Final | Confidential

London's VRU

Thematic report 4: Intervention development and delivery

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1   Executive summary

1.1   What are MyEnds interventions?

MyEnds is an ambitious programme funded by London's Violence Reduction Unit (VRU). It promotes highly-local, place-based approaches to reducing violence in eight London neighbourhoods which have experienced high and sustained levels of violence (sometimes referred to in this report as 'sites'). Consortiums of voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations were awarded funding to develop and deliver the local programme in each site.

Targeted hyper-local interventions to prevent and reduce violence are a key activity strand within the MyEnds model[1]. This includes funding a mixed profile of support in terms of need and intervention level, expanding promising practice, fostering innovative practice, locally informed practice, and adapting to emerging need and critical incidents.

1.2   What have MyEnds interventions achieved, and how?

MyEnds sites have taken an organic approach to developing profiles of interventions. Factors which have informed this process include (a) informal identification of local needs and gaps in existing provision, and (b) locally available assets such as existing knowledge, experience and relationships.

This, combined with the funding and resource made available through MyEnds, has resulted in an expansion of the delivery of existing interventions as well as the development of new interventions. Local intervention profiles now encompass a range of activity types and a range of intended outcomes. The overall volume and range of interventions being delivered has therefore increased, and MyEnds interventions have reached a large number of children and young people.

1.3   How do interventions fit within the MyEnds model?

Within the MyEnds model there are four key activity strands. Together they aim to strengthen community networks in order provide stronger foundations for violence reduction and to enable the delivery of interventions which engage young people and community members in the local areas. They also contribute, in different ways, to promoting the sustainability of work implemented under MyEnds. For instance, implementing hyper-local interventions may increase the likelihood of local organisations securing future funding which will enable delivery to continue in the longer-term, independently of the MyEnds programme. The strands are:

1.   Community and youth-led co-design and engagement.
2.   Supporting and building capacity in the grassroots sector.

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[1] Please see *MyEnds extension evaluation. Thematic report 1: MyEnds model* for a copy of the model.

3.   Targeted hyper-local interventions.
4.   Strengthening collaborative network approach.

Interaction between the different activity strands is an important part of the MyEnds model. Therefore, some activities cut across – and have potential to deliver outcomes in – more than one strand. Equally, all activity strands are supported and informed by the set-up, key components and ethos, and system-level mechanisms of change which are reflected in the model.

The MyEnds model is explored in more detail in thematic report 1. Thematic report 2 examines key strengthening community networks activity, including community and youth-led co-design and engagement, and strengthening collaborative network approach. Thematic report 3 focuses on supporting and building capacity in the grassroots sector through onwards grants programmes. This report, Thematic report 4, explores targeted hyper-local interventions. Lessons and implications for MyEnds are brought together in Thematic report 5.

1.4   About this report

This report provides a summary of key findings from the MyEnds evaluation 2021-24 in relation to activities undertaken by local MyEnds programmes to deliver and develop their intervention profiles to tackle local violence. It:

- Outlines approaches taken by sites to develop and deliver their intervention profiles, focusing on three categories of interventions: positive opportunities; activities to reduce harm; and activities delivered in educational settings.

- Explores the common features of effective intervention design, factors supporting delivery and challenges in implementation.

- Considers the impact of MyEnds on each site's intervention profile and reach, and emerging evidence of the impact of interventions on young people and other community members in the area.

> The findings in this report are based on extensive qualitative consultation with a range of stakeholders throughout the three years of MyEnds programme delivery in 2021-24, review of the final monitoring data submissions covering the period April 2023 to March 2024 inclusive and analysis of responses to an e-survey shared with stakeholders in local sites. Please see annex 1 for more information on the evaluation methodology and research questions.
>
> Thank you to everyone who has taken part in consultation activity or shared information with us to support the evaluation. Without your input, we could not have gained the insights and learning included in our reports.

2   Overview of key findings

Types of intervention

1 The **non-prescriptive** nature of MyEnds has enabled consortiums to develop **locally specific profiles of interventions.**

2 Interventions being delivered under MyEnds relate most closely to three priority areas of London's VRU's outcomes framework: **positive opportunities, reducing harm and educational settings.** Some interventions link to more than one of these priorities, which are not mutually exclusive.

What has been the impact of MyEnds on interventions delivered in sites?

3 As a result of the increased funding and resource injected into sites through MyEnds, sites have (1) **expanded on existing interventions** and (2) **developed and delivered new interventions** in the local area. This ha**s increased the overall volume and range of interventions delivered. It has also led to an increased number of organisations** involved in delivery.

4 Sites have sought opportunities to develop and deliver interventions for young people who were **less well reached** previously.

5 The majority of interventions are in the **primary and secondary** space, which is the space in which most consortium partners and wider provider organisations were already delivering.

6 MyEnds has helped to **increase the number of locally available tertiary interventions** delivered by VCS providers, **especially in the final year of the programme.**

What has the impact of interventions on young people been?

7 As a result of being able to deliver a higher volume and broader range of interventions, **sites have reached high numbers of young people**. They have therefore engaged more young people in areas which experience higher levels of violence than they would have reached without the programme.

8 Interventions have aimed to achieve a wide range of positive outcomes for young people. These include outcomes focused on directly reducing involvement in violence or exploitation. However, **the most common intended outcomes are those which might serve as protective factors, thereby reducing young people's risk of becoming involved in violence.**

9 Qualitative consultation with young people involved in interventions and local area stakeholders (including MyEnds programme managers and intervention providers) **indicated that interventions have contributed to a range of positive outcomes for young people who have participated.**

How have interventions been delivered?

10 Consortiums have all taken a similar approach to developing their intervention profiles. **This has been organic and has not entailed formal strategic needs assessment.**

11 Consortiums have drawn on **existing local assets and networks** selecting when developing interventions. This includes the **knowledge, experience and relationships** of consortium partners and wider partners operating locally.

