



your route
to digital
success.

2025

Annual Report

Funded by

NE North East
Combined
Authority

Delivered by

CATAPULT
Digital

NORTH EAST
TEES VALLEY

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During 24' - 25' the Digital Pathfinders programme continued to provide comprehensive digital support & guidance to organisations across Newcastle, Northumberland and North Tyneside.

Over the past 12 months, the programme has empowered organisations to overcome digital challenges and try new ideas designed to increase growth, productivity and long-term sustainability.

Digital Pathfinders has played a key role in enabling greater digital adoption for some of the regions best small businesses and social enterprises.



WE ARE THE DIGITAL PATHFINDERS

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WELCOME TO OUR ANNUAL REPORT

ABOUT THE REPORT

This report details the programme's key annual milestones, impact metrics and case studies to demonstrate the impact and benefits gained by hundreds of organisations since Digital Pathfinders inception.

This annual report is interactive - where you see a [hyperlink](#) or a 'click to play' button, as seen right, these are links to engage with more content online!



Click to play

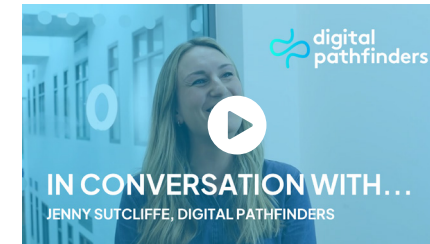
WHAT IS DIGITAL PATHFINDERS?



Digital Pathfinders is a fully funded programme that helps **businesses, charities and social enterprises** across **Newcastle, Northumberland and North Tyneside** to adopt new technology to drive their organisation's productivity and performance to become more successful and resilient.

We're made up of a team of multi-disciplinary digital experts who are here to support you, whatever your challenges.

To learn more about us, check out our **'In conversation'** videos overleaf!



Jenny Sutcliffe

Head of Delivery for Business Support

My leadership ensures effective support and resources are given to empower the North of Tyne organisations we support.



Amanda Potts

Interim Head of Delivery for Business Support

Helping our clients succeed and forging meaningful relationships is the most rewarding part of my work.



Ben Mushen

Digital Adoption Specialist

I love the variety of challenges we work on – everyday is a school day and it's really fulfilling helping clients overcome them.



Nathan Rowlands

Digital Adoption Specialist

I've enjoyed helping businesses discover the power of going digital is more fun than frustrating – most of the time!



Chamath De Silva

Digital Adoption Specialist

I find it particularly rewarding to see the tangible impact we have on SME digital transformation in the region.

OUR APPROACH

During our 4 – year delivery, the Digital Pathfinders programme has offered bespoke support that meets the needs of each organisation.

We listened to feedback and continued to tailor our approach to develop 1–2–1 support packages that get to the heart of their digital adoption challenges.



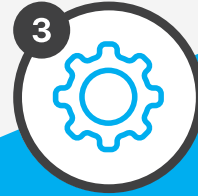
INITIAL MEETING

An initial kick off meeting with you to gain a deeper understanding of your organisational objectives and existing use of digital technology.



DIGITAL REVIEW

We create a documented action plan detailing recommended next steps for support, as well as highlighting other useful resources.



ONE-TO-ONE SUPPORT

We deliver bespoke support including but not limited to website reviews, social media strategy, technical specifications, workflow & process improvements, and more.



WE ALSO RUN REMOTE & IN-PERSON EVENTS

Ranging from large-scale to smaller workshops, all designed to spark new ideas and foster peer to peer collaboration.



UPSKILLED TEAM

The team continues to upskill through courses and advanced research leading to more in-depth and comprehensive support.



