



November 2024

Digital Skills Mentoring Interim Impact Report

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ABOUT THE WISE GROUP

The Wise Group is a leading social enterprise working to transform lives. Since 1983 we have delivered customer-led solutions to lift thousands of households out of poverty. Today, we continue to build bridges to opportunity for the most vulnerable in our society through Relational Mentoring.

We build better lives, better communities and stronger businesses, and we don't do it alone. We work with a range of partners to make a real and lasting difference to the lives of thousands of people and families every year, from large businesses to national/local government and third sector organisations.

Every day we support customers into jobs, out of fuel poverty, and help people coming out of prison to build a better future. Our work is wide ranging but underlying everything we do is a passion and commitment for sustainable change.

Our Values guide all our work

- We go the distance, so our colleagues and customers reach a positive and sustainable future.
- We are ambitious to make a real difference every day with colleagues across the enterprise following our values: socially; financially and culturally.
- We hurdle boundaries and innovate.
- We thrive through collaboration, kindness and learning together.
- We celebrate and respect individual difference.

The purpose of this report is to demonstrate the impact that our Digital Skills Mentoring service is making on the lives of people across Glasgow. Through data driven evidence, we will document customer progression and the associated social value.

We look forward to exploring further partnership opportunities with CGI to expand the scope, reach, and efficacy of this service, not only within Glasgow but also on a national scale.

WHAT IS DIGITAL SKILLS MENTORING?

Digital technology is deeply integrated in every aspect of our lives, both personal and professional. Recognising the substantial challenges faced by those without digital skills—including poorer health outcomes, increased isolation, and limited access to employment

and education (The Good Things Foundation), the Wise Group, in collaboration with CGI and Glasgow City Council, has developed and is actively delivering a Digital Skills Mentoring Service. **This person-centred service aims to bridge the digital divide and empower individuals by enhancing their technological proficiency.**

Our service supports individuals across Glasgow who are unemployed and are the most excluded from the digital world. **We offer tailored one-to-one Relational Mentoring aimed at developing essential digital skills necessary for both everyday life and the workplace.**


Our approach involves close collaboration with locally based community partners who not only refer individuals in need of our support but also host mentoring sessions and our monthly Digital Café events. These events provide a casual, group-learning environment that emphasises peer-to-peer interaction and support.

Each person engaged in our service works with a dedicated Digital Skills Mentor to establish and pursue personalised learning objectives, utilising a specially created Digital Skills Framework. This person-centred approach ensures inclusivity and relevance, adapting to each customer's unique needs and circumstances. As a result, we have contributed not only to improving digital skills but also a wide spectrum of needs which is improving the overall employability of those engaged. This is testament to the impactful approach taken by our Digital Skills Mentors and the commitment of our customers to engage with us and transform their lives.



Headline Outcomes:

- **Improving digital skills:** to-date, **86% of customers report progression and improvements in their digital skills.** This underscores the effectiveness of the service in meeting a critical need in our progressively digital society.
- **Removing barriers to employment:** among customers who have identified needs associated with digital skills and employment, **76% have reported making progress and improvements.** Furthermore, **74% have reported enhancements in their wellbeing, self-esteem, and confidence,** while **71% have reported an increase in**



their aspiration and motivation, both of which are crucial in transitioning towards employment.

- **Improving lives in the most deprived communities:** To date, all customers who are actively engaged in the service **have achieved at least one outcome related to their areas of need.** These households are in the most deprived 20% of communities in Glasgow.
- **Strong community engagement:** We have developed **partnerships with 21+ community-based organisations across Glasgow.** This has ensured an effective and impactful reach to those in need, streamlining access to support and help local people progress towards greater digital inclusion and employment opportunities.
- **Social Return on Investment:** based on service delivery to date, **the indicative SROI value is £999,280.** This means that **for every £1 invested in this service by CGI, £8 of social value has already been created,** including primary value from increased wellbeing and secondary value from preventative spending/savings for wider society.

As this is an interim report, the data and impact presented reflects the experiences of the 106 participants engaged so far. We are preparing to welcome an additional 40 participants to the service shortly, which will further enrich our understanding and enhance the impact data further.

