

## Helping people be Better ConNEcted in the North East

Many of the services and parts of life that were once accessible in person have moved online through COVID-19, including school and university studies, welfare advice, healthcare appointments and social gatherings. Not being able to access these elements of life is having an enormous impact on those who are not able to or are limited in using the internet. But **digital inclusion is an issue that many in the North East faced before COVID-19 and will continue to face unless steps are taken to change this.**

### The Answer

Your organisation can help by donating funding or new data-enabled equipment via the [Better ConNEcted](#) campaign for a specific community or group in the North East. By ring-fencing donations for the North East you will be helping local people to be digitally included. We are partnered with [DevicesDotNow](#), which was set up in March 2020 by FutureDotNow with support from DCMS and is delivered by [Good Things Foundation](#).

You can:

- **Donate New Devices:** Mobile devices with at least a **7” screen**, supplied with or able to take a minimum **20GB pay-as-you-go SIM card**, and with a **front-camera** and **adjustable text** capability. If you have other devices you want to donate, please contact [betterconnectedne@gmail.com](mailto:betterconnectedne@gmail.com).
- **Make a financial contribution:** By providing funding immediately you will help us to quickly procure devices at scale and get them out to those in need fast.
  - ★ **£200** will buy a device, provide 3 months connectivity and support training and delivery
  - ★ **£20,000** will provide a device, connectivity and support to 100 vulnerable adults.
  - ★ **£200,000** will enable us to procure at scale and connect over 1,000 households

[Better ConNEcted](#) is a collaboration of organisations and individuals across the region. Our aim is to build a North East where digital inclusion is a right enjoyed by all, where people have the skills, technology and internet to access goods, services and information, in order to close the digital divide.

## The problem

According to the Good Things Foundation, there are an estimated [15.2 million](#) people in the UK who either have no or limited use of the internet. The North East has the highest proportion of internet non-users in the country, standing at [12.1%](#) for the region in 2018.

Digital inclusion can be defined by people being able and feeling confident to access services, information and goods online. Barriers to digital inclusion include:

- An inability to afford the internet or data
- Lack of equipment such as laptops or smartphones
- Low levels of digital literacy or lack of confidence
- Poor accessibility for disabled people

## The Process:

To donate, contact us at [betterconnectedne@gmail.com](mailto:betterconnectedne@gmail.com).

We communicate donations from businesses and individual supporters with DevicesDotNow, who then process them:

1. Good Things Foundation's UK network Online Centres Network (OCN) of 5000 hyper-local organisations will provide a 'trusted contact'.
2. Connected devices will be distributed to OCN members. A trained Digital Champion will prepare the device, pre-loading essential apps, shortcuts and setting up the internet functionality.
3. Devices are delivered to the doorstep. Relevant support is provided at a safe distance or on a landline to unpack, switch on and begin to use the device. Ongoing support is provided through the 'trusted contact'.

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Please make any donations via Better ConNEcted to help us track them more effectively.

Get in touch: [betterconnectedne@gmail.com](mailto:betterconnectedne@gmail.com)