Clarion Futures One Digital

Project progress report

OneDigital

COMMUNITY FUND

CLARION FUTURES

Introduction

Project outline

As part of the One Digital programme of delivery[1] Clarion Futures (part of Clarion Housing Group) is funding and building partnerships with 15 other organisations who are 'replicating'[2] our approach of developing and embedding effective Digital Champion models of support, within employment settings.

Clarion Futures recognises the potential of using Digital Champions to support the essential digital skill (EDS) needs[3] of people within this particular setting as:

- Jobs and training opportunities are largely advertised and sourced via digital platforms; the setting is therefore ideal for identifying, supporting and enhancing the digital skills needs of individuals.

- There remain opportunities to further explore and understand the link between digital exclusion and employment. According to the Governments Industrial Strategy[4] (2018) the next two decades will see 90% of jobs requiring digital proficiency and yet 23% of people are still without essential digital skills.

- This setting also provides opportunities to further explore and understand the effectiveness of the Digital Champion model of support as both an inclusive and cost effective approach for tackling digital exclusion.

As part of this work Clarion Futures has developed a screening tool to help organisations identify and support clients in accordance with their EDS needs. The screening tool, which can be used via mobile devices or computers, is GDPR compliant and central to One Digital delivery carried out by Clarion Futures and all 15 replicating organisations. The tool, which serves to identify EDS need primarily, is further enabling the entire partnership to collect data to enhance understanding and evidence employment-digital skill need; the tool provides learning opportunities, is helping to safeguard whilst also supporting a standardised and informed process of support for both champions and clients. Diagram 1 outlines the general process of how the tool works. Readers can further learn about the screening tool within project updates, page 12.

Contents

Diagram 1

Part 1
Screening for essential digital skill need within employment settings
- Takes approx. 2 mins
- Any staff personnel can deliver.

No need identified

Responses to questions signify **no need yet client** want offer of support, Part 1 Stage B resumes.

Responses to questions signify **no need and client doesn't want** offer of support.

Reason is recorded and process ends

Need identified

Responses to questions signify **essential digital skill need** and clients take up the offer of further support.

Responses to questions signify **essential digital skill need** and clients don't want the offer of support.

Part 1b
Reference number generated & client referred for Digital Champion support
- Non personal and sensitive identifier
- Helps to connect responses between Part 1 Screening and Part 2 Skills Check.

Part 2
Skills check screening
- Exploring more closely those specific essential digital skill areas where the client may benefit from further support
- Conducted by Digital Champions
- Identified key support areas and suggests resources and learning opportunities
- Takes approximately 5-7 minutes to complete.

Purpose of the report

This Progress Report will be shared by Clarion Futures, on a quarterly basis and with key project stakeholders. These reports will serve to recognise, celebrate and share learning from this partnership and subsequent delivery.

It's important to note that in addition to 'good news stories' the report will also provide insight into those challenges faced by partners, as well as the important learning entwined with how challenges have been addressed or overcome; something Clarion Futures believes is fundamental for developing good inclusion work.
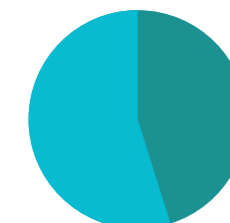
Headline stats*

