



Digital Lifelines Small Grants Fund 2024

Interim Impact Report
July 2024



Small Grants Fund 2024

This report provides a summary of the impact of the funding to date from organisations funded through the Small Grants Fund 2024.

The main objective of the fund is to support small, local organisations with income of less than £250,000 per annum to continue or extend digital inclusion activities with people at risk of death from a drug overdose and those who care about them and support them.

The primary focus of the organisation did not have to be drug death prevention but the activity applied for had to be working with people who are at risk of death from a drug overdose and are, or have recently been:

- Experiencing homelessness
- Transitioning from custody
- Recently discharged from hospital

Grants up to £10,000 were available to support existing digital inclusion work over a 12-month period from January 2024 - December 2024.

All awarded projects funded through the Digital Lifelines Small Grants Fund 24 were previously funded through Digital Lifelines Small Grants Fund 23.

Previously, eight projects were funded through Digital Lifelines Small Grants Fund 23. In this round of funding, four organisations applied for continuation funding, and all four organisations were successfully awarded funding through the Digital Lifelines Small Grants Fund 2024.



**Maximum
Award Amount**

£10,000

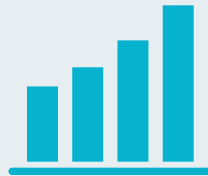
Funded Projects

Four projects were supported through the fund, totalling £38,150.



Funded
projects

4



Total amount
awarded

£38,150



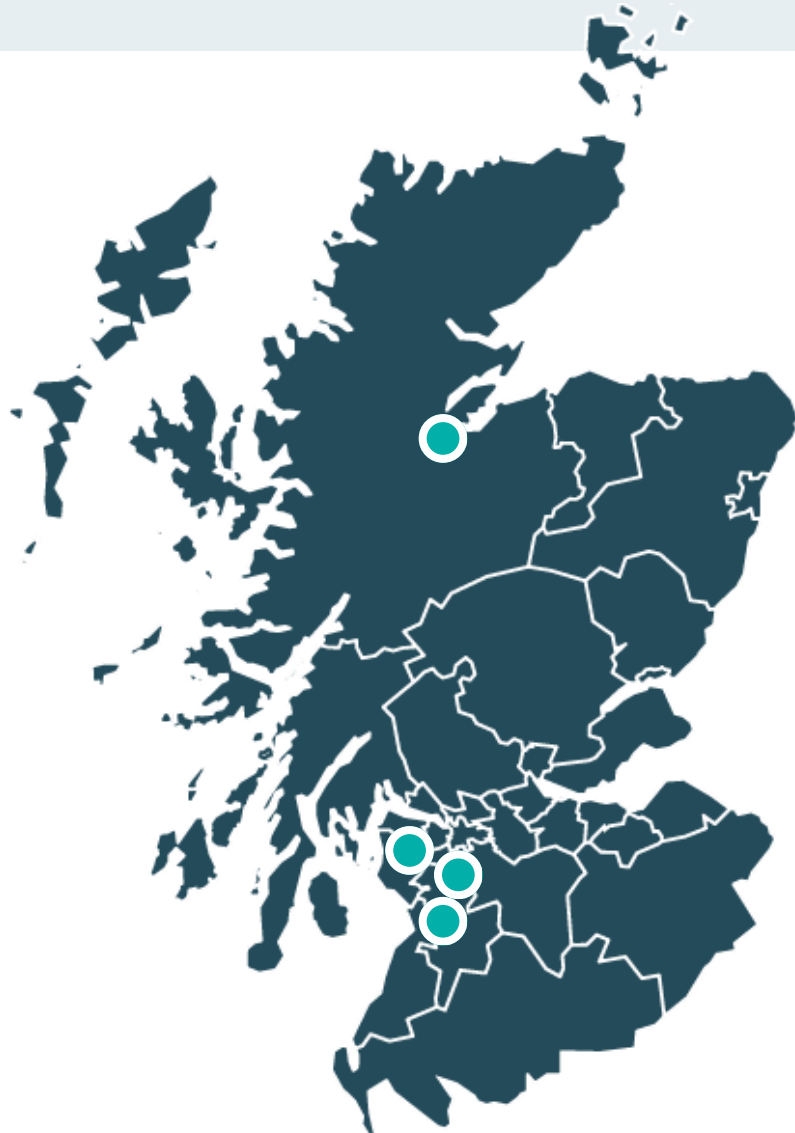
Average amount
awarded

£9,537

Project Delivery

In total, 4 of the funded projects are delivering across 4 local authority areas in Scotland.

[Find out about each funded project in our interactive Google map here](#)



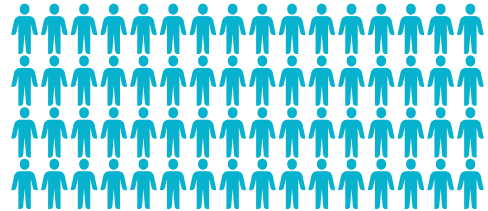
The Beneficiaries

This programme targets people who are at risk of drug related harm and are, or have recently been:

- Experiencing homelessness
- Released from custody: or
- In hospital or a residential service

551

Direct beneficiaries have been supported currently.



