got me into a chair, called 999 and while we waited everyone looked after me and made sure I was OK. I knew exactly what was going on – every second! It was very scary at the time.”

Following his stroke and a brief stint in hospital, Bob never lost his focus and he was back in class the week after he was discharged. Starting Point describe his attitude towards his recovery and his journey back to attending classes as “inspiring”.

Bob says: “I’m that person in my family that does the things that no one else will try and I’ve always stood on my own two feet. My attitude towards illness is, if there’s anything wrong with me, I’ve got to fight it and get rid of it and push forward. That’s why I was determined to get back to class as soon as I could.”

One of the things Bob loves about the internet, is the fact that he can look things up and find out information at the touch of a button. Following his stroke, Bob was determined to find out more about his condition and health online. He says: “I wanted to find out what causes a stroke and why I’d had one. It turns out there’s no real justification as to why it happens. It can happen at any time to anyone and it’s more damaging to you than a heart attack can be. That made me think about my local shops and cafes. If I were to have a stroke there, would the staff know how to handle the situation?

“I can’t find this out online, but I’ve read quite a bit about it and I now know a lot more about strokes and how to recognise it myself if I see it happening to someone else. I’m not saying I’d be able to do the first aid, simply because of my age. You need to be able to move fast, like the young ones. But anyone who can get training for it definitely should.”

Because of Bob, Starting Point made The Stroke Association their charity of the year in 2016 and all staff and volunteers have now undertaken awareness training. Bob says: “They all know now and realise how important it is to be able to handle a stroke. They’re such a great team – the perfect team in my eyes!”

Towards the end of 2016, Bob fell ill again following an operation to remove a tumor and a diagnosis of Vertigo and was unable to attend his classes, but he used the computer to keep in touch with people and pursue his hobbies to stop himself from becoming isolated, something which has massive health benefits in itself.

Bob says: "I have a brother who lives in Kent and I send him emails. I also find myself regularly turning off the TV, turning on my laptop and listening to my favourite music on YouTube - brass bands and choral music! I look at photos of locations in Scotland on Google Maps and StreetView too. I love Scotland and because I can't holiday there anymore, it's nice to be able to see it. I know it sounds silly, but I even explore places I didn't know existed before.

"Since my stroke I've lost a lot of confidence but the team at Starting Point boost my morale. If I'd never visited them, I wouldn't be using a laptop, that's for sure - just plodding along and I'd probably be on my own a lot of the time. I didn't have many friends before, but since going there I've met a lot of people."

Starting Point describes Bob as a role model to others who feel that they have too many barriers to getting online, more so than ever now he's a 2 Millionth Learner Award Winner.

Bob says: "I've never looked at myself as a role model by any means. I just like to help people and I've recommended the computer classes to a couple of my friends. It's not just the skills that are helpful, it's the companionship that you get from meeting others at the centre.

"It's a bit of a community that provides a great service for people who are a bit older and are on their own. I think that anyone who's capable and willing enough to get online should do it. I get it wrong a lot myself, but I just keep trying and that's what keeps me going."

### Alan and Barbara, Starting Point



Alan and wife Barbara, 83, are active members of their local community centre run by Starting Point Community Learning Partnership. As an Online

Centre, they run regular IT sessions and were starting a special class introducing people to iPads and other tablets.

Barbara continues: "It was only supposed to be a six-week course! But here we are still coming in week after week."

"It's been the longest and best 'six weeks' ever," adds Alan. "At our age, you see, things sometimes take some hammering in!"

"Sometimes it does go in one ear and out the other," admits Barbara, "which is why we've got to keep practising! But we love it don't we? We learn something new every week, something that refreshes us, or we haven't seen or done before. You'd be amazed at the group we belong to, they really are lovely people. When we all come together on a Tuesday nearly everyone has come across a problem or issue, so we all sort it out together."

### Community Support

"It's very social," agrees Alan. "We all have a nice lunch afterwards! Barbara and I are big believers in not sitting at home. Nine times out of ten every day we're out and about doing something, and enjoying ourselves."

"We do all sorts at the community centre," continues Barbara. "From Tai Chi to seated yoga! And the iPad classes are another part it – connecting us to even more of our community."

### Digital Capability

Now Alan has his own email address, and he's keeping up with his Olympic club, and keeping on top of his correspondence as something of a local celebrity.

Alan explains: "I won my medal in Helsinki in 1952, for the 4,000m team pursuit cycling event. It was one of only 11 medals team GB brought home that year, so we did pretty well. Up until 2012, though, nobody apart from close family knew I'd won ever been to the Olympics! But then when we hosted the 2012 games it all came back out, and suddenly Stockport Council were asking me to carry the torch through Wellington Street!"

“I had a stroke in 2002 and didn’t feel I could do myself justice running with the torch – besides, I thought that should really be for the children. I did go with the VIPs onto the Town Hall steps when it was coming through, though. I thought ‘right, that’ll do me.’ It was wonderful.”

Since then, Alan has been asked to open a local bridge and has even had a new cycle path named after him – the Alan Newton Way – which runs from Marple Hall High School through to Bredbury.

Barbra says: “The path is great because it’s so much safer for the children.”