2,132
Number of people screened for digital skills
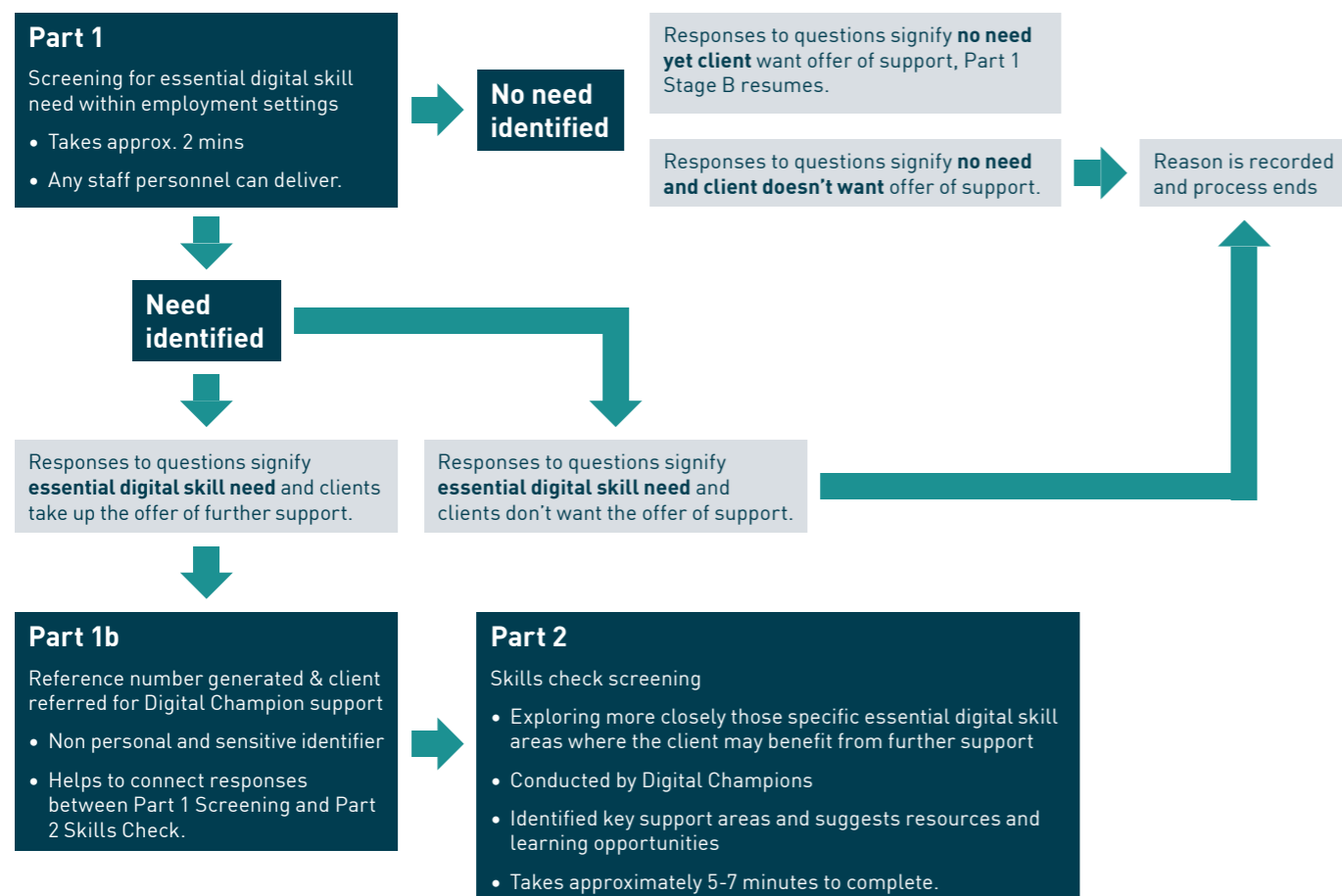(Part 1 screening tool)
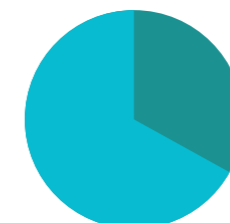
33%
of people screened referred for Digital Champion support
(Part 2 screening tool)

45%
of people who prior to Digital Champion support did not feel confident using internet or computer
(Part 1 screening tool)

Replicating partners

The ability and desire to work collaboratively has been a key factor for Clarion Futures when assessing and selecting suitable organisations to fund and partner with. As of January 2019 Clarion Futures can confirm that our cohort of replicating partners include:

1. Charlton Triangle Homes
2. Hexagon Housing
3. Poplar Harca
4. Action West London
5. ENABLE Works Scotland
6. First Choice Homes Oldham
7. ComMutual
8. Phoenix Community Housing (In partnership with Lewisham Homes and Lewisham Council)
9. Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing
10. Barnet Homes
11. Bromley By Bow Centre
12. Your Employment Service (YES) Manchester
13. Westminster Employment Service
14. A2Dominion Housing Association
15. Peter Bedford Housing Association (in partnership with Providence Row)

It should be recognised that Clarion Futures and all 15 replication partners bring a wealth of knowledge and experience which further enhances this work and lends to the quality of developing projects. Quite simply this partnership is invaluable for learning about what does and doesn't work.

