



Accessing & Using ICT

A Survey of Lambeth
Voluntary and Community
Organisations

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1. Executive Summary

In July 2008 Lasa was commissioned by Lambeth LIP Consortium (Lambeth Voluntary Action Council, London Borough of Lambeth, Lambeth Primary Care Trust and Voluntary Sector representatives – Streatham Darby and Joan Club and Lambeth Play Association to undertake the Lambeth LIP Consortium’s “Accessing and Using ICT” research project.

This piece of work comprised:

- Desktop research - brief analysis of ChangeUp funded and other ICT activity in London, Central London sub-region and Lambeth
- Running two focus groups at LVAC’s Sustainability Conference of 22 July 2008
- Survey consultation – of Lambeth Voluntary and community sector organisations (VCOs) and other key stakeholders by post and online
- Data analysis, report on findings and recommendations to the Lambeth LIP Consortium

Findings

Lambeth’s voluntary and community organisations score below the baseline on virtually all ICT indicators and face many barriers to “accessing and using” ICT. These are detailed below in our key findings.

Summary of key findings

- ▶ 43% of respondents came from **smaller organisations** with less than 5 staff, whilst another 31% had an annual expenditure of under £10,000 per annum.
- ▶ Virtually of our respondents said that computers (85%) and the Internet (96%) was “**vital**” or “fairly important” to their work. However, our respondents are exposing themselves to considerable risk by not planning or taking responsibility for ICT:
 - 55% lack an ICT budget
 - 65% don’t back-up data on a regular basis
 - 51% don’t update anti-virus software on a regular basis
- ▶ **Accessing ICT:** 53% of respondents have 0-5 computers. Of those, 12% have zero computers, presenting smaller organisations with serious barriers to engaging with mainstream services and provision;
- ▶ **Networking** of computers consistently emerged as a development and support need;
 - 40% have no computers networked
 - 33% said staff don’t have access to networked computers or email
- ▶ **The comfort zone** of computers tends to be for a universal range of basic office tasks – email, calendar, documents and spreadsheets for reporting to funders and trustees; However, managers find it difficult to understand and apply newer technologies – web 2.0, open source and VOIP, etc - to their organisation;

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- ▶ Confidence is an issue, with 41% of respondents being “**not confident**” in making ICT decisions. However, 53% of respondents confused us by saying they were “**reasonably satisfied**” with the way ICT decisions were made in their organisation!
 - ▶ We are concerned about **sources of internal ICT knowledge** - 41% of respondents do not have anyone within the organisation with specific ICT skills. This has a knock-on effect on the way ICT problems are dealt with, as some 20% are happy to let staff solve their own ICT issues on an ad hoc basis;
 - ▶ The need for **signposting external sources of ICT knowledge** – UKOnline and NetGain fare badly - is evident and LIOs and development workers have a crucial role to play in raising awareness of sources of help and support. Training resources – like SKILD - exist to help development workers signpost sources of ICT help.
 - ▶ There are contradictory attitudes to **training** - 51% of respondents identified ICT training as a development need, but 41% were unable to prioritise ICT training, with 40% admitting to having no-one with ICT expertise within their organisation;
 - ▶ **LB Lambeth** is the largest **funder** of the local voluntary sector (in terms of cash and numbers funded). There is also a case to be made for funders supporting **Total Cost of Ownership** of to increase access and use of ICT - just 10% said their main funders were happy to accept ICT capital and running costs in their bids;
 - ▶ 70% preferred to respond to our survey by post rather than online;
 - ▶ **Documentation** of ICT is moving in the right direction with evidence that organisations take seriously Data Protection (49%) and acceptable use policies (35%). However, VCOs need help in developing ICT strategies and disaster recovery plans, or at least signposting towards resources like the online ICT Knowledgebase;
 - ▶ Although the sector strives to be socially inclusive, **ICT accessibility** barely registers as an issue of good practice – and more work needs to be done to raise awareness of free or low cost resources available from AbilityNet and Lasa’s ICT Knowledgebase.

Suggested further action for the Consortium

Our overall recommendation is that the Consortium develops a “bottom-up” strategic response to our findings over the next 2-3 years. The following is intended to offer the Consortium options for a strategic response to the barriers faced by Lambeth voluntary and community organisations in accessing and using ICT.

High Priority

- ▶ **Circuit Rider projects:** HM Treasury's ChangeUp report and research from Lasa and others shows Circuit Riding to be an **efficient, effective and flexible model** of delivering ICT support to the sector. Circuit Riders - mobile ICT support workers who support a caseload of organisations – are a proven source of quality, impartial and strategic help for building organisational ICT capacity.
- ▶ **Smaller VCOs:** Smaller VCOs or **communities of interest** that cannot afford an individual or team to support their ICT might consider using shared support staff. Often known as Circuit Riders, these support workers are not based in one organisation but travel between the organisations that make up their caseload, helping on a long term basis with ICT planning, support and training. Superhighways are an example of this approach in London.
- ▶ **Shared back office:** ICT is essential to back office services and collaboration can enable VCOs to develop more sophisticated systems and bring huge benefits to beneficiaries of their services through improved delivery. The benefits of shared back-office are documented by NCVO third Sector Foresight¹. We would like to see the Consortium test this with a pilot project offering small organisations facing the greatest barriers a package of combined ICT services and support. The Ethical Property Company provides a similar model for its tenants.
- ▶ **Web services/new media:** New web browser based services such as Google Docs, Google Calendar, Facebook, Youtube, Slideshare and others **offer VCOs great opportunities to overcome traditional ICT barriers**, such as cost and complexity, to gain basic office functionality and collaborate and communicate their stories to wider audiences. The NCVO's "**ICT Tools to Support Collaborative Working**" presents a number of useful case studies demonstrating practical benefits.
- ▶ **Expert impartial advice:** Funders need expert and impartial advice to help them and their grantees understand the impact of ICT on the activity they are funding. Lasa's 'Building Bridges to ICT Excellence' project with the City Bridges Trust offers a model for how this could work.
- ▶ **Funding total cost of ICT:** VCOs struggle with the cost and complexity of ICT, hindering their ability to deliver effective services and outputs to their stakeholders. With full cost recovery now an accepted practice, funders should consider recognising ICT as a **legitimate cost of doing business** that brings real benefits to VCOs and their stakeholders.
- ▶ **Signposting sources of external ICT knowledge:** Low awareness and take-up levels indicate there is a clear need for better signposting sources of ICT knowledge, skills and training, a role that can be played by **local infrastructure networks, development workers, local libraries and circuit riders**.
- ▶ **Training** in basic ICT skills – strategy, management, web sites and networks – is a clear need but is rarely taken up by VCOs for a variety of reasons – time, money, priorities, etc. We would like to see better sign-posting towards local training and embedding training in local libraries and other community venues.

¹ How ICT is shaping the future design and delivery of public services (NCVO Third Sector Foresight, 2008)

Medium Priority: 2008 onwards

- ▶ **Open source:** VCOs should be aware that open source technologies can significantly reduce the cost of ICT, reduce dependency on proprietary systems and breathe new life into refurbished hardware. However, some work needs to be done to explain the practical applications to VCOs and we would signpost VCOs towards the **ICT Knowledgebase** which has plenty of resources to help explain open source and other new technologies.
- ▶ **Accessible computing:** As a matter of good practice VCOs should support accessible computing for all. Accessible computing also fosters the economic inclusion of disabled people. A number of resources are available to assist VCOs such as the **ICT Knowledgebase**, and the **London ICT Champion**.
- ▶ **ICT volunteering:** volunteering can help VCOs to leverage in skills to help build their organisational ICT capacity – such as building databases, websites, setting up networks, etc. More on ICT volunteering is available from **www.IT4Communities**.

Long-term priority: 2008-2014

- ▶ **ICT Social enterprise:** Funders should consider social enterprise models a **long-term goal** as their viability and sustainability for ICT support for VCO is largely unproven. Although, Comm-Tech remains the benchmark for a successful local ICT social enterprise, the folding of Brixton Online in 2007 indicates how difficult it is to sustain projects in a small market. In our view, the local market for social enterprise needs further research and development. We also have to question the capacity of many smaller organisations to engage with ICT social enterprises

2. Introduction

“Organisations failing to embrace ICT “risk having their work overshadowed” by those who do.”²

Background to voluntary sector ICT

There are currently over 2,500 Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations in Lambeth. The sector is made up of a wide variety of groups, ranging from small self-help groups with no staff, to branches of large national charities. Within this figure the majority are small and BAMER (black and minority ethnic refugee) organisations reflecting the rich ethnic diversity of the borough.

Voluntary and community sector organisations (VCOs) form the backbone of civil society and are at the forefront of efforts to build healthier, more vibrant, and more

² ICT, social capital and voluntary action (Economic Social Research Council, 2006)

inclusive communities. They also play "a crucial role in delivering public services"³ and are being called upon to take on expanded roles and responsibilities in service delivery and community revitalisation. In response, VCOs have become major innovators, continually creating new programmes and policies that grow the social, economic, physical, and civic infrastructure.

It should also be recognised that technology plays an important role in enabling VCOs to respond to social needs, especially at this critical moment in the development of the voluntary and community sector. The rise of information and communications technology (ICT) and the Internet has created unprecedented opportunities for VCOs and their funders to support those most at risk from social exclusion.

Our findings show that many key indicators of voluntary sector ICT in Lambeth lag well behind the national baseline. This is deeply concerning for the sector and other key stakeholders if the VCS is to contribute fully to social inclusion. Our findings leave no doubt that radical action and sustained investment is needed for the sector in Lambeth to achieve ChangeUp's high level ICT objective of "affordable and reliable support"⁴ for VCOs by 2014.

Accessing and Using ICT survey

The survey was sent to over 800 Lambeth voluntary and community sector organisations, with the consultation period running from 22 July to 12 September 2008. The survey attracted under 100 responses (via post and online). Although this is a small sample size, it can be indicative of consulting during the summer holiday period, and a lack of enthusiasm in the sector for surveys. The list of organisations responding is at Appendix 1.

It is worth noting the tight timescale - from contract approval to final report at the end of October - as well as the fact that data gathering would inevitably take place during the peak summer holiday season.

We also conducted a focus group of Lambeth VCOs at LVAC's Sustainability Conference of 22 July to tease out some of the issues (see Appendix 2).

Survey framework and questionnaire

The ICT evaluation framework developed by Paul Ticher and Andrea Eaves for the ICT Hub⁵ provides a ready made and well tested set of tools for our survey. Their baseline findings of 2007 also make a useful point of comparison between the state of ICT in Lambeth and nationally.

³, ChangeUp: Capacity Building and Infrastructure Framework for the Voluntary and Community Sector (2004)

⁴ *ibid*

⁵ ICT Hub Baseline Survey of 2004 and again in 2007

Briefly, the framework we've adopted aims to be:

- valid,
- useful to funders and policy-makers,
- useful to practitioners, and
- easy to apply.

Secondly, the questionnaire (Appendix 3) is divided into clear sections with key questions as markers for a wide range of connected issues:

- Organisational profile
- Importance of ICT
- ICT financing and funding
- ICT decision-making, advice and support
- Computers and what the organisation uses them for
- Technical issues



The intention is that it should be possible to assess relatively quickly, and with minimal effort, how well an organisation is using its ICT, compared with others in a similar situation. Where possible we have made direct comparisons with the national baseline to give a sense of how Lambeth is performing.

Another key feature of the survey is that it recognises the different expectations that should apply to organisations of different sizes and complexities, and to those at different stages of their development.

That is not the whole story, of course, as it doesn't reveal why an organisation is in that position, nor what contribution the work of the Consortium - or other, local infrastructure organisations - has made. The survey questionnaire also suggests how these questions should be approached.

Desktop research

Our desktop research focused on a review of ChangeUp and its approach to ICT at national, regional, sub-regional and national levels. This was particularly important to give a sense of context in which this work was carried out

The bibliography at Appendix 5 provides a comprehensive list of recent sources we reviewed in the compilation of this report.

3. ChangeUp and ICT

ICT has been identified as a strategic priority at all levels of ChangeUp – from national to local. The most striking thing to note is the obvious similarity in findings and conclusions from research into ICT needs at national to borough level. This is the context in which voluntary sector ICT in Lambeth can be viewed.

National

An increasing number of public services are delivered by voluntary and community organisations on behalf of the Government. Total public funding (from local and central government) reported by the voluntary and community sector has doubled from less than £5 billion in 1996/97 to more than £10 billion in 2004/05⁶.