Looking beyond the current funding period, we are building strong relationships with school communities across Glasgow to reach more families with young children who are currently living in poverty and are digitally excluded. This means that for the service continuing in 2025-26, we have established additional engagement pathways that continue to increase the impact of the service while also helping to address child poverty in Glasgow.

RELATIONAL MENTORING EXPLAINED

Relational Mentoring is the evidenced and sustainable approach to helping people identify and overcome multiple challenges through the relationship built with a professional mentor. Mentors motivate and inspire customers to commit to change, to persevere and achieve goals by working together.

Our Relational Mentoring approach was developed by customers and mentors building upon 40 years of experience in supporting as many as a million people towards a happier, healthier, and sustainable future. It is based upon the insight that working with a person in a professional, evidence-led manner has a compounding impact and delivers more sustainable results.

While the overall aim of this service is to improve digital skills, it goes beyond just teaching technical competencies. It involves building a deep, meaningful relationship with the mentee, understanding their unique needs and challenges, and tailoring the support provided to suit personal and professional development.

This approach is tailored to each situation and recorded using our **Relational Mentoring Framework**, which consists of 15 key Areas of Need with crisis management, coaching, advocating, listening and mentoring as key methods of delivery.



Our framework directly links the 15 Areas of Need to 56 activities. Repeated engagements and completion of activities results in the achievement of short-term outcomes. Over time, this leads to the achievement of medium-term outcomes and ultimately sustainable long-term outcomes for the customer and/or whole household.

15 Areas of Need

56 Activities

55 Short-term outcomes

26 Medium-term outcomes

11 Long-term outcomes

SERVICE DELIVERY

All customers engaged in the service receive a personalised service based on a five-stage customer journey:

Stage 1:
Referral

Stage 2:
Onboarding

Stage 3: Needs
Assessment &
Action Plan

Stage 4:
Mentoring in the
Community

Stage 5:
Next Steps
Planning

Stage 1	<p>Referral:</p> <p>We work with a network of Community partners to reach the people who need this service the most. We have built strong partnerships with organisations such as GAMH, Visibility Scotland, Glasgow Woman's Library & Partick Housing Association.</p> <p>To refer an individual to the service, they follow a simple online process. We also receive referrals from other Wise Group services, including from our Community Justice team who work with people who have recently been released from prison.</p>
Stage 2	<p>Onboarding:</p> <p>The Mentor arranges to meet with the customer in the community where they provide further information about the service and complete the necessary sign-up process. This is the first stage in building a relationship based on compassion and respect. It is important to bring the service to the individual at this stage, to make access as easy as possible.</p>
Stage 3	<p>Needs Assessment & Action Planning:</p> <p>Once signed up, the Mentor takes the customer through a Digital Skills Assessment along with a wider Needs Assessment. This helps the Mentor to fully understand the customer's challenges and barriers. Based on the results of the assessment, together they create personalised goals and an associated Action Plan which they then work through together. This plan focuses on addressing their digital learning requirement alongside wider needs such as mental health support, financial issues, and home energy support.</p>
Stage 4	<p>Digital Skills Mentoring in the Community:</p> <p>Regular one-to-one Digital Skills Mentoring takes place in the community, gradually building the customer's digital skills for employment and</p>

personal development. The Mentor uses our purpose designed Digital Skills Framework to structure each session.

The Mentor will also refer the customer to other support services based on their identified needs, such as our **Home Energy Advice Team (HEAT)** and **locally based mental health support services.**

Customers are also encouraged to attend our monthly Digital Cafe events for group-based, social engagement and peer-to-peer learning.

All customers have the option to also join our **Connect Service.** Connect is an online learning programme designed to support individuals to progress towards work and improve their health and wellbeing. It includes a menu of 22+ learning sessions, each delivered live and online by a team of facilitators and trained counsellors. Each session provides advice and guidance to help participants navigate various aspects of life. These range from managing stress and improving mental health, to preparing your CV, job searching and cultivating positive relationships. **To date, 43 customers have attended a wide range of Connect Sessions.**

Stage 5

Review & Exit Plan:

Towards the end of the three-month engagement, the Mentor and customer review the action plan and review their progress against all identified needs areas. Once all actions are completed, the Mentor and customer create an onward exit plan, which may include booking additional learning opportunities or transitioning into work.