The Spotlight

The 'Spotlight' provides insight and details the delivery and learning journey for replicating partners (Clarion Futures included) within each report. Within this first report we feature Hexagon and Charlton Triangle Homes, who were the first organisations to join the One Digital project partnership.

Both Hexagon and Charlton Triangle Homes are part of the Love London Working partnership; an employment and training programme helping unemployed people over the age of 16 into work.

lovelondonworking.com

Hexagon

Hexagon is a housing association working in partnership with a range of local authorities to meet housing and care needs across 5 South-East London boroughs.

Hexagon makes investing in communities a key priority and recognises that many of their residents are facing increasing financial, technological and employment challenges. To help address such challenges, Hexagon set up a digital inclusion project in 2014 with the aim of getting residents online and improving their digital skills to support their employment goals.

The project conducted an evaluation in 2017; the outcomes of which formed the basis of Hexagons digital inclusion strategy going forward. The evaluation highlighted that whilst digital support provided to residents within the group setting helped their residents with the ability to get online, it did not necessarily lend to an increase in sustained confidence. The organisation recognised the ad-hoc nature of developing the confidence of residents through more tailored one to one initiatives.

The One Digital opportunity enabled by Clarion Futures was desirable to Hexagon as the organisation valued being part of a wider partnership to learn and understand this work further. Hexagon also felt the opportunity could enable them to 'safely' explore the Digital Champion method.

Hexagons One Digital Journey

Hexagons One Digital journey has been both challenging and rewarding but ultimately the organisation has found the One Digital partnership both valuable and supportive.

Embarking on their One Digital journey Hexagon has had much success in capturing the digital needs of their residents by embedding the screening tool within their Customer Service team; the initial digital screening is being carried out with every new client interaction. They also get referrals via their employment team.

However supporting the digital needs of its residents via only Volunteer Digital Champion support has been more of a challenge. The recruitment of residents as Paid Digital Champions has helped to improve the digital skills support available to residents and they intend to deliver more Digital Champions sessions in different community locations moving forward.

The wider One Digital partnership, in particular the Digital Dialogue[5] sessions which Clarion Futures run on a quarterly basis, have however provided Hexagon with a platform to discussing their challenges and exploring possible solutions with organisations delivering similar work.

With their vastly spread stock Hexagon are now integrating the use of Mobile Digital Champions working across a range of Hexagon and partner sites which includes Big Local sites in Southwark and Slade Green.

The Clarion Futures One Digital partnership has helped Hexagon to better understand and implement digital inclusion work and they are already seeing results.

> "The access to resources, expertise and support available through One Digital has really helped us to move forward with our Digital Inclusion work. The Screening tool has proved a game changer, creating an opportunity for us to have structured conversations with residents about digital and their digital skills needs.
>
> It is thanks to the support from One Digital that we have recruited our first Paid Digital Champions who are now supporting residents on a one to one and small group basis"

Nicky Hazelwood
Community Investment Manager

The future looks very promising for Hexagons digital skills support work as they are committed to continue and expand it further; with revenue and neighbourhood teams posed to carry out digital skills screening of residents.

[5] Digital Dialogue sessions are quarterly sessions facilitated by Clarion Futures which bring together funded partners and stakeholders to discuss and explore this work at a more detailed level.

Charlton Triangle

Charlton Triangle Homes is a subsidiary of Peabody and a registered social landlord with 1,162 homes in Charlton, South East London.