It is worth noting that the issues flagged up in Lambeth chime strongly with research from HM Treasury⁷ and others that indicated that the sector's main problems in effectively using ICT were:

- a lack of strategic understanding of how ICT can benefit frontline organisations;
- difficulties in accessing advice, information and support that is affordable, reliable and relevant to the sector; and
- a lack of understanding of the full costs of ICT with a corresponding reluctance by funders to meet those costs.

It should also be noted that in our analysis Lambeth VCOs frequently lagged behind the national baseline on all three of the above issues. We shall look closer at this in our analysis of the survey results in section 4.

London

Analysis of various mapping exercises and regional, sub-regional and borough ChangeUp consortia business plans by Lasa (2004, 2007, 2008) and the London Infrastructure Development Consortium (2006) found similar ICT support needs to those identified at other levels of ChangeUp.

- London's VCS struggles to use ICT to its full potential and lacks access to appropriate support;
- Lack of co-ordination for ICT initiatives across London, evaluating outcomes and informing future planning and development

These findings and a number of recommendations were summarised in the London Infrastructure Development Plan 2006 and updated in the London Infrastructure Plan 2008.

⁶ The National Council for Voluntary Organisations, The UK Voluntary Sector Almanac 2007

⁷ ChangeUp: Capacity Building and Infrastructure Framework for the Voluntary and Community Sector, Home Office 2004

This plan formed the basis for the development of the London ICT Strategy by Lasa's Regional ICT Champion in consultation with a wide range of ChangeUp stakeholders. The strategy provides an over-arching plan for the development of voluntary sector ICT in London with key recommendations for funders, local infrastructure organizations and frontline organizations.

Sub-Regional

Lambeth, through LVAC, is a member of the Central London CVS Network (CLCVS) which co-ordinates ChangeUp activity across the central London sub-region (Camden, Islington, Kensington & Chelsea, Lambeth, Southwark, Wandsworth and Westminster).

The CLCVS Network commissioned CNT Associates⁸ to investigate ways in which ICT development and support could be provided from within the sector and to investigate the possibility of setting up a social enterprise to support the sector.

The report identified local providers of ICT support across the boroughs of the Central London sub-region, flagging up models of good practice. The report went on to conclude that a social enterprise support model was viable, but more work needed to be done to:

- develop a business culture and 'buy-in' from the sector;
- develop sub-regional ICT working with 4 ICT 'clusters' or pilot projects in partnership with the private sector;
- CLCVS take a decision on forming a social enterprise;
- develop a business plan and marketing strategy with fundraising activity undertaken.

More recently, CLCVS ChangeUp business plan for 2008-11 envisages the following ICT priorities:

- to improve collaboration in Human Resources, ICT, premises and volunteering;
- to deliver training to development workers in ICT;
- to develop proposal for setting up ICT social enterprise;

Lambeth

After a wide range of consultation exercises throughout 2005, the ChangeUp-Lambeth Local Infrastructure Plan (LIP) identified four key ICT needs of frontline organisations as:

- need for website development
- need for hardware
- need for ICT staff

⁸ Central London CVS Network – ICT Social Enterprise Feasibility Study; CNT Associates, January 2007

- help with resolving database development issues

Community Technology (or Comm-Tech) consequently carried out their own survey to further establish the scope of this need in the local voluntary sector⁹ in May 2006.

- better ICT resources – such as hardware
- efficient and reliable ICT support
- development of ICT skills and knowledge of staff

Community Technology's findings chime closely with the findings of Lambeth LIP and our own survey of 2008, and we will look more closely at this as we move through our analysis in section 4.

GIFTS and local e-government

During this piece of work we were specifically asked to look at LB Lambeth's GIFTS database and make some general observations about its implications for VCOs in Lambeth. It should be noted that LB Lambeth's implementation of GIFTS is being tested and is not yet in the public domain.

Broadly, GIFTS is a database package designed for funders to manage their relationship with grantees. It also provides contact management that has supported numerous consultations in the borough. The system has also provided mail outs alerting organisations to available and new funding streams. (over 30,000 emails sent in recent months to support consultation and outreach requests, as well as highlight forthcoming events, etc) and ties in with the 'managing information as a resource' and 'customer focus and integrated services' elements.

LB Lambeth's long term goal is to utilise the GIFTS system to identify funding gaps in service provision and target organisations with specific remits that may fall into these categories. As more and more funding information is entered, the capability for the data capture of this information increases dramatically, LB Lambeth has been able to provide detailed breakdowns of Community Funds in 2007/08.

In our view, GIFTS should be seen in the wider context of local e-government¹⁰, which envisaged:

- transforming business processes
- transforming service delivery
- customer focus and integrated services
- managing information as a resource

⁹ Report of Findings – ICT Survey of Lambeth Voluntary and Community Organisations; Comm-Tech, May 2006

¹⁰ Modern councils, modern services – access for all (HMSO 2006)

Readers looking for a fuller of discussion of e-government should note the Local e-Government Programme officially closed in April 2006, having partially succeeded in achieving some of its aims. This was superseded by Digital Challenge¹¹ and DC10 Plus¹². LB Lambeth's web site has a full discussion of its own e-government strategy¹³.

ICT used for service delivery

The ultimate aim of doing anything in the voluntary and community sector is to benefit individuals in need, communities or a cause. When used appropriately ICT enables VCOs to operate more effectively – this is especially relevant since the voluntary and community sector is regarded as a major delivery agent of public and community services.

NCVO Third Sector Foresight's latest report¹⁴ describes how ICT is driving transformations in service delivery:

- They generate, aggregate and store data. E-mail leaves data trails in ways that other conversations don't. Personal data collected for one service can be shared with another. While each instance can offer benefits, they raise issues of ethics, standards and procedures;
- ICT allows a personalised experience. Data collection, if properly handled, can enable organisations to provide tailored services and be more responsive to the needs of users;
- Communication technologies help people to network more easily, making new contacts and establishing their own exchange mechanisms. If organisations don't provide these opportunities, they may be derided or by-passed;
- Effective service delivery requires an alliance between customers/users, suppliers and investors. ICT can support open and collaborative cultures, provided organisations are prepared to work closely with stakeholders and each other;
- The behind-the-scenes back-office processes needed for service delivery can be mechanised through improved data recording and processing. So too can some front desk services - although users will still assert differing preferences for a mix of face-to-face, phone and online channels.
- Improved access to information is one of the most widely-recognised potential benefits of ICT. However, VCOs must ensure they do not disadvantage those not able or willing to use online services.

Beyond the changes that ICT brings to existing ways of doing things, they also offer the possibility of entirely new services such as call centres, online self-help; remote support by professionals; peer-to-peer support; and the co-creation of

¹¹ <http://www.digitalchallenge.org.uk/>

¹² <http://www.dc10plus.net/>

¹³ <http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/NR/exeres/B3A988CB-FA66-4DC7-846F-E4BC95B28D8B.htm>

¹⁴ How ICT is shaping the future design and delivery of public services (NCVO Third Sector Foresight, 2008)

services. Some of these display a move away from centralised to decentralised distribution and the need for changes in control systems and organisational procedures.

The value and importance of ICT to Lambeth VCOs is overwhelmingly borne out in responses to our survey – the vast majority of respondents rate the value of computers and the Internet as “vital” to their operation. Numerous case studies¹⁵, for example, have described how ICT allows organisations to do things they would not otherwise be able to do.

In general, the increased access and use of ICT by VCOs is worth pursuing because it helps organisations to better meet their aims, engage with policy-makers and deliver increased outputs and quality outcomes for funders.

Before we plunge into our analysis, some final observations should be noted:

- Our primary focus was on the barriers faced by organisations to accessing and using ICT and what can be done about it in terms of organisational and infrastructure development
- Many organisations do not particularly want to be innovative in their use of ICT. All they demand of their ICT is that it functions with the minimum of fuss to support their activities;
- The diverse nature of the voluntary and community sector presents serious practical challenges to capacity building activity.

4. Baseline Information on ICT in Lambeth 2008

In this chapter we analyse the survey responses, highlight areas for action and where possible compare them to the national baseline of 2007 for a point of reference. A summary of our findings and recommendations can be found in the Executive Summary.

The survey was sent to around 800 organisations on LVAC’s membership database by post. The paper form also included a link to a survey hosted on Lasa’s Knowledgebase which was also publicised using Lambeth Council’s GIFTS service. 69% of respondents did so via the post with the remaining 31% using the online survey. This is possibly indicative of the willingness of organisations to engage online and has ramifications for Lambeth Council’s roll out of the GIFTS service.

¹⁵ <http://www.icthub.org.uk/caseStudies/>

Organisational profile

Q1. Areas of operation

The survey asked organisations to indicate which were their main areas of operation and allowed multiple selections across the 19 categories. All categories got at least one selection but the focus was on youth, advice and guidance, children and family and community services. In addition, organisations added disability (as distinct from health), training and tenants associations to the prescribed list. 16% serve the BMER communities and 10% refugees and asylum seekers.

This presents a challenge to supporting and developing ICT in Lambeth's voluntary sector which is not unusual – different organisations working in different sectors will have varying ICT needs and specialities. Any programmes developed will need to address this by being generalist rather than specific to one area.

Q2. Staff and volunteers

Whilst there was a fairly even split between the organisational size ranges, the majority of respondents were in the smallest (0-5) banding at 43%. Again, this presents support and development issues in that the smaller organisations tend to have more difficulty engaging with developmental programmes due to availability of staff (which includes volunteers), time and money.

The limited capacity of equalities frontline groups to self-organise to seek help - and the capacity of support providers to respond - is well documented by CEMVO¹⁶ and the National Equality Partnership¹⁷.

Q3. Total annual expenditure

Although the pattern of organisational spending was similar to the baseline in that the highest percentage of surveyed organisations were in the third highest category (£100,000 - £1m) there was a much higher amount of smaller organisations with expenditure of under £10,000 and those between £10,000 and £100,000 and significantly lower in the highest bracket. In effect there is a larger number proportionately of small organisations against a smaller number of large organisations when compared with the national picture.

¹⁶ Capacity building black and minority ethnic voluntary and community organisations - an evaluation of CEMVO's London pilot programme, Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2006

¹⁷ Supporting Equality Groups: An overview of support to the diverse third sector in England, National Equality Partnership, 2008

About the importance of ICT in the organisations

Q4. Number of computers

As might be expected given the results of the previous questions relating to organisation size and expenditure, the highest percentage (41%) were in the 1 to 5 bracket. Significantly, however, 12% of respondents reported that they had no computers at all. This, however, given responses to later questions, generally meant that the organisation itself did not own any computers but that they used their own personal computers or other shared resources (owned by another organisation but made available to the organisation). This will be discussed later, but in this latter case it is more difficult for organisations to engage with ICT if they are not in total control of their equipment. As an analogy, if you hire or borrow a car, you are at the mercy of the hirer or lender's maintenance, insurance, rescue plans and policies and availability is limited. Of course, it can be much cheaper!

There are also issues around security and data protection when using shared computers in that other organisation (or family in the case of home-based organisations) members may have access to confidential or critical information.

Q5. Importance of computers in general and Internet/email to the organisation's work

With a small number of exceptions, virtually all the organisations surveyed responded that computers (85%) and the Internet (96%) were "vital" or "fairly important" to their work. No one responding replied that they didn't use computers and whilst this is in some way to be expected (we don't know how many non-respondents didn't reply because they have no use for computers and therefore did not feel it worth their while replying to the survey) it is significant given the size of organisations surveyed. It is usually the very smallest organisations or those providing face-to-face services who do not use computers but it seems in Lambeth this is not the case.

Q6. ICT support and development needs identified

This was another multiple response question and the areas which received the highest responses were (in declining order) costing and funding, training (see question 26), databases and ICT management.

This is a very helpful question in that it enables the Lambeth LIP Consortium to plan how they might respond to these needs in terms of a developmental programme.

