

“Creating Brighter Futures”

**A Vision for the future delivery of services for
young people in Havering**

1. INTRODUCTION

“We need all young people to have a stake in their communities and communities to have a stake in the lives of their young people” (Positive for Youth)

Young people are the future - our future assets and creators of social and economic wealth. The London Borough of Havering wants the very best for our young people and a community that enables them to thrive and flourish to be safe, social and successful. We want young people to have bright futures. We want young people to enjoy fulfilling lives and realise their potential through positive relationships and exciting opportunities. Investing in young people is crucial to the growth and success of our Borough and communities.

It is widely acknowledged that life for many young people is increasingly complex with complicated domestic and social issues. Being a young person involves social and psychological changes. At the centre of a number of factors which influence the development of young people during teenage years is the understanding that this is a period in life during which people begin to develop independent forms of behaviour and to assimilate new and alternative ideas and ways of living, and that these factors in turn require the development of particular emotional, sensory, intellectual, physical and socialisation capabilities in young people if they are to successfully negotiate a rapidly changing landscape within their own lives.

Adult behaviours are often set in place during teenage years, which can have a huge influence on the quality of experience later in life. For example, research has shown that adults with higher levels of literacy are more likely to play an active part in society with resultant higher levels of wellbeing and enjoyment of life than those with lower levels of literacy. Analysis of data from the National Childhood Development Study suggests that 79% of people with good literacy trust people in their local area, while only 54% of those with poor literacy do. 45% of those with good literacy are likely to be members of clubs or societies, while among those with poor literacy the figure is only 17%. Equally, recent research has suggested that across all socio-economic groups those who are more likely to read are also likely to have a lower incidence of dementia.

In addition to the personal development issues, the world around young people is changing, with an unprecedented level of change in family life, job security and the ability to gain financial independence. Many young people have the support and skills to manage this. Havering already has a wide range of people delivering a wealth of opportunities for young people in sport, culture, education and community activities. These people bring a great deal of dedication, enthusiasm and genuine commitment. They are a valuable resource which is integral to supporting young people manage a successful transition into adulthood. We must make the most of this energy and resourcefulness.

These considerations clearly demand a broad-based response for the vast majority of young people - drawing particularly on libraries, the arts and sport, the natural

environment and their huge power to develop both the senses and the emotions, as well as developing social skills, team work and physical qualities. They also require the involvement of organisations from a wide range of different backgrounds as well as the public sector, and their effective co-ordination to ensure the best possible opportunities for people at a time of particular change in their lives.

Research has shown that providing young people with a range of cultural opportunities will have significant benefits to the local community and society (instrumental benefits), in addition to the benefits to the young people themselves. The availability of a range of constructive, engaging and voluntary cultural activities (art, sport, dance, music, reading opportunities, access to heritage etc.) is critical to the development of the full range of young people's assets, for example; confidence, creativity, tolerance, health & wellbeing, and work readiness/functionality. These are all essential qualities that society will require from young people when they become workers, citizens, and community and family members, and they are essential for building healthy and fulfilling lives.

Young peoples' participation in culture activities, in and out of school, have a significant bearing on their positive outcomes in later life, with evidence showing those who participate in positive culture activities when they are young are 50% more likely to achieve good qualifications later on in life. This is because engaging in culture provides significant learning opportunities, above and beyond that traditionally offered in the classroom. Young people can learn and practice social, physical, emotional and intellectual skills; contribute to the community; belong to a socially recognised group; establish supportive social networks of peers and adults; experience and deal with challenges; and all whilst enjoying themselves. Furthermore, participation in positive culture activities has been linked to improvements in academic, preventative and development outcomes, such as school performance, avoidance of drug and alcohol use and anti-social behaviour, and increased self confidence and self esteem.

Neighbourhoods are becoming ever more diverse, with people from an increasingly wide range of backgrounds living side by side. These differences can result in places becoming socially fragmented: however, DCMS research (Taking Part Survey) has shown that people taking part in cultural activities are up to 20% per cent more likely to know 'many people' in their neighbourhood, and 60% more likely to believe 'many of their neighbours can be trusted'. Given that views are often defined in the process of our upbringing, this puts a particularly important focus on young people as the new generation which has the ability to shape a future community that is strong and cohesive.

However, not all young people will be able to easily benefit from cultural opportunities and some young people do not receive the support they need and experience real difficulties in their family lives and friendships. This reduces their ability to learn and even attend school leading to physical and mental health issues and disengagement from society. The more difficult the circumstances of the young person, the greater the impact on their well-being and life chances. Research has shown that such young people require more focused and intensive intervention. The London Borough of Havering is committed to identifying and developing

appropriate mechanisms to encourage them in fully developing their potential in a safe and supported manner.

