

# Aveley Village Intergenerational Community Centre

## Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. The Vision for an Intergenerational Community Centre	3
3. Project Development History	4
4. Delivering the ICC Vision	5
5. The Plans for the Intergenerational Community Centre	9
6. Location and Setting	10
7. Comparative Deprivation Indices	11
8. Estimated Project Costs	12
9. Funding	13
10. Sustainability	14
11. Employment and Volunteering Opportunities	14
12. Training and Education	15
13. Partners Involved	16
14. Case for a Multi-Agency Partnership	16
15. Links to Local and National Strategies	17
16. Current Partnership Sites and Proposed Acquisitions	21
17. Views of Proposed Sites	23
18. Extracts from Strategies Detailed Above	25
19. Acknowledgements	32

## Introduction

Aveley Village is the social and economic centre of the Thurrock Ward of Aveley and Uplands and is located at the western edge of Thurrock Unitary Authority. Over the last 10 years Thurrock has been slowly recovering from the severe deprivation that blighted much of the borough. Much has improved and will continue to do so. However some areas have still been falling away and still need much support to achieve the aspirations of the people who make up these communities. Aveley is one of them.

Aveley has grown from a population in 1848 of around 750 people to a current population nearing 10,000. This figure has remained constant for the last five years with only 100 houses built over this time. Services in the area, however, have not matched this growth. There is almost no youth provision in Aveley. The medical services are at breaking point and struggle to cope and housing rates in some parts of the ward are just above the worst 5% in the country.

Prospects for the future seem bound to put an enormous further strain on Aveley's resources. The Local Development Framework (LDF) shows Aveley and Ockendon as a focus for new housing with plans for 1750 houses in this area. As Thames Gateway develops more housing in Aveley it is doubtful that the current infrastructure would be able to cope.

With this in mind, local people have been developing plans to both service the current needs with the ability to cater for the planned growth.

As the needs came together, a plan evolved: The Intergenerational Community Centre.



**A Possible Design  
Tadley Community Centre**

## **The Vision for an Intergenerational Community Centre**

Our vision is stop the downward trend into deprivation and reverse it so that all residents of Aveley have the opportunities to try and meet their ambitions, to give them a village which is a thriving community of people who share in and benefit from the developing living environment, whether it is the social, economic, educational, health sectors that come together to form a happy and sustainable community.

Our research has shown that the best way, for Aveley, is a Centre that will help all the residents of Aveley to meet their aims and aspirations. Our vision is for a state of the art Community Centre that supports all ages by

- bringing services where people can access them easily
- providing places where people of all ages can meet and mix in a friendly social area
- providing facilities where people can develop skills or training
- providing a purpose built Youth Centre where our young people can meet in safety
- improving existing service provision and tailoring services to meet local needs and more.

In our vision, local people, working together, will have the opportunity to be actively involved in the development and successful completion of this project.

The vision for the Intergenerational Community Centre developed from an almost unanimous desire in Aveley to actively support our young people. They told us they wanted a place where they can meet and socialise, have leisure activities specifically designed by the young people themselves and access young people's services (the Youth Centre). They wanted a place where they can develop educational skills and have access to information (the improved library). They wanted better sports activities (new halls and changing rooms).

Our vision includes the whole of the community whether social or economic. Our new hall, by being multi-use will allow better and more social activities. Our Enterprise Area will help new local businesses to start and make it easier for people to work close to where they live.

Our vision is that the Intergenerational Community Centre will be both the focus and the stimuli for an Aveley tomorrow that is positive in outlook, where every resident has the opportunity to fully take part in an active and fruitful life, where all parts of the community live and work in harmony, where the community is strong enough to face the challenges of the future.

**Rt Hon Hazel Blears MP, Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government**

*'There isn't a single service or development in Britain which hasn't been improved by actively involving local people'*

## Project Development History

Some years ago, Thurrock College closed its centre in Love Lane, Aveley. The land was eventually sold for housing. An initial £250,000 was handed over to Thurrock Council in December 2001 with the specific requirement for it to be spent on service provision for the young people of Aveley. An increase in the size of the housing development raised this amount to £370,000. Local people and councillors looked at ways of using the funds. A number of ideas were considered but none were taken on.

In 2003 the Aveley Village Community Forum was founded and the possibility of a purpose built Youth Centre was one of its initial aims. However the Forum and its members were also painfully aware of the lack of facilities for all its residents and the increasing pressure that new housing would put on these services.

One of the services that they were particularly keen to develop was the Aveley Medical Centre. It seemed that a practical solution was to build the Youth Centre and the medical Centre together. This opened the doors for other ideas for new facilities to be incorporated in the project.

The project was expanded to include, with the Youth Centre and medical Centre, a new library, a new public hall, a nursery, a radio station, a police office and an enterprise centre.

In 2005, £1,000 was raised to pay an architect to design the initial building and draw up outline plans. These formed the basis of the project and gave a physical plan to stimulate discussion..

The project was discussed with Thurrock Council, the Primary Care Trust and the Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation, all of whom supported the project in principle. However, a full commitment to the project was not possible as the project was very much in its conception stage.

The Forum was still in its infancy and, although keen to take the project forward, it was only able to keep the project in the public eye and try and raise funds for the project. In early 2008 the Forum decided that it did not have the in-house skills to develop the project further and professional help was needed.

In June 2008 the Forum took on a part time project manager with the brief to develop the Forum into an organisation capable of running this project and to turn the idea for the Intergenerational Community Centre from a concept into an active and feasible project.

In September 2008 Aveley Village Community Forum became formally incorporated into a company limited by guarantee and is now seeking charitable status.