The organisation works closely with residents and the local community to provide a variety of housing, community and support services. Their community work has brought to the forefront the need to provide both digital skills and employment support to residents and the wider community. Charlton Triangle homes joined the Clarion Futures One Digital project in March 2018.

Charlton Triangle Homes' One Digital Journey

Charlton Tringle started their digital support journey providing IT support to residents. As a result of the One Digital partnership Charlton Triangle better recognise digital support to be more than just IT knowledge and assistance for clients. This has created an internal change in the organisation and their focus is now primarily on essential digital skills support.

> "Before joining One Digital Charlton's focus was IT, there has been an internal change because of One Digital and we have now moved focus to providing essential digital skills support"
>
> **Mike Bowles**
> **Community Regeneration Manager**

One Digital has enabled Charlton Triangle to provide digital skills support not only for its employment projects but also for its other support services. The screening tool is being used as a quick and easy way of identifying digital skills needs across Charlton Triangle's internal and outreach projects.

These Include

1. Internal - 1:1 support to residents and wider community. Referrals mainly via internal projects like +50 years and Fair Share Food.

2. Love London Working - Supporting people with digital skills for employment

3. Outreach work - Delivered in partnership with Change Grow and Live (CGL) who work mainly with medium level drug, alcohol and substance users to provide essential digital skills support which enables these clients to find work.

Charlton Triangles' partnership work with CGL has a strong underpinning of One Digital. One Digital partially funds their Professional Champion mentor who also works as a career coach with Love London Working, this well integrated internal collaboration has worked in favour of the clients, many of whom have gone on to find jobs.

Charlton Triangle's success has not been without its fair share of challenges which have ranged from clients not keeping digital session appointments to an experienced difficulty in retaining Volunteer Digital Champions. The organisation has had much success in upskilling the digital skills of clients which has in turn helped to create Digital Champions, but they have also seen a continued trend of these upskilled individuals moving into fulltime employment. Louise, a Professional Digital Champion describes it as a "Positive vicious circle"

Charlton admit that whilst the project has largely empowered Digital Champions by instilling skills and confidence to enable them to get a job (which is a positive outcome) this also means that an immense amount of effort has been required to constantly recruit and upskill new Digital Champions. To overcome the challenge of a fragmented service to clients; due to frequent Digital Champion changes, the organisation keeps a track of the client's digital journey and the digital screening tool plays an important role in this.

> "The screening tool is a most useful and important tool to help us identify support"
>
> **Louise Partridge**
> **Digital Champion Mentor**

The screening tool provides the organisation with information on the client's current digital skills level. This information helps the Digital Champion to create a personal learning plan for the individual. This log is useful for new Digital Champions to get an understanding of exactly where the client is on their digital journey and can provide continuity with Digital Champion changes.

The One Digital project has enabled Charlton Triangle to provide effective essential digital skills support to its residents, the wider community and has facilitated synergised work with other partner organisations like CGL.

> "The Digital Champion has been invaluable here at CGL Aspire in being able to engage with our (often marginalised) Service Users around accessing technology, which individuals may find intimidating or confusing. This has helped increase general confidence and reduced anxiety"
>
> **Alan Briggs**
> **BRIC Coordinator – CGL Aspire Greenwich**

Project Updates

Screening tool changes

To deliver a digital skills support service which caters to the needs of client's looking for work it's pertinent that we understand our client's digital skill requirements to help support them in the best way possible.

The digital screening tool - developed by Clarion Futures and embedded into the delivery of all 15 replicating organisations; provides all delivery partners with an opportunity to better understand their client's digital skills needs, whilst also supporting an ability to provide targeted support.

The screening tool comprises of two parts: The first is the initial screening tool (Part 1) which serves as an initial assessment of a clients' digital skills to help identify if there is a need for support. Clients who have identified needs (and importantly want this) are referred to a Digital Champion where the skills check tool (Part 2) is used to help gauge more in-depth information on the areas where a client may be best/could be initially supported.

The screening tool went through an extensive upgrade in December 2018 incorporating both external and internal feedback from Clarion Futures' staff and replication partners. As well as the insertion of additional question fields; which included a number of client demographics to help the partnership better understand clients accessing this support, there were also amendments made to the expression of questions, and insertion of skip logic to help filter specific client responses.