The current economic climate, which has challenged local authorities to reduce and re-designate public spending, has presented an opportunity to review service provision and re-define how best to offer progressive and appropriate support to families, children and young people. This Vision, “Creating Brighter Futures”, represents a radical and ambitious approach to support the development of **all** young people and bring genuine culture change in the way services are delivered to young people. At the core is an Assets development approach, supported by a framework to bring people and organisations together in order to raise awareness and create a shared understanding of the part we can all play in supporting the development of young people.

“Creating Brighter Futures” is for **all** young people and **all** agencies and people working with, representing the interests of, supporting or living with young people. The Vision is based on a belief that we can all influence the future of our young people.

2. THE VISION – “CREATING BRIGHTER FUTURES”

To ensure that all young people in Havering have access to relevant activities and opportunities, to assist in the development of their abilities and to help them make a successful transition from childhood to adulthood, and develop the assets that will enable them to become successful, social and safe.

The **Vision** is linked to the achievement of the following **Outcomes** for young people:

- Improved life chances;
- Increased participation in and benefit from cultural opportunities;
- Increased volunteering, training and employment opportunities;
- Fewer looked after children
- Improved well being and reduced health problems
- Reduced anti social behaviour
- Achieving at school

The following **Indicators** will be used to assess whether the **Vision** is being successfully achieved:

- All young people in Havering feel that they have support, opportunity and confidence to fulfill their potential;
- Young people are positive about their life chances and speak positively about people, activities and places that influence them and are actively engaged in designing and developing their context and life chances;
- It can be demonstrated that Young people who are vulnerable and have significant needs have increased their personal and social development as a result of their involvement in, positive activities;
- Young people are actively engaged in and with communities, experience improved cross-generational relationships and feel valued through reduced negative attitudes;
- Young people, parents and communities describe attractive and safe places to go where they are involved in a wide range of exciting activities;
- Young people are making informed choices through access to information, advice and guidance from trusted sources and specialist services;
- Evidence of an improvement in the health and well being of young people;
- Increased positive images of young people and their achievements

The following 5 Themes will underpin the Vision:

Education – formal and informal

Confidence in life requires a confidence in learning. Schools are a major influence in the lives of many young people. Success in school and further education can really enhance self-esteem and success in the job market. The education system provides important mechanisms to discipline thinking, develop ideas and gain knowledge. The education landscape is changing; the development of academies bringing new and different partnerships with the local authority. Schools and libraries remain important partners in supporting the development of young people's assets and the effective delivery of the youth strategy. Our aim is to ensure those partnerships relevant to education are there and are strengthened in new circumstances, rather than schools acting in splendid isolation.

Much of our learning takes place informally, through a vast range of interactions in family life, cultural and sports activities, socially with friends (locally and through social networking). 85% of young peoples' lives take place outside the formal lessons in the classroom. Informal education is a crucial element, supporting young people to develop ideas and ways of being through a wide range of activities and learning opportunities.

Personal development

Personal development is the foundation in our sense of well-being and success. Personal development is the capability to enjoy life, take pleasure from the spaces around us, including the natural environment and provide a balance to the pressures of life. There is a growing understanding of the links between personal development and the achievement of longer term outcomes around employment, attainment and health. The cultural and social enrichment of young people's lives through informal education can really support formal learning opportunities. These activities provide a rich experience for the development of attitudes and relationships with others.

Employment and Enterprise

Employment provides a firm base for young people to move toward social and financial independence. At the heart of the Vision is a desire to enable young people to be competitive in the job market and successfully secure employment. The Vision has been influenced by the ideas of the Confederation for British Industry, Creative Industries and OfSTED amongst others who have highlighted the importance of key qualities of a good employee, beyond qualifications. The Havering Assets include such qualities.

Real change is led through enterprise, both social and economic. We must develop social enterprise and corporate responsibility to create social capital. Local and national business, whose customers are our families and young people, are a crucial ingredient in developing an enterprise culture and an entrepreneurial

mindset. The benefits are twofold; young people will benefit from real and relevant experience with the business community; businesses will gain from community and public support.

Health

Health and emotional well-being is fundamental to being safe, social and successful. Creating Brighter Futures is aimed at equipping young people with the resources and qualities to develop a healthy approach to life and consequently stay healthy and avoid getting ill. The Vision will focus on young people's emotional health, drug and alcohol use, sexual health and nutrition. The approach adopted by the Vision draws from many of the ideas outlined in the national health policy Healthy Lives, Healthy People including local leadership, encouraging responsibility across society to improve everyone's health and wellbeing, strengthening self-esteem and confidence, positively promoting healthy behaviours and lifestyles.

