Adoption of a Digital Inclusion Policy and Roadmap

Appendix 1: Roadmap

1. Introduction

Digital exclusion is increasingly preventing residents from accessing vital services as more and more provision moves online, leaving those who are unable to use digital channels at risk of inequality. This is compounded by the emergence of new and sometimes complex technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Internet of Things (IoT) devices.

The Digital Inclusion Roadmap for Haringey will be a powerful tool in helping residents interact online. It will empower them to improve their health and wellbeing, become more financially resilient, achieve better educational outcomes, realise more employment opportunities, and participate fully in society.

To help residents achieve these benefits, digital inclusion needs to be embedded into everything the Council does as a strategic priority, not an afterthought. Adopting the Digital Inclusion Principles will provide a consistent approach to building digital motivation, confidence, trust, and skills to future-proof our communities.

2. Identifying who is digitally excluded in our borough

The reasons for being digitally excluded are complex and many people face multiple overlapping barriers that both lead to, and are compounded by, digital exclusion.

The Council's digital inclusion function will combine insights from available data sets and engagement with residents and community organisations to identify areas in the borough that may have relatively high levels of digital exclusion and gain a greater understanding of the needs of specific groups e.g. older people, care leavers, asylum seekers, and people in temporary accommodation.

3. Our digital inclusion mission

Our digital inclusion mission is to remove the barriers that stop people from making the most of the opportunities available in the online world, as well as ensuring that the majority of residents can access council services digitally by choice.

To focus our resources effectively it is essential that we recognise the challenges faced by those residents and businesses who are either partially or fully digitally excluded, and understand where there are concentrated groups of digitally excluded people.

We will establish a borough-wide Digital Inclusion Network with shared commitment and responsibility to:

- Create a more coherent system of support
- Increase reach and facilitate referrals
- Raise awareness and incentivise suppliers
- Partner on funding bids and leverage social value
- Share best practice and evidence of impact

4. Real-world outcomes we want to achieve

4.1 Improved economic circumstances

There is a "poverty penalty" for residents who are digitally excluded and many routes to apply for additional financial support are now online only.

Universal Credit claimants must update their 'journal' online or risk being sanctioned and losing part of their benefits.

Better deals on credit, special discounts, and the lowest energy costs require digital access. The Digital Cost of Living Project delivered in collaboration between TLC Volunteers and Haringey Learns, equipped residents with the digital skills they need to better manage their expenses and improve their financial stability.

To participate fully in society, households need resources beyond just having internet access, devices and essential digital skills, including the knowledge to engage safely and confidently online.

4.2 Improved prospects for education & jobs

For many pupils the assumption that they will have access to devices, connectivity and digital support at home isn't the reality. In some households, there is no internet access, devices may be shared between siblings or schoolwork completed on borrowed smartphones. Children are falling behind, because they cannot access the tools they need to learn.

Most jobs now require digital skills, job adverts & applications are increasingly online, and many first interviews are video calls—meaning digital access and skills training is a key enabler for getting people into work.

These factors create a negative feedback loop exacerbating inequalities; young people not in education, employment, or training (NEET) experience long term challenges with income, and children growing up in workless households tend to have worse education outcomes. Our strategic goal is to improve access to skills training, devices, and connectivity which will in turn support people into work and increase earnings.

4.3 Better access to health & well-being resources

People who are digitally excluded generally face a higher risk of health inequalities and consequently experience worse mental and physical health.

The redesigned NHS App is being promoted as "a doctor in your pocket". However 39% of adults in the UK are not registered on the NHS App and 33% of people who are offline say it's difficult to interact with NHS services.

Social isolation is known to be higher for digitally excluded residents; 44% of the people referred to food banks who are digitally excluded reported being severely socially isolated.

Feeling equal and having a suitable device and connectivity results in being better able to participate socially, leading to improved wellbeing.

5. Digital inclusion principles

Digital inclusion is a cross-departmental responsibility and should be integrated into all services. Incorporating digital inclusion considerations in our activities will reveal hidden needs in communities that, if not addressed, could heighten inequalities in society.