Alan adds: “It’s encouraging young people to get on their bikes rather than buses and cars, and that’s got to be a good thing.”

Both Alan and Barbara are really tickled by their newfound fame, and they’re delighted with their newfound IT skills.

“People send us such lovely pictures on the iPad,” explains Barbara. “Whether it’s from the Greater Manchester Children’s Games or one of the other local events we’ve been part of, or even of the Helsinki games – it’s lovely to be able to be plugged into all of that.

“But it’s more than all the Olympic things – it’s all the other things you can find online too – like maps and news, and looking up train times and routes, and exploring hotels and holiday destinations. I use it to communicate with and organise the bowling team I belong to. There’s just so much that’s available and it’s given us so much more. It’s helped us spread – we’ve made so many friends and new connections, as well as dusting off old ones. It’s been most, most enjoyable.”

“We’d definitely recommend other people to get online this Get Online Week,” concludes Alan. “Especially people of our age! These iPads and tablets are much easier to use than computers, and you don’t know what you’re missing out on until you give them a go. If Barbara and I can do it, anyone can.”

## Y, The Prevention Alliance

Y was referred to the TPA in September 2019 by her mental health worker, she had just returned home after being on a mental health ward for several months. She was referred because she was finding it very difficult to get used to living back in her community, was very socially isolated and afraid of leaving the house. Y has no access to the internet and rarely watches TV so is very much cut off from the world and people. Y has a PA who visits her once a week, her mental health worker who visits about once every three weeks and me, I visit about once a fortnight.

Y expressed an interest in finding groups and activities in her area, I was able to get some information from a community connector but what really got her attention was showing her how we could use the internet to find out what's out there, we had a look at what the U3A in High Lane have to offer. Y told me that when she was younger she loved to go to the cinema, I helped her to use the internet to find out what's showing in the small local cinema, this really excited her because its not far away and something that she would love to do. I'm also planning on helping her to complete an online referral for the befriending service provided by the Red Cross.

Y does sometimes pop down to her local library with her PA, I'm hoping that my little introduction to the wonders of the internet will inspire her to have a go herself maybe with the support of her PA or the library staff.

## **R, The Prevention Alliance**

R got in touch with TPA as was worried about his Council Tax arrears. The Keyworker showed him how to use the internet to search for help with Council Tax Debt, and together they researched information about organisations who could offer financial support such as Step Change and Turn To Us, but at this stage R did not want to engage.

The Keyworker managed to contact the Council Tax department and they agreed to put the recovery process on hold while R applied for Council Tax. R had no experience in completing online applications and the Keyworker went through the process with him alongside telephone support from the Council Tax Department. R now feels confident with completing online applications and has a direct number at The Council Tax Department for support with completing online forms.

The recovery process has now stopped in the light of benefits being awarded and R feels far more confident with going online for information and applications.

## H, The Prevention Alliance

When H got in touch with TPA she had lost confidence in herself, was suffering from depression and not managing it well at all and owed money to a number of organisations - some of it accrued by her son in her name. She felt that she couldn't move forward, despite harbouring ambitions to open a beauty business she had no idea how to turn this into reality.

Our Keyworker pointed out that the answers could possibly be found online and showed her the most effective ways of using search to research local organisations that could help with the debt. By the time of the second visit, her Keyworker found that she had a consolidated payment plan for all her debts that she could manage online.

She had become socially isolated, and only interacted with her own family, so had little idea about how to go about finding beauty courses which could kickstart her business idea. Our Keyworker helped her research the courses offered by Stockport Homes for their tenants and H found and completed two beauty courses with them. This has given her much more confidence in her ability to go out and interact with people and a great boost to her enthusiasm for having her own business.

Another positive which led from her online search was that she found she will be able to get advice and support about starting her own business from Stockport Homes financial advice team.

She is very excited now about the future and knows there is a huge amount of support, at the click of a mouse.





## Appendix 7: Marketing collateral

**DigiKnow** Organisations across Stockport are getting together to tackle social isolation by ensuring everyone can benefit from digital



Across Stockport, 50,000 adults still lack the basic digital skills they need to participate in today's world.

### How can I help others to find digital skills support?

- You can find more information about digital skills sessions taking place across the borough on the Stockport Local website, at [www.stockport.gov.uk/groups](http://www.stockport.gov.uk/groups)
- If you need support finding a local session or organisation, contact Ryan at [0161 994 9947](tel:01619949947) or email [ryan@startpoint.org.uk](mailto:ryan@startpoint.org.uk)



## Getting online is easier than you think!

Stockport has many groups and organisations to help people get online.

Benefits include:

- Enjoying interests
- Saving money - getting the best deals
- Keeping in touch with friends and family
- Learning new skills for work or pleasure

### Where to get online and improve your skills

Your local community has many places with computers or access to Wi-Fi, or places to learn how to use the internet and improve your digital skills – all for free!



[stockport.gov.uk/digiknow](http://stockport.gov.uk/digiknow)

# DigiKnow

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## Where to get online and improve your skills

Confused about computers (for over 55's)

Thursday 20 April 2017 14:00 - 16:00

Brereton Court, Cheadle Hulme, Cheadle SK8 6RZ

Organised by Good Things Foundation