Controlling Migration Fund evaluation

Project-level evaluation report

Lead LA: Barking and Dagenham
Project name: Connected Communities

August 2022
Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities

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Contents

Contents 3

Executive summary 5

1 Introduction 10

The area context 10

The CMF-funded project 13

Project objectives 19

2 Methodology 27

Overview of evaluation approach 28

Methodological strengths 31

Methodological limitations 31

Analysis and synthesis 32

3 Key findings: delivery 33

Introduction 33

Was the project delivered as intended? 33

What worked in delivering the project? 39

What were the challenges to delivering the project? 43

4 Key findings: Outcomes 47

Progress towards intended outcomes 47

Progress towards longer-term outcomes 66

5 Key findings: Value for Money 68

Introduction 68

Value for money assessment 68

6 Conclusions and lessons learned 72

What works? 72

For whom? 74

In what circumstances? 75

Could the project be replicated? 75

Could the project be scaled up? 75

Is there evidence of sustainability beyond the lifetime of the project? 76

7. Appendix 1: Methodology and technical note 78

Evaluation scope 78

Evaluation Methodology 80

Analysis / synthesis of findings 84

Project-level evaluation framework 85

Outputs achievements 96

Appendix 2: CMF Overall Theory of Change 97

Appendix 3: Research tools 102

CMF qualitative tools 102

Quantitative tools 105

Executive summary

This project-level evaluation report presents the key findings relating to the delivery and This project-level evaluation report presents the key findings relating to the delivery and outcomes for the **Connected Communities** project led by the **London Borough of Barking and Dagenham**.

Project overview and objectives

Barking and Dagenham local authority was awarded £1,413,867 from the Controlling Migration Fund (CMF) for the Connected Communities project[1]. The project took a multi-strand approach, with three activity strands overseen by an officer based in the local authority.

- **The Data and Insights strand** aimed to build a comprehensive evidence base to inform and shape future service provision, communications strategies and corporate policies through quantitative and qualitative research on community composition and resident values.

- **The Storytelling and Listening strand** aimed to create opportunities for conversations and social mixing for select groups of local residents, ultimately improving community cohesion and trust and engagement with the local authority. Strand activities engaged wider residents, young people and faith organisations in the borough as well as providing training to front-line local authority staff.

- **The Managing Rogue Landlords strand** aimed to use a combination of enforcement and support to address and relieve some of the impacts of poor housing conditions on private rented sector (PRS) tenants facing unlawful eviction, landlord harassment or sub-standard housing conditions and the wider community. This strand also included the delivery of Creative English classes aimed to increase the confidence of learners, including tenants, in speaking English.

The project promoted a flexible approach to delivery with an emphasis on learning and partnership working, facilitated by the Connect Communities Officer. As a result, planned activities within strands were continuously developed and amended as the project progressed.

Ipsos MORI undertook an evaluation of the Connected Communities Project between January 2019 and March 2020. A theory-based approach was taken to the evaluation, with the aim of reviewing and testing the outputs and outcomes intended through the project activities[2]. Evaluation activities included a scoping phase to identify project activities and objectives. Taking into consideration the flexible approach to delivery, the decision was made to focus the evaluation on learning and partnership approach (a key focus of the Connected Communities project). This was due to project timescales, the scope of the evaluation and the priorities of the Connected Communities project team. Evaluation activities included interviews with project staff, delivery staff, internal stakeholders and project beneficiaries, a focus group

[1] This amount included £136,400 for the local authority to provide soft skills training and short courses to Unaccompanied Children, however this element of the fund was not integrated into the Connected Communities project and so was not evaluated

[2] Theory-based approaches to evaluation use an explicit theory of change to draw conclusions about whether and how an intervention contributed to observed results. For more information, see: https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/audit-evaluation/centre-excellence-evaluation/theory-based-approaches-evaluation-concepts-practices.html

with beneficiaries and a questionnaire with beneficiaries of Interfaith Week events. The evaluation also included the analysis of monitoring information provided by the local authority.

Progress towards intended outcomes

Progress towards intended CMF-level intermediate outcomes is summarised in table 0.1 below

Table 0.1 Summary project CMF outcomes

Intended Outcome	Assessment of progress made up to March 2020
Local authority	
Intermediate outcome 1: Increased insight into local migration patterns and community impact	The evaluation found evidence that the project contributed to this outcome through research activities conducted across the project. Overall, staff felt that the insight was comprehensive, providing a good evidence base to inform delivery of local authority activities and future service planning.
Intermediate outcome 2: Expanded / strengthened networks partners	Evidence indicates that the project contributed to expanding networks of faith organisations and strengthening partnerships between the local authority and faith organisations (Storytelling and Listening strand), in addition to strengthening partnerships between the local authority and Citizens Advice Barking and Dagenham (Managing Rogue Landlords strand) through the work of the Connected Communities Officer.
Intermediate outcome 3: Increased co-ordination and co-operation between agencies	Evidence suggests that a focus on partnership working through quarterly evaluation meetings and the work of the Connected Communities Officer led to increased joint-working between agencies delivering project activities, some of which were planned to continue beyond the project.
Intermediate outcome 4: Acquired expertise and structures in place to deal with local issues	Evidence indicates that the project contributed towards this outcome through the creation of the Tenancy Sustainment Officer role (Managing Rogue Landlords strand) and the design and implementation of the Effective Conversations Training sessions for local authority staff which had started to be embedded into the operation of the local authority.
Intermediate outcome 5: Improved signposting and referral systems	Evidence suggests that the project improved referral systems for tenants in PRS properties who were facing unlawful eviction, landlord harassment or substandard housing through the creation of a referral pathway. However, the planned referral route for Creative English classes was unsuccessful.
Migrants	
Intermediate outcome 6: Increased understanding of and access to public services	Despite the shift of focus away from direct referrals, the evidence suggests that Creative English classes increased learners understanding of, and access to, local public services including housing, health and education services.
Intermediate outcome 7: Housing issues resolved	Evidence indicates that the project resolved housing issues for tenants through a combination of support, mediation, information provision and referrals.
Intermediate outcome 8: Access to ESOL and EAL provision	Evidence suggests that the project appears to have increased access to English language provision by providing an alternative to existing formal provision at local colleges.
Intermediate outcome 9: Increased understanding of British culture and social norms	There is some evidence of the Creative English classes contributing to increasing understanding of social norms through Creative English classes. However, due to the small number of

Intended Outcome	Assessment of progress made up to March 2020
	beneficiaries interviewed, it is difficult to assess the extent to which the outcome was achieved for all learners.
Intermediate outcome 10: Increased civic society participation	Evidence suggests that the Creative English classes contributed to increasing civic society participation among some learners, particularly with regards to supporting other learners with learning English.
Wider residents	
Intermediate outcome 11: Increased involvement in community-led integration activities (i.e. volunteering):	Evidence indicates that the project contributed towards increasing involvement in community-led integration events on the Storytelling and Listening strand, especially through the Interfaith Platform activities. However, qualitative research with beneficiaries in the Youth Arts project and Community Amplifiers indicated that the majority had previously been involved in some form of community-led activity or volunteering.
Intermediate outcome 12: Increased opportunities for social mixing	Evidence indicates that the project contributed to increasing social mixing among residents, especially pupils. The project hoped to contribute further to this outcome in the future through additional activities and events, however they were still in the planning stage at the time of the evaluation. While not an intended outcome from this activity, there was also evidence that the Creative English classes contributed towards increased social mixing.

There was some evidence that the project was contributing to the longer-term local authority CMF outcome of providing *evidence for future service planning and resourcing*, as a result of insights from the research. Based on the direction of travel, it is likely that the project will contribute to this outcome further in future. Furthermore, the evidence suggests the project is likely to contribute to the longer-term outcome of *building the evidence base of "what works" locally*, through contribution towards the intermediate outcomes of 'acquired expertise and structures in place to deal with local issues', 'increased co-ordination and co-operation between agencies', 'increasing insight into local migration patterns and community impact', and 'expanded and strengthened networks and partners'.

Through the contribution of the Managing Rogue Landlords strand towards intermediate CMF outcomes, the evidence suggests that the project is on track to contribute towards the longer-term migrant CMF outcomes of *increased well-being*, *increased living standards*, *reduction in exploitation* (from rogue landlords), and *increased English proficiency and labour market skills*.

There was some evidence to suggest that the project is likely to contribute towards the longer-term local authority CMF outcome of *increased levels of social mixing* through contribution towards the intermediate outcome of *increased involvement in community-led integration activities* and *increased opportunities for social mixing*, albeit on a small scale. This would be dependent on beneficiaries using the skills gained through the activities to further the objectives of the project. The project also intended to deliver further activities to contribute towards this outcome beyond the timescale of the evaluation.

What works?

- An initial focus on research and partnership building helped to increase understanding of local issues and created a good foundation for future work. Identifying experienced partners to undertake research activities ensured the right skills and expertise to undertake activities.

Recruiting residents from diverse backgrounds as Community Amplifiers also helped engage lesser-heard communities in research.

- The adoption of a flexible approach to delivery, focused on learning, gave partners the confidence to adapt activities and explore emerging needs identified during project delivery. This was facilitated through the role of the Connected Communities Officer co-ordinating project activities and brokering relationships; opportunities for partnership working provided by quarterly evaluation meetings; and achieving buy-in from senior local authority stakeholders.

- However, the focus on learning and partnership working required a long lead-in time to build trust between partners and resulted in changing priorities and focus through the project. This presented barriers to delivering interlinked activities and made it more difficult to work towards fixed outcomes.

- The intended referral of tenants from housing support to Creative English classes was found not to work in practice. The projects experienced challenges engaging intended beneficiaries, as learning English was not considered to be a priority of tenants while they were experiencing a housing issue.

- Employing residents as Community Amplifiers limited the scope of some resident-led activities to addressing the "softer" side of community cohesion, as Community Amplifiers were unable to challenge more negative views held by some residents.

For whom

- The local authority benefited from the learning about the local resident population, generated by research activities and increased networking and co-ordination between partners and the local authority.

- The local authority also benefited from new structures and expertise through the role of the Tenancy Sustainment Officer and subsequent creation of the new referral pathway for tenants experiencing housing issues.

- Local authority staff benefited from the Effective Conversations training sessions to address customer service issues. By addressing these service issues, the project also aimed to benefit residents in the longer-term.

- The focus of the project on understanding underlying tensions and issues in the community (without pre-supposing a link between local issues and migrant communities) meant that a range of residents benefited from activities. When designing research activities, the project focused on capturing as many voices as possible among residents, including those from lesser-heard communities and from a range of faith backgrounds. Benefited to residents included:

  - Residents with low English language benefited from entry-level English language support focused on promoting social interaction and engagement with public services. Some beneficiaries were also encouraged to engage in wider volunteering opportunities, and/ or formal education to gain qualifications with the aim of finding a job.

- Tenants benefited from the support provided by the Tenancy Sustainment Officer and Family Liaison Officer, including reduced risk of homelessness and eviction.

- Wider residents benefited from social mixing activities through attending Interfaith Week events, and Youth Arts activities.

In what circumstances?

- A key enabler for project activities and contribution towards intended outcomes was a willingness among local authority staff (including senior strategic staff) to address local cohesion issues. Buy-in was secured through linking the project to previous research undertaken by the local authority and a new strategic plan and aligning the project with the local authority's corporate model (which aimed to provide a more coordinated and better integrated service).

- Recruiting partners with specific skills and experience to deliver project activities provided increased capacity and expertise.

- Central co-ordination by the local authority, through the role of the Connected Communities Officer, facilitated joint working between agencies delivering project activities.

- Drawing on existing local structures (including the Faith Forum and community centres) meant project activities were able to get off the ground faster and aided the recruitment and engagement of beneficiaries.

1. Introduction

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) commissioned Ipsos MORI alongside the Migration Observatory at the University of Oxford to conduct an independent evaluation of the Controlling Migration Fund (CMF) in May 2018. Launched in November 2016, the Controlling Migration Fund (CMF) aims to help local authorities across England develop and deliver activities to mitigate the perceived negative impacts of recent and unexpected migration on communities in their area. MHCLG provided funding to local authorities to deliver projects that aim to address local service pressures, tailored to their context and needs. While the primary emphasis is on relieving pressure on public services in a way that delivers benefits to the established resident population, the fund also seeks to support wider community cohesion and the integration of recent migrants. Interventions can also focus on gaining a greater understanding of the local migration data landscape where there is currently a lack of accurate local data.

Project-level evaluations of 14 CMF-funded projects were conducted as part of the CMF evaluation. The project-level evaluations aim to assess the effectiveness of various project approaches in delivering against their local-level objectives and those of the wider fund[3]. They seek to build an understanding of what works, for whom and in what context to relieve pressure on local services due to recent or unexpected migration. This project-level evaluation report presents the key findings relating to the delivery and outcomes for the **Connected Communities** project led by **Barking and Dagenham** local authority.

The area context

Over the last 20 years, The London borough of Barking and Dagenham experienced high levels of population change and was home to an increasingly ethnically diverse population with wide ranging social and cultural identities. In their bid for CMF funding for the Connecting Communities project, the local authority outlined that the speed of demographic change in Barking and Dagenham put pressure on relations between new arrivals and established resident communities. The project lead noted that the high turnover of residents in the borough created a challenge for the local authority in terms of building lasting connections between people and between organisations, such as faith organisations. The total population in Barking and Dagenham increased by 26 percent to 206,460 between 2001 and 2016[4] and was projected to grow to 290,417 by 2050[5]. Furthermore, between 2013 and 2015 approximately 33,000 new residents came into the borough and roughly 30,000 left, which equated to almost a quarter of the borough's population at the time. The pace of demographic change between 2001 and 2011 was notable, with the population of White British residents falling from 80.9 percent to 49.5 percent in a decade[6]. In 2011, the largest non-white British ethnicities were Black (20 percent), Asian (15.9 percent) and White Other (7.8 percent). Barking and Dagenham local authority noted in the bid for CMF funding that 72 non-English languages were spoken as the main household language in 2011[7]. In addition, the

[3] An overall Theory of Change, created during the scoping stage, outlines the intermediate and longer-term fund outcomes (see Appendix 2).
[4] Reported in the bid, ONS mid-year estimate
[5] Reported in the bid, 2016 GLA forecasting (2016 based population projections, central trend).
[6] https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/population-and-demographic-data
[7] Reported in the bid, 2011 census

borough was ranked as the second most deprived borough in London and the ninth nationally in the 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation[8].

In 2015, the local authority worked with an Independent Growth Commission to create the "Barking and Dagenham Together Borough Manifesto"[9], which set out a vision for the future of the borough over the next 20 years. This resident-led exercise was informed by a consultation of nearly 3,000 residents and partners. The findings from this exercise and the Manifesto formed a key basis for many of the underlying aims of the Connecting Communities project. "Community and Cohesion" was one of ten priority themes in the Manifesto. As a result, the local authority committed to making Barking and Dagenham "a friendly and welcoming borough with strong community spirit"[10]. To achieve this, the local authority committed to holding events and activities to celebrate the community, history and heritage; tackle extremism and hate crime; and help different groups come together and integrate. In the Manifesto, the local authority also pledged to continue engaging the community in decisions regarding the future of the borough (an aim that was echoed by the Participation and Engagement team that led on the CMF bid). The bid reported a need to address social cohesion by increasing dialogue between residents and promoting more marginalised voices. The local authority felt there was a lack of opportunity for different groups within the community to encounter each other and build networks to foster understanding, tolerance and cohesion.

The project team identified the need to improve resident perceptions of Barking and Dagenham as a key challenge. The proportion of residents who were satisfied with the local area declined in the three years preceding the CMF bid, falling from 70 percent of residents saying they were satisfied in 2015 to 61 percent in 2017[11]. In the CMF bid, the local authority also reported significantly lower levels of satisfaction among white British residents when compared to the borough as a whole (54 percent compared to 61 percent)[12], which they attributed to residents feeling "left behind".

The high population turnover in the borough was also identified as limiting the usefulness of existing data sources (such as the 2011 census) that were used by the local authority for service planning. The local authority felt the ward level data was not able to provide the granularity required for the local authority to understand the needs of the borough's different communities, or design and deliver effective activities and initiatives to improve cohesion in a targeted way. The bid also identified a need for more comprehensive data on inequality and social progress[13] at a ward level to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the challenges facing the borough.

Project staff felt that low trust in the local authority among residents was a barrier to promoting effective communication and engagement. In interviews, project staff and partners identified poor customer service on the frontline of the local authority as a "pressure point" that eroded trust between residents

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[8]Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2015 takes into consideration factors such as income, employment and housing https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/465791/English_Indices_of_Deprivation_2015_-_Statistical_Release.pdf [Chart 8]

[9] Barking and Dagenham Together – Borough Manifesto 2015-2035 https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/Barking-and-Dagenham-Together-Borough-Manifesto.pdf

[10] Ibid.

[11] Barking & Dagenham Residents survey 2017, https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/Residents-perception-survey-report-2017.pdf

[12] Reported in the bid, Barking & Dagenham Residents survey 2017, https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/Residents-perception-survey-report-2017.pdf

[13] Social progress was defined by the project in terms of how well the local authority was meeting the needs of its residents in terms of basic human needs (e.g. food, water, shelter etc), well-being (e.g. access to knowledge, health and wellness, environmental quality) and opportunity (e.g. personal rights and freedom)

and the local authority. They felt that high deprivation in the borough, accompanied by high demand for local authority support services among residents, made this an important issue[14]. Due to high demand on frontline services, the project reported that local authority staff often had to deliver "bad news" to residents (for example, explaining the long waiting list for council housing)[15]. A delivery partner considered these interactions to negatively impact how residents felt about their area and inflame tensions between communities (for example, if residents felt they were treated unfairly compared to others in the borough).

At the time of writing the bid, the local authority was also preparing to implement the "No-one left behind" 2018-2022 corporate plan[16]. This included a reconfiguration of all local authority public-facing services into one "Community Solutions" department. Launched in April 2018, the new department aimed to provide a more coordinated and better integrated service. The new model also aimed to increase the "self-sufficiency and resilience"[17] of residents by resolving issues early and promoting a joined-up approach to addressing the multiple needs of households. The new model also aimed to address resource constraints by reducing demand on services, with an anticipated saving of £4.5 million through reduction in future demand by 2020/21[18].

The housing landscape was identified in the bid as an area where residents, including longer-standing residents and newer migrant arrivals, were exposed to exploitation by rogue landlords and poor housing conditions. Barking and Dagenham experienced the largest proportional increase in the private rented sector between 2001 and 2017 (from 5% to 24% of the total housing stock) compared with the rest of London[19]. According to National Health Service (NHS) General Practitioner (GP) data registration data cited in the bid, over 70% of "international migrants" and over 50% of "internal migrants" were living in private rented accommodation[20]. The bid suggested that migrants in the borough tended to be more socially and economically vulnerable to exploitation by rogue landlords and poor housing conditions. The bid attributed this in part to the fact that migrants in difficult housing situations often did not understand their rights and subsequently did not know how to improve their situation, and faced additional barriers (including language barriers and fear of coming forward to engage with services). This was also a priority theme outlined in the Borough Manifesto, in which the local authority pledged to work with PRS landlords to improve quality and enforce standards. The Manifesto noted that a minority of landlords with low standards and overcrowded properties were exploiting high demand in the private rental sector (PRS).

The project also identified tensions that could arise between newer residents (including migrants) and more established residents as a result of housing. Staff highlighted that high levels of churn (with more recent residents frequently moving property or leaving the borough) prevented relationships from being formed with longer-standing residents. Internal local authority analysis cited in the bid identified that PRS households were more likely to have anti-social behaviour reports or multiple incident reports associated

[14] The Barking and Dagenham Customer Access Strategy report identified a potential funding gap of £63 million which, combined with a growing population and demographic changes, was considered to put increasing demand on services provided by the local authority. For more information, see: Barking and Dagenham Customer Access Strategy 2016, https://modgov.lbbd.gov.uk/internet/documents/s112299/Customer%20Access%20Strategy%20Report%20-%20App.%201.pdf
[15] Barking and Dagenham local authority statement about applying for council housing https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/applying-for-council-housing
[16] Barking & Dagenham Corporate Plan 2018-2020 https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/No-One-Left-Behind-Corporate-Plan-2018.pdf
[17] Barking & Dagenham consultation proposal for the Corporate Plan 2018-2020 https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/We-all-have-a-part-to-play.pdf
[18] Community Solutions department launched in April 2018 and combined all front-facing services including housing allocation, housing advice and preventing homelessness, adult social care, integrated youth services, children's early intervention, employment and skills, financial and benefit support, community safety services and libraries. https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/sites/default/files/attachments/We-all-have-a-part-to-play.pdf
[19] Reported in the bid, an increase in private rented sector units from 3,363 in 2001 to 18,209 in 2017
[20] Reported in the bid. The terms "international migrant" and "internal migrant" were not defined in the bid

with them compared to other types of house tenures[21]. Project staff suggested that established residents sometimes associated problems with PRS properties with newer residents (including migrants). In the bid, the local authority reported that this created and reinforced negative perceptions of migrants being reluctant to integrate and not having pride in the borough or area where they live.

The CMF-funded project

Barking and Dagenham local authority was awarded £1,413,867[22] for the Connected Communities project, which planned to run from April 2018 to June 2020. To achieve the overarching aim of improving cohesion within the borough, the project took a multi-strand approach, developed and delivered together with external partner organisations. Variation in how and when partners were identified and engaged resulted in some variation between the start date and length of each strand (outlined below). Some strands were out of scope of the evaluation. This was due to the timing of the activities, or a lack of information made available to the evaluation. Out of scope activities are outlined in more detail in Appendix 1.

The project promoted a flexible approach to delivery with an emphasis on learning and partnership working. Project staff suggested this approach was most appropriate to respond to the changing needs of residents, facilitate community conversations and generate useful learnings. This approach meant that planned activities within strands were continuously developed and amended as the project progressed. Below is an overview focused on actual delivery, including key changes from the bid.

To coordinate all the strands of work, the project recruited a **Connected Communities Officer** to join the Participation and Engagement team (April 2018 – June 2020). The role aimed to facilitate a "coherent and effective" approach to delivery across all strands. Specific activities of the Connected Communities Officer included:

- commissioning partners to deliver strands of work where relevant[23];
- monitoring the performance of delivery partners;
- brokering relationships between external delivery partners and the local authority;
- organising workshops with local authority departments and teams to ensure insight and learnings from the project are communicated;
- running "quarterly evaluation meetings" every three months to bring partners together to share insights and learnings and identify opportunities for partnership working; and
- overseeing changes to project delivery, with the aim of keeping the overall focus of the project and ensure sustainability where possible.

The strands of work covered by the project included:

1. The **Data and Insights** strand was delivered by The Campaign Company and the local authority data team (June 2018 – June 2020). Through this strand, the project aimed to build a comprehensive evidence base to inform and shape future service provision, communications

[21] Reported in the bid, Barking and Dagenham internal insights hub analysis 2017
[22] This amount included £136,400 for the local authority to provide soft skills training and short courses to Unaccompanied Children, however this element of the fund was not integrated into the Connected Communities project and so was not evaluated
[23] Amplify Barking and Dagenham, Interfaith Platform and Youth Arts strands did not have a named partner in the bid.

strategies and corporate policies, using data from the Origins[24] tool. The strand activities were divided into three parts.

a. The project used Origins software, with the aim of increasing understanding of where different ethnic communities reside within the borough, by analysing the surname of residents registered within a postcode area. By running the analysis at two points in time, The Campaign Company produced a report, featuring a "Cohesion ATLAS"[25], showing an up-to-date picture of community composition and pace of change and produce recommendations for areas where interventions to improve community cohesion could be targeted.

Originally, the delivery partner also planned to design and implement up to three interventions to improve community cohesion based on insights from the Origins data. During delivery, one of these interventions was redirected to the "Values Modes" research element (outlined below). The other two interventions were out of scope of the evaluation as they were scheduled to be delivered outside of the evaluation timeframe.

b. The **Social Progress Index**[26] (out of scope) was led by the local authority data team and created in conjunction with the Social Progress Imperative[27]. The pre-existing database brought together data on three broad dimensions of social progress (basic human needs, foundations of wellbeing and opportunity) and aimed to provide analysis to help decision makers, businesses, charities and the general public understand the social wellbeing of the borough's residents at a ward level.

c. **Values Modes** research[28] was added during delivery of the project. The Campaign Company conducted a telephone survey with residents and organised resident focus groups to understand motivational drivers and values. Using "Values Modes" segmentation, sub-groups of residents were identified based on sets of values they share and their motivational drivers. Research probed on questions related to perceptions of integration and cohesion, perceptions of past and future change, sentiment about migrants, perceived pressure on public services, levels of trust and appetite for participation. Through this research, the delivery partner aimed to help the local authority identify which communication strategies would resonate with different groups, to inform the upcoming corporate redesign (the "Barking and Dagenham Way[29]). After delivering a report on the findings, the delivery partner then ran four internal workshops with relevant local authority departments to disseminate the findings.

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[24] Origins is an analytics tool created by Webber Phillips consultancy designed to enable better understanding of the cultural, ethnic and linguistic origins of a specific area or database using first and last name. www.originsinfo.eu/
[25] Cohesion ATLAS http://www.thecampaigncompany.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/TCC-Cohesion-ATLAS.pdf
[26] The Social Progress Index is led by the local authority Data team and brings together data on a range of social and environmental indicators https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/social-progress-index
[27] The Social Imperative is a global non-profit providing data on the social and environmental health of societies https://www.socialprogress.org/
[28] Values Modes research, delivered by The Campaign Company, aims to use understanding of people's values, social networks and relationships to improve the impact, efficacy and efficiency of an organisation's communications. http://www.thecampaigncompany.co.uk/approach/
[29] The "Barking and Dagenham Way" was described by project staff in an interview as corporate redesign focused on providing a platform for residents and local authority staff to participate and engage in local authority decision making. The redesign also includes the creation of a Citizens Alliance Network as a platform for resident activists to work together. At the time of this evaluation, the "Baking and Dagenham Way" and the "Citizens Alliance Network" were still in development https://oneboroughvoice.lbbd.gov.uk/the-way-we-do-things-bd

2. The **Storytelling and Listening** strand aimed to create opportunities for conversations and social mixing for select groups of residents, ultimately improving community cohesion and trust and engagement with the local authority. There were four key activities:

   a. **Amplify Barking and Dagenham:** delivered as a joint-partnership between the Young Foundation[30] and Community Resources[31](October 2018 – August 2020). This activity aimed to provide qualitative insight for the local authority on resident views and implement resident-led community initiatives. The Young Foundation was engaged to provide technical training and coordination in community-based research, while Community Resources aimed to provide a local link to sustain the work of the strand after the project ended. Specific activities included recruiting a representative and diverse group of residents (in terms of age, gender and ethnicity) and providing training for them to act as "Community Amplifiers" for seven hours per week.

