HACT Digital Inclusion Network – 2024 Activity Round Up

1. **Background and details:**

   A collaboration of housing associations working in partnership with the Digital Poverty Alliance to improve digital inclusion and digital access. The digital inclusion network brings together social housing colleagues to share best practice and resources and to hear from expert speakers working specifically to foster digital inclusion.

   The Network is Chaired by Kavita Kumar, Assistant Head of Operations, Reliance Housing. Kavita is a champion for digital inclusion, previously leading change as the Digital Support and Funding Manager at Southern Housing. As Chair she facilitates learning, peer connection, and practice development in this area. She's proud to be part of the solution in tacking digital poverty with communities.

2. **Meetings & Training**

No. of meetings	No. of attendees	No. of Organisations	No. of speakers
4	84	66	9

- **February 2024 – Network Meeting**

  A Digital Inclusion Network meeting to discuss digital support for older residents, how to extract social value from contractors and the network priorities.

- **April 2024 – Network Meeting**
  A Network meeting to discuss the Digital Poverty Alliance's latest work and digital inclusion policy development including funding digital inclusion efforts discussion followed by an overview of the Good Things Foundation's National Databank

- **<u>July 2024</u> – Network Meeting**
  A Digital Inclusion Network meeting to hear more about the Digital Poverty Alliance's National Delivery Plan, Wythenshawe Community Housing Group's digital inclusion strategy and working within a combined authority followed by a case study from Southern Housing and getting new residents connected.

- **<u>September 2024</u> – Centre Conference**

  Conference session - Social connection in a digital world - Exploring the ever-changing world of digital inclusion, new techniques and approaches to digital inclusion and what new challenges are presented via digital poverty and how housing associations can use digital tools to increase community cohesion and social connection. Featuring Kavita Kumar and Sarah Woolley.

- **<u>October 2024</u> – Network Meeting**
  A Digital Inclusion Network meeting hearing updates from the Digital Poverty Alliance's engagement work at the Labour Party conference 2024. Followed by an update from the Good Things Foundation and their digital inclusion networks and projects. Followed by a case study from Newydd Housing and their Digital Referral Pathways.

3. **<u>Plans for 2025:</u>**

   During 2025 we hope to continue to build on our activity and take forward priorities raised in previous network meetings, including – increasing take up of social tariffs, accessing contracts with a poor credit rating, mapping projects and housing associations, and making the case for digital inclusion work to the publica and internally within organisations.

   <u>2025 meeting dates:</u>

   - Thursday 27th February 2025 10am – 11:30am
   - Monday 12th May 2025 – 2pm – 3:30pm
   - Monday 4th August 2025 – 2pm – 3:30pm
   - Wednesday 26th November 2025 – 10am – 11:30am

For more information about the Network or future meetings and events please get in touch with Rebecca Rieley - <u>Rebecca.Rieley@hact.org.uk</u>.