



Demonstrating the value of a trust-based approach to working with detached young people

A report for StreetInvest

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Executive summary

Founded in 2008, StreetInvest, helps children and young people who are at risk of becoming detached.¹ StreetInvest's approach centres on putting trustworthy adults into the lives of the hardest to reach and most excluded street-connected children. These adults contribute to a child's growth and development via 'street work' - a practice that is based on building relationships based on trust with street-connected children. Placing a trustworthy adult in the life of every street-connected child ensures that they are safer, as well as better supported and valued by their communities.

The charity operates across the globe to promote street work (known as 'detached youth work' in the UK) as the most effective way of supporting street-connected children, and to develop a network of local partners with the means to deliver this vision. StreetInvest is currently the only UK-based charity solely focussed on providing trustworthy adult support to detached young people. It intends to provide children and young people in the UK with professional child centred support through the development and assistance of partners delivering detached youth work.²

Our brief

PBE was commissioned by StreetInvest to help them consider how to demonstrate the economic value of a trust-based approach to working with detached young people in the UK.³ This report considers what would be needed to carry out a cost-benefit analysis (CBA), discusses what evidence is currently available, and considers a potential evaluation approach and associated data requirements.

Summary of main findings

- In principle, the value of StreetInvest's proposed intervention could be assessed using a cost benefit analysis (CBA) that compares the incremental social benefits due to improved outcomes that are attributable to the intervention to the cost of the intervention.
- Data gathered from local authorities gives some insight into the existing scope of detached youth work provision in the UK and the correlation with outcomes (measured in terms of the Index of Multiple Deprivation). However, it does not shed light on the causal relationship between detached youth work and outcomes and therefore cannot be used to assess the likely impact of detached youth work, or the intervention contemplated by StreetInvest.
- It may be possible to identify the causal impact of detached youth work on outcomes targeted by StreetInvest through a more detailed empirical analysis that compares specific outcomes across different local authorities over time. However, this is likely to be a complex exercise that would require specialist econometric advice, as well as requiring further data to be collected from local authorities, and more granular evidence on relevant outcomes such as school exclusion rates.
- As with any such analysis, there is no guarantee of success and we suggest that StreetInvest considers undertaking further work to assess the availability of data from local authorities, and

¹ In this context, 'detached' describes children and young people who are away from home or care for lengthy periods of time; live outside of key societal institutions including the family, education and other statutory services; do not receive any formal sources of support; and are self-reliant and/or dependent upon informal support networks (Smeaton, 2009).

² We understand that StreetInvest will apply the principles set out in the 2011 Munro Review in relation to effective child protection in the UK.

³ Whilst it should be acknowledged that trust-based interventions are not solely outcomes-driven, it is true to say that such interventions aim to improve the lives of young people and to empower them to make positive choices.

the suitability (availability, timeliness, robustness, geography etc.) of relevant outcome measurements before proceeding.

- In principle, if a reliable estimate of the impact of detached youth work can be established, the resultant social benefits could be expressed in monetary terms using estimates of the reduction in expenditure on relevant public services (such as social services, crime and health). This can be compared with the cost of detached youth work services to estimate the net social benefit to society.

1. Introduction

Founded in 2008, StreetInvest helps children and young people who are at risk of becoming detached.⁴ StreetInvest's approach centres on putting trustworthy adults into the lives of the hardest to reach and most excluded street-connected children. These adults contribute to a child's growth and development via 'street work' - a practice that is based on building relationships based on trust with street-connected children. Placing a trustworthy adult in the life of every street-connected child ensures that they are safer, as well as better supported and valued by their communities.

The charity operates across the globe to promote street work as the most effective way of supporting street-connected children, and to develop a network of local partners with the means to deliver this vision. StreetInvest is currently the only UK charity solely focussed on providing trustworthy adult support to street-connected children. It intends to provide children and young people in the UK with professional child centred support within schools, which are often the last point of contact with children and young people before they become detached from social support agencies.⁵

PBE was commissioned by StreetInvest to help them consider how to demonstrate the economic value of a trust-based approach to working with detached young people in the UK.⁶ This report considers what would be needed to carry out a cost-benefit analysis (CBA), discusses what evidence is currently available, and considers a potential evaluation approach and associated data requirements.

The structure of the report is as follows:

- Section 2 outlines the key elements of a CBA framework for detached youth work
- Section 3 reviews evidence collected from local authorities on the current provision of detached youth work in the UK and its impact on social deprivation
- Section 4 discusses a potential evaluation approach and key data requirements
- Section 5 sets out key findings

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2. Framework for assessing the impact of detached youth work

StreetInvest has a well-developed framework (or theory of change) that identifies the channels through which a trustworthy adult relationship can enhance the growth and development of street-connected children, known as ‘detached young people’ in the UK. Ultimately, such a relationship can enhance the growth and development of a young person and deliver a range of benefits for them and the wider society, including:

- reduction in drug use;
- improved attendance at school;
- reduction in anti-social or criminal behaviour;
- improved mental health; and
- positive results from family reunification.

The value of StreetInvest’s proposed intervention could be assessed using a cost benefit analysis (CBA) that compares the social benefits that are attributable to the intervention to the cost of the intervention. This would involve a comparison of outcomes with the intervention (the ‘factual’ scenario) to outcomes in the absence of the intervention (the ‘counterfactual’ scenario) to identify the impact in terms of improved outcomes. The value created can be expressed in monetary terms using estimates of the ‘unit’ social value associated with the relevant improvement in outcomes. In general terms, an estimate of the social value can be based on an assessment of the reduction in expenditure on public services such as social services, health and criminal justice that are associated with some of the poor outcomes that arise for detached children.

