

# VIOLENCE REDUCTION

## Good Practice Case Studies

LB Waltham Forest  
The Outset Centre

*Through the transfer of an existing asset to a community consortium providing a safe space for a wide range of services, Waltham Forest believes its investment in community aspirations can help build meaningful community resilience to violence, with a focus on activities to build resilience in young people against criminal exploitation.*



### The problem

The Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) recognised that, while there was a great deal of will in the community to develop services and programmes to strengthen community resilience, there was a lack of both physical space and reach into the community to bring these ambitions to fruition.

The VRP identified the need for a shared space that was accessible, visible and trusted by the community. We wanted a space for the community to come together to take action on things that mattered to them and form new alliances to deliver violence reduction activities.

### Proposed solution

The council approved the transfer of an existing asset, The Outset Centre, to a consortium of community partners led by Project Zero to enable the provision of programmes to strengthen community resilience to violence with a focus on activities to build resilience in young people against criminal exploitation.

Based in the heart of one of our communities most burdened by violence, the centre would act as support hub for young people offering a range of services including employment support, mentoring, therapeutic support, restorative justice, homework clubs, music, coding, tech workshops and much more.

### Partners involved

LB Waltham Forest

Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP)

Streetbase

Spark 2 Life

Department for Work and Pensions

CGL

Public Health

# VIOLENCE REDUCTION

## Good Practice Case Studies

LB Waltham Forest  
The Outset Centre

### Approach

To achieve these ambitions the most effective model was for the centre to be run by the community for the community. We wanted to engender a mature, trusting and collaborative relationship with our community to achieve the shared vision created through the VRP.

The council used a Community Benefit Analysis tool to determine the level of community benefit which was then offset against the market value rent of the centre. As a result, the centre has been leased at a radically reduced rent.

Led by Project Zero, the Outset centre is now occupied by a range of community organisations and services. The consortium of partners participate in regular steering group meetings, support the management, shape the centre and enable growth. The management and governance of the centre is underpinned by a Memorandum of Understanding which is co-produced by the consortium partners.

Homework clubs, coding workshops, music production, young women's groups, holiday programmes, drama, sport, design workshops and mentoring services are just a few of the programmes currently lined up to be delivered from the centre. When young people engage in these programmes they will also be able to access services collocated on the premises such as employment support, sexual health services, smoking cessation and a range of therapeutic services

The centre will also employ up to 32 young people through the Kickstart programme to manage the site operations, providing opportunities for young people to learn skills, gain experience and become job ready. The centre has a café onsite which provides a safe space for young people to socialise, opportunities to learn hospitality skills and the potential to generate income for the centre.

### Desired outcomes

Each of the services collocated at the centre has individual sets of outcomes however, all of these contribute to the overarching objectives to reduce violence by:

- Strengthening community resilience through a universal approach
- building resilience in young people against criminal exploitation
- forming alliances and networks in the community to deliver violence reduction activities

We want the Outset centre to become a thriving community hub where young people and their families feel safe, connected and empowered. We hope to demonstrate the benefits of enabling the community to lead violence reduction activities.

Led by Project Zero, the Outset centre is now occupied by a range of community organisations and services



Waltham Forest



# VIOLENCE REDUCTION

## Good Practice Case Studies

LB Waltham Forest  
The Outset Centre

### Current picture

Delivery focus has quickly pivoted to meet community need during the Covid-19 pandemic. So, alongside establishing the youth programmes for the centre, services have also been using it as a basis to provide crisis support to families in need as a result of lock down

In the first three months of operation the centre has generated additional cash investment of £102,000 for violence reduction activities from various trusts and local philanthropic endeavours. This is in addition to more than £50,000 worth of equipment and furniture donated by local business groups; already demonstrating that, by enabling our community organisations, we are able to attract external investment, build innovative alliances and broaden our community reach to reduce violence.

### Next steps

We now need to embed, test and consult on the governance and management structures.

As a council we recognise the careful balance we need to reach between enabling the centre to be genuinely community-led and playing a role in supporting quality assurance. Sharing power is not always easy for public institutions, but we set out with an aim of investing in our community and showing what could be achieved through enabling services to be run by and for the community.

We are in the process of working with the consortium to develop an evaluation framework to ensure we capture the impact of the outset centre. We are designing a framework to capture the impact on individual young people, the broader community and the benefits of investing in a public health approach to violence reduction.

### Contact



**Laura Butterworth**  
Head of Violence  
Reduction



**Waltham Forest**