12 Common features of effective intervention design **included involving young people and other community members in the design of interventions**, using a '**hook**' to engage young people, focusing on **ETE skills**, giving young people a **space to express concerns** and **collaborating with statutory organisations.**

13 MyEnds intervention providers bring several key attributes which enable them to develop and deliver interventions effectively: being **embedded in the local area and community, strong connections to other local organisations and ability to build positive relationships with young people**.

14 **Common challenges** for sites when implementing interventions included: **building and maintaining relationships with key organisations, engaging young people, recruiting skilled workers,** and **establishing intervention theory and impact.**

Future focus

Use data from community needs assessments to create more strategically informed intervention profiles

Build organisations' capacity to contribute to meaningful monitoring and evaluation in order to (1) effectively match interventions to known needs and (2) improve the evaluability and replicability of effective interventions

Assess the balance between primary, secondary and tertiary level interventions

Increase the focus on understanding the impact of interventions on violence reduction

3   ⚛ Types of intervention

3.1   MyEnds programme and requirements

> **Key finding 1: The non-prescriptive nature of MyEnds has enabled consortiums to develop locally specific profiles of interventions.**

The MyEnds programme is deliberately non-prescriptive, building in flexibility for sites to interpret and implement it in ways which best suit their local context. This non-prescriptive approach has enabled consortiums of voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations to develop locally tailored approaches to meeting the needs of the community and to tackling the causes of young people becoming involved in violence.

The model outlines features of hyper-local interventions that should be furthered by the programme, which are:

- Funding a mixed profile of support in terms of need and intervention level[2]:

- Expanding promising practice.

- Fostering innovative practice.

- Locally informed practice.

- Adapting to emerging need and critical incidents.

It also seeks to cultivate several approaches and principles across all activity strands, which are specified in the MyEnds model. Some of these are particularly pertinent to the interventions activity stand, including trauma-informed approaches, cultural competence and contextual safeguarding[3].

Beyond this, sites have a relatively high degree of freedom to approach the development and implementation of interventions in a way that suits their area. Therefore, sites have developed locally specific programmes of interventions. There is some variation between how sites have approached the development and delivery of their profile of interventions.

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[2] This includes three levels: primary: Preventative interventions available to everyone in a setting/community, irrespective of need or risk level; secondary: Interventions for those at risk of involvement in violence; tertiary: Interventions for those already involved in violence.

[3] Examples of interventions which integrate trauma-informed approaches are one-to-one interventions supporting young people who are at risk of involvement with crime or violence (e.g., THICN's Bridging Programme (provided by Streets of Growth) and West Croydon's one-to-one mentoring (provided by Mentivity)). These types of intervention also incorporate contextual safeguarding approaches, as do assertive outreach interventions (e.g., Gamechangers' Southwark Young Advisors peer outreach work). An ethos of cultural competence is fairly well engrained across intervention providers.

3.2 Relationship of MyEnds interventions to London's VRU's priorities

> **Key finding 2: Interventions being delivered under MyEnds relate most closely to three priority areas of London's VRU's outcomes framework[4]: positive opportunities, reducing harm and educational settings. Some interventions link to more than one of these priorities, which are not mutually exclusive.**

The VRU's outcomes framework aims to take a public health approach to violence reduction and commits to community led approaches. The MyEnds programme and model as a whole reflects all of the six priority areas within London's VRU's outcomes framework. The interventions activity strand most closely relates to three priority areas, which are[5]:

- **Children and young people: positive opportunities**. Expanding access to positive opportunities and providing development and support through training, apprenticeships, and employment and enrichment.

- **Children and young people: reducing harm and exploitation**. Improving identification of and support to prevent violence against children and young people at greatest risk of harm and exploitation.

- **Educational settings**. Improving young people's experience and engagement within education settings.

Some interventions address more than one of these priorities, for example by delivering an intervention in a school setting which seeks to improve young people's engagement and relationships within education whilst also providing positive opportunities or reducing harm.

Consultation during the extension phase with the programme managers in the eight MyEnds sites identified local interventions which addressed these priorities and which local partners considered to be 'standout' examples of interventions developed and delivered under MyEnds. We conducted in-depth interviews with the leads for these interventions and have included them throughout this report as illustrative examples of promising and innovative interventions addressing the VRU's priorities.

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[4] London's Violence Reduction Unit (2022). *London VRU Outcomes Framework.* Unpublished. This framework was developed after the introduction of MyEnds. Partly as a consequence of this, sites did not design or select interventions linked to these specific outcomes. However, most interventions broadly align with one or more of these outcome areas.

[5] A number of sites have also included activities targeted at families within their MyEnds programmes and intervention profiles. These relate to the **Families: Developing stronger and more resilient families (to better support young people)** priority within the VRU's outcomes framework. However, these have tended to be less of a significant focus within sites' intervention profiles because the majority of interventions target children and young people directly.