ICT Financing and Funding

Q7. ICT budget

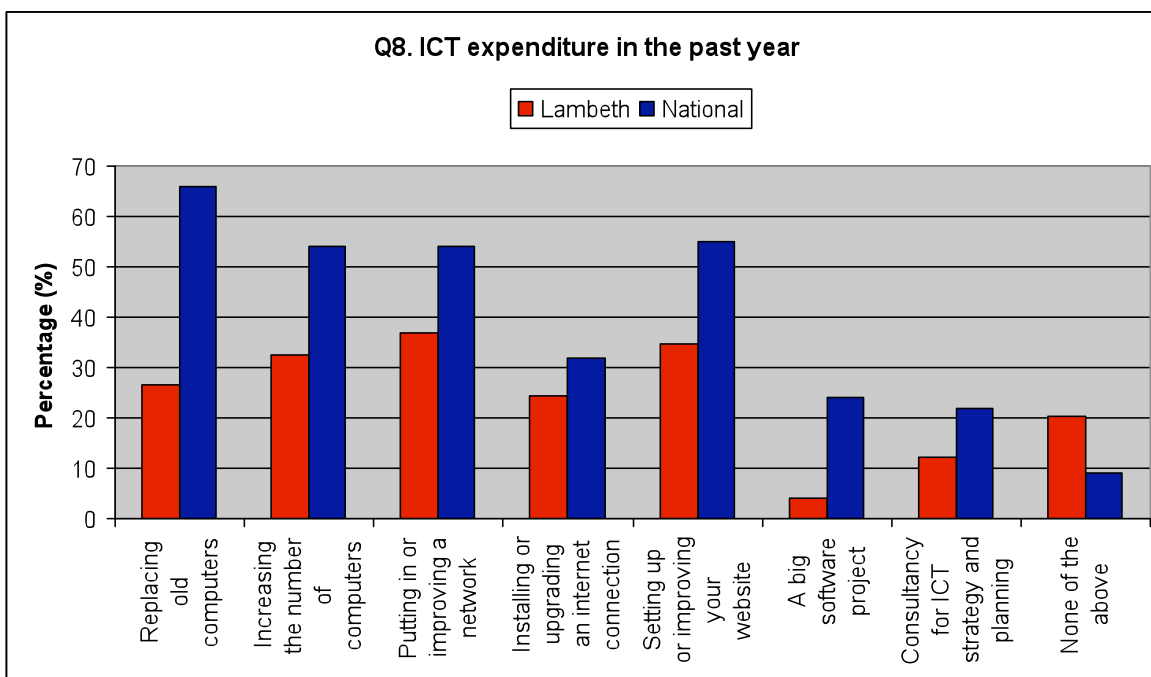
There was a roughly equal split between organisations who have and don't have specific ICT budgets with the slight majority not having a budget. This is virtually exactly the opposite of the national picture where 57% do budget for ICT. Although out of the scope of this survey, we can only base our analysis on our knowledge of the sector and perceive that this is because of a mixture of ignorance of the need to budget (for ICT and possibly at all, a common issue with small organisations) that they just don't have the money available, that funding is not sought for ICT when putting in bids or that funders are unwilling to fund ICT. The latter situation is changing; for example, Lasa is currently running a project with the City Bridge Trust and Wates Foundation (*Building Bridges to ICT Excellence*) to provide information on budgeting to potential and current grantees of the funders and to raise awareness within the funding bodies as to the importance of funding ICT. But it is clear that more work needs to be done here as there is a significant risk in not budgeting for ICT – compare this answer to question 5 where most organisations claimed that ICT was “vital” for their work.



From the answers to how much the budget is, it is apparent that only a minority are budgeting at a realistic sustainable rate for ICT. In order to cover the **Total Cost of Ownership** (TCO – includes hardware and software purchase, licence costs, administration, maintenance, training, etc) for an organisation's ICT, Lasa estimates that organisations should be budgeting around £1,500/annum per person. Of course this figure will depend on organisation size and complexity of their systems and is subject to the changing prices especially of hardware (however support and training costs tend to rise), it is a reasonable rule of thumb. In addition there are resources available to help organisations plan and budget at a level appropriate such as those on the ICT Knowledgebase and the (late) ICT Hub's *How to Cost and Fund ICT* publication.

Q8. ICT expenditure in the past year

This question allowed multiple answers – the highest responses were for putting in or improving a network, setting up or improving a website, increasing the number of computers and with significant votes for replacing old computers and installing or upgrading an Internet connection. Lambeth’s organisations fall significantly below the national baseline except for “none of the above” (which can have multiple interpretations – either the question failed to list what they were spending on (perhaps training or support) or they weren’t spending anything at all, which given the answers to the previous questions is our preferred option).



We were pleased to see that money is being spent on networking as this has considerable benefits to organisations through, for example, sharing resources (e.g. databases, documents), collaborative working, making data easier to secure and sharing Internet connections. In addition, the visibility that websites provide for organisations to their clients, members, the general public and (importantly) funders cannot be overemphasised so it is again heartening that money is being spent in this direction (hopefully not at the expense of other areas of ICT). Likewise, the Internet is “vital” for organisational business and communication with the outside world.

Q9. How good funders are at funding ICT

It is perhaps not all that surprising, but is somewhat disappointing, that 41% of the organisations don’t know how good their funders are at funding ICT – the next highest percentage indicated that some funders are sympathetic to funding ICT but

others are bad. The baseline reported that "...only 26% of their funders were generally happy to accept both capital and running costs for ICT" – this can be compared to our survey result of 10%.

Again more work needs to be done to educate funders as to the benefits of ICT to the organisations they fund and also the levels to which they should be funding – it is hoped that this message will be conveyed to them through projects like Lasa's *Building Bridges to ICT Excellence* and also communication with groups of funders through forums such as London Funders although more work needs to be done with statutory funders such as local authorities (perhaps through their representative bodies) – which leads us to the next question...

Q10. Principal funders

The largest funder by a considerable amount is Lambeth Council with the next largest being split between another member of the Consortium, Lambeth PCT and the Big Lottery. Slightly behind this was the City Bridge Trust followed by a selection of 25 funding bodies (see Appendix 4). In some ways this shows the scale of the problem facing those of us who wish to raise awareness of funding for ICT in that there are so many bodies to engage with. The ICT Hub carried out national research into ICT funding¹⁸ and provides a useful list of funders and their attitudes to ICT funding.

ICT Decision making, advice and support

Q11. Strategy, policy and procedural documentation

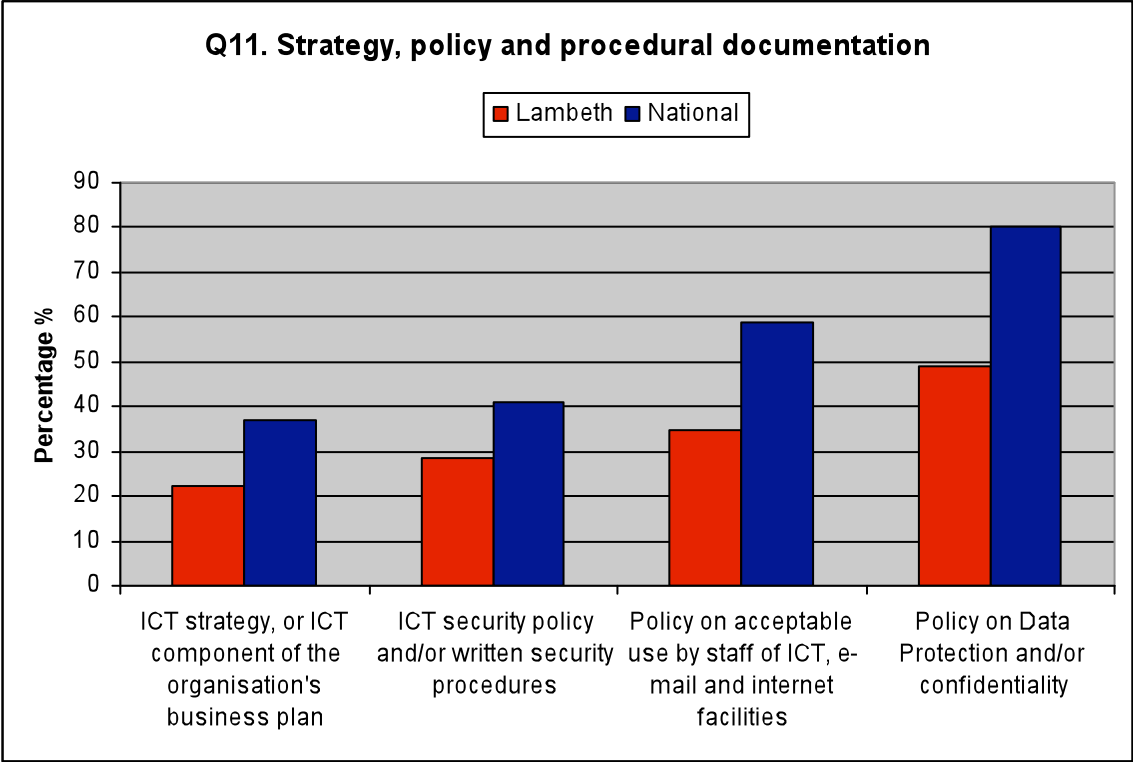
Whilst the pattern of written documentation in organisations is similar to the national baseline, Lambeth is consistently below the percentages by around a third. It is, however, encouraging and better than we anticipated.

Data protection and confidentiality was the highest listed policy followed by an inventory and acceptable use.



¹⁸ (Sources of funding for ICT projects and initiatives, January 2007, Updated March 2008 by Karen Cropper and Cadence)

Disappointingly, only 22% had an ICT strategy document or component of their business plan - this contrasts with the national baseline finding which was that organisations that had ICT budgets were also the most likely to have a strategy.



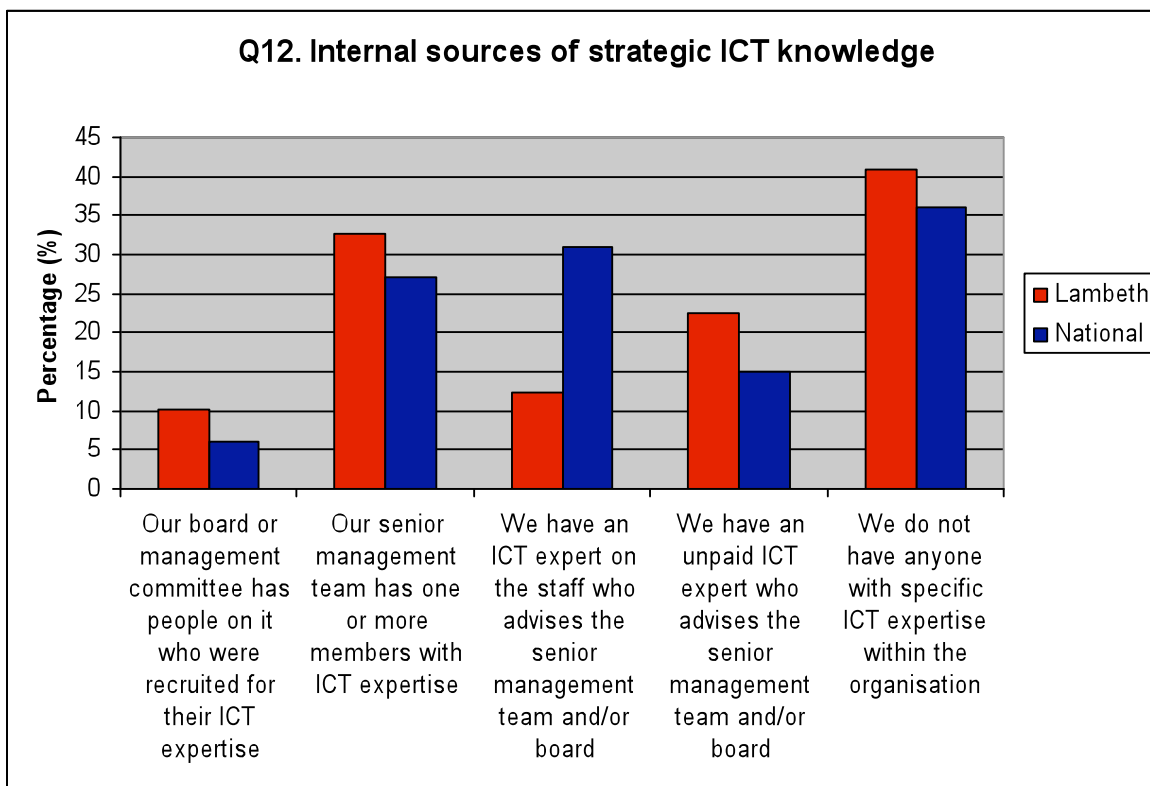
The lowest percentage was for disaster recovery plans – given that organisations are stating that ICT is vital for their work, they are possibly ill prepared when it comes to making plans if things go wrong – for example, it is estimated that over a half of organisations that suffer a serious data loss will go under within a year.

Q12. Internal sources of strategic ICT knowledge

Organisations were asked to tick all options which applied to them. The results of this question range from the good to the bad. On the negative side, 41% of respondents do not have anyone within the organisation with specific ICT expertise – this is slightly above the national baseline so not unexpected.