To support our digital inclusion mission, we have created a set of principles to be adopted across the council ensuring that digital inclusion becomes a fundamental element of our services.

We will commit to:

- Targeted interventions to support marginalized groups and ensure they're not left behind in a digital-first world
- Training and resources to develop digital skills, particularly for people unfamiliar with technology or digitally excluded

- Affordable connectivity ensuring those with financial barriers can access low-cost options to use digital providers

- Multi-channel and equitable access to digital services e.g. website, phone, or in-person so residents can use the medium most comfortable for them, particularly for those residents in harder to access localities

- Accessible and inclusive digital services, websites and platforms designed for people from a wide range of backgrounds, cultures, and ages with diverse abilities and digital literacy levels

- Community engagement to understand the needs and challenges of people from a wide range of backgrounds, cultures, and ages, which will inform decisions on improving our digital services

- Language and Cultural Sensitivity to ensure digital content is accessible for diverse needs and languages

6. **Digital barriers our residents experience and helping them overcome these**

6.1 Devices

Access to affordable, suitable devices is an ongoing barrier for our residents. We will seek to increase device availability by securing, refurbishing, and distributing devices to residents most in need.

How we will achieve this

- Build sustainable supply chains through ongoing partnerships with national schemes, local businesses and corporate sponsors

- Partner with circular economy organisations and combine device recycling initiatives with digital skills training to reuse tech for social good and reduce e-waste in Haringey

- Continue to secure allocations from the National Device Bank, agree criteria for distribution to residents, and establish governance for reporting

- Build on existing pledges and work to secure further social value commitments for device donations

- Explore potential to collaborate with telecommunication providers or other large corporates in setting up community-based device loan schemes

6.2 Data and Connectivity

Many broadband services are unaffordable for low-income households, and the availability of low-cost options is often not widely known

We will increase affordable access to the internet for people in data poverty by ensuring residents know about, understand, and can confidently use available connectivity offers

How we will achieve this

- Targeted outreach to the Resettlement Team, Financial Support team, Young Adults Service and others to expand availability of free data SIMs to residents most in need through the National Databank scheme

- Ensure residents know about, understand, and can confidently use available connectivity offers

- Support the delivery of Community Fibre's social value commitment to offer 100 x 12 months of free internet for Haringey residents and discounted WiFi for Community Centres

- Work with other internet providers to build long-term partnerships that will secure ongoing free or discounted broadband for residents, supported housing and community organisations

- Promote the Wi-Fi provision in libraries and Family Hubs as safe, free access points for residents without home connectivity.

6.3 Skills

Training and resources to develop digital skills are often online and therefore inaccessible for people who are unfamiliar with technology or digitally excluded.

Strengthening community-led delivery of structured, accessible learning pathways from beginner to advanced skills will increase digital confidence and ensure inclusive access capability for every resident.

How we will achieve this

- Partner with Haringey Learns and trusted local organisations to design and deliver skills training that helps both residents and staff learn and adapt to new technologies

- Community co-production to strengthen the capacity of the VCS sector to help deliver digital support sessions in community locations to boost engagement and participation.

- Partner with Community Fibre to train and support local volunteers in delivering digital skills training and build sustainable capacity through a train-the-trainer model.

- Create a central online directory of available training opportunities in the borough including targeted support for specific groups e.g. people with neurodiverse conditions or dementia

- Explore intergenerational learning schemes

6.4 External Partnerships

Convening a borough-wide Digital Inclusion Network with different organisations will harness complementary expertise and avoid duplication of effort. In addition, partners can reach residents who might not be willing to engage directly with council services to raise awareness of available support.

How we will achieve this

Engagement with:

- Local charities and community groups who have established trust with target populations
- Faith organisations
- Housing associations and resident advocate groups
- Local colleges and adult education providers
- Employment support organisations
- Existing digital skills training providers
- Healthcare providers

6.5 Internal Partnerships

Digital inclusion needs to be everyone's responsibility, especially those officers who are in regular face-to-face contact with residents e.g. housing services, adult and children's social care, council tax and benefits.