The analytical framework for implementing a CBA involves the following steps:

1. Estimate cost to society in ‘no intervention’ counterfactual scenario: prior to the intervention, the young person will impose costs on society, e.g. school truancy. Without the intervention, the young person would be likely to continue to impose a higher cost on society. In the longer-term, other support bodies would at some later point (typically assumed to be 5 years) intervene to provide treatment and support under this ‘no intervention’ scenario. These costs could increase over the time as the young person becomes more detached from society.
2. Estimate cost to society in factual intervention scenario: in this scenario the hypothesis is that if the young person benefits from a trustworthy adult relationship they would be expected to impose fewer costs on society in future relative to the counterfactual scenario.
3. Gross benefit to society: the benefit of the intervention can be estimated as the ‘avoided’ cost to society resulting from the intervention. This is given by the difference in the social costs that would be incurred under the counterfactual and those that arise under the factual scenario. This would require the use of estimates to quantify the unit cost to society of outcomes that are relevant to the intervention, e.g. reduction in rates of school truancy.
4. Net benefit to society of the intervention: this is the difference between the gross benefit (as per 3 above) less the total cost of the proposed intervention.

Since StreetInvest is yet to enact its intervention in the UK, there is no evidence currently available on actual outcomes that can be used to assess the value of a trust-based approach. As an alternative, we considered whether it would be possible to get an indication of potential value using data on existing interventions such as the detached youth work that is currently provided by local authorities. However, several limitations led us to conclude that an impact assessment of the value of a trust-based approach to working with street-connected young people is not feasible based on the available data:

- Whilst there is considerable evidence on the unit costs to society of the outcomes that we are interested in (cf. section 4.1), we did not have access to data that links detached youth work provision to improvements in these outcomes. This meant that we were unable to provide

robust estimates on the proportions and timing of the impact (e.g. the proportion of street connected children likely to reduce truancy) with a reasonable degree of certainty.

- In addition, there is limited information on the current scale of detached youth work in the UK. As such, we were not able to accurately determine the costs of existing interventions.

Ideally, outcomes for detached youth work should be measured at an individual level, but this is not possible given the lack of granularity in the data collected by local authorities. An alternative approach would be to estimate the outcomes that are associated with detached youth work at a local area level by using econometric analysis. To assess this, we gathered information on the existing provision of detached youth work from UK local authorities (LAs) via a FOI request (see annex B). This is used to establish a baseline as to which local authorities undertake detached youth work, and categorise local authorities in three groups:

- LAs that currently undertake detached youth work (in 2016/17);
- LAs that do not currently undertake detached youth work but did so in the period 2012/13 to 2015/16; and
- LAs that have never undertaken detached youth work in the period 2012/13 to 2015/16.

The performance of these groups was assessed against relevant national statistics, including deprivation and school exclusions, to identify key trends. A key challenge here is that detached youth work is sometimes provided by a local charity rather than the local authority and we lack a comprehensive view of their provision across each region.

3. Key findings from the research

All the data on detached youth work by local authorities in the UK that are referenced in this report were sourced via the aforementioned FOI. Quantitative data include:

- The number of whole time equivalent (WTE) detached youth workers employed by the local authority in the financial year;
- The total spent on detached youth work services by the local authority (£'000) in the financial year; and
- The number of children and young people contacted (both unique contacts and total contacts where an individual was seen multiple times) by the detached youth work team in the financial year.

In addition, the analysis makes use of several publicly available national statistics. These include indices of deprivation and permanent/fixed-period exclusions from school (see annex C for further details). As this information is available at a local level it can be combined with the detached youth work data that has been provided by each local authority.

Existing evidence on detached youth work in the UK

Wylie & Smith (2004) estimated that, with an annual budget of £75,000 (in 2003 prices), a detached youth worker can 'make a difference' when working alongside established institutions, such as schools and colleges. In practical terms, this means that young people can make regular contact with trusted adult to seek advice on issues of concern⁷. The £75,000 was based on information gathered from examples of real projects a 'good practice' project, allowing for basic contact with 125 young people per week of whom 25 would be worked with intensively⁸.

Detached children suffer from a range of adverse outcomes that impose costs of society, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 – Potential outcomes and social costs of detached children

Cost category	Costs imposed on:
Higher welfare benefits	Public welfare system
Lower employment and taxes ⁹	Exchequer
Higher Truancy	Department of Education; Other support services
Higher substance/alcohol abuse	NHS; A&E; Other support services
Greater Anti-social behaviour	Criminal Justice System; Police costs
Higher Youth offending	Criminal Justice System; Other support services
Higher crime	Cost to victim
Deterioration in physical health	NHS; A&E; Other support services
Deterioration in sexual health	NHS; A&E; Other support services
Deterioration in mental health	NHS; A&E; Other support services

⁷ There is acknowledged variability in the scale and intensity of street-based work, but the over-riding intention is to establish a relationship built on trust between socially excluded young people and a trust worthy adult.

⁸ Detached youth work team operating five, three-hour sessions per week for 46 weeks per year. Contact with 20 young people each session, five sessions per week and participation of 12 young people each session, for five sessions per week.

⁹ Contribution to employment and taxes likely to be minimal over the 10-year period for two reasons: (i) model includes assumption of delayed response (5 years later) by other support organisations; and (ii) youth population do not occupy a significant presence in work.

Links to homelessness and deterioration of health

Homelessness, by definition, has strong links to life on the street. Homeless youth must confront adolescence and related emotional/developmental challenges alongside the quest for survival without the usual familial supports. Oxera (2013) identified a positive correlation between mental health problems and increased years of homelessness. If an individual has been homeless for 1 year or less there is a 51% chance they will have some mental problems. However, this probability increases to over 80% for those that have been homeless for 5-10 years. The cost of dealing with mental health problems in the 16-44 age group cohort¹⁰ is outlined in the below table.