However, on the plus side, Lambeth scored above the baseline for ICT experts on their board, in their senior management team or unpaid advisers. The latter is a double edged sword though – voluntary organisations are often keen to take on volunteers who claim to have ICT expertise – without being too critical, many of them do have ICT skills but in the majority of cases their experience is inappropriate (we have lost track of the number of times we have heard of the helpful person who has implemented a solution such as a database which is totally inappropriate or the website that no one else can update...). Use of organisations

such as IT4Communities ensures that there is an appropriate fit of professional to organisation. Similarly volunteers, even the most well-meaning, can have problems with being available when the organisations need them most.

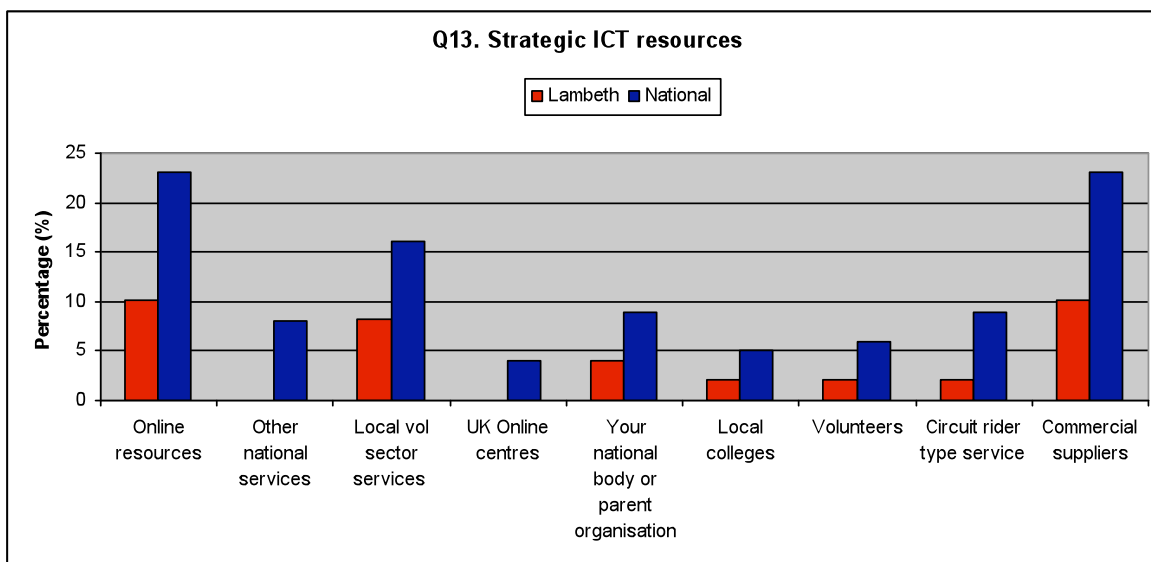


Having an “accidental techie” in-house, that is someone who has aptitude and responsibility for ICT that is not their sole or primary job role is a good thing and it appears that the organisations surveyed here do have this resource. Lasa is starting work on a project (London Region ICT Infrastructure Project) which looks to help skill-up such individuals and provide a framework for personal learning and development. LVSC is also running training days for accidental techies to help them understand the range of ICT issues which need to be on their agenda from day to day troubleshooting and security, through to strategic planning.

Q13. Strategic ICT resources

There appears to be very little knowledge of or use of external sources of ICT knowledge with Lambeth way below the baseline. For example, whilst there are 11 UKOnline centres within 2 miles of LVAC’s office, only 4% of organisations were aware of their existence and no one had actually used them. There is also concern that the joint highest source of advice is commercial suppliers. Some suppliers are well versed in the voluntary sector and do a great job in providing appropriate equipment and software and maintain a level of independence but there are many who are not and use the same solution for their clients irrespective of size, need,

finance and ability to use the systems. It is hoped that initiatives such as Lasa's Suppliers directory which ensures that suppliers listed have voluntary sector experience will help resolve some of these issues.



The need for more signposting is evident – the methodology for doing it is a somewhat harder nut to crack. Despite the large amount of resources being put into initiatives such as the ICT Hub, organisations remain relatively ignorant of what is available. Infrastructure and developmental organisations all have a part to play – the embedding of ICT as a tool in the development workers armoury and its acceptance by quality assurance organisations would assist in this greatly. Similarly, local support agencies such as LVAC can use their publicity, newsletters etc to flag up resources.

Q14. Satisfaction with ICT decision making

The response to this question is broadly in line with the baseline in that around 71% of the respondents started they were “completely” or “reasonably” satisfied with ICT decision making in their organisations. What we don’t know, however, is how many of the respondents are actually the decision makers! It is still of concern though that 29% are only “partly” or “not at all” happy.

Q15. Confidence in making ICT decisions

The response to this question is curious, given the apparent high level of satisfaction stated in the previous question, in that 41% of respondents are “not confident” of their ability to make decisions. Coupled with the “vital” nature of computers in Lambeth’s organisations (as per question 5) there appears to be a

disconnect – maybe there’s an element here of “I don’t know what I want but I want it now”. Whatever the reasons, it’s obvious that there needs to be some help available for managers to become more confident in their decision making – we doubt many would admit to being unconfident about other organisational decision making so the honesty displayed here is gratifying (if a little surprising).

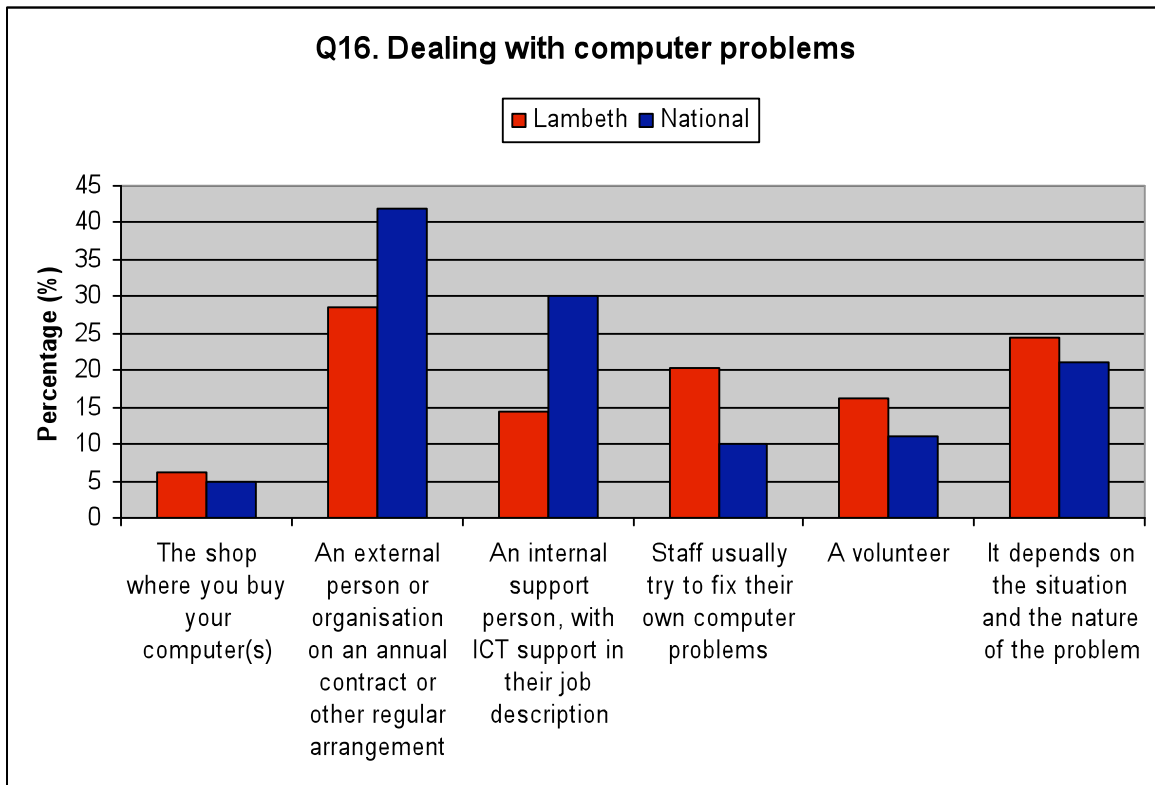
Training programmes such as those run by NetGain appear to have little take up – the need exists for ICT management training but there has been little take up, possibly because managers lack the time and energy to engage with it.

Programmes which introduce decision makers to ICT strategy, planning, budgeting and so on via the back door through longer term capacity building interventions such as circuit riding have the potential to change the way decisions are approached – and provide a safety net in that independent advice and support is available.



Q16. Dealing with computer problems

29% of respondents stated they had external support with an annual contract or regular agreement which is the direction we’d like to see all organisations going in (although we would also like to see some Circuit Riders in the mix who got a resounding “nul points”). The next highest response said that it depended on the situation which in all probability is what happens in most organisations – the accidental techie can deal with a certain amount of problems but runs out of experience and knowledge when it comes to more complex issues and has to call in the hired hand to fix it. 20% of organisations say staff usually try to fix their own problems – this can be a recipe for disaster as there is generally no control, no process, no fault logging and no learning for the organisation – things can end up worse than they were already especially if trying to attempt fixes out of their comfort zone.



As previously mentioned (question 12), the Lasa London Region ICT Infrastructure Project is attempting to address this with a structured learning programme that will help equip responsible staff with the correct skills. The ideal situation in an organisation is someone with a certain level of ICT skills who can handle day to day issues in a controlled, logical manner but with professional technical support on hand when the knowledge runs out (or they need advice).

Q17. Satisfaction with dealing with computer problems

There appears to be a 60/40 split here with around 60% being “very” or “fairly satisfied” with the way in which their problems get resolved. We’d reiterate that we would like to see a more structured and professional approach to problem resolution.

Q18. ICT issues requiring external advice or technical support

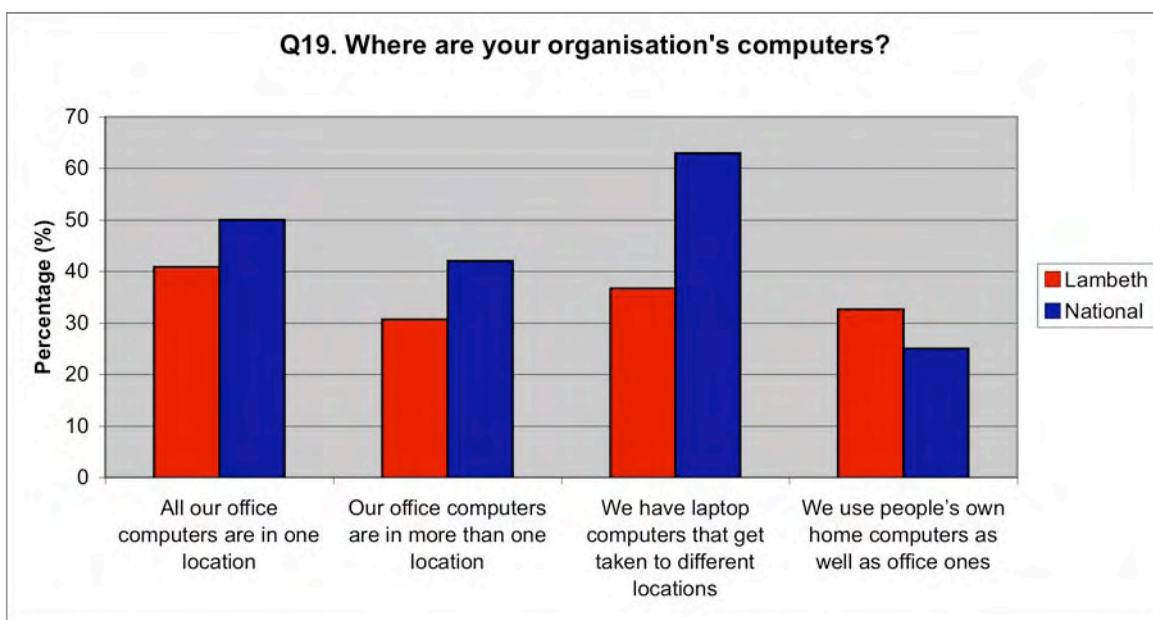
The areas which got the highest responses here (albeit with a low response rate) were networking, Internet connectivity and websites (which compares with the spending reported in question 8) suggesting that organisations are putting their money into upgrading areas in which they’ve had problems, quite correctly. This is not unexpected and fits the profile which Lasa has seen in its two Circuit Rider projects. Again help and assistance with training accidental techies can give a

small amount of knowledge that, if targeted effectively, can significantly help organisations with the stability, security and efficiency of their systems.

Computers and what the organisation uses them for

Q19: Location of the organisation's computers

The first thing to note is that 33% said they “use people’s own computers as well as office ones”, somewhat higher than the national baseline response of 25%. Similarly, 37% said they have laptops that get taken to different locations. These both indicate a high-level of mobile working or home-working, typically found amongst small and micro organisations who often lack fixed premises and access to ICT.



