

## MONITORING VISIT REPORT: Kingston Voluntary Action 11662

<p><b>1.1 Date of visit:</b> September 2015</p>	<p><b>1.2 Name of visiting Grants Officer:</b> Sandra Jones with Scott Morgan (Graduate Trainee)</p>	<p><b>1.3 People met with:</b> Kate White</p>
<p><b>1.4 Programme Area:</b> Strengthening the Third Sector (New &amp; strategic approaches to using ICT)</p>		
<p><b>1.5 Purpose of the award:</b> £195,000 over three years (3 x £65,000) towards Superhighways, an ICT project supporting voluntary and community organisations in six boroughs in South London. Grant awarded in February 2013.</p>		
<p><b>MONITORING INFORMATION</b></p>		
<p><b>2.1 Project Outcome 1:</b> Charities will have gained the knowledge / confidence to implement digital tools to improve monitoring and evaluation</p> <p><b>Progress made:</b> KVA has delivered eight training sessions on specific tools and applications since the first payment was made in December 2013, engaging 38 charity sector staff so far. In addition the organisation has developed online training resources and delivered remote support (by email and phone) as well as on-site. Targets for follow-up support have been exceeded. Across all services the grantee is using evaluation forms to measure progress, outcomes and quality of delivery.</p>		
<p><b>2.2 Project Outcome 2:</b> Charities will implement new database systems and transform how they capture and report on outcomes</p> <p><b>Progress made:</b> KVA has delivered in-depth support to a number of organisations, helping them gauge how best to transform the ways in which they capture and report on outcomes. The project team has delivered advice ranging from better use of Excel through to signposting to off-the-shelf databases. KVA report they will change the way this support is delivered in the coming year of the project with a more structured application process for groups seeking database support. KVA continue to track the progress made by those organisations they worked with in the first year of grant funding to start measuring the impact any new databases or system improvements have had.</p>		
<p><b>2.3 Project Outcome 3:</b> Charities communicate the outcomes of their work more effectively</p> <p><b>Progress made:</b> KVA has worked with groups to help them present outcomes data on their own websites, through social media and the use of a range of digital platforms (including audio and visual channels). The charity has worked to raise awareness of outcome communication through workshops and presentations about free tools. Throughout, KVA has built a dossier of examples of good practice including new formats for annual reviews, use of infographics and other engaging visualisations of data, including mapping. Whilst the ethos of Impact Aloud is building the capacity of</p>		

groups to do things for themselves, staff involved in the project continue to develop their own expertise in a range of digital tools.

**2.4 Project Outcome 4:** Charities become more sustainable, better able to evidence outcomes to attract funding and win contracts

**Progress made:**

At this stage, only anecdotal evidence exists of progress made against this outcome. The staff involved in Impact Aloud state that improvements made by client organisations to digital systems are leading to improvements in the capture and reporting of outcomes, but note that most of the groups supported either aren't totally up and running with their new system or haven't been using their new systems long enough to really evidence this at this stage. All groups supported so far understand that KVA wish to track progress against this outcome as part of the project, and should be better placed to report against this outcome in future monitoring reports to the Trust.

**2.5 Project Outcome 5:** Charities will be more aware of tools they could implement to improve monitoring and evaluation

**Progress made:**

KVA has delivered 12 standalone awareness raising sessions and a further 7 sessions via networks. In this, they have exceeded the target for their grant. There is a Superhighways monthly email bulletin with news for a network of 2,400 subscribers, in addition to which articles have been placed in the general KVA bulletins as a way of encouraging new subscriptions to the dedicated digital briefing. The Superhighways team has attended 16 network meetings over the year with 208 attendees to promote their work, and ran an annual event (Impact Aloud) to promote digital platforms for outcome monitoring and reporting (City Bridge Trust spoke at this event).

**GRANT OFFICER COMMENTS**

This is an ambitious project working across six south London boroughs, and there is evidence so far that take-up has been greater in some areas (notably Kingston) than other (for instance, Bromley). This appears to reflect the relative strengths of the borough infrastructure organisations and Trust officers will continue to monitor progress through annual returns from KVA.

The Superhighways team is offering specialist, bespoke support to a wide range of groups through this programme. Different levels of expertise are being catered for and the approach is intended to be as practical as possible. Demand is high, and to manage this staff prioritise those groups who have taken the time to frame their requests clearly with set clear objectives and who have the capacity to manage the intervention.

Overall, the project offers good support to its network and is taking positive steps to extend the network it communicates with.