

LINK Financial Inclusion Monthly Report



April 2020

Overview of the Programme

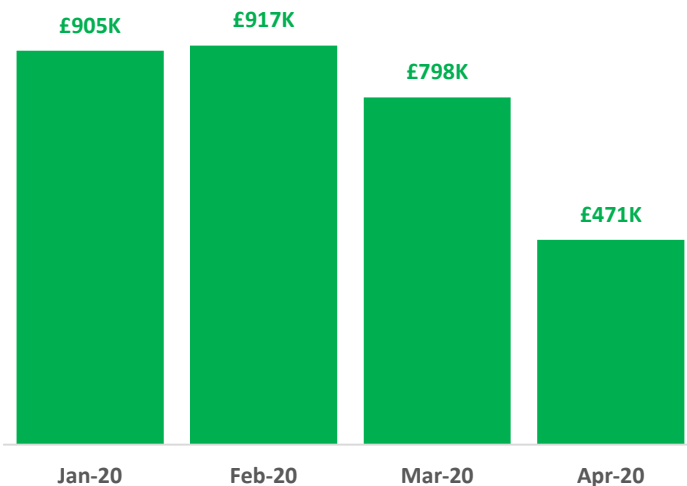
The LINK Financial Inclusion Programme has been improving access to cash for the most vulnerable and deprived communities since 2006. It provides subsidies to ATM operators who run free-to-use machines in the most deprived communities in the UK. In 2006 1,694 deprived areas were identified with no free access to cash where the subsidy could apply. In 2015 957 further sites were brought into the Programme following independent research by Toynbee Hall. A further 112 Scottish Output Areas were brought into the Programme in September 2018 making a total of 2,763 in scope today. Of these 2,763 sites, 2,154 have either a free ATM or a Post Office, and 609 are without either. 338 of these sites do not have access to an ATM, but do have access to a Post Office. The remaining 8,743 deprived sites across the UK already have a free ATM without the need for a subsidy.

Programme Enhancements from December 2018

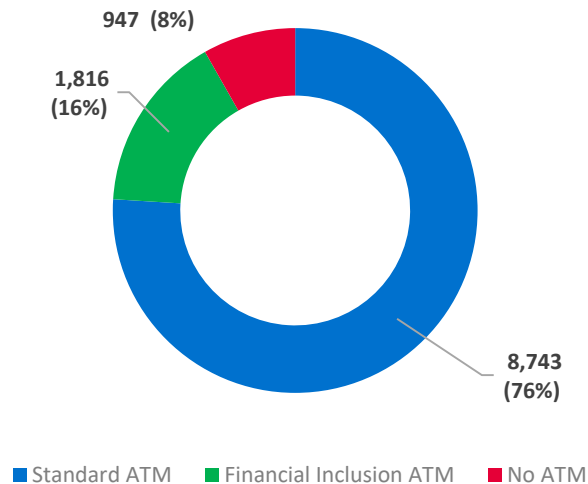
On the 1st April 2019, LINK introduced additional premiums that can significantly increase payments to ATM operators by up to £2.75 per cash withdrawal. Premiums are available to all eligible ATMs which resolve access in the most deprived areas under the Financial Inclusion Programme or are Protected i.e. a free-to-use ATM that does not have another free-to-use ATM within 1 kilometre. These measures are aimed at safeguarding free-to-use ATMs in remote and deprived areas.

During April 2020 the number of transactions across the LINK network has dropped by 60%. The cost of premiums paid to support financial inclusion has therefore also dropped substantially. We would expect this to increase when businesses re-open and lockdown is eased further.

Link Interchange Premiums Paid to Support Financial Inclusion



Deprived Areas - Free ATM Access



Remaining Deprived Areas Without a Free ATM