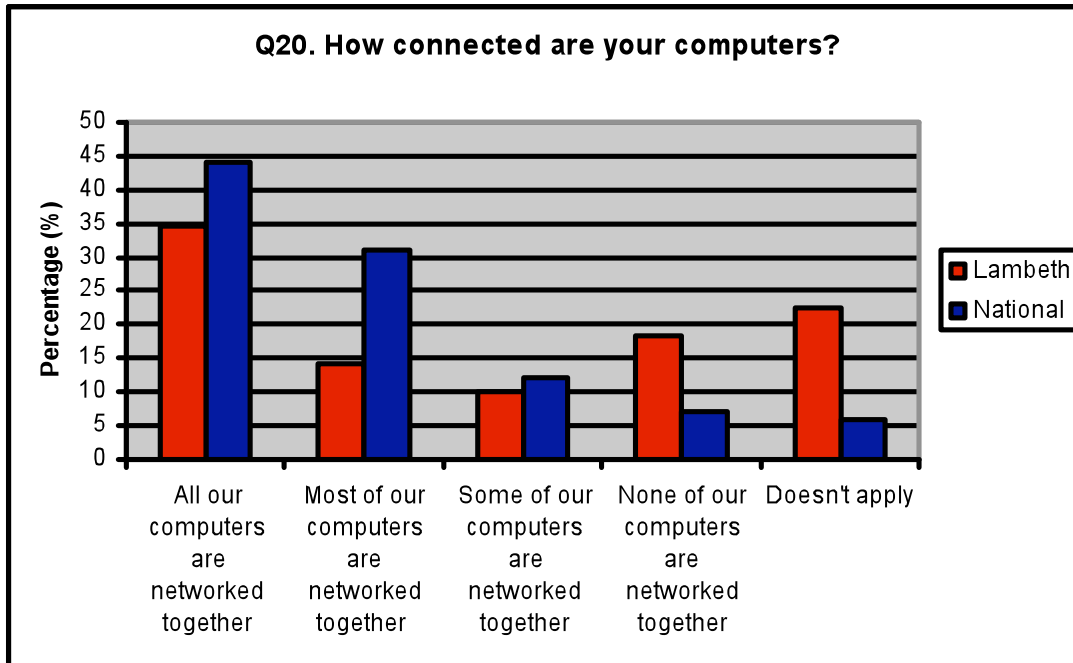
It is also worth noting the national baseline for taking laptop computers to different locations (63%) is almost double that for Lambeth (37%), and may indicate that Lambeth VCOs lack access to laptop hardware.

Using home computers for work also comes with substantial risks that VCOs should be aware of, commonly:

- a lack of technical support for home PCs
- a lack of up to date anti-virus and other security precautions
- a lack of data back-up
- and Data Protection issues

Q20. Networked computers

Networking computers was consistently identified as priority need in our survey (see questions and 8 and 18) and a previous survey conducted by Comm-Tech in 2006.



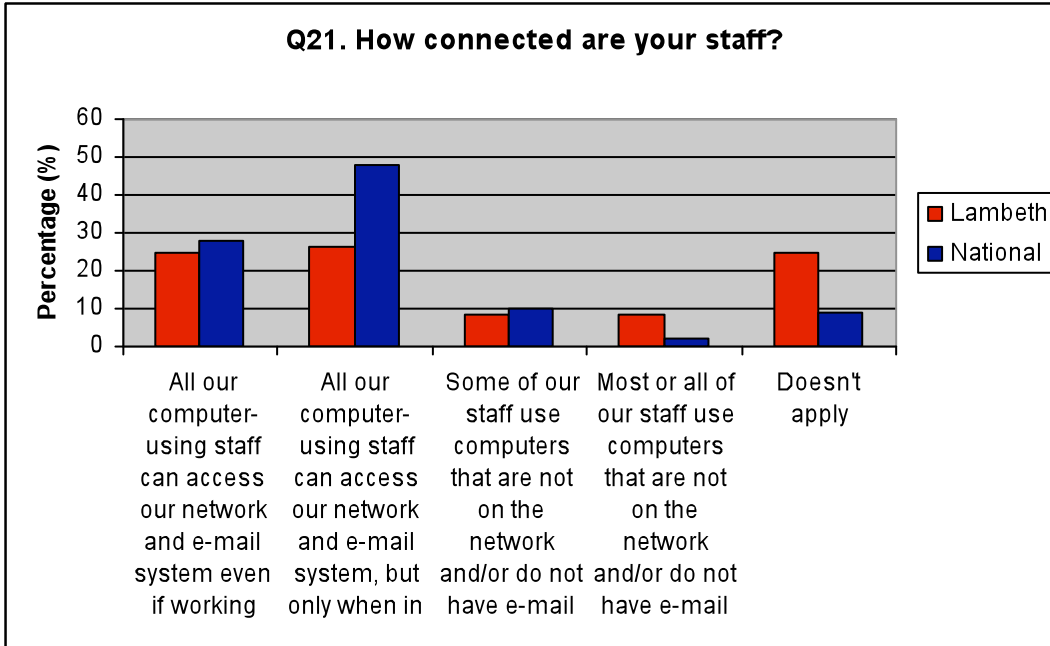
Responses show a familiar 60/40 split – some 60% said **all or some** of their computers were networked, whilst 40% said they had no computers networked or the question didn't apply. This was somewhat higher than the national baseline of 13% who admitted to no network computers. This finding is consistent with our profile of small/micro organisations – typically they have less than 5 staff and 5 computers and struggle with a variety of capacity issues.

Q21. Networked staff

The ability to share files over a network or access email are two basic staples of office life. On the plus side, over 50% said all of their computer using staff could access their network and email. This wasn't too far behind the national baseline.

However, almost one third (32%) of Lambeth respondents said their staff didn't have access to networked computers and email, or the question didn't apply. Again this is substantially higher than the baseline (11%) and is indicative of our profile small/micro organisation.



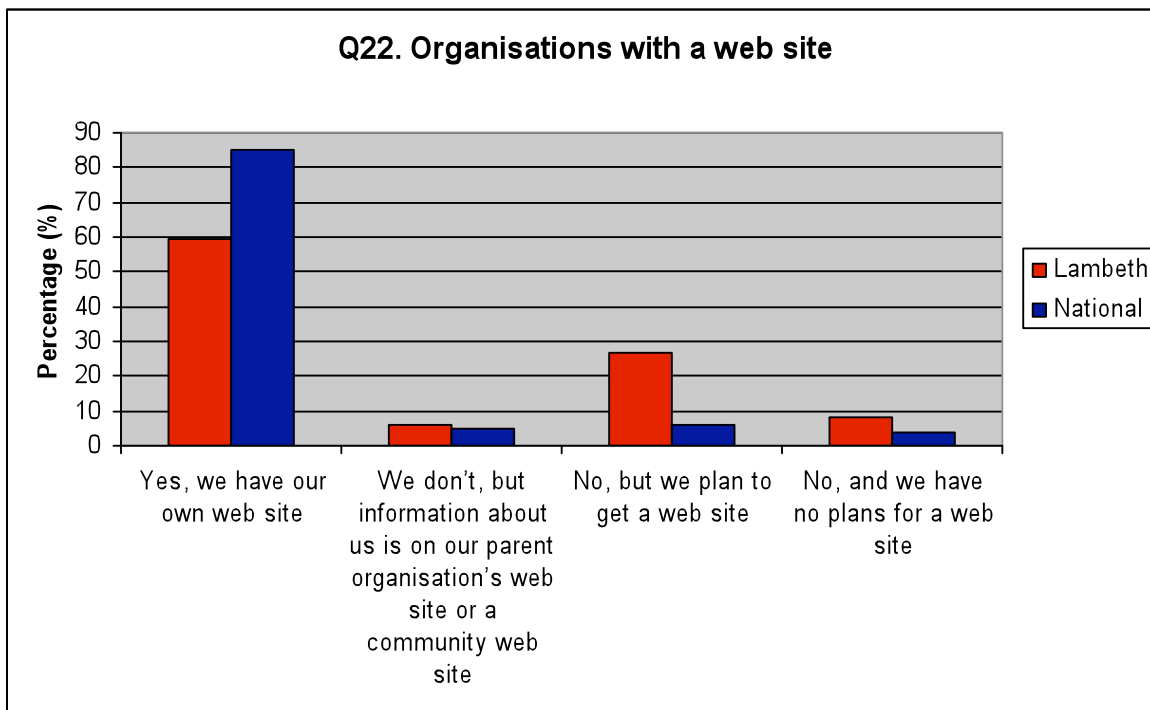


In our experience, small/micro organisations who are struggling to “access and use ICT” even at a basic level are in need of joined up capacity building interventions.

Q22. Organisation’s with a web site?

Once again we see the 60/40 split emerge in respondents. Encouragingly, almost 60% of our respondents said they had their own website. Although this indicator is some way behind the national baseline of 85%, it is consistent with the importance our respondents have placed on having a web presence and web skills – see questions 8 and 18.

However, almost 40% confess to either having no web site (but plan to get one) or having no plans for a web site. Again, this fits our profile of the micro/small group which struggles to understand, access and use ICT.

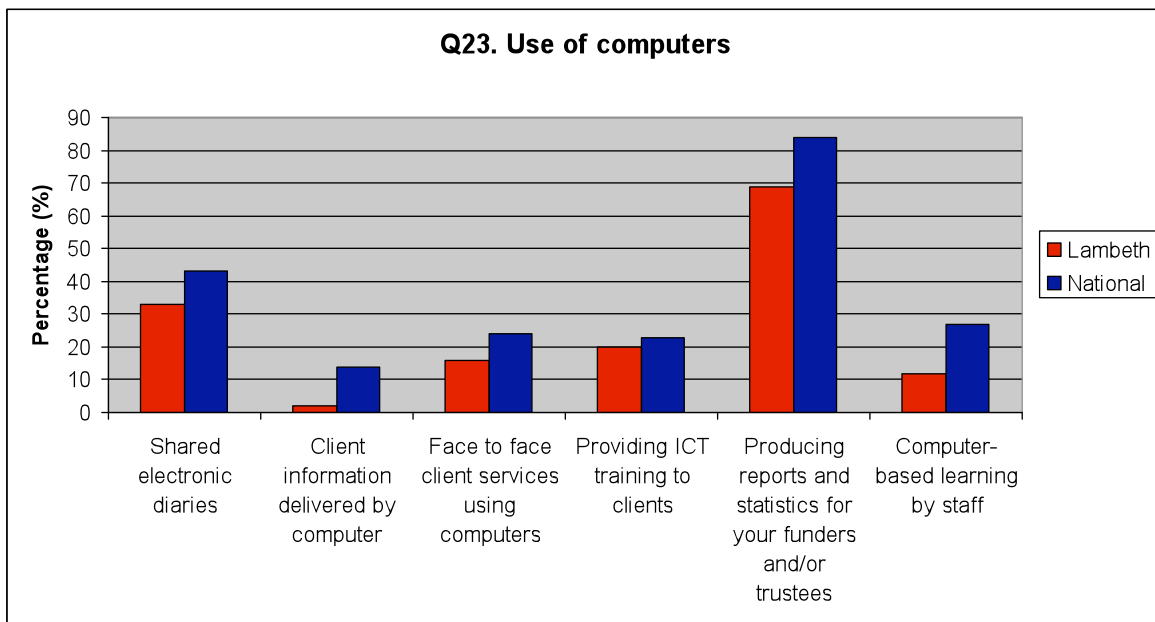


Not having a web site is like not having a brochure, it tends to give stakeholders – rightly or wrongly - an impression of an organisation that is not communicating with the outside world. Given the importance of web sites in helping VCOs to explain to stakeholders what they do and the difference they make, we suggest that Lambeth LIPC looks at a solution involving simple hosted websites, training to understand basic web design and keep their web site up to date.

Q23. Use of computers for organisational tasks

This was another multiple choice question, and once again, Lambeth's responses are all below the national baseline. We were surprised that only 2% used computers to deliver client information, but then again databases have proved a perennial issue for VCOs of all sizes.

The biggest response was 69% using their computers to produce reports for their funders and trustees. We did not ask, but based on our experience most VCOs would be using Excel spreadsheets and Word tables to monitor and report their work. The Consortium could look at how local VCOs can better understand and use databases to deliver client information, monitor and report their work.