Table 2 – Incidence rates and service costs by type of condition¹¹

Condition	Proportion	Average service cost	Services considered
Depression	53%	£1,700	GP, non-inpatient NHS, non-psychiatric inpatient, medication, psychiatric inpatient, residential care
Anxiety disorder	16%	£1,000	GP, non-inpatient NHS, non-psychiatric inpatient, medication, psychiatric inpatient, residential care
Psychosis, schizophrenia	9%	£13,300	Inpatient, outpatient and medicines, informal care, community service, day care
Bipolar disorder	4%	£1,400	GP, psychiatrist, therapist, day care, inpatient, residential care, medication and informal care
Personality disorder	17%	£500	GP, medication, outpatient, inpatient
Total weighted average cost in 2010 prices:		£2,780	

The scale of youth homelessness is uncertain because so much of it is hidden. By way of a proxy, in 2014/15 it was reported that 13,490 young people between the ages of 16-24 had a homeless duty accepted. In contrast, Homeless Link (2014) estimated that around 130,000 young people a year ask their local authority for support and the authors contend that many of those that fall through the cracks will become street connected children.

Homelessness at an early age significantly increases the likelihood of homelessness in adulthood with adverse consequences for longevity and quality of life. Significant deterioration in health and well-being is evidenced through increased mortality rates:

- Homeless people have an average age of death of 47 years compared to 77 years for the general population. At the age of 16-24 homeless people are at least twice as likely to die as their housed equivalents;
- Drug and alcohol abuse account for over one third of all deaths; and

¹⁰ This is based on estimates in the King's Fund (2008) report "Paying the price: the cost of mental health care in England to 2026".

¹¹ Source: Oxera (2013). "Impact of Centrepoin's intervention for homeless young people: A cost-benefit analysis", page 47. Study based on all conditions of Centrepoin's clients with approximations based on the average cost of service from large scale Psychiatric Morbidity Survey and Hospital Episode Statistics.

- Homeless men (women) are seventeen (thirteen) times more likely to die from deaths due to drugs than the general population (Thomas, 2012).

Substance abuse often becomes a coping mechanism, i.e. a means with which to block out these challenges. The estimated average one-time treatment cost for a person suffering from class A drug abuse or alcohol problems is about £19,000 in 2010/11 prices (Oxera, 2013). It should be acknowledged that this cost would be in addition to those that are outlined in table 2.

Young homeless people are a particularly vulnerable subset of homeless people. Crisis (2012) research estimates that 51% have been excluded from school and therefore have low levels of literacy. Brookes et al. (2007) estimate that the average cost to society of exclusion is £63,851 (in 2005 prices), which includes costs to the child in lower future earnings resulting from poorer qualifications as well as costs to society with respect to crime, health and social services. The same authors use the same methodology to estimate that the average cost of persistent truancy, borne between the individual and society, is £44,468 (also in 2005 prices).

Many homeless youth, some 40%, have experienced abuse at home and further 33% have experienced self-harm. Evidence suggests that young homeless people go to desperate measures to avoid sleeping rough including committing crimes or engaging in sex work.

A very large proportion of young homeless people have been in care – about 33%. Although fewer than one percent of all children in England are in care they make up over half (52%) of children (under 18) in secure training centres and almost 38% of children in young offender institutions.

Links to crime and violence

Whilst the streets might offer respite from violence in the home, it also exposes children to other forms of violence. Homelessness is associated with increased exposure and possible engagement in crime relative to the general population. Williams et al. (2012) research suggests that 15% of newly sentenced prisoners are homeless before custody, with 9% sleeping rough. Men represent 95% of the prison population. At the end of December 2016, there were 4,357 young adults (aged 18-20) and 600 (aged 15-17) in prisons in England and Wales.

The most frequently observed types of criminal activity amongst the non-adult prison population¹² in 2016 in England and Wales were as follows:

- Sexual offences, drug offences and possession of weapons offences accounted for the greater proportion of offences by non-adult men (as against non-adult women); and
- Criminal damage and theft accounted for the greater proportion of non-adult offences by women (as against non-adult men).

The number of proven offences against young people (aged 10-17 years) has fallen for most types of offences with the exception of violence against the person, criminal damage and sexual offences. At the end of March 2016, there were 960 young people in custody. The unit cost of proven offending by young offenders to the criminal justice system can be broken down using direct staff costs in 2008/09 prices as in the overleaf table.

¹² Adults are aged 21 and over at the time of sentencing, whereas young adults are 18-20 years. In England and Wales people of offending age are classed as those aged 10 years or older.

Table 3 – Average unit costs of proven offending¹³

	Under 18	Over 18
Unit cost of police (per recorded crime)	£492	£492
Unit costs of courts (per court event, depending on offence type)		
Violence against the person	£6,837	£12,716
Sexual offences	£4,061	£10,887
Burglary	£1,650	£3,448
Robbery	£4,800	£9,428
Theft and handling stolen goods	£2,645	£4,012
Drug offences	£1,400	£2,500
Summary offence, ex. Motoring	£1,000	£650
Summary motoring offences	£400	£344
Unit cost of offender management teams (per offender, per year)	£1,469	£357
Unit cost of custody (per month served in prison)	£4,898	£2,367

The cost to the victims of crimes can also be broken down into three separate categories as in the below table.