      The project involved Community Amplifiers interviewing residents in different areas of the borough to gather qualitative insights about social cohesion (focusing on ideas of identity and belonging) and perceptions of change, crime and safety, and littering and fly-tipping. The project aimed to hold several events to celebrate the different stories about residents collected by Community Amplifiers and produce a pamphlet. Community Amplifiers also ran "co-creation workshops" with wider residents and supported them to identify and set up activities to improve cohesion in the borough. These events, workshops and subsequent interventions were out of scope of the evaluation. Additional planned workshops with wider residents to develop "cohesion indicators" to monitor cohesion in the borough were subsequently discontinued.

   b. **Youth Arts:** delivered by Studio 3 Arts[32](January 2019 – July 2020). Studio 3 Arts aimed to recruit local young people to take part in arts-based activities, exploring perceived tensions in their communities., During delivery the original plan to focus recruitment on Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) and young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) was expanded to include referrals from schools and other public service providers, the Youth Offending Services and social services. These activities aimed to provide an opportunity for young people to meet and socialise with people from different backgrounds and equip them with the skills and knowledge to develop community art pieces addressing the themes identified through the Community Amplifiers research and engagement activities, outlined above. Exploration of the themes and the art pieces were scheduled to take place outside of the evaluation timeframe.

   c. **Interfaith Platform:** delivered by the Faith and Belief Forum[33] (September 2018 – July 2020). The delivery partner was commissioned to design a faith policy for Barking and Dagenham[34], underpinned by engagement with local community stakeholders and to compile a record of faith organisations in the borough through a scoping exercise. The faith policy was intended to be

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[30] The Young Foundation is a research organisation with a mission to develop better connected and more sustainable communities through driving locally led community action www.youngfoundation.org/about-us/
[31] Community Resources are a borough-based organisation who helped to set-up and facilitate community-based projected by providing a venue, resources and support. www.communityresources.co.uk/
[32] Stuidio3Arts is a borough-based non-profit organisation helping local people to co-create challenging and relevant art including theatre, poetry, dance choreography and music. www.studio3arts.org.uk/
[33]Faith and Belief Forum is an organisation helping communities to engage with and learn from people from different faiths, beliefs and cultures through programmes, workshops, training and events. https://faithbeliefforum.org/programme/faith-in-barking-dagenham/
[34]The Barking and Dagenham faith policy was collaboratively created by the Faith and Belief Forum, the local authority and the Barking and Dagenham Faith Forum. http://bdfaithforum.org.uk/faith-policy/

delivered at the end of the project (July 2020) to facilitate a longer engagement period with faith organisations on behalf of the independent local Barking and Dagenham Faith Forum (a separate organisation to the Faith and Belief Forum) prior to conducting research for the faith policy. However, the faith policy publication deadline was brought forward as its delivery was identified as a priority by the local authority. The policy was launched in November 2019.

The Faith and Belief Forum also provided secretariat support to the existing local Faith Forum to strengthen their engagement with the community, build capacity and collaborate on events with wider residents. This included delivery of an annual interfaith event and the "visit my place of worship" initiative[35]. The delivery partner ran an art competition and exhibition to involve young people in Interfaith Week, and delivered workshops[36] for local schools in the borough.

The Faith and Belief Forum also planned to deliver a range of activities targeted at different actors within the community, including: inclusion and awareness training; leadership training; network of young leaders; and art-based workshops exploring themes of belief and identity. These activities were out of scope of the evaluation.

d. **Effective Conversations Training**: delivered by The Campaign Company[37] (September 2018 – July 2020). The delivery partner planned to provide training for front-line local authority staff to improve communication with residents and increase confidence among staff to deliver negative news to residents and handle difficult conversations. The Campaign Company designed the training programme with input from a steering group made up of local authority staff and insight gathered through values modes analysis. The Campaign Company created handouts and a video for the training session, showcasing examples of "good" and "bad" customer service. The project then piloted the training with front-line staff from the Community Solutions department.

3. The **Managing Rogue Landlords** strand was delivered by the Private Rented Sector Team (PRS Team) within the local authority, Citizens Advice Barking and Dagenham (CABD)[38] and FaithAction[39] (April 2018 – June 2020). The overarching aim of this strand was to use a combination of enforcement and support to address and relieve some of the impacts of poor housing conditions on private rented sector tenants and the wider community. During conception of the bid, the CABD and the PRS team planned to work together to support the most vulnerable tenants living in accommodation that was the target of enforcement action (for example, homes of multiple occupation (HMOs)). The PRS team and CABD subsequently reoriented the focus of the

[35] Visit my place of Worship campaign involved local places of worship opened their doors to the public (November 2019) https://faithbeliefforum.org/barking-and-dagenham-faith-forums-visit-my-place-of-worship-week/
[36] School workshops https://faithbeliefforum.org/programme/school-workshops/
[37] The Campaign Company is a London based organisation specialising in research, communication, behaviour change and community consultation. The organisation helped to analyse the Origins data to provide insight. The organisation had previously worked with the local authority in a cohesion focused project in 2008. www.thecampaigncompany.co.uk/
[38]Citizens Advice Barking and Dagenham is an independent charity based in the Barking Learning Centre, providing free confidential information and advice to assist people with money, legal, consumer and other problems. Since 2013, Citizens Advice Barking and Dagenham (CABD) has had a housing legal aid contract, led by a housing legal aid solicitor meaning that it can provide specialist advice relating to housing including possession, defending possession proceedings, harassment and unlawful eviction in the private rented sector and disrepair. The organisation was involved in writing the original bid. www.bdcab.org.uk/
[39]Faith Action is an organisation delivering free Creative English classes to those with very few or no language schools, through acting out real life situations. They also run training for volunteers so that they can set up they can set up their own classes. The organisation initially received funding from MHCLG in 2013 to run English classes as part of a scheme to reduce isolation and marginalisation of communities. www.creative-english.org.uk/

project to focus on all tenants facing unlawful eviction, landlord harassment or sub-standard housing conditions. The strand involved three main elements:

a. **Recruiting two additional enforcement officers to increase enforcement capacity** to tackle rogue landlord activity (April 2018 – April 2020). When inspecting households, the enforcement officers also provided fire safety advice and provide new smoke alarms and Carbon Monoxide alarms where necessary. This element of the project was out of scope of the evaluation, as it was not possible to distinguish between the activities undertaken through the CMF funding and the wider work of the enforcement team.

b. **Creating two new roles within the PRS team and the CABD** (April 2018 – June 2020), with the intention of providing a wrap-around service to support tenants being exploited by rogue landlords. Activities included helping tenants become more aware of their options, rights and responsibilities in relation to housing and where possible enabling the continuation of their tenancy. Where necessary, the project planned to support residents to leave unsafe properties. Specific activities included:

- Recruiting a **Tenancy Sustainment Officer (TSO)** to work in the PRS team and visit privately rented houses where there had been a report of an unlawful eviction. The role included both pastoral care and enforcement. The TSO was tasked with mediating between the tenant and landlord and where necessary explaining their rights and responsibilities, and escalating unresolved disputes by building a criminal case against the landlord.

- Funding a **Family Liaison Officer (FLO)** within CABD to coordinate with and take referrals from the TSO to support tenants. The FLO provided advice and support to clients who accessed the CABD independently with problems related to the behaviour of a landlord. Similar to the TSO, the FLO helped tenants understand their rights and responsibilities, find new accommodation and assist with a civil claim against the landlord. During delivery, the CABD modified the role of the FLO to support tenants who presented with additional problems that impacted their housing circumstances (for example, where tenants had "no recourse to public funds"[40] and were not able to afford a deposit to move to a new house) and signpost or refer them to wider organisations for support..

- During delivery, the project identified a need to map the referral pathway for tenants who receive support from the Tenancy Sustainment Officer (TSO), in order to streamline referrals between the PRS team, the CABD and other local authority services. Prior to the creation of the new referral pathway, delivery staff reported that there was no formal process for referring tenants to other services, instead relying on individual tenancy officers' awareness of other available services and departments.

c. **"Creative English" classes**, delivered by FaithAction (September 2018 – June 2020) at four locations across the borough; Castle Point[41], The Source[42], Somali Women's Association[43] and

[41]The Hub at Castle Point is a community centre run by Community Resources http://communityresources.co.uk/#CommunityHub
[41]The Hub at Castle Point is a community centre run by Community Resources http://communityresources.co.uk/#CommunityHub
[42]The Source in Vicarage Fields Shopping Centre is a support centre run by Barking Baptist Church offering welfare and homelessness support https://www.barkingbaptist.org.uk/welcome/whats-on/the-source/
[43] The Somali Women's Association is a small charity dedicated providing support to women to enhance opportunities and improve their lives https://www.faithaction.net/news/2017/12/05/featured-member-barking-dagenham-somali-womens-association/

Faith Regen Foundation[44] provided entry-level English language support, focused on promoting social interaction and engagement with public services. The language classes were designed to be interactive and participatory. For the purposes of the Connected Communities project, FaithAction was asked to expand their provision and develop a new part of the curriculum to cover housing rights and responsibilities, as well as accessing public services (for example health services), day-to-day interactions (such as talking with neighbours), volunteering and education. The project intended for the TSO and the FLO to refer supported tenants to the classes in cases where English proficiency was identified as barrier to tenants raising housing issues with their landlord.

Faith Action selected two locations to run the pilot for the new Creative English classes. The first was in the Barking Learning Centre (where the CABD operated), to make it easier for people presenting at the CABD to attend and aid referrals. During delivery, the location of the new hub was moved to a second location in Dagenham Library.

The delivery partner also trained a small number of learners to volunteer at classes. The project also intended to train local authority staff to deliver "Creative English" classes on behalf of the local authority. However, delivery was limited and subsequently discontinued due to the unaccounted for costs of licenses for the local authority.

In March 2019 the Connected Communities project received £154,680 additional CMF funding. Through this, three new partners, AFRUCA[45], the East European Resource Centre[46], and Shpresa[47], joined the Connected Communities project. These partners attended quarterly evaluation meetings from the third meeting (June 2019) and contributed to partnership working. Activities delivered by these three partners were not in scope of the evaluation, due to their late addition.

All strands included activities that were intended to be delivered outside of the project timeframe (and therefore out of scope of the evaluation). Further detail on out of scope activities can be found in Appendix 1.

Data and Insights strand:

- Values Mode research with local authority staff to feed into the Effective Conversations Training programme.
- interventions to improve community cohesion based on insights from the Origins analysis.

Storytelling and Listening strand:

-
- Recruitment of six volunteers to run a participatory video project as part of the Amplify Barking and Dagenham activities;

[44] The Faith Regen Foundation is a charity working to reduce social exclusion and achieve positive change for disadvantaged individuals and communities https://thefrf.org/about-us/
[45] APRUCA is a safeguarding charity advocating for the rights and welfare of African children in the UK www.afruca.org/
[46] East European Resource Centre is a charity that provides information, advice and support to people from Central and Eastern Europe www.eeac.org.uk/#/
[47] Shpresa is an organisation that advances the education and training of Albanian speaking people to enable them to take full and active roles in their communities http://www.shpresaprogramme.com/

- exploration of themes by young people and commissioning art pieces as part of the **Youth Arts** activities;
- Leadership training; developing a network of young leaders; arts-based workshops on belief and identity as part of the **Interfaith Platform** activities; and
- a training review and the train-the-trainer activities as part of the **Effective Conversations Training** activities.

Project objectives

Project objectives were identified following a review of project documentation and a consultation between the Ipsos MORI Relationship Manager and Connected Communities project staff. Following the consultation, the Ipsos MORI Relationship Manager developed a logic model, which was reviewed and agreed with project staff (see figure 1.1)[48]. The logic model outlines planned activities and outputs and how these relate to project and CMF fund-level outcomes[49]. How the project aimed to contribute to CMF intermediate outcomes covered by the evaluation is outlined below (including longer-term CMF outcomes where contribution of the project towards these outcomes was expected or seen within the evaluation time frame). The logic model was updated in line with the changes undertaken and planned by November 2019 (prior to fieldwork taking place).

Through the planned project activities and outputs, the Connected Communities project aimed to contribute towards the following **intermediate CMF fund-level outcomes for the local authority and delivery partners:**

Intermediate outcome 1: Increased insight into local migration patterns and community impact:

- Through **Origins Analysis** activities, the Data and Insights strand aimed to improve the local authority's understanding of community composition.

- Through **Values Modes research** activities, the Data and Insights strand aimed to improve the local authority's understanding the different values held by residents in the borough.

- Through **Amplify Barking and Dagenham** activities, the Storytelling and Listening strand aimed to increase the local authority's understanding of residents' perceptions of the local area through research conducted by Community Amplifiers.

Intermediate outcome 2: Expanded / strengthened networks partners:

- Through **Interfaith Platform** activities, the Storytelling and Listening strand aimed to build and strengthen networks and relationships between faith organisations through supporting the local Faith Forum. The project also intended to improve the local authority's awareness of borough-based faith organisations, through scoping work. Through the faith policy, the project intended to strengthen relationships between the local authority and faith organisations.

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[48] A logic model is a diagrammatic representation of a project which depicts the various stages required in a project that are expected to lead to the desired outcomes. The logic model in turn is used to inform the evaluation approach; specifically, what needs to be measured to determine whether outcomes are being met, and how.

[49] CMF fund-level outcomes are outlined in the Theory of Change in Appendix 2.

- Through activities of the **TSO and FLO**, the Managing Rogue Landlords strand aimed to strengthen the working relationship between the PRS Team and the CABD.

- The **Connected Communities Officer** role aimed to build and strengthen relationships between delivery partners and with the local authority by brokering relationships between relevant parties throughout project delivery.

Intermediate outcome 3: Increased co-ordination and co-operation between agencies:

- The **Connected Communities Officer** role aimed to bring different organisations working toward improving cohesion in the borough under one programme to provide increased opportunities for collaboration, facilitated by a flexible approach with an emphasis on learning and partnership working. The project coordination and approach to evaluation, with collective meetings every three months, sought to build deeper relationships and integrated working between project partners and create a lasting infrastructure.

Intermediate outcome 4: Acquired expertise and structures in place to deal with local issues:

- Through the creation of the **TSO** role, the Managing Rogue Landlords strand aimed to acquire additional expertise to address housing issues and improve structures to deal with local housing issues.

- Through **Effective Conversations Training** activities, the Storytelling and Listening strand aimed to improve customer service skills among local authority staff. In this way, the project hoped to improve frontline services for local residents and increase trust and engagement between residents and the local authority, thereby reducing tensions.

Intermediate outcome 5: Improved signposting and referral systems:

- Through activities of the **TSO and FLO**, the Managing Rogue Landlords strand, aimed to improve referrals through creating a new referral pathway between the PRS team, the CABD and other local authority departments and services. The strand also intended to refer tenants assisted by the PRS team and the CABD to Creative English classes where language was identified as a barrier.

Project activities and outputs also aimed to contribute towards the following **intermediate CMF fund-level outcomes for migrants**[50]:

Intermediate outcome 6: Increased understanding of and access to public services:

- Through the delivery of **Creative English classes**, the Managing Rogue Landlords strand aimed to increase confidence among learners to engage with local services.

Intermediate outcome 7: Housing issues resolved:

[50] For all outcomes, the project did not differentiate between different nationalities, ethnicities, or length of time in the borough.

- Through activities of the **TSO and FLO**, the Managing Rogue Landlords strand aimed to resolve housing issues experienced by vulnerable tenants.

Intermediate outcome 8: Access to ESOL and EAL provision:

- Through the delivery of **Creative English classes**, the Managing Rogue Landlords strand aimed to improve English proficiency of learners.

Intermediate outcome 9: Increased understanding of British culture and social norms:

- Through the delivery of **Creative English classes**, the Managing Rogue Landlords strand aimed increase understanding of social norms for learners, through exercises that aimed to encourage a culture of respect and tolerance. Content also covered practical knowledge about UK law.

Intermediate outcome 10: Increased civic society participation:

- Through the delivery of **Creative English classes**, the Managing Rogue Landlords strand aimed to increase civic society participation. The classes provided opportunities for learners to volunteer. In addition, the classes aimed to increase confidence among learners to communicate with neighbours and wider residents and take a more active role in in the community.

Project activities and outputs also aimed to contribute towards the following **CMF intermediate outcomes for longer-established residents:**

Intermediate outcome 11: Increased involvement in community-led integration activities (i.e. volunteering):

- Through **Amplify Barking and Dagenham** activities, the Storytelling and Listening strand aimed to train residents to become Community Amplifiers.

- Through **Youth Arts** activities, the project Storytelling and Listening strand to involve of young people in a volunteer art-based programme.

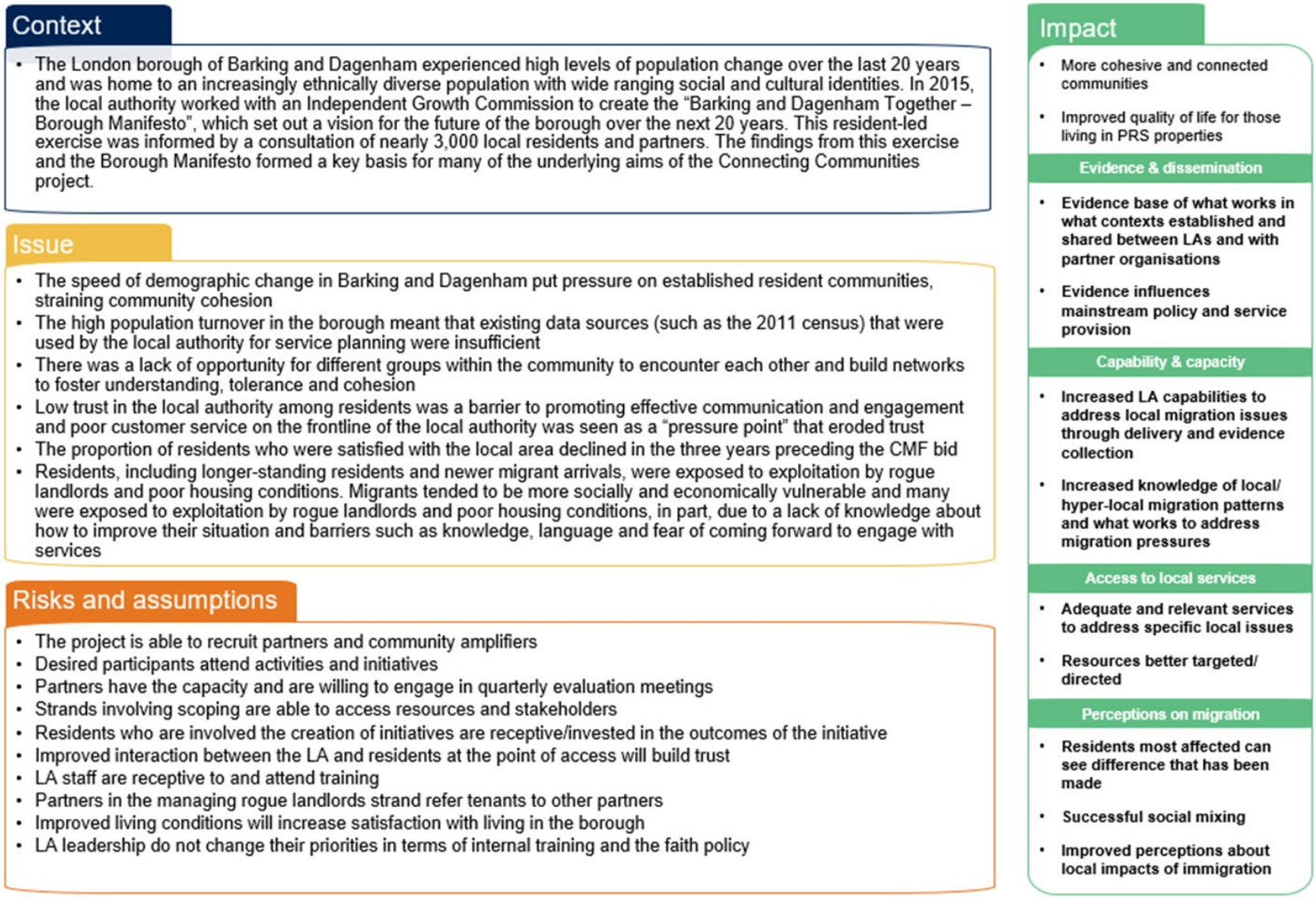
- Through **Interfaith Platform** activities, the Storytelling and Listening strand aimed to increase resident participation in Interfaith Week events.

Intermediate outcome 12: Increased opportunities for social mixing:

- Through **Youth Arts** activities, the Storytelling and Listening strand aimed to encourage young people to mix socially through participation in the art-based programme.

- Through **Interfaith Platform** activities, the Storytelling and Listening strand aimed increase opportunities for social mixing through local Faith Forum meetings and participation in Interfaith Week.

Figure 1.1: Connected Communities project logic model



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Context

- The London borough of Barking and Dagenham experienced high levels of population change over the last 20 years and was home to an increasingly ethnically diverse population with wide ranging social and cultural identities. In 2015, the local authority worked with an Independent Growth Commission to create the "Barking and Dagenham Together – Borough Manifesto", which set out a vision for the future of the borough over the next 20 years. This resident-led exercise was informed by a consultation of nearly 3,000 local residents and partners. The findings from this exercise and the Borough Manifesto formed a key basis for many of the underlying aims of the Connecting Communities project.

Issue

- The speed of demographic change in Barking and Dagenham put pressure on established resident communities, straining community cohesion
- The high population turnover in the borough meant that existing data sources (such as the 2011 census) that were used by the local authority for service planning were insufficient
- There was a lack of opportunity for different groups within the community to encounter each other and build networks to foster understanding, tolerance and cohesion
- Low trust in the local authority among residents was a barrier to promoting effective communication and engagement and poor customer service on the frontline of the local authority was seen as a "pressure point" that eroded trust
- The proportion of residents who were satisfied with the local area declined in the three years preceding the CMF bid
- Residents, including longer-standing residents and newer migrant arrivals, were exposed to exploitation by rogue landlords and poor housing conditions. Migrants tended to be more socially and economically vulnerable and many were exposed to exploitation by rogue landlords and poor housing conditions, in part, due to a lack of knowledge about how to improve their situation and barriers such as knowledge, language and fear of coming forward to engage with services

Risks and assumptions

- The project is able to recruit partners and community amplifiers
- Desired participants attend activities and initiatives
- Partners have the capacity and are willing to engage in quarterly evaluation meetings
- Strands involving scoping are able to access resources and stakeholders
- Residents who are involved the creation of initiatives are receptive/invested in the outcomes of the initiative
- Improved interaction between the LA and residents at the point of access will build trust
- LA staff are receptive to and attend training
- Partners in the managing rogue landlords strand refer tenants to other partners
- Improved living conditions will increase satisfaction with living in the borough
- LA leadership do not change their priorities in terms of internal training and the faith policy

Impact

- More cohesive and connected communities
- Improved quality of life for those living in PRS properties

Evidence & dissemination

- **Evidence base of what works in what contexts established and shared between LAs and with partner organisations**
- **Evidence influences mainstream policy and service provision**

Capability & capacity

- **Increased LA capabilities to address local migration issues through delivery and evidence collection**
- **Increased knowledge of local/ hyper-local migration patterns and what works to address migration pressures**

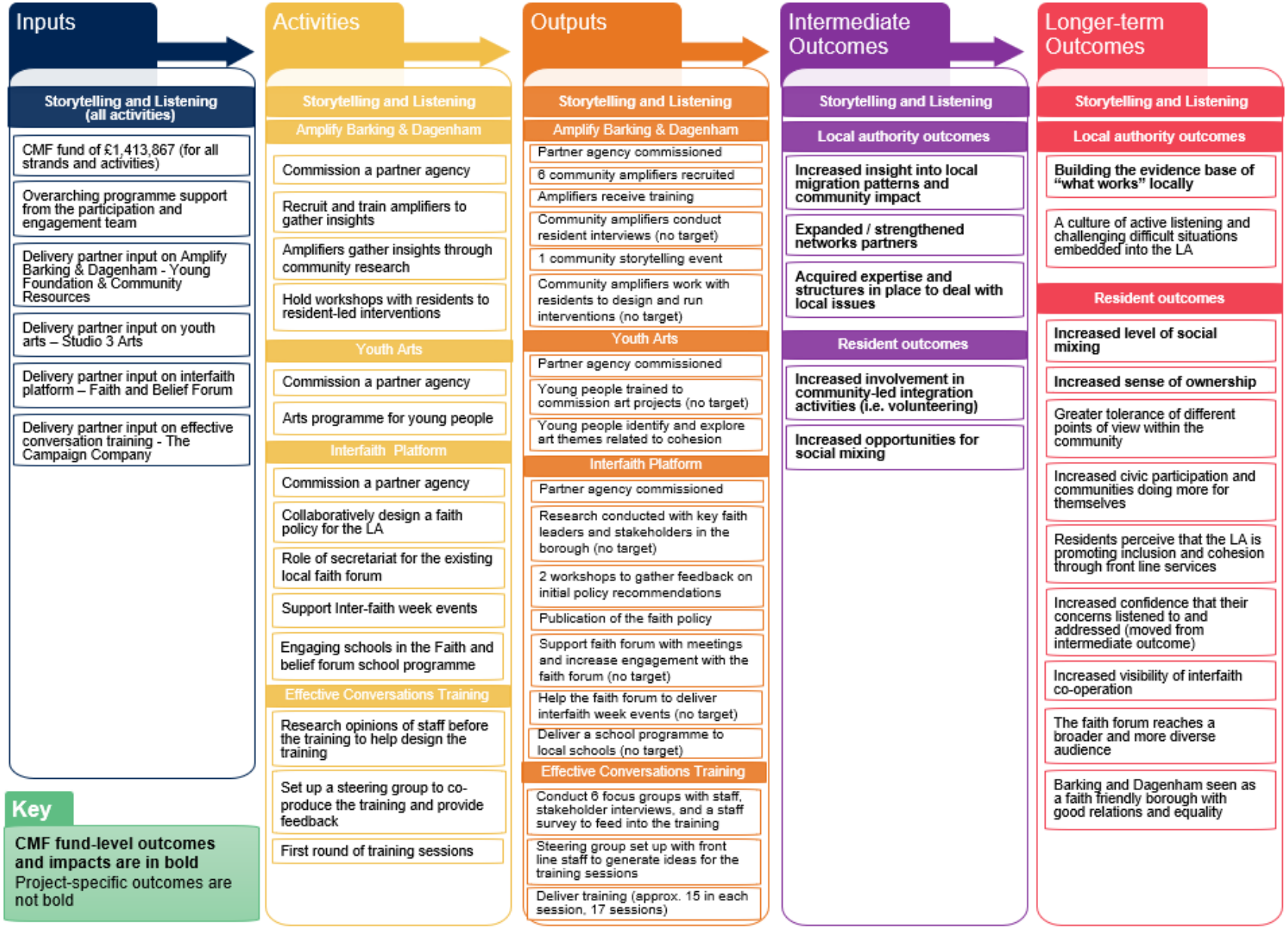
Access to local services

- **Adequate and relevant services to address specific local issues**
- **Resources better targeted/ directed**

