



East Riding Digital Inclusion Conference 2026

Evaluation Report

By Community VISION CIO

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Summary

The East Riding Digital Inclusion Conference 2026, hosted by Community VISION, successfully brought together partners, practitioners, decision-makers and community representatives to explore how digital exclusion can be reduced across East Riding of Yorkshire.

The conference set out to strengthen partnership working, share good practice, identify barriers to digital inclusion and develop future collaborative approaches to tackling digital exclusion.

A total of 72 places were booked, with 63 delegates attending, representing an attendance rate of 87.5%.

The conference attracted representatives from over 40 separate organisations including local government, health, policing, digital providers, village halls, libraries, community organisations, charities and the private sector.

The event feedback demonstrates that the conference:

- Increased delegates' understanding of digital inclusion.
- Strengthened existing relationships and established new partnerships.
- Increased awareness of available support and services.
- Inspired organisations to consider new digital inclusion initiatives.
- Reinforced the need for partnership-led approaches.
- Generated valuable intelligence regarding barriers faced by individuals and organisations.

Overall, the conference achieved its intended objectives and has established a strong foundation for future collaborative activity through the East Riding Digital Inclusion Network (ERDIN) and Community VISION's ongoing Digital Inclusion for All programme.

Introduction

Digital exclusion remains a significant challenge across East Riding, particularly within rural and coastal communities where barriers relating to connectivity, affordability, accessibility, confidence and social isolation continue to prevent residents from fully participating in an increasingly digital society.

Community VISION's Digital Inclusion for All programme sets out to address these issues through Digital Hubs, outreach activity, training, partnership working and community-based support. We currently support Digital Hubs and community-led projects to improve digital confidence, increase access to online services and reduce social isolation. The project has already supported the development of Digital Hubs and community support models across the East Riding.

The aims of the conference were to to:

- Increase understanding of digital exclusion.
- Share local and national good practice.
- Encourage partnership working.
- Showcase existing support and services.
- Identify future priorities for digital inclusion activity.
- Strengthen the East Riding Digital Inclusion Network (ERDIN).

Conference Overview

Venue:- Lund Village Hall

Date:- Tuesday 16 June 2026

Attendance

Measure	Total
Places Booked	72
Delegates Attending	63
Attendance Rate	87.5%

Agenda

The conference agenda included:

- Welcome and opening remarks.
- National and regional keynote presentations.
- Recognition and celebration of local Digital Hubs through a certificate presentation ceremony.
- A panel discussion exploring digital confidence and support needs.
- A Digital Inclusion Marketplace featuring local and regional support organisations.
- Networking opportunities and interactive consultation activities.
- Discussions regarding future partnership opportunities and collaborative working

Speakers and Contributors

Event Host

The conference was expertly chaired and compered by John Harding from the Yorkshire Radio Network (Seaside FM, Great Driffield Radio and Great Yorkshire Radio).

John's facilitation ensured the event remained engaging, accessible and well-paced throughout the day.

Keynote Speakers

Dr Emma Stone:- Director of Evidence and Engagement, Good Things Foundation

Dr Stone delivered the keynote presentation:

"Digital Inclusion: Opportunities & What Comes Next"

The presentation explored:

- The national picture of digital exclusion.
- Emerging opportunities and future challenges.
- The importance of community-based support.
- Future priorities for digital inclusion policy and practice.

Attendees consistently highlighted this session as informative and thought-provoking.

Neil Bartholomew:- KCOM

Neil delivered the keynote presentation:

"Bridging the Connectivity Gap: Improving Access Across East Riding"

The presentation focused on:

- Rural broadband challenges.
- Connectivity infrastructure developments.
- Improving digital access in rural communities.
- Opportunities for collaboration between connectivity providers and community organisations.

The session provided delegates with valuable insight into connectivity challenges and future opportunities across East Riding.

Digital Hub Recognition

As part of the conference, Community VISION formally recognised the achievements of local Digital Hubs through the presentation of certificates.