Table 4 – Estimated average costs of crimes by crime type / cost category¹⁴

Offence category	Physical and emotional impact	Lost output	Health services
Serious wounding	£4,554	£1,166	£1,348
Other wounding	£4,554	£1,166	£1,348
Sexual offences	£22,754	£4,430	£916
Common assault	£788	£269	£123
Burglary in a dwelling	£646	£64	-
Theft	£192	£10	-
Criminal damage	£472	£6	-

Detached youth work provision by LAs

Local authority responses to the FOI request are summarised in the below table. In total, 213 local authorities were contacted across the UK and ~ 79% provided a formal response. Of this 79%, some 43% currently provide detached youth work services for their local population.

¹³ Source: National Audit Office (2011). "The cost of a cohort of young offenders to the criminal justice system". London: National Audit Office, page 18.

¹⁴ Source: Dubourg et al. (2005). "The economic and social costs of crime against individuals and households 2003/04". London: The Home Office.

Table 5 – Detached youth work provision by local authorities in the UK¹⁵

Country	Number of local authorities	Currently undertake detached youth work	Previously undertook detached youth work	Never undertaken detached youth work	Unknown (no response)
England	153	55	22	46	30
Northern Ireland ¹⁶	6	-	-	1	5
Scotland	32	7	3	15	7
Wales	22	9	2	9	2
Total	213	71	27	70	44

The general trend is that there has been a reduction in the provision of detached youth work services. The below table reports the average (mean) value across a range of indicators for those authorities that *did* undertake detached youth work over the period and it can be seen that there is some evidence of disinvestment.

Table 6 – Average service provision in UK local authorities that undertake detached youth work

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
WTEs (year on year change)	3.56	3.17 (-11.1%)	3.24 (2.4%)	3.16 (-2.6%)	3.46 (9.6%)
Budget (year on year change)	£142,616	£130,931 (-8.2%)	£119,708 (-8.6%)	£115,897 (-3.2%)	£92,936 (-19.8%)
Individuals seen (year on year change)	1,026	880 (-14.2%)	820 (-6.9%)	681 (-17.0%)	559 (-17.8%)
Total contacts (year on year change)	5,917	4,400 (-25.6%)	3,640 (-17.3%)	3,454 (-5.1%)	3,528 (2.1%)

There is considerable variation around the mean for detached youth work. For example, a number of local authorities report considerably higher levels of investment in detached youth work (see annex D for more detail). It is possible that these reflect data quality issues where information has been conflated with other aspects of youth service provision in the response by the local authority.

The qualitative features of detached youth work services also vary considerably and these are summarised in more detail in annex E. Of particular interest is that some 81% of responders made reference to their close working with the Police, whereas only 54% made explicit reference to their relationship with schools. This would seem to suggest that the prevalent view of detached youth work is that it is a ‘corrective’ response to criminal and anti-social behaviour.

Case Study: Warrington Borough Council

Local authorities use a range of metrics to measure outcomes of detached youth work. These metrics are often chosen because there is a direct link between their realisation and the objectives of detached youth work. As such, they may be more readily ‘monetisable’ than those that exists in national data sets, such as the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), for example if they relate to use of public services which have an associated cost to society (e.g. health or social services).

For example, in their response Warrington Borough Council outlined in detail some of the KPIs that they use to evaluate the effectiveness of their detached /mobile youth work. Warrington’s team of detached

¹⁵ For clarity, this relates to the direct provision of detached youth work by a local authority. It is possible that another third party delivers detached youth work in the absence of a local authority service.

¹⁶ In Northern Ireland, youth services fall under the remit of the Health & Social Care Boards.

youth workers (~ 1.1 WTE) deliver the service on foot or by using their mobile youth bus, which provides interactive activities and private clinic spaces to offer positive support and guidance to young people in the targeted locations. Their approach is to respond to areas of known concern with respect to criminality as identified through local data intelligence sharing (e.g. information from the Police).

Table 7 shows 3 key KPIs used by Warrington Borough Council. This shows a clear downward trend in the rate of entrance to the Youth Justice System and secondary school absences within the local population. Whilst this is a positive outcome for these individuals and society, it is not possible to conclude that this was caused by the council’s intervention in the absence of a plausible counterfactual scenario.

Table 7 – Example KPIs from Warrington Borough Council

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
First time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10-17 (rate per 100,000)	391.2	285.1	171.9	153.6	180.5
Total absence rate from secondary schools (per cent)	6.0	6.0	5.1	5.3	5.0
Under 18s admitted to hospital with alcohol specific conditions (rate per 100,000)	57.69	57.69	62.69	65.49	57.78

Quantitative analysis: aggregate findings

Application of the CBA framework outlined in section 2 would require comprehensive data on the outcomes for detached children with and without detached youth work support. One potential source of information is the IMD. This is a weighted index that combines information from seven domains to produce an overall relative measure of deprivation¹⁷. It includes many of the outcomes that are pertinent to detached youth work and one would expect to see a positive correlation between these variables and the level of intervention. However, the IMD is an aggregated data set and therefore it is not possible to isolate only the variables that are of interest. Furthermore, given that it is an index, it only allows us to measure changes in *relative* deprivation as opposed to the absolute level of deprivation.

The subsequent analysis is restricted to local authorities in England. This is for solely for practical reasons as the definition and collection of national statistics varies across the UK and, as such, it is hard to ensure consistency in the interpretation of the results. In any case, the English local authorities represent around 72% of the total and therefore should be able to provide a good approximation of general trends.

Table 8 provides a summary of the average deprivation rankings for the three LA categories, where a higher ranking is reflective of higher levels of. This shows that areas with detached youth work provision are typically associated with higher levels of deprivation.

