

Connecting Cambridgeshire Members Update | Feb 2025

The update designed to keep you up-to-speed with our work and links to further information.

Digital Inclusion Focus

Digital Inclusion and Why It's Important

As society becomes increasingly digitalised, there remain people who are digitally excluded, lacking the resources, knowledge and support to 'be online'. Connecting Cambridgeshire are dedicated to ensuring that the right digital inclusion support is given to the right people and the right time across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

It is vital that our residents and businesses can take full advantage of the opportunities offered by being online, including the ability to access key health, education and other public services, as well as being able to benefit financially from being digitally included, which impacts both the economy and the individual. All of these benefits also result in better social inclusion, and happier and healthier communities as no one is 'left behind' in an increasingly digitalised world. More information on the financial impact of being digitally included can be found here: https://www.goodthingsfoundation.org/dam/jcr:a82ef2e8-c924-4489-bc4a-105422459b0b/GoodThings_DigitalNation_2024.png

Our Digital Inclusion Work

We aim to deliver digital inclusion using a placed-based approach, working with cross-sector partners to collaboratively implement various initiatives. Our work involves creating a strategy and plans to ensure the delivery of digital inclusion activities and bringing together organisations to share learning and reduce duplication.

We're also extending free public access WiFi to make sure everyone in Cambridgeshire has access to free, reliable and secure WiFi in our public buildings, cities and market towns, helping people get online, support local business and make it easier to access vital public services.

2024 Progress

Highlights include:

Digital forums

We've partnered with Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service (CCVS) to co-deliver the Cambridgeshire Digital Partnership (CDP), a digital forum supporting and championing digital inclusion and bringing together organisations to work, network and learn from each other.

We've also been working with Peterborough Council Voluntary Service (PCVS) to deliver a similar forum in Peterborough, engaging with a range of organisations, from health to housing.

Digital hubs

We're funding the provision of local digital hubs to deliver holistic, placed-based, digital inclusion support for digitally excluded communities. This involves working with local organisations and partners to make sure that support is considerate and suitable for the location.

Events:

We're partnered with CCVS to deliver the Cambridgeshire Digital Partnership (CDP). This is a digital inclusion forum that provides organisations and individuals to work, support and network with each other.



Alongside CDP, we organised the Cambridgeshire Digital Partnership 2024 Round-up to celebrate the achievements made in the last year that have supported digital inclusion. We also asked attendees to nominate people who have contributed to digital inclusion, and we have three Digital Superstars, who you can read about here: [Celebrating Digital Superstars - Connecting Cambridgeshire](#)

[Our Delivery Plan for 2025](#)

Events:

Connected Ely: Empowering Digital Communities marketplace event took place on the 13th February, which raised awareness of digital exclusion, as well as showcasing the support available from different organisations who are championing digital inclusion. The Library reported over 100 extra visitors on the day!

Digital Switchover

We've contracted two expert organisations to support our residents and businesses through the Digital Switchover. Keystone will deliver our residential comms campaign over the between Spring and Autumn and FarrPoint will deliver workshops through ambassador to inform and support our SMEs

Digital Hubs and Digital Unite

We'll be engaging with our local partners to enable Digital Hubs across the region, providing holistic, place-based digital inclusion support to our communities. We're also supporting digital inclusion through providing licenses to the Digital Champions platform from Digital Unite, where volunteers can access resources and peer support to deliver digital skills & confidence training.

[How Members Can Get Involved](#)

We're looking to establish a Members' special interest forum around Digital Inclusion. There's a range of work that will be carried out throughout 2025 and beyond, which will overlap with a number of council services, and aim to meet the diverse needs of our communities. We'd like Members to express their interest in joining if they'd like to do so, to stay abreast of any developments and be at the forefront of our work. If you would like to get involved, [contact our Digital Inclusion Lead, Will Plant](#).