The Digital Hubs recognised were:

- M.A.S.H
- Newton Upon Derwent Local History Group
- Burstwick Village Hall
- Sutton Upon Derwent Village Hall
- Holme Family Connect
- Riston Village Hall
- Wolds Edge Methodist Church
- Rawcliffe Village Hall

The recognition celebrated the contribution made by these organisations in supporting residents to improve digital confidence, access services online and reduce social isolation.

The ceremony also reinforced the important role that trusted community venues play in addressing digital exclusion within rural communities.

Panel Discussion

The conference featured a panel discussion called:

"Building Digital Confidence for All Ages: What Support Do Our Communities Really Need?"

Panel members included:

- **Sian Broughton**:- Chief Executive Officer, Community VISION
- **Julie Dearing**:- Safeguarding Support Officer, Community VISION
- **Sarah Harris**:- Digital Facilitator, East Riding of Yorkshire Council

The discussion focused on:

- Barriers experienced by older adults, unemployed residents and isolated rural communities.
- Practical support models that are working locally.
- The importance of effective partnership working.
- Learning and experiences from digital inclusion initiatives across East Riding.

The session generated significant audience engagement and highlighted the importance of local, trusted and relationship-based support.

Attendee and Stakeholder Representation

A significant strength of the conference was the breadth and diversity of organisations represented.

Representatives attended from more than 40 organisations, including:

Local Government ➤ East Riding of Yorkshire Council ➤ East Riding Libraries and Customer Services ➤ East Riding Adult Learning ➤ East Riding ASB Team ➤ East Riding Your Money Team ➤ North Lincolnshire Libraries ➤ Rawcliffe Parish Council ➤ Riston Parish Council ➤ Rudston Parish Council	Digital Inclusion and Connectivity Partners ➤ Good Things Foundation ➤ AbilityNet ➤ Quickline ➤ KCOM ➤ Barclays
Voluntary, Community, Faith and Social Enterprise Sector ➤ Age UK Hull and East Yorkshire ➤ Beverley Rural Youth ➤ Citizens Advice Hull and East Riding ➤ Community VISION ➤ Fishermen's Mission ➤ Friends of Riston Village Hall CIO* ➤ Home-Start Hull ➤ Humber and Wolds Rural Action (HWRA) ➤ M.A.S.H* ➤ Neighbourhood Network ➤ Newton upon Derwent Heritage Café* ➤ Penderels Trust ➤ Rawcliffe Village Hall* ➤ Rudston Village Hall ➤ Seaton Ross Village Hall Committee ➤ Sight Support ➤ South Dalton Village Hall ➤ Sutton upon Derwent Village Hall* ➤ Wolds Edge Methodist Church* * Registered Digital Hubs	
Health Sector ➤ Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust ➤ Humber NHS Services	Community Safety Partners ➤ Humberside Police ➤ Cyber Hood Watch Humberside
Employment and Skills ➤ Jobcentre Plus	Media ➤ Great Yorkshire Radio

The attendance profile demonstrates that digital inclusion is increasingly recognised as a cross-cutting issue affecting health, community safety, education, employment and social inclusion.

Digital Inclusion Marketplace

The Digital Inclusion Marketplace formed a central part of the event and enabled attendees to engage directly with local support providers and digital inclusion initiatives.

Marketplace organisations included:

- Age UK Hull and East Yorkshire
- Sight Support
- Humberside Police
- Community VISION
- Humber and Wolds Rural Action (HWRA)
- East Riding of Yorkshire Council – Your Money Team
- KCOM
- Quickline
- M.A.S.H
- East Riding Adult Learning
- East Riding Libraries

The marketplace was consistently identified as one of the most valuable aspects of the conference, with attendees highlighting opportunities to establish new contacts, explore services and develop referral pathways.

Partnership Contributions

The conference was delivered through a strong partnership approach.

Community VISION would like to formally recognise the contribution of:

- **KCOM** – Principal Sponsor.
- **East Riding of Yorkshire Council** – strategic partner.
- **John Harding and the Yorkshire Radio Network** – conference host and compère.
- **M.A.S.H** – for supporting the event through refreshments and hospitality throughout the day.
- **Stuarts of Driffield** – for providing lunch for attendees.
- All speakers, panel members, stall holders and attendees.

