

# Digital Inclusion for Covid Recovery

Summary of LOTI's work to support digitally excluded Londoners

 @LOTI\_LDN

 [www.lotilondon.org.uk](http://www.lotilondon.org.uk)

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## Background for this work

**Digital exclusion has long been an issue of concern for London boroughs. The Covid period has increased the extent and severity of this problem. Virtually every aspect of life is now expected to be conducted online, from work to socialising, and from education to shopping. Those who are not online are more disadvantaged than ever.**

Digital exclusion presents itself in many different ways. Someone may be excluded because of one or more of the following factors:

- Lack of a device (or *enough* devices if shared with others)
- Lack of connectivity - e.g. through access to wifi or a mobile data allowance
- Lack of digital skills and/or confidence in using digital tools

Other forms of exclusion may also be exacerbated online:

- Those in economic hardship may have reduced options for benefitting from some online content
- Unbanked individuals struggle to transact online
- Language barriers hinder the use of online services
- Different physical and mental disabilities can hinder online engagement

Addressing these problems can be complex. Information about which cohorts experience one or more of these issues can be hard to find. Boroughs often lack resources to help all those in need, while central government support has been limited. Even where resources are available, knowing how to reach specific individuals within a cohort can be difficult.

## What we're doing about it

**The London Recovery Board is committed to tackling digital exclusion through a number of initiatives. LOTI plans to work closely with the Taskforce, ensuring that boroughs' knowledge, ideas and resources are aligned with this process to make the greatest positive impact for Londoners.**

Our view is that digital exclusion is a massive and multi-faceted issue that cannot be addressed in one go. Instead, we need to find specific aspects where we have the influence and ability to make change happen.

With our bias for action, we propose applying our [outcomes-based methodology](#) to identify specific, achievable outcomes that we can work towards with boroughs, the GLA and other partners. This is likely to entail identifying specific cohorts whose needs we can aim to understand and address.