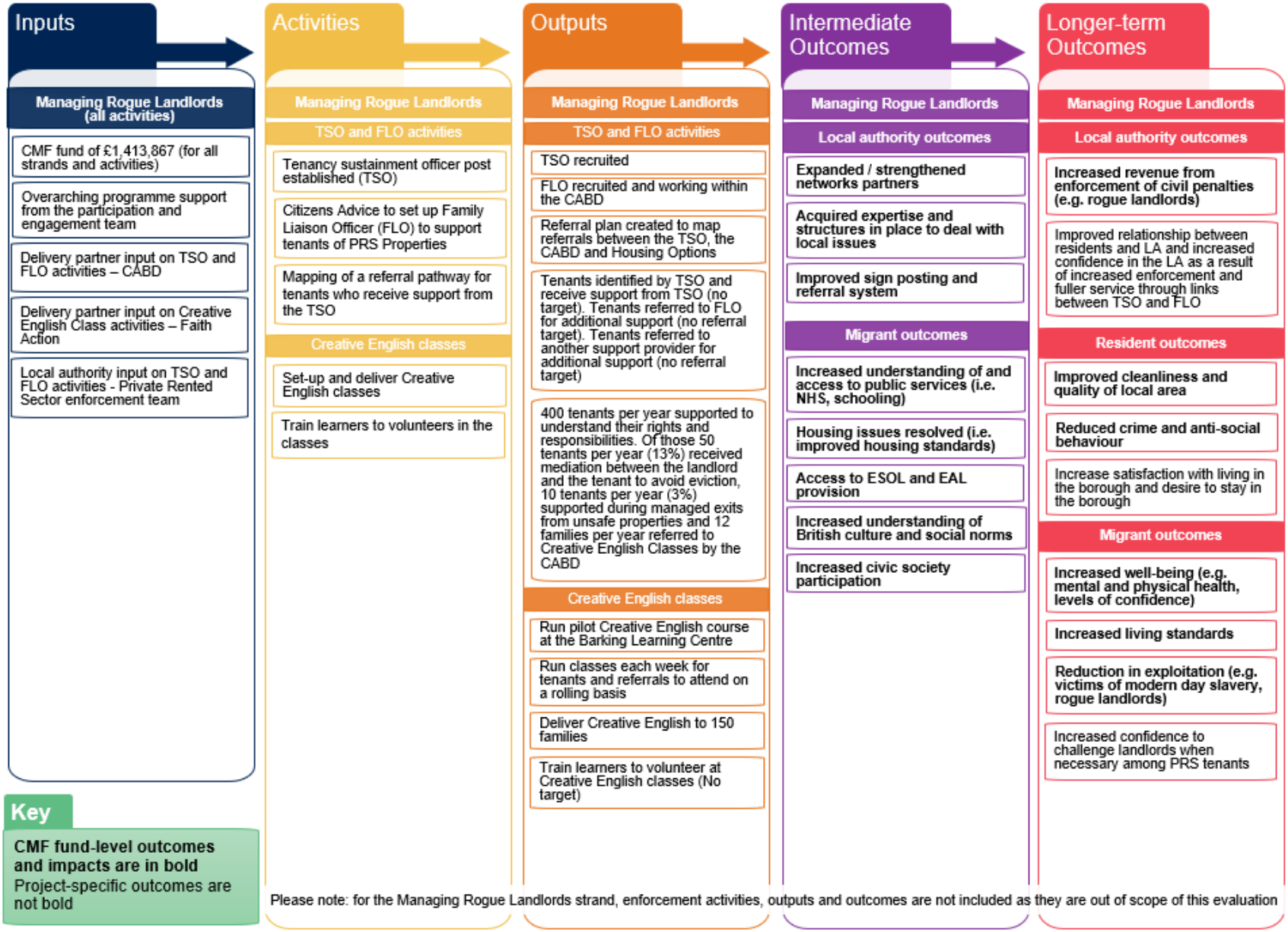
Perceptions on migration

- **Residents most affected can see difference that has been made**
- **Successful social mixing**
- **Improved perceptions about local impacts of immigration**

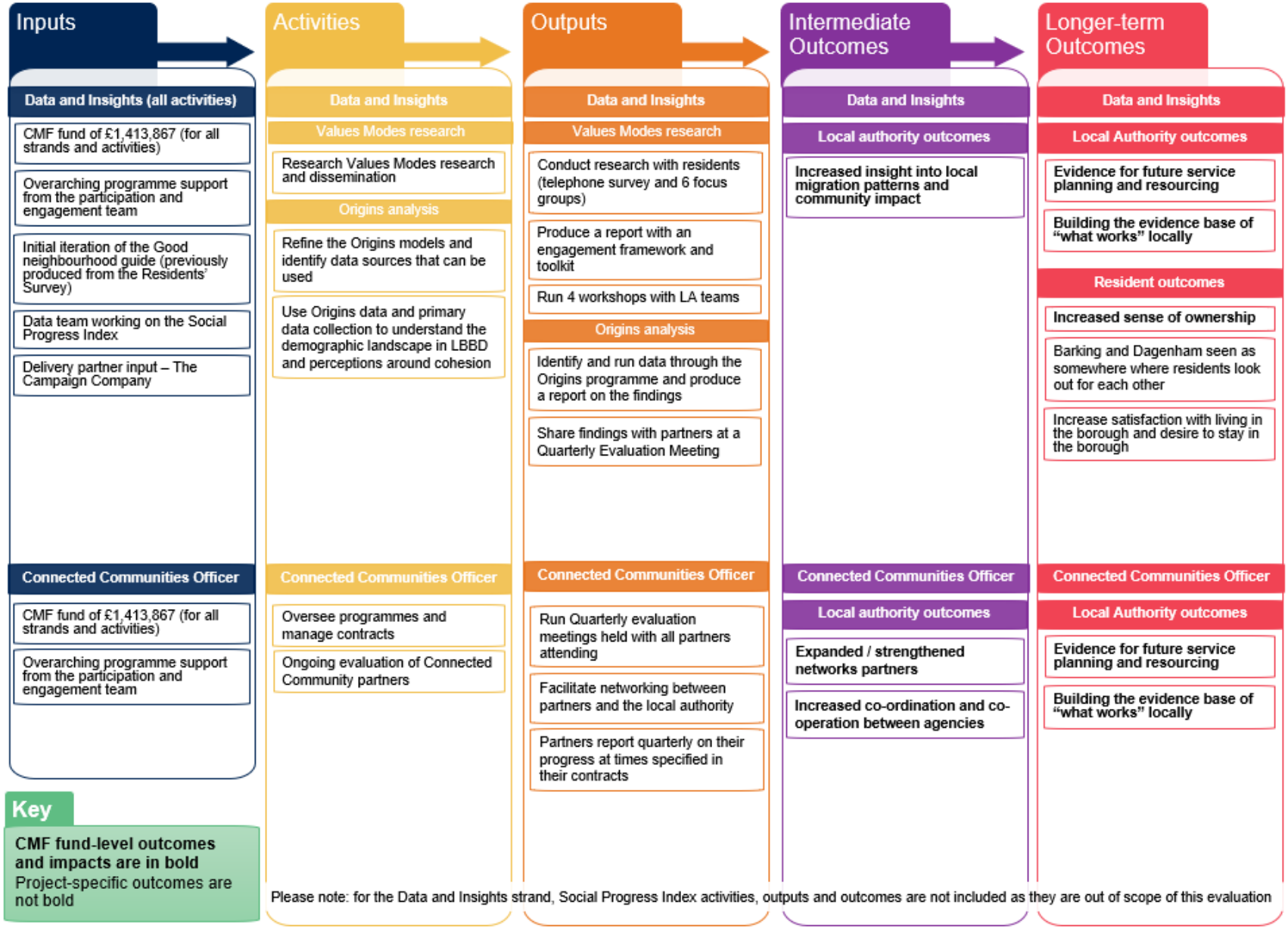
Connected Communities project logic model: Storytelling and Listening strand



Connected Communities project logic model: Managing Rogue Landlords strand



Connected Communities project logic model: Data and Insights strand and the role of the Connected Communities Officer



2. Methodology

This section outlines the methodology for the project-level evaluation of the Connected Communities project. A theory-based approach was taken for the evaluation, which focused on reviewing and testing the outputs and outcomes within the project logic models. The suitability of different approaches was explored in an evaluation scoping phase. The possibility of implementing experimental evaluation designs, including Randomised Control Trials (RCTs), was explored and deemed not feasible at a fund level due to the broad range of projects that have been funded across different regions and local contexts – this would have needed to have been built into the programme design from the outset. The feasibility of identifying local-level control groups was explored during individual project consultations. This was not considered possible for two reasons:

- **Local-level comparison groups** were not identifiable given that all resident facing activities (e.g. Youth Arts project, Community Amplifier resident workshops, Interfaith Week events, Creative English classes etc) were available to all residents who wanted to attend and therefore lacked clear inclusion/ exclusion criteria.
- **Identifying a control group within the local authority** was also considered unfeasible given the breadth of the connected communities project.

Project-level outcomes were “mapped” onto relevant CMF-fund level outcomes contained in the overall fund-level Theory of Change (contained in Appendix 2). The evaluation approach was designed in consultation with project staff, including the development of an evaluation framework (contained in Appendix 1). The evaluation employed a mixed method approach of both qualitative (depth interviews and focus groups) and quantitative (questionnaires with beneficiaries) methods. Further detail on the approach is contained in Appendix 1.

Following a review of changes to planned activities implemented by the project mid-way through the evaluation, the decision was made to focus the evaluation on **the approach to learning and partnership** that was a key focus of the Connected Communities project. This was due to project timescales, scope of the evaluation and the priorities of the project team, outlined in more detail in Appendix 1. As a result, the evaluation design prioritised breadth of research, including conducting evaluation activities for all strands of the project, rather than a detailed explorations of individual project strands and activities. Therefore, focus was placed on gathering views from a wide range of audiences working within and benefiting from the programme through qualitative and quantitative methods.

In order to assess value for money, each of the 14 projects were initially assessed through the lens of an eight-step model (contained in Appendix 1). The assessment involved a review of the availability and suitability of data collected at each of the 14 project sites. Consequently, each project was triaged to one of three methodological groupings:

1. **Cost benefit analysis (CBA)**: Projects for which data on quantitative and monetizable outcomes was available met the higher threshold for Cost benefit analysis.

2. **Cost effectiveness analysis (CEA):** Where quantitative measures for outcome(s) existed, but no data (primary or secondary) was available to monetise the outcomes, cost effectiveness analysis was conducted.

3. **No feasibility for quantitative analysis:** Where there was little or no quantitative measure of outcomes available to the evaluation, neither cost benefit analysis nor cost effectiveness analysis could be conducted. In this case, a qualitative assessment of project costs and benefits was undertaken based on analysis of staff, stakeholder and beneficiary perceptions from qualitative consultations.

Following the assessment, the Connected Communities project was assessed as having no feasibility for quantitative analysis.

Further information on the methodological approach, including the evaluation framework, is contained in Appendix 1. Appendix 2 outlines the CMF fund-level Theory of Change. Appendix 3 outlines the qualitative and quantitative research tools.

Overview of evaluation approach

Quantitative data collection

Quantitative data was collected through a paper questionnaire among residents who attended the "Celebrating Faith, Diversity and Harmony" Interfaith Week event (Interfaith Platform activity). The questionnaire was designed by Ipsos MORI and administered by delivery staff from the Faith and Belief Forum, who provided copies of the questionnaire to participants and encouraged them to complete it.

In total, five questionnaires were returned, out of a possible 35 (the number of attendees at the event), giving a 14% response rate[51]. Due to the small number of responses, analysis of the statistical significance of changes reported within the questionnaire was not deemed appropriate. Questionnaire data is instead presented for illustrative purposes only, that is to indicate the direction of travel with regard to changes in attitudes and behaviours of participants[52].

Qualitative data collection

Qualitative data was gathered between November 2019 and March 2020 and activities consisted of interviews and focus groups with project staff, delivery staff, Community Amplifiers and beneficiaries (see table 2.1 below)

Table 1.1: Qualitative research undertaken

Participant group	Activity / strand	Research method
Project staff	Connected Communities Officer	1 face-to-face interview, supplemented with a telephone interview

[51] A response rate is the number of usable completed questionnaires returned divided by the number of beneficiaries taking part in the project activities (this is assumed to be the same as the number of questionnaires that were distributed/took part – i.e. all end-beneficiaries would be eligible to take part in the survey and thus all should have been asked to complete a questionnaire, although this was down to the project distributing them this way). This is expressed in the form of percentage. The response rate used in this study is 14% calculated by dividing the number of questionnaires (5) divided by the number of beneficiaries eligible to take part the evaluation (35).

[52] This data processing approach is in keeping best practice for reporting on quantitative data, whereby analysis of samples lower than 10 entries should be limited to the reporting in a narrative way.

Delivery staff	Interfaith Platform (Storytelling and Listening strand) Origins Analysis and Values Modes research (Data and Insights strand) / Effective Conversations Training (Storytelling and Listening strand) TSO and FLO, and Creative English (Managing Rogue Landlords strand)	4 telephone/ face-to-face interviews 1 paired face-to-face interview
Internal stakeholder	TSO and FLO (Managing Rogue Landlords strand)	1 telephone interview
Community Amplifiers	Amplify Barking and Dagenham (Storytelling and Listening strand)	1 focus group with 8 participants (including the project co-ordinator)
Creative English learners	Creative English (Managing Rogue Landlords strand)	3 face-to-face interviews
Creative English volunteers	Creative English (Managing Rogue Landlords strand)	2 face-to-face interviews
Youth Arts project beneficiaries	Youth Arts (Storytelling and Listening strand)	1 focus group with 3 participants
Local authority training beneficiaries	Effective Conversations Training (Storytelling and Listening strand)	3 telephone interviews
Interfaith Platform beneficiaries	Interfaith Platform (Storytelling and Listening strand)	1 telephone interview

Project staff facilitated the recruitment of participants for qualitative research activities to minimise the need to share personal data as part of the evaluation, in the absence of a data sharing agreement between the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham and MHCLG. Delivery staff were recruited by the project team. Local authority training beneficiaries were recruited via email, with support from delivery staff and the Interfaith Platform beneficiary was recruited directly by delivery staff. Creative English learners and volunteers, and Youth Arts project beneficiaries were recruited by Ipsos MORI during project activities, with support from delivery staff.

Secondary data and monitoring information

Monitoring data on project outputs and relevant secondary data was collected by the project and shared with Ipsos MORI. This included:

- December 2019 progress report on **Amplify Barking and Dagenham** activities as part of the Storytelling and Listening strand;

- December 2019 progress report on **Interfaith Platform** activities as part of the Storytelling and Listening strand. This report contained an aggregate report of quantitative data collected through questionnaires designed and administered by the delivery staff including aggregate data from 540 students who attended one of the schools' workshops;

- December 2019 progress report on **Youth Arts** activities as part of the Storytelling and Listening strand;

- An anonymised report of feedback on the **Effective Conversations Training** as part of the Storytelling and Listening strand. The report included quantitative data collected through questionnaires designed and administered by the delivery staff at the end of each training session and includes responses from 57 local authority training beneficiaries;

- Short follow-up qualitative updates on the **Effective Conversations Training** from six training beneficiaries collected three weeks after completing the training as part of the Storytelling and Listening strand. Updates were collected by the delivery partner by emailing all training beneficiaries;

- December 2019 progress report on **TSO** activities as part of the Managing Rogue Landlords strand;

- December 2019 progress report on **FLO** activities as part of the Managing Rogue Landlords strand; and

- Progress updates on outputs from **Creative English classes** provided by project staff as part of the Managing Rogue Landlords strand.

The project also provided secondary data which included:

- A summary report of findings from the **Amplify Barking and Dagenham** research activities as part of the Storytelling and Listening strand, delivered in December 2019. The report summarised findings from 110 interviews and 341 "light-touch research engagements" with residents conducted by the Community Amplifiers;

- A Year 1 impact summary written by the Connected Communities Officer (June 2019) submitted to MHCLG which included a summary of insight on **Origins Analysis** and **Values Modes research** as part of the Data and Insights strand and a progress report on **Effective Conversations Training** activities as part of the Storytelling and Listening strand;

- A summary of the published Faith Policy[53] designed by the **Interfaith Platform** as part of the Storytelling and Listening strand; and

[53] The Barking and Dagenham faith policy was summarised into a two page document https://faithbeliefforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Working-Together-PDF-1.pdf, the full policy is also available https://modgov.lbbd.gov.uk/Internet/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?Id=3502

- Two case studies from the CABD demonstrating co-ordinated support from the **TSO and FLO** as part of the Managing Rogue Landlords strand.

Value for money assessment

Due to the lack of quantifiable outcomes data or primary or secondary data to monetise outcomes, it was not possible to conduct a CBA or a CEA for the Connected Communities project. As a result, a qualitative assessment of costs and benefits was undertaken, based on interviews with project staff, delivery staff, an internal stakeholder and project beneficiaries from Creative English classes, as well as a focus group with Community Amplifiers. A review of secondary data was also undertaken.

Methodological strengths

- The **breadth of the qualitative data**, including interviews and focus groups with project staff, delivery staff, stakeholders, Community Amplifiers and project beneficiaries, contributed to a well-rounded analysis of the learning and partnership approach taken by the project

- **The wide range of monitoring and secondary data** that was shared between the project and Ipsos MORI evaluators on most strands of the project, providing further context and evidence on the achievement of CMF and project outcomes and some evidence of change over time.

- **Strong communication between project staff and the evaluation team** allowed for a transparent and honest relationship which further strengthens the credibility of the evaluation itself.

Methodological limitations

- The devolved nature of the project and flexible approach meant that **some events and activities took place without prior communication with the evaluation team**, meaning it was not possible to conduct evaluation activities.

- **The fact that the evaluation took part mid-way through the project timeframe** meant that it was not possible to include all project activities in scope of the evaluation. This made it more difficult to assess whether certain outcomes had been achieved, particularly for the Storytelling and Listening strand for which the many of the activities had been planned for the last six months of the project. Delays to project delivery for some strand and activities also created challenges ensuring project activities were covered by the evaluation. The timeframe also limited the possibility of seeing achievement of some project outcomes which were considered longer-term, particularly where activities have been postponed.

- The **qualitative evidence was unable to capture the full range of views and opinions** of participants. However, the evidence provides additional context to the findings and enables triangulation of the evidence gathered from different participant groups.

  - **Small sample sizes for beneficiary groups:** as the evaluation focused on breath of qualitative data to cover all project strands, views of only a small number of beneficiaries were captured for each project activity (Creative English learners and volunteers, Youth Arts project beneficiaries, local authority training beneficiaries and Interfaith Platform beneficiaries). Due to the small number of beneficiaries interviewed, it is difficult to assess to what extent the views expressed extend to all beneficiaries within each project activity.

  - **Participant self-selection biases**: project beneficiaries interviewed could decide for themselves whether they wanted to take part in the evaluation. This means that the sample may not be representative of the target population.

  - **Lack of data from beneficiaries:** only three interviews were conducted with local authority training beneficiaries about the Effective Conversations Training. Two more interviews to provide further evidence were planned but did not take place due to non-responsiveness of the beneficiaries. This was attributed to low capacity to take part among local authority staff, as well as the length of time between taking part in the training and being approached to take part in an interview (11 months).

  - Due to data sharing considerations and the absence of a formalised Data Sharing Agreement between Barking and Dagenham local authority and MHCLG, the evaluation was **reliant on project staff to facilitate recruitment of research participants**. In some cases, this involved Ipsos MORI researchers **recruiting participants directly from events and activities**. This limited the ability to sample participants and the number of beneficiaries that could be interviewed as part of the evaluation.

  - In addition, **the recruitment approach meant the evaluation was unable to pre-arrange interpreter support for interviews**, and recruitment was limited to those with sufficient English language skills that would enable them to provide informed consent to take part in the evaluation and respond to questions. In some cases, low English language ability limited the scope of topics explored. Interviews were supplemented with volunteers and staff.

- **Low response rate of evaluation questionnaires**: The low number of responses to the Interfaith Week event questionnaire limited the scope of finding statistically significant differences and the evaluation was unable to draw statistical conclusions from the data as to the effectiveness of the project.

Analysis and synthesis

Secondary data and monitoring data shared by the project was analysed to extract key findings related to achievement of outputs and outcomes. Where quantitative monitoring data reported on change in participant skills level or understanding for over 50 training beneficiaries (Effective Conversations Training feedback), change figures were tested for statistical significance at a 95% confidence level. In the feedback, change was self-reported and collected at one point in time at the end of the training.

Interview notes were systematically inputted into an analysis grid for each research encounter, allowing for more in-depth analysis of findings. There was one grid for each type of audience consulted. The grids follow the structure of the topic guide enabling the identification of relevant quotes for each element of the outcomes and process evaluation. A thematic analysis approach was implemented in order to identify, analyse and interpret patterns of meaning (or "themes") within the qualitative data, which allowed the evaluation to explore similarities and differences in perceptions, views, experiences and behaviours. Once all data had been inputted, evidence for each outcome and key delivery themes was brought together in a second analysis matrix to triangulate the evidence and assess its robustness.

Quotes in this report are verbatim and are used to illustrate and highlight key points and common themes. Quotes that contain personal information have been anonymised.

3. Key findings: delivery

Introduction

This section reports on the key findings from the evaluation in relation to how the Connected Communities project was delivered. It begins with an assessment of progress made towards the intended outputs set out in the project logic model. This is followed by discussion of the success factors and challenges that were found to have impacted on project delivery and the achievement of outputs.

Was the project delivered as intended?

Table 3.1 summarises the overall progress made towards project outputs, including how many achieved or exceeded and how many not achieved within the timeframe of the evaluation. Further outputs which were planned outside of the evaluation timeframe are not included.

Table 3.1 Achievement of project outputs

Target output	Output achieved	Completion measure[54]
Storytelling and Listening (Amplify Barking and Dagenham)		
Partner agency commissioned	According to the commissioning contracts, 2 partner agencies were commissioned to deliver Amplify Barking and Dagenham activities: The Young Foundation and Community Resources (October 2018 – August 2020)	Achieved
6 Community Amplifiers recruited for seven hours per week	Information provided by project staff indicates 7 Community Amplifiers were recruited and delivered activities during the evaluation timeframe.	Achieved
Community Amplifiers receive training	Qualitative research with Community Amplifiers indicated that they received training on Safeguarding; General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR); types of research and data; and interviewing skills.	Achieved
Community Amplifiers conduct interviews with residents (no target)	Monitoring data submitted by delivery staff indicated that, by December 2019, the Community Amplifiers conducted 110 interviews and 341 "light touch" research engagements with residents	Achieved
Hold 1 story-telling event for the local community to attend	Monitoring data submitted by delivery staff indicated that, by December 2019, 3 story-telling events with 70 attendees had been delivered in Dagenham, Chadwell Heath and Thames Ward	Exceeded
Community Amplifiers work with residents to identify and execute resident-	Monitoring data submitted by delivery staff indicated that, by December 2019, 4 co-creation sessions with 35 participants had been delivered, and 3 initiatives led by 8 residents had been established:	Partially achieved (on track)

[54] The completion measure is a subjective assessment by Ipsos MORI based on the extent to which the project has achieved its intended outputs – scored as follows: inconclusive; not achieved; partially achieved; partially achieved (on track); achieved; exceeded. See Appendix 1 for further details.

led interventions in two rounds of co-creation workshops[55] (no target)	• *Keep on the Grass* (litter-picking initiative in the park); • *Closed together* (closing streets to traffic for a few hours to allow children to play safely); and • *Parents2Parents* (parenting support network).	
Storytelling and Listening (Youth Arts)		
Partner agency commissioned	Monitoring data showed that Studio 3 Arts was commissioned to deliver Youth Arts activities (January 2019 – July 2020)	Achieved
Young people trained to commission community art projects (no target)	Monitoring data showed that, by December 2019, 10 young people had been recruited to join the project. The project received referrals from schools, Youth Offending Services, social services.	Achieved
Young people identify and explore art themes related to cohesion (no target)	In a qualitative group interview, project beneficiaries indicated that they would commission art-based activities on 3 themes: LGBT discrimination; homelessness; and race/ culture but had yet to explore the themes in detail.	Partially achieved (on track)
Storytelling and Listening (Interfaith platform)		
Partner agency commissioned	The Faith and Belief Forum was commissioned to deliver Interfaith Platform activities (September 2018 – July 2020)	Achieved
Research conducted with key faith leaders and stakeholders in the borough (No target)	Monitoring data showed that the Faith and Belief Forum conducted 40 face-to-face meetings with faith leaders and people of faith and 3 focus group workshops. An online survey received 51 responses	Achieved
2 workshops to gather feedback on initial policy recommendations	Monitoring data showed that 5 consultation meetings were conducted with community organisations and 10 meetings and workshops with local authority staff	Exceeded
Publication of the faith policy	Delivery staff reported that the faith policy was soft launched during Interfaith Week 2019. The policy launch organised by the local authority and was attended by 28 people, 15 of which were local faith leaders. The policy sets out 76 recommendations for faith communities and the local authority	Achieved
Support local Faith Forum with their meetings and increase engagement with the Faith Forum (no target)	Monitoring data showed that the Faith Forum was supported to hold 6 public meetings and recruit 17 regular new joiners, with 5 more expressing an interest. Furthermore, the delivery partner helped the Faith Forum to create a new website, grow their mailing list to 120 people and created a newsletter to send out.	Achieved
Help the Faith Forum to deliver Interfaith Week events (no target)	According to monitoring data, a “Celebrating Faith, Diversity and Harmony” event was attended by 35 residents (compared with 26 in 2018) and 12 places of worship took part in the "Visit my Place of Worship" events (compared to 4 in 2018). In addition, the delivery staff helped the Faith Forum to set up an art competition	Achieved

[55] Only the first round of co-creation sessions was planned within the timeframe of the evaluation

	for local schools which resulted in 44 entries from local students	
Deliver a school programme to local schools (No target)	Monitoring data submitted by delivery staff reported that 4 schools took part in the school programme, resulting in the delivery of 19 workshops to 540 students.	Achieved
Storytelling and Listening (Effective Conversation Training)		
Conduct 6 focus groups with staff, stakeholder interviews, and a staff survey to feed into the training	In a qualitative interview, delivery staff reported that they had conducted focus groups with staff and conducted a staff survey. Delivery staff reported that they received 15 responses to a 30-question exploratory survey and 76 responses to a 3-question pre-training survey.	Achieved
Steering group set up with front line staff to generate ideas for the training sessions	According to project monitoring data, 3 steering group meetings were run to inform the training.	Achieved
Deliver training (approx. 15 in each session, 17 sessions)	According to monitoring data submitted by project staff, 17 training sessions were delivered in March, reaching a total of 135 staff. The number of attendees varied by session but ranged from 8 to 17.	Achieved