In implementing this policy and roadmap, the council's digital inclusion function will work to ensure the adoption of our digital inclusion principles across all relevant council services.

How we will achieve this

- Engagement with teams to socialise our mission, boost support, gather ideas for initiatives and help clarify the digital inclusion needs of our communities based on frontline knowledge

7. Funding

Securing sustainable funding is crucial for delivering long-term impact from our digital inclusion work. The Digital Inclusion function will maximise external funding through:

- Identifying and applying for relevant grants and funding opportunities (e.g. Government Digital Inclusion Innovation Fund, Good Things Foundation programmes)

- Embedding digital inclusion requirements into social value clauses in relevant contracts

- Building corporate partnerships with local and national businesses to secure sponsorship, donations, and long-term support

How we will achieve this

7.1 Grant Funding

- Charitable foundations and trusts; develop a grant pipeline tracker to ensure timely, high-quality applications, ensuring bids are data-driven and impactful

- Health sector digital transformation funding: build relationships with ICB and health partners to help identify funding opportunities early and combine expertise

- Community and voluntary sector organisations; partner to strengthen bids and broaden impact

7.2 Social Value

- Actively contribute to the Social Value Ways of Working group to embed digital inclusion clauses in procurement processes, particularly in technology procurement

- Promote inclusion of free devices, connectivity, or training within supplier social value commitments

7.3 Corporate Sponsorship

- Approach large corporate organisations such as Tottenham Hotspur Foundation, Microsoft, Arriva, telecommunication providers, and high street banks.

- Local business sponsorship schemes; develop a sponsorship package outlining clear benefits for business partners

- Secure multi-year agreements where possible to ensure continuity of programmes

8. Measuring impact

All our work will be underpinned by data to track progress and measure the positive impact of the Council's digital inclusion activities on an ongoing basis. This will allow us to identify who needs digital support and who is best placed to offer it, as well as providing a deeper understanding of the specific digital barriers and challenges facing residents.

Metrics will include the number of residents supported through digital skills training or digital drop-ins, and the quantity of devices and SIM cards distributed. The partnerships formed with businesses, the amount of social value funding and sponsorship secured will also be reported.

While there is a correlation between increased uptake of online services and higher levels of digital inclusion, other factors including ongoing improvements to Resident Experience must also be considered.

A range of qualitative measurements including feedback from residents, community groups, and officers will be developed over the next 12 months, and will reinforce the successful outcomes of the Action Plan.

9. Service Offer

Higher levels of digital inclusion will enable residents to use digital channels independently, generate improved employment opportunities, education outcomes and wellbeing, and provide more equitable access to services for all.

We have developed three scalable options which will determine the ambition for Haringey and the "service offer" for the new Digital Inclusion function.

9.1 Core Offer:

The Digital Inclusion function currently consists of one core funded post and has no dedicated non-staffing budget.

This is the service offer Haringey can provide within the existing level of investment.

- Work with services including the Financial Support team, Resettlement team and VAWG prevention team and distribute free SIMs and recycled devices from the National Device Bank and National Databank to residents in need

- Explore options for creation of a device recycling training project with a local circular-economy organisation and promote this as an opportunity for learners / jobseekers

- Raise awareness of social tariffs and partner with providers for discounted broadband via social value contract commitments.

- Create a dedicated Digital Inclusion webpage for residents, community groups and officers with a searchable directory of support available. Ongoing management of the directory to ensure it remains current

- Set up a Digital Inclusion Working Group with councillors, services, NHS, and VCS

- Make use of existing non-digital channels for outreach and communications e.g. Haringey People, Homes Zone newsletter, libraries.

