Supporting our Digitally excluded residents

Suffolk County Council Digital Inclusion Fund

Public Health & Communities

Digital Inclusion Fund: Aims and Objectives

We aim to reduce digital poverty and increase digital inclusion across all of Suffolk by identifying needs and supporting solutions.

Key areas of focus:
Digital Skills (Capability)
Device/Connectivity
Accessibility

Public Health
& Communities

We work with the people and partners who live and work
in Suffolk to support healthier people, healthier places
and healthier futures and to reduce inequalities.

Impacts of Digital Exclusion

National Data

- poorer health outcomes and a lower life expectancy

- increased loneliness and social isolation (basic digital skills levels enable people to connect with family, friends and community 14% more frequently)

- less access to jobs and education

- paying more for essentials (shopping online is found to be on average 13% cheaper)

- financial exclusion

- an increased risk of falling into poverty (acquiring digital skills results in an increase to earnings of between 3% and 10%)

Impacts of Digital Exclusion

Suffolk Data

- Around 10% of residents in the East of England are non-internet users

- Around 20% of residents in Suffolk suffer from digital exclusion as defined by Lloyds Bank Consumer Digital Index

- Those on lowest incomes are least likely to be fully engaged online, this group is also least likely to use internet sources of information seeking and service access

- Residents who claim Universal Credit are six times more likely to have their broadband disconnected

- Suffolk has a higher than national average rate of residents aged 65 years plus, this is likely to lead to ongoing technology-change led digital exclusion
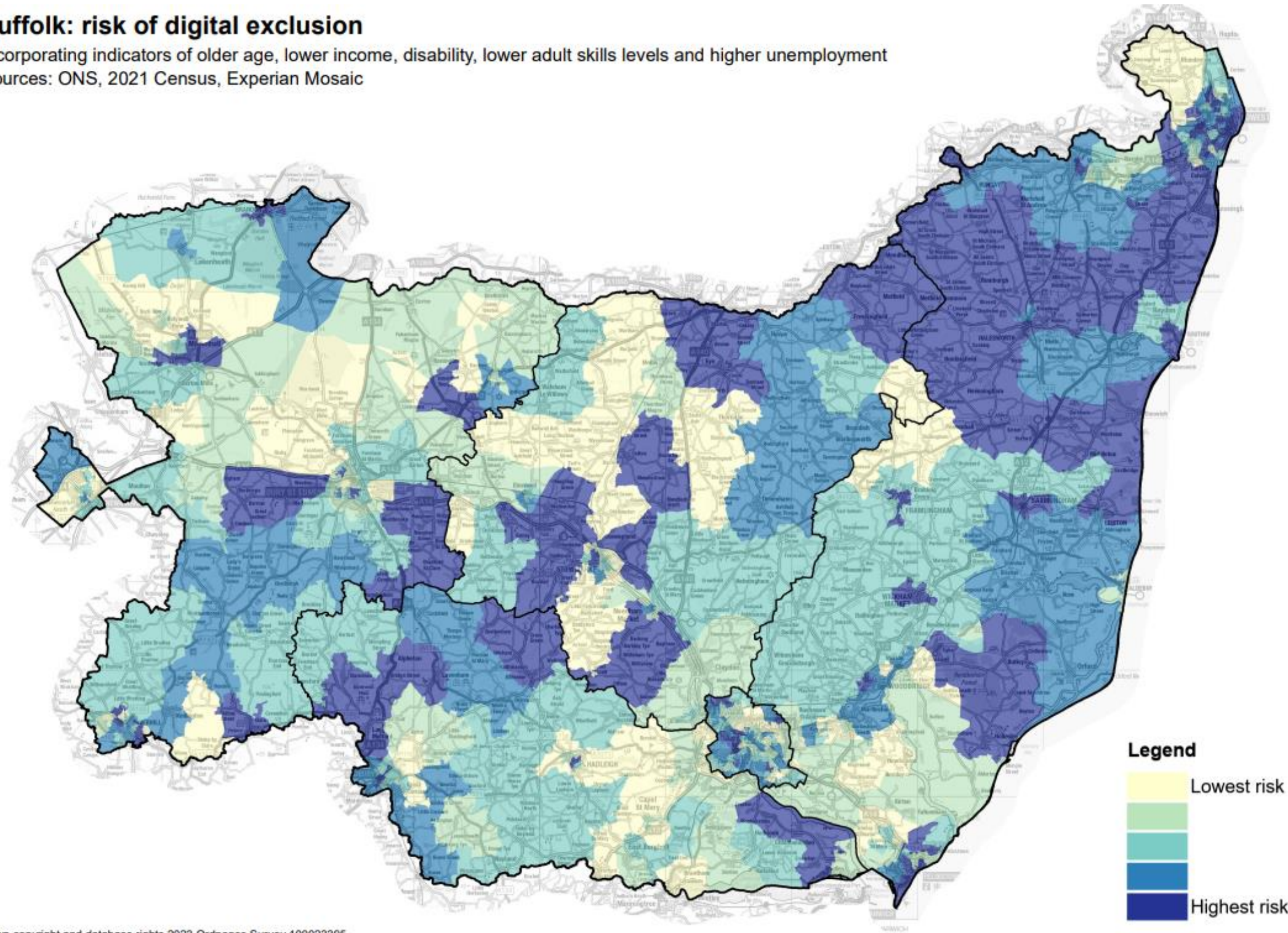
Suffolk Data - heatmap