Managing Rogue Landlords (TSO and FLO activities)		
TSO recruited	Delivery staff reported that the TSO was recruited and in post between April 2019 and June 2020. The project had intended for the TSO to be in position from April 2018 – April 2020 to align with the FLO role, however delivery staff indicated that barriers to recruitment resulted in the role only being contracted for 14 months (explored in more detail below).	Partially achieved
FLO recruited and working within the CABD	According to the commissioning contract, the CABD was commissioned to fund the FLO post between March 2018 and April 2020. In an interview, delivery staff reported that the contract had been extended to June 2020 to correspond with the end date of the TSO role	Achieved
Referral plan created to map referrals between the TSO, the CABD and the Housing Options team	Delivery staff indicated that the first iteration of the referral plan was in place by December 2019 and suggested the TSO was continuing to develop it further, mapping new organisations onto it where relevant for example, East European Resource Centre (EERC)	Achieved
TSO visits tenants in PRS properties facing unlawful eviction, landlord harassment or sub-standard housing. (no target).	Monitoring information provided by delivery staff indicated that the TSO visited 95 tenants from PRS properties facing unlawful eviction, landlord harassment or sub-standard housing between April 2019 and February 2020.	Achieved
Tenants facing unlawful eviction, landlord harassment and/ or experiencing sub-standard housing identified by the TSO and provided with support (no target)	Information provided by delivery staff indicated that 85% of cases (81 tenants) received support from the TSO (this included advice, mediation and/or servicing a notice). Information provided by delivery staff indicated that 68 cases were supported and resolved by the TSO without the need to refer the tenant to another service	Achieved
Tenants requiring additional support referred by the TSO to the FLO (no target)	Information provided by delivery staff indicated that 11% of cases (10 tenants) were referred to the FLO between April 2019 and February 2020.This included 4 cases in which the TSO had no further input, and 6 cases where the tenant received joint support from the TSO and FLO. Information provided by delivery staff indicated that 68 cases were supported and resolved by the TSO without the need to refer the tenant to another service	Achieved
Tenants identified by the TSO requiring additional support, referred to another support provider (no target for referrals)	Information provided by delivery staff indicated that 18% of cases (17 tenants) were referred to other support providers between April 2019 and February 2020, including referrals to the Housing Options team (Homelessness prevention team), the Homes and Money Hub and Social Services. This included 10 cases which were referred to other support providers in which the TSO had no further input, and 7 cases where the tenant was referred to another	Achieved

	support provider but continued to receive support from the TSO.	
400 tenants per year supported by the FLO to understand their housing rights and responsibilities.	Monitoring data submitted by delivery staff indicated that 555 tenants were supported by the FLO to understand their rights and responsibilities in an 18-month period (no further breakdown provided)	Partially achieved (ongoing)
50 tenants per year (13%) received mediation between the landlord and the tenant from the FLO to avoid eviction	Monitoring data submitted by delivery staff indicated that 102 tenants supported by the FLO (18%) received mediation between themselves and their landlord and avoided eviction in an 18-month period (no further breakdown provided)	Exceeded
10 tenants per year (3%) supported during managed exits from unsafe properties by the FLO	Monitoring data submitted by delivery staff indicated that 34 of the 555 tenants (6%) were supported by the FLO during managed exists from unsafe properties in an 18-month period (no further breakdown provided)	Exceeded
12 families per year referred to Creative English classes by the CABD	Monitoring data submitted by delivery staff indicated that only 3 tenants were directly referred to English classes by the CABD within an 18-month period. However, 254 tenants who received support from the CABD were signposted to the class (for example, provided with written information)	Partially achieved
Managing Rogue Landlords (Creative English Classes)		
Run pilot Creative English course at the Barking Learning Centre	In interviews, delivery staff and project staff reported that the pilot Creative English Class started at Barking Learning Centre. However, during delivery in was moved to Dagenham Library. While delivery did not occur as intended (with tenants referred by the CABD and TSO), as the pilot took place the output is assessed as achieved	Achieved
Run classes each week for tenants and referrals to attend on a rolling basis	In an interview, delivery staff reported that classes were run every week across 5 locations in the borough. However, referrals from the TSO and the CABD did not come to fruition and so the majority of beneficiaries were not the result of referrals nor were they attending the class on the basis of being a tenant in need of support (as intended)	Partially achieved
Deliver Creative English to 150 families	Monitoring data submitted by delivery staff reported that 166 families attended Creative English classes. The majority of these families were recruited through word of mouth or advertising.	Exceeded
Train learners to volunteer at Creative English classes (no target)	Monitoring data submitted by delivery staff suggested that 8 beneficiaries were trained as volunteers to help in Creative English class	Achieved

Data and Insights[56] (Values Modes research)		
Conduct research with residents (telephone survey and 6 focus groups)	In a qualitative interview, delivery staff reported that they had conducted a telephone survey with 1,000 residents and ran 10 focus groups in a few different areas. Delivery staff reported that they conducted 6 additional focus groups to feed into the survey design.	Achieved
Produce a report with an engagement framework and toolkit	Qualitative consultations indicated that the engagement framework and toolkit were delivered, which formed the basis for a workshop delivered to the local authority	Achieved
Run 4 workshops with LA teams	In a qualitative interview, delivery staff and project staff reported that 4 workshops were delivered to local authority teams including the Communications Team, My Place housing team, Enforcement Teams and a team of senior staff working on the "Barking and Dagenham Way"	Achieved
Data and Insights (Origins Analysis)		
Identify and run data through the Origins programme and produce a report on the findings	Delivery staff and project staff reported that a report providing an overview of the community composition and typology of wards was delivered	Achieved
Share findings with partners at a Quarterly Evaluation Meeting	Project staff reported that the Data and Insights partner had presented their findings at the third Quarterly Evaluation Meeting	Achieved
Connected Communities Officer		
Quarterly evaluation meetings held with all partners attending where possible	According to information shared by project staff, five quarterly evaluation meetings were organised by the Connected Communities Officer and the Participation and Engagement team between December 2018 and March 2020. Studio 3 Arts joined from session two (March 2019) as they were commissioned later in delivery. Partners from the second round of funding joined from session three (June 2019).	Achieved
Facilitate networking between partners (no target)	In interviews, delivery staff and project staff reported the Connected Communities Officer helped to facilitate meetings between the CABD, the TSO and the Housing Options team within the local authority as well as between the CABD, TSO and Creative English.	Achieved
Partners report on their progress at times specified in their contracts	In an interview, project staff reported that all delivery partners had provided a Quarter 4 (December 2019) progress update either in the form of a written report or through conversations with the Connected Communities Officer.	Achieved

[56] Data and insights (Social Progress Index) outputs are not included as it is out of scope of the evaluation

What worked in delivering the project?

There were six key elements that were found to facilitate project delivery:

(1) Identifying partners with specialist skills and experience to run activities effectively;

(2) Creating opportunities for partners to share learnings and challenges through quarterly meetings and the role of the Connected Communities Officer, which built trust and facilitated partnerships and joint working;

(3) Taking an exploratory and flexible approach to delivering activities, which enabled the project to respond to emerging needs and gaps identified during delivery;

(4) Recruiting residents from diverse backgrounds to conduct research and delivery activities, which enabled the project to capture less-heard voices from marginalised groups;

(6) Senior staff buy-in for and endorsement of the project, which facilitated staff attendance at training and supported the new referral pathway; and

(6) Running Creative English classes from established community venues, which aided recruitment and engagement of beneficiaries.

(1) Identifying partners with specialist skills and experience

Project staff reported that commissioning project activities to partners with specialist skills and experience was a key enabler for delivery across strands and activities. For **Interfaith Platform** activities, project staff described how the Faith and Belief Forum used their experience conducting previous interfaith work to support the local Faith Forum to improve events and community engagement. Staff felt the experience of the Faith and Belief Forum enabled them to give useful advice on how to promote interfaith co-operation more broadly. For example, recommending that the practice of "shared prayer" be removed from meeting to create a more neutral space for all faiths and beliefs and encourage engagement with the Faith Forum. The delivery partner also reported that their experience of undertaking similar work in other London boroughs meant they could bring new ideas to the project. For example, the schools' workshops were suggested by the delivery partner based on previous successful delivery.

"The Faith and Belief Forum have such a wealth of experience that that is completely bespoke... They're very experienced in... setting Faith Forums up, not just counting secretariat duties but also in terms of thinking about getting representation from different groups, making sure that it's a neutral space [and making] sure it's a safe space. Thinking about how to bring other people into it." Project staff, interview

For the **Amplify Barking and Dagenham** activities, project staff reported that having a dedicated delivery partner that specialised in community research and had the "time to invest in specifically thinking about the cohesion angle" was valuable. While the Participation and Engagement Team in the local

authority had experience conducting engagement work, project staff felt they did not have the internal resources to carry out extensive qualitative enquiries to the same extent as the Young Foundation and Community Resources could. In terms of the **Data and Insights** activities, staff reported that the delivery partner, The Campaign Company, offered services that the local authority did not have internally (such as Values Modes segmentation and the Origins Cohesion ATLAS, which was integrated into the Origins Analysis report). Furthermore, the project partner on the Data and Insights strand described how they were able to bring learnings based on their experience of delivering Origins analysis in other London boroughs. This provided added value such as a larger body of evidence to substantiate the ward typologies outlined in the Origins Analysis report.

(2) Creating space for partners to build partnerships and share learnings

Project staff valued the dedicated space afforded by the quarterly evaluation meetings, which they reported facilitated learning from different strands and activities and enabled partners to build connections with each other and explore challenges (both related to specific activities and the project more broadly). The Connected Communities Officer reported that meetings were most beneficial when they were less formal and allowed more time for discussion between partners. They said this provided space for partners to build trust and reflect on their work and how this fitted into the work of others, a sentiment echoed by other project delivery partners.

Through encouraging local authority partners to reflect on some of their own shortcomings, project staff felt this helped to build trust between delivery partners and encouraged a more open and honest conversation. Staff also suggested that sharing early insights from the research activities with partners prior to their official sign off for public dissemination helped to make them feel part of a trusted cohort. Other delivery partners particularly valued the opportunity to network through the project. However, project staff reported that building these partnerships took longer than expected (explored in 3.4 below).

Project staff also suggested that the focus on interaction and partnership working at the meetings made delivery partners more willing to take ownership of the project and work towards shared objectives.

"So, what we've had is maybe less of a sense of "well that's not in my job spec", or "that's not in my programme specification", which has allowed us to do [extra] things [not in the original plan]… I think that some of that willingness to give is because they do feel this ownership and we haven't prescribed that you do these things by this time." Project staff, interview

Reflecting on learnings for future projects, staff suggested that having a brand for the project would further contribute to building a sense of common identity among partners.

Some delivery partners reported that the work of the **Connected Communities Officer** was key to promoting effective partnership working between partners and the local authority. On the Managing Rogue Landlords strand, the delivery partner from the CABD reported that support from the Connected Communities Officer enabled them to have conversations with the local authority, which they otherwise would have struggled to do as a small charity. Staff therefore considered the support of the Connected Communities Officer key to the inception of the new referral pathway.

"[The Connected Communities Officer] just happens to be… making those conversations happen… keeping the momentum up upon those conversations, and so it's not, just if that [Connected Communities Officer] wasn't there, [I] question, would the CAB have felt able to be in the space in the way that we were? Especially because it's small charity, big public system, big public authority, small charity." Delivery staff (Managing Rogue Landlords), interview

(3) Exploratory and flexible approach to delivery

The premise of the project was founded on a flexible and exploratory approach to delivery, in order to encourage responsiveness and address emerging local issues. On the **Managing Rogue Landlords strand**, delivery staff described how the TSO had identified a need for the referral pathway, through delivering project activities, to support tenants. Delivery staff reported that they felt encouraged by the project to think proactively and explore barriers and weaknesses in the current approach and come up with solutions to complex housing issues. Delivery staff also felt that the flexible approach enabled honest conversations with the local authority and allowed them to turn their focus to address barriers through mapping a new referral system. This new system was considered by project and delivery staff to be one of the most effective outputs from the Connected Communities project.

"I think that's done more than deliver what they originally intended, it's also delivered insight which was unexpected and that's got additional value" Project staff, interview

Delivery staff also suggested that the emphasis on learning gave them the mandate to explore challenges, which they would not have been able to do if the focus had been on hitting targets.

"I think it's a dysfunctional thing isn't it, that happens with funding, if you feel that you're actually just having to hit the target, the learning element isn't emphasised." *Delivery staff (Managing Rogue Landlords), interview*

Project staff also reported that the flexible approach to delivery enabled them to reprofile the budget to include **Values Modes research** activities with residents. Staff reported that the insight generated was central to informing the "Barking and Dagenham Way" by providing a toolkit on the most effective ways to communicate with residents.

(4) Recruiting residents from diverse backgrounds

Community Amplifiers from the **Amplify Barking and Dagenham** activities reported that the diversity of the group (in terms of background, age, and religion) enabled them to reach different groups in the community to conduct research. In addition to migrant communities, project staff described how the Community Amplifier research gave space to white British voices perceived to be lesser heard. However, Community Amplifiers also reported that language barriers made it harder to access and engage some communities with which they had no personal links, such as Eastern European communities.

Project staff praised the Community Amplifiers ability to engage residents for the first round of co-creation sessions through their own networks and through the research and felt this had contributed to well-attended sessions. Project staff suggested the approach of harnessing the networks of residents was more effective than local authority led recruitment (such as advertising) would likely have been.

"[Recruitment] worked far better in terms of getting people into the room than it would've done for [the local authority to] just advertise something and then see who turned up". Project staff, interview

While the diverse backgrounds of the Community Amplifiers had benefits for recruitment, it also presented challenges. Variation in computer skills and professional experience meant that some Community Amplifiers found the administrative tasks associated with conducting research burdensome.

(5) Utilising established community venues

Delivery staff reported that running **Creative English classes** in established community venues (such as Castle Point community centre) helped recruitment as the venue was well known in the area as both a community venue and a venue for Creative English classes. Delivery staff and beneficiaries reported that the venue was used frequently by different communities, for example, for parent toddler groups, community choir and personal development programmes. Delivery staff felt that learners additionally benefited from the other activities on offer at the venue and from the support of a volunteer coordinator to identify opportunities for volunteering, including at the venue itself (such as helping to serve refreshments, or volunteering at the mother and toddler group).

"In [Castle Point], it has been great because there are different communities that come here anyway so we've been able to integrate in that way, but in some of the venues like libraries community spaces, there isn't another forum to integrate [with] or showcase. I think we could have just been running our classes in isolation but there is something about being able to make that a seamless process." Delivery staff (Managing Rogue Landlords), interview

(6) Senior staff endorsement and buy-in

Project staff and local authority staff who attended Effective Conversations training reported that buy-in from senior staff across a range of project activities facilitated the delivery of specific activities, as well as helping delivery to embed. On the **Managing Rogue Landlords** strand, delivery staff reported that the senior staff within the Housing Options team (part of the Community Solutions department) were enthusiastic about working with the TSO and the FLO to map the referral system, facilitating the delivery of the referral pathway. Staff attributed the willingness of senior staff to engage to the Community Solutions model, which emphasised early intervention and, according to delivery staff, mandates staff with the responsibility to affect positive change where possible.

For **Effective Conversations Training** activities, project staff described how they set up a steering group of local authority staff (including managers) to provide feedback on the design of the staff training. Delivery staff described how this led to increased buy-in for the training, aiding engagement and recruitment of local authority staff for the initial sessions. Beneficiaries also reported that training attendance was encouraged by their manager, empowering them to attend.

"The department itself was really behind [the Effective Conversations Training] [and] when people turned-up they were committed to it." Delivery *staff (Storytelling and Listening), interview*

What were the challenges to delivering the project?

There were six main challenges to the delivery of the project:

(1) The narrow tender process used by the local authority was found to present barriers to the types of organisations and individuals the project wanted to engage;

(2) Difficulty recruiting hard-to-reach communities in research and project activities;

(3) The long lead-in time required to facilitate and build trust between partners, which led to delivery delays

(4) Delays to project activities (in part due to the exploratory and flexible approach) which created challenges for delivering interlinked activities;

(5) Managing Rogue Landlords strand experiences challenges in meeting referral targets

(6) The diverse background of Community Amplifiers (in terms of skills and previous work experience) limited the scope of resident-led activities;

(1) Barriers to engagement in the tender process

Project staff suspected that the local authority tender process created a barrier to some social enterprise organisations applying to deliver project activities. Staff acknowledged that this was a wider issue within the local authority that was not limited to this project, and which the local authority was aware of and seeking to address. Staff attributed this in part to the need for organisations to be registered with the procurement platform in order access the specification for the tender. As a result, despite initial interest, staff reported that fewer organisations and individuals than expected entered bids to run the **Interfaith Platform** and **Youth Arts** project activities. For the Youth Arts commission, project staff reported extending the length of the tender period with the aim of attracting more organisations, which led to delays in commissioning the project. Staff suggested that advertising the opportunity via a range of different channels would have been a more effective way to engage the desired type of delivery partners and was a priority going forward.

Recruitment for the role of the **TSO** was also challenging, with project staff reporting that it took a year to identify the right person for the role. Project staff pointed the difficulty of finding someone who had the dual skillset of pastoral care, and enforcement responsibilities. Additionally, it was noted that job opportunities can be difficult to find and interpret for those not working in the public sector.

"I think that, firstly, all of public sector job advertising is [bad]. It's impossible if you're not in it to find out what the jobs are, and I don't think local authorities do themselves many favours in terms of thinking about how to advertise and communicate what they're doing in non-bureaucratic newspeak for people to see why that would be a fascinating thing to do." Project staff, interview

This contributed to delays to delivery for joint working between the TSO and FLO and subsequent numbers of referrals (explored further below).

(2) Challenges engaging 'hard-to-reach' communities

Despite the Community Amplifiers using their networks to identify and recruit residents to participate in interviews as part of the **Amplify Barking and Dagenham** research activities, delivery staff reported that mistrust of the local authority among some hard-to-reach audiences had created a barrier to engagement. Residents were often unwilling to participate in interviews that would require them to state their name or personal details (for example on a consent form). Community Amplifiers also highlighted low English ability as another barrier to engage migrant communities in research.

"When a lot of the team have reached those groups, we'll then bring [out] the consent form and that is just like, 'well, I don't want to fill that in, is that going to the council? I don't trust the council, it's going to backfire against me if… my name's on this.' And, so, I think… if we had maybe planned how we do the tools and agree that then maybe we would have got more of the voices that we're trying to reach." *Delivery Staff, interview*

Similarly, delivery staff on the **Managing Rogue Landlords** strand reported that language barriers and mistrust of the local authority were the main challenges to engaging vulnerable tenants from migrant communities, particularly the Eastern European community. To mitigate this, the TSO reported that they planned to partner with the Eastern European Resource Centre (EERC) to reach out to Eastern European communities in the borough. Acknowledging the mistrust and fear of public services and authority, the Creative English delivery partner reported that they had worked closely with the CABD and the PRS team to develop English language course content to help learners "overcome fear about council interventions".

Mistrust of the local authority was also identified as a barrier to recruitment by **Interfaith Platform** delivery staff. They reported that prioritising the faith policy ahead of the engagement activities for the local Faith Forum made the delivery partner "come across very closely related to the [local authority]" and staff felt that this made it harder to engage certain faith organisation who didn't have a good relationship with the local authority in wider interfaith activities on behalf of the independent Faith Forum.

(3) Time required to build trust between partners

Project staff reported that it took longer than expected before external delivery partners had built enough trust to feel comfortable collaborating on activities with each other (over a year into the project, at the fifth quarterly evaluation meeting. This resulted in the majority of collaboration between partners being planned for the last six months of the two-year project. Staff suggested building trust between partners was hindered by new partners joining part way through the project (for example the Youth Arts partner joined in the second meeting, and the three second round CMF partners joined in the third meeting). Staff also suggested it may have taken longer to build trust because the project didn't have a common identity, which would have helped create a sense of shared objectives.

(4) Delays to project activities impacting joint working

Project staff reported that while the flexible approach enabled the project to respond to needs more effectively and address gaps identified during delivery (as outlined above), they recognised that changing priorities and focus had led to delays to some project activities and made it more difficult to work towards fixed outcomes. Staff suggested that they could have contributed further to intended

outcomes if there had been fewer changes and a more prescriptive approach. For example, during delivery, they identified a need for a new referral pathway on the **Managing Rogue Landlords** strand, while ultimately considered successful, reduced the capacity of the TSO and FLO during the period of mapping the new referral pathway. This reduced staff capacity to support tenants and the number of referrals between the two partners.

Overall, project staff felt that a less flexible approach would not have been beneficial and may have negatively impacted the relationship between the local authority and partners and effected partners' willingness to change what they were doing in line with learnings. Staff also suggested that the flexible approach led to more "diverse and interesting" outcomes, which further contributed to learning.

Delays also made it more difficult for some strands to work together in the way originally envisaged. For example, the qualitative research activities were intended to inform other strands (such as providing the basis for the topics of the Youth Arts commissions), however this was not possible due to delays. In addition, project staff reported that delays to receiving official sign off restricted the use of the Origins data from the **Data and Insights** strand. While the data was presented at the quarterly evaluation meeting, it could not be shared publicly. This was initially intended to shape a collective debate about the future of the borough.

"I think the idea that we had about how much of the rest of the programme would be shaped by the [qualitative] research elements, it all shifted a little bit… [and as a result] … has been less. That meant that the quarterly evaluation meetings took on a slightly different tone because we waited to get that insight" Project staff, interview

(5) Challenges meeting referral targets

On the **Managing Rogue Landlords** strand, there were a number of delivery challenges that reduced the number of referrals from the TSO to the CABD and to the Creative English classes. As mentioned above, recruitment delays for the TSO role meant that no tenants were referred from the PRS sector team to the CABD during the first 12 months of the project. The caseload of the TSO also involved more eviction harassment cases than had previously been anticipated (about half of the number of supported cases, according to project staff). Delivery staff reported that eviction harassment cases were the most time-intensive (due to the need for evidence collection to build a case for prosecution), which reduced the number of tenants supported by the TSO and, correspondingly, the number of referrals made to the FLO.

For the **Creative English classes**, it was widely reported by staff that the intended process of the TSO and CABD referring tenants to Creative English classes did not work well in practice. The TSO reported that most of the tenants they supported did not face language barriers and so did not need to be referred to Creative English classes, while those who did often declined the referral or did not want to provide contact details needed for the referral (no reasons were suggested by staff as to why this was the case). The CABD reported that there often wasn't time during advice sessions to signpost clients with low English language to Creative English classes, as the priority was addressing the specific issue the tenant was presenting with. CABD staff also mentioned that, as an independent charity, some CABD advisors felt uncomfortable referring service users directly to Creative English classes, instead preferring to offer it as an option among other English language providers in the borough. Project staff and the Creative English partner felt that the fact that TSO or FLO service users were often *experiencing a housing crisis*

(such as eviction, harassment or a court case) meant the timing of the intervention was less effective than it could have been (for example, prior to a period of crisis), as tenants were less likely to see learning English as a priority. *To mitigate this, Creative English delivery staff recruited beneficiaries through alternative channels, including flyers, signposting from wider local authority staff and word of mouth. However, staff acknowledged that these beneficiaries may not have issues related to housing, as originally intended.*

(7) The background of Community Amplifiers

For **Amplify Barking and Dagenham** activities, project staff suggested that Community Amplifiers, who did not have professional experience (for example, in mediation or community work), were not equipped to have the difficult conversations required to address deep-set cohesion issues, such as racism and prejudice. Instead, staff felt that Community Amplifiers were better placed to focus on "softer" side of community cohesion (such as addressing environmental concerns through litter picking activities). Project staff felt this limited the scope of project activities and meant that ingrained problems of mistrust of others or views regarding who had the right to live in the community were left unaddressed by the project, thereby limiting the project's ability to improve social cohesion in the borough.

4. Key findings: Outcomes

This section reports on the key findings from the evaluation in relation to progress made by the Connected Communities project towards its intended outcomes. It begins with an assessment of progress made towards each of the intermediate outcomes set out in the project logic model. Where expected during the project timeframe, evidence towards expected longer-term outcomes is also considered. This is followed by discussion of the factors that were found to have contributed to the achievement of project outcomes. The last section considers the direction of travel towards longer-term outcomes, expected to be realised beyond the evaluation timeframe.

Progress towards intended outcomes

The evidence outlined below indicates that the project contributed in some way to all intended outcomes. Contribution towards outcomes for the local authority were underpinned by the insight gained through research activities and the focus on learning and partnership working. While joint working was not as developed as intended at the time of the evaluation, this was planned to continue through the last six months of the project.

There was also evidence that the TSO and FLO contributed to identifying and resolving housing issues for tenants. While the planned referral route of tenants to Creative English classes did not take place, there was evidence that the project increased access to English language provision by offering an alternative to existing formal provision at local colleges. There were indications that participation in the English language classes increased understanding of social norms through covering relevant content, as well as increased civic society participation for some learners through volunteering opportunities.

In relation to wider residents (although there was no formal distinction made by the project between more recent arrivals and longer-term residents) there was evidence of increased involvement in community-led integration activities as a result of project activities, although numbers were small at the time of the evaluation and it was unclear whether these gains would be sustained. The contribution towards increased social mixing was limited at the time of the evaluation, with the exception of pupils. The project hoped to contribute further to this outcome in future through ongoing and planned activities.

CMF fund-level local authority outcomes

Intermediate outcome 1: Increased insight into local migration patterns and community impact

Data and Insights strand

Through Origins Analysis activities**,** the project aimed to improve the local authority's understanding of its population through the delivery of a report showing an up-to-date picture of community composition and pace of change, with recommendations for areas where interventions to improve community cohesion could be targeted. Evidence for this outcome comes from interviews with project staff and delivery staff and secondary data from the Y1 impact assessment written by the Connected Communities Officer.

Both project staff and delivery partners reported that the Origins Analysis helped to improve the local authority's understanding of local migration patterns and the impact of migration on residents at a borough level, a ward level and community level. Cluster analysis at two time points revealed insights about community composition, including a typology of wards based on levels of diversity against levels of demographic change. Staff reported that this insight helped the local authority to understand where in the borough residents may be feeling the impact of population change. For example, the analysis showed that several postcodes experienced a population change of 91% between 2011 and 2019. The data also included mapping the migration pattern of certain communities between wards as well as into and out of the borough.

"The reason [population change at a postcode level] matters…is because that's the way that people materially feel it, in terms of not knowing your neighbour. Even though it might be that at the ward level [residents] are still staying in the ward or in the borough, in a material way… people's neighbours have changed by 90% in ten years on one street… that was a new insight to us." Project staff, interview

The delivery partner described how they brought together the ward typologies, Values Modes research and the qualitative findings from the Amplify Barking and Dagenham research activities in order to further their understanding of the impact of migration at a ward level. Learnings and comparisons from the delivery partner's experience running similar Origins Analysis in neighbouring wards contributed additional context and enabled the exploration of wider trends of migration into and out of the borough. Existing local authority datasets on hate crime and resident survey data on resentment towards migrant communities were also integrated into the report. Project staff stated that the Origins Analysis provided new insight by bringing the information together to create a "heat map of risk" across the borough, indicating wards would benefit most from targeted interventions to improve cohesion and identifying wards that were more likely to be facing cohesion issues. The analysis also highlighted wards that were likely to be facing other issues, for example, due to high levels of deprivation (evidenced through being at the bottom of the Social Progress Index).

The delivery partner planned to use the insights generated through the research to inform targeted pilot interventions to improve cohesion. Where successful, the delivery partner suggested that this would provide learning for the local authority to roll out similar interventions to wards with the same typology. At the time of writing, the local authority had designed a programme of interventions with The Campaign Company and the Community Amplifiers using this insight in pilots of the "Citizen Alliance Network" (part of the renewed corporate plan the "Barking and Dagenham Way"). This was described by project staff as a community-based platform for activism with online and physical meeting spaces.

Project staff indicated that the local authority had yet to decide how best to optimise the potential value of the Origins Analysis and that the data had yet to be signed off by local authority members. Staff recognised that the sensitivity of the findings required careful consideration over whether, and in what form, the data should be made publicly available, potentially limiting its application and dissemination to external partners. However, project staff suggested potential future uses, including:

- For decisions around service planning,
- To ensure representation of all communities when engaging residents;
- Asset planning for cultural resources, such as places of worship;
- Public health outreach to specific communities; and

- Comparisons with the electoral register to understand underrepresentation of certain communities in voter registration.

Complementing the Origins Analysis, the Values Modes research aimed to increase the local authority's understanding of the different values held by residents in the borough through research and segmentation analysis of residents based on sets of values that they share and their motivational drivers. Evidence for this outcome comes from interviews with project staff and delivery staff and secondary data from the Y1 impact assessment written by the Connected Communities Officer.