Priority area	Description	Intended outcomes †
POSITIVE OPPORTUNITIES	Interventions addressing the positive opportunities priority engage young people in activities that may provide development and support through training, apprenticeships, and employment and enrichment. They may also reduce the time young people are exposed to negative influences and be an entry route into other support or interventions*. These interventions are predominantly at primary level, providing sites with an opportunity to reach a wide range of young people. Several interventions also have secondary and tertiary aspects. They often encompass sports provision, creative activities, training or entrepreneurship opportunities. Many of the interventions included in sites' intervention profiles have focused on this priority.	• Improved wellbeing. • Improved socio-emotional learning. • Improved engagement. • Improved employment opportunities.
REDUCING HARM AND EXPLOITATION	Interventions addressing the reducing harm and exploitation priority typically improve identification of and support to prevent violence against children and young people at greatest risk of harm and exploitation. These generally include more structured secondary and tertiary interventions that are more closely tailored to those already involved in violence, or at greater risk of becoming involved with violence. An example of a tertiary intervention is mentoring, which may support young people in overcoming substance misuse and behavioural difficulties, and to improve educational outcomes and self-esteem*. Fewer of the interventions included in sites' intervention profiles have focused on this priority. However, during the third year of My Ends sites have increased the number of interventions addressing this priority in response to guidance from London's VRU.	• Reduction in violence. • Reduction in victimisation. • Improved knowledge and understanding of risks/issues relating to violence and exploitation. • Reduced vulnerability to harm and exploitation. • Reduction in harmful behaviour.
ACTIVITIES DELIVERED IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS	Interventions addressing the education settings priority typically focus on promoting healthy relationships and reducing disengagement in education. Examples include support for transition from primary to secondary school or activities to reduce exclusions amongst young people. Preventing young people from being excluded from school may reduce further adverse life experiences, increase the likelihood that young people remain in a safe environment and support educational attainment*. They theoretically cut across all three intervention levels, though most of the interventions included within sites intervention profiles have been at either secondary level, working with staff in education settings to identify young people who might be at risk of violence and exploitation, or at primary level, capitalising on education settings as a means to reach a large number of young people simultaneously.	• Improved engagement with education. • Improved wellbeing at school. *Potential to contribute to outcomes for education professionals and settings:* • Improved practice to prevent and reduce harm in school. • Improved understanding of different needs. • Improved inclusive practice.

*Youth Endowment Fund. 'Sports programmes', 'Mentoring' and 'Interventions to prevent school exclusion'. Available at: https://youthendowmentfund.org.uk/toolkit/ (Accessed 2nd April 2024).
†These high-level outcomes for young people are taken from the VRU's Outcome Framework.

4 ◎ What has been the impact of MyEnds on interventions delivered in sites?

4.1 Broadening number and range of available interventions

> **Key finding 3: As a result of the increased funding and resource injected into sites through MyEnds, sites have (1) expanded on existing interventions and (2) developed and delivered new interventions in the local area. This has increased the overall volume and range of interventions delivered. It has also led to an increased number of organisations involved in delivery.**

4.1.1 Number of interventions delivered under MyEnds

> Monitoring data reported in this section was captured during the extension year only. By the extension year, sites had established their programmes of activity. Data from this period therefore provides a useful snapshot of the level of activity achieved by sites which helps to contextualise the impact of MyEnds.

Responses to the MyEnds systems change e-survey indicate that local stakeholders recognise an increase in the availability of funding for interventions that meet the community's needs. In 2024, 84% (163/194) respondents strongly agree/agreed that this was the case compared to 74% (171/232) of respondents in 2023.

A total of 104 interventions were delivered during the extension period, making 13 the average number per site (see Figure 1 below). This total accounts for interventions which have been continued from previous years and interventions which were introduced during the extension year[6]. One Flow One Brent delivered the highest number of interventions (22), and Gamechangers and Home Cooked delivered the lowest number (7 each).

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[6] Due to differences in the recording of interventions across different monitoring data returns, it was not possible to combine data on interventions from the monitoring returns in the extension period and in previous years to generate a robust total number of interventions delivered by each site during the whole MyEnds programme.

Figure 1: Number of interventions delivered during extension year by site

Site	Number of interventions delivered	Interventions delivered as %
ACT-AS-1	12	12%
Ecosystem Coldharbour	13	13%
Gamechangers	7	7%
Home Cooked	7	7%
One Flow One Brent	22	21%
Rise Up East	21	20%
THICN	13	13%
West Croydon	9	9%
Total	**104**	**100%**

4.1.2 Types of intervention received

Across the eight sites, each intervention was recorded as working in at least one of a total of 13 defined activity categories[7]. This highlights the range of activities MyEnds made available to young people.

The most frequently reported activity categories were: Workshops/group work (18%); Holistic one-to-one support (11%); Mentoring (group) (10%); Sports based (10%).

Five activity categories were reported at least one in every site were: After school – academic/social enrichment (7%); Holistic one-to-one support (11%); Sports based (10%); Training – children and young people, parents/carers (4%); Workshops/group work (18%).

4.1.3 Expanding on existing interventions

Sites have commonly taken the increased funding and resource available as an opportunity to expand and adapt existing local provision, building on interventions that were already being delivered locally. Consultation with local area and VRU stakeholders indicates that this has typically involved one of two approaches:

1. Expanding an intervention's offer, enabling an intervention to continue in its existing approach but on a larger scale.

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[7] Because each intervention can be ascribed to multiple categories (the highest number of categories ascribed to one intervention is 12), the same interventions may be reporting working in more than one of these categories.

2.   Refocusing and refreshing the target group an intervention aims to reach.

The combination of these two approaches has in turn resulted in an increase in the volume and range of interventions sites are delivering.

4.1.4   Developing and delivering new interventions

Increasingly sites have introduced new interventions in their local areas. This has been supported by interaction between the three strands of the MyEnds programme. The development of new interventions has been informed and supported by:

- Strengthened community networks, which have enabled sites to better understand the needs of their local areas and in some cases to establish referral pathways with statutory partners. See thematic report 2.

- The onward grants strand and capacity building support, which has included funding grassroots organisations to deliver new and innovative interventions. See thematic report 3.

4.2   Expansion in availability of interventions for specific target groups

Key finding 4: Sites have sought opportunities to develop and deliver interventions for young people who were less well reached previously.

Qualitative consultation throughout the evaluation indicates that sites' approaches to reaching young people who were previously less well reached has included developing interventions which target particular groups of young people based on a common characteristic, and reaching young people whom previous interventions were not engaging. Examples include young people from specific ethnic backgrounds, girls and young women, and parents.

Consequently, the profile of some sites' interventions has evolved as they have sought to fill gaps and offer interventions which are specifically aimed at particular groups as opposed to being more universal. Monitoring data recorded during the extension year does not include groups targeted by interventions. This means it is not possible to draw on monitoring data to explore this finding further.