Spotlight on the Digital Café

Our monthly Digital Café events, hosted in community locations such as the Maryhill Hub and the Wise Group's Community Hub, have become a cornerstone of our Digital Skills Mentoring service.

Customer-Driven Learning:

The themes of our Digital Cafés are dictated by the interests and needs of customers. Topics range from key digital skills like setting up email account, using Excel and MS Teams, or CV building and online job searching techniques.

Inclusive and Interactive:

In addition to skill-building, our cafés feature guest speakers such as our Home Energy Advice Team, our Employment Pathways Team, and representatives from our Connect Service. This variety enriches the learning experience and provides attendees with a broader understanding of available resources and support.

Enhancing Employability:

Recognising the importance of employment opportunities, we also invite employers to discuss their recruitment processes, available roles, and the digital competencies they seek. This direct engagement with potential employers demystifies the job application process and aligns our training with live job opportunities.

Social Connectivity:

Digital cafés offer more than just learning opportunities; they are vibrant social gatherings that encourage peer support and community building.

Success Stories:

Initially lacking any digital skills, Pauline was encouraged to attend a Digital Café by her Mentor. She was nervous as first as she was very early in her learning journey, however her determination, coupled with our support, led her to successfully create an email account and learn how to use it during her first Digital Café. The next day, she sent an email to her Mentor, expressing her gratitude:

"Thanks so much for encouraging me to come along yesterday. I am so glad I came along. I loved meeting all the other people and learning from them. I'm so looking forward to using the skills I am learning here in the future. It's nice to be in a room with other people like me and I can't wait for the next one."



DIGITAL SKILLS & EMPLOYABILITY

All those engaged in the service are currently unemployed. Nonetheless, the vast majority are keen to enter the job market. A significant barrier to work is a lack of digital skills, which are essential for effectively searching, applying for, and maintaining employment. To address this challenge, **our Mentors concentrate on developing these crucial digital competencies.** They provide tailored support to guide each customer through the process of:

- Setting up an email address
- Composing a digital CV using free tools such as Google Docs
- Job searching online
- Completing online application forms
- Submitting applications by email and communicate with potential employers
- Developing digital skills for work – including using tools such as Zoom, Google Suite, MS Teams, Microsoft 365.
- Using online communication tools for work.

Once their digital skills have suitably advanced, our Digital Skills Mentors **engage the support of our Employment Pathways Team to utilise these newfound skills to further their journey towards work.** This includes access to a **network of 20+ employers across Glasgow who are actively seeking employees for a variety of roles.** Employer partners include Malcolms Group, Telecommunication, Marriott Hotel Group, Scotrail and Iceland.

To-date **28 customer have worked one-to-one with our Employment Pathways Team.** They are all at different stages of their journey towards work, however all customers have moved into paid employment, volunteering opportunities, work-placements or continue to engage with the team. This is a significant achievement for those involved, especially considering how far they were to the job market when they first engaged in our service.

Aisha's experience: Overcoming Barriers to Work

Aisha, a former primary school teacher from Pakistan, relocated to Scotland 10 years ago. Following her move, she faced significant cultural and childcare barriers that prevented her from pursuing employment opportunities. The recent cost of living increase has meant that she now needed to find employment to help support her family. Despite her eagerness to return to work, Aisha struggled on her own to secure interviews due to a lack of recent UK work experience and gaps in her digital skills.

Engagement with Digital Skills Mentoring

Alongside her Mentor Surbhi, Aisha identified her key needs and created an Action Plan. This included learning more about the UK Education System and developing the relevant technological skills required to search and apply for jobs online. We provided Aisha with a laptop and set up a new email account to kickstart her digital journey.

Tailored Support and Progress

With a personalised learning plan, Aisha rapidly advanced from learning basic email functions to actively participating in virtual meetings. Our collaboration included CV building, interview preparation, and connecting her with further support through the Wise Group's services like Connect and Employment Pathways.



Community Involvement and Confidence Building

Aisha became an active participant in our regular Digital Cafes, significantly boosting her confidence and social skills. Her commitment was evident as she efficiently navigated through learning outcomes and applied her new skills in real-world scenarios.