Delivery and project staff highlighted how research and segmentation analysis increased the local authority's understanding of community perceptions regarding migration. Project staff reported that the findings had already been "massively useful" and had helped the local authority to think about how they communicate with the different types of resident audiences. Project staff reported that this insight had helped to shape the "Barking and Dagenham Way" corporate plan, as well as the overall strategy and direction. This included shifting communications focus away from a strong enforcement message, to cater to residents who are receptive to more positive messaging.

"The defining new narrative of the council [the Barking and Dagenham Way] … has been shaped through a Values Modes workshop which [looked at] … research around 'does this whole narrative work in this borough' … and that's had a huge impact… it's shaped the whole corporate plan and strategy and direction… [for example] to reduce tensions pre-emptively by thinking about how our language may or may not infuriate certain groups of people." Project staff, interview

Values Modes research findings were shared with the Connected Communities partners in the quarterly evaluation meetings. Project staff suggested potential future use could include setting up a workshop for residents, run by the delivery partner, to start a dialogue about why people have different values, and how they can overcome these differences. Delivery and project staff described how insights from the research were disseminated through the local authority via four workshops with strategic managers and front-line staff exploring communication and engagement challenges relating to future service provision. In these workshops, delivery staff and local authority staff used insights from the Values Modes research to inform communications and tailor campaigns with the aim of increasing engagement in services (for example, increasing public engagement with recycling programmes to reduce contamination and encouraging a take-up of health checks among specific communities). Another of the workshops focused on exploring challenges around communicating housing allocation policy by using the research to consider how certain communications could be perceived differently by different residents.

Amplify Barking and Dagenham (Storytelling and Listening strand)

Through Amplify Barking and Dagenham activities, the project aimed to increase the local authority's understanding of residents' perceptions of the local area through qualitative research with residents across the borough. Evidence for this outcome comes from interviews with project staff and a focus group with the Community Amplifiers as well as monitoring data in the form of a progress report and a research summary produced by the delivery partners and Community Amplifiers.

The report summarised the insights into resident sentiment towards the borough. This included insights regarding residents' views on identity and belonging; experiences of change; crime and safety; and litter and fly-tipping. Through the research, the Community Amplifiers identified drivers that brought people together based on "shared needs, aspirations or values", including activities centred around parks and

playgrounds, community groups, local meeting places, and faith. The report also explored barriers to connecting people across geographic, ethnic, religious or generational divides, including: fear of crime; activities perceived as segregated (such as pubs, shisha bars and food stores catering for specific ethnic groups); high population turnover; and perceptions that narratives surrounding history and heritage within the borough excluded new communities and contributed to experiences of racism. Barriers to inclusion and community connections highlighted through the report included: low English ability; residents lacking information about local events; and a lack of spaces for community connection due to cuts to services resulting in closures. While the report explored some of the negative concerns raised by residents, it also reported that most residents interviewed said they "enjoyed" living in the borough and were "often proud to be residents".

"The Community Amplifiers work has been quite interesting in the sense that they've identified more the feeling of different places in the borough. [Their work has] recognised where certain areas aren't feeling loved or there's no sense of identity and belonging." Project staff, interview

In addition to informing the design of the "Citizen Alliance Network", the insight gathered was used by the Community Amplifiers to design co-creation sessions with residents.

Project staff also reported that the insight gathered from the Amplify Barking and Dagenham and Values Modes research provided the local authority with deeper insight into the concerns held by less heard white British residents. Although the local authority had been aware of these concerns, staff described how the Connected Communities research activities uncovered the "depth and weight of the evidence" and the impact it had on engagement with the local authority and the community more widely.

The above evidence suggests that the project contributed to increasing insight into local migration patterns and community impact. Overall, project and delivery staff felt that the insight generated through the Origins Analysis, Values Modes and Amplify Barking and Dagenham research activities was comprehensive, providing a good evidence base to inform delivery of local authority activities and future service planning.

Intermediate outcome 2: Expanded and strengthened networks and partners

Interfaith Platform (Storytelling and Listening strand)

Through Interfaith Platform activities, the project aimed to build and strengthen networks and relationships between faith organisations, by commissioning the Faith and Belief Forum to support the local Faith Forum to build its membership. The project also intended to improve the local authority's awareness of faith organisations in the borough through producing an engagement report based on the scoping work undertaken by the delivery partner. Evidence for this outcome comes from interviews with delivery staff and project staff and the published faith policy.

Through the initial scoping exercise, the delivery partner identified new faith groups in the borough for the Faith Forum to connect with. The delivery partner described finding faith groups of different denominations that shared venues but were yet to collaborate in interfaith activities, identifying an opportunity for the Faith Forum to provide future support. The membership of the Faith Forum increased by 17 individuals throughout the project, with a further five expressing interest in joining (membership is explored further under the 'Increased involvement in community-led integration activities' outcome below).

As described in Chapter 3, the delivery partner identified a need to support the Faith Forum to set up a membership scheme and ensure the forum was a neutral space to promote and host interfaith activities, prior to promoting membership. The delivery partner worked with the Faith Forum to identify different methods of engagement and broaden the types of activities offered to faith organisations. This included types of training and events (such as the arts competition for Interfaith Week) with the aim of widening the appeal of the Faith Forum. The delivery partner reported that this was effective in engaging faith groups. Furthermore, the delivery partner found that some faith organisations had expressed an interest in collaborating on social action projects but were less interested in deepening their interfaith understanding. The delivery partner felt that by encouraging the Faith Forum to embrace faith organisations with different interests, the membership was able to grow.

"Through the speaker training, we engaged with some churches that we haven't engaged with before, and with leadership training we've engaged with some groups that we hadn't engaged with before so it's quite interesting how each aspect interests different people." Delivery staff, interview

Project staff reported that the engagement report improved the local authority's internal knowledge of faith organisations and provided an update on "social activism" in the borough, identifying potential platforms where the local authority could collaborate with faith organisations in the future. The report also identified areas of friction between the local authority and faith organisations that were negatively impacting the relationship. This included perceptions around how the local authority responds to hate crime and the level of support provided by the local authority to faith organisations, including around facilitating access to faith buildings. The faith policy outlined responsibilities for both the local authority and faith organisations and prescribed actions across seven key areas (social action, hate crime and prejudice, accessing space and buildings, safeguarding, respecting different faiths, collaboration and diversity). By addressing these areas of friction in the faith policy (produced by the delivery partner), the local authority aimed to strengthen their relationship with faith organisations. Delivery staff suggested that the actions provided accountability for both the local authority and faith organisations, which would lead to more positive partnerships. As the policy was launched shortly before the end of the evaluation period, it was not possible to assess its impact on strengthening partnerships in practice.

Managing Rogue Landlords strand

Through the activities of the TSO and FLO, the project aimed to strengthen the working relationship between the local authority Private Rental Sector team and the CABD. Evidence comes from interviews with delivery staff and project staff.

Since the TSO joined the PRS team, delivery staff reported that cooperation between the PRS team and the CABD had increased, and project staff described the partnership as one of the most effective elements of the Connected Communities project. The referral pathway designed by the TSO and FLO was highlighted by two delivery staff members and project staff as evidence of strengthened partnership working. It provided a process for the TSO and FLO to work together alongside the Housing Options team to support tenants to resolve housing issues (explored in more detail below).

"…We've got a better relationship with the PRS, because now we have a systematic ability… to phone the PRS and go, 'is this landlord properly licensed? What have you got on this landlord? Are there any issues about this landlord?'" Delivery staff, interview

The TSO and FLO also built relationships with wider organisations to support the delivery of project activities. The TSO described building a partnership with the Eastern European Resource Centre (EERC) (one of the partners that joined the project following the grant of additional CMF funding) in order to better engage tenants from Eastern European communities who experience housing issues. In addition, the CABD partnered with Woodford and Wanstead Migrant Support (WWMS) to provide immigration advice to tenants where necessary. The delivery partner indicated that partnership was possible, despite the charity having limited capacity to take on cases from neighbouring boroughs, because the FLO streamlined the process by supporting tenants to gather necessary paperwork and evidence ahead of their appointment.

Connected Communities Officer

The Connected Communities Officer role aimed to build and strengthen relationships between delivery partners and the local authority through brokering relationships between relevant parties throughout project delivery. Evidence comes from interviews with delivery staff and project staff.

Delivery partners on the Managing Rogue Landlords strand credited the Connected Communities Officer with facilitating the initial discussions with the Housing Options team that eventually led to the creation of the referral pathway. Delivery partners described how the Connected Communities Officer had created a "safe space" for dialogue and kept up the "momentum" of conversations.

"When [the Connected Communities Officer] brokered that conversation [with the Housing Options team] … [the Housing Options Manager] said immediately yes, we're totally up for that, we're totally up to exploring that. Now that conversation would not have occurred at all if we weren't in this system, with all of the trust and everything, and the openness." Delivery staff, interview

Through brokering connections, the overall intention of the Connected Communities Officer was to increase co-ordination and co-operation between the Connected Communities partners and the local authority, explored further below.

The above evidence indicates that the project contributed to expanding networks of faith organisations and strengthening partnerships between the local authority and faith organisations through Interfaith Platform activities. The evidence also suggests that the role of the Connected Communities Officer strengthened partnerships within the Managing Rogue Landlords strand.

Intermediate outcome 3: Increased co-ordination and co-operation between agencies

Connected Communities Officer

The Connected Communities Officer role aimed to contribute to this outcome by bringing different organisations working toward improving cohesion in the borough under one programme and identify opportunities for collaboration. The key element of the model was to start with a foundation of quantitative and qualitative insight, share findings with partners to open up discussions around how the insight can be used and identify how each partner can contribute, and consider how the interventions

may impact different audiences (including residents, the local authority and partner organisations). Evidence comes from interviews with delivery staff and project staff; and monitoring data submitted by delivery partners.

Project staff described how the type of collaborative activities changed through the project and became more widespread as trust between partners increased. During the early stages, a delivery staff member described how most collaborations within the quarterly evaluation meetings focused on sharing contacts, rather than delivering activities together. Project staff indicated that this changed towards the end of the project and that most collaborative partnership working was planned for the last six months of the project. Project staff attributed collaborations between partners to the focus on partnership working and bringing different groups together at quarterly evaluation meetings. In some cases, partners also met outside of the quarterly evaluation meetings to organise joint work under the umbrella of the Connected Communities project. Examples of joint-working and collaboration between partners that occurred within the timescale of the evaluation included network building, integration activities and signposting of service users to activities run by other organisations. For example:

- The insights from the Origins Analysis was used to inform the activities of delivery partners and the pilot locations for new Creative English classes. Another delivery partner also indicated that the research provided interesting context for partners;
- Partners who attended the second quarterly evaluation meeting identified opportunities to collaborate on future activities or where they could promote each other's events. All partners collaboratively mapped project timelines, noting when new networks and relationships would be developed, insights gained, and activities conducted;
- Discussions between the TSO, the CABD and Creative English around referral pathways initially took place at a quarterly evaluation meeting;
- The TSO collaborated with the EERC to increase engagement with tenants from Eastern European communities;
- The delivery partner for Data and Insights strand used the findings from the Amplify Barking and Dagenham research to provide more context for their Origins Analysis report;
- The delivery partner for the Origins Analysis collaborated with the local authority data team who were working on the Social Progress Index, sharing their typology dataset to support the data team and further embedding the Origins work within the local authority; and
- During the scoping research phase for the faith policy, the delivery partner for Interfaith Platform activities signposted some members of faith organisations to the Creative English classes, although it was unknown any of the residents then went on to attend the class.

Further collaborations were also being developed, including additional use of the Amplify Barking and Dagenham research by delivery partners' collaborating on a film and workshops with residents. One delivery staff member reported that the partnership element had brought "more depth to the work", as they had more opportunities to refer project beneficiaries to wider activities delivered by Connected Communities partners.

Project staff reported that the "flexible, partnership approach" taken by the Connected Communities project was considered successful and had since been written as a case study and was being used to shape the "Barking and Dagenham Way".

"[The project approach] influenced the organisation in terms, in that way it's demonstrating a model of how to go about service design. It's used quantitative and qualitative insight to design what we're doing. It's created spaces to openly discuss them and what that means for a group of people and stakeholders beyond the [local authority's] boundaries in and of itself." Project staff, interview

The above evidence indicates that focus on partnership working through quarterly evaluation meetings and the work of the Connected Communities Officer led to increased joint-working between agencies delivering project activities, some of which was planned to continue beyond the project.

Intermediate outcome 4: Acquired expertise and structures in place to deal with local issues

TSO and FLO (Managing Rogue Landlords strand)

Through the activities of the TSO and FLO, the project aimed improve the structures in place to deal with rogue landlords and substandard housing through a new TSO role encompassing both enforcement and pastoral care. The role was designed as part of the project, to offer support and advice to PRS tenants facing unlawful eviction, harassment or substandard properties. The responsibilities of the TSO were considered to complement the existing enforcement officer role within the PRS team who worked with landlords to encourage compliance with rules and obligations. Evidence comes from interviews with delivery staff, an internal stakeholder, and monitoring data submitted by the delivery partner.

The evidence suggests that the role of the TSO had embedded over time, with increased referrals and the TSO learning and developing the role while in post. As mentioned in the delivery chapter, recruitment of the TSO took longer than intended, resulting in a later start. Delivery staff suggested that, anecdotally, there had been an increase in the number of tenants referred to the TSO (self-referrals or through services) over time, which they attributed to the work of the local authority in publicising the role of the TSO within the local authority, updating the local authority website[57] with contact details for the TSO, and an improved referral pathway (see below). As a result of learning on the job, the TSO reported that their skills "improved massively" over time, saying that no formal training was provided. These skills included legal knowledge related to their area of activity; how to refer people using the rights channels, to the right agencies and contacts; and improved skills about how to prevent homelessness through the referral pathway (see 'improved sign posting and referral system' outcome).

An internal stakeholder attributed improved engagement between the PRS team and migrant communities to the work of the TSO, highlighting the example of the partnership with the EERC. The stakeholder and project staff also reported that the local authority had decided to formally integrate the role of the TSO into the PRS team, committing to funding the role internally once the Connected Communities project ended. Staff reported that the value of the position had been recognised internally due to demonstrating the ability of the TSO to support tenants and reduce emergency homelessness situations.

However, delivery staff and the stakeholder both felt that the demand for the work of the TSO was much higher than anticipated in the bid, suggesting one person did not provide enough capacity to handle the number of requests from tenants. They pointed to the growing size of the private rented sector in the

[57] Barking and Dagenham local authority webpage for Advice for private tenants https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/private-tenant-rights

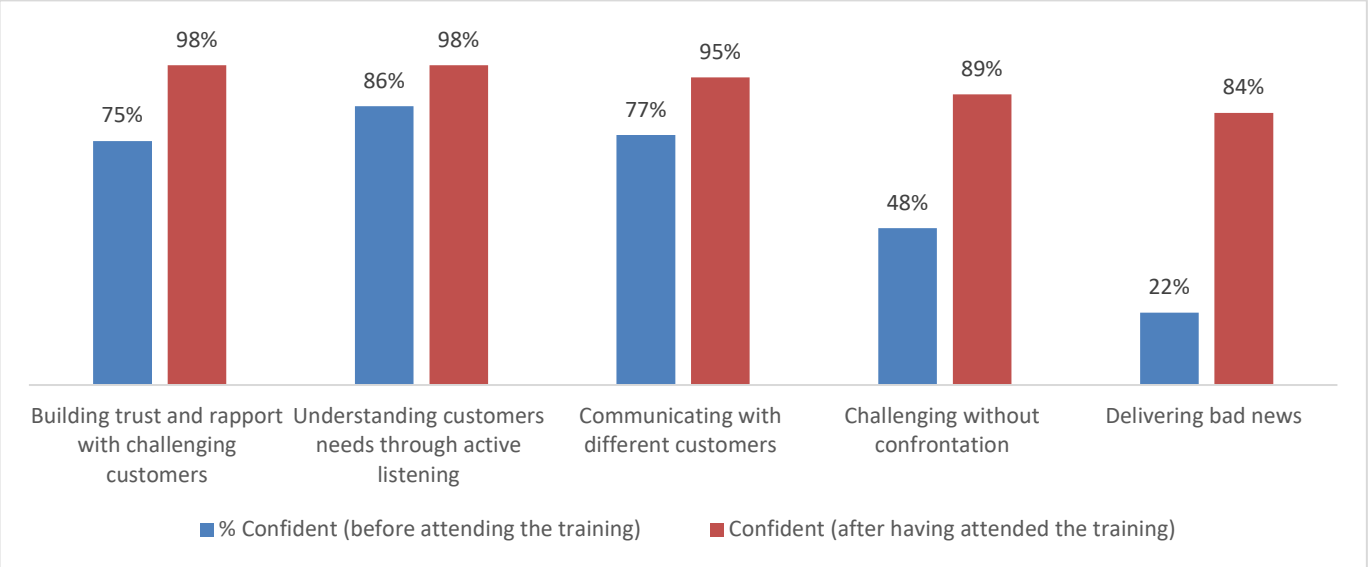
borough and population churn as the key drivers of demand, necessitating continual need to provide information and education to new tenants.

Effective Conversations Training (Storytelling and Listening strand)

Through Effective Conversations Training activities, the project aimed to improve customer service skills among local authority staff, including helping them to feel more confident in delivering negative news. In this way, the project hoped to improve the service provided to local residents and increase trust and engagement with the local authority, thereby reducing tensions between residents and the local authority. Evidence comes from interviews with project staff, delivery staff and three local authority training beneficiaries. Quantitative feedback from the post-only training surveys (with questions exploring perceived of change as a result of the training) completed by beneficiaries and follow-up updates from six beneficiaries three weeks after completing the training gathered by delivery staff also contributed to the evidence.

Beneficiaries surveyed at the end of the training session reported a significant increase in confidence across all five areas covered in the training: building trust and rapport with challenging customers (+23 percentage points); understanding customers' needs through active listening (+ 13 percentage points); communicating with different customers (+18 percentage points); challenging without confrontation (+41 percentage points) and delivering bad news; (+61 percentage points).

Figure 1.2: Perceived change in confidence levels among training beneficiaries



Base: 57 Local authority training beneficiaries. Source: Effective Conversations Training feedback

Updates from local authority training beneficiaries three weeks after completing the training indicated that those who had been presented with an opportunity to try out the techniques found that implementing active listening and using clear and direct communication had been beneficial to their role. However, none of the beneficiaries mentioned that they had been involved in challenging confrontation or delivering bad news since taking part in the training.

Later in the project, having had time to implement the techniques, the training beneficiaries interviewed who had received the training were less enthusiastic about it. Beneficiaries described how they had used active listening and were aware of body language when talking with residents, but none indicated that

they had used the specific techniques around challenging without confrontation and delivering bad news within in their day-to-day role. Staff recalled that the training had a customer service focus, however, they could not recall specifics around learning about navigating difficult conversations with residents. However, as only three beneficiaries were interviewed, views may not be representative of the entire training cohort.

Nonetheless, project staff considered the Effective Conversations Training to have been a success and noted that it had since become a mainstream part of the local authority's training offer. They explained that the train-the-trainer training meant that local authority staff would have the institutional knowledge to continue rolling out the training to the rest of Community Solutions and other departments such as My Place at all levels of seniority, suggesting that the training had been "scaled up" across the local authority.

The above evidence, alongside monitoring data, indicates that the project appears to have contributed towards acquiring expertise and structures in place to deal with local issues, especially through the role of the TSO. The Effective Conversations Training also contributed to the outcome and has become embedded in the operation of the local authority.

Intermediate outcome 5: Improved signposting and referral systems

TSO and FLO (Managing Rogue Landlords strand)

Through the activities of the TSO and FLO, the Managing Rogue Landlords strand aimed to achieve this outcome through the creation of a referral pathway between the PRS team, the CABD and other local authority departments and services (such as the Housing Options team). Evidence comes from interviews with delivery staff, project staff and monitoring data submitted by the delivery partners in the form of progress reports.

Prior to the creation of the new referral pathway, delivery staff reported that the process of referring tenants to other services was informal, with referrals made by individual tenancy officers based on their awareness of available services and departments. As part of the Connected Communities project, the TSO designed a decision flow chart mapping out the new referral pathway and clarifying the circumstances under which cases should be referred. The chart included the type of support provided by wider organisations, charities and departments in the borough, including the CABD. At the time of the evaluation, the TSO was in the process of integrating the referral pathway map into a more comprehensive Advice, Guidance, Process and Referral Pathway document for tenancy officers working with tenants facing unlawful eviction, landlord harassment or substandard housing.

Project staff and delivery staff members reported that the referral pathway had been a success, with project staff highlighting how it had delivered insight by drawing attention to areas where tenants may be "slipping through the net". For example, identifying circumstances where tenant issues would not be covered by either criminal or civil law, or finding areas where improved coordination between the local authority and the CABD could benefit tenants (such as ensuring a paper trail is recorded to aid any future prosecution).

"[The referral pathway has] done more than deliver what they originally intended, it's also delivered insight which was unexpected" Project staff, interview

Delivery staff described the old system as a "juggling act" to try to support tenants. They felt that the new referral pathway had helped them to find solutions to protect residents facing difficult PRS housing situations and that the inclusion of the Housing Options team had streamlined the process of supporting tenants facing the possibility of eviction and/ or homelessness.

Delivery staff acknowledged that mapping the process took a long time, due to the need to build the partnerships and overcome the "siloed working" of the local authority PRS team and Housing Options team. In addition, delivery staff described how the complexity of criminal and civil law in relation to the private rented sector was challenging, intricate and time-consuming. The time required to set up the referral pathway impacted the number of tenants the TSO and FLO were able to support within the evaluation timeframe, however, delivery staff felt that the benefits outweighed the time investment. According to delivery staff, the new referral pathway resulted in systems change through honest conversations about details in the system and created a "springboard" to do more work together in the future.

"We keep on finding these pieces of [work] that we would never have been able to have traction on, both in terms of honesty, openness, detail about the system, and therefore the detail about how to solve and find ways to protect resident's positions." Delivery staff, interview

As a result of joint-working between the PRS team, the Housing Options team and the CABD, facilitated by the referral pathway, delivery staff reported that they had achieved multiple positive outcomes for tenants, which they attributed to this wrap-around service (explored further in outcome 7 below).

Delivery staff also explained that they intended to develop the referral pathway by adding new partners into the process, to further improve the support available to PRS tenants in the borough. However, staff acknowledged that challenges around sharing tenants' personal data between partners, particularly with the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), still needed to be resolved in order to maximise the effectiveness of the partnership.

The project had intended for the TSO and CABD to refer tenants for whom English language was identified as a barrier to Creative English classes. However, evidence provided by all three delivery partners suggested that this referral process did not work in practice (as outlined in Chapter 3), meaning that it was unsuccessful. Project staff recognised that the point at which tenants experience a housing issue was not the right time to be referred to English classes. Instead, staff explained they found it more helpful to keep the two types of activities (housing support and English language classes) separate, seeing the support provided by the TSO and FLO as a "safety net", while Creative English classes took on a more "preventative" function.

The above evidence suggests that the project improved referral systems for tenants in PRS properties facing unlawful eviction, landlord harassment or substandard housing through the creation of a referral pathway mapping the system between the TSO, the CABD and the Housing Options team. The evidence also suggests that the new referral process contributed to the CMF intermediate outcome of Housing Issues identified (although unintended). The planned referral route for Creative English classes was, however, unsuccessful.

Intermediate outcome 6: Increased understanding of and access to public services

Creative English classes (Managing Rogue Landlords strand)

Through the delivery of Creative English classes**,** the project intended to contribute to increasing understanding of and access to public services among residents with low levels of English language proficiency. These classes aimed to increase confidence among learners to engage with local services. Evidence for this outcome comes from interviews with project staff, delivery staff, Creative English learners and volunteers.

As outlined above and in Chapter 3, the intended referral pathway for tenants supported by the TSO and CABD to Creative English classes did not take place as intended. Nevertheless, delivery staff reported that the course still included a variety of material regarding housing, including:

- Rights and responsibilities of tenants and landlords, including communication with landlords, information about tenancy agreements, deposit protection schemes and the right to repair;
- Maintenance, health and safety: information about gas certificates, managing and documenting a complaint, understanding the difference between condensation and damp and what to do about it; and
- Sources of support within the borough: visiting the CAB and how to make a report to Housing Enforcement.

Learners who were interviewed also recalled learning about how to move to a new property and how to speak to a landlord about housing issues. Creative English classes also included content on how to access public services through roleplay exercises. Learners, volunteers and delivery staff recalled topics such as making an appointment at the GP, going to hospital, calling 999, using a pharmacy and talking with teachers about their children. When describing examples of where they had accessed a service successfully, learners attributed their increased confidence to attending the Creative English classes.

"Now I can talk to the doctors. Before my husband was the interpreter, but nowadays I am speaking to him alone." Creative English Learner, interview

Despite the shift of focus away from direct referrals, the above evidence suggests that the Creative English classes increased learners' understanding of, and their access to, local public services (including housing, health and education services).

Intermediate outcome 7: Housing issues resolved

Tenancy Sustainment Officer (TSO) and Family Liaison Officer (FLO) (Managing Rogue Landlords strand)

Through the activities of the TSO and FLO, the project aimed to resolve housing issues faced by tenants facing unlawful eviction, landlord harassment or substandard housing. The work of the TSO and FLO involved mediating relationships between tenants and landlords; referring tenants to relevant services; and raising awareness of the rights and responsibilities of both tenants and landlords. Evidence for this outcome comes from interviews with delivery staff, case studies provided by CABD and monitoring data from progress reports submitted by delivery staff.

According to a delivery staff member, the TSO and FLO were able to solve various issues faced by tenants, including the TSO reinstating tenants within properties they had been locked out of, and

reconnecting utilities that had been cut off by landlords. This was echoed by the two case studies provided by CABD which provided examples of serving notices and prosecuting non-compliant or criminal landlords. In both cases, the case studies describe successful outcomes for the tenants: in one case enabling repairs to go ahead, and in another helping the tenant to access financial compensation via a Rent Repayment Order[58] which could then be used as a deposit for other accommodation. The monitoring data showed that, overall, the TSO conducted 95 visits to households at risk of unlawful eviction, landlord harassment or substandard housing and resolved 68 cases without needing to refer the tenant to another service. Further monitoring data from the CABD also indicated that the FLO had supported 34 tenants during managed exists from unsafe properties throughout the 18 months that the FLO had been in post (data provided did not indicate whether any of the 34 cases were referred to the FLO by the TSO).

The case studies provided by CABD also described examples of joint working between the TSO and FLO, with enforcement action in conjunction with mediation. For example, one case study described the FLO acting as an intermediary between the tenant and the landlord in order to grant access to builders to carry out repairs at the same time the TSO focused on legal compliance. Delivery staff also described how they were able to prevent homelessness in the borough through mediation. Monitoring data showed that 18% (102) of tenants supported by the CABD received mediation between themselves and their landlord and avoided eviction as a result.

"We've been able to prevent street homelessness and mediate between tenants and landlords, allowing tenants time to find suitable accommodation and leave on their own terms. There was a recent case where the tenant was issued incorrect notices after which the landlord changed the locks. We were able to reinstate the tenant and ensure security while she lived there." *Delivery staff, interview*

The FLO also supported 555 tenants to understand their rights and responsibilities. Anecdotally, delivery staff reported seeing an increase in the number of tenants and landlords who seemed to be more aware of their rights and responsibilities as a result of the interaction with the TSO. They described, as an example, tenants calling the TSO to confirm whether their intended actions were legal and safe.