Example of intervention focused on the experience of young women and girls. Positive opportunities: Female Engagement Lutadoras (ACT-AS-1)

Fight For Peace's Female Engagement Lutadoras focuses on the experience of girls, young women and non-binary people. It provides a space within Fight For Peace for girls, young women and non-binary people to have a weekly group session and twice weekly boxing sessions. The group session is an open and safe space, and participants can decide how they would like to use

the time. This can include peer support, discussions led by the young people on topics that are relevant to them, or activities such as watching a film together. The group has also led training for all staff members at Fight For Peace and aimed to promote accessibility for girls, young women and non-binary people.

4.3 Balance in delivery of interventions at different levels

Key finding 5: The majority of interventions are in the primary and secondary space, which is the space in which most consortium partners and wider provider organisations were already delivering.

Qualitative consultation throughout the evaluation indicates that many of the interventions delivered have been primary or secondary, in line with providers' pre-existing offers. Primary and secondary interventions often entail positive and safe spaces, positive relationships with peers and with trusted adults, and positive activities with which young people can engage, as well as new opportunities. They therefore have the potential to increase the number of young people reached by the programme, and to provide an entry point into other types of support and/or into co-development activities that feed into the design and delivery of future interventions.

Monitoring data reported in this section was captured during the extension year only.

Monitoring data from the extension period supports this finding. Within the data, interventions are not identified as primary, secondary or tertiary level but they are categorised as working towards different outcomes and priority areas within the VRU's outcomes framework, some of which relate more closely to tertiary level interventions[8]. Less than a quarter (24%) are documented as working towards only outcomes which could indicate that the intervention is tertiary.

Key finding 6: MyEnds has helped to increase the number of locally available tertiary interventions delivered by VCS providers, especially in the final year of the programme.

Qualitative consultation in years 2 and 3 of the evaluation suggests that over the course of the MyEnds programme and particularly in the programme's final year,

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[8] Across the eight sites, each intervention was recorded as working towards particular outcomes which align with priority areas set out in the VRU's Outcomes Framework. There are five priority areas, and each intervention was recorded as working towards up to three outcomes, which also means up to three priority areas. For the purposes of this analysis interventions which could potentially be tertiary were defined as interventions working towards outcomes within the priority area aimed at reducing young peoples' risk of exposure to harm or exploitation.

there has been an increased focus on developing and delivering tertiary level interventions[9]. The impact of this is twofold:

1. There is a greater number of interventions available specifically for young people who are already involved with violence or at risk of becoming so.
2. The type of tertiary level interventions on offer has broadened, reflecting consortiums' commitment to continuous learning and innovation.

Example of innovative tertiary level intervention. Activities to reduce harm: The Reparations Project (THICN)

THICN's Reparations Project relies on the positive relationships which have been established between the local VCS and statutory providers. This is because the time young people spend working with the Project counts towards their Community Hours. This means that between the VCS and statutory partners (e.g. the Youth Offending Service), there are referral pathways and ongoing dialogues. Taking this approach means that (1) there is more variety in the activities young people can undertake to fulfil Community Orders, and (2) the THICN consortium is more likely to engage young people who have been involved with violence.

Future focus: Assess the balance between primary, secondary and tertiary level interventions

In future iterations of MyEnds and future similar programmes, it may be helpful to consider the relative merits of the three levels of intervention and incorporate this into guidance and targets for consortiums. For instance, if a programme's primary aim is to reach as many young people as possible, a focus on primary interventions seems most logical. In contrast, if a programme's primary aim is to engage young people who are at risk of involvement with violence, tertiary interventions should be prioritised over number of young people reached. A Tertiary Working Group being implemented for the next iteration of MyEnds will help consortiums to respond to this.

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[9] Due to differences in the recording of interventions across different monitoring data returns and the absence of data on intervention levels, it was not possible to analyse patterns in intervention levels across multiple years of the MyEnds programme.

5   🎯 What has the impact of interventions on young people been?

5.1   Number of young people reached

> **Key finding 7: As a result of being able to deliver a higher volume and broader range of interventions, sites have reached high numbers of young people. They have therefore engaged more young people in areas which experience higher levels of violence than they would have reached without the programme.**

> Monitoring data reported in this section was captured during the extension year only. By the extension year, sites had established their programmes of activity. Data from this period therefore provides a useful snapshot of the level of activity achieved by sites which helps to contextualise the impact of MyEnds.

There is agreement across programme- and local-level stakeholders that MyEnds has increased the range and quantity of support available for young people via its interventions strand.

Interventions which were delivered during the extension year reached more than 41,000 children and young people[10]. This total accounts for interventions which have been continued from previous years and interventions which were introduced during the extension year[11]. On average, each site reached more than 5,000 children and young people per quarter via interventions delivered during the extension year[12].

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[10] Because the number of people reached by interventions is recorded on an intervention-by-intervention basis, there is likely some duplication (i.e. if one young person participates in more than one intervention, they will have been counted more than once). This means that the number of individual children and young people reached is lower than the numbers reported here.

[11] Due to differences in the recording of interventions across different monitoring data returns, it was not possible to combine data on interventions from the monitoring returns in the extension period and in previous years to generate a robust total number of young people reached by interventions during the whole MyEnds programme. It is likely that the number we report here is lower than the total number across the whole programme period because some interventions were delivered in years 1 and/or 2 of the programme but not continued into the extension year.

[12] Each individual intervention has been ascribed to up to three priority areas and up to twelve activity categories. This means it is difficult to draw any detailed conclusions about how the number of children and young people receiving interventions is spread across priority areas or activity categories.

5.2 Intended outcomes

> **Key finding 8: Interventions have aimed to achieve a wide range of positive outcomes for young people. These include outcomes focused on directly reducing involvement in violence or exploitation. However, the most common intended outcomes are those which might serve as protective factors, thereby reducing young people's risk of becoming involved in violence.**

Sites have built foundations for innovative, creative and locally led interventions, which ultimately strive towards violence reduction. As discussed in section 4.3, a relatively small proportion of interventions are working at the tertiary level, i.e. primarily or exclusively towards directly reducing involvement in violence or exploitation for those already involved. Therefore most interventions are working towards other outcomes, which might act as protective factors and reduce young people's risk of future involvement in violence or exploitation[13].

