AbilityNet

Digital Lifeline: Supporting people with learning disabilities

Digital Lifeline is an emergency response project. Funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport Good Things Foundation delivered the project in partnership with AbilityNet and Digital Unite, supported by Learning Disability England, the Voluntary Organisations Disability Group, self-advocacy groups and other disability and digital inclusion organisations.
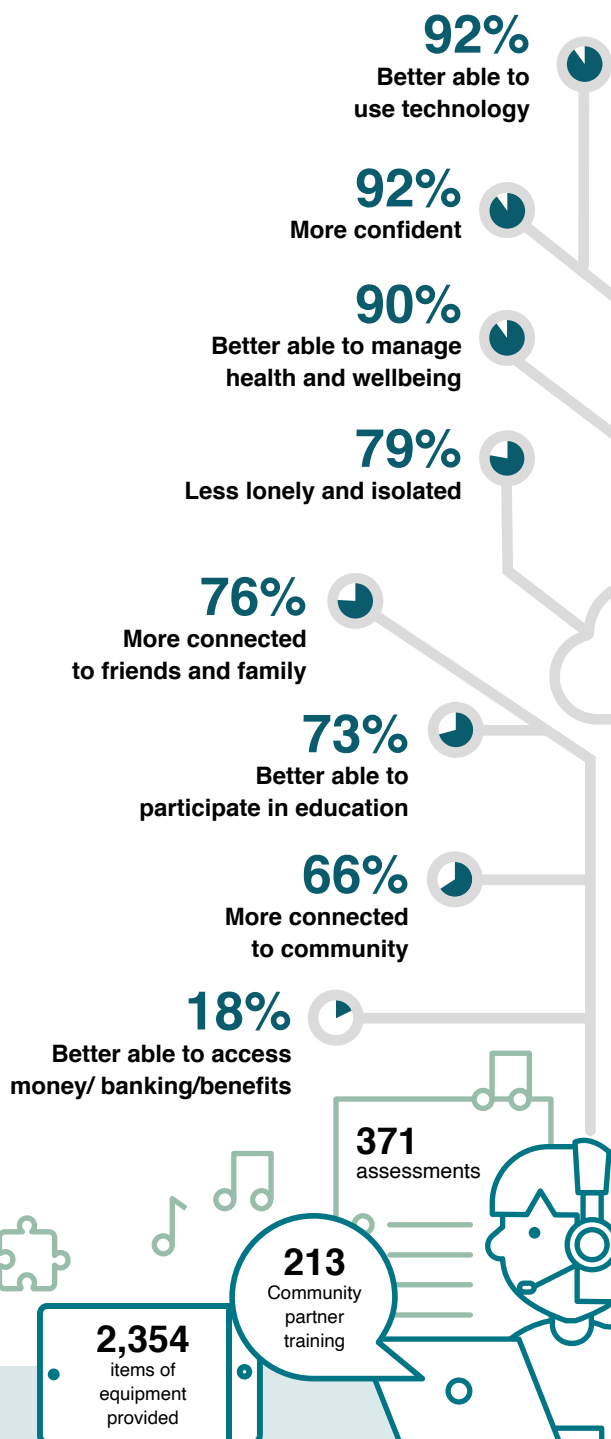
AbilityNet was lead accessibility partner for the project providing specialist advice and support to community partners and beneficiaries.

Our impact on Individuals

"It's given me more independence. It's allowed me to keep my interests and access them in a different way."

JANET GROVES, DIGITAL LIFELINE BENEFICIARY, WORCESTERSHIRE

92%
Better able to use technology

92%
More confident

90%
Better able to manage health and wellbeing

79%
Less lonely and isolated

76%
More connected to friends and family

73%
Better able to participate in education

66%
More connected to community

18%
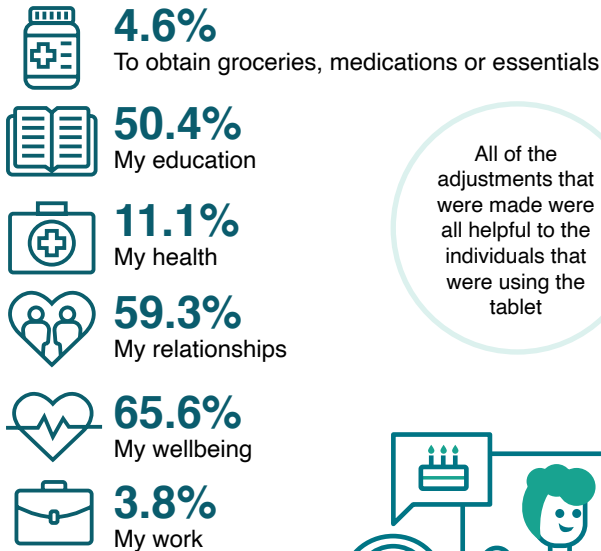Better able to access money/ banking/benefits