Interviews with delivery staff also indicated that the new referral system supported tenants to address housing issues. This is explored further under intermediate outcome 5 above. **The above evidence, alongside monitoring data, indicates that the project resolved housing issues for tenants through a combination of support, mediation, information provision and referrals.**

Intermediate outcome 8: Access to ESOL and EAL provision

Creative English classes (Managing Rogue Landlords strand)

Through the delivery of Creative English classes across the borough, the project aimed to increase access to English language provision for residents with low levels of English proficiency, including those facing housing issues. Evidence for this outcome comes from interviews with delivery staff, Creative English volunteers and learners, as well as monitoring data provided by delivery staff.

[58] A Rent Repayment Order is an order made by the First-tier Tribunal requiring a landlord to repay a specified amount of rent. The Housing and Planning Act 2016 extended Rent Repayment Orders to cover illegal eviction, breach of a banning order and certain other specified offences. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rent-repayment-orders-under-the-housing-and-planning-act-2016

Volunteers described how the Creative English classes complimented formal ESOL provision in the borough, through offering a more practical type of learning experience, including more opportunities to practice speaking. A volunteer also reflected that they appreciated the conversation practise within the Creative English classes, as their other class had been more academic.

"In college you have less opportunity to talk, but here you have that opportunity to talk and the teacher can correct for you. In the college [you are] just listening because the teacher spoke all the time. Here you can improve your speaking." *Creative English Volunteer, interview*

However, the volunteer also explained that the focus on oral language skills meant that learners did not gain other skills that would help them to address housing issues, such as how to write a letter to a landlord and suggested this would be useful additional content.

When asked about their futures, volunteers and learners mentioned that many of the learners aspired to attend formal education, gain certifications and/or find a job. The delivery partner explained that by including volunteers who had pursued further studies, learners were given a motivational example of what they could do.

The above evidence suggests that the project appears to have increased access to English language provision by providing an alternative to existing formal provision at local colleges.

Intermediate outcome 9: Increased understanding of British culture and social norms

Creative English classes (Managing Rogue Landlords strand)

Through the delivery of Creative English classes, the project aimed to improve understanding of social norms among beneficiaries through exercises roleplaying everyday scenarios and interactions as well as through covering topics about aspects of UK law. Project staff did not consider improving understanding of British culture to be an explicit aim of the project. However, evidence suggests that classes included promoting values of respect and tolerance. Evidence for this outcome comes from interviews with delivery staff, Creative English learners and volunteers.

Delivery staff explained that social norms were embedded throughout the Creative English course. Although not addressed as a specific topic they described how, within the class, teachers aimed to promote a culture of respect and tolerance. This was echoed by volunteers who mentioned that the classes taught respect for one another, as well as more practical knowledge about the law. Creative English learners found it more difficult to recall what they had learned about social norms explicitly (which may in part have been due to a difficulty in understanding the question due to low English language ability), however some learners recalled learning about the UK parliament and elections. One of the learners also spoke positively about living in a progressive multicultural society.

"There are many cultures here and I respect the cultures and other religions." Creative English volunteer*, interview*

There is some evidence of the Creative English classes contributing to increasing understanding of social norms through Creative English classes. However, due to the small number of beneficiaries interviewed, it is difficult to assess to what extent the outcome was achieved for all learners.

Intermediate outcome 10: Increased civic society participation

Creative English classes (Managing Rogue Landlords strand)

Creative English classes aimed to increase confidence among learners to communicate with neighbours and wider residents and take a more active role in the community, through volunteering opportunities within and outside the English classes. The classes also provided opportunities and training for learners to become volunteer English language assistants. Evidence for this outcome comes from interviews with delivery staff, Creative English learners and volunteers.

Delivery staff described how the Creative English classes included content on volunteering and that they sought opportunities for learners to complement their interests. In classes delivered at the Castle Point community centre, delivery staff were able to signpost learners to a volunteer coordinator to help identify opportunities. Delivery staff also reported encouraging learners to volunteer at the community centre's creche or kitchen, as well as suggesting to opportunities outside of the community centre. Monitoring data showed that 23 learners were registered with the volunteer coordinator as of December 2019. More specifically, eight learners were trained to assist in delivering Creative English classes, and an additional ten learners volunteered with Creative English over the summer to run activities without training (seven of whom were first-time volunteers). According to delivery staff, these volunteers were recruited from learners who had previously attended the class and had exhibited the necessary language and social skills. While most volunteers put themselves forward, according to the delivery staff, they sometimes received recommendations from other learners. In other cases, staff approached learners directly if they thought they might be suitable and interested. This aligns with feedback from the volunteers interviewed, one of whom was approached by delivery staff while the other was encouraged to volunteer by other learners in the class.

One learner described that, although they had already started volunteering in the Castle Point creche prior to attending Creative English classes, they felt that the English lessons had helped them to communicate better with children and parents at the creche. Another learner described how they had not volunteered before, but subsequently sought out further opportunities to volunteer with help from delivery staff. Both volunteers stated that they wished to volunteer more in the future, particularly in schools, for example as a teaching assistant or at reception, and spoke positively about the potential employability benefits of their volunteering experience.

"Like me, other learners came here to learn English. After that they became volunteers in the creche or in the kitchen, and it is also helpful in your CV, and after that you can do other things."

Creative English Volunteer, interview

The above evidence suggests that the Creative English classes contributed to increasing civic society participation among some learners, particularly with regards to supporting other learners improve their English.

Intermediate outcome 11: Increased involvement in community-led integration activities (i.e. volunteering)

Amplify Barking and Dagenham (Storytelling and Listening strand)

Through Amplify Barking and Dagenham activities, the project aimed to achieve this outcome through training residents to become Community Amplifiers. Evidence for this outcome comes from an interview with project staff, a focus group with the Community Amplifiers and monitoring data submitted by delivery staff.

Prior to participating in the project, the majority of the Community Amplifiers said they had previously volunteered in some capacity or were involved in a community group (such as being involved in a church group, volunteering at a playgroup at a community centre or involvement in a local residents' association). Community Amplifiers highlighted how the project had increased their confidence in talking to new people, taught them research skills and helped them to feel more positive about where they live and more connected to the borough. One Community Amplifier suggested that being involved in the project would "probably make [them] more proactive in the borough". However, none reported wanting to be more involved in community activities or volunteering as a result of their participation (potentially due to their already high levels of participation). This was at odds with the hope from project staff that the Community Amplifiers would continue to use the knowledge and skills they accrued through the project to be "activists for change" in the borough.

Youth Arts (Storytelling and Listening strand)

Through Youth Arts activities, the project aimed to increase involvement of young residents in volunteering through taking part in an art-based programme and commissioning three pieces of art in the borough. Evidence comes from a group interview with three of the young resident Youth Arts project beneficiaries.

Similar to the Community Amplifiers, two of the project beneficiaries said they had volunteered prior to attending the Youth Arts project (one at an external youth club and the other through the delivery partner on a different project). However, both said that they would volunteer again. The other project beneficiary interviewed said they had not previously volunteered anywhere and nor had they been interested in doing so, but that this had changed as a result of their experience of the project.

"It's like, whenever someone said 'volunteering' I'd think 'oh okay, it's not something I'd think about actually physically going and doing'. But now that I'm here, it's easy, I can find something and do it. It has changed my perspective on it." Project beneficiary, group interview

Interfaith platform (Storytelling and Listening strand)

Through Interfaith Platform activities, the project aimed to increase resident participation in Interfaith Week. This included through an art competition for local school children, introduced by the delivery partner for Interfaith Week 2019. The project also intended to increase membership of the local Faith Forum. Evidence comes from an interview with delivery staff, questionnaires completed by attendee beneficiaries of the "Celebrating Faith, Diversity and Harmony" Interfaith Week event as well as monitoring data provided by delivery staff.

35

attendees at Interfaith Week event, compared to 26 in 2018

Delivery staff reported that they had a "really successful" Interfaith Week, evidenced by an increase in attendance to the interfaith event (35 attendees compared to 26 in 2018) and a three-fold increase in the number of places of worship that were involved in the "visit my place of worship" event series (12) compared to 2018 figures (four).

12

Places of worship took part in "Visit My Place of Worship" events (compared to 4 in 2018)

Delivery staff also wanted to encourage future participation in interfaith activities. All five of the beneficiaries who attended the Interfaith Week event and filled in a questionnaire said they were "a lot more likely" to get involved in future interfaith activities and events and, of those five, four said they had not attended any other community run interfaith events or activities in the five years prior. Moreover, all five beneficiaries said they were "a lot more likely" to get involved in future community-led activities and events (such as joining a youth club, sports club, community group, or volunteering). Due to the small base size, these numbers are indicative only and may not be representative of all attendees.

In terms of the attendance at other Faith Forum events, the delivery partner reported an increase, with 17 new people joining meetings on a regular basis and five expressing an interest. They noted that some of the new members had initially said they were not interested in interfaith or working on a local authority connected project, however, delivery staff were able to "challenge [these] perceptions, build trust and gain new support". Monitoring data submitted by the delivery partner showed that, across all interfaith events (including those run by the Faith Forum and those that were part of Interfaith Week), all attendees said their experience at the event made them at lot more likely to get involved in future interfaith activities and events (153 responses total, although this may include double counting of beneficiaries that attended multiple events).

Delivery staff felt that while they increased the Faith Forum's membership and event attendance, the operation of the Faith Forum was an initial barrier. This required the delivery partner to initially focus on renewing the Faith Forum's constitution and Charity Commission details (a requirement for building membership). The delivery partner also helped the Faith Forum to create a new website, so that the work and objectives were more visible and accessible to the public. By December 2019, the delivery partner had increased the subscribers to 120 individuals, to whom they sent a newly created newsletter. If this initial work had not been necessary, the delivery partner felt that capacity could have been redirected to engage more faith communities.

"I think what has been a challenge is that the Faith Forum, it ideally needed to focus on building its network before it started to do lots of product events because I think they've put on events but not had much of an audience to advertise their events to, and so the stuff we did in Interfaith Week could've been more effective and could've engaged with more faith communities." Delivery staff, interview

The above evidence indicates that the project contributed towards increasing involvement in community-led integration events, especially through the Interfaith Platform activities. However, qualitative research with project beneficiaries in the Youth Arts project and Community Amplifiers indicated that the majority had previously been involved in some form of community-led activity or volunteering.

Intermediate outcome 12: Increased opportunities for social mixing

Youth Arts (Storytelling and Listening strand)

Through Youth Arts activities, the project aimed to encourage young people to mix socially by participating in an art-based project. Evidence comes from a group interview with three Youth Arts project beneficiaries.

All three of the beneficiaries reported that the project had helped them to feel more confident in speaking to other people. One of the beneficiaries said that, prior to the project, they usually only talked to a set group of people because they were nervous when interacting with new people. Despite feeling more confident and highlighting how they had met other volunteers and artists, the beneficiaries did not feel like the project had resulted in them meeting anyone from a different background that they wouldn't have met through other circumstances, saying that Barking and Dagenham is a diverse borough with lots of opportunities to meet new people.

"Barking and Dagenham [is] quite multicultural, so it is very unusual for you to meet someone from a culture you've never met before, maybe you'd learn more things about that culture, but it is not like you'd meet someone and be like "oh I've never met someone from that place". It happens occasionally but not as much as you'd think." Project beneficiary, group interview

Interfaith Platform (Storytelling and Listening strand)

Through the Interfaith Platform activities, the project aimed to increase opportunities for social mixing and improve awareness of different points of view within the community by running events for residents (including events for Interfaith Week and activities such as the schools' programmes). Evidence comes from an interview with delivery staff and a resident Interfaith Platform project beneficiary, questionnaires completed by attendee beneficiaries of the "Celebrating Faith, Diversity and Harmony" Interfaith Week event, questionnaires from the schools' workshops, and monitoring data provided by delivery staff in the form of a progress report.

Four of the five beneficiaries who attended the "Celebrating Faith, Diversity and Harmony" Interfaith Week event (jointly delivered by the Interfaith Platform delivery partner and the local Faith Forum) and filled in a questionnaire said they has met someone at the event from a faith, belief or community that was new to them. The Interfaith Platform project beneficiary interviewed also described how the event provided residents with the opportunity to network with other residents and discuss their faith, as well as activities for families and young people.

"The activity is to allow individuals or communities to come to events and express what they believe. So, the interfaith will allow the Muslims, the Christians and different other faiths and beliefs to showcase what they believe." Project Beneficiary, interview

The delivery partner also delivered 19 workshops to four schools in the borough (one secondary and three primary schools), reaching 540 students. Quantitative evidence gathered from questionnaires filled in by pupils indicated that the workshops contributed to increasing social mixing and interfaith understanding, through meeting people from different faiths to themselves (93% of pupils),and learning something they weren't expecting from another faith or belief (92% of pupils). The majority of pupils (77%) also felt the event made them feel more confident speaking to people of different beliefs.

93%
of young people said they met someone from a different faith or belief to themselves

92%
of young people said they learnt something they weren't expecting about someone else's faith

77%
of young people stated they would now feed confident speaking to someone with a different faith or belief to themselves

After conducting scoping research for the faith policy and delivering the schools' workshops, project staff reported that residents in the borough were already interacting with people from different faiths and beliefs and that schools were already quite diverse. However, they identified that adults did not have the space or confidence they needed to have "difficult and serious conversations" about differences within the borough.

"In our research, people tend to say that they interact with people from different faiths and beliefs quite a lot, so that was quite interesting to see that people maybe feel that it's something they do naturally…. When we've gone to schools, we've seen how diverse the schools are and how confident children are to speak about their faith and beliefs. I think on an adult level, the view that we've got is that although you might meet people from different faith backgrounds, there's never really space to talk about… what difficulties there could be, and maybe difficult conversations and serious conversations aren't really being had." Delivery staff, interview

Project staff added to this sentiment, explaining that a key learning from the project was an acknowledgement that activities to promote social mixing alone would not be enough to address underlying prejudices held by some residents within the borough.

While not an intended outcome, there was evidence that **Creative English classes** learners benefited from socially mixing with others in the class and interacting with learners from different backgrounds, helping them to build relationships. Delivery staff described how some learners would meet up outside of class and do activities together, building their confidence in speaking English and encouraging them to feel "empowered" within the community and "participate as functioning people". Learners and volunteers complemented this by expressing that making friends was one of the personal benefits they gained from attending the classes. Furthermore, through the **Amplify Barking and Dagenham** research activities, there was some evidence that the Community Amplifiers benefited from conducting interviews with a range of residents who they indicated they would not have met otherwise. In the focus group, Community Amplifiers described how making new connections with people in their local area - by approaching them for an interview - also helped them to feel "more at home" in the borough and like they belong "a bit more than they used to".

The evidence outlined above indicates that the project contributed to increasing social mixing among residents, particularly pupils taking part in Interfaith Week activities. The project hoped to contribute further to this outcome in the future through additional activities, including the storytelling events and co-creation sessions with residents as part of the Amplify Barking and Dagenham activities and other events and activities that were still in the planning stage at the time of the evaluation. While not an intended outcome from this activity, there was also evidence that the Creative English classes contributed towards increased social mixing among learners.

Unintended outcomes

The evaluation found evidence of two unintended outcomes as a result of the Connected Communities project.

There was evidence that that the **Creative English classes** inspired learners to look into attending formal education and gain qualifications with the aim of finding a job. This was attributed to the role of volunteers who had pursued further studies and encouraged learners to volunteer within areas they would like to gain further skills. For example, volunteers and delivery staff pointed to one learner who had started to volunteer in the community centre kitchen to build up their confidence in speaking English before eventually going on to complete formal catering qualifications. There was also evidence to suggests that the role of the **TSO** contributed to the CMF intermediate outcome of Housing Issues identified through the creation of new referral process. Project and delivery staff described how the new referral pathway had drawn attention to specific and detailed areas where tenants were possibility "slipping through the net", which had not previously been explore in enough detail, highlighting new Housing Issues that needed to be addressed and resolved.

Progress towards longer-term outcomes

This section gives a short summary of progress made towards long-term outcomes based on the direction of travel identified for intermediate outcomes. This is based on the logic intended by the project, outlined in the theory of change (figure 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1,4 in the Introduction) and on the expectation that the assumptions contained in the model are valid.

There is strong evidence that the project contributed towards the intermediate local authority outcome of improved insight into local migration patterns and community impact, and some evidence that the project is already contributing to the intended longer-term local authority CMF outcomes of **evidence for future service planning and resourcing** as a result of embedding insight from the qualitative and quantitative research within the local authority. Based on the direction of travel, it is also likely that the project will contribute to this outcome further in future: delivery staff reported that several local authority staff members had received training on how to use the Values Modes insight to further embed the thinking and skills across the local authority.

There is also evidence that the project is likely to contribute to the longer-term outcome of **building the evidence base of "what works" locally**. This is due to contribution towards the intermediate outcomes of 'acquired expertise and structures in place to deal with local issues' (Effective Conversations Training), 'increased co-ordination and co-operation between agencies' (Connected Communities Officer), 'increasing insight into local migration patterns and community impact' (Values Modes research and Origins Analysis), and 'expanded and strengthened networks and partners' (Interfaith Platform).

Through the work of the TSO and FLO in supporting tenants and creating the referral pathway, the project contributed towards the local authority intermediate outcomes of 'expanded and strengthened networks and partners', 'increased co-ordination and co-operation between agencies', 'acquired expertise and structures in place to deal with local issues', 'improved sign posting and referral systems' and 'resolving housing issues'. Evidence suggests that the project is on track to achieve the long-term migrant CMF outcomes of **increased well-being, increased living standards and reduction in exploitation (from rogue landlords)**.

Through contributing towards ‘access to English language courses’ and ‘increased understanding of British culture and social norms’ (which both included understanding of housing rights), the project also appeared to be on course to achieve the following long-term CMF outcomes for migrants: **increased well-being, increased English proficiency and labour market skills, and reduction in exploitation (from rogue landlords)** All three of the learners interviewed felt that their English had improved since attending the classes. A volunteer also noted that new joiners were often very shy when they first arrived, but that they started to talk with others in the class after two or three lessons.

There was some evidence to suggest that the project is likely to achieve the longer-term local authority CMF outcome of **increased levels of social mixing**, albeit on a small scale, through contribution towards the intermediate outcome of ‘increased involvement in community-led integration activities’ and ‘increased opportunities for social mixing’. This would be dependent on beneficiaries using the skills gained through the activities to further the objectives of the project. There was more evidence of this from Creative English classes and Youth Arts activities, however, the evidence is more limited for the Community Amplifiers. The project also intended to deliver further activities to contribute towards this outcome beyond the timescale of the evaluation.

5. Key findings: Value for Money

Introduction

Due to the lack of quantifiable outcomes data or primary or secondary data to monetise outcomes, it was not possible to conduct a CBA or a CEA for the Connected Communities project[59]. As a result, a qualitative assessment of costs and benefits is included below. This is based on data from interviews and focus groups with project staff, delivery staff, an internal stakeholder, Community Amplifiers (Amplify Barking and Dagenham), and Creative English learners and volunteers. A review of secondary data regarding relevant intended outcomes provides further context.

Value for money assessment

Secondary data assessment

The evaluation evidence suggests that the project contributed to outcomes that have the potential to contribute to the cost-effectiveness of the project interventions but were not possible to include in a cost benefit analysis or a cost-effectiveness analysis due to a lack of available quantifiable data on beneficiary outcomes.

Qualitative evidence from the Community Amplifier focus group suggests that involvement in the project increased their confidence and that beneficiaries developed transferable skills for future employment.

"Because I hadn't worked for ten years. I had children and just left work. So, getting back into this, for me, has definitely made me more confident about myself. I didn't really go on the computer, other than Facebook and things like that... but now I can use spreadsheets, type things up. Well, I think it won't make, it won't make me so technophobic as I was before because the world is changing now, and it is all computers and online. And, for me, it's definitely helped my confidence with side of it." Community Amplifier, focus group

Some Creative English learners and volunteers also reported that volunteering opportunities identified through the classes, as well as increased confidence to volunteer through improved English language skills, had made them more confident to apply for further education and employment.

While the cost-benefit ratio of volunteering depends on the type of programme analysed, a study by Pro Bono Economics estimated a cost-benefit ration of between 1.2 and 1.6 based on a series of assumptions concerning the operating costs that might pertain to a 10,000-volunteer scheme[60].

Delivery staff and Creative English learners also suggested that their English language had improved, although it is not clear how many learners would have identified alternative provision had the classes not been available. While staff suggested that some more vulnerable learners may not have accessed provision outside of the community centre setting, some suggested that they would access college

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[59] Recording financial data in a specific format was not a requirement of CMF funding for projects. Financial data was received for the Connected Communities project demonstrating spend for each strand. However, this was outside of the analysis period and therefore could not be included in the analysis.

[60] Pro Bono Economics, The Economic Value of Full-Time Volunteering. Available at https://www.probonoeconomics.com/sites/default/files/files/The%20Economic%20Value%20of%20Full-Time%20Volunteering_0.pdf

provision. Evidence surrounding the cost-benefit of English language provision in the UK is mixed. A 2013 study by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills found slight increases in employment rates and receipt of benefits following ESOL courses. However, econometric analysis found no significant returns for individuals in terms of subsequent time in work, of earnings, or of reduced time on benefits, suggesting that the economic benefit of these courses was negligible. However, these findings may be mitigated by the fact that benefits may take longer to achieve than the study period examined[61].

Monitoring data from the Managing Rogue Landlords strand indicates that between the work of the TSO and FLO, 102 families considered at risk of eviction received landlord/ tenant mediation to remain in their home, while 35 families were supported through a managed exit from their property (into council and/or private accommodation). This could represent a reduction in homelessness (although it is not clear how many beneficiaries would have found alternative accommodation without the support of the project). Research has estimated that, on average, preventing homelessness for one year would result in a reduction in public expenditure of £9,266 per person, due to improved health and reduction in use of public services (NHS and mental health services and costs to the criminal justice system)[62].

"I think it's about keeping the roof over their head, over someone's head actually and taking everything into a more preventative zone and through the support and signposting that occurs whilst the person has a roof over their head" Delivery staff (Managing Rogue Landlords), interview

In addition, data from the Manchester New Economic Unit cost database estimates cost savings for local authorities as a result of preventing a complex eviction to be £7,770. This includes the ongoing cost of providing temporary accommodation in the private rented sector whilst a homelessness application is progressing (based upon two weeks of temporary accommodation). Prevented evictions are also likely to provide wider economic and social benefits such as improved wellbeing and reduced long run healthcare costs in the future.

Qualitative assessment of project costs and benefits

Financial reporting took the form of quarterly reports by delivery partners to the project coordinator. Reflecting the flexible ethos of the project, the reporting did not have a set structure. While it mainly took the form of written updates, it also included conversations with partners and a review of outputs, particularly in the case of Community Amplifiers and the work of The Campaign Company. Project staff recognised that the hands-off approach meant that there was a "trade-off" between building trusting relationships with partners and the requirement to be prescriptive and collect comparable data on progress towards project outputs on each strand. However, staff felt this approach ultimately worked well, as partners were more engaged and could adapt their work in line with the learnings from the project.

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[61] Department for Business Innovation & Skills, 2013, Evaluation of the Impact of Learning Below Level 2. Available here: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/253585/bis-13-1261-evaluation-of-the-impact-of-learning-below-level-2.pdf

[62] Pleace, N. & Culhane, D.P. (2016) Better than Cure? Testing the case for Enhancing Prevention of Single Homelessness in England. London: Crisis. Available at: https://www.crisis.org.uk/media/20680/crisis_better_than_cure_2016.pdf

"We probably could've got more out of the evaluation if we'd been more interventionist, but that might have been a trade off with the relationship that we had with partners, and then their willingness to change what they were doing… and I think that some of that willingness to give [extra towards the project] is because they do feel this ownership and we haven't prescribed that you do these things by this time. But it does also mean that, yeah, we haven't been as directional in terms of… getting a specific set of numbers each time, but that also fits within the approach to get beyond the limitations of new public management." Project staff, interview

Project staff felt that the flexible approach, which emphasised partnership working and focus on shared goals between delivery partners, gave the different organisations involved a sense of ownership. Staff highlighted the example of one partner who had provided additional resources for activities in order to further the objectives of the Connected Communities project, as they now saw this as a shared objective of their organisation.

Project staff highlighted the value of CMF funding in providing dedicated resource to investigate cohesion issues. Due to funding pressures, staff did not think this would have happened in the absence of CMF funding, which would have meant the local authority lacked the evidence-base to make cohesion a key focus of the service transformation strategy.

"When there is such a tight pressure on funding, having the resource to invest in specifically thinking about the cohesion angle is, has been really helpful and I don't know if this, well this work wouldn't have been done" Project staff, interview

The use of volunteers, for example, through the Creative English classes and local Faith Forum, was also considered to promote efficiency and reduce costs. For the Creative English classes, this had the added benefit of upskilling beneficiaries and increasing their confidence for future employment (as outlined above).

"I think I would say that [the Interfaith Platform activities] have been delivered in quite a cost-effective way because we've been able to recruit local volunteers… it's been great to have the Faith Forum that are all volunteers that could put in time" Delivery staff (Interfaith Platform), interview

Project staff felt that a key benefit of the funding was the focus on learning and the ability to commission research to understand local cohesion issues and pressures. Project staff highlighted that the internal data team would not have had the capacity to investigate cohesion, due to pressures on their time. Furthermore, project staff reported that outsourcing the work to delivery partners brought additional insights through their Values Modes work and experience in analysing Origins software. Project staff were not aware of other funding sources that would have enabled them to undertake this work.

"The research piece has been really useful… we never would have got funded anywhere else because you can't get research funding, so that is exceptional and brilliant. This was the only option to get at that time" Project staff, interview

Project staff and delivery partners felt that while specific partner organisations may have continued their work in the absence of CMF funding (including Creative English classes and tenant support provided by

the CABD), this would have been less focused on learning and sustainable solutions, as well as lacking the focus on identified problems (such as retaliatory evictions). Furthermore, without the partnership approach, project staff felt that the local authority would not have gained insight into the work of the delivery partners, which had helped them to identify "what works" to improve cohesion. Partners also felt that through the Connected Communities funding they were able to add value and capacity that the local authority lacked internally, in order to address specific issues in a way that otherwise would not have been possible.

"No, if we hadn't got this money, we really wouldn't be doing this work… it's a bit like having an excuse to go much more deeply into work that you would want to do, but you don't have an ability to do that. So, the generalists wouldn't do it, because they've got too much strain on them because they've got to help over demand" Delivery staff (Managing Rogue Landlords), interview

"There's absolutely no way that we would have focused on these types of detailed system solutions." Delivery staff (Managing Rogue Landlords), interview

"We would still have been doing work with the CAB, but it would not have been on the deep dive around preventing homelessness…. so that whole massive piece of work and way of thinking, and entry point into particular issues for migrants" Project staff, interview

6. Conclusions and lessons learned

This chapter outlines key learnings from the Connected Communities project in relation to the achievement of project outputs and outcomes. The key barriers and enablers are also highlighted. This is followed by a discussion of some of the main attributes of the project, including for whom it benefited, the larger context in which it was created, and future directions in terms of replicability, scalability and sustainability.

What works?

The main components that contributed to the successful delivery of the Connected Community project and contribution to intended outcomes included:

- the initial focus on research and partnership building to increase understanding of local issues, and the adoption of a flexible approach to delivery;
- opportunities for partnership working created through quarterly evaluation meetings;
- achieving buy-in from senior local authority stakeholders;
- recruitment of experienced partners to run project activities; and
- recruitment of residents from diverse backgrounds to help with engaging marginalised communities in project research and activities.