- Work with Community Fibre to recruit volunteer Digital Ambassadors, as agreed in their contractual social value commitments, and create a sustainable structure for ongoing management of the programme

- Seek social value commitments related to digital inclusion needs from relevant council contracts

- Target government grants, charitable foundations, and corporate sponsorship to fund long-term sustainable digital inclusion initiatives

- Liaise with relevant services to assess digital support needs for businesses and promote available resources through the Haringey Business Forum

- Explore opportunities to expand existing digital skills training and provide structured learning pathways through community-led partnerships.

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Core offer	Devices & Data	Skills	Networking	Accessibility
Activities / deliverables	• Enhanced National Databank offer • Internal device donation pilot • Device recycling partnership with local circular economy org	• Digital ambassadors - partner with Community Fibre London • Digital skills for business	• Establish digital inclusion working group with councillors, services, NHS, VCS • Create new partnerships and cultivate existing ones	• Digital inclusion web page with directory of available support
Our role	• Work with services to set up National Databank and Device Bank hubs and determine criteria for recipients • Set up and promote device collections Promote free data and social tariff offers to services and VCS partners • Establish device recycling training project and promote the opportunity for learners or job seekers	• Promote recruitment of volunteer ambassadors via Digital Inclusion Network and create structure for ongoing management of volunteers • Work with the Haringey Economic Regen team to assess support needs for businesses and promote available resources	• VCS engagement sessions to further develop needs mapping • Promote free data and social tariffs offers to services and VCS partners • Work with corporate communications team on promotional materials	• Will require support from webcams team • Promotion of new support directory amongst teams who have direct contact with residents • Promotion and ongoing development of directory with VCS partners
Resident outcomes	• Access to devices and data • Upskilling for learners and job seekers	• More residents online • Upskilling for digital ambassadors	• More cohesive support for digital inclusion needs	• Improved access to available digital inclusion support

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9.2 Enhanced Offer: Includes **Core Offer** and additional services which could be provided with some further investment and additional support

- Develop the device refurbishment project to provide additional devices for residents unable to afford their own.

- Engage with schools and/or community groups to design and develop a tailored skills training programme to be delivered by volunteer Digital Ambassadors supported by existing contractual social value commitments. Co-produced training modules will ensure best support to meet individual needs

- Work with VCS, Haringey Learns, GP Federation, and others to host a digital inclusion event during Get Online Week, bringing all providers into one space to showcase the digital support available and allowing residents, business, carers, etc. to meet all the service providers in a "marketplace" scenario.

- Subject to securing external funding, we'd also like to subscribe to Digital Unite Inspire programme for Councillors and senior leadership. The programme offers an alternative way to embed our digital inclusion principles through detailing the positive impact of digital inclusion initiatives and invites participants to pledge a specific digital inclusion action.

Enhanced offer	Devices & Data	Skills	Networking	Accessibility
Activities / deliverables	• Continue to increase number of National Databank hubs • Extend device recycling training project	• Partner with schools and/or VCS groups to create tailored digital skills programme	• Digital Unite inspire subscription for councillors and senior leadership	• One-off digital inclusion fair bringing all digital inclusion providers into one space to showcase the digital support offer
Our role	• Work with services to set up further National Databank hubs • Set up device collection points and promote volunteer opportunities	• Engage with partners to co-design programme and publicise offer • Management of volunteer digital ambassadors	• Promote the Digital Unite Inspire program	• Management and promotion of digital inclusion event with partners as "stallholders"
Resident outcomes	• Enhanced access to devices and data	• Tailored digital skills support offer, designed around residents' needs	• Accountability: helps people realise the big differences small acts can make.	• Residents will see the full range of digital support available

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9.3 Complete Offer: Includes the Core & Enhanced offers with additional services, enabling an ambitious approach to Digital inclusion.

- Collaborate with Haringey Learns in securing device donations from sponsors which can be loaned to adult learners, enabling them to complete course assignments at home, leading to improved outcomes and more employability.

- Continue and seek to expand the TLC Digital Cost of Living skills programme (c.f. paragraph 9.4) delivered through a collaboration between volunteers and Haringey Learns. The programme equips residents with the digital skills to find savings, better manage their expenditure and improve their financial stability through hands-on, scenario-based learning in community spaces.