Our impact on Organisations

"Digital inclusion will be an ongoing priority for our organisation, and a large proportion of our participants have additional support needs, so we would love to continue engaging with AbilityNet. We will certainly use the website resources."
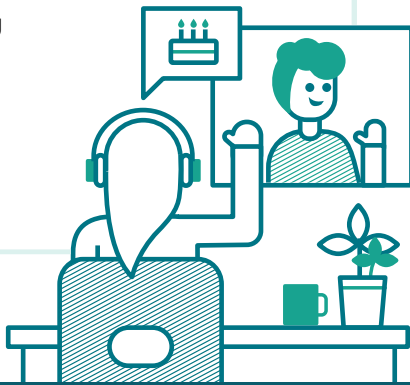
100%
Better able to support learners

92%
Knowledgeable and confident about tech

95%
Able to work in a more disability inclusive way

100%
Better able to engage with learners

"Tablets are built into people's routine now.. it's something they'll continue for the rest of their lives… everyone seems to be enjoying them."
COMMUNITY PARTNER

371
assessments

101
volunteer buddies assigned

971
beneficiaries

121
Community Partners accessing services to support 2978 beneficiaries

213
Community partner training

2,354
items of equipment provided

Goals

4.6%
To obtain groceries, medications or essentials

50.4%
My education

11.1%
My health

59.3%
My relationships

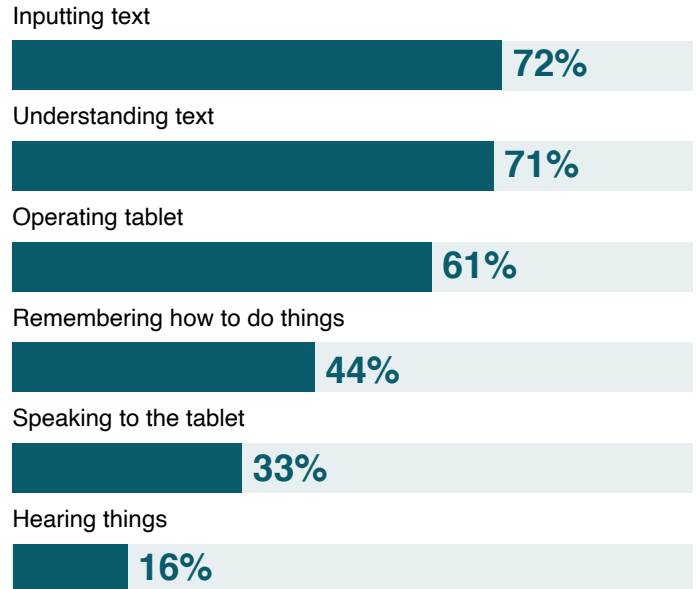**65.6%**
My wellbeing

3.8%
My work

> All of the adjustments that were made were all helpful to the individuals that were using the tablet

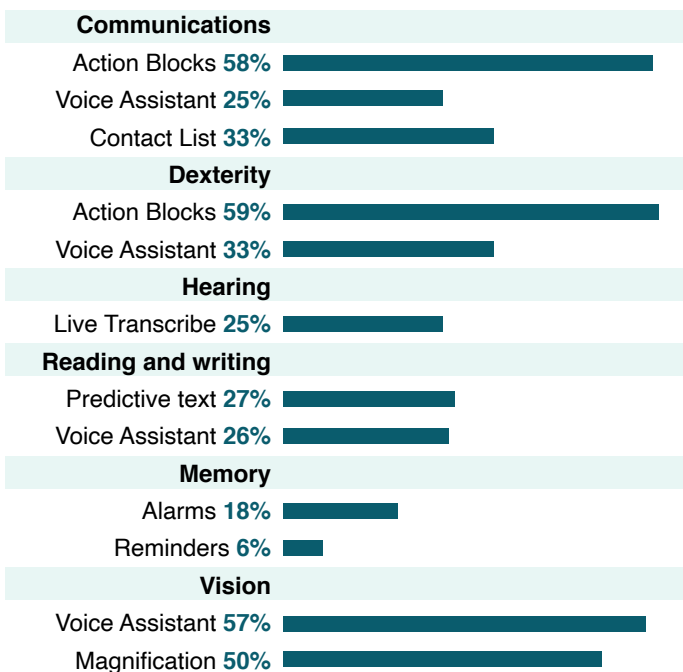> The ability to video-conference gifted a birthday chat with a loved one