- The **emphasis on research and building partnerships during the initial period of the project created a good foundation for future work,** through providing a broad evidence base and facilitating collaboration between partners. There was evidence of insights being embedded within the local authority through the design of the new corporate plan (the "Barking and Dagenham way"). Direction of travel suggests that the local authority will continue to benefit from these outcomes if the insight continues to be disseminated and the networks and relationships are sustained. Key elements that contributed to the success of this approach included:
  - The **role of the Connected Communities Officer strengthened existing partnerships and encouraged new partnerships**. Through brokering connections, there was evidence that the Connected Communities Officer increased joint working between agencies delivering project activities, some of which were planned to continue beyond the project.
  - **Quarterly evaluation meetings fostered good partnership working** by providing an opportunity for project partners to network with each other, share ideas, build trust and reflect on how their work fitted together. Evidence suggested that the meetings helped to promote the flexible approach through providing partners with the space to co-ordinate and modify the design of project activities in response to research findings and activities run by the other partners.

- The **flexible approach gave partners the mandate to adapt activities and explore emerging needs** identified during project delivery, which project staff felt would not have been possible if the focus had been on hitting targets.

- The delivery of specific project activities was facilitated by **buy-in from senior stakeholders in the local authority**. Evidence suggests that senior support on the Effective Conversations Training activities aided engagement and recruitment of local authority staff for the initial sessions and empowered staff to attend. On the Managing Rogue Landlords strand, senior staff within the Housing Options team were enthusiastic about contributing to referral pathway, resulting in a more comprehensive map of the system.

- By **commissioning partners with experience and skills** to conduct the research and run project activities, the project was able to capitalise on the partners' previous experience.

- By **recruiting residents from a range of backgrounds as Community Amplifiers**, the project was able **to engage lesser-heard communities** in research and project activities, although engaging communities with which they had no personal links remained challenging.

The key barriers encountered by the Connected Communities included:

- the need for a long lead-in time to build trust between partners;
- delays to project activities (in part due to the exploratory and flexible approach) creating challenges for delivering interlinked activities.
- challenges meeting referral targets on the Managing Rogue Landlords strand
- The "Community Amplifier" approach, which limited the scope of resident-led activities to the "softer" side of community cohesion.

- Project staff reported that it took **longer than expected before external delivery partners had built enough trust to feel comfortable collaborating on activities with each other**, which was hindered by new partners joining part way through the project. As a result, much of the collaboration between partners was planned to take place during the last six months of the two-year project.

- While the exploratory and **flexible approach** had benefits (outlined above), project staff recognised that **changing priorities and focus had led to delays to some project activities and made it more difficult to work towards fixed outcomes**. Project staff suggested that they could have contributed further to intended outcomes if there had been fewer changes and a more prescriptive approach. However, they felt that a less flexible approach may also have negatively impacted the relationship between the local authority and delivery partners and made partners less willing to change what they were doing in line with learnings. Staff also suggested that the flexible approach led to more "diverse and interesting" outcomes, which further contributed to learning.

- **Delays to some activities made it more difficult for strands to work together in the way originally envisaged**. For example, the original intention for findings from the qualitative research activities to inform the topics for the Youth Arts commissions was not realised, and delays in obtaining sign off from the local authority on the Origins data limited its public use.

- The **intended process of the TSO and CABD referring tenants to Creative English classes was found not to work in practice**, as learning English was not considered to be a priority of tenants while they were experiencing a housing issue.

- While **recruiting residents as Community Amplifiers** had benefits to engaging certain communities in project activities, due to their limited professional experience they were **not equipped to have the difficult conversations required to address deep-set cohesion issues**. This limited the scope of project activities and meant that ingrained problems of mistrust of others or views regarding who had the right to live in the community were left unaddressed by the project, limiting the project's ability to improve social cohesion in the borough.

For whom?

The local authority benefited from the creation of a broad evidence base collected through research activities, and increased networking and co-ordination between partners and the local authority. The local authority also benefited from new structures and increased expertise through the role of the Tenancy Sustainment Officer and subsequent creation of the new referral pathway for tenants.

Local authority staff benefited from the Effective Conversations training sessions, designed to address service issues related to customer services and housing that had been identified by the project as key points of tensions between the local authority and local residents. By addressing these issues, the project also aimed to benefit all residents.

The evaluation found less evidence of benefits to specific groups (i.e. recent migrants and longer-standing residents) as the project chose not to distinguish between these groups. This was due to the design of the project which mainly focused instead on understanding the underlying tensions and issues, without pre-supposing a link to migrant communities or based on length of time in the UK. When designing research activities, the project focused on capturing as many voices as possible among residents, including those from lesser-heard communities and from a range of faith organisations operating within the borough. Within the wider definition of residents, there was evidence that the project benefited the following groups:

- Residents with low English language benefited from entry-level English language support focused on promoting social interaction and engagement with public services, as part of the Creative English classes. Some learners and volunteers were also inspired to look into attending formal education to gain qualifications with the aim of finding a job.

- Tenants facing unlawful eviction, landlord harassment or sub-standard housing conditions benefited from the increased capacity of the Tenancy Sustainment Officer and Family Liaison Officer and new referral pathways to wider support.

- Wider residents benefited from social mixing activities through attending Interfaith Week events, Youth Arts activities.

In what circumstances?

The successes of the project were, in part, down to willingness among local authority staff to address cohesion issues. This willingness was underscored by the local authority's commitment to making Barking and Dagenham "a friendly and welcoming borough with strong community spirit" as part of the Borough Manifesto. Buy-in was also established through aligning the project with the local authority's corporate model, "Community Solutions". Buy-in from senior staff enabled staff to take learning forward, including Effective Conversations Training, the mapping of the referral pathway by the TSO, and embedding the Values Modes research.

The project benefited from the skills and experience of partner organisations. Where staff were unable to identify suitable partners within the borough, partners were brought in from other areas or with a wider geographic remit, but experience on working on similar issues.

Central co-ordination by the local authority, through the role of the Connected Communities Officer, increased joint-working between agencies delivering project activities by brokering connections and providing delivery partners with the opportunity to network, share ideas and build trust.

Drawing on existing structures in the borough (including the Faith Forum, local communities and libraries) meant that project activities were aided the recruitment and engagement of beneficiaries.

Could the project be replicated?

The focus on learning and identifying "what works" means the project would not benefit from being repeated locally, at least in the short-term. However, there may be value to replicating the approach in other local authorities that aim to explore social cohesion issues through research and partnership working. This would be reliant on identifying suitable partnerships and achieving buy-in from senior strategic staff.

Individual project activities could be replicated in other local authorities with the support of suitable partners, although specific outputs and intended outcomes would need to be reconsidered depending on the local context, as the Connected Communities project was intentionally tailored to the needs of Barking and Dagenham residents (identified through research, as outlined above).

The Creative English classes have the potential to be replicated, as they are already available nationally to organisations that buy a licence. However, learning from the projects suggests that classes should not necessarily be targeted at people experiencing housing issues as this is a stressful time when people may not have the capacity to attend.

Effective Conversations training were based on Barking and Dagenham services and therefore would not benefit from replication in other areas.

Could the project be scaled up?

The bespoke design of the Connected Communities project suggests that it would work best on a local authority level, with central coordination from within the local authority. For example, the creation of the Tenancy Support Officer and Family Liaison Officer roles was in response to the growing private rented

sector within the borough, and the referral pathway was designed to map the referral process between specific local authority departments and wider local support providers.

The flexible approach also benefited from operating at a local authority level as time was needed for new partners to build trust when working together. The co-ordination of the partnership working would likely become less effective if the project was scaled up to a regional or national level.

Is there evidence of sustainability beyond the lifetime of the project?

There was some evidence that outcomes could be sustained in the longer term and sustainability had been built into some project activities. Project staff were confident that the Effective Conversations Training sessions would continue beyond the lifespan of the project, reporting that local authority staff had been trained to deliver the Effective Conversations Training with the intention to roll it out to all front facing staff across the local authority as a mandatory training session.

Interfaith Platform activities were also designed with sustainability in mind. Project activities focused on revitalising the local Faith Forum, increasing engagement with the community and making it a more accessible platform for collaboration, with the intention of improving the longevity of the Faith Forum. Delivery staff described how most of their relationship building had focused on drawing residents and faith organisations into the Faith Forum so that the relationships could continue once the funding ends. To further the work of the Faith Forum, delivery staff reported that they were supporting them in applying for funding from the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (NCIL) (a local authority resident panel that makes decisions about the allocation of community funding up to £10,000). If granted, delivery staff suggested the Faith Forum would use the grant to continue promoting their work and expand their network further. In addition, the published faith policy was designed as a list of future actions to which the local authority, faith organisations and other partners could be held to account.

When commissioning delivery partners to deliver Amplify Barking and Dagenham activities, project staff explained that they chose Community Resources as one of the partners as they were based within the borough. As a community venue that is also used by the local authority on occasion for activities organised by the Participation and Engagement Team, project staff felt that the “institutional memory” of the organisation would help with disseminating any lessons from project research and activities at other events held in the same space.

While there were no plans for the local authority to continue the Amplify Barking and Dagenham activities, project staff suggested that there was a possibility of the group becoming a social enterprise, explaining that the local authority may plan to commission a local social enterprise of community researchers. While the majority of the Community Amplifiers did not express an interest in getting involved in future community-led activities, they were optimistic that the resident volunteer-led interventions they were supporting residents to deliver would continue to run after the end of the project.

Project staff and an internal stakeholder reported that the role of the TSO would be funded by the Private Rental Sector team once the CMF funding ends, although they suggested that the role would likely focus on the enforcement activities rather than on partnership building. With the first iteration of the referral pathway mapped and further additions planned within the project timeline, the associated benefits will likely be sustained. A barrier to this would be if there is further local authority restructuring, or material changes made to relevant legal frameworks.

Project and delivery staff expressed that it was unlikely that the role of the Family Liaison Officer would continue unless additional funding was identified by Citizens Advice Barking and Dagenham, due to the lack of capacity for targeted resourcing. This may have consequences for the collaborative partnership between the Citizens Advice Barking and Dagenham and the Private Rental Sector team.

For the Data and Insights strand, project staff were confident that the insight generated would be internalised and embedded within the local authority by a variety of teams, to help with service planning and communications strategy. They also mentioned that local authority staff, including staff from the Participation and Engagement team, had received training in how to understand the Values Modes segments, which was hoped to feed into the way departments make decisions.

7. Appendix 1: Methodology and technical note

Evaluation scope

Following a review of changes to planned activities implemented by the project mid-way through the evaluation, the decision was made to focus the evaluation on **the approach to learning and partnership** (a key focus of the Connected Communities project). This was due to project timescales, the scope of the evaluation and the priorities of the project team. As a result, the evaluation design prioritised breadth of research, including conducting evaluation activities for all strands of the project, rather than a detailed explorations of individual project strands and activities. Focus was placed on gathering views from a wide range of audiences working within and benefiting from the programme through qualitative and quantitative methods.

Below is an overview of project activities which were considered to be outside of the scope of the evaluation. Please note that, due to the flexible approach taken by the project, the listed activities may have been adapted, developed or replaced prior to delivery.

1. On the **Data and Insights** strand, the project planned to design and implement up to two interventions to improve community cohesion based on insights from the **Origins Analysis**, drawing additional evidence from the Values Modes research and Amplify Barking and Dagenham research. These interventions were out of scope of the evaluation as they were scheduled to be delivered outside of the evaluation timeframe. In addition, the **Social Progress Index**[63] was out of scope of the evaluation as no information was provided to the evaluation regarding the analysis and use of the data.

2. On the **Storytelling and Listening** strand:

    a. As part of the **Amplify Barking and Dagenham** activities, the project held several events to celebrate the different stories about residents collected by Community Amplifiers and produced a pamphlet. Community Amplifiers also ran “co-creation workshops” with wider residents and supported them to identify and set up intervention activities to improve cohesion in the borough. These events, workshops and subsequent interventions were out of scope of the evaluation as the initial workshops were organised on an ad hoc basis and the second round were scheduled for after the evaluation fieldwork period. The project also planned to recruit six volunteers to run a participatory video project, however this element was also scheduled to be delivered outside of the evaluation timeframe.

    b. As part of the **Youth Arts** activities**,** exploration of the themes by young people and the commissioning of the art pieces were scheduled to take place outside of the evaluation timeframe.

    c. As part of the **Interfaith Platform** activities, the project planned to deliver a range of activities targeted at different actors within the community including inclusion and awareness training with local individuals and businesses; a leadership training programme for emerging young leaders

[63] The Social Progress Index is led by the local authority Data team and brings together data on a range of social and environmental indicators https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/social-progress-index

in the borough; a newly created network of young leaders; and art-based workshops with residents to explore themes of belief and identity through a partnership with Studio 3 Arts. These workshops and trainings were out of scope of the evaluation as the inclusion and awareness training was arranged on an ad hoc basis and the remaining activities were outside of the timeframe of the evaluation.

d. As part of the **Effective Conversations Training** activities**,** the training review and the train-the-trainer activities were out of scope of the evaluation as they were outside of the timeframe of the evaluation.

3. On the **Managing Rogue Landlords** strand, the r**ecruitment of two additional enforcement officers to increase enforcement capacity** was out of scope of the evaluation as it was not possible to distinguish between the activities undertaken through the CMF funding and the wider work of the enforcement team. The project also intended to train local authority staff to deliver **Creative English classes** on behalf of the local authority. However, interviews with staff indicated that delivery of this activities was limited as the local authority decided to discontinue the training, as the cost associated with licencing the local authority to delivery Creative English classes had not been accounted for in the bid. For this reason, it was not considered in scope of this evaluation.

In March 2019 the Connected Communities project received £154,680 additional CMF funding. Through this, three new partners, AFRUCA[64], the East European Resource Centre[65], and Shpresa[66], joined the Connected Communities project. Activities delivered by **these three partners** were not in scope of the evaluation, due to their late addition.

[64] APRUCA is a safeguarding charity advocating for the rights and welfare of African children in the UK www.afruca.org/
[65] East European Resource Centre is a charity that provides information, advice and support to people from Central and Eastern Europe www.eeac.org.uk/#/
[66] Shpresa is an organisation that advances the education and training of Albanian speaking people to enable them to take full and active roles in their communities http://www.shpresaprogramme.com/

Evaluation Methodology

Qualitative evidence

Qualitative data was collected between November 2019 and March 2020. Activities consisted of interviews with project staff, delivery staff, an internal stakeholder and project beneficiaries plus a focus group with Community Amplifiers (see table 7.1 below).

Table 7.1 Qualitative research activities

Respondent group	Activity / strand	Research method
Project staff	Connected Communities Officer	1 face-to-face interview, supplemented with a telephone interview
Delivery staff	Interfaith Platform (Storytelling and Listening strand) Origins Analysis and Values Modes research (Data and Insights strand)/ Effective Conversations (Storytelling and Listening strand) TSO and FLO, and Creative English (Managing Rogue Landlords strand)	4 telephone/ face-to-face interviews 1 paired face-to-face interview
Internal stakeholder	TSO and FLO (Managing Rogue Landlords strand)	1 telephone interview
Community Amplifiers	Amplify Barking and Dagenham (Storytelling and Listening strand)	1 focus group with 8 participants (including the project co-ordinator)
Creative English learners	Creative English (Managing Rogue Landlords strand)	3 face-to-face interviews
Creative English volunteers	Creative English (Managing Rogue Landlords strand)	2 face-to-face interviews
Youth Arts project beneficiaries	Youth Arts (Storytelling and Listening strand)	1 focus group with 3 participants
Local authority training beneficiaries	Effective Conversations Training (Storytelling and Listening strand)	3 telephone interviews
Interfaith Platform beneficiaries	Interfaith Platform (Storytelling and Listening strand)	1 telephone interview

Quantitative evidence

Quantitative data was collected through a paper questionnaire among residents who attended the "Celebrating Faith, Diversity and Harmony" Interfaith Week event. The questionnaire was designed by Ipsos MORI and administered by the delivery staff from the Faith and Belief Forum, who provided copies of the questionnaire to participants and encouraged them to complete it.

In total, five questionnaires were returned, out of a possible 35 (the number of attendees at the event), giving a 14% response rate. Due to the small number of responses, analysis of the statistical significance of changes reported within the questionnaire was not deemed appropriate. Questionnaire data is instead presented for illustrative purposes only, that is to indicate the direction of travel with regard to changes in attitudes and behaviours of participants.

Secondary data and monitoring information

Monitoring data on project outputs and relevant secondary data was collected by the project and shared with Ipsos MORI. This included:

- December 2019 progress report on Amplify Barking and Dagenham activities as part of the Storytelling and Listening strand;
- December 2019 progress report on Interfaith Platform activities as part of the Storytelling and Listening strand. This report contained an aggregate report of quantitative data collected through questionnaires designed and administered by the delivery staff including aggregate data from 540 students who attended one of the schools' workshops;
- December 2019 progress report on Youth Arts activities as part of the Storytelling and Listening strand;
- An anonymised report of feedback on the Effective Conversations Training as part of the Storytelling and Listening strand. The report included quantitative data collected through questionnaires designed and administered by the delivery staff at the end of each training session and includes responses from 57 local authority training beneficiaries;
- Short follow-up qualitative updates on the Effective Conversations Training from six local authority training beneficiaries collected three weeks after completing the training as part of the Storytelling and Listening strand. Updates were collected by the delivery partner by emailing all beneficiaries;
- December 2019 progress report on TSO activities as part of the Managing Rogue Landlords strand;
- December 2019 progress report on FLO activities as part of the Managing Rogue Landlords strand; and
- Progress updates on Creative English classes outputs provided by project staff as part of the Managing Rogue Landlords strand.

The project also provided secondary data which included:

- A summary report of findings from the Amplify Barking and Dagenham research activities as part of the Storytelling and Listening strand, delivered in December 2019. The report summarised findings from 110 interviews and 341 "light-touch research engagements" with residents conducted by the Community Amplifiers;
- A Year 1 impact summary written by the Connected Communities Officer submitted to MHCLG which included a summary of insight on Origins Analysis and Values Modes research as part of the

Data and Insights strand and a progress report on Effective Conversations Training activities as part of the Storytelling and Listening strand;

- A summary of the published Faith Policy[67] designed by the Interfaith Platform as part of the Storytelling and Listening strand; and
- Two case studies from the CABD demonstrating co-ordinated support from the TSO and FLO as part of the Managing Rogue Landlords strand.

Value for money assessment

In order to assess the feasibility of a cost-benefit analysis (CBA) or cost-effectiveness analysis (CEA) each of the 14 projects were assessed using the 8-step process below.

Based on this assessment, each project was triaged to one of three methodological groupings:

1. **Cost benefit analysis (CBA)**: Where data on quantitative and monetizable outcomes was available, a cost-benefit analysis was conducted;

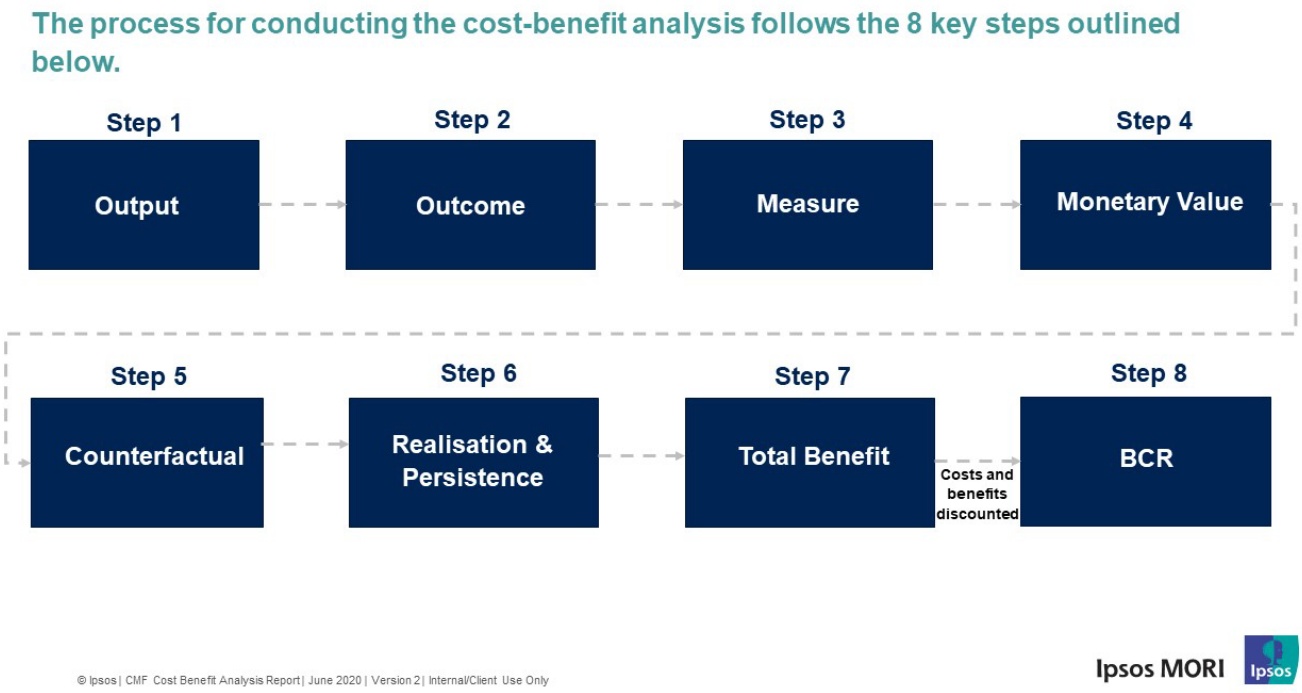
2. **Cost effectiveness analysis (CEA):** Where quantitative measures for outcome(s) existed, but no data (primary or secondary) was available to monetize the outcomes, cost effectiveness analysis was conducted; or

3. **No feasibility for quantitative analysis:** Where there was no quantitative measure of outcomes available to the evaluation, neither cost benefit analysis nor cost effectiveness analysis could be conducted. In this case, a qualitative assessment of project costs and benefits was undertaken based on analysis of staff, stakeholder and beneficiary perceptions from qualitative consultations. Secondary data on potential monetizable benefits was also reviewed.

Following the assessment, the Connected Communities project was assessed as having no feasibility for quantitative analysis. Very few project outcomes were assessed as monetizable. Furthermore, while some financial data was received from the project, this was outside of the analysis period for the economic analysis and therefore could not be included. Recording financial data in a specific format was not a requirement of CMF funding for projects.

[67] The Barking and Dagenham faith policy was summarised into a two page document https://faithbeliefforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Working-Together-PDF-1.pdf, the full policy is also available https://modgov.lbbd.gov.uk/Internet/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?Id=3502

Eight step model for reviewing project outputs and outcomes

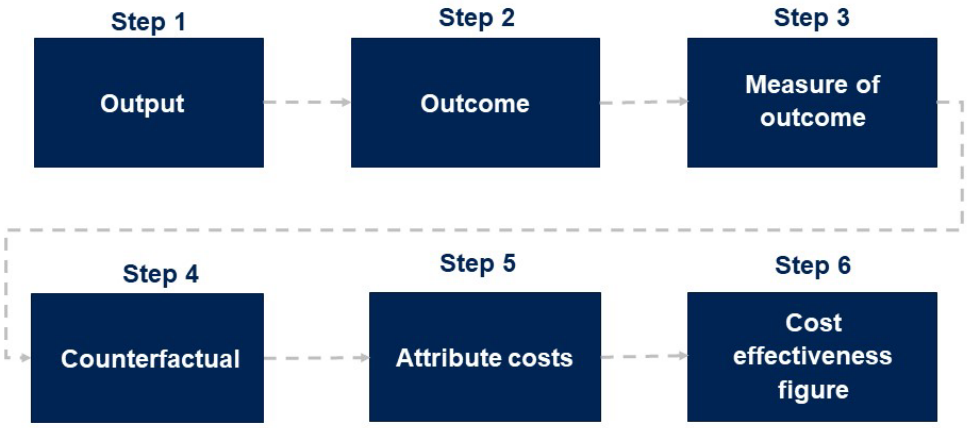


Cost-benefit analysis followed an eight-step process:

1. **Identify the projects outputs** (e.g. number of individuals provided with housing support)
2. **Identify the achieved projects outcomes** and the outcomes which are monetizable
3. **Identify monetary values for each outcome** from existing data sources
4. **Assign a counterfactual case for the outcomes** to estimate the number of outcomes achieved in the absence of the project; derived through primary information collection or secondary data analysis
5. **Monetize the outcomes** by multiplying the monetary value of each outcome by the number of additional outcomes achieved
6. **Estimate the persistence of the outcome** (i.e. is this a one-off benefit or ongoing, and how long does the benefit persist for into the future?)
7. **Calculate the total monetary benefits (cost savings)** by summing the total benefit for each outcome (including fiscal savings, public sector efficiency savings and public value benefits), accounting for any duplication of benefits across different categories.
8. **Compared the total estimated monetary benefits to the total costs** of the project, to estimate the estimated Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR).

Cost effectiveness analysis followed a six-step process, outlined below:

The process for conducting the cost-effectiveness analysis follows the six key steps outlined below.



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1. Identify the projects outputs
2. Identify the achieved projects outcomes
3. Identify quantifiable values for each outcome
4. **Assign a counterfactual case for the outcomes** to estimate the number of outcomes achieved in the absence of the project. This is derived through primary information collection or secondary data analysis.
5. **Attribute costs** using a breakdown of the project costs. Costs that are related to the outcomes identified in Step 3 can be isolated and attributed to the relevant outcomes.
6. **Calculate the cost-effectiveness figure** of the project outcome, by dividing the outcome by the cost attributed to it to derive the cost per unit of that outcome.

Analysis / synthesis of findings

Secondary data and monitoring data shared by the project was analysed to extract key findings related to achievement of outputs and outcomes. Where quantitative monitoring data reported on change in participant skills level or understanding for over 50 beneficiaries (Effective Conversations Training feedback), change figures were tested for statistical significance at a 95% confidence level. In the feedback, change was self-reported and collected at one point in time at the end of the training.

Interview notes were systematically inputted into an analysis grid for each research encounter, allowing for more in-depth analysis of findings. There was one grid for each type of audience consulted. The grids follow the structure of the topic guide enabling the identification of relevant quotes for each element of the outcomes and process evaluation. A thematic analysis approach was implemented in order to identify, analyse and interpret patterns of meaning (or "themes") within the qualitative data, which

allowed the evaluation to explore similarities and differences in perceptions, views, experiences and behaviours. Once all data had been inputted, evidence for each outcome and key delivery themes was brought together in a second analysis matrix to triangulate the evidence and assess its robustness.

Quotes in this report are verbatim and are used to illustrate and highlight key points and common themes. Quotes that contain personal information have been anonymised.

Project-level evaluation framework

The project-level evaluation framework from evaluation plan is shown in Table 7.2 and can be read alongside the project level Theory of Change (Figure 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4 in the Introduction). For clarity and brevity, the evaluation framework only includes the outputs and intermediate outcomes that fall within scope of this evaluation.