HOW THE PROGRAMME DEVELOPED

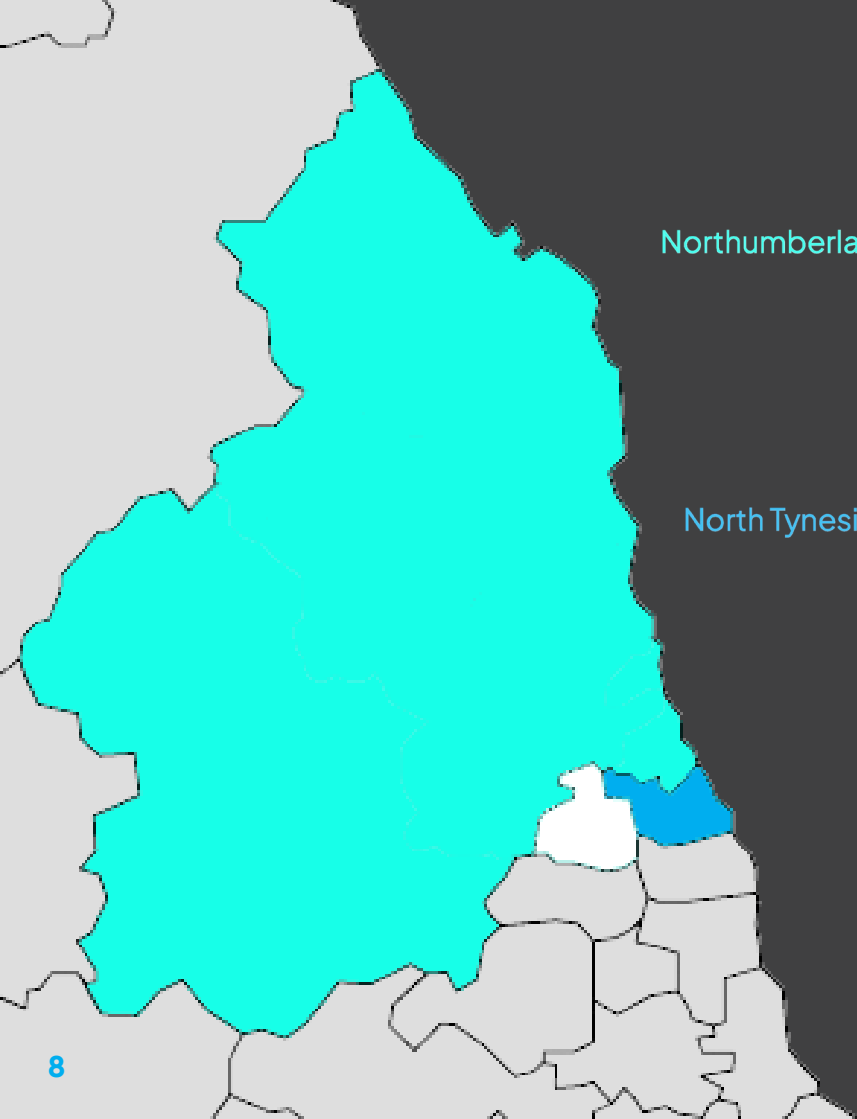
EVENTS

We continued to listen. We always research current trends and ensure our events are meeting the needs of local organisations.



EMBEDDED ECOSYSTEM

The programme continued to play a pivotal role in the local ecosystem through word of mouth referrals and nurtured relationships with local partners.



WHO WE'VE SUPPORTED BY LOCATION



86
Events Held

571
Event Attendees

BY EVENTS

OUR IMPACT

The Digital Pathfinders programme has had a significant impact on the local economy, creating **40 new jobs** and **safeguarding an additional 96 positions** across the region. This support helped drive **£671k in digital investment**, much of which went back into the local economy. The programme's focus on upskilling workers and connecting businesses with the latest digital tools and technologies has been crucial in positioning the region as a hub for innovation and growth.