290

People supported released from custody



242

People supported experiencing homelessness



19

People supported recently in a hospital or residential service



10

Digital Champions have been trained



10

Staff and volunteers have been supported

Devices Distributed to date

People Experiencing Homelessness



58

Phones



1

Laptops



15

Tablets



242

Connectivity

People Released from Custody



85

Phones



0

Laptops



13

Tablets



178

Connectivity

People recently in Hospital or Residential Service



19

Phones



0

Laptops



0

Tablets



19

Connectivity

Funded Projects

Organisation Name	Project Summary	Amount Awarded
East Ayrshire Churches Homelessness Action	The project is supporting people in urban and rural areas affected by substance use through drop in and recovery hub services.	£10,000
Red Chair Highland LTD	The project provides devices, connectivity, and digital support to people in crisis affected by substance use in Highlands. This project is delivered in partnership with Apex Highland who work with people affected by the criminal justice system.	£9,650
Irvine Sports Club	The project provides devices and digital inclusion activities for families affected by substance use in North Ayrshire.	£10,000
Recovery Ayr SCIO	The project tackles digital poverty through providing devices and basic digital skills training and support within the recovery community in South Ayrshire.	£8,500
		£38,150



Project Insights

Organisations shared feedback on what worked well, key factors for success, and project insights.



Organisations have found that using different hooks to get people interested in learning how to use a device has been beneficial. For some organisations, this consisted of digital graffiti and photography courses.



Feedback emphasised that having phones and SIM cards available on short notice enabled prompt support for people at risk of drug harm, ensuring they were connected and contactable as quickly as possible.



Feedback also highlighted that devices have enabled people to communicate directly with their support workers improving chances of successful recovery.



Some organisations reported positive results from working with and building a relationship with a local organisation selling second-hand devices. This has enabled them to maximise their budget and support more people while still providing the same quality of devices.



Other organisations reported that developing a strong partnership with their referral partners has helped the project's delivery go smoothly. This partnership has been strengthened by good communication and recording processes between the two organisations.



The Impact

RecoveryAyr SCIO

Theme: Improved Confidence

‘Many recipients reported to the organisation that being able to contact friends, family, and the wider recovery community has increased their confidence and reduced their anxiety. For others, it has supported them to go on to further education and employment.’



Irvine Sports Club

Theme: Positive Pathways

‘The project is creating positive pathways to support provided by Irvine Sports Club and support from other organisations. Users are regularly increasing their use of recovery services, users' skills are growing, and there has been a notable increase in self-worth and confidence in those supported.’

Red Chair Highland

Theme: Increased Independence

‘We have recognised that for those supported with a device through this project, it has significantly improved their feelings of independence and autonomy, empowering them to control their future outcomes.’



RecoveryAyr SCIO

An Impact Story

In February 2024, John was referred for a phone by his addiction support worker. The phone was essential for John to stay in touch with his support workers, family, and friends as he prepared for residential rehabilitation. This device played a crucial role in his preparation by allowing him to maintain contact and attend pre-admission meetings.

Even after his time in residential rehabilitation, the phone continued to be a crucial tool in John's recovery journey. It was not just a device, but a constant connection to his friends, family, and dedicated support worker, ensuring ongoing support for his eventual discharge. Post-discharge, the phone remained a critical tool, facilitating communication, meeting arrangements, and engagement with the broader recovery community, providing ongoing connection and support.

John's continued success in his recovery is evident as he actively participates in several recovery groups in Ayr. He plans to apply and enrol in the South Ayrshire ADP's Volunteer Peer Worker Project starting in August 2024.

John credits the phone provided by the scheme as a key factor in his successful recovery journey.



The Challenges

Projects experience a range of challenges



Several organisations reported a high demand for support and a significant uptake in device usage. This has resulted in a greater need for devices than initially anticipated for the project.

To address this, the Digital Lifelines program team has proactively implemented a contingency plan to support organisations in meeting the additional demand.



One organization noticed a low uptake of their services and support by women. To address this, they have recently established a women-only drop-in space.



Other organisations reported that staff changes led to a temporary pause in project delivery.

They overcame this by identifying an alternative staff lead trained to deliver the project. Since then, the project has been running smoothly.



One organisation reported that they managed to get free connectivity through Vodafone for a short period but that they didn't have enough to meet demand. They partnered with another organisation locally who had connectivity but no phones and between them were able to deliver the support needed.



Some organisations reported challenges around devices being lost, stolen, or broken. However, across the fund, this is shown to be a small percentage of all devices distributed, less than 7%.



Grantmaking

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Contact

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