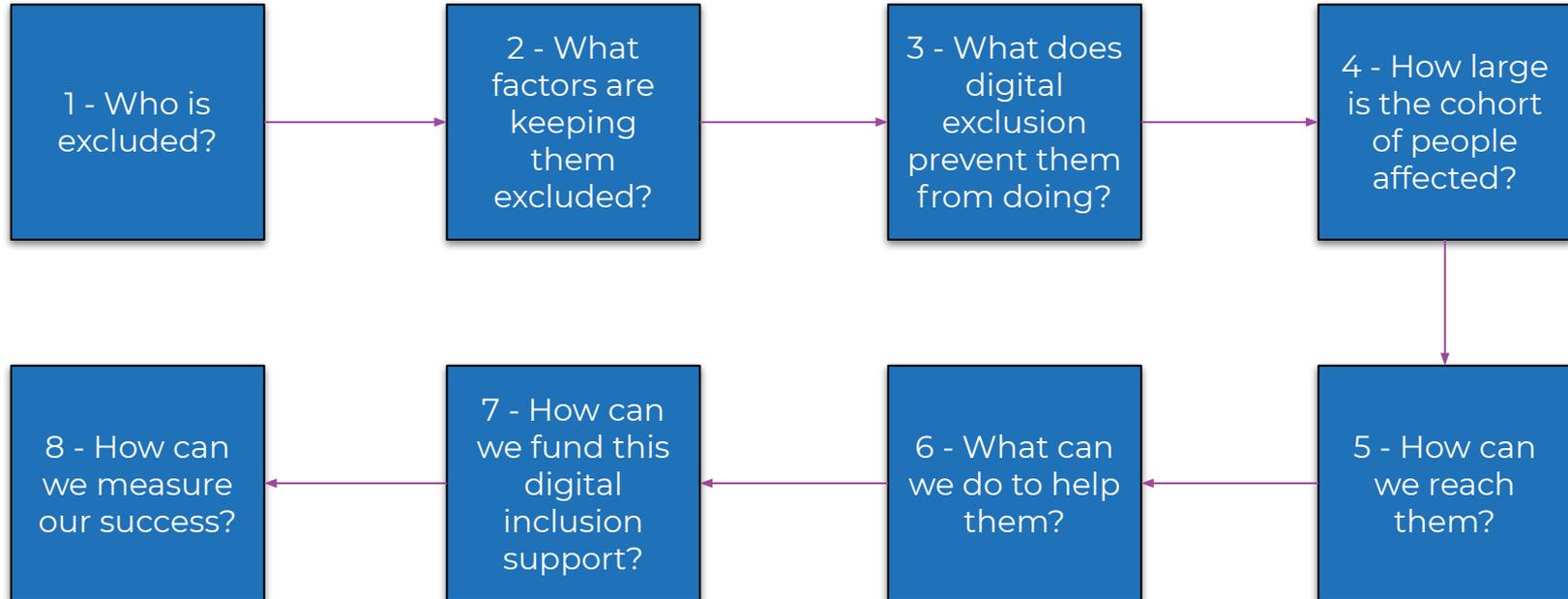
## The BIG questions to answer



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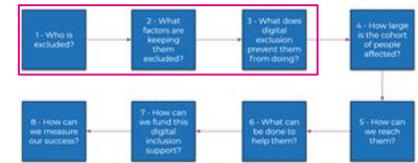
## Key questions boroughs have about digital exclusion

Making progress on digital inclusion requires answering the following questions.



**So what do we  
already know?**

# 1 - Who is excluded? 2 - What factors keep them excluded? 3 - What does digital exclusion prevent them from doing?



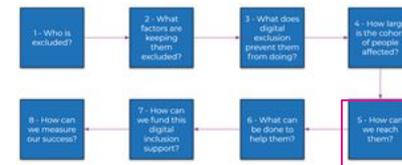
What we have now	What's happening now	Open actions / questions
<p><b>LOTI workshops identified 9 personas affected by digital exclusion and their needs.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. People in care homes</li> <li>2. Socially and/or physically isolated</li> <li>3. Digitally excluded business owner</li> <li>4. Newly Unemployed</li> <li>5. No recourse to public funds</li> <li>6. English not first language</li> <li>7. Low Income / Unemployed</li> <li>8. School students</li> <li>9. Those with accessibility needs</li> </ol> <p><b><u>Personas identified by Nominet</u></b></p> <p><b>Personas identified by Croydon</b></p> <p><b><u>Leeds barriers to being digitally included</u></b></p> <p><b>Anecdotal examples - e.g. people arriving in person for GP appointments</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Engagement Collaborative reviewing potential to standardise data on digital inclusion.</li> <li>2. RBKC + Westminster - Map and personas</li> <li>3. Brent - identified priority areas - Citizens Online Research</li> <li>4. Newham - Council wide strategy to understand digital exclusion. Ambition that everyone should have access at home</li> </ol>	<p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Source personas from organisations who are expert in this field.</li> <li>2. Synthesise personas from different sources.</li> <li>3. Explore what user research has been done on factors related to each persona.</li> <li>4. Conduct user research on any personas which lack detailed user research.</li> </ol> <p><b>Questions:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How do we best prioritise which personas should be helped first?</li> <li>2. How do we handle persons where the need is dynamic - e.g. people who can only afford pay as you go data for part of the month.</li> </ol>

## 4 - How large is the cohort of people affected?



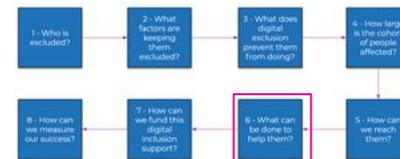
What we have now	What's happening now	Open actions / questions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. LOTI has been working with the London Datastore Team to <a href="#">map datasets</a> that might act as proxies for digital exclusion.</li> <li>2. Boroughs including Brent have worked to use their own data to identify local need.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. London Councils (Caroline Dawes) has asked for all boroughs to report on scale of pupil digital exclusion by 20 January.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review <a href="#">London Datastore map</a> with boroughs to assess usefulness, and what data / views would enable new actions.</li> <li>2. Check what progress has been made by boroughs.</li> <li>3. Check what stats are held by expert organisations in this field.</li> </ol> <p><b>Questions:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Who could do what differently if they had better access to information?</li> <li>2. What sources have data have been explored to date?</li> <li>3. How specific do we need to be on the location of people in need?</li> <li>4. Beyond using data, how else can we measure the scale of need? Surveys etc?</li> </ol>