By equipping local companies with the digital capabilities needed to thrive, **Digital Pathfinders has played a key role in strengthening the regional business landscape and creating new economic opportunities for residents.**

WHO WE'VE SUPPORTED BY BUSINESS SECTOR

Business Sector	Org No.	Business Sector	Org No.	Business Sector	Org No.
Voluntary & Community Sector	88	Software & Web Development	12	Legal	4
Health & Social Care	47	Business Support	12	Agriculture	4
Education	39	Information Technology	11	Gaming	3
Creative Industries	31	Advertising & Marketing	9	Manufacturing	3
Professional Business Services	28	Financial	8	Architecture	3
Retail	24	Recruitment	8	Energy	2
Hospitality	22	Engineering	8	Membership Organisation	2
Art & Crafts	16	Media	8	Economic Development	1
Sports & Leisure	15	Travel & Tourism	8	Construction	1
E-Commerce	14	Training Provider	7	Aerospace	1
Food & Drink	14	Events	7		

CASE STUDY VIGATOUR



[Click play](#) to learn more about how [Digital Pathfinders](#) supported [Vigatour](#)

TECHNOLOGY SCOPING

DESIGN BRIEF



Scoping out technology to inform the build of an AR app

Vigatour contacted Digital Pathfinders to gain a better understanding of what resources and technology would be needed to build their app.

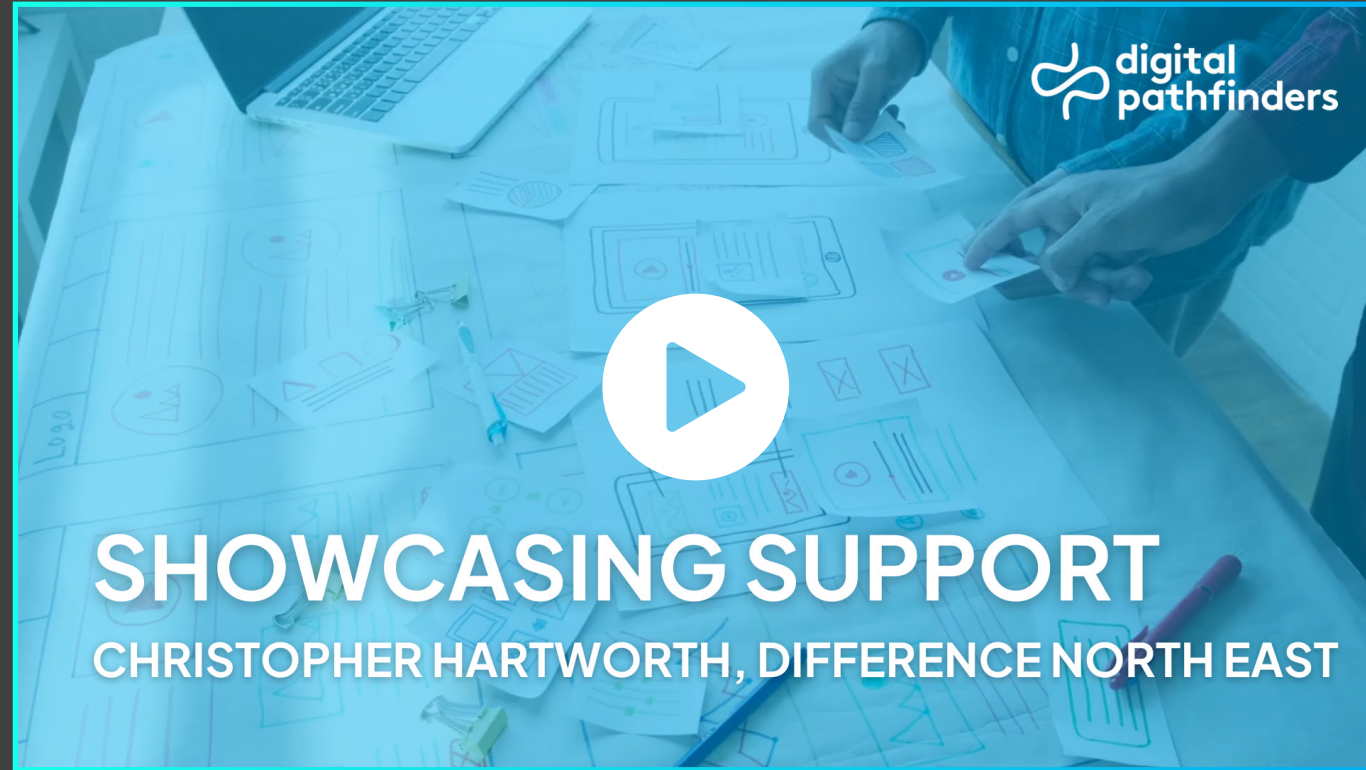
Following an initial call, the Digital Pathfinders team conducted comprehensive research and analysis around the tech stack required to develop the Vigatour app. This included identifying the most suitable technologies, frameworks, and tools needed to achieve the overall vision, including areas where the app could be developed in the future.