The following 6 Principles will underpin the Vision:

Positive Focus on Young People – Voice of Youth

The starting point of this Vision is young people and what young people need to be successful, social and safe. Services need to be sensitive to the unique needs of young people and focused on developing their potential. We will value the different aspects of young people's lives including academic achievement, social integration, emotional well-being, physical and sexual health, keeping safe and a sense of belonging and feeling valued.

We recognise that the vast majority of young people are already responsible, hard working and want to make the most of their lives and contribute to making the world a better place. We want to enable young people to succeed - not just prevent them from failing. This Vision supports the principles highlighted in 'Positive for Youth', the Government strategy developing a cross-governmental approach for young people.

Young people have a right to be heard. Our aim is to give all young people across Havering the chance to engage regardless of circumstance; to ensure that young people have a voice, access to services and engagement in service design, delivery and governance.

Inclusion and Cohesion: Valuing young people, parents and communities

We seek to support parents and carers and not ignore and supplant them. We want to foster local leadership. Young people do not grow up in isolation; they grow up as part of families, including their extended family, geographical neighbourhoods and wider social networks (often global). Young people's needs are interdependent with the needs of families and community. Young people are influenced by, and learn from, people and organisations with whom they interact

including schools, sports clubs, community groups and their own friends. The nature of these people and places is very important in the social and moral development of young people. A Vision focused on young people must encompass and engage with those influences. Community is important to young people; the need for connection is a fundamental motivation.

We aim to promote more active community engagement in service delivery, from consultation and volunteering to targeting ‘...new audiences and broaden access to our services, breaking down barriers to engagement where these exist, facilitating social progress and improved quality of life’ (Culture Strategy). Community empowerment places power in communities to help shape local decisions, choose how public money should be spent locally and help people come up with their own solutions to local problems rather than relying on the state to tackle social problems (Community Empowerment Strategy).

Being Safe and Prevention

Prevention and safeguarding are the golden threads for all work with young people, children and families. Young people have the right to grow up in safe communities and feel protected from danger. This includes safety from bullying, from violence, from abuse, from dangerous environments and road safety. Safe communities give confidence and foster growth.

Havering is committed to shift investment from reactive to preventative services, with a focus on early intervention, partnership and using joint resources. The Vision focuses on the early identification of young people’s issues in the environments that they inhabit and the swift transition to Council and specialist services and/or activities delivered within community.

Partnership working

Effective change comes from creating genuine partnerships with community and other services across Havering. There is no doubt that integrated working can prevent duplication, improve outcomes and bring better use of resources. We will encourage collaboration and co-creation with a wide range of partners to ensure that all services ‘make the most of’ the available resources and deliver the best outcomes to young people. We will present opportunities for all stakeholders to develop a shared understanding, create ideas and identify ways of working together and look for join up between activities.

“Creating Brighter Futures” will inform the Strategy which will be delivered and coordinated across Council directorates (Culture and Leisure and Childrens Services) to ensure cohesion and strong communication.

Efficiency: Value for money, and making the most of external funding

Our aim is to ‘make the most of’ those excellent community resources that already exist and develop others to be as efficient and effective. We will look to identify external funding to support the resource in the Borough and use better technology and communication to cut running costs and bureaucracy. Better partnership

working with public, private, voluntary and community organisations across Havering, and beyond its borders, will ensure that these services remain affordable – even with far less Government funding.

Making best use of limited resources by using the basis of a good society in the arts, sport, libraries, parks, play and heritage as the most effective ways to gain universal goals for young people while also allowing greater focus among the specialists who deal with the vulnerable.

Building Capacity and Capability

We value and welcome that Young people naturally and importantly turn to family, friends and local people as their natural and informal support networks. They are often the first point of contact and most significant influence. Building the capacity and capability of such networks can ensure more effective and immediate support and prevent dependency on other services.

3. **HOW THE VISION IS TO BE SUCCESSFULLY ACHIEVED**

To successfully deliver the Vision, the following actions will be progressed:

1. The production of a three year Strategy and Action Plan;
2. The creation of the Havering Young Person Assets Framework;
3. A new way of delivering youth services within the Council;

Strategy and Action Plan

The Council will produce a three year Strategy and Action plan, which will be widely consulted upon, prior to being considered by Cabinet. This strategy and action plan will set out in detail how the Vision is to be achieved, by the Council, partners and stakeholders, over a three year period.

Havering Young Person Assets Framework

What do young people need to be successful, safe and social? What are the strengths they need to manage an increasingly complex life?