One particular set of client responses it made sense to capture and filter-out were those aligned to foundation digital skills. Foundation digital skills refer to the basics of using a computer or tablet. Examples of foundation digital skills include turning on a device, connecting to Wi-Fi and using a mouse to navigate. Initial feedback of the screening process evidenced that many Champions had been trying to support clients who needed to address a shortfall in their foundation skills and knowledge. This should be recognised as a baseline knowledge and skill set which is required before advancing an individuals' essential digital skills. Such activity references a distinct need which in turn requires Champions to provide a different level of support.

The importance of ingraining the screening tool as a part of One Digital delivery cannot be stressed enough. Data captured offers unique insights into the target group[6] we serve and helps guide and structure support provision. Something we believe is particularly important in light of the Universal Credit roll-out and in particular where Volunteer Champion models are being exercised (which are often easy to scale up but can be difficult to control).
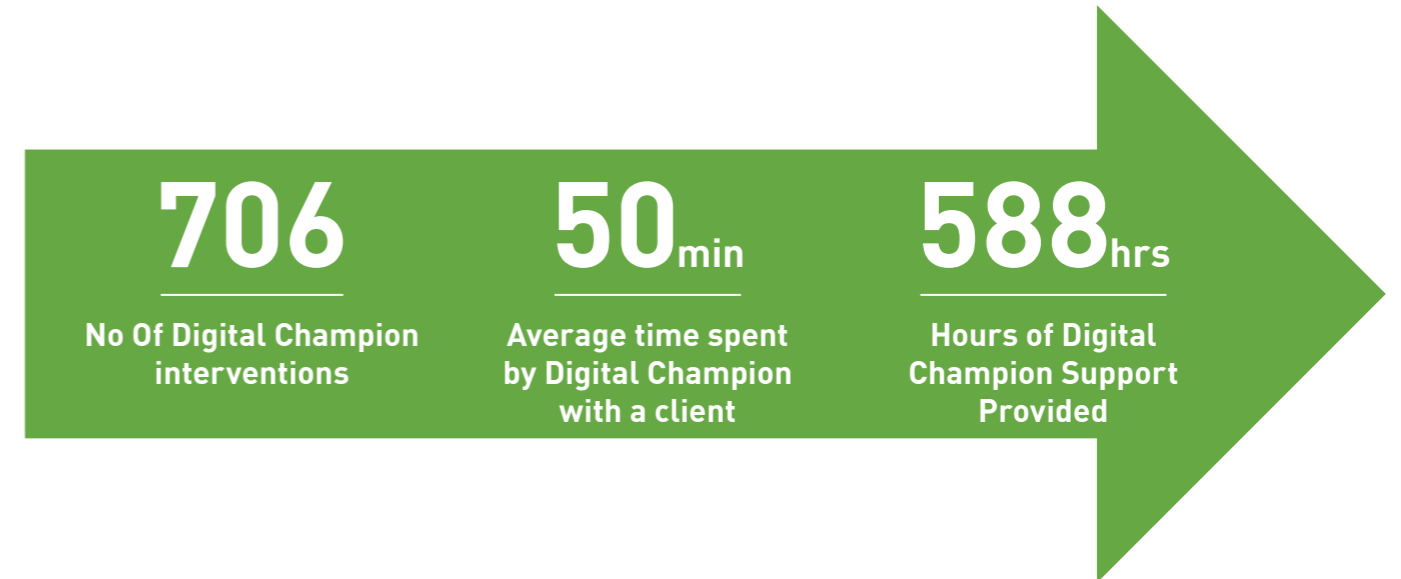
The relation between digital literacy and employability is well recognised. Research[7] by Tinder Foundation found 72% of employers have revealed that they would not even interview a candidate who does not possess basic computer skills.

In light of this, the data captured via the screening tool helps demonstrate the work Clarion Futures and replication Partners are doing to advance our clients in this area.