¹⁷ The domains with their weights in parenthesis are: Income Deprivation (22.5%); Employment Deprivation (22.5%); Education, Skills and Training Deprivation (13.5%); Health Deprivation and Disability (13.5%); Crime (9.3%); Barriers to Housing and Services (9.3%); and Living Environment Deprivation (9.3%)

Table 8 – Average deprivation ranking

	Currently undertake detached youth work	Previously undertook detached youth work	Never undertaken detached youth work
Overall IMD - Rank of average score	69.95	80.54	90.32
Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) - Rank of average score	69.42	82.85	88.86
Education, Skills and Training - Rank of average score	71.95	74.93	91.27
Health Deprivation and Disability - Rank of average score	71.16	80.30	85.86
Crime - Rank of average score	63.11	89.07	89.36

Table 9 considers the permanent exclusion rate and fixed period exclusion rate from state-funded primary, state-funded secondary and special schools. Here it is difficult to glean much insight as the permanent exclusion rates are comparable across the three categories, and the fixed period exclusion rate does not appear to follow any clear pattern.

Table 9 – Average school exclusions ranking

	Currently undertake detached youth work	Previously undertook detached youth work	Never undertaken detached youth work
Permanent exclusion rate	0.09	0.09	0.09
Fixed period exclusion rate	4.43	4.95	3.56

It is important to note that this high-level analysis of correlations does not provide a reliable indication that there is a casual link between detached youth work and improved outcomes in education and other indicators of social deprivation. There are several reasons for this:

- First, there is likely to be reverse causality at a play in that local authorities are more likely to commission detached youth work if they experience high levels of deprivation and associated problems;
- Second, local authorities will have different characteristics (unrelated to the provision of the detached youth work) that will tend to affect the levels of deprivation; and
- Finally, there may also be an ‘omitted variable bias’, for example if local charities are more likely to be present in areas where the local authority does not undertake detached youth work.

Accordingly, this information as it stands is not sufficient to allow one to make a robust estimate of the likely impact of detached youth work on outcomes targeted by StreetInvest. As discussed in the next section, this would require the collection of additional data to allow a more detailed empirical analysis that compares specific outcomes across different local authorities over time.

4. Potential evaluation approach and data requirements

Potential evaluation approach

As explained earlier, to identify the improvement in outcomes attributable to detached youth work it is necessary to measure and compare outcomes under the factual and counterfactual scenarios. There are several potential approaches to do this that StreetInvest may wish to consider in future:

1. One simple approach would be to compare observed outcomes within a local area before and after the introduction of the 'treatment' (i.e. detached youth work provision). This would require careful consideration of any general time trend that may have resulted in a change in outcomes in the absence of the intervention (e.g. cuts to other council services)
2. Alternatively, one could compare local areas at the same point in time to see if there is a difference in outcomes for those that provide detached youth work services and those that do not. Here the challenge is that there may be unobserved factors that explain why some local areas achieve worse outcomes than others unrelated to the provision of detached youth work.
3. A more sophisticated approach is to compare outcomes at two points in time for two local areas and compare the change in outcomes over time across areas with different level of youth work service provision. This is known as a 'difference in difference' approach and is commonly used in impact analysis to estimate the differential effect of a treatment on a 'treatment group' versus a 'comparison group' in a natural experiment.

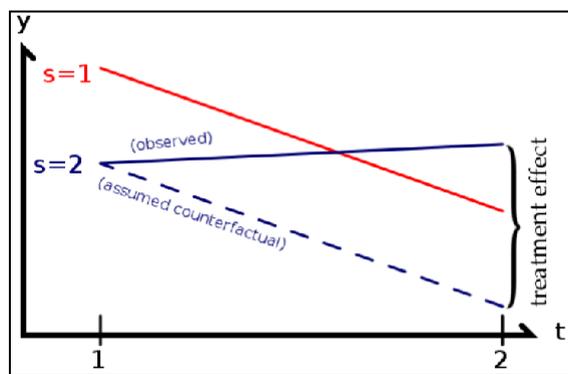
Ideally, the analysis would be done using detailed data on actual outcomes for individual detached children i.e. directly observing outcomes for those who have received support. The challenge with this research design is that it would be both costly and time consuming to set up such a study and there is limited evidence that local authorities consistently collect data in this way.

Figure 1 illustrates how the difference in difference approach might be applied to estimate the impact on outcomes from an intervention where a local authority has a detached youth work service. The analysis would compare two local authorities (the treatment and control groups) across two periods:

- $s = 1$ when both the treatment group and the control group had a detached youth work service; and
- $s = 2$ when only the treatment group had a detached youth work service.

A simple linear regression analysis could then determine the effect of withdrawing the treatment on observed variables of interest, e.g. school exclusion rates. The impact of the treatment would then be identified as in the below chart.

Figure 1 – Illustration of identification in difference-in-differences analysis¹⁸



¹⁸ Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Difference_in_differences#/media/File:Parallel_Trend_Assumption.png

What data would be needed?

The difference in difference analysis relies on the strong assumption that the two groups follow a common time trend (e.g. the evolution of school exclusions would have been the same in the absence of the treatment). It is generally difficult to assess the validity of this assumption. In some circumstances, looking at whether there has been a parallel trend between local authorities in the past can give some confidence. In addition, it is important to ensure that the comparison is based on ‘similar’ local authorities, or to include appropriate controls that capture relevant observable differences that may affect outcomes for detached young people.

We suggest that subsequent research by StreetInvest should focus on the London Boroughs, not least because StreetInvest is already in contact with many of these and can make use of existing relationships to source more detailed information on their current detached youth work and measured outcomes. Table 10 shows that the average IMD score by Borough and indicates which of the detached youth work service provision categories is applicable.