Community Safety Volunteer Support

Humberside Police and Humberside Fire & Rescue Service supported the event through the deployment of three Community Safety Volunteers, who provided practical assistance with venue set-up and logistics.

Their involvement demonstrated the important relationship between digital inclusion, online safety and community resilience.

Key Findings

Increased Understanding of Digital Inclusion

Feedback suggests that the conference significantly increased attendees' understanding of digital inclusion.

One attendee commented:

"The minimal digital standards is great! When working with people going forward I will think about this. It has helped me to think about people's digital needs more holistically."

Another attendee stated:

"I thought the talks were really interesting, they spoke about things I never would have thought about before."

These comments suggest that the conference successfully broadened understanding and encouraged a more holistic approach to digital inclusion.

Networking and Partnership Development

Networking opportunities were consistently identified as one of the strongest aspects of the conference.

Attendees commented:

"It's been a great event, I have spoken to lots of people I wouldn't have spoken to or known. It will help us linking with other groups moving forward."

"I'D NEVER HEARD OF SOME OF THESE PEOPLE WHO WERE HERE TODAY SO IT'S GOOD TO KNOW THEY ARE THERE AND WHERE WE CAN GO FOR SUPPORT."

The conference successfully enabled organisations to establish new relationships and identify future opportunities for collaboration.

Future Action

Attendees reported feeling inspired to develop new digital inclusion initiatives.

One attendee commented:

"It's made me think about what we can do around digital inclusion now, and what different projects we can run."

This demonstrates that the event acted not only as a networking opportunity but also as a opportunity for innovation and service development.

Marketplace Impact

Feedback from stall holders highlighted the success of the marketplace.

One stallholder stated:

"It's been fab today, there are loads of people here and we have had quite a few enquiries."

The marketplace successfully increased awareness of available services and facilitated new referral opportunities.

Attendee Feedback

A feedback survey was issued to attendees to assess satisfaction levels, identify learning outcomes and inform future event planning.

Overall, feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with attendees reporting high levels of satisfaction with both the content and delivery of the conference.

The survey received 43 responses, representing a response rate of 68.3% of attendees.

Overall Satisfaction

Of those providing a rating:

- 74.3% (26 respondents) rated the conference 5 out of 5.
- 25.7% (9 respondents) rated the conference 4 out of 5.
- Only one respondent provided a score below 4.

Usefulness of Conference Content

Attendees reported that the conference content was highly useful:

- 64.9% (24 respondents) described the conference as "Extremely useful".
- 21.6% (8 respondents) described it as "Very useful".
- 10.8% (4 respondents) described it as "Somewhat useful".
- 2.33% (1 respondent) reported the content as "Not very useful".

Overall, 86.5% of respondents rated the conference content as either extremely or very useful.

Relevance to Attendee Roles

The conference was highly relevant to attendees' professional roles and organisational priorities:

- 53.5% (23 respondents) stated that the event was "Extremely relevant".
- 25.6% (11 respondents) stated that it was "Very relevant".
- 9.3% (4 respondents) reported it was "Somewhat relevant".

In total, almost 79% of respondents reported that the event was either extremely or very relevant to their role or organisation.

Increased Knowledge and Confidence

The conference successfully improved delegates' understanding of digital inclusion:

- 34.9% (15 respondents) reported that attending had significantly increased their confidence in understanding digital inclusion and supporting others.
- A further 34.9% (15 respondents) reported their confidence had increased somewhat.

This means that almost 70% of respondents reported an increase in confidence following attendance.

Organisational Benefit

Delegates overwhelmingly felt that the conference would benefit their organisations:

- 58.1% (25 respondents) stated that the event had provided significant new information, ideas, contacts or opportunities.
- 25.6% (11 respondents) stated that it had provided some useful information or opportunities.