> Monitoring data reported in this section was captured during the extension year only.

This is demonstrated by an analysis of monitoring data returns relating to the extension year. This shows that the three most common intended outcomes of interventions delivered during the extension year were[14].

- Improved mental wellbeing (25 interventions)

- Increased engagement with activities and support services (22 interventions)

- Improved understanding of issues related to harm & exploitation (22 interventions)

Monitoring data also demonstrates the diversity of outcomes towards which MyEnds interventions are working: interventions delivered in the extension year of MyEnds reported working towards a total of 61 different intended outcomes.

5.3 Outcomes and impact achieved with children and young people

> **Key finding 9: Evidence from qualitative consultation with young people involved in interventions, local area stakeholders (including MyEnds**

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[13] See the infographic in section 3.2 for an overview of the types of outcomes associated with interventions working towards different priority areas.

[14] In monitoring data returns for the extension year, each intervention was recorded as working towards up to three outcomes, which align with outcomes in the VRU's outcomes framework. Because each intervention could be ascribed to up to three outcomes, the total count of outcomes recorded against interventions is greater than the total number of interventions.

programme managers and intervention providers) indicates that interventions have contributed to a range of positive outcomes for young people who have participated.

The available monitoring data on outcomes achieved with young people is limited. However, consultation with a range of stakeholders and activity providers throughout the MyEnds evaluation has illuminated the range of outcomes which interventions have supported young people to achieve. Common examples of these outcomes include: improved interpersonal skills such as understanding and empathy for other people's experiences; improved engagement with education and other services; and improved confidence and positivity about future prospects. The suite of case studies from the impact evaluation (2022-23) reporting on individual outcomes of specific interventions provides further detail.

There are a number of challenges in evidencing violence reduction linked to a programme operating at both local area and individual level. For example, it requires robust theories of violence reduction and data collection at intervention and area level, some of which is not necessarily feasible to implement without significant additional resource in a programme designed to work with smaller, grassroots organisations and with communities. Equally, violence reduction at an area level is likely to take time to achieve and the likelihood of achieving it might be limited by factors outside of the MyEnds' control.

Future focus: Increase the focus on understanding the impact of interventions on violence reduction

During the next iteration of MyEnds, it would be beneficial to commit resource to understanding and evidencing whether violence in local areas has reduced, or alternatively whether violence by individuals involved in interventions (and especially tertiary interventions) has reduced, and the extent to which the programme has contributed to this. This is partly because some of these outcomes are are likely to take longer to achieve and are difficult to evidence within the lifespan of the programme. , Therefore being able to evidence shorter-term outcomes is also important, andmay help build an understanding of what contributes to longer-term change.

6   How have interventions been delivered?

6.1   Development and selection of interventions

6.1.1   Organic process of identifying needs and gaps

> **Key finding 10: Consortiums have all taken a similar approach to developing their intervention profiles. This has been organic and has not entailed formal strategic needs assessment.**

In keeping with the hyperlocal approach of MyEnds, consortiums' development of intervention profiles has relied upon knowledge of their local areas. The identification of gaps in local provision and the selection of interventions has been relatively organic. Gaps in local provision are typically identified by providers or consortium members who then develop or adapt an intervention to be delivered in the area. The suite of case studies from the impact evaluation (2022-23) offer a more detailed account of how some interventions were developed.

As identified in the impact evaluation report, consortiums have not undertaken formal strategic needs assessments for their target areas as a starting point for developing their intervention profile. Instead, their understanding of need has been based on providers' knowledge and experience from their prior delivery or their proximity to the community. Further understanding of community members' views of needs and priorities has been gathered via community engagement. Please see thematic report 2 for further detail.

This organic and less structured approach to identifying needs and gaps makes the most of the expertise, networks and opportunities of people and organisations who are already operating in the MyEnds sites. It is also a pragmatic approach given the challenges of undertaking a more formal strategic needs assessment as a VCS consortium.

However, it does build in the risk that more substantial needs and gaps might exist, which are not addressed because consortiums and wider partners are not aware of them or have not recognised their high importance relative to other known needs and gaps. This may reduce the overall effectiveness of interventions in contributing to violence reduction.

Another result of this approach is that, especially for interventions working to offer positive opportunities, consortiums and other intervention providers often did not articulate the specific target audiences for individual interventions, or the needs or outcomes they were intended to address. This is because these interventions aimed towards a level of generic appeal. For interventions delivered in educational settings and for those which work with young people who are identified as being at greater risk of involvement with violence, providers had a clearer idea of the interventions' target group, though this was not always articulated formally. This presents challenges in understanding any existing

theory or evidence base underpinning the interventions, measuring their impact on preventing or reducing violence, and using them to inform the development of future interventions (either within the area or elsewhere).

Future focus: Use data from community needs assessments to create more strategically informed intervention profiles

London's VRU has recognised the challenges for MyEnds sites in generating and demonstrating a strategic understanding of local need and how to respond to it. Therefore, independent support to produce community needs assessments has been built into the initial stages of the next iteration of MyEnds. This presents an opportunity for future MyEnds sites to take a more strategic approach to developing intervention profiles in response to priority needs.

6.1.2 Intervention selection and development based on existing assets and networks

Key finding 11: Consortiums have drawn on existing local assets and networks when selecting and developing interventions. This includes the knowledge, experience and relationships of consortium partners and wider partners operating locally.

In their approach to selection of interventions, consortiums have built upon the existing relationships, experience and strengths of providers in their network, whilst also seeking to deliver a wider range of activities and respond to the needs and challenges of the community.

Providers reported that sites had either bolstered existing interventions in the area, enabled existing providers from other areas to expand delivery into their area or implemented new interventions. Amongst the sample of interventions included as examples in this report, there was a mixture of providers whose activities had started during or prior to MyEnds.