## 5 - How can we reach them?



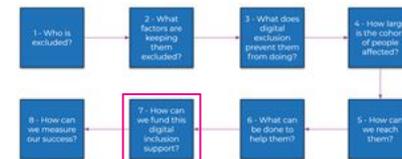
What we have now	What's happening now	Open actions / questions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>For some personas, a point of contact is relatively obvious, e.g. people in care homes, school children.</b></li> <li>2. <b>We have anecdotal examples of where some digitally excluded people come into contact with public services: e.g. people arriving in person for GP appointments indicating they couldn't do so online.</b></li> <li>3. <b>Some boroughs have digital inclusion hubs. (Many were run through libraries, which are shut for now.)</b></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Brent</b> - Digital Champions networks, devices distribution service</li> <li>2. <b>Newham</b> -using libraries and VCS to deliver skills and devices, provide a personalised end to end service based on resident need.</li> <li>3.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask expert organisations about how best to reach digitally excluded people.</li> </ol> <p><b>Questions:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Has anyone already mapped all London's digital inclusion support hubs? If not, can / should we?</li> <li>2. For some personas, rather than trying to reach them, is it better to create a system that they can request help from, as needed?</li> <li>3. How do we overcome challenge of reaching digitally excluded people when we cannot rely on online channels?</li> <li>4. Do we want to reach out to people before we have something concrete to offer them?</li> <li>5. What partnerships do we need to effectively reach different personas?</li> </ol>

## 6 - What can we do to help them?



What we have now	What's happening now	Open actions / questions
<p><b>Skills:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. LOTI list of <a href="#">7 case studies</a> of London borough initiatives</li> <li>2. LOTI <a href="#">global case studies</a> of digital inclusion initiatives</li> <li>3. <a href="#">Croydon Digital Skills Guides</a></li> <li>4. Hackney and <a href="#">Leeds examples</a> of digital champions networks.</li> </ol> <p><b>Devices</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Nominet <a href="#">Reboot initiative</a> - help redistribute unused devices in your local area.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Devices:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. London Grid for Learning focusing on procuring lost cost devices for schools.</li> <li>2. DfE laptop scheme - but only meets needs of 11+ and doesn't cover</li> <li>3. Three LOTI boroughs have expressed interest in redistribution schemes for old public sector laptops - but others are lukewarm.</li> <li>4. Some big tech firms (Google, Vodafone etc) have express interest in helping with better deals / CSR, but need to be given a specific ask.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct quick audit of level of interest and provision in schemes to redistribute unused devices to determine need for further action.</li> </ol> <p><b>Questions:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Councils have underused office space - can some be repurposed for digital inclusion (think beyond Covid)?</li> <li>2. How can we formulate a specific ask of big tech firms - and ensure what we request is not just a temporary sticking plaster?</li> </ol>

## 7 - How can we fund this digital inclusion support?



What we have now	What's happening now	Open actions / questions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Digital Inclusion Toolkit advice on funding digital inclusion initiatives.</a></li> <li><a href="#">Camden crowdfunding scheme for devices and wifi for young people.</a></li> <li><a href="#">Webinar on using Social Value Exchange to source digital devices from Social Value portion of large contracts.</a></li> <li>Some details of device redistribution schemes</li> </ol>	<p><b>Devices:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>London Grid for Learning focusing on procuring lost cost devices for schools.</b></li> <li><b>DfE laptop scheme - but only meets needs of 11+ and doesn't cover.</b></li> <li><b>Some big tech firms (Google, Vodafone etc) have expressed interest in helping with better deals / CSR, but need to be given a specific ask.</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create clear guide on using Social Value part of contracts to fund digital inclusion and add to Digital Inclusion Toolkit.</li> <li>Templatise Camden crowdfunding model.</li> <li>Make specific ask of big tech firms based on accurate assessment of needs of specific personas.</li> </ol>



**What next?**



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## LOTI digital exclusion innovation fund

The GLA is securing funding for council-facing projects to support the Digital Access for All Mission. There is potential to provide LOTI with just over £1 million over two years to meet three objectives:

1. Develop a model for the prescription of devices, skills, or connections for the digitally excluded
2. Develop a co-ordinated device recycling scheme
3. Scope procurement options for securing digital exclusion measures as part of IT contracts.