It should be acknowledged that focusing on a narrowly defined geographical area does increase the risk of ‘spillover’ effects. This occurs when, for example, an intervention in one area to reduce youth crime leads to a rise in criminality in a neighbouring area as activity is simply displaced. Such patterns would make it more difficult to accurately estimate the impact of detached youth work.

Robust implementation of a difference in difference analysis using this data would require additional data to be collected, including:

- Further information from LAs to confirm exactly when detached youth services were introduced or withdrawn (this is often not specified in the responses to the FOI request).
- More detailed data on relevant outcomes over time. As noted earlier, the IMD is too highly aggregated and outdated to determine the relationship between detached youth work and the five outcomes of interest. Ideally, monthly (or failing that quarterly) data in national data sets covering indicators for school attendance, criminal behaviour, drug use, mental health and family reunification at a local authority level is needed to measure accurately the impact of the intervention. Identification of these data sets would be a key part of any subsequent work.

In addition, we recommend that StreetInvest seeks specialist econometric advice. This would need to address several technical issues, including whether there is sufficient variation in the data to identify the treatment effect, and the most appropriate treatment variable to use. On the latter, one option is to use a binary dummy variable that accounts for the existence of a detached youth service to determine whether such a service leads to an improvement in the selected outcomes. It should be acknowledged that the results of the analysis would likely be sensitive to the model specification and work would be needed to determine the most appropriate specification.

If a reliable estimate of the impact of detached youth work on outcomes can be obtained, this can be combined with estimates of the unit cost of public services using the type of information discussed in section 4.1 to determine the economic benefits of detached youth work. Combining this with data on the costs of these interventions would give an estimate of the net benefit.

Table 10 – Detached youth work provision and deprivation ranking in London Boroughs

London Borough	IMD - Rank of average score	Currently undertake detached youth work	Previously undertook detached youth work	Never undertaken detached youth work
Barking and Dagenham	11		✓	
Barnet	109	✓		
Bexley	117	✓		
Brent	55			✓

London Borough	IMD - Rank of average score	Currently undertake detached youth work	Previously undertook detached youth work	Never undertaken detached youth work
Bromley	122			
Camden	62	✓		
City of London	132			
Croydon	71	✓		
Ealing	73		✓	
Enfield	51	✓		
Greenwich	61	✓		
Hackney	10	✓		
Hammersmith and Fulham	68		✓	
Haringey	24		✓	
Harrow	129		✓	
Havering	107	✓		
Hillingdon	104			
Hounslow	80	✓		
Islington	22	✓		
Kensington and Chelsea	75	✓		
Kingston upon Thames	144	✓		
Lambeth	36			
Lewisham	38			
Merton	125	✓		
Newham	21		✓	
Redbridge	91	✓		
Richmond upon Thames	147			✓
Southwark	33		✓	
Sutton	127			✓
Tower Hamlets	9			
Waltham Forest	29			
Wandsworth	103	✓		
Westminster	45			✓

5. Key conclusions and recommendations

Our main findings are:

- In principle, the value of StreetInvest's proposed intervention could be assessed using a cost benefit analysis (CBA) that compares the incremental social benefits due to improved outcomes that are attributable to the intervention to the cost of the intervention.
- Data gathered from local authorities gives some insight into the existing scope of detached youth work provision in the UK and the correlation with outcomes (measured in terms of the Index of Multiple Deprivation). However, it does not shed light on the causal relationship between detached youth work and outcomes and cannot be used to assess the impact of the proposed intervention.
- It may be possible to identify the causal impact of detached youth work on outcomes targeted by StreetInvest through a more detailed empirical analysis that compares specific outcomes across different local authorities over time. However, this is likely to be a complex exercise that would require specialist econometric advice, as well as further data to be collected from local authorities, and more granular evidence on relevant outcomes (such as school exclusion rates).
- As with any such analysis, there is no guarantee of success and we suggest that StreetInvest considers undertaking further work to assess the availability of data from local authorities, and the suitability (availability, timeliness, robustness, geography etc.) of relevant outcome measurements before proceeding.
- In principle, if a reliable estimate of the impact of detached youth work can be established, the resultant social benefits could be expressed in monetary terms using estimates of the reduction in expenditure on relevant public services (such as social services, crime and health). This can be compared with the cost of detached youth work services to estimate the net social benefit to society.

ANNEXES

ANNEX A: Bibliography

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ANNEX B: FOI pro forma

I am undertaking a research project on detached youth work in the UK and I am writing to each local authority to gather data on the positive impact that trust worthy adult relationships can have on the lives of detached young people.

I would be very grateful if you could please send me information on the following:

1. A summary of the detached youth work services that you undertake within your organisation
2. Information on which districts / geographical areas are covered by your detached youth work service
3. The number of detached youth workers employed by your organisation (WTEs) in the financial years 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17
4. The total spent on detached youth work services by your organisation (£'000) in the financial years 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17
5. Details on the operating hours of your detached youth work service, specifically:
 - o The number of days per week the service runs
 - o The number of sessions that are provided each day (specifying if this varies by day)
 - o The length in hours that these sessions run for (specifying if this varies by day)
 - o The number of young people contacted within each session (specifying if this varies by day / session)
6. Number of children and young people contacted (both unique contacts and total contacts where an individual was seen multiple times) by your detached youth work team in the financial years 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17
7. Performance against the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) (e.g. % reduction in school truancy rates) that you use to monitor and evaluate the outcomes of your detached youth work services in the years 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16 and 2016/17
8. A summary of any interaction and / or joint work with other agencies including: schools; police; and social services

If this request is too broad or unclear, I would be grateful if you could contact me so that I can provide further clarification. If any of this information is already in the public domain then please do direct me to the relevant URL web addresses.