This research allowed Vigatour to gain a deep understanding of the no-code, low-code, and full code version of this prototype, and what was needed to build several iterations of what the app would be, what has helped to fast track the business.

“It’s been great working with this team. I had no idea what the tech space looked like, and being able to access Digital Pathfinders has really helped.”

CASE STUDY

DIFFERENCE NORTH EAST



[Click play](#) to learn more about how [Digital Pathfinders](#) supported [Difference North East](#)

WEBSITE REVIEW

SITE MAPPING

DESIGN BRIEF



Reviewing of a website to meet user needs

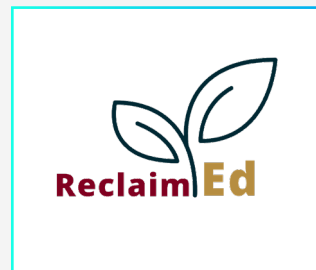
Difference North East approached Digital Pathfinders for support in making their website as accessible as possible for all users.

To begin, the Digital Pathfinders team conducted a comprehensive review of the existing website. Through in-depth research, focus groups, and collaborative discovery meetings, they gained a clear understanding of Difference North East's unique needs. This insight enabled them to develop a detailed and actionable set of accessibility specifications.

Digital Pathfinders then provided a curated list of recommendations for building and improving the website. With these resources, Difference North East was able to confidently appoint the right partner to create an inclusive and user-friendly website.

“The team were really brilliant. I was really impressed; now we have a new super accessible website. I would advise all organisations to chat to Digital Pathfinders.”

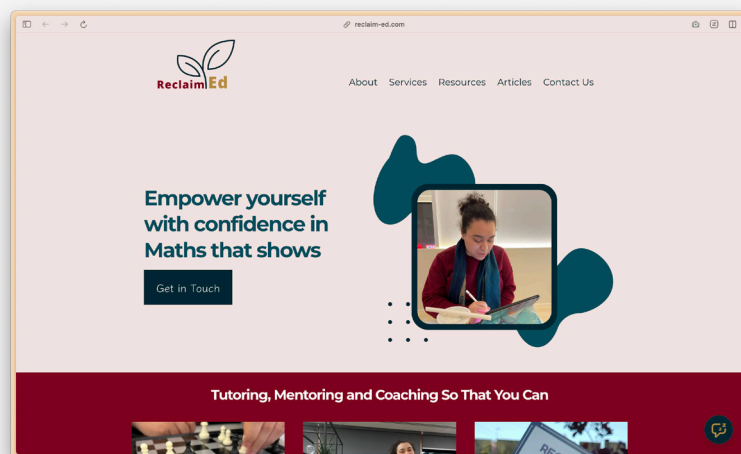
Taking ownership of their online tutoring business



Reclaim Ed asked Digital Pathfinders to help them find a platform that could manage and facilitate all of their online tutoring and learning content.

Reclaim Ed provides mathematics tutoring and coaching to empower students and educators to overcome learning barriers and feel confident with mathematics.

Through personalised support, the tutoring caters to the diverse needs of each student and helps every student to reach their potential with maths, no matter the proficiency level.