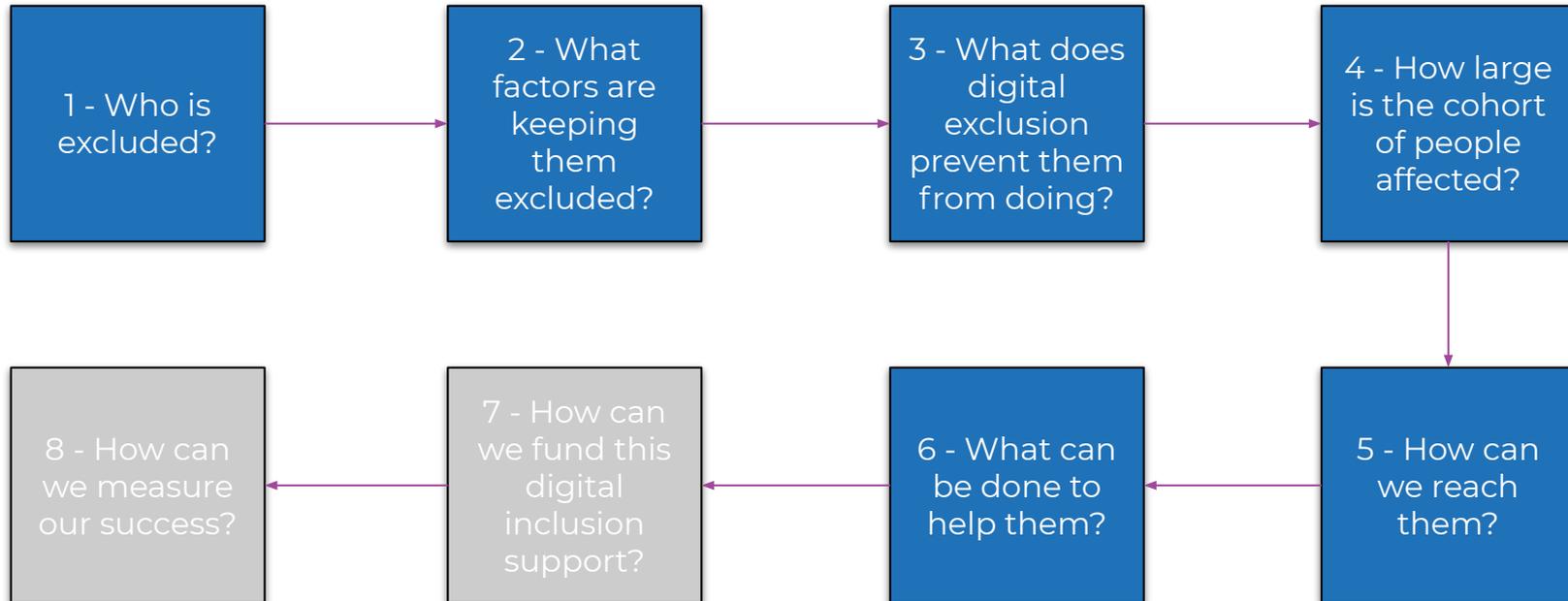
Project	Description	Delivery	Budget
<b>1 - Prescription of devices, skills and connections</b>	<i>Scoping and developing a model for the prescription of devices, skills, or connections for the digitally excluded.</i>	<i>2021/2022 – Using TfL procurement framework to produce report on models. By Q3 2022/2023 - TBC</i>	<i>2021/2022 - £300k 2022/2023 - £300k</i>
<b>2 - Co-ordinated device recycling scheme</b>	<i>Building on existing programmes to bring together and deliver a model for collective device recycling to maximise economies of scale and available devices for those excluded.</i>	<i>2021/2022 – Using TfL procurement framework to produce report on models. By Q3 2022/2023 – TBC</i>	<i>2021/2022 - £200k 2022/2023 - £180k</i>
<b>3 - Delivering devices and social value in IT procurement</b>	<i>Scoping of framework and procurement options for securing digital exclusion measures as part of IT contracts.</i>		<i>2021/2022 - £80k</i>

