Voice and Power for Homeless and Vulnerable People through New and Emerging Technologies

Your Entry

Please do not exceed 1500 words in total.

1. Your contact details

| Organisation | Royal Borough Kensington and Chelsea |

2. Name of the project you are entering for The LankellyChase Digital Empowerment Awards

| Digital Empowerment for Stable Way Travellers’ Site |

3. Award category you are entering

| Capabilities |

4. Describe your project in one sentence

| Addressing Inequalities and improving social inclusion and life chances for the Irish Traveller Community on Stable Way through enhanced digital technology. |

5. Specify the setting(s) where your project is delivered (eg homeless agency, housing organisation etc )?

| Stable Way Travellers’ site in RBKC: a community of 25 Households and including 50 children and young people: In caravan homes and Community Hut. The site is managed by KC TMO and supported by Development Manager for Gypsies and Travellers, based in Kensington Town Hall. |
6. What are the project’s objectives?

To improve the life chances of this Hard-to-Reach Community to access all mainstream services and to provide equality of provision via information, education, training and benefits available on-line in the 21\textsuperscript{st} century.

7. What are the project’s activities?

School aged children need access to a computer as much of their homework is expected to be completed as a Word document then saved and printed in school. Having access to a computer enables the children to use educational websites which can supplement their learning in school. Often homework and revision activities are set using sites such as MyMaths, BBC Bitesize and Sam Learning. These educational sites are particularly important to the young people are Stable way when they are absent from school for example due to travel or illness.

Access to a computer is also of great benefit to the parents of these young people in terms of remaining in contact with their schools via email, checking information such as the school calendar. Additionally, school registration, GP appointments, benefit claims, driving licence applications etc are increasingly being offered on line. Many training DVDs, such as the driving theory test, can be played with a voice-over for those with poor literacy. Few residents of Stable Way have a land line installed and 0800 numbers are not free to mobile phone users. Literacy is generally poor among residents of Stable Way. Use of a computer can often be helpful as it encourages people to read in the privacy of their own homes.

8. What has been the impact / achievement of the project?

Since the local Notting Barns Ward Initiative funded the initial installation costs and rental of Broadband on Stable Way in 2010, Making Broadband available to all, there has been a marked improvement in the way that Traveller families have taken responsibility for their own needs, accessing information via the internet where they previously would have been reliant on assistance from workers: improved communication between schools, pupils and their families. Increased literacy, less involvement with police (eg more young men passing on-line theory test, taking
practical test and avoiding driving convictions).

9. How is your project evaluated?

In a number of ways, including on-going feedback from members of the Community, regular resident consultation on a pitch to pitch basis, measurable results from schools, informal feedback from Site Manager, support workers and youth workers. Evaluation can be coordinated by the Development Manager for Gypsies and Travellers.

10. How would you spend the prize money to develop the project?

Outdated IT equipment means that many residents can no longer make use of the Broadband facility and it would be beneficial to children, young people and adults if every household once again had access to a (refurbished) computer. Outside of the Traveller site, those young people without computers are currently able to use the nearby Harrow club during Homework Club sessions, but potential loss of funding for this facility means that this may no longer be available. The Broadband connection no longer provides adequate coverage for the whole Traveller site and needs to be updated. Quotations have been obtained for enhanced coverage. Line rental costs are only covered until the end of 2014. Ideally, these costs would be secured for a longer period of 5 years.