Young people are often described as our future (an asset) - we invest in their development through education and health. The term asset is normally associated with business wealth i.e. things that a company owns that makes up its value and worth. However, Assets are also personal qualities. Creating Brighter Futures considers an asset to be a personal strength that enables us to achieve what we want to be and can be.

Personal assets.

Personal assets are desirable and valuable qualities that are acquired through learning and experience, gained and maintained over a lifetime. They are resources that enable people to thrive. Assets are often noticed as behaviours and are built up of skills, attitudes and knowledge. We often describe people by their assets e.g.,

‘She is a confident and creative person’

‘He is able to problem solve and work independently’

‘They are very motivated and enterprising’

Assets are the very qualities that employers, communities and others in society regard as being essential. National employer surveys identify assets such as confidence, teamwork and integrity as being as important as formal qualifications to secure a job. Within health, assets such as resilience, communication and seeking support are central to emotional and physical well-being. In terms of keeping safe, assets such as problem solving and assertiveness are clearly very

important. Personal assets are qualities that influence choices young people make and help them become caring, responsible, successful adults. Having a number of assets can help young people thrive and be social, safe and successful.

Within Havering, the following assets have been identified:

Confidence	Integrity	Creativity
Resilience	Teamwork	Autonomy
Enterprise	Communication	Curiosity and Learning
Motivation	Self Value	Emotional intelligence
Tolerant	Determination	Reliable
Seek Support	Problem Solving	

The Havering Young Person Asset Framework will be at the heart of all activities and support to young people delivered in Havering through youth and community work, through the delivery of culture services, through key stakeholders and through our partners. Research has shown that many assets can be supported and developed by the whole community, not just professionals.

The Havering Young Person Asset Framework supports an holistic approach to young peoples' development and recognises the impact on their lives from a number of places including different policy areas and communities of practice such as employment and training, housing, transport, safeguarding and civil responsibility.

The Havering Young Person Asset Framework provides many opportunities for the whole community to better understand what young people need and how to support them. It will identify outcomes and indicators to support the voluntary and community sector in providing services and create enterprise opportunities to develop materials and resources for developing assets to sell to other agencies business and authorities.

Personal assets develop informally through family support, social friendships and significant relationships with other people e.g. sports activity, cultural events and faith communities. They are developed through everyday living, supported by community life, through interaction with a range of people - from families and friends to neighbours and shopkeepers to the global community e.g. Facebook. The quality of interaction between the young person and their environment and community is crucial influencing behaviour and developing assets.

They develop through our learning in schools and colleges. Formal education, through schools and colleges, is clearly one important way – young people develop the discipline of learning and working with others. Many young people really benefit from the learning opportunities offered in school/colleges.

Outcome Based Activity

Assets can be measured and have indicators to identify that young people are developing and indeed thriving in them. An outcome-based approach will be

developed to support young people and organisations in working with the Assets Framework. This will be used to support young people in their development, and organizations in focusing their activity on making a difference for young people. The outcome-based approach will include indicators to help young people and others assess their own progress and organizations in focusing their resource. The outcome-based approach lends itself well to enabling an effective commissioning approach.

Community Resources (Assets)

It was noted earlier that our communities and environments play an important role in personal development and consequently personal assets. The community is a great resource. Our communities (local and global) and our environments provide a vast array of opportunity for young people to develop their personal assets. There are many organizations, community groups, religious groups, businesses and people who can support the development of assets and improve the quality of community life.



“Creating Brighter Futures” promotes the development of the capacity and capability of these ‘community resources’ including parent and carer support, local leaders, volunteers, ‘paraprofessionals’ and community and voluntary sector organisations. This also involves the development of community contexts and social supports in which young people (and others) can develop assets. Capability will be developed through a wide variety of locally occurring learning opportunities, skill training, coaching and mentoring.

Central to this will be the development of volunteering. Volunteers are integral to the effective delivery of services. They bring a commitment and experience that is

so often unique. Volunteers will be trained and supported, through the development of a volunteer institute for example.

A new way of delivering youth services within the Council

To help achieve the Vision, it is proposed (subject to the outcome of consultation with affected staff) that services to young people will be primarily delivered by Culture and Leisure Services and Children's services; but with so many other Council services also playing a role, the focus on coordinating the delivery of services to young people will be increased at corporate level, through the creation of a Youth Board. It is proposed that a focused intervention team is based in Social Care and Learning and a Youth Facilitation Team is based in Culture and Leisure Services. Each team will have a different focus but they will operate together to ensure the coherent delivery of effective outcomes for young people across Havering.