- Host two Digital Inclusion fairs per year with partner organisations, to give residents more opportunity to access a range of digital support.

- Purchase additional subscriptions to the Digital Unite Inspire programme and promote uptake

- Digital bus: partner with neighbouring boroughs to commission a shared digital inclusion bus service to offer support in community locations that residents can access easily, timetabled to coincide with existing community events.

- Seek sponsorship to develop a multi-lingual chat function for the Haringey Gets Digital webpage removing barriers for residents who do not have English as a first language

Complete offer	Devices & Data	Skills	Networking	Accessibility
Activities / deliverables	• Collaboration with Haringey Learns on device loan scheme for adult learners	• Continue and expand the Digital Cost of Living skills programme with Haringey Learns	• Digital Inclusion fairs: two events per year • Additional Digital Unite Inspire subscriptions	• Digital inclusion bus pilot • Multi-lingual chat function for the Haringey Gets Digital webpage
Our role	• Agree governance and security measures to be implemented • Source device donations • Purchase secure donation bins for devices	• Curate content and publicise sessions for digital skills timetable • Ongoing management of Digital Ambassadors	• Manage and publicise digital inclusion fairs • Promote the Digital Unite Inspire offer and track impact of pledges made	• Agree timetable and coordinate with existing community events • Seek sponsorship for development of multi-lingual webpage
Resident outcomes	• Learners able to complete course assignments at home leads to better outcomes	• Improved financial resilience for residents. • Transferrable skills for Digital Ambassadors	• More reach for digital support providers • Increased engagement with digital inclusion from officers	• Improved access to digital inclusion support offer in community locations and online

9.4 TLC Digital Cost of Living project

In response to rising cost-of-living pressures, the TLC Digital Cost of Living Project has been equipping Tottenham residents with the digital skills they need to better manage their expenses and improve their financial stability, ensuring no one is left behind in Tottenham's journey towards digital empowerment.

Delivered through a collaboration between TLC Volunteers and Haringey Learns, the TLC Cost of Living peer mentors engaged 34 residents through hands-on, scenario-based learning. As the project progressed, TLC provided individualised support to a further 8 hard-to-reach residents, through 22 personalised interactions.

Over ten weeks, the programme provided:

- Peer support: Learning alongside others in a welcoming environment.

- Access to digital resources: Using online tools to find savings.

- Practical exercises: Hands-on activities to reinforce skills.

Participants acquired skills that enabled them to access online savings and discount portals, use budgeting apps to manage expenses, compare prices for essential goods and navigate government benefit portals.

These skills directly contributed to improved digital literacy and employability, lower everyday costs, increased income opportunities, and greater confidence and self-reliance, setting the stage for long-lasting financial resilience and community transformation.

As residents continue applying these digital tools in their daily lives, the project's positive impact will extend far beyond the programme itself and create lasting financial empowerment across the community.

With further funding, the group would be able to extend its digital skills provision across other parts of the borough to build a more digitally confident community.

10. Partnering and Engagement

Partnering and engagement are key to the successful delivery of the Digital Inclusion Action Plan.

Since the creation of a dedicated digital inclusion function within Digital Services we have been actively engaging with a range of internal and external stakeholders including:

Community and voluntary sector organisations
- Atypify
- Coffee & Computers
- Digital Unite
- Fixing Factory
- Generation Exchange
- Good Things Foundation
- Haringey Community Collaborative
- Haringey Fixers
- Haringey Multi-Faith Forum
- Old Alone UK
- Public Voice
- Reach & Connect
- Wheely Tots

Health Sector
- Haringey GP Federation
- Haringey Health Champions
- North Central London ICB

Business
- Community Fibre London
- Hyperoptic
- Openreach
- Nationwide Building Society

Ongoing engagement with new as well as existing partner organisations will be key to successful delivery of the roadmap.