Example of intervention development. Positive opportunities: Sports Provision (Gamechangers)

Active Communities Network developed a sports provision offer through conversations with local schools and community members, coupled with their own youth work experience. This informed the target audience, location and core topics for the intervention. Through these conversations, Active Communities Network also identified a need for providing free activities at times when anti-social behaviour tends to increase. By holding sessions at these times, they hoped to reduce anti-social behaviour by providing young people with an engaging activity in a safe environment that reduced their exposure to potentially negative influences.

6.2 Features of effective intervention design

> **Key finding 12: Common features of effective intervention design included involving young people and other community members in the design of interventions, using a 'hook' to engage young people, focusing on ETE skills, giving young people a space to express concerns and collaborating with statutory organisations.**

Interventions developed and delivered as part of MyEnds demonstrate several common features, which intervention providers highlighted were important to their local relevance and success in engaging young people.

6.2.1 Feature 1: Involving young people and other community members in the design of the interventions

Co-designing interventions with young people who might use them and with other local community members enables providers to hear directly from local people about their needs and preferences. This ensures that interventions provide relevant and engaging support which responds to these needs and preferences, and also promotes buy-in to the interventions because young people and other community members who might support the interventions can see their own agency in developing them.

> *"The co-design process was so important… the majority of these projects are usually led by business need. This was about learning."*
>
> A MyEnds consortium lead

> **Example of effective co-design. Reducing harm and exploitation The Reparations Project (THICN)**
>
> The reparations project developed by THICN works with young people who are on community orders. It was developed through a co-design process which included workshops, focus groups and surveys with young people who were subject to a community order and people who were affected by anti-social behaviour on the Isle of Dogs.
>
> Through this process, THICN identified that young people were unsatisfied with the activities they were required to undertake as part of community orders. In response, it developed opportunities for young people to learn trade-specific skills, such as decorating, under the supervision of youth workers whilst meeting the requirements of their community order.
>
> The project is showing promise and emerging positive impact. For instance, some young people who have taken part have either found employment or set up a business doing the trade they learnt while part of the reparations project. The project indicates the consortium shifting towards more tertiary interventions, and in doing so, developing something new in the area.

6.2.2 Feature 2: Using a 'hook' to engage young people

Using an appealing activity or incentive can act as a 'hook', enabling providers to engage young people. A 'hook' is most beneficial when it is an activity which appeals to young people who may otherwise not access or engage with support. It usually involves a fun activity that may draw on the particular skills or interests of the staff involved in a grassroots organisation. This has been a particular feature within positive opportunities and interventions in educational settings. Examples include providing a free sports or creative activity such as martial arts, football, basketball or a music studio session. Providers often combine these activities with early intervention support for those identified by practitioners of having higher levels of potential risk. This support includes pastoral support, light-touch mentoring, education, training and employment (ETE) support, and signposting/referral to other appropriate support.

Example of an effective 'hook'. Educational settings: Awareness Raising Programme (ACT-AS-1)

The Awareness Raising Programme is six-week long programme of support sessions delivered in schools by youth workers, drawing on cultural competence and lived experience. Young people are identified by teachers as at-risk of exclusion, exploitation, or on the periphery of gang involvement.

Creative sessions, such as working with an art therapist or in a music recording studio, aim to 'hook' young people. During these sessions, young people are encouraged to explore difficult topics. Examples of topics are raising aspirations, trauma-informed practice, stop and search and first aid. Schools also have scope to select from additional topics, including vaping, online safety and consent.

6.2.3 Feature 3: Focusing on ETE skills

Interventions which work towards improving young people's employment opportunities are recognised for promoting a number of skills. These include improved attitudes and management skills, improved engagement and attainment in education, and improved wellbeing (e.g., motivation and personal ambition)[15]. In consultation, providers highlighted that interventions focusing on ETE skills also support young people who are vulnerable to criminal exploitation by providing opportunities to earn money through safe and legal means.

> *"We find that a lot of young people that we work with are struggling academically, they may have special educational needs or are just not managing with mainstream education. They are interested in*

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[15] London's Violence Reduction Unit (2022). *London VRU Outcomes Framework.* Unpublished.

making money. It is a strong pull factor into other lifestyles, they see other young people who are able to afford what they can't."

A MyEnds intervention project lead

Example of focus on ETE skills. Positive opportunities: Entrepreneurship programme (One Flow One Brent).

Ultra Education delivered a six-month programme supporting young people to design, develop and market their own trainers. Young people were taught basic entrepreneurial skills, offered opportunities for short-term work experience placements and provided with light-touch mentoring. Delivery staff reported that the programme had successfully engaged young people who mainstream education settings had been unable to engage.

In addition, several other interventions (and community engagement activities – see thematic report 2) had a secondary aim of improving participants' ETE skills. For example, a number of former Southwark Young Advisors have now taken up roles in the local authority (see section 6.2.5 for more information on this intervention) whilst Active Communities Network has enrolled some young people accessing their sports provision in an FA Level 1 coaching course.

6.2.4 Feature 4: Space for young people to express concerns

Several interventions built in space for young people to express their worries or fears in a supportive environment. Providers highlighted that this was particularly helpful for engaging young people at risk of exploitation who may need space to be able articulate their situation and feelings and whose confidence to ask for and receive support might initially be low.

Example of providing space for young people to express themselves. Reducing harm and exploitation: One-to-one Mentoring (Croydon)

Mentivity provides a 12-week programme of bespoke one-to-one mentoring sessions and parental engagement for young people referred by Croydon Youth Offending Service. Session topics include the learning process, relationships, managing emotions, trauma, wellbeing and identity.

By giving young people the space to consider these topics in a supportive environment, providers reported that they were able to better understand their situations and make better informed decisions when faced with potentially risky situations.

6.2.5 Feature 5: Collaborative working with statutory services

Collaborative working with statutory services has been an important component in a number of MyEnds interventions. It has been particularly prominent in interventions which address the VRU's reducing harm priority, and which involve working with young people who are closer to involvement in violence. For example, several interventions received referrals from the youth justice system and provided a targeted service such as mentoring.