Successful Outcomes

Aisha used her new skills to successfully secure a Tutoring position with Action Tutoring, helping underprivileged young people. This role not only aligns with her passion but also opens doors to further opportunities within the education sector. Her journey from a hesitant beginner to a confident user of digital tools for work showcases her determination and the effective support provided by our service.

Future Prospects

Aisha continues to receive ongoing support from our Employment Pathways team. She remains optimistic about her future contributions in education, reflecting on her transformative experience with enthusiasm: *"I never thought I would be able to teach kids in the UK using a computer. It's fantastic. I'm so excited to start working again."*

Aisha's journey illustrates the powerful influence our service has on employment outcomes. With some minor changes, we believe we can increase this impact further.

Going forward, we suggest that our Digital Skills Mentoring Service focuses more on employability - by intensifying work-related digital skills mentoring and establishing stronger connections with employers citywide. **To accomplish this, we recommend that**

in the next funding cycle, we extending our customer engagement duration from 3 months to 6 months. This extension will provide each customer with at least 3 months dedicated to enhancing their digital skills for work and 3 months working closely with our Employment Pathways team to aid in job search, application, and acquisition. Where feasible, we will also offer in-work support to help mitigate any challenges that may occur during the transition back to work after an extended period of unemployment.

DEMOGRAPHICS: WHO ARE OUR CUSTOMERS?

Our Digital Skills Mentoring service supports a cross-section of those in need and offers a valuable alternative to traditional classroom-based education, particularly for individuals who may not thrive in conventional learning environments.



Our one-to-one, personal-centred approach provides a highly attractive offer to individuals who have multiple barriers to the digital world. Almost all our customers have previously attended Digital Skills Courses/Classes that follow a set curriculum; however, they failed to provide the right support that they need. This is because these classes are not personalised and do not take into consideration different learning styles, level of understanding or personal circumstances.

In contrast, our approach is designed to recognise and adapt to unique needs and preferences. By providing tailored support and flexible learning modules, we ensure that everyone, regardless of their starting point or barriers, can effectively and comfortably navigate the digital landscape.

Our services also includes continuous support and feedback, allowing learners to progress at their own pace without feeling rushed or overlooked. Moreover, we integrate practical, real-life applications of digital skills to ensure that the learning is relevant and immediately applicable. This method has proven to be particularly effective for individuals who may feel overwhelmed by more traditional, structured group learning environments.

As a result, our service has been significantly over subscribed with a regular waiting list and a high demand from both customers and referral partners.

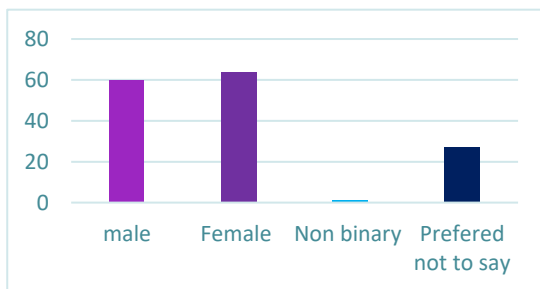
Referrals Partners:

152 people have so far been referred to the service, of which 106 people have actively engaged in the service. Referrals to the service have so far come from over 21 organisations.

We have additional partnerships with organisations across Glasgow who offer specific expertise to help our customers address complex issues. Our Mentors have made 191 onward referrals to both Wise Group services and to external services. This includes:

- Glasgow City Council's Digital Programmes
- Glasgow Life Digital Skills Learning Services
- Multiply courses
- Plugged In Digital Recycling Project (to access digital devices)
- Citizen Advice Bureau
- NHS Services

Gender:

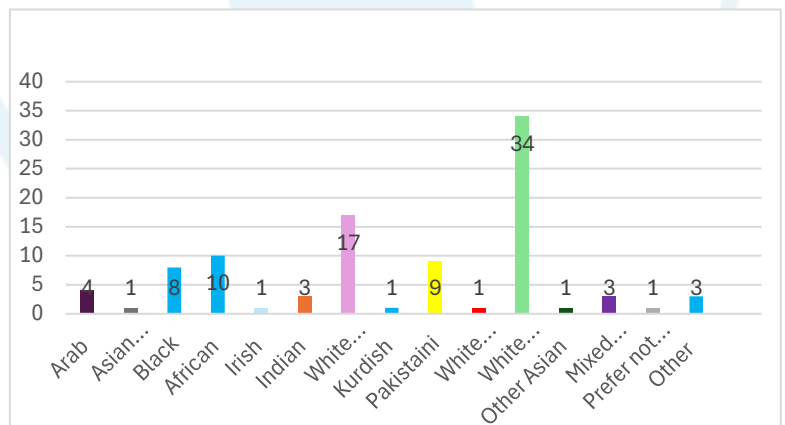


Of the 152 referrals to the service, 60 were male and 64 were female highlighting an almost even gender distribution. This suggests that the service appeals to or is equally accessible to all.