Overall, 83.7% of respondents reported that the conference had generated useful opportunities to support their organisation's work or development.

Networking Outcomes

One of the conference's strongest outcomes was partnership development and networking:

- 32 respondents (74.4%) reported making useful new contacts or connections during the event.
- Only one respondent reported that they had not made any new contacts.

This finding strongly supports the qualitative feedback received regarding the value of networking opportunities.

Future Partnership Working

The conference generated significant appetite for ongoing collaboration:

- 65.1% (28 respondents) expressed an interest in becoming involved in future digital inclusion partnership work or networks.
- A further 14% (6 respondents) stated that they may wish to become involved.

This represents a strong foundation for the continued development of the East Riding Digital Inclusion Network (ERDIN).

Future Engagement

Interest in future activity was exceptionally high:

- 79.1% (34 respondents) requested to receive updates about future Community VISION digital inclusion projects and events.

This demonstrates significant ongoing demand for digital inclusion networking, learning and collaboration opportunities.

Consultation Findings

Consultation activities generated valuable intelligence regarding barriers to digital inclusion.

Attendees identified:

Confidence and Motivation ➤ Lack of confidence using technology. ➤ Fear of making mistakes. ➤ Anxiety relating to fraud and cyber crime. ➤ Lack of awareness regarding available support.	Skills and Knowledge ➤ Limited digital skills. ➤ Low literacy levels. ➤ Lack of knowledge regarding how to become digitally included.
Financial Barriers ➤ Affordability of devices. ➤ Cost of broadband and mobile connectivity. ➤ Financial hardship.	Accessibility ➤ Complex websites and online forms. ➤ Accessibility barriers affecting disabled and non-disabled users.
Rural Isolation ➤ Poor connectivity. ➤ Transport barriers. ➤ Limited local support opportunities.	Social Factors ➤ Loneliness and isolation. ➤ Lack of family support. ➤ Reduced opportunities to practise digital skills.

Quickline also undertook additional consultation during the conference. The following themes emerged:

Knowledge and Confidence <i>"Lack of knowledge – doesn't know how to be digitally included."</i> <i>"Lack of confidence – seems confusing/too difficult so gives up or doesn't attempt at all."</i>	Accessibility <i>"Some websites/apps/forms may be too complex or hard to navigate for disabled and non-disabled people."</i>
Organisational Funding Challenges <i>"Wi-Fi is very expensive but essential."</i>	Rural Connectivity <i>"Rurally isolated so difficulty getting a broadband connection at home or in the immediate community."</i>
Ageing and Lifelong Learning <i>"Memory issues come with age so embedding learning and follow up sessions to ensure confidence."</i>	Rapid Technological Change <i>"Things on the internet change all the time so can't keep up."</i> These findings reinforce the need for ongoing, community-based digital support.

Impact

Community VISION currently supports nine village halls to operate as Digital Hubs and delivers digital pop-up activity alongside libraries, community centres, leisure centres, NHS services and DWP settings.

The conference generated additional interest from organisations wishing to establish Digital Hubs and participate in future partnership activity.

The event also strengthened awareness of the East Riding Digital Inclusion Network (ERDIN) and generated new expressions of interest in collaborative working.

Conclusion

The East Riding Digital Inclusion Conference 2026 was highly successful.

The conference achieved its objectives and demonstrated strong demand for continued partnership working, shared learning and coordinated action.

Particular strengths included:

- Strong attendance and engagement.
- Diverse stakeholder representation.
- High quality presentations.
- Effective networking opportunities.
- Strong marketplace activity.
- Valuable consultation findings.
- Increased awareness and understanding.
- Significant enthusiasm for future collaboration.

The conference demonstrated that digital inclusion remains a priority across sectors and that there is considerable appetite to work collaboratively to address inequalities.

The East Riding Digital Inclusion Conference 2026 successfully brought together organisations, communities and practitioners to share learning, build partnerships and strengthen the local response to digital exclusion. The conference has laid strong foundations for future collaborative working and represents an important milestone in East Riding's journey towards becoming a more digitally inclusive place.

