



Include-IT Mersey Project Summary

What we want to achieve and how we intend to deliver it

Include-IT Mersey will provide targeted, personalised digital skills development and employment support to digitally excluded, unemployed/economically inactive residents of the Liverpool City Region (LCR) to improve their basic ICT and online skills, confidence and access to digital technologies, enabling them to overcome barriers resulting from a lack of digital skills.

Although the project's primary focus is Digital Inclusion (DI), our delivery model is firmly set in the context of skills/employment and will ultimately support participants to progress towards employment or further training, helping those furthest from the labour market to become more job ready.

Our core delivery model involves:

1. Intelligent identification, referral and engagement, using robust data from the largest network of Housing Associations across LCR;
2. Volunteer Digital Champions for localised community engagement & support;
3. Highly experienced/effective, locally based, ICT & employment support providers, with extensive employer links;
4. Localised outreach delivery through a network of Delivery Partners (DPs), community venues and Housing Associations;
5. Digital surgeries/ IT drop-ins, aligned to our training provision, run by experienced staff and volunteers, to facilitate ongoing access to digital technologies, enabling participants to practice and apply their new found skills during and after training.

The delivery model diagram is appended ([see Appendix 1](#)).

The project will provide individually tailored, flexible programmes of support that respond to specific needs & barriers (to DI, employment & training) faced by participants.

Our delivery model & partnership is wholly geared towards targeting and supporting those most at risk of social exclusion. Our unique ability to intelligently target digitally excluded, workless residents through sophisticated Housing Association data is a key component and USP of our model.

We will mobilise a small army of 150 volunteer Digital Champions (DCs) to provide the primary thrust of our localised community engagement approach. Drawn from and based in local LCR communities, housed in Delivery Partners, Housing Associations and other community organisations, DCs will be tasked with engaging, persuading and supporting participants in to locally delivered ICT training and employment support.

Digital Champions will support participants to learn at their own pace, only hooking them in to formal group work when they feel comfortable to do so.

Once engaged, participants will be formally signed up to the project. Outreach delivery will take place in accessible community venues. Small group sizes of between 5 and 8, and delivery by appropriately qualified/experienced staff will ensure that participants receive the levels of intensive support they require.

Interesting approaches to developing basic digital skills, finding the right 'hooks' to engage people (e.g. social media, shopping, entertainment) will lead into more targeted, employment focused ICT delivery (e.g. online job search, universal job match, CV builder). At this point, wider employment/ skills support will be weaved in, covering topics such as:

- Assets/strengths
- Understanding recruitment & application processes, including on-line processes
- CV/ application writing
- Interview skills
- Other PSD: presentation, confidence, timekeeping, inter-personal & communication skills, teamwork, problem solving
- Workplace behaviours, rights & responsibilities
- Work experience, volunteering
- Wider progression support

The Good Things Foundation (UK Online) **Learn my Way** platform will be central to ICT skills delivery, enabling participants to both choose topics of personal interest and to continue learning outside taught/ supervised sessions. Through volunteer DCs and local digital surgeries, participants will be supported in the ongoing application and extension of their learning.

All participants will benefit from a single, integrated pathway of support to help achieve their desired outcomes. Key to our model is a focus on individual abilities, needs & aspirations, offering personalised packages of support.

Benefits to the individual (participant) include:

- Increased confidence, empowerment & inclusion through improved ability to use digital media to job search, improve skills and engage with public services, as well as friends & family.
- Renewed motivation to learn & progress in life; gaining what will, in many cases, be a first qualification
- Greater confidence in self-ability to judge & combat risks associated with online activity
- Better access to digital technology/ services and support in convenient locations
- Improved digital skills leading to:
 - Financial: budgeting capability, savings through online shopping & cheaper communication
 - Social: reduced isolation through social media; access to entertainment; ability to pursue interests online
 - Health: access to online health services/advice
- Employment benefits:
 - Ability to search & apply online, work-related IT skills

- Improved employability & workplace ICT skills, increasing employment prospects
- Work experience & volunteering opportunities as a pathway to employment
- Gaining employment

Where we will deliver the project and the people who will benefit from it

The project will support **750** eligible digitally excluded residents aged 18+ across the LCR LEP area, with a targeted focus on those aged 45+ and others for whom DI is a key barrier to progression. Our experience, backed up by local and national research, shows that digital exclusion correlates with increasing age, hence targeting those aged 45+.

We also know that workless people have diverse characteristics, needs & challenges including: low/no qualifications &/or work experience; resident in deprived communities; disabilities/learning difficulties, mental health or L-T health conditions; BME communities; lone parents/carers; offending/substance misuse histories; limited motivation &/or access to job finding. From experience, we anticipate the majority of participants to possess one or more of these characteristics.