# 1 - Prescription of devices, skills and connections



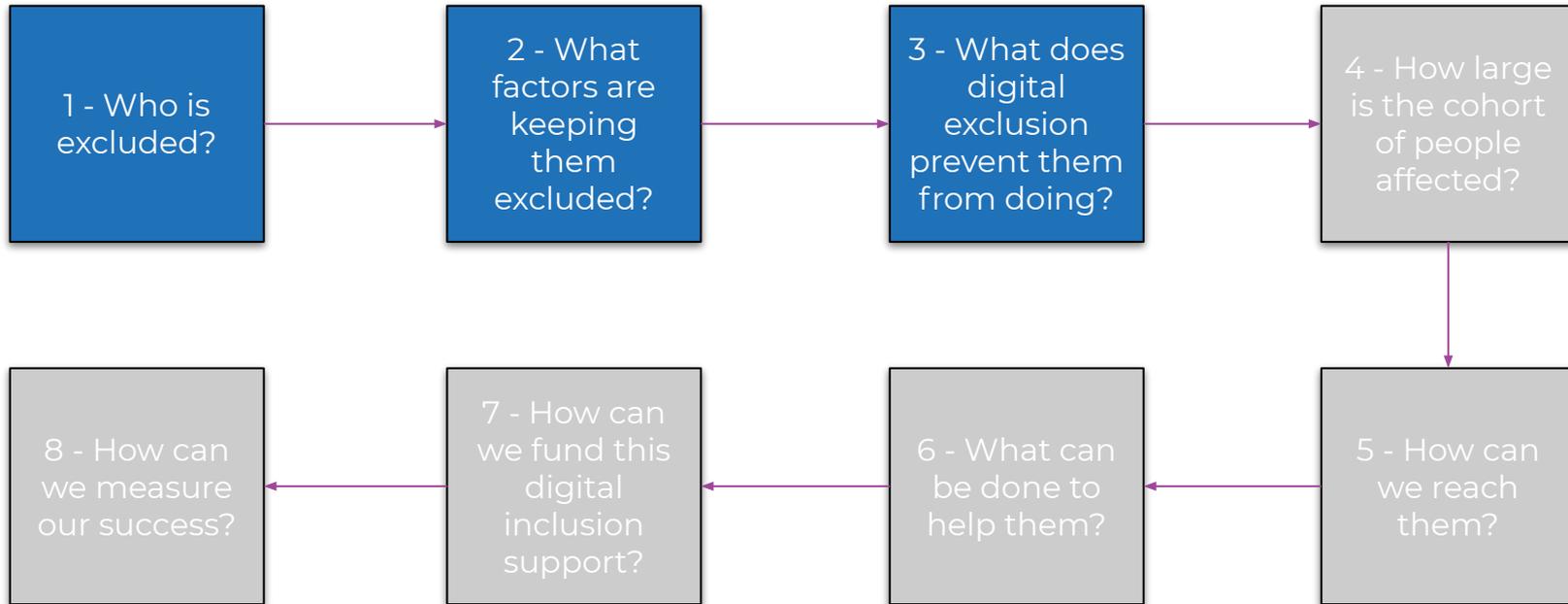
# 1 - Prescription of devices, skills and connections (1/4)

In order to be able to help digitally excluded people, boroughs first need to generate answers to the first six questions identified during our workshops. These focus on understanding the demand side of things.



# 1 - Prescription of devices, skills and connections (2/4)

Partial answers to the first three questions were identified during our workshops, in which distinct personas and the challenges they face were identified.



# 1 - Prescription of devices, skills and connections (3/4)

We may be able to enhance our understanding of the first three questions through:

1. Interviews with organisations that specialise in tackling digital exclusion (Good Things Foundation, Nesta, etc.)
2. Interviews with front line works in different settings (e.g. social workers) who witness digital exclusion and its impact first hand
3. User research
4. Surveys

**However - we should be wary of analysis paralysis - the need is urgent and, in some cases, obvious.**



# 1 - Prescription of devices, skills and connections (4/4)

Questions 4, 5 and 6 could be addressed through a combination of data-centred, and a human-centred approaches.