On Analysis of the data gathered via the skills check tool (Part 2)[8] Clarion Futures can report the total hours of Digital Champion Support

Provided by Clarion Futures and replication Partners as of January 2019:

That's 588 hours of support, largely 1:2:1 though not exclusive of group support, across the partnership to individuals which aims to advance their digital skills in order to support them to obtain work.

706
No Of Digital Champion interventions

50min
Average time spent by Digital Champion with a client

588hrs
Hours of Digital Champion Support Provided

[6] Target group comprises of those 'clients' (residents or individuals within communities for which the organisation serves) who are accessing employment support from an organisation.

[7] Tinder Foundation (Good Things Foundation): tinderfoundation.org/our-thinking/research-publications/online-jobs-report
[8] Data as of 23/01/19

A big fraction of the time spent by Digital Champions when supporting clients is dedicated to helping them with an online job search, as figures show 44% of all the clients screened via the skills check tool (see diagram 2) have never searched for jobs or training online.

Have you searched for jobs or training online?

Diagram 2

- **Yes. In the past 3 months**
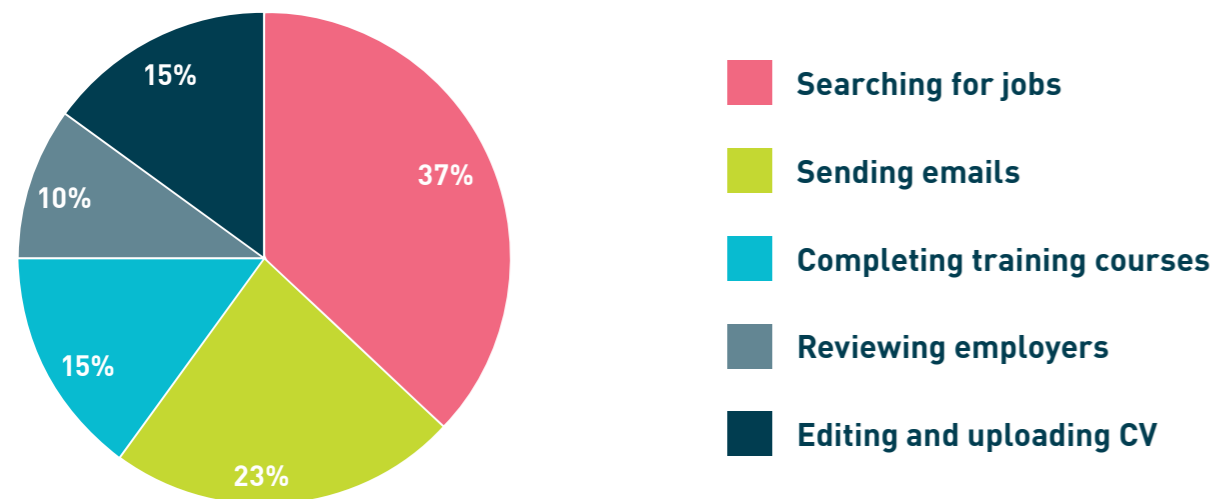- **Yes. Not in the past 3 months**
- **No**
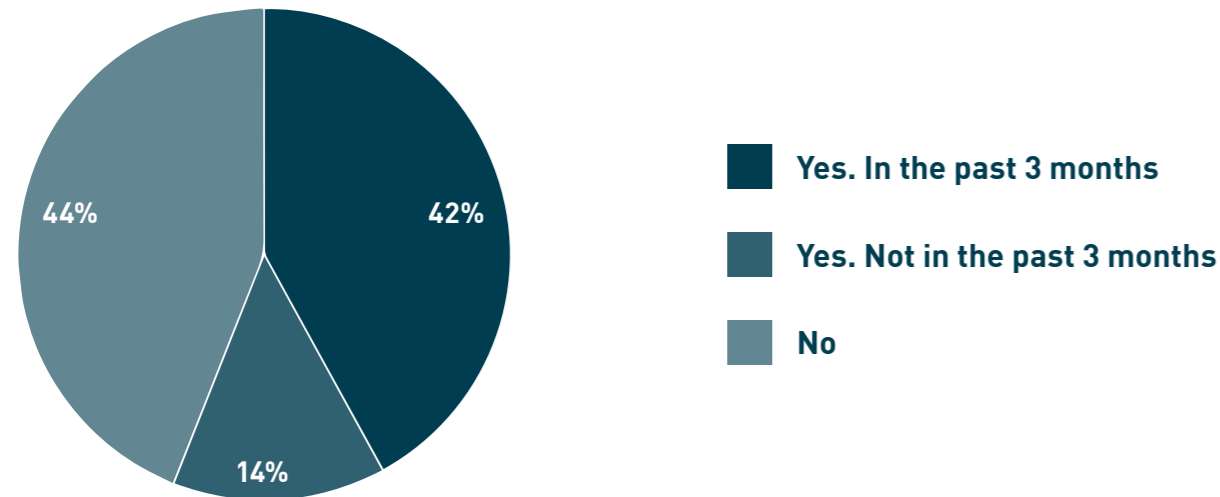
The internet has become a vital tool for job seekers as it facilitates the low cost and efficient exchange of information between the employers and those seeking employment whilst simultaneously reducing the time and money spent in searching and applying for job opportunities[9].