Equally, providers and statutory organisations have shared insight and intelligence to inform the development and delivery of interventions, or to support learning and reflection.

Example of collaborative working with statutory services. Reducing harm and exploitation: Southwark Young Advisors (Gamechangers)

Southwark Youth Advisors undertake peer-to-peer outreach sessions in the Gamechangers target area. MyEnds funding was used to scale up their delivery, so that outreach takes place three times a week from 3pm-9pm during term time and for longer during school holidays. The lead worker for this project also works for the local council who provides a link with the local authority and advocates for the group.

The local authority helps Southwark Young Advisors to identify hotspots for anti-social behaviour and areas associated with a higher risk of young people being exploited. Intelligence sharing between Southwark Young Advisors and statutory partners goes two ways. The link has generated new opportunities for collaboration. For instance, the Home Office has introduced a pilot programme for Offensive Weapon homicide reviews and Southwark Young Advisors are included in the process to report any local intelligence identified through their outreach work or network.

Work with statutory services is also crucial for interventions addressing the VRU's education settings priority. For example, several interventions offered in school settings draw on the insight of teachers and school staff to identify who is best suited to support. This is an approach shows promise in increasing participation.

6.3 Key attributes of intervention providers

Key finding 13: Intervention providers involved in MyEnds bring several key attributes which enable them to develop and deliver interventions effectively: being embedded in the local area and community, strong connections to other local organisations and ability to build positive relationships with young people.

Intervention providers involved in MyEnds commonly hold several key attributes which enable them to deliver interventions that engage local young people.

6.3.1 Attribute 1: Being embedded in the local area and community

Most intervention providers involved in MyEnds – and many of their individual staff members – have roots in the local areas and communities which are the focus of the programme. This means they have extensive local knowledge and experience and are often well-connected to and respected by young people and other community members. They therefore have an understanding of local needs, priorities and assets (as discussed in section 6.1) and can bring this knowledge to bear in developing interventions. For example, their knowledge of lower risk/neutral areas means they can locate activities in places that young people feel able to go to.

6.3.2 Attribute 2: Strong connections to other local organisations

Many of the intervention providers are well connected to and well regarded by other local organisations. This is especially the case for some of the larger and longer standing organisations involved in consortiums.

"It is a collaborative process – we are just the relationship brokers. We all agree the content together - the schools, the police and the students."

A MyEnds intervention lead

This enables intervention providers to broker communication between young people and other organisations to design and deliver interventions.

Example of the benefits of well-connected and embedded intervention providers. Education settings: Violent Crime Taskforce - police and young people engagement programme (Home Cooked)

Hope in Haringey's Violent Crime Taskforce: police and young people engagement programme is a primary-level intervention delivered in primary and secondary schools in the Tottenham Hale Ward. It aims to improve confidence in local police by bringing young people and police together in neutral spaces.

Hope in Haringey used its experience as a charity in the area for over 25 years to broker relationships and inform conversations between the police and schools. These conversations enabled the school, young people and police to agree on the content of informative sessions that are relevant to issues within the Tottenham Hale Ward. For example, young people requested a session on their rights following a high-profile incident when a man was shot with a taser by police in the area.

6.3.3   Attribute 3: Skills in building positive relationships

The staff and volunteers involved in interventions generally have strong skills in building trusting, positive relationships with young people. This enables young people to feel motivated and safe to engage with the intervention, and potentially also with wider support. This relationship is often helped by young people identifying with practitioners in some way, reinforcing the value of providers' local and shared experiences with young people (discussed in section 6.3.1). These skills can also be applied in building providers' relationships with young people's families.

> *"[We are providing] consistency and space for the young person to express themselves. We are completely open and honest with the young person. This allows them to make changes or to take advice once they have relaxed."*

A MyEnds intervention lead

The importance of these relationship-building skills was particularly evident in interventions which target young people who are at greater risk of exposure to violence. Providers reported that young people receiving these interventions had often had previous negative experiences with several services and that a consistent approach to support was key to establishing this relationship. The relationship was also viewed as an important way of modelling healthy behaviours and relationships.

Example of positive relationships. Reducing harm and exploitation: The Bridging Programme and One-to-one mentoring (THICN and West Croydon)

The importance of the relationship between the young person and delivery partner is particularly evident in the Bridging Programme and One-to-one mentoring. In both interventions, young people had typically been bounced between services before being referred through the youth justice system.

In Mentivity's One-to-one mentoring, the importance of listening and being transparent with the young person was key to the building the foundations of the relationship between mentor and mentee. This enabled the mentee to trust the mentor and engage more openly in the support. The implementation of boundaries was also beneficial for the young person to develop an understanding of a healthy relationship.

In the Bridging Programme, youth workers balance patience against persistence when initially building a relationship with a young person in order to demonstrate their commitment to supporting the young person. They also try to engage the young person's family, which (1) helps the youth worker to obtain a holistic picture of the young person's situation, and (2) further signals their commitment to engaging the young person.

6.4   Common challenges in implementation

> **Key Finding 14: Common challenges for sites when implementing interventions included: building and maintaining relationships with key organisations, engaging young people, recruiting skilled workers, and establishing intervention theory and impact.**

There were three common challenges in implementing interventions as part of the MyEnds programme.

6.4.1   Challenge 1: Building and maintaining inter-organisational relationships

Building and maintaining working relationships across multiple organisations proved challenging. In interventions involving multiple delivery partners, it took time to synchronise approaches across the different organisations. Providers highlighted that one way to accelerate this process was to ensure that providers had a shared sense of the intended outcomes of the intervention before working together, and that these aligned with both organisations' aims and values.