Q24. Uses of e-mail and the Internet

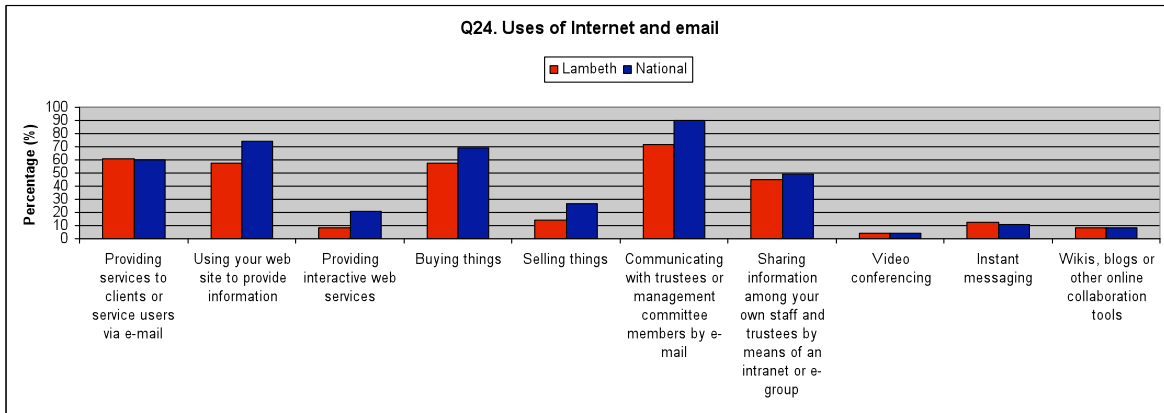
Lambeth VCOs are making good use of Internet and email. Standard uses of Internet and email – emailing clients (61%), using web sites to provide information (57%), online purchasing (57%), emailing trustees and management (71%) - are well represented, albeit slightly below the national baseline.

It is also worth noting that interactive web based technologies¹⁹ which can help organisations better collaborate, share data and tell their story²⁰ – think of Youtube, Facebook, and wikis, – rate very lowly in take up rates. The same is true of the wider voluntary and community sector.

Whilst take up of web based tools is currently low across the sector, entry barriers to their use are significantly lower than traditional computer infrastructure which comes with costs attached to owning hardware and software and investing in training and maintenance. Many web based tools offer the same basic function as Microsoft Office – email, calendar, contacts, documents - at a fraction of the price and only need an Internet connection, a keyboard and monitor to run on.

¹⁹ Online Technology for Social Change: From Struggle to Strategy, dotOrganize, 2006

²⁰ Campaigning and Consultation in the age of participatory media; NCVO ICT Foresight, 2006



Web based office tools could offer smaller/micro VCOs a viable and low cost way of gaining basic office functionality and the Consortium should seriously consider a pilot project to explore how small/micro organisations might **access** such tools.

Q25. Approach to ICT skills

The headline news here is that 41% of respondents are unable to prioritise ICT training. In the middle, another 40% said they prefer to look at what training is available before sending anyone. At the other end of the spectrum only 20% carry out regular training needs analysis (16%), or expect staff to work towards a recognised standard, such as the European Computer Driving License (4%).

Quite clearly, ECDL and ICT training and skills are not viewed as priorities in the sector. In our experience, smaller VCOs tend not to prioritise training for many reasons – lack of budget, no organisational capacity, high staff turnover, etc. By and large, VCOs are focusing on the day to day battle for survival rather than longer-term strategic needs – which in turns limits their capacity to work effectively and engage with mainstream services.

This is also about changing sector attitudes and behaviour to ICT - 85% of respondents rated computers as being very or fairly important to their organisation, they are not backing it up in practice, with 41% unable to prioritise ICT training, and 40% confessing to having no-one with ICT expertise within their organisation (see Q5). This also fits our profile of the small/micro organisation that is unable to engage with accessing or using ICT beyond a basic, one day at a time approach.

Changing attitudes and behaviour to ICT in Lambeth is going to take serious thought and won't happen overnight, but the Consortium might like to consider further work in this area.

Q26. Satisfaction with the ICT skills of staff and volunteers

75% of respondents said they were very or fairly satisfied with the ICT skills of their staff. Once again, our respondents are saying the right things, but are also honest enough to admit they are not following it up in practice. Whilst 51% identified ICT training as a development need, 41% admitted they were unable to prioritise ICT training.

Instead, an ad hoc approach to ICT training (as when funding and or time permits) and staff sorting out their own computer problems has developed. Lasa's circuit rider projects²¹ have highlighted many examples where well-intentioned staff without ICT skills have made computer problems worse by trying to fix it themselves.

Again, the Consortium may wish to look at strategies of raising awareness and signposting organisations towards sources of ICT knowledge and help.

Q27. More effective use of ICT compared to previous years

We have no way of measuring this objectively, but 68% of our respondents said they thought their organisation was using ICT more effectively than in previous years.

Good planning and decision-making on ICT involve knowledge about the potential of the technology and a sense of how this potential may be translated into practical benefits for the organisation. They also require awareness of the possible pitfalls and how to avoid them.

For managers to feel on top of all this, while staying focused on the organisation's overall strategy and business plan, can be a tall order for those who do not feel themselves to be particularly technically minded. The more an organisation has done to address this, the more likely it is to be using ICT effectively²².

Q28. Consideration of environmental issues

Encouragingly, 69% of respondents said they considered ICT environmental issues. Sustainability has long been on the political agenda and it is encouraging to see so many respondents recognise the environmental impact of ICT – such as conserving energy, recycling and disposing of old kit responsibly and making ethical purchasing decisions.

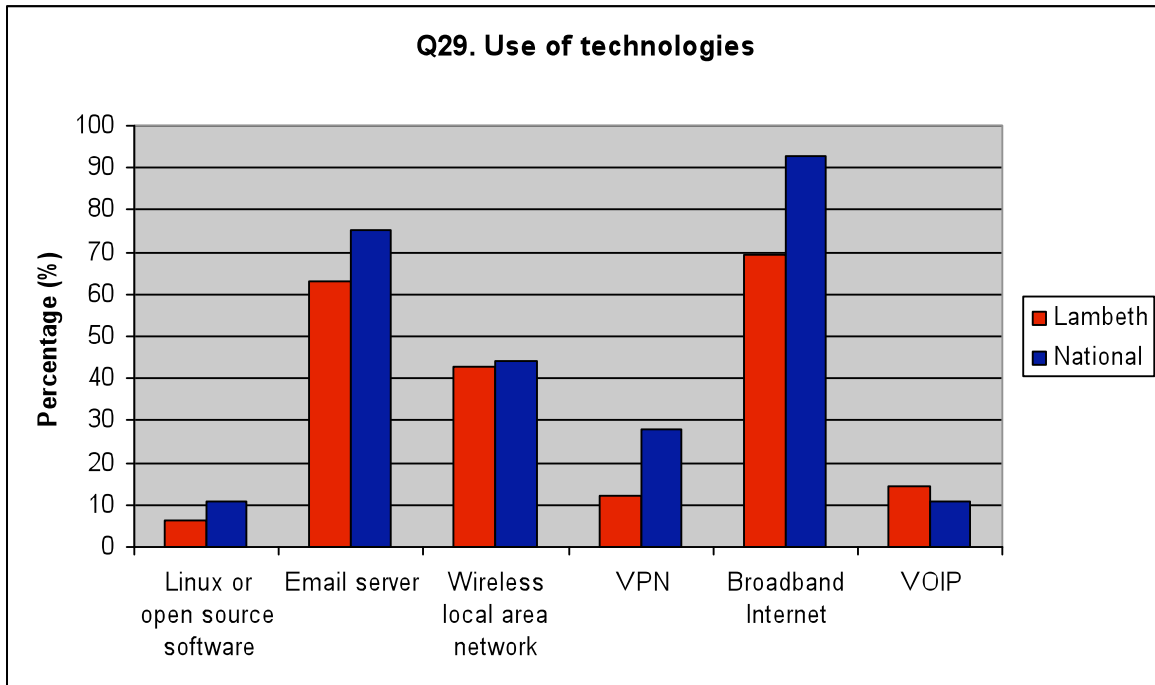
²¹ Circuit Rider Project: Evaluation, Lasa, May 2007

²² ICT Hub Baseline Survey, Ticher and Eaves, 2004

Technical issues

Q29. Use of technologies

Responses from Lambeth were slightly below the national baseline. Noticeably, take-up and knowledge of newer technologies – open source software, VOIP (Voice Over IP telephony) and VPN (virtual private networks) – are low.



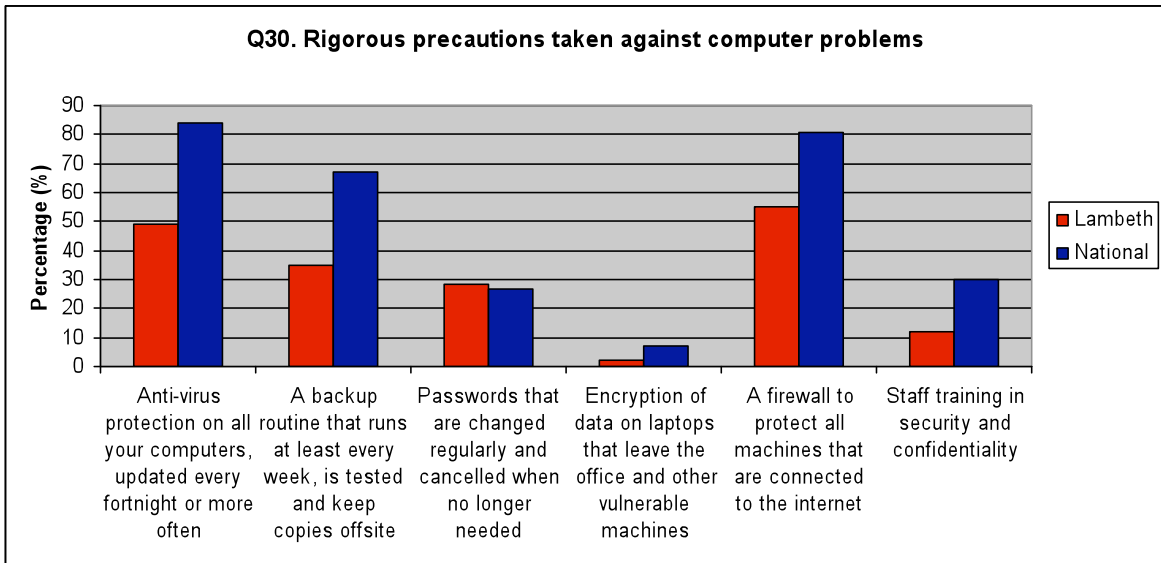
As we have discussed before, it is a tall order for managers to stay on top of new technology developments and see the practical benefits for their organisation - while staying focused on the organisation's overall strategy and business plan - especially for those who do not feel themselves to be particularly technically minded.

Q30. Taking precautions against possible computer problems

Disturbingly, Lambeth respondents are well below the national baseline on all counts. Whilst 85% of our survey respondents felt that computers were "vital" to their organisations, this is not being executed in practice:

- 65% don't back-up data on a regular basis
- 51% don't up date anti-virus software on a regular basis
- 45% don't have an Internet firewall





Studies in the commercial sector regularly report that many companies which suffer a significant loss of data fold within a year. The voluntary and community sector is no different - certainly the disruption to services would be disasterous for service users or clients as well as for staff, volunteers and funders of the services.

Changing attitudes and behaviour to ICT practices is a sector wide problem, but the Consortium may wish to look at commissioning local projects - such as circuit riders to work with smaller groups on their ICT practices; upskilling development workers to conduct basic ICT health-checks; or more radically, exploring the provision of web based services.

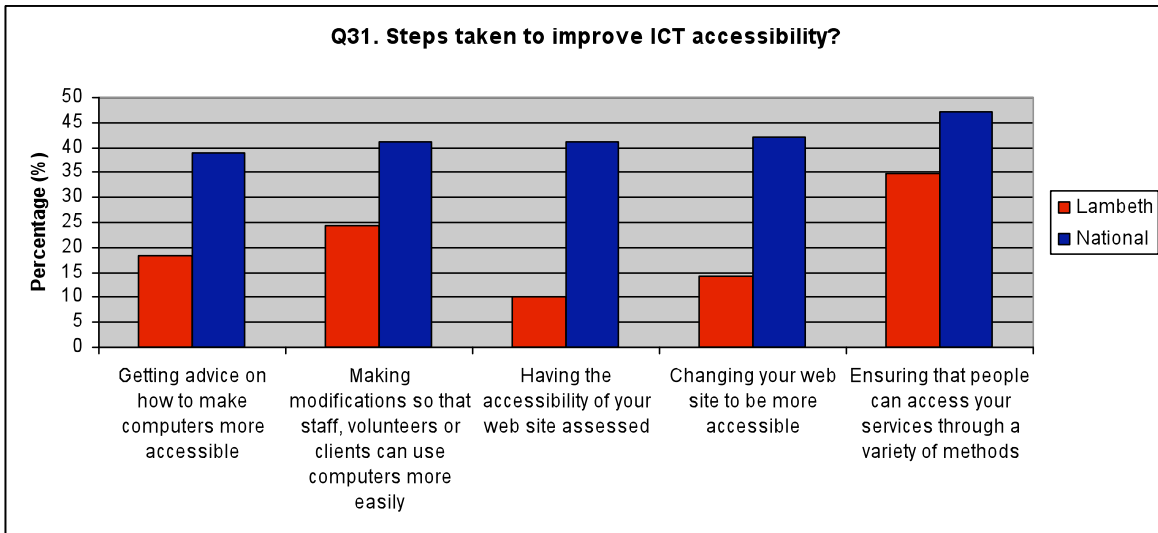
Q31. Improving ICT accessibility

All organisations regardless of size must make “reasonable adjustments” under the Disability Discrimination Act of 2005²³ for any employee who, for example, needs adapted equipment in order to be able to use ICT effectively.