To ensure greatest impact and most efficient use of funding, we will primarily target delivery in areas of greatest need. Comprehensive research has led to the prioritisation of 22 specific areas:

- **Halton:** Widnes (Kingsway/Appleton/Broad Heath), Runcorn (Halton Castle/Halton Lea/Norton South/Grange)
- **Knowsley:** Northwood (Kirkby), Longview (Huyton), Halewood, Stockbridge Village, Dovecot
- **Liverpool:** Toxteth, Norris Green/Croxteth/Clubmoore, Speke-Garston, Kirkdale, Anfield, Everton
- **Sefton:** Linacre (Bootle), Dukes (Southport)
- **St Helens:** Parr, Town Centre, Moss Bank
- **Wirral:** Birkenhead/Tranmere, North Birkenhead, Rock Ferry, Seacombe

These areas have been selected by combining local RSL data concerning location of digitally excluded tenants, with Indices of Multiple Deprivation rankings of LSOAs.

Overall impact of the project

Overall, 750 local residents will improve their IT skills, access to digital technologies and employment skills and prospects, a minimum of 24% of whom will progress to employment, further education or training, with a further 13.5% moving to active job searching as a result of their involvement.

The project will contribute to LCR Employment & Skills Board priorities including: targeted support, linked to local business needs; developing independent advice/guidance; preparing people for work including employability training & support into work.

LCR *Skills for Growth* Priorities include developing both digital & employability skills. It also targets tackling health-related worklessness in its aspirations for 2020 and recognises that older people (esp. 40-64) 'continue to be more likely to lack qualifications'.

We will contribute to tackling key LEP economic strategies – emphasising increased employability/ enterprise skills and reduced unemployment, particularly with people aged 45+. Expert & impartial IAG will raise awareness of opportunities in LCR’s growth employment sectors.

We will ensure that the most socially excluded, e.g. those aged 50+, social housing residents, BME communities and people with particular vulnerabilities, including learning difficulties, disabilities or L-T health conditions (incl. mental health) can access the project by channelling engagement & support resources as described above.

Local LCR communities themselves will benefit from:

- A more efficient/ effective, co-ordinated cross-sector, city region wide approach to DI, resulting in sustainable neighbourhood-based DI support
- Improved digital access, local support & facilities
- Sustainable DI support through a network of volunteer Digital Champions
- Improved community integration & cohesion through (re-)engagement of socially excluded people
- Improved information & choice re access to digital technologies, through a comprehensive map of digital access points across the city region
- The collective economic rewards of higher employment
- Greater equality of opportunity for residents through improved access to relevant online provision
- Minimal environmental impact through locally based provision

Project partners and wider stakeholders we will work with

The partnership brings together Sefton CVS, a leading LCR VCSE sector infrastructure organisation, with 22 Delivery Partners (19 VCSE sector providers, plus three Local Authorities) and 11 strategic Housing Association partners; all high performing local providers with proven performance track records in DI & employment support.

Partner selection ensures highly localised pan-city region coverage. Our experience confirms the strength of this approach in engaging ‘hard to reach’ people, compared to a handful of larger, often town centre based providers. Our partners are known and, most importantly, trusted in their local areas, with extensive experience in supporting workless and socially excluded people.

All Delivery Partners have committed to:

- Their individual partnership delivery roles, volumes and associated financial values.
- The Partnership Agreement and individual Service Level Agreements specifying their required roles and responsibilities in delivering the project.

Core project delivery roles include:

Role	Who
Project, partnership and performance management; coordination of marketing/ publicity; volunteer Digital Champion (DC) recruitment & support	Sefton CVS



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Publicity - to attract and engage potential participants and volunteers	All DPs, except <i>Good Things Foundation</i>
Localised volunteer Digital Champion briefing and planning sessions. Good practice support for organisations acting as local hosts to volunteer DCs	3 local CVS' (Liverpool, Halton & St Helens, Wirral)
Digital /ICT training, IAG & employment support	18 local training/employment support providers
Digital Surgery provision	Training/ employment support providers
MI/ database support	Good Things Foundation

Strategic Partners (Housing Associations) do not own any of the Project targets and have no pecuniary interest in the project and, as such, are not party to the full Partnership Agreement. A lighter touch Pledge of Support has been agreed with Strategic Partners, who will act as enablers to support the successful delivery, at no cost to the project:

- a. Providing local intelligence and data to assist Delivery Partners and volunteers in targeting and engaging digitally excluded Housing Association residents;
- b. Acting as local host organisations for volunteer Digital Champions involved in the project;
- c. Supporting publicity and promotion of the project to their residents;
- d. Providing premises for the delivery of Project activities.

A complete list of Delivery and Strategic Partners is appended ([see Appendix 2](#)).

Funding Allocation

The project is co-financed by the European Social Fund (ESF) and Big Lottery Fund as part of its Building Better Opportunities programme.

Value: £1,645,300, of which 13% is allocated to Halton based activity.