1. **Data-centred approach** - Can we identify factors that correlate with digital exclusion, and then find data sets that represent those risk factors? This might help us quantify and broadly locate those affected by digital exclusion. A big question remains how far the data can take us. We also need to be clear on whether this kind of data would actually equip anyone to do anything differently.
2. **Human-centred approach** - The human-centred approach asks: “What do we know about those affected by digital exclusion in their place and context? Where do they go? With whom do they interact? What would most help them? This areas may lend itself to trialling very practical interventions, and thinking very creatively about using community assets such as libraries, council offices, GP surgeries etc in different ways.

4 - How large  
is the cohort  
of people  
affected?

5 - How can  
we reach  
them?

6 - What can  
be done to  
help them?

# 1 - Prescription of devices, skills and connections

Options for LOTI... (focus on where we REALLY add value)

## 2 - Coordinated Public Sector Device Recycling Scheme

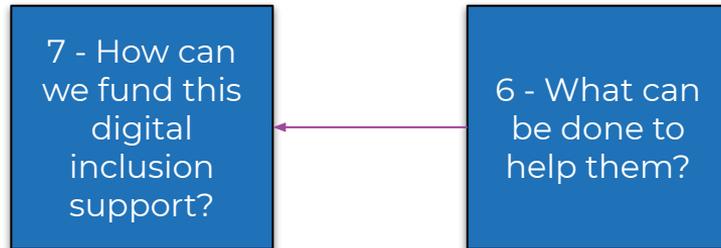


## 2 - Coordinated Public Sector Device Recycling Scheme

This part of the grant focuses on questions 6 and 7. For those who need a device, how can we create a highly effective recycling scheme to repurpose older devices.

### Thoughts:

1. This might be best to start with the recycling of public sector digital devices, before looking at public donations.
2. Need to consider what types of devices are in scope, how old they can be, and how they are prepared and supported.
3. We should be aware there are a number of organisations - both private and charitable - who perform this function. We should be clear what gap or shortfall we see in these initiatives. We would need to understand which boroughs already take part in existing schemes.
4. There is benefit to keeping this project area tight and focused in order to achieve meaningful progress. However, it does start with the conclusion that device recycling is the answer.



## 2 - Coordinated Public Sector Device Recycling Scheme

Options for LOTI... (focus on where we REALLY add value)

## 3 - Delivering devices and social value in IT procurement

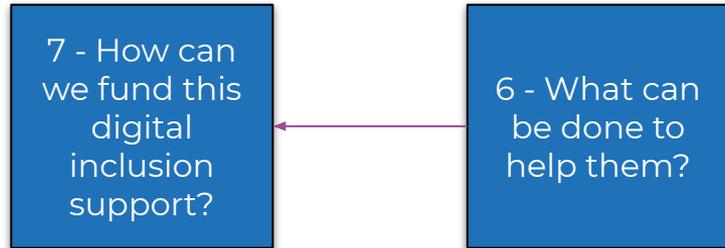


### 3 - Delivering devices and social value in IT procurement

This part of the grant focuses on questions 6 and 7. For those who need devices, data, skills training or support, how do we fund their procurement through existing contracts?

#### Thoughts:

- This might be as simple as create template tender wording for the Social Value portion of large contracts.
- What else is needed?



## 3 - Delivering devices and social value in IT procurement

Options for LOTI... (focus on where we REALLY add value)

# Appendix



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## Good Practice

## Better Data

## Innovation in Supply

Sharing borough case studies of practical interventions

[See casestudies on LOTI's website](#)

Developing data model for boroughs to map and understand local excluded groups

See [London DataStore Digital Exclusion Map](#)

Creating Guidance on using Social Value to support digital inclusion.

Held webinar with [Social Value Exchange](#).

Researching and synthesising global best practice

[View our casestudy database](#)

Sharing examples of mapping local sources of digital inclusion support

[See Hackney map](#)

Negotiating with corporates to offer free or discounted devices, data packages and skills training

## Personas affected by digital exclusion

Personas	Summary of key problems and barriers
<b>A - People in care homes</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bandwidth availability - number of simultaneous devices that can be supported</li> <li>2. Staff skill limits and time constraints</li> <li>3. Residents would respond best to face to face training</li> </ol>
<b>B - Socially and/or physically isolated</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Affordability of connectivity and devices</li> <li>2. Language barrier for some in this cohort</li> </ol>
<b>C - Digitally excluded business owner</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Councils identifying which business owners are excluded</li> <li>2. Business owners unaware of tools or services that could support them</li> <li>3. Availability of connectivity in some high streets</li> </ol>
<b>D - Newly Unemployed</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No access to devices</li> <li>2. No opportunity to practice new skills for new working environment</li> <li>3. Councils should be better connected with existing support services e.g JCP</li> </ol>