I understand that I am entitled to request this data under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, but I would sooner request it directly in the first instance as I appreciate that would be more agreeable.

Thanks in advance for facilitating this request for information.

ANNEX C: Data Sources

Description:

The accompanying Excel spreadsheet contains a range of measures which summarise the Indices of Deprivation 2015 at the upper-tier local authority level. The official statistics were published on 30 September 2015 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government.

Filename:

File_11_ID_2015_Upper-tier_Local_Authority_Summaries

Description:

The accompanying Excel spreadsheet contains the full set of permanent and fixed period exclusions releases that are available in the pupil exclusions statistics series. The official statistics were published on 20 July 2017 by the Department for Education.

Filename:

SFR35_2017_LA_tables

ANNEX D: Variation in detached youth work provision

Figure 2 – Distribution of detached youth work WTE provision¹⁹

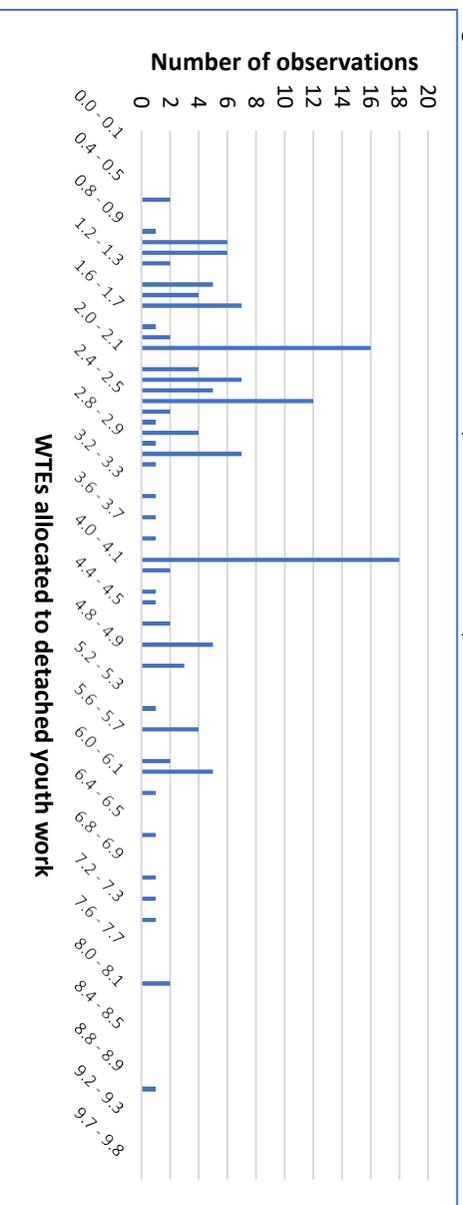


Figure 3 – Distribution of detached youth work budget provision²⁰

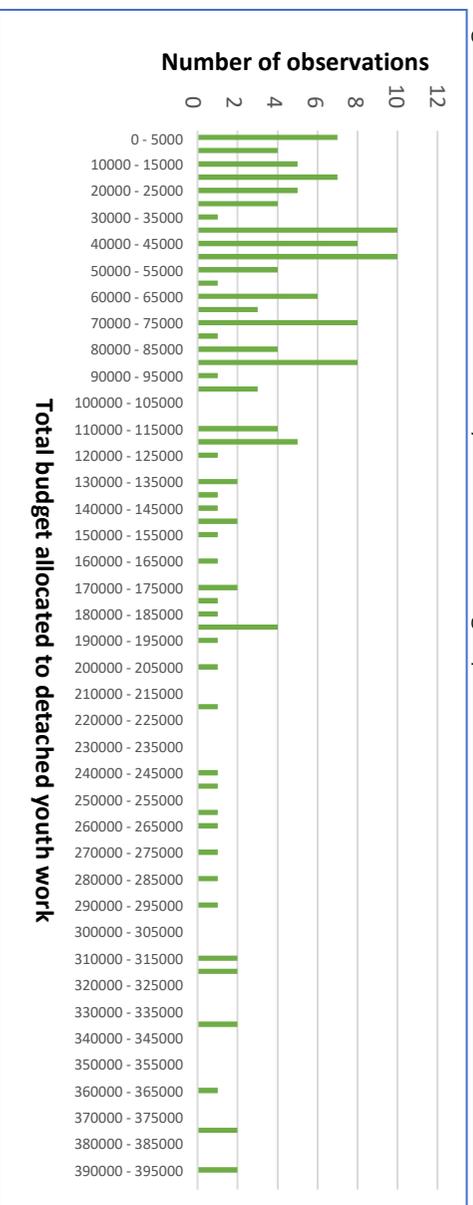
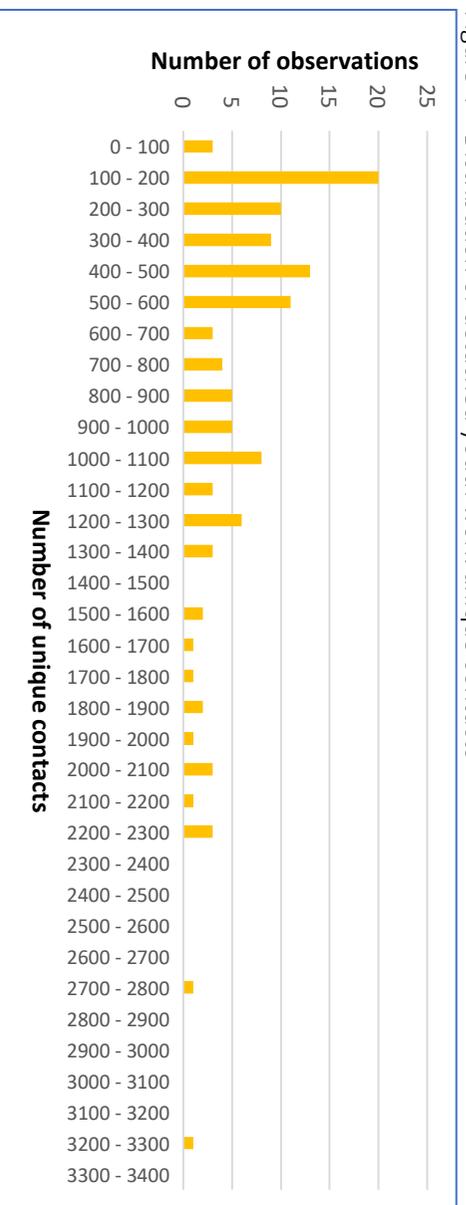