Data from the screening tool further substantiates the finding above (diagram 2) as 37% of people screened (see diagram 3) said that the area where they needed most support was searching for jobs online.

Where do you feel you need most support?

Diagram 3

- **Searching for jobs**
- **Sending emails**
- **Completing training courses**
- **Reviewing employers**
- **Editing and uploading CV**

So what are the key skills aligned to searching and looking for work online? It's worth noting that Clarion Futures' has developed a skills matrix which helps clarify our digital-employment outcomes. As outlined within our matrix the particular skills and knowledge which underpin 'searching for jobs online' includes:

- Using search engine to find information and make the most of search terms to generate better results

- Evaluating what information or content may or may not be reliable

- Using bookmarks to save and retrieve information on a web browser.

It's very encouraging to note that the screening tool is playing an important role by capturing insights which can be used to better target our digital and employment support services and activities.

We will endeavour to incorporate more findings from the data collected from the screening tool in the subsequent reports. We hope One Digital stakeholders can benefit from using this information to advance and validate their digital inclusion work further.

In the next section we will turn our attention albeit briefly any relevant policy updates or news.

 [9] A. Green, M. Hoyos, Y. Li and D. Owen, (2011), 'Job Search Study: Literature review and analysis of the Labour Force Survey'.

Digital inclusion updates

Action on digital inclusion is needed from government and businesses everywhere to ensure everyone in the UK benefits from the digital world. The Tinder Foundation recently shared their vision for the nation to be 100 per cent digitally included by 2028.

Released at the end of last year, a blueprint, which sets out 6 objectives for a achieving a digitally included nation claims that 6.9 million people will remain digitally excluded by 2028 at the current rate of investment. The report from the Tinder Foundation flags that digital exclusion is holding back economic growth and stalling social inclusion, with 11.3 million adults lacking one or more of the basic digital skills for life and work.

The report also highlights that the UK could benefit to the tune of £21.9bn within a decade by upskilling the entire population in digital skills[10].

Summary

The first Progress Project report has attempted to bring together and celebrate One Digital work delivered by Clarion Futures and replication partners. The report has shared some initial stats generated from partnership activity, has communicated some of the challenges and successes of delivery through case studies and has provided some brief albeit relevant policy news.

Clarion Futures hope you have found this report both informative and useful, we welcome your feedback and look forward to providing you with the next report which will explore the delivery challenges and learning from further replicating organisations, demographic insight of those we are supporting as well as further project and policy updates.

[10] Tinder Foundation (Good Things Foundation) Blueprint for 100% Digitally Included Nation: #bridgingthedigitaldivide

How have you found this report? Is it useful to you? Do you want to know more or have further questions?
Get in touch, the team would love to hear from you.

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