Ethnicity:

Our customer base is rich in ethnic diversity, underlining our commitment to inclusivity and accessibility.

For approx. 20% of our customers, English is not their first language. Their feedback underscores the appeal of our one-to-one delivery model, as our Mentors create an environment where they can freely express themselves.



We also have Mentors who are multilingual and customers who volunteer to offer translation support where necessary. This helps to facilitate a more inclusive learning

environment which is vital for customers who are new to Scotland, keen to move closer towards work and to integrate fully into the local community.

Customers with Diverse Support Needs:

Approximately 60% of customers have at least one health-related need, encompassing a wide spectrum of mental and physical health conditions, learning disabilities, neurodiversity, physical disabilities, and addictions.

Our Mentors, many of whom have lived experiences like those of our customers, provide tailored support that is sensitive and specific to each individual situation.



This empathetic approach empowers our Mentors to **effectively meet unique needs and foster meaningful progress**. We also work in close partnership with organisations such as Autism Scotland to provide support that is designed with specific needs in mind.

Take the case of John Paul, a customer who was referred by a Partick Housing Association. John Paul was diagnosed with ADHD at the age of 38. His diagnosis was a turning point for him, clarifying the reasons behind previous challenges with learning digital skills. Our one-to-one approach was particularly beneficial for John Paul, offering him the person-centred support he needed and a particular method of communication that met his needs. This helped foster a strong, trusting relationship with his Mentor.

In his Action Plan, John Paul focused on enhancing his life, digital, and social skills to better prepare for employment, while also managing his mental health. His activities included engaging in our regular Digital Cafés and participating in a series of Connect sessions.

With the dedicated support of his Digital Skills Mentor, John Paul quickly mastered essential digital tasks and was then referred onto more advanced courses, such as those provided by Glasgow Code Learning and Jump Digital. His active participation not only improved his readiness for employment but also reduced his social isolation. This progress significantly boosted his confidence and fuelled his ambition to give back to the community and pursue a role in the future as a digital mentor and/or community champion.

Addressing Digital Exclusion and Poverty

The majority of our customers reside in Glasgow's most deprived communities, with nearly 75% living in the lowest two SIMD deciles. This reflects findings from a report by the Centre for Social Justice which highlights that individuals living in poverty are significantly more likely to be digitally excluded from society.

The report also indicates that working-age individuals who lack digital skills face considerable economic challenges, as they are significantly more likely to be unemployed (22.1% compared to the national average of 3.8%). Even among those employed, individuals with limited digital skills are more likely to hold low-income jobs. Therefore, reducing digital exclusion and enhancing digital skills is an effective way to increase employment opportunities as evidenced by the outcomes of our service.

We are addressing the link between digital skills and poverty by providing a holistic and person-centred service which teaches essential digital skills in an incremental way, and which focuses on individual goals. Our Mentors use a custom designed Digital Skills structure based on the [UK Government's Essential Digital Skills \(EDS\) framework](#). Within each of the 5-learning outcomes, customer can choose the key areas they wish to focus on for work and for life:

1. Transacting
2. Communicating
3. Problem Solving
4. Information Handling
5. Online safety

To date, across those who have actively engaged in the service:

66% report increased skills to transact online

71% report improvements in Communicating online

76% report increased problem solving skills

76% report increased information handling abilities

76% report improvements in their understand of online safety

Approximately half of our customers to-date already had access to a digital device. For those who did not, we have equipped 46 customers with a digital device to ensure they can fully engage in the digital world. This includes the distribution of specialist equipment for people with additional needs and /or disabilities. We have also provided access to data-vouchers to improve connectivity thanks to a partnership with the Good Things Foundation.



ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

In addition to tracking the achievement of essential digital skills, for each customer, we record how many engagements they have with their Mentor, the number of action plan goals created and how many activities have been completed. This allows us to track progress towards individual short- and medium-term outcomes. This process provides wider evidence of the difference our service is making on the lives of customers.

We have successfully supported 106 customers so far. Mentors have completed over 1065 Engagements with customers to help them achieve the goals identified in their individual Action Plans.

In turn, the completion of activities has led to the achievement of 1051 Short-term and Medium-term outcomes.

The achievement of outcomes helps Mentors to track customer progression against their identified Areas of Needs. Alongside the Customer, our Mentors revisit the Needs Assessment at intervals throughout their learning journey.

From this, we can evidence the significant impact our service has had against all 15 Areas of Need:

Identified Area of Need	% of customers evidencing progression (based on those who identified the need and completed more than one needs assessment)
Digital Skills	86%
Wellbeing, Self Esteem & Confidence	74%
Access to Other Support	72%
Aspiration & Motivation	71%
Basic Skills	68%
Developing Life Skills	68%
Work Experience and Skills	76%
Mental Wellbeing	51%
Building & Maintaining Relationships	52%
Social Skills for Work	55%
Stability	41%
Energy Assistance	39%
Financial Support	41%
Physical Health	22%
Addictions	66%

From this, we can evidence that the service is, as expected, having a significant impact on improving digital skills. However, we can also see that our support had ensured marked progression in all 15 Areas of Need.

When considering the link between a lack of digital skills, poverty and unemployment, it is encouraging to see that against all digital and employment related needs, 72% of customers report progression. This is despite the relatively short engagement period of three months. For our partnership going forward, as previously outlined, we propose increasing the engagement period to six months.

This would enable us to further focus on work-related digital skills and associated employability support, which we expect will further increase the chances that our customers will move into or closer towards work.

SOCIAL IMPACT AND RETURN ON INVESTMENT

The 15 key areas of need identified and updated as part of a customer's journey are linked to Activities and Short, Medium, and Long-term outcomes which can then be used to calculate the social impact of Relational Mentoring. The Wise Group is committed to delivering £1.5 billion of Social Impact over the next 5 years.

To understand how much social value is created through the delivery of this service, we used the UK Social Value Bank, developed by Simetrica Jacobs in partnership with HACT (The Housing Associations Charitable Trust). The UK Social Value Bank (UKSVB) uses a Wellbeing Valuation which is endorsed within HM Treasury's Green Book and has a comprehensive set of metrics designed to measure the social impact of services like our Digital Skills Mentoring service.

The measure of impact is based upon data collected by Mentors to evidence the achievement of outcomes by customers. Our SROI consultancy partner, HACT, matched the Wise Group's Relational Mentoring framework outcomes to the UKSVB. As some outcomes did not directly map to the UKSVB social value wellbeing measures, this indicates the social value generated to date has not been fully accounted for. The calculation also includes a deadweight deduction, which accounts for what would have happened anyway in the absence of an intervention by the service. By incorporating deadweight, this ensures that only the additional social value is calculated, providing a more robust and accurate valuation.

Additionally, to ensure no overclaiming and double counting of outcomes, only those that are material are included in the overall calculation. *E.g. where two or more outcomes draw on the same UKSVB metric, only one is counted per customer to prevent double counting.*

Based on the period from April 2024 to October 2024, the total expenditure to deliver the service was £136,116. The total indicative value derived from the mapped outcomes (allowing for both deadweight and in accordance with double counting principles), is £999,280 of social value.

Outcomes Achieved	
(Short-term & Medium-term)	Social Value
1051	£999,280

The social value generated by the service is expected to be higher than what is currently mapped to the UKSVB, resulting in a significant indicative Social Return on Investment (SROI) of 1:8. This means that for every £1 invested, almost £8 of social value has already been created, including primary value from increased wellbeing and secondary

value from preventative spending/savings for wider society. As we have a remaining 5 months of delivery in this funding cycle, we are very confident that the social value will significantly increase.