Table 7.2 Connected Communities Evaluation Framework by strand/activity

Output / Outcome (from logic model) Storytelling and Listening strand	**Who will measure it?**	**When will it be measured?**	**Target**	**Data source**					
				MI	Interview (project staff)	Interview with delivery staff/ stakeholders	Focus group with Community Amplifiers	Interview with beneficiaries	Interfaith week Questionnaire
Amplify Barking and Dagenham									
Outputs									
Partner agency commissioned	Project staff	Once completed	Commission	Commissioning contract					
6 community amplifiers recruited	Project staff/ delivery staff	Once completed	6 recruited	1. Project staff Evidence of outputs document (Dec 2019) 2. Delivery staff Progress report (Dec 2019) 3. Summary report of findings (Dec 2019)					
Community amplifiers receive training	Project staff/ delivery staff	Once completed	6 trained						
Community amplifiers conduct resident interviews (no target)	Project staff/ delivery staff	Mid-point (Dec 2019)	No target						
Community amplifiers work with residents to design and run interventions (no target)	Project staff/ delivery staff	Mid-point (Dec 2019)	No target						
Intermediate project outcomes									
Increased insight into local migration patterns and community impact (Improved understanding of residents' perceptions in the local area)	Project staff/ Ipsos MORI		No target	1. Project staff Evidence of outputs document (Dec 2019) 2. Delivery staff Progress report (Dec 2019) 3. Summary report of findings (Dec 2019)	Interview (project staff)		Focus group (Community Amplifiers)		

Increased involvement in community-led integration activities (i.e. volunteering) (Amplifiers understand how to collect and analyse data to contribute to research then conduct community research)	Ipsos MORI		No target				Focus group (Community Amplifiers)		
Youth Arts									
Outputs									
Partner agency commissioned	Project staff	Once completed	Commission	Commissioning contract					
Young people trained to commission art projects (no target)	Project staff/ delivery staff	Mid-point (Dec 2019)	No target	1. Project staff Evidence of outputs document (Dec 2019) 2. Delivery staff Progress report (Dec 2019)					
Young people identify and explore art themes related to cohesion	Project staff/ delivery staff	Mid-point (Dec 2019)	No target						
Intermediate project outcomes									
Increased involvement in community-led integration activities (i.e. volunteering)	Ipsos MORI		No target					Interview (youth arts beneficiaries)	
Increased opportunities for social mixing (Young people interact with each other from different parts of the community)	Ipsos MORI		No target					Interview (youth arts beneficiaries)	

Output / Outcome (from logic model) Storytelling and Listening strand	**Who will measure it?**	**When will it be measured?**	**Target**	**Data source** MI	Interview with project staff (CCO)	Interview with delivery staff/ stakeholder	Focus group with Community Amplifiers	Interview with beneficiaries	Interfaith week questionnaire
Interfaith Platform									
Outputs									
Partner agency commissioned	Project staff	Once completed	Commission	Commissioning contract					
Research conducted with key faith leaders and stakeholders in the borough (no target)	Project staff/ delivery staff	Once completed	No target	1. Project staff Evidence of outputs document (Dec 2019) 2. Delivery staff Progress report including an aggregate report of quantitative data collected by delivery staff (Dec 2019) 3. Summary of the published faith policy					
2 workshops to gather feedback on initial policy recommendations	Project staff/ delivery staff	Once completed	2 workshops						
Publication of the faith policy	Project staff/ delivery staff	Once completed	Publication						
Support Faith Forum with meetings and increase engagement with the Faith Forum (no target)	Project staff/ delivery staff	Mid-point (Dec 2019)	No target						
Help the Faith Forum to deliver Interfaith Week events (no target)	Project staff/ delivery staff	Mid-point (Nov 2019)	No target						
Deliver a school programme to local schools (no target)	Project staff/ delivery staff	Mid-point (Dec 2019)	No target						

Intermediate project outcomes									
Expanded / strengthened networks partners (via supporting the Faith Forum, scoping research and faith policy)	Project staff/ delivery staff/ Ipsos MORI		No target	1. Project staff Evidence of outputs document (Dec 2019) 2. Delivery staff Progress report including an aggregate report of quantitative data collected by delivery staff (Dec 2019) 3. Summary of the published faith policy	Interview (project staff)	Interview (delivery staff)			
Increased involvement in community-led integration activities (i.e. volunteering) (Greater participation from residents in interfaith activities)	Project staff/ delivery staff/ Ipsos MORI		No target			Interview (delivery staff)		Interview (faith forum member)	Qnr for Interfaith week
Increased opportunities for social mixing (Greater participation from residents in interfaith activities)	Project staff/ delivery staff/ Ipsos MORI		No target			Interview (delivery staff)		Interview (faith forum member)	Qnr for Interfaith week
Effective Conversation Training									
Outputs									
Conduct 6 focus groups with staff, stakeholder interviews, and a staff survey to feed into the training	Project staff/ delivery staff	Once completed	4 focus groups, no other target	1. Project staff Evidence of outputs document (Dec 2019) 2. Year 1 impact summary (Jun 2019) 3. Anonymous feedback on the training conducted by delivery staff					
Steering group set up with front line staff to generate ideas for the training sessions	Project staff/ delivery staff	Once completed	No target						
Deliver training (approx. 15 in each session, 17 sessions delivered.	Project staff/ delivery staff	Once completed	17 sessions, approx. 15 attendees						
Intermediate project outcomes									

Acquired expertise and structures in place to deal with local issues (LA staff more confident to have difficulty conversations with the community about issues related to inclusion and cohesion)	Project staff/ delivery staff/ Ipsos MORI		No target	1. Project staff Evidence of outputs document (Dec 2019) 2. Year 1 impact summary (Jun 2019) 3. Anonymous feedback on the training conducted by delivery staff	Interview (project staff)	Interview (delivery staff)		Interviews (LA training attendees)	

Output / Outcome (from logic model) Managing Rogue Landlords strand	**Who will measure it?**	**When will it be measured?**	**Target**	**Data source**					
				MI	Interview (project staff)	Interview with delivery staff/ stakeholder	Focus group (Community Amplifiers)	Interview (beneficiaries)	Interfaith week Questionnaire
TSO and FLO activities									
Outputs									
TSO recruited	Project staff	Once completed	1 TSO recruited	1. Project staff Evidence of outputs document (Dec 2019) 2. Delivery staff Progress reports (Dec 2019) 3. Case studies demonstrating co-ordinated support from the TSO and FLO (Dec 2019					
FLO recruited and working within the CABD	Project staff	Once completed	1 FLO recruited						
Referral plan created to map referrals between the TSO, the CABD and Housing Options	Project staff/ delivery staff	Mid-point (Dec 2019)	Referral pathway						
Tenants identified by TSO and receive support from TSO (no target). Tenants referred to FLO for additional support (no referral target). Tenants referred to another support provider for additional support (no referral target)	Project staff/ delivery staff	Mid-point (Dec 2019)	No target						

400 tenants per year supported to understand their rights and responsibilities. Of those 50 tenants per year (13%) received mediation between the landlord and the tenant to avoid eviction, 10 tenants per year (3%) supported during managed exits from unsafe properties and 12 families per year referred to Creative English Classes by the CABD	Project staff/ delivery staff	Mid-point (Dec 2019)	400 tenants per year						
Intermediate project outcomes									
Expanded / strengthened networks partners (Fuller service through links between TSO and FLO)	Ipsos MORI		No target		Interview (project staff)	Interviews (delivery staff/ stakeholder)			
Acquired expertise and structures in place to deal with local issues (Role of the TSO)	Ipsos MORI		No target		Interview (project staff)	Interviews (delivery staff/ stakeholder)			
Improved sign posting and referral system (Through the creation of a referral pathway/ Referral from FLO and TSO to Creative English classes)	Ipsos MORI		No target		Interview (project staff)	Interview (delivery staff)			
Housing issues resolved (i.e. improved housing standards) (Through the work of the TSO and FLO (e.g. improved awareness of options, rights and responsibilities among PRS tenants))	Ipsos MORI		No target			Interview (delivery staff)			

Output / Outcome (from logic model) Managing Rogue Landlords strand	**Who will measure it?**	**When will it be measured?**	**Target**	**Data source**					
				MI	Interview with project staff (CCO)	Interview with delivery staff/ stakeholder	Focus group with Community Amplifiers	Interview with beneficiaries	Interfaith week Questionnaire
Creative English classes									
Outputs									
Run pilot Creative English course at the Barking Learning Centre	Project staff/ delivery staff	Mid-point (Dec 2019)	No target	Project staff Evidence of outputs document (Dec 2019)					
Run classes each week for tenants and referrals to attend on a rolling basis	Project staff/ delivery staff	Mid-point (Dec 2019)	No target						
Deliver Creative English to 150 families	Project staff/ delivery staff	Mid-point (Dec 2019)	150 families						
Train learners to volunteer at creative English classes (No target)	Project staff/ delivery staff	Mid-point (Dec 2019)	No target						
Intermediate project outcomes									
Increased understanding of and access to public services (i.e. NHS, schooling) (Increased confidence to engage with local services through English classes e.g. GP, housing office)	Ipsos MORI		No target			Interview (delivery staff)		Interviews (learners and volunteers)	
Access to ESOL and EAL provision (Through the Creative English classes)	Ipsos MORI		No target			Interview (delivery staff)		Interviews (learners and volunteers)	

Increased understanding of British culture and social norms (Through the Creative English classes)	Ipsos MORI		No target			Interview (delivery staff)		Interviews (learners and volunteers)	
Increased civic society participation (Increased confidence among learners to communicate with neighbours and other residents and take a more active role in civic society)	Ipsos MORI		No target			Interview (delivery staff)		Interviews (learners and volunteers)	

Output / Outcome (from logic model) Data and Insight strand / Connected Communities Officer	**Who will measure it?**	**When will it be measured?**	**Target**	**Data source**					
				MI	Interview with project staff	Interview with delivery staff/ stakeholder	Focus group with Community Amplifiers	Interview with beneficiaries	Interfaith week Questionnaire
Data and Insights (Values Modes)									
Outputs									
Conduct research with residents (telephone survey and 6 focus groups)	Project staff/ delivery staff	Once completed	6 focus groups, 1000 interviews	1. Project staff Evidence of outputs document (Dec 2019) 2. Year 1 impact summary (Jun 2019)					
Produce a report with an engagement framework and toolkit	Project staff/ delivery staff	Mid-point (Dec 2019)	1 report						
Run 4 workshops with LA teams	Project staff/ delivery staff	Mid-point (Dec 2019)	4 workshops						

Intermediate project outcomes									
Increased insight into local migration patterns and community impact (Improved understanding of residents' perceptions around cohesion through the Values Modes research)	Project staff/ delivery staff/ Ipsos MORI		No target	1. Project staff Evidence of outputs document (Dec 2019) 2. Year 1 impact summary (Jun 2019)	Interview (project staff)	Interview (delivery staff)			
Data and Insights (Origins Analysis)									
Outputs									
Identify and run data through the Origins programme and produce a report on the findings	Project staff/ delivery staff	Once completed	1 report	1. Project staff Evidence of outputs document (Dec 2019) 2. Year 1 impact summary (Jun 2019)					
Share findings with partners at a Quarterly Evaluation Meeting	Project staff/ delivery staff	Once completed	1 presentation						
Intermediate project outcomes									
Increased insight into local migration patterns and community impact (Improved understanding of community composition through the Origins research)	Project staff/ delivery staff/ Ipsos MORI		No target	1. Project staff Evidence of outputs document (Dec 2019) 2. Year 1 impact summary (Jun 2019)	Interview (project staff)	Interview (delivery staff)			
Connected Communities Officer (CCO)									
Outputs									
Run Quarterly evaluation meetings held with all partners attending	Project staff	Mid-point (Dec 2019)	Quarterly		Interview (project staff)				
Facilitate networking between partners and the local authority	Project staff	Mid-point (Dec 2019)	No target		Interview (project staff)	Interview (delivery staff)			

Partners report quarterly on their progress at times specified in their contracts	Project staff/ Ipsos MORI	Mid-point (Dec 2019)	No target	Delivery staff Progress reports (Dec 2019)	Interview (project staff)				
Intermediate project outcomes									
Expanded / strengthened networks partners	Ipsos MORI		No target		Interview (project staff)	Interview (delivery staff)			
Increased co-ordination and co-operation between agencies	Ipsos MORI		No target		Interview (project staff)	Interview (delivery staff)			

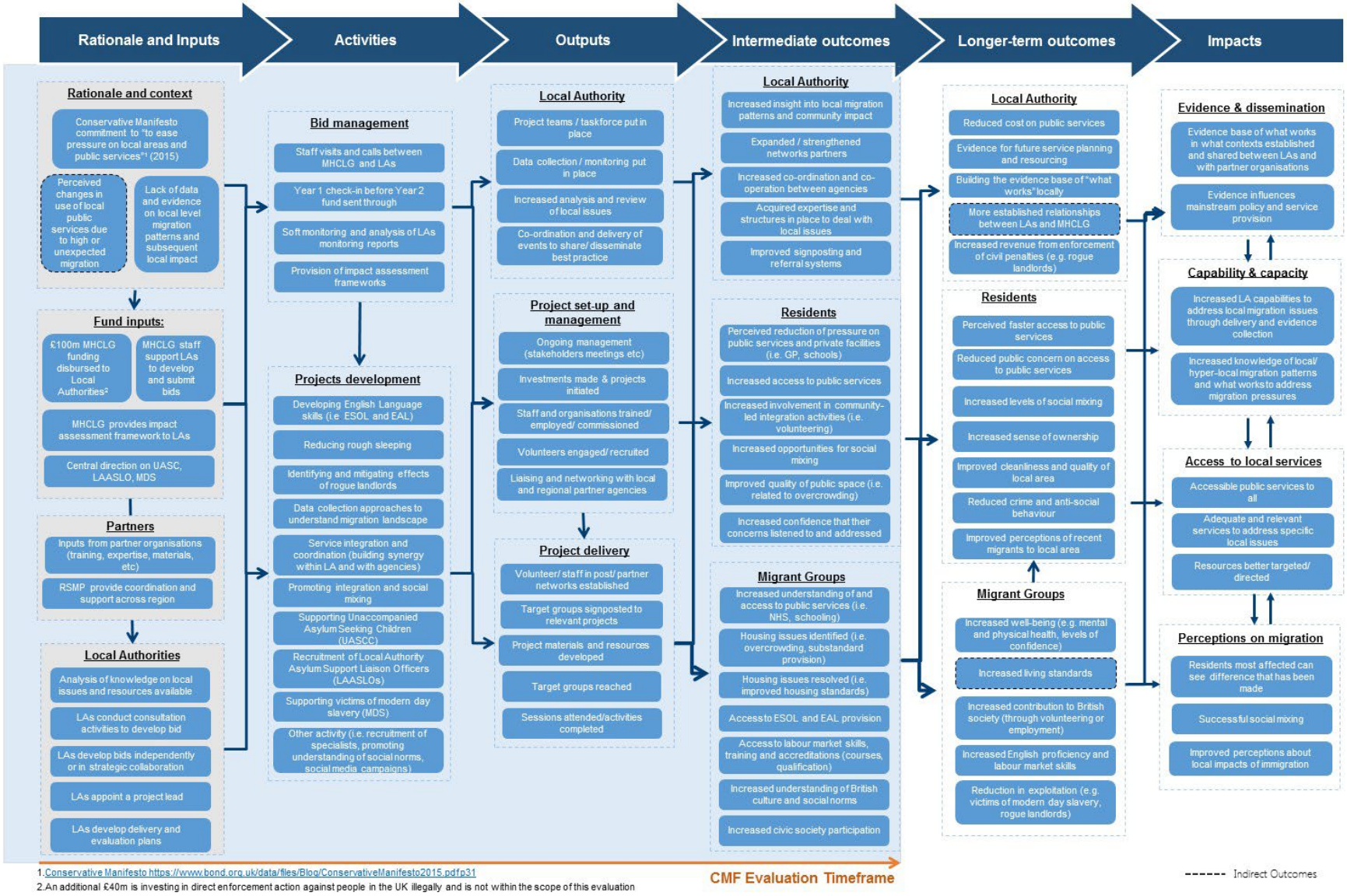
Outputs achievements

Ipsos MORI undertook an assessment of the project's success in achieving its intended outputs based on consideration of the evaluation evidence generated. There are five measures that this assessment can take and that have been consistently applied throughout the individual project evaluations. These measures are based on the definitions below.

Table 7.3 Definitions of achievement measures

Achievement measure	Definition
Not achieved	The evidence indicates that the output has not been achieved
Partially achieved	There is some evidence to infer some of the output may have been achieved.
Partially achieved (on track)	The output has not been achieved at the time of the evaluation, however there is evidence to suggest that the output will be achieved within the time frame of the project.
Achieved	There is evidence to conclude that the output has been achieved.
Exceeded	This refers to output where monitoring information shows projects exceed their target outputs.
Inconclusive	There is not sufficient evidence to provide a robust assessment of progress towards project outputs.

Appendix 2: CMF Overall Theory of Change



1.Conservative Manifesto https://www.bond.org.uk/data/files/Blog/ConservativeManifesto2015.pdfp31

2.An additional £40m is investing in direct enforcement action against people in the UK illegally and is not within the scope of this evaluation

The CMF logic model:

Rationale is linked to activities and these are linked to outputs, outcomes and impacts.

Rationale

Context:

- There was a Conservative Manifesto Commitment to ease pressures on local areas and public services; There was a public perception that there were changes in the use of local public services due to high or unexpected migration; Local of data and evidence on local level migration patterns and subsequent local impacts.

Fund inputs:

- £100 million from MHCLG disbursed to Local Authorities; MHCLG staff support LAs to develop and submit bids; MHCLG provides impact assessment framework to LAs; Central direction on UASC, LAASLOs

Partners:

- Inputs from partner organisations (training, expertise and materials etc); RSMP provides coordination and support across the region.

Local Authorities:

- Analysis of knowledge on local issues and resources available; LAs conduct consultation activities to develop bid; LAs develop bid independently, or on strategic collaboration; LAs appoint a project lead; LAS develop delivery and evaluation plans.

Activities:

Bid management:

- Staff visits and calls between MHCLG and LAs; Year 1 check-ins before year 2 fund sent through; Monitoring and analysis of LAs monitoring reports; Provision of impact assessment frameworks

Project development:

- Developing English language skills (ESOL and EAL); Reducing rough sleeping; Identifying and mitigating the effects of rogue landlords; Data collection approaches to understand migration; Service integration and coordinating (building synergy within LA and with agencies); Promoting integration and social mixing; Supporting Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children; Recruiting local authority asylum support liaison officers; Supporting victims of modern day slavery; Other activities (recruitment of specialists, promoting social norms and social media campaigns)

Outputs

Local Authority:

- Project teams/ taskforces; data collection/ monitoring information; increased analysis and review of local issues; coordination and delivery of events to share and disseminate best practice

Project set up and management:

- Ongoing management; investments made and projects started; staff trained; volunteers engaged and recruitment; liaising and networking with local and regional agencies

Project delivery:

- Volunteers in post and networks of partners established; target groups sign posed to relevant projects; project materials and resources developed; target groups reached; sessions attended and activities completed.

Intermediate outcomes

Local authority:

- Increased insights into local migration patterns and community impacts; Expanded and strengthened network partners; increased coordination and cooperation between agencies; acquired expertise and structures in place to deal with local issues; improved sign posting and referral systems

Residents:

- Perceptions of reduced pressured on local public services; increased access to public services; increased involvement in community led integration activities; increased opportunities for social mixing; improved quality of public space; increased confidence that concerns are being listened to

Migrant groups:

- Increased understanding of and access to public services; housing ussyes identified; housing issues resolved; access to ESOLand EAL provision; access to labour market, skills and training, and accreditation; increased understanding of British culture and social norms, increased civic participation.

Long term outcomes:

Local Authority:

- Reduced cost of public services; evidence for future service planning and resourcing; building the evidence base of work works locally; increased revenue from enforcement of civil penalties

Residents:

- Perceived faster access to services; reduced public concern on access to public services; increased level of social mixing; increased sense of ownership; improved cleanliness and quality of local areas; reduced crime and anti-social behaviour; improved perceptions of recent migrants to local area.

Migrants groups:

- Increased well-being (mental health) levels of confidence; increased living standards; increased contributions to British Society; Increased English proficiency; Reduction in exploitation

Impacts:

Evidence and dissemination:

- Evidence base of what works in what contexts and shared between LAs and partners; evidence influence mainstream policies an service provision

Capability and capacity:

- Increased LA capabilities to address local migration issues through delivery of evidence collection; Increased knowledge of local hyper local migration patterns and what works to address migration pressures.

Access to local services:

Accessible public services to all; adequate and relevant services to address specific local issues; resources better targeted and directed

Peceptions on migration:

- Residents most affected can see difference that has been made; successful social mixing; improved perceptions of local impact of immigration.

Appendix 3: Research tools

CMF qualitative tools

All research tools contained standardised questions for each participant group (staff, wider stakeholders and beneficiaries) regarding delivery of the project and changes perceived through the project. Guides were tailored to reflect the specific experience and background of participants. The table below outlines the outcomes included in research materials for each participant group.

Table 2.1: Qualitative tools for different participants groups

Participant	Research method	Outcomes measured
Project staff Connected Communities Officer	1 face-to-face interview, supplemented with a telephone interview	**Connected Communities Officer outcomes** • Expanded and strengthened networks partners • Increased co-ordination and co-operation between agencies **Interfaith Platform outcome** • Expanded and strengthened networks partners **Origins Analysis and Values Modes research outcome** • Increased insight into local migration patterns and community impact **TSO and FLO outcomes** • Expanded and strengthened networks partners • Acquired expertise and structures in place to deal with local issues • Improved sign posting and referral system **Effective Conversations Training outcome** • Acquired expertise and structures in place to deal with local issues
Delivery staff Interfaith Platform Storytelling and Listening	1 telephone interview	**Interfaith Platform outcomes** • Expanded and strengthened networks partners • Increased involvement in community-led integration activities (i.e. volunteering) • Increased opportunities for social mixing **Connected Communities Officer outcome**

		• Increased co-ordination and co-operation between agencies
Delivery staff Origins Analysis and Values Modes research Data and Insights Effective Conversations Training Storytelling and Listening	1 face-to-face interview	**Origins Analysis and Values Modes research outcome** • Increased insight into local migration patterns and community impact **Effective Conversations outcome** • Acquired expertise and structures in place to deal with local issues **Connected Communities Officer outcome** • Increased co-ordination and co-operation between agencies
Delivery staff TSO and FLO Managing Rogue Landlords	1 telephone interview 1 paired face-to-face interview	**TSO and FLO outcomes** • Expanded and strengthened networks partners • Acquired expertise and structures in place to deal with local issues • Improved sign posting and referral system • Housing issues resolved (i.e. improved housing standards) **Connected Communities Officer outcome** • Increased co-ordination and co-operation between agencies
Delivery staff Creative English classes Managing Rogue Landlords	1 face-to-face interview	**Creative English classes outcomes** • Increased understanding of and access to public services (i.e. NHS, schooling) • Access to ESOL and EAL provision • Increased understanding of British culture and social norms • Increased civic society participation **Connected Communities Officer outcome** • Increased co-ordination and co-operation between agencies
Internal stakeholder TSO and FLO Managing Rogue Landlords	1 telephone interview	**TSO and FLO outcomes** • Expanded and strengthened networks partners • Acquired expertise and structures in place to deal with local issues • Improved sign posting and referral system

Community Amplifiers Amplify Barking and Dagenham Storytelling and Listening	1 focus group with 8 participants (including the project co-ordinator)	**Amplify Barking and Dagenham outcomes** • Increased insight into local migration patterns and community impact • Increased involvement in community-led integration activities (i.e. volunteering)
Creative English learners Creative English classes Managing Rogue Landlords	3 face-to-face interviews	**Creative English classes outcomes** • Increased understanding of and access to public services (i.e. NHS, schooling) • Access to ESOL and EAL provision • Increased understanding of British culture and social norms • Increased civic society participation
Creative English volunteers Creative English classes Managing Rogue Landlords	2 face-to-face interviews	**Creative English classes outcomes** • Increased understanding of and access to public services (i.e. NHS, schooling) • Access to ESOL and EAL provision • Increased understanding of British culture and social norms • Increased civic society participation
Youth Arts project beneficiaries Youth Arts Storytelling and Listening	1 focus group with 3 participants	**Youth arts outcomes** • Increased involvement in community-led integration activities (i.e. volunteering) • Increased opportunities for social mixing
Local authority training beneficiaries Effective Conversations Training Storytelling and Listening	3 telephone interviews	**Effective Conversations Training outcome** • Acquired expertise and structures in place to deal with local issues
Interfaith Platform beneficiaries Interfaith Platform Storytelling and Listening	1 telephone interview	**Interfaith Platform outcomes** • Increased involvement in community-led integration activities (i.e. volunteering) • Increased opportunities for social mixing

Quantitative tools

INTER-FAITH WEEK QUESTIONNAIRE

This event is organised by the Barking and Dagenham Faith Forum for Inter-faith week. The Faith Forum is supported by the Faith & Belief Forum, an organisation working with Barking & Dagenham's Connected Communities programme, which receives funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). Ipsos MORI (an independent research company) is conducting research on behalf of the MHCLG to understand how this funding is being used, what is working well and anything that can be improved. This short questionnaire is designed to understand your experiences of this event.

Participation is voluntary, and it is your choice to take part. The questionnaire is anonymous. Please **do not write your name or personal details anywhere** on this piece of paper.

Event title: _____

Date: _____

Questionnaire

Please tick one box ☑ per question

1. **At this event, have you met anyone from a faith, belief or community different to your own?**

   ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know

2. **At this event, have you met anyone from a faith, belief or community that is new to you? (i.e. your first-time meeting someone from that faith, belief or community)**

   ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know

3. **Before attending this event, how much, if anything, did you know about faiths or beliefs that are different to your own?**

   ☐ A lot ☐ A fair amount ☐ A little ☐ Nothing at all ☐ Don't know

4. **At this event, to what extent, if at all, has your awareness of faiths and beliefs different to your own increased?**

   ☐ Increased a lot ☐ Increased a fair amount ☐ Increased a little ☐ Not changed ☐ Don't know

5. **Have you attended any other community-run inter-faith events or activities in the last 5 years?**

   ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know

6. **Have you attended, or are you planning to attend, any of the other inter-faith events organised by the Faith Forum this week?**

	Yes	No	Maybe	Don't know
Any of the 'Visit my place of worship' events (Sunday to Saturday – various locations)	☐	☐	☐	☐
'Faith Builds Community Policy' event (Tuesday – Barking Town Hall)	☐	☐	☐	☐
'Celebrating Faith, Diversity and Harmony' event (Wednesday – Barking Town Hall)	☐	☐	☐	☐
'Art exhibition' (All week – Barking Town Hall)	☐	☐	☐	☐

7. **Thinking about your experience at this event, to what extent has it made you more or less likely to get involved in future inter-faith activities and events after inter-faith week finishes?**

☐ A lot more likely ☐ A little more likely ☐ Made no difference ☐ A little less likely ☐ A lot less likely ☐ Don't know

8. **Thinking about your experience at this event, to what extent has it made you more or less likely to get involved in any future community-led activities and events? This could be things like joining a youth club, a sports club, a community groups, volunteering, etc?**

☐ A lot more likely ☐ A little more likely ☐ Made no difference ☐ A little less likely ☐ A lot less likely ☐ Don't know

9. **Please add any other thoughts or comments about today's event in the box below, for example things that you liked, or things that could be improved:**

Thank you very much for your help!