Equally, time and resource was needed to build and maintain relationships with potential referrers, onward referral routes and host settings. In interventions involving educational settings, for instance, gaining access to these settings often presented an early challenge for providers, especially for those with no previous experience of similar delivery. To overcome this challenge, some providers offered free provision in educational settings, drew on the existing relationships between education settings and other organisations within the local MyEnds network, and reached out early to offer support for the following academic year. In general, once a provider organisation had experience within one education setting, they found it easier to build relationships with other local settings.

6.4.2   Challenge 2: Engaging young people

Some intervention providers, particularly in activities aiming to reduce harm, experienced challenges in engaging young people.

> *"In particular, consistent trust building and regular contact between a youth worker and a young person [is important]. A lot of young people across the borough have been through different services and had bad experiences, so they think they're going to be let down. So [we are] simultaneously building trust and learning information about a young person and their background/risk factors/characteristics".*

A MyEnds intervention lead

> **Example of overcoming the challenge of engaging young people. Activities to reduce harm: The Bridging Programme (THICN)**

> The Bridging Programme provides one-to-one support for young people aged 14-19. The support focuses on reducing involvement in violence or risk thereof, and on building trust and engagement with support services.
>
> Practitioners noted that a challenge associated with engaging the young people targeted by this intervention is young people's mistrust, especially if they have previously felt let down by services. Overcoming this challenge has been achieved by cultivating a trusted-adult relationship which simultaneously works on two aspects:
>
> 1. Building trust by being consistent and ensuring contact between the young person and youth worker feels meaningful rather than tokenistic.
>
> 2. Taking a holistic assessment of the young person (e.g., ongoing safety checks, understanding the young person's aspirations) which enables the youth worker to tailor support to meet individual needs.

6.4.3 Challenge 3: Recruitment of skilled workers

Intervention providers sometimes experienced challenges in recruiting and retaining appropriately skilled workers. This challenge is wider than the MyEnds programme because recruitment and retention is a common challenge with the VCS and public sector.

Within MyEnds, it was particularly prominent in interventions which target young people who are at greater risk of exposure to violence. Consortium partners generally had more limited prior experience with these types of intervention. Alongside the engagement skills and cultural competence which are common assets of MyEnds intervention providers, they require specific specialist knowledge and skills, such as trauma-informed approaches, and robust risk assessment and management. Several organisations have responded to the recruitment challenge by training and recruiting young people who have previously used their services. This offers an additional benefit of generating training and employment opportunities for local young people.

> **Example of training and upskilling young people. Educational settings: Transition from primary to secondary school programme (One Flow One Brent) and Schools transition programme (Ecosystem Coldharbour)**
>
> Sport at the Heart provides transition support for young people identified by their teachers in local primary schools through a two-week programme during the summer holiday. Sessions include trips, multi-sports and dance activities and advice on nutrition, substance misuse, and mental health and wellbeing.
>
> MLCE and CHIPS provides a six-week programme of weekly in-school support sessions to pupils in year six pupils identified by their teachers based

on needs. Sessions include discussions on transition to secondary school, challenges at secondary school and safety, as well as light touch mentoring.

In response to challenges in recruiting staff, both providers identify young people who have previously used their services who are interested in moving into youth work roles themselves. They then provide them with training and experience to upskill them to provide high quality support to young people. This approach also ensures that delivery staff are close to the community, a key factor supporting delivery.

6.4.4 Challenge 4: Establishing intervention theory and impact

Many of the interventions included in sites' intervention profiles did not have a clearly articulated theory of change, outlining the intended outcomes of the intervention, how the programme activities would contribute to these outcomes, and how these outcomes might link to violence prevention or reduction. They also often lacked mechanisms for consistently capturing evidence about the impact of the intervention on these outcomes.

This is often a challenge for both commissioners and providers of interventions. It is especially challenging for smaller providers who may have more limited infrastructure, resource, experience and confidence in developing programme theory and designing and implementing monitoring approaches.

MyEnds takes a practice-led evidence approach, with a deliberate focus on community- and grassroots-generated ideas for violence reduction. This presents a particular challenge to intervention theory and evaluation at a local level, because it means trialling new solutions which might not be rooted in previous evidence, and testing and learning through implementation.

Programme managers in each of the sites reported on the reach of interventions and categorised their high-level intended outcomes through the monitoring data reported to the VRU. Many intervention providers also captured evidence of impact through a range of mechanisms, including monitoring data, testimonials from young people, family members and other professionals working alongside them, pre- and post-intervention questionnaires, and provider-generated case studies about individual young people. Therefore, the challenge was to some degree in making the most of the resource available for monitoring to ensure it was capturing data as consistently as possible on the outcomes of most relevance to understanding the intervention itself and to generating evidence about what works to prevent and reduce violence in local communities.

Future focus: Build organisations' capacity to contribute to meaningful monitoring and evaluation in order to (1) effectively match interventions to known needs and (2) improve the evaluability and replicability of effective interventions

During the next iteration of MyEnds, it will be important for London's VRU and MyEnds consortiums to maintain a focus on understanding the theory and

outcomes of interventions developed and delivered under MyEnds. Identifying a range of short-, medium- and long-term outcomes early on in the programme will support the sustainability of intervention delivery, by providing a set of outcomes against which success can be measured and demonstrated. This will also ultimately support the evaluability of interventions, enabling the programme to further contribute to the evidence base on what works to prevent and reduce violence, and will support the replicability of interventions which are proven to be effective.

There are several resources which have been introduced during MyEnds which could support the development of intervention theory and monitoring. The MyEnds model outlines elements of the programme-level theory and mechanisms of change. London's VRU's outcomes framework maps out both higher level and more granular outcomes to which VRU-funded programmes should be aiming to contribute. In MyEnds in future, it will be beneficial for consortiums to consider this framework at the outset in order to inform the design, selection and framing of their interventions.

Any evaluation and monitoring requirements need to be proportionate to consortiums' and wider intervention providers' resources, skills and experience in programme theory and evaluation. The consortium capacity building needs assessments being conducted at the start of the next iteration MyEnds can provide important information to inform both the VRU's expectations of sites and the extent and nature of support sites may require with monitoring and evaluation.

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