CUSTOMER JOURNEYS


Case Study: Improving Digital and Skills for Work

Background: Hadil has faced numerous challenges in her young life including poverty, homelessness, and general instability. To help overcome these barriers, Hadil was referred to our Digital Skills Mentoring (DSM) service, where she began working with Jenni, one of our Digital Skills Mentors. Alongside improving her digital skills, Hadil expressed a keen interest in pursuing a career that would allow her to immediately apply her new skills in a practical environment.

Support Provided: Jenni spent time with Hadil to understand her digital barriers and how this was impacting her journey towards work. They put together an Action Plan and set realistic goals which they began working on together via weekly sessions in the local community. Jenni provided Hadil with access to a laptop and gradually Hadil's confidence grew significantly. She learned how to independently use her new device and skills to job-search online, to communicate online with employers via email and MS Teams and how to manage her personal finances online. Jenni then linked Hadil to Stephanie from our Employment Pathways team who encouraged and supported her to enrol in an upcoming barista training programme with one of key partners Change Please.

Progress and Development: During the barista training, Hadil demonstrated significant enthusiasm and talent. Stephanie, who met with Hadil at the training, reported that Hadil was enjoying the training immensely and excelled in latte art, a skill she took particular pride in. Feedback from her trainer was overwhelmingly positive, noting her exceptional performance. As a result, she has secured her a placement with Everyman Cinema, a major employer involved in the programme.





Outcomes and Future Steps: Hadil is committed to continuing her journey by completing her digital skills training, which she believes will be invaluable in the future. She is eagerly anticipating the start of her work placement with Everyman Cinema, where she aims to further refine her skills and establish a solid foundation for her career.

Case Study: Making Connection Work

Background: Saba's engaged in our Digital Skills Service to develop her knowledge and skills to get a part time role within retail or customer service. Her Mentor, Surbhi, began by creating a personalised learning plan for Saba, focusing on developing digital skills for work, combined with employment support from Stephanie from our Employment Pathways Team.


Support Provided: Surbhi encouraged and supported Saba to attend a recent Wise Group jobs fair at Platform. She was excited to attend knowing more than 50 employers were coming to the event and was reassured that her Mentor would be there to support her on the day.

Surbhi introduced Saba her to several organisations that were actively hiring and aligned with her interests. Saba establish connections with potential employers, distributed her recently created CV, and received advice on her applications for various retail job opportunities.

Outcome: Soon after, Saba heard back from employers such as Boots, Lush, Costa and Tim Hortons. Stephanie supported Saba to reply to these emails in a professional manner and to complete online applications. Saba has since usefully secured and has started a new job with Boots as a retail assistant and is loving her new role. She knows that she can reach out to her Mentor Surbhi should she need any further support.

Case Study: Reducing Social Isolation

Background: Caroline was referred to the Digital Skills Mentoring (DSM) team in April by an external partner who noted how digitally excluded she was and the impact this was having on her life. Upon contacting her, our Digital Skills Mentor Gillain learned that while Caroline was somewhat comfortable using her smartphone, she was bewildered by new tasks and lacked any computer skills. She expressed a profound uncertainty about computers, admitting she did not even know how to turn on a laptop and felt she was never going to learn.



Gillian spent time getting to know Caroline and slowly they developed a strong relationship. After a few meetings in her local community, Gillian encouraged Caroline to come along to a Digital Café event. During their conversation, Caroline revealed her struggles with social interactions and low self-confidence, yet she expressed a desire to challenge herself by attending the café.

Support Areas and Action Plan: A laptop was provided to Caroline, and the first objective set was for her to participate in a Connect session. The initial steps involved teaching her to connect to Wi-Fi and use Microsoft Teams, which was covered over two sessions. Caroline successfully attended her first two Connect sessions independently and reported a positive experience, feeling pleased that she could manage without external help.

Her attendance at the Digital Café, although nerve-wracking, was ultimately fulfilling. She engaged with others facing similar digital challenges, which alleviated her feelings of inadequacy. Repeated assurances were given to Caroline that her lack of digital knowledge stemmed merely from not being previously taught, a concept she gradually began to accept.

Further Plans: The plan is to continue enhancing her digital skills and boosting her confidence. Efforts will also focus on increasing her social interactions, which, coupled with her growing digital proficiency, will broaden her involvement in community activities. Discussions about potential volunteer opportunities are ongoing, aiming to address her feelings of isolation.

Visit us here:
thewisegroup.co.uk/reports

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