

Voluntary**Action**Islington

Buildings Project Review 2013

Executive Summary

The Buildings Project is a five year Lottery funded programme set up to support organisations in the third sector that run community buildings or need help with their premises up to June 2014.

Voluntary Action Islington commissioned a Review of the project to identify how well it has performed, what impact it has had for organisations who have received support and what should happen to the service in the future.

The Review and a report of its findings were carried out by Lorraine Hart of Community Land Use (www.communitylanduse.org), a consultancy which works solely with voluntary and not for profit organisations on land and building development and management.

Community Land Use reviewed the project by analysing all monitoring data about the activities of the Project and interviewing project users, stakeholders and staff over a six month period in 2013.

The review found that the project currently provides over **30** types of advice including help with leases, facilities management, increasing income and meeting the requirements of the law to run a community building.

Since it started in 2009 it has supported **52** organisations supported one to one with their buildings and supported **40** organisations to find premises.

63 organisations had participated in special projects and training provided by the project to help them reduce their costs, understand their legal responsibilities and improve their marketing and business planning to secure more income.

Organisations that had used the project provided overwhelmingly positive feedback on the impact it had for them in terms of **increasing income** and

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reducing costs, helping them with their **planning** and increasing their **confidence** and **skill** to **measure their impact**, secure external **accreditation** and extend the range of their **networks**.

Users identified the **independence** and **professionalism** of the Project and its **knowledge** of premises issues and Islington Council as particularly helpful to them.

They also identified improvements to the Project including changes to ways in which the support is delivered and asked for more help for **smaller groups** and on **day to day facilities management**. The Project was also urged by users to carry out **more strategic work with Islington Council** on planning and investment in the use of council buildings by the voluntary sector in Islington.

As a result of the Review and its recommendations Voluntary Action Islington will be looking to secure the future of the Project beyond Lottery funding through trading and extending its own work on providing premises for the sector in the Borough.

For more information about the Buildings Project, case studies of its work or the Review, contact:

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