

# Digital Inclusion or Digital Efficacy? The impact of a "digital by default" state

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## Joint SHU and SCC project

*Funded by ESRC and SCC*

- Goals
  - Understand levels of digital inclusion/exclusion in 4 target groups in Sheffield
  - Work with communities to identify intervention activities to support digital engagement in order to:
    - Improve SCC housing customers quality of life
    - Reduce further social exclusion
    - Realise efficiency savings
    - Develop SCC online offer

## The issue...

### *The Digital by Default Agenda*

- Drivers for digital by default
  - Mainly costs:
    - F2F services cost 10x more than digital by transaction (£10 to £30 vs 10p to 80p)
    - Government expects £1.75Bn year savings
    - Some arguments that digital interventions can improve service provision
  - Identified social and personal benefits of being online:
    - Major household bill savings (from £100 to over £2000) depending on income and lifestyle, can help negate poverty premium
    - Identified educational, skills, jobs and social engagement benefits

## The issue...

### *The Digital by Default Agenda*

- Challenges
  - 20% of UK households (5.2 million) still deemed “offline” by Ofcom/ONS
    - Figures hide levels of engagement
    - Figures hide “churn” in online access routes
    - Figures don’t indicate exclusion from aspects of internet use due to poverty
  - Majority of likely users of online government services in marginalised communities and groups
    - 50% of people in social housing offline
- Universal credit
  - 12m people affected
  - Proposal assumes 80% online interaction and service use
  - 50% of likely users do not have personal access

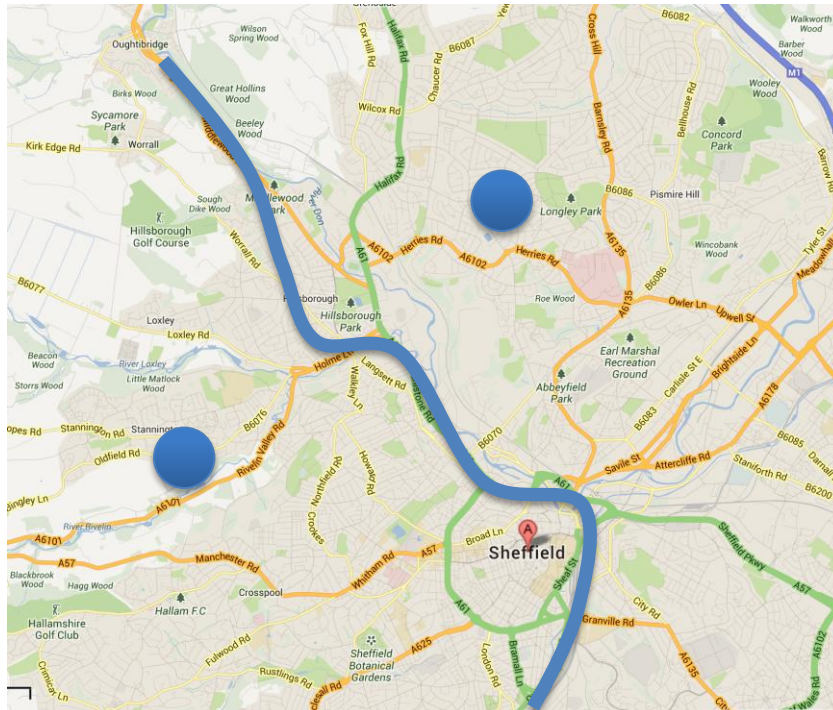
## Project elements

### *From understanding to intervention*

- Project targeted 4 community groups:
  - Older residents (Hall Park) – largest national excluded group
  - Tower block residents (Deer Park) – Tower blocks provide specific technical issues for community inclusion projects
  - Young people under 25 (Parsons Cross) – Higher levels of digital exclusion
  - Young families (Parsons Cross) – Digital exclusion of school age kids has long term effects on education

## Project elements

*From understanding to intervention*



## Project elements

### *From understanding to intervention*

- Project activities:
  - Survey with individual households (designed with help from NW tenant reps and staff)
    - Short 15 minute f2f or telephone survey collecting up to 100+ data items on access, knowledge, and attitudes to ICTs
  - Data analysis
    - Identification of key features of DE in the target groups
  - Community event/workshop to help identify intervention(s)
    - Focus group type workshops with
      - Community members
      - Tennant reps
      - Council staff



Two groups of users:

Have reasonable access and experience

*Mostly younger*

*More likely to book a repair online*

*Check a balance online*

*Report community issue online*

*Use social media often*

Don't have reasonable access and experience

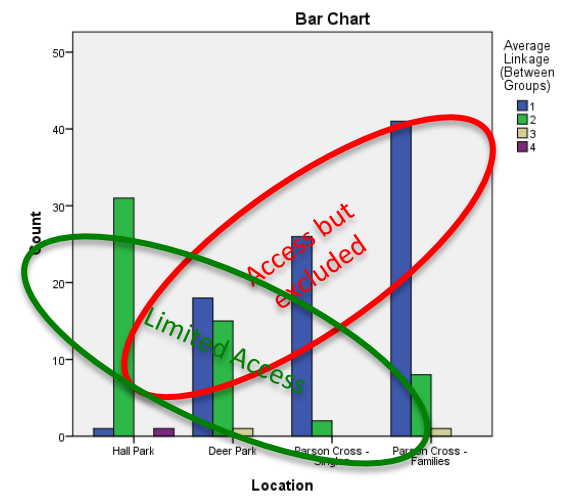
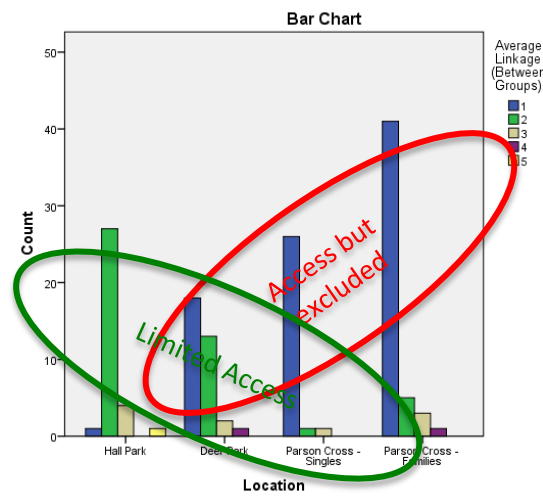
*Mostly older*

*Less likely to book a repair online*

*May check a balance online*

*Unlikely to report community issue online*

*Don't use social media often*



**Structure Matrix**

	Function		
	1	2	3
Report a repair	.472 <sup>*</sup>	-.121	.445
Check your rent balance	.303	.671 <sup>*</sup>	-.405
Pay your rent	-.196	-.528 <sup>*</sup>	-.440
Bid for a property	-.098	.103	.538 <sup>*</sup>
Ask a rehousing query	-.428	.296	.472 <sup>*</sup>
Report litter or graffiti	.308	-.054	.426 <sup>*</sup>
Report antisocial behaviour	.321	-.060	.419 <sup>*</sup>
Make a housing benefit enquiry	-.208	.191	.347 <sup>*</sup>
Ask a question about your tenancy	-.083	.130	.269 <sup>*</sup>
Any other query <sup>b</sup>	-.083	.130	.269 <sup>*</sup>

Pooled within-groups correlations between discriminating variables and standardized canonical discriminant functions. Variables ordered by absolute size of correlation within function.

\*. Largest absolute correlation between each variable and any discriminant function

b. This variable not used in the analysis.

**Functions at Group Centroids**

Average Linkage (Between Groups)	Function		
	1	2	3
1	.499	-.042	.010
2	-.694	.057	.050
3	-.997	-1.031	-1.194
4	.778	2.273	-1.137

Unstandardized canonical discriminant functions evaluated at group means



## Key findings from data analyses

### *Beyond material exclusion – digital social and cultural capital*

- For many young people main access mobile devices
  - Major use of Internet is Facebook
    - Facebook “is the internet”
    - Little engagement with other digital media
- Telephone/face to face preferred channel for access to services
  - Interactions with services are not just transactional nor ever about “one thing”
  - Joined “joined up services” require “joined up interactions”
- Younger tenants had more access to IT equipment than older tenants/tower blocks
  - Primary barrier to accessing the internet remains money

## Key findings from data analyses

### *From understanding to intervention*

- No internet access:
  - 6 out of 10 (58%) older people
  - 3 out of 10 (32%) tower blocks
  - 3 out of 10 (30%) Parsons Cross
- Landline – big difference
  - 85.7% Hall Park (older people) reducing to 50% in Deer Park (tower block), to 35% in Parsons Cross (YS/TF)
- Access to an email account:
  - 16.7% Hall Park (older people) compared to 64.1% Deer Park (tower block)

## Key findings from data analyses

### *Beyond material exclusion – digital forms of social and cultural capital*

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## Conclusion

### *Developing Digital Efficacy*

- Definition
  - Citizens' faith and trust in digital media and their own belief that they can personally understand, influence and use the internet in all its forms.
- Digital Inclusion strategies need to be citizen and service user led, not IT department led
  - “Build it and they will come” does not work
- User centred digital service design
  - UCSDS brings together service users, social service staff, families and communities to explore and understand the real-life experience of service provision, and use that knowledge to drive innovation and improvement in the design and delivery of the systems that support service delivery – both technical and social

## Current interventions

*Computer Club — Community led but SCC supported?*

*Job Clubs — Community and partner provided?*

*Mapping Digital Inclusion Support — making support visible and accessible?*

## Future interventions

*Digital Service Design — Needs to be core to SCC delivery?*

*Digital Outreach — part of SCC provision?*



## Future research plans

*Research to understand lived experience of digital exclusion to include examinations of digital inequalities in:*

*Social capital  
Cultural capital  
Economic wellbeing  
Educational opportunities*

## Future engagement/action research

*Digital design for inclusion*

*Arts and digital engagement – both with artists leading and digitally including the arts*

*Local and community digital culture – making local digital culture to support digital inclusion*

*Digital making in the community – using digital fabrication in the community*

