

Digital Exclusion: Findings from the New Horizons Project

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Outline

- The research
- Digital exclusion
- Some factors which affect levels of digital exclusion:
 - Type of internet connection
 - Location where people access the internet
 - Housing situations
- Relationship between digital exclusion and poverty

The Research

- 18 interviews with participants and coaches from the New Horizons project
- Focused on the factors affecting levels of digital exclusion



The Digital Divide



- Over 5 million people don't use the internet; over 10 million lack digital skills (ONS, 2019)
- Close relationship with inequality and poverty
- A continuum of inclusion/exclusion (see Livingstone and Helsper, 2007)

Type of Internet Connection

- Unlimited wi-fi/data vs. limited or pay-as-you go data
- Limited data can lead to restricted use:

You keep a check on it and don't use the computer as much as you otherwise would because you're worried about running out of data, and in case something comes up that you might need it for... You do obviously restrict it on that basis. – Geoff



Location of Access



- The importance of home access

I wouldn't go down to the library, because that gives me anxiousness sometimes. And most of the time they're not open. And you can only go down the library when their hours are open, not when you want. So that becomes a major problem if you want to suddenly check something at midnight. – Liam

Housing Situations



- Slow broadband speeds and poor 4G coverage in some areas
- Long-term broadband contracts and installation fees may be unfeasible in non-permanent housing
- Difficulties making online opportunities tangible due to housing:

I can actually get my food shop online now, which is a miracle... I had tried, but because I was in a fourth floor bedsit – it was in the attic – they wouldn't deliver to me. - Alexa

What next?

- Recognition of the relationship between poverty and digital exclusion
- Accessible, affordable internet access treated as essential, not a luxury
- High quality affordable and social housing, with digital connectivity as standard



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