Suffolk: risk of digital exclusion

Incorporating indicators of older age, lower income, disability, lower adult skills levels and higher unemployment
Sources: ONS, 2021 Census, Experian Mosaic

Legend

Lowest risk

Highest risk

© Crown copyright and database rights 2023 Ordnance Survey 100023395

Public Health & Communities

We work with the people and partners who live and work in Suffolk to support healthier people, healthier places and healthier futures and to reduce inequalities.

The Importance of Digital Inclusion

Education

Digital inclusion enhances education and learning by providing access to online resources, virtual classrooms, and fostering digital literacy for improved educational outcomes.

Bridging the gap

Digital inclusion bridges the gap between those who have access to digital technologies and those who don't, reducing socioeconomic disparities and providing equal opportunities for all.

Economy

Digital inclusion drives economic growth and innovation by expanding business opportunities, enabling remote work, and fostering a diverse and inclusive digital ecosystem.

Empowering marginalised communities

Digital inclusion empowers marginalised communities by giving them access to digital tools and skills, enabling educational, economic, and civic participation.

Public Health & Communities

We work with the people and partners who live and work in Suffolk to support healthier people, healthier places and healthier futures and to reduce inequalities.

Target demographics:

Residents with lower income levels

- 40% of benefit claimants have very low digital engagement* and 31% of unemployed have low or very low digital engagement
- Residents earning less than £17.5k are significantly less likely to have foundation level digital skills*
- Nearly half (44%) of the very low engagement group have a household of less than £20,000 p/a

Residents living with disability/sensory impairment

- 15% of those with classed as having a disability under the Equalities Act have never used the internet compared to 3.4% of those who are not 'Equality Act Disabled'
- 25% of people who have some kind of sensory impairment do not use the internet

Residents who are unable to fully access the labour market

- 43% of the digitally disengaged* group are likely to have no formal qualifications (9% of the general population have no formal quals)
- 95% of the digitally disengaged group fall into social grade C2,D and E (41% of the general population fall within these social grades)
- Higher unemployment

Digital Inclusion Fund: Aims and Objectives

We aim to reduce digital poverty and increase digital inclusion across all of Suffolk by identifying needs and supporting solutions.

Key areas of focus:
Digital Skills (Capability)
Device/Connectivity
Accessibility

Initiatives we would like to support

Existing and new

- Sustainable provision of hardware to target groups

- Targeted digital skills provision – foundation level skills

- Organisations working with existing digital inclusion programmes eg Databanks

- Provision of information and support to marginalized groups

- Small scale, local projects with existing links to their communities