## Personas affected by digital exclusion

Personas	Summary of key problems and barriers
<b>E - No recourse to public funds</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Councils can struggle to identify individuals through usual challenges, requires engaging with other support services such as food banks</li> </ol>
<b>F - English not first language</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No access to devices or data</li> <li>2. A hard to reach group for councils</li> <li>3. Additional challenges for training / service delivery</li> <li>4. Communities may not know services and information are available in their language</li> </ol>
<b>G - Low Income / Unemployed</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of confidence in using technology</li> <li>2. Access to devices and data</li> <li>3. Interventions require trusted delivery partner, who should be consistent over a long term period</li> <li>4. Ongoing support required</li> </ol>
<b>H - School students</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Access to devices and data</li> <li>2. Students may not know they are eligible for support / devices</li> <li>3. Councils not engaged adequately by central government</li> <li>4. Definitions for who is eligible are inconsistent</li> </ol>
<b>I - Those with accessibility needs</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Commercial sites/ social media not always accessible - using these sites is a gateway to building digital skills</li> </ol>

## Ideas

### A - People in care homes

1. Partner with VCS organisation and private sectors orgs with expertise in training care home staff and residents in digital skills
2. Leverage wayleave agreements and CSR to roll out fibre to care homes

### B - Socially and/or physically isolated

3. Map schemes that can provide free or subsidised devices and support, so we can see what is available for which cohort and where there are gaps
4. Use existing data to identify those in need, understand where additional data is required
5. Use already available commercial/consumer translation tools
6. Create community/ local digital hubs to provide devices and deliver training tailored to specific groups/communities

### C - Digitally excluded business owner

7. Enable community engagement teams to better capture data from businesses and provide a tool kit of support
8. Target high streets with a funded full fibre roll out
9. Collate information from teams engaged with small businesses to understand scale and nuances of needs
10. Create generic materials aimed at business for each LA to tailor for their own channels
11. Digital skills training

### D - Newly Unemployed

12. Mapping of available services and reaching agreements with partners with roles strongly defined to deliver effective signposting
13. Use emerging funding avenues such as circular economy and green economy digital to provide devices to individuals and employment services
14. Work with existing services and create digital hubs in communities.

### E - No recourse to public funds

15. Use in person hubs to provide services and collect data anonymously that can be used in policy making, leverage relationship with VCS to enable this.



## Ideas

### **F - English not first language**

- 16. Use existing data to identify this cohort, including working with schools
- 17. Through adult education services provide laptop/device loans
- 18. Work with community groups providing language support, provide these groups with devices.

### **G - Low Income / Unemployed**

- 19. Provide devices for free
- 20. Effective signposting to available support and services

### **H - School students**

- 21. Understand need - engage with school, head teachers and VCS to do this
- 22. Generic comms pack

### **I - Those with accessibility needs**

- 23. Build capacity with the VCS
- 24. Ensure accessibility needs of citizens are shared across the council (with consent) to improve the user experience and ensure the right services are offered
- 25. Offer alternative channels - for example Alexa, Sign language app

## How many people are in need of device now?

We need a quick estimate of device need in London. We know boroughs have estimates of device need based on their current digital inclusion work. We aim to bring this data together at a London level to help frame the challenge and aid negotiations with the private sector who can support in providing devices.

This short term approach will be superseded by a data model that more accurately captures digital exclusion.

<b>Personas</b>	<b>Estimate number of devices needed:</b>		<b>Estimate number of devices needed:</b>
<b>A - People in care homes</b>		<b>F - English not first language</b>	
<b>B - Socially and/or physically isolated</b>		<b>G - Low Income / Unemployed</b>	
<b>C - Digitally excluded business owner</b>		<b>H - School students</b>	
<b>D - Newly Unemployed</b>		<b>I - Those with accessibility needs</b>	
<b>E - No recourse to public funds</b>			