Regarding ICT accessibility, our Lambeth respondents do not shape up well against the national baseline in terms of action taken or thinking about accessibility.

Whilst voluntary and community organisations certainly take seriously their commitment to be socially inclusive, accessibility is one more ICT issue that managers are not often aware of, or have the resource to act on.

²³ http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/RightsAndObligations/DisabilityRights/DG_4001068

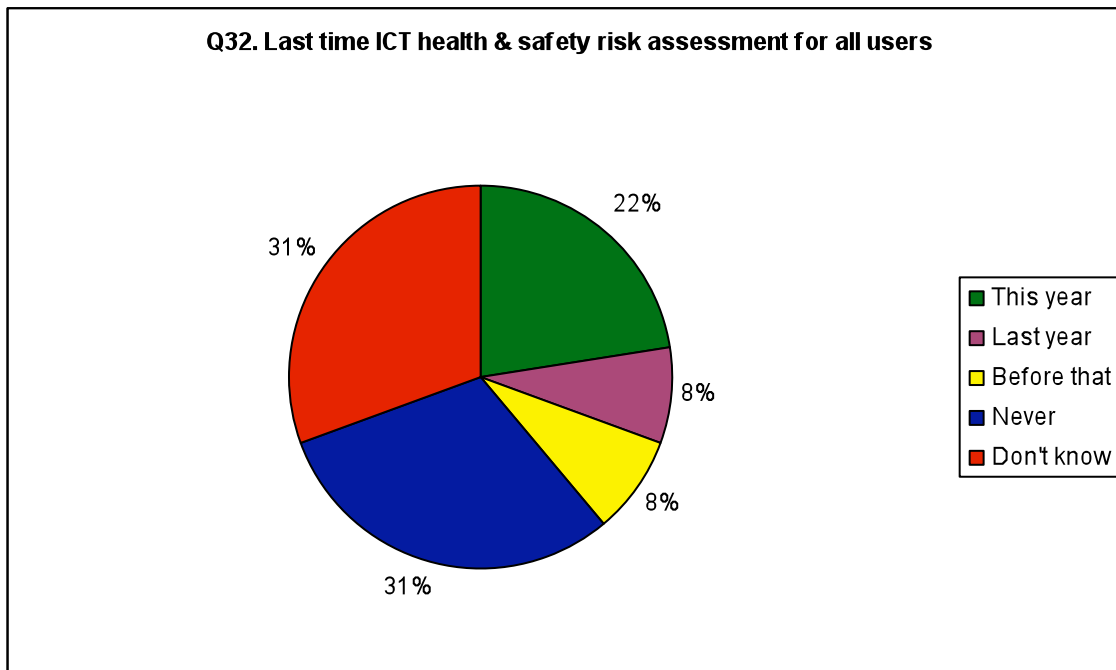


There are plenty of free or low cost resources to aid good practice that we can signpost organisations towards:

- Abilitynet – www.abilitynet.org.uk/
- ICT Knowledgebase – www.ictknowledgebase.org.uk/
- RNIB - www.rnib.org.uk/

Q32. Assessing health and safety risks for computer users

Just 22% of respondents have carried out health and safety risk assessment for all their computer users. Another 62% either don't know or have never carried out a health and safety risk assessment for their users.



This means that as new risks emerge, they are not analysed or tackled.

Voluntary and community organisations also need to bear in mind risk assessment guidance issued by the Charity Commission in July 2007²⁴:

Under Accounting and Reporting by Charities - Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP)²⁵ trustees are required to make a statement confirming that: "...the major risks to which the charity is exposed, as identified by the trustees, have been reviewed and systems have been established to manage those risks."

Again, the Consortium needs to consider raising awareness of the practical of risk assessment and management to organisations to help it become embedded in good practice.

²⁴ <http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/investigations/charrisk.asp>

²⁵ <http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/Library/publications/pdfs/sorptext.pdf>

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - list of survey respondents

Art4Space
Anchor Project
Age Concern Lambeth
Black Cultural Archives
Blenheim CDP – Lambeth Harbour
Brixton Town Centre Forum
Centre 70 Advice Centre
Childlink Adoption Society
Clapham Youth Centre
Community Technology
Dante Leigh Foundation
Disability Advice Service Lambeth
Fegans Child & Family Care
Flipside (Lambeth Crime Prevention Trust)
Friends of Kennington Park in Lambeth
Friends of Unigate Wood and Valley Road Playing Field
Friends of West Norwood Cemetery
Help the Aged – South East London
Home Start Lambeth
Hurley Pre-School
Island Arts
Lambeth Accord
Lambeth Carers
Lambeth Community Initiative
Lambeth MDF
Lambeth MIND
Lambeth Women's Aid
Latin-American Housing Co-Op Ltd

LEAT
Milkwood Residents Association
Myatts Fields Park Project Group
Norwood Community Group
Oralex
Rathbone Society
Rainbow Pre-School
Ruskin Readers
Southbank Mosaics CIC
Southside Rehabilitation Association
Starlight Music Academy
Streatham Drop-in Centre
Streatham Festival Association
Streatham South Safer
Neighbourhoods Panel
Stockwell Community Resource Centre
Studio Voltaire
Thamesreach
Tulse Hill Estate TRA
Upper Norwood Joint Library
Vauxhall Gardens Estate Residents and Tenants Association (VGERTA)
WaCoCo (Waterloo Community Coalition)

* There were also two anonymous replies

Appendix 2 - accessing and Using ICT Focus Group Session

Lasa attended LVAC's Sustainability conference of 22 July 2008 and ran two focus groups. These were not particularly well attended but produced some useful results.

Participants were asked ***“What are organisations using ICT for? What sort of work do you do in your organisation which relates to ICT?”***

- Educational work
- Administration
- Membership
- Newsletters – publicising events etc
- Funding
- Website
- Accidental techie
- Back up and security
- Databases
- Reports
- Training materials
- Accounts
- Networking/servers

Participants were asked ***“What ICT issues/needs does your organisation have?”*** Responses included the following:

- Clients can't access ICT, communication issues
- Lack of maintenance
- Accessing funding
- Ability to access information
- Troubleshooting
- Being able to use ICT for grant applications
- Getting the message to the community – do they have access to our services via the web?
- Accessing services
- Increasing bandwidth
- Cost of ICT
- Maximising ICT for internal/external communication
- Keeping abreast of technology
- Data protection and information management
- Keeping website up to date
- Database – getting the most out of our data
- Maintenance support
- Becoming computer literate
- Training and staff to be self sufficient in ICT
- Good information/support for the voluntary sector without extortionate fees (from IT companies)

- Ensuring compliance with regulatory laws etc
- Sending email to many addresses (bulk emailing)
- Selecting the right software
- Advice on security and networking
- Advice on updating databases, best way to do group emails and updating websites
- Outdated ICT equipment
- Data security
- Accessing faster Internet
- Raising awareness to groups
- Affordable software
- Too many systems
- Service users needs?
- Communications- no joint network for VCS
- Data storage and backup
- Duplication of systems
- Old hardware & software
- One click software
- Mobile use, Grid for London
- General help to access things like emails and how to use/add attachments – training & instruction
- How mobile devices are incorporated
- VOIP (Voice Over IP telephony)

Participants were engaged in a “dream big” session where they were asked to imagine that if money was unlimited what ICT they would like to see in their organisation in order to assist with delivering on their mission. They responded:

- Interactive website – dynamic content
- Media web/mobile web, audio and video streaming
- Secure domains
- Fast broadband
- Up to date software
- Continuous and targeted training for staff
- Wireless Internet, mobility
- Better support for ICT, where to go for help
- Package of software – e.g. databases, accounts/finances
- Laptop/mobile “library”
- Increase access to Internet
- Information “kiosks” and noticeboards on VCO information and events in public spaces
- Each VCO to have VPN to Council services
- Mobile ICT e.g. 3G connections
- Development of social enterprise for local ICT support
- Website revamp and update
- Database – client relationship
- Large screens
- Remote access
- Link to phones

- Mobile phone integration
- Send info to phones (SMS etc)
- Database support – circuit rider type person
- Strategic development

Appendix 3 – survey questionnaire



Lambeth Local Infrastructure Planning Consortium - Accessing and Using ICT Survey 2008

Information and communication technology (ICT) plays an important role in enabling voluntary and community sector organisations (VCOs) to build healthy, vibrant and strong communities.

The Lambeth Local Infrastructure Planning consortium has commissioned Lasa (www.lasa.org.uk) to research the ICT needs of Lambeth's Voluntary and Community Sector. This project is funded by Capacity Builders. Completing this survey is your chance to help us understand how your organisation accesses and uses ICT – and shape ChangeUp's response to your concerns.

Even if you do not currently use ICT please complete section A (Your Organisation) and B (Importance of ICT)

Surveys completed and returned to Lasa by **Friday 12 September 2008** will be entered into a prize draw. All fully completed surveys will be entered in the draw and the first three picked from the entrees will receive a free place on one of LVAC's forthcoming training courses (which equates to £25.00 in cash).

This survey can also be completed online at: www.ictknowledgebase.org.uk/lipsurvey

Please return completed surveys to:

Miles Maier, Lasa, Universal House, 88-94 Wentworth Street, London, E1 7SA

If you require any assistance with answering any of the questions, please contact Miles Maier or Ian Runeckles at Lasa on **020 7426 4473** or email mmaier@lasa.org.uk

Confidentiality and Data Protection

Please note that the answers to the survey will not be used for any other reason other than for the purposes given in the introductory paragraph. All survey forms will be provided to LVAC on completion of the project and will be retained by them. We may follow up your response either by phone or email for any clarification necessary.

A. About your organisation

Organisation name:

Organisation contact:

Email address:

Phone:

Website address:

1. What category (or categories) best describe your organisation’s area of operation?

- Advice and guidance
- Children and Families
- Faith
- Housing & Homeless
- Substance Misuse
- Other (please state)
- Animal Welfare
- Community Services
- Family
- Lesbian, Gay & Bi-sexual
- Women
- Arts
- Elderly
- Health
- Refugee & Asylum Seeker
- Youth
- Black & Minority Ethnic
- Environment
- Heritage
- Sport & Leisure

2. How many staff and regular volunteers (Full Time Equivalent - FTE) do you have?

- (1) 0 – 5
- (2) 6 – 10
- (3) 11+

3. What is your organisation’s approximate total annual expenditure? (Please tick one)

- (1) Under £10,000
- (2) £10,000 – £25,000
- (3) £25,000 – £100,000
- (4) £100,000 – £500,000
- (5) £500,000 – £1,000,000
- (6) over £1,000,000

B. About the importance of ICT in your organisation

4. How many computers (including desktops, laptops and servers) do you have in your organisation?

q (1) 0 q (2) 1 – 5 q (3) 6 – 10 q (4) 11+

5. How important are computers in general and the internet/e-mail in particular to your organisation’s work?
(Please tick one box in each row)

	Vital	Fairly important	Not very important	Not at all important	Not used
Computers	q (1)	q (2)	q (3)	q (4)	q (5)
Internet/e-mail	q (1)	q (2)	q (3)	q (4)	q (5)

6. Which of the following ICT support and development needs have you identified?

- q (1) ICT Management q (2) Costing & funding q (3) Training q (4) Databases q (5) Websites
- q (6) Online communities q (7) Strategy q (8) Telephony q (9) Policies
- q (10) Accessibility q (11) Green computing q (12) Hardware q (13) Software

Please expand below on any of the above or anything not covered:

C. ICT financing and funding

7. Does your organisation have a specific budget for ICT and/or the internet?

q (1) Yes q (2) No

If Yes to the above, how much is it?