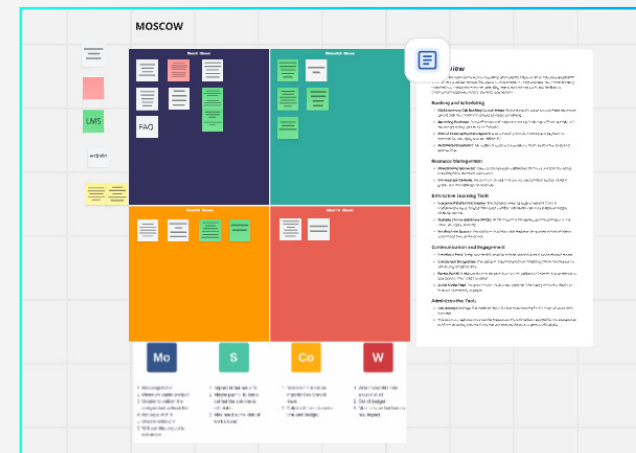


Reclaim Ed was relying on external tutoring platforms to drive business to the organisation but wanted to have an online presence of their own to drive business, store evergreen content, increase brand recognition, and to have somewhere to host group tuition.

The twelve hours of support started with a discovery call to explore the business and the existing technology used, as all of the tutoring is done online.

Together, Founder Ana Maria Ocampo Lucumi and the Digital Pathfinders team then looked at the target audience in relation to the website, what they would want to see, how they may navigate the space and what would work best for them. This led to an in-depth MoSCoW analysis of the ‘must haves, should haves, could haves and won’t haves’ in relation to the website.

Through this, development of a wireframe, and analysis of various website builder options, Ana Maria was able to create the website for Reclaim ED through Podia.



I would recommend Digital Pathfinders. They really get you to think about what your requirements are and what you actually need; what will work for your organisations and your users.

CASE STUDY

TURN ABOUT PEGASUS



SHOWCASING SUPPORT

TRACIE FAA-THOMPSON, TURN ABOUT PEGASUS

[Click play](#) to learn more about how [Digital Pathfinders](#) supported [Turn About Pegasus](#)

WEBSITE REVIEW

SITEMAPPING

DEVELOPMENT



Building a new, purpose-led, self-managed website

Turn About Pegasus asked Digital Pathfinders to help them to improve their online presence so they could better communicate their offering.

Turn About Pegasus provides unique, playful and evidence-based therapeutic services utilising animals and the outdoors. Their goal was to better promote their offerings online to attract more clients/students.

Digital Pathfinders identified issues with their existing PHP website from 2015, and helped to modernising it. This was achieved through content discovery, creating site maps and wireframes, Digital Pathfinders were able to put together a website brief, and support with the build of a new website hosted in Wix, a platform the organisation was familiar with from their sister organisation, Nurtured in Nature.

“Digital Pathfinders were very interactive and walked me through every part. I could understand what they were talking about. I think that was absolutely invaluable.”

CASE STUDY OPAL NORTH EAST



SHOWCASING SUPPORT INGRID WILKINSON, OPAL NORTH EAST

[Click play](#) to learn more about how [Digital Pathfinders](#) supported [OPAL North East](#)

WIREFRAMING

SITE MAPPING

SIGNPOSTING



Evaluating, prioritising, and planning for business growth

OPAL North East had grown quickly as an organisation, and Founder Ingrid Wilkinson wanted to increase efficiencies and explore digital technologies.

Initially, Digital Pathfinders provided an in-depth review of the organisation and the existing digital technologies and processes that were being used, and to identify where OPAL North East wanted to grow. The team helped Ingrid to prioritise what was urgently needed, what was a nice to have, and what could be left for now.

One identified major need was a website. Together, Ingrid and the Pathfinders created wireframes and a site map to highlight what the website might look like, to explore customers and the target market. They were also able to signpost OPAL North East to match funding opportunities to enable Ingrid to develop the website.

“I’d have no hesitation in recommending Digital Pathfinders. The support I’ve had has been brilliant. They’ve been really, really patient.”

CONTACT US

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