Barriers

Inputting text
72%

Understanding text
71%

Operating tablet
61%

Remembering how to do things
44%

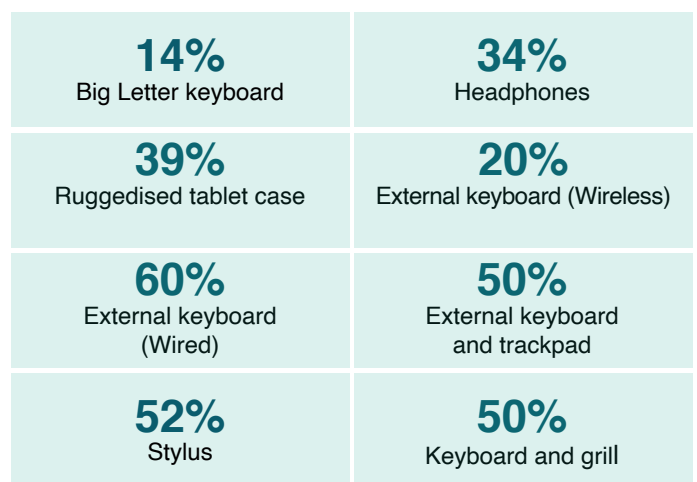Speaking to the tablet
33%

Hearing things
16%

58% of assessed beneficiaries recorded multiple disabilities

Top Adjustments

These percentages reflect the proportion of people who have already implemented recommended adjustments. The full report shows that there is a large appetite from respondents to make future assistive modifications and learn other skills.

Communications
Action Blocks **58%**
Voice Assistant **25%**
Contact List **33%**