- q (1) Up to £250 q (2) £250 - £1000 q (3) £1000 - £5000
- q (4) £5000 - £10,000 q (5) £10,000 - £20,000 q (6) Over £20,000

8. Which of these did your organisation spend money on in the past year? (Please tick all that apply)

- q (1) Replacing old computers
- q (2) Increasing the number of computers
- q (3) Putting in or improving a network (including wireless networking)
- q (4) Installing or upgrading an internet connection (including Virtual Private network)
- q (5) Setting up or improving your web site
- q (6) A big software project such as a client records system or contact database
- q (7) Consultancy to give you advice or to help with your ICT strategy or plans
- q (8) None of the above
- q (9) Don't know

9. How good, in general, are your main funders at funding your ICT needs? (Please tick one)

- q (1) Most of our main funders are happy to accept ICT capital and running costs (including support) in our bids
- q (2) Most of our main funders will give money for capital but are reluctant to fund ICT running costs
- q (3) Most of our main funders are very reluctant to give any money for ICT at all
- q (4) Some of our funders are good, some are bad; there is no pattern
- q (5) Don't know

10. Who are your principal funders?

D. ICT decision-making, advice & support

11. Which of the following written documents does your organisation have? (Please tick all that apply)

- q (1) ICT strategy, or ICT component of the organisation's business plan
- q (2) ICT security policy and/or written security procedures
- q (3) Policy on acceptable use by staff of ICT, e-mail and internet facilities
- q (4) Policy on Data Protection and/or confidentiality
- q (5) Disaster recovery plan
- q (6) Inventory of your ICT equipment
- q (7) None of the above

12. What internal sources of strategic ICT knowledge does your organisation have? (Please tick all that apply)

- q (1) Our board or management committee has people on it who were recruited for their ICT expertise
- q (2) Our senior management team has one or more members with ICT expertise
- q (3) We have an ICT expert on the staff who advises the senior management team and/or board
- q (4) We have an unpaid ICT expert who advises the senior management team and/or board
- q (5) We do not have anyone with specific ICT expertise within the organisation

13. Which of these external ICT strategic resources has your organisation recently used? (Please tick all that apply)

Know of	Used
q (1)	q (1) Online resources (e.g. Lasa Knowledgebase, Suppliers Directory, NCVO, ICT Hub)
q (2)	q (2) Other national services aimed specifically at the voluntary sector (such as Netgain, AbilityNet)
q (3)	q (3) Local services aimed specifically at the voluntary sector (such as LVAC)
q (4)	q (4) A UK Online Centre
q (5)	q (5) Your national body or parent organisation
q (6)	q (6) Local colleges or other educational institutions
q (7)	q (7) Volunteer(s) from a recognised ICT volunteering programme (such as IT4Communities)
q (8)	q (8) A Circuit Rider, or Circuit Riding team, or other local ICT support service
q (9)	q (9) Commercial suppliers
q (10)	q (10) Regional ICT Champion
q (11)	q (11) None of the above

14. How satisfied are you with the way ICT decisions are made in your organisation? (Please tick one)

- q (1) Completely q (2) Reasonably q (3) Partly q (4) Not at all

15. How confident are you personally in making decisions about ICT (such as what to buy or whether to accept the advice you are getting)? (Please tick one)

- q (1) Not confident q (2) OK q (3) Very confident q (4) Not applicable or not relevant to my job

16. Who normally deals with your organisation's computer problems? (Please tick the most important one or two)

- q (1) The shop where you buy your computer(s)
- q (2) An external person or organisation on an annual contract or other regular arrangement
- q (3) An internal support person, with ICT support in their job description
- q (4) Your most ICT-literate member of staff sorts it out
- q (5) Staff usually try to fix their own computer problems
- q (6) A volunteer
- q (7) A management committee member or trustee
- q (8) It depends on the situation and the nature of the problem
- q (9) Circuit Rider

17. How satisfied are you with the way computer problems get dealt with in your organisation? (Please tick one)

- q (1) Very satisfied
- q (2) Fairly satisfied
- q (3) Not very satisfied
- q (4) Not at all satisfied

18. What issues have you recently needed external advice or technical support on? (Please describe briefly)

E. Your organisation's computers and what they are used for

19. Where are your organisation's computers? (Please tick all that apply)

- q (1) All our office computers are in one location
- q (2) Our office computers are in more than one location
- q (3) We have laptop computers that get taken to different locations
- q (4) We use people's own home computers as well as office ones

20. How connected are your computers? (Please tick the statement below that best describes your situation)

- q (1) All our computers are networked together (even those located away from the main office, if any)
- q (2) Most of our computers are networked together
- q (3) Some of our computers are networked together
- q (4) None of our computers are networked together
- q (5) The question doesn't apply

21. How connected are your staff? (Please tick the statement below that best describes your situation)

- q (1) All our computer-using staff can access our network and e-mail system even if working from home
- q (2) All our computer-using staff can access our network and e-mail system, but only when in our office(s)
- q (3) Some of our staff use computers that are not on the network and/or do not have e-mail access
- q (4) Most or all of our staff use computers that are not on the network and/or do not have e-mail access
- q (5) The question doesn't apply

22. Does your organisation have a web site? (Please tick one)

- q (1) Yes, we have our own web site
- q (2) We don't, but information about us is on our parent organisation's web site or a community web site
- q (3) No, but we plan to get a web site
- q (4) No, and we have no plans for a web site

23. Does your organisation use computers in any of the following ways? (Please tick all that apply)

- q (1) Shared electronic diaries, shared calendars and/or a central booking system for meetings or resources
- q (2) Client information delivered by computer (such as a self-service information kiosk)
- q (3) Face to face client services that make use of computers (such as debt counselling, information or advice that has to be looked up on CD or on the internet)
- q (4) Providing ICT training or computer facilities for clients or members of the public
- q (5) Producing reports and statistics for your funders and/or trustees
- q (6) Computer-based learning by staff
- q (7) Membership services
- q (8) Accounting and payroll
- q (9) Fundraising software (e.g. Raisers Edge)

24. Does your organisation use e-mail and the internet in any of the following ways? (Please tick all that apply)

- q (1) Providing services to clients or service users via e-mail
- q (2) Using your web site to provide information to clients, service users and other people
- q (3) Providing interactive services to clients or service users on your web site (such as discussion forums)
- q (4) Buying things (for the business of your organisation) on the internet
- q (5) Selling publications or products, taking bookings, or fundraising on your web site

- q (6) Communicating with trustees or management committee members by e-mail
- q (7) Sharing information among your own staff and trustees by means of an intranet or e-group
- q (8) Video conferencing
- q (9) Instant messaging
- q (10) Wikis, blogs or other online collaboration tools

25. Which of the following best describes your approach to ICT skills? (Please tick the most important one or two)

- q (1) We expect staff to work towards a recognised standard, such as the European Computer Driving Licence
- q (2) We carry out a regular training needs analysis and ensure it is acted on
- q (3) We look at what training is available and decide whether to send anyone
- q (4) We are unable to prioritise ICT training
- q (5) We offer all new staff an ICT induction

26. In general, how satisfied are you with the ICT skills of your staff and volunteers?

- q (1) Very satisfied
- q (2) Fairly satisfied
- q (3) Not very satisfied
- q (4) Not at all satisfied

27. Do you think your organisation is using ICT more effectively now than it was two or three years ago?

- q (1) Yes, much more
- q (2) Yes, a bit more
- q (3) No, about the same
- q (4) No, we're having more problems

28. Do you consider environmental issues when using, purchasing or disposing of ICT equipment?

- q (1) Yes
- q (2) No

F. Technical issues

29. Thinking about the following technologies, please indicate which of these your organisation uses, which of them you know of, and which you are not sure that you could explain? (Please tick all that apply)

Use	Know of	Unsure	
q (1)	q (2)	q (3)	Linux or open source software
q (1)	q (2)	q (3)	An e-mail server
q (1)	q (2)	q (3)	A wireless local area network
q (1)	q (2)	q (3)	A virtual private network
q (1)	q (2)	q (3)	A broadband internet connection (of any kind)
q (1)	q (2)	q (3)	Voice over IP (or internet telephony e.g. Skype)

30. Which of the following precautions do you take against possible computer problems? (Please tick all that apply)

Rigorously	Partially	
q (1)	q (2)	Anti-virus protection on all your computers, updated every fortnight or more often
q (1)	q (2)	A backup routine that runs at least every week, is tested and keep copies offsite
q (1)	q (2)	Passwords that are changed regularly and cancelled when no longer needed
q (1)	q (2)	Encryption of data on laptops that leave the office and other vulnerable machines
q (1)	q (2)	A firewall to protect all machines that are connected to the internet
q (1)	q (2)	Staff training in security and confidentiality

31. Which of the following steps has your organisation taken or thought about in order to improve the accessibility of its ICT? (Please tick all that apply)

Taken	Thought about	
q(1)	q(2)	Getting advice on how to make computers more accessible
q(1)	q(2)	Making modifications so that staff, volunteers or clients can use computers more easily
q(1)	q(2)	Having the accessibility of your web site assessed
q(1)	q(2)	Changing your web site to be more accessible
q(1)	q(2)	Ensuring that people can access your services through a variety of methods
q(1)	q(2)	Other (please describe):

32. When did your organisation last carry out a health and safety risk assessment for all its computer users?

q(1) This year q(2) Last year q(3) Before that q(4) Never q(5) Don't know

Finally...

33. Are you aware of or have you used any of Lasa's products or services?

Know of	Used
q (1)	q (1) ICT Knowledgebase
q (2)	q (2) Suppliers Directory
q (3)	q (3) ICT Consultancy including healthcheck
q (4)	q (4) AIMS case management
q (5)	q (5) Multikulti
q (6)	q (6) Rightsnet
q (7)	q (7) ICT coaching and mentoring
q (8)	q (8) Circuit Riders

The Lambeth LIPC Consortium and Lasa would like to thank you for your participation in this survey.

Appendix 4 – list of funders

Arts Council
Awards for All
BBC Children in Need
Business sponsors
Big Lottery
City Bridges Trust
Comic Relief
Community Chest
Dept of Health
Guys & St Thomas Charity
Henry Smith
Hyde Southwark Homes
Lambeth CYPS
Lambeth PCT
LB Lambeth
Lambeth Endowed Charities
Learning & Skills Council
Legal Services Commission
Lloyds TSB
London Catalyst
LSL Partnership
Monument Trust
National Offender Management Service
Opportunities for Volunteering
Rank Foundation
Supporting People
Wates Foundation

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Acknowledgements and thanks

Thanks must go firstly to the staff and volunteers from the organisations who took the trouble to complete the questionnaire. Important lessons have been learned from their efforts.

Our thanks go to Spencer Marshall at Comm-Tech for sharing his insights into the state of Lambeth voluntary sector ICT.

We are also deeply indebted to Paul Ticher and Andrea Eaves for allowing us to freely apply their Report on Baseline Research and Evaluation Framework 2007 as a point of comparison.

We would also like to thank Conrad Hollingsworth and Joanna Barnet at Lambeth Voluntary Action Council for guiding the work with a light touch.

About Lasa

Lasa has provided ICT advice to mainly London based voluntary organisations since 1984.

We have conducted significant research in the VCS ICT field including – ‘ChangeUp ICT Mapping Report’, ‘Circuit Rider Project Evaluation’, ‘Leading the Way to ICT Success’, ‘Circuit Riders 2.0’, and ‘Supporting Advice in London: Review of Infrastructure Needs’. Lasa also provided consultancy to Newham Council's Where ITs @ Project - carrying out ICT health checks to prepare 40 smaller organisations for implementation of our AIMS case management database.

Lasa has been fully engaged with the ChangeUp agenda in London, with its ICT Champion developing an ICT strategy for London's voluntary sector, promoting sustainable models of circuit riding, facilitating good practice, engaging funders and policy makers.

Lasa's London ICT Champion has worked in partnership with BTEG to research the support needs of BAMER organisations, and delivered ICT training directly to BMER and refugee/asylum seeker groups.

Our online ICT Knowledgebase (www.ictknowledgebase.org.uk) is a comprehensive source of independent expert ICT advice for VCS organizations, now containing over 300 articles. The Suppliers Directory (www.suppliersdirectory.org.uk) connects VCS organisations with 200 approved suppliers of ICT products and support services.

Lasa is also noted for its consultancy work and leadership in developing the Circuit Rider model of local technical support for VCOs. (www.ukriders.info)

Authors: Miles Maier and Ian Runeckles (Lasa 2008)

Cartoons: Phil Evans