Figure 4 – Distribution of detached youth work unique contacts²¹



¹⁹ Includes 151 observations covering the period 2012/13 to 2016/17 (2 outliers were excluded from the chart)

²⁰ Includes 147 observations covering the period 2012/13 to 2016/17 (7 outliers were excluded from the chart)

²¹ Includes 119 observations covering the period 2012/13 to 2016/17. Unique contacts means total number of young people contacted (ignoring if they were contacted multiple times).

ANNEX E: Qualitative features of detached youth work provision

Table 11 – Qualitative assessment of detached youth work services

Region	Ref.	Local authority	Dedicated detached youth workers?	Service delivered in-house?	KPIs for detached youth work?	Explicit reference to working with Police?	Explicit reference to working with Schools?
England	005	Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council	×	×	×	✓	×
England	009	Bournemouth Borough Council	✓	✓	×	✓	✓
England	013	Buckinghamshire County Council	×	✓	✓	✓	×
England	017	Central Bedfordshire Council	×	×	✓	✓	×
England	019	Cheshire West and Chester Council	✓	✓	×	✓	×
England	020	City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council	×	✓	×	✓	×
England	027	Coventry City Council	✓	✓	×	✓	✓
England	030	Derby City Council	×	✓	✓	✓	×
England	031	Derbyshire County Council	×	✓	×	×	✓
England	035	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council	✓	✓	×	×	×
England	036	Durham County Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
England	038	East Sussex County Council	×	✓	×	✓	×
England	039	Essex County Council	×	✓	×	×	×
England	047	Hertfordshire County Council	×	✓	×	×	×
England	048	Hull City Council	×	✓	✓	✓	×
England	051	Kirklees Council	×	✓	×	×	×
England	053	Lancashire County Council	×	✓	×	✓	×
England	054	Leeds City Council	×	✓	×	✓	✓
England	055	Leicester City Council	✓	✓	×	✓	×
England	056	Leicestershire County Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
England	060	London Borough of Barnet	×	×	×	×	×
England	061	London Borough of Bexley	×	×	✓	✓	✓
England	064	London Borough of Camden	✓	✓	×	✓	✓
England	065	London Borough of Croydon	×	✓	×	✓	✓
England	067	London Borough of Enfield	✓	×	×	✓	×
England	068	London Borough of Hackney	×	✓	×	✓	✓
England	072	London Borough of Havering	×	✓	×	✓	✓
England	074	London Borough of Hounslow	✓	✓	×	✓	✓
England	075	London Borough of Islington	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
England	078	London Borough of Merton	✓	×	✓	×	✓
England	080	London Borough of Redbridge	✓	✓	✓	×	✓
England	086	London Borough of Wandsworth	✓	×	✓	✓	✓
England	087	Luton Borough Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
England	094	North East Lincolnshire Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
England	102	Nottinghamshire County Council	✓	✓	×	✓	×
England	103	Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council	✓	✓	×	✓	×
England	105	Peterborough City Council	×	✓	×	✓	✓
England	106	Plymouth City Council	×	✓	×	✓	✓

Region	Ref.	Local authority	Dedicated detached youth workers?	Service delivered in-house?	KPIs for detached youth work?	Explicit reference to working with Police?	Explicit reference to working with Schools?
England	109	Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
England	111	Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗
England	112	Royal Borough of Greenwich	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
England	113	Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓
England	114	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓
England	117	Salford City Council	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗
England	119	Sefton Metropolitan Borough Council	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
England	120	Sheffield City Council	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
England	122	Slough Borough Council	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
England	128	Southend-on-Sea Borough Council	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗
England	129	St Helens Council	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
England	133	Stoke-on-Trent City Council	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗
England	136	Surrey County Council	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓
England	138	Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓
England	143	Wakefield Metropolitan District Council	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓
England	145	Warrington Borough Council	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
England	151	Wirral Borough Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Scotland	168	East Ayrshire Council	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗
Scotland	173	Fife Council	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓
Scotland	177	Midlothian Council	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Scotland	179	North Ayrshire Council	✗	✓	✗	✓	✗
Scotland	186	South Ayrshire Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Scotland	188	Stirling Council	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
Scotland	189	West Dunbartonshire Council	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗
Wales	191	Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
Wales	200	Flintshire County Council	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
Wales	201	Gwynedd Council	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓
Wales	203	Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Wales	206	Newport City Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wales	208	Powys County Council	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Wales	210	Torfaen County Borough Council	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗
Wales	211	Vale of Glamorgan Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Wales	212	Wrexham County Borough Council	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓
Total			31 / 71	63 / 71	27 / 71	58 / 71	38 / 71