Dexterity
Action Blocks **59%**
Voice Assistant **33%**

Hearing
Live Transcribe **25%**

Reading and writing
Predictive text **27%**
Voice Assistant **26%**

Memory
Alarms **18%**
Reminders **6%**

Vision
Voice Assistant **57%**
Magnification **50%**

Assistive Hardware

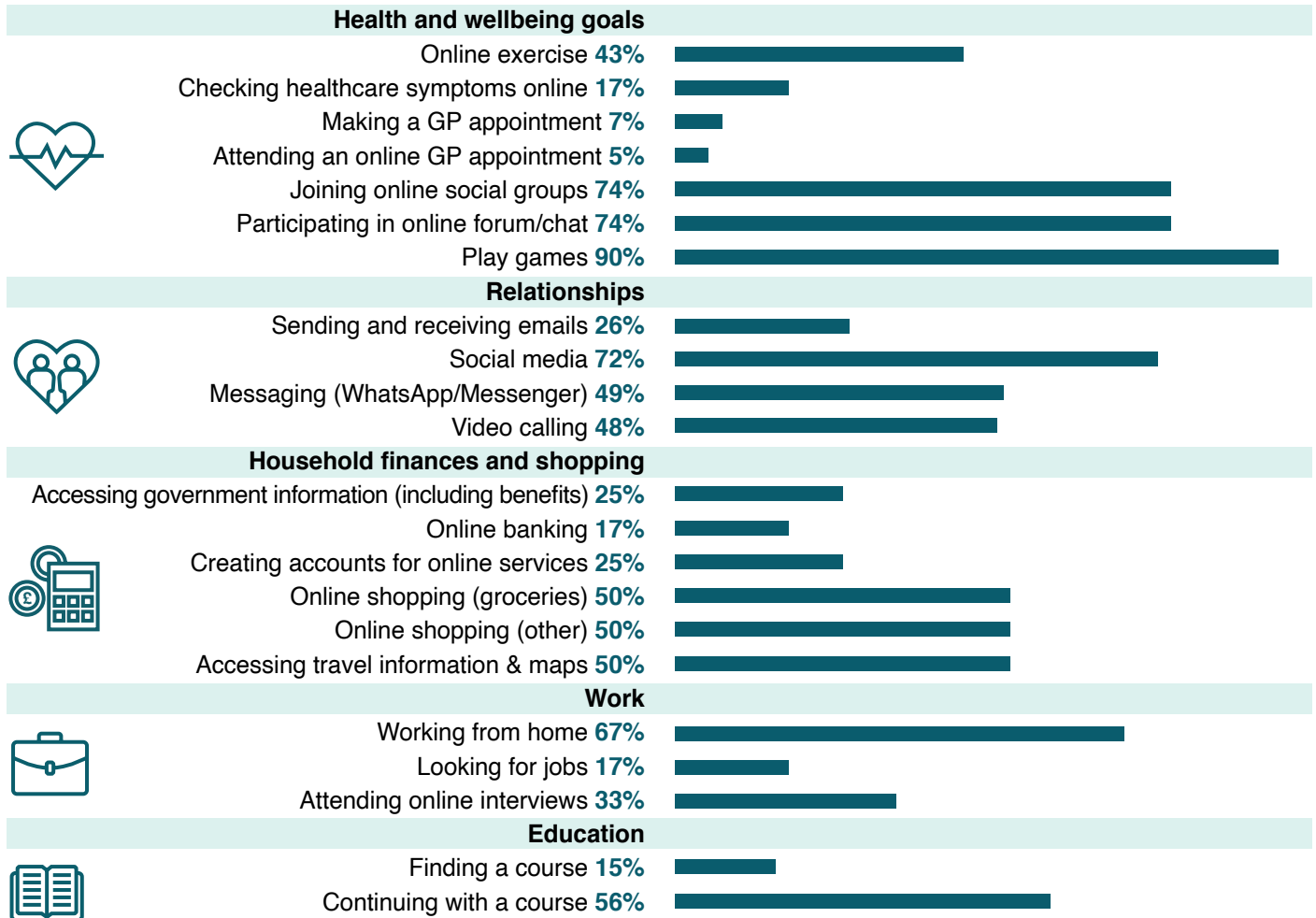| **14%** Big Letter keyboard	**34%** Headphones
39% Ruggedised tablet case	**20%** External keyboard (Wireless)
60% External keyboard (Wired)	**50%** External keyboard and trackpad
52% Stylus	**50%** Keyboard and grill

Other popular recommendations

26 people Gooseneck tablet holder
5 people Be My Eyes (VI)
26 people Symbo talk (communication)
48 people Colouring App
33 people Jigsaw
30 people Number App
15 people Phonics and spelling app
18 people Photos App
7 people Stories
40 people Games

> Personalised recommendations meant people didn't all get the same things - they all got what they actually needed"
> **COMMUNITY PARTNER**

Early goals achieved

Health and wellbeing goals

- Online exercise **43%**
- Checking healthcare symptoms online **17%**
- Making a GP appointment **7%**
- Attending an online GP appointment **5%**
- Joining online social groups **74%**
- Participating in online forum/chat **74%**
- Play games **90%**

Relationships

- Sending and receiving emails **26%**
- Social media **72%**
- Messaging (WhatsApp/Messenger) **49%**
- Video calling **48%**

Household finances and shopping

- Accessing government information (including benefits) **25%**
- Online banking **17%**
- Creating accounts for online services **25%**
- Online shopping (groceries) **50%**
- Online shopping (other) **50%**
- Accessing travel information & maps **50%**

Work

- Working from home **67%**
- Looking for jobs **17%**
- Attending online interviews **33%**

Education

- Finding a course **15%**
- Continuing with a course **56%**

Using my device

88%
Using my device (general)

75%
Changing device to meet my needs

60%
Getting help with tech problems

68%
Staying safe online

47%
Downloading new apps

23%
Setting an appointment/reminder

Buddy map

Map shows location of people supported and volunteer buddies assigned for ongoing support.

- Volunteer
- Buddy

"We know we just give her a shout if we need help."

Find out more at: **abilitynet.org.uk**