## Delivering the ICC Vision

To deliver our vision we are aware that only working on one part of the community's problems at a time would be very slow to bring around changes in Aveley, if at all. We are also aware that any services brought into the village would have to be available in an easily accessible location.

We soon became aware that a multi-strand, multi-agency approach would be needed to address as many issues as possible at the same time. We decided that these services should be brought together in the Intergenerational Community Centre. These services include:



- A new and larger public hall
- A dedicated Youth Centre
- Training rooms
- An enterprise zone
- A community café
- Changing rooms

These sections of the Intergenerational Community Centre, whilst operated and run independently, would work in partnership to maximise their overall benefits to the community.

### A New and Larger Public Hall



The current public hall is well used and is currently at capacity. It is badly in need of repairs but a lack of funding makes this unlikely. This makes the hall unsuitable for some organisations and unavailable to others.

The current plans for the new public hall would be for a hall about three times the size of the present hall. It would be able to be divided so more than one group can use it at the same time. A purpose built stage area would be included so that music or drama groups would both be able to practice or put on shows. This would also allow groups such as

Essex On Tour to bring shows into the village.

Being purpose built means we will be able to include storage space and other facilities that will allow groups to keep their equipment in the hall or widen the range of groups who can use the hall.

### A Dedicated Youth Centre

Other than a few small clubs, Aveley has no youth provision. Youth work is conducted by outreach and individual short term projects. The dedicated Youth Centre will provide a permanent base for youth work. It is envisioned that this Centre will be open for a large part of the day so young people can use it when they feel it most useful or to socialise during the day or evening. The Centre would provide both formal and informal activities whilst allowing specialised education, training or welfare to be provided right where the young people are.

With the large number of NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) young people in Thurrock generally and Aveley specifically, the Youth Centre will give a place where young people feel secure and more likely to see advisors, talk about their aspirations and seek ways of meeting them. It also means we will be able to assist these young people work

towards their goals by listening to them and tailoring services provided whether ad hoc or full time.

### **Training rooms**



As part of the aim to increase the skills of local people and their ability to have a say or take part in the development of our community, training rooms will be included in the building. These will be available to local groups to bring training courses into the village. They will also be available for rent to local companies who do not have their own local facilities. This will also link into the kitchen which will be built as a training kitchen.

### **An Enterprise Zone**

Working with the Thurrock Local Enterprise Agency and Thurrock Council, it has become obvious that there is a shortage of office and small workshop space. The Enterprise Zone seeks to address this by providing start-up and incubator offices, commercial offices and workshops.

The Zone will assist local people to start their own businesses by providing studios, small offices and workshops. It will allow local people to rent office space near to where they live. It is also an important part of the sustainability of the Intergenerational Community Centre as the income will support the running costs of the communal spaces.

### **A Community Café**

This is an important part of the project. With the range of facilities available within the Intergenerational Community Centre, local residents are likely to use more than one of them at the same time. The location of the Centre means that residents are just as likely to visit whilst conducting other business or activities in the Village. The Café will provide a space to meet with friends, wait for buses or appointments or just have a cup of tea.



The Café's kitchen is also an important part as it will provide catering services to the Hall and Youth Centre, training opportunities for potential food workers and, by taking on a professional caterer to operate from the kitchen, provide an income to the Centre.

### **Changing rooms**

Whilst not a dedicated sports centre, it is expected that some sporting groups may well want to make use of the halls. In addition, changing rooms would be needed for music and theatrical shows using the hall. The changing rooms would also be available to clubs using the Recreation Ground pitches

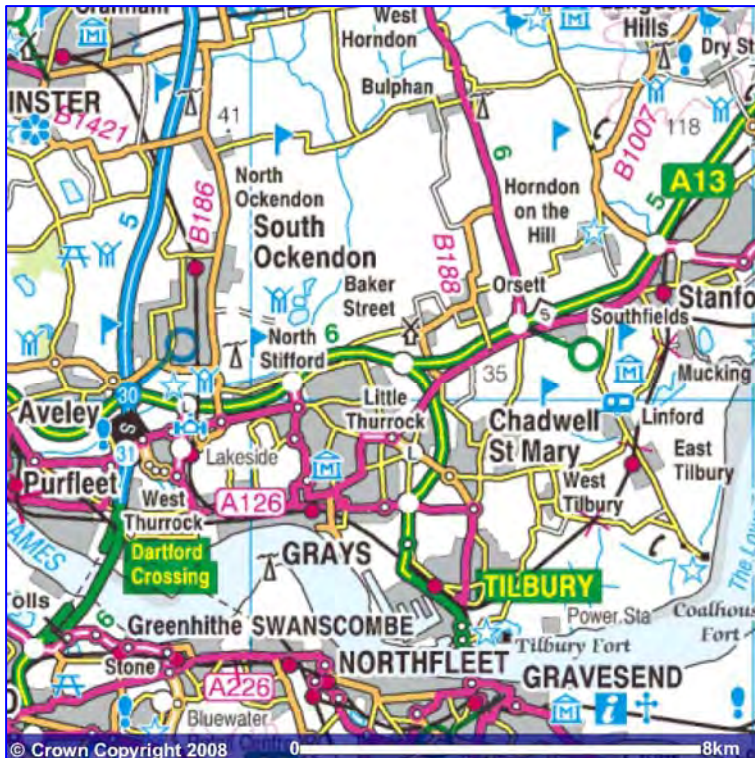
## The Plans for the Intergenerational Community Centre



**These Plans are based on the initial idea for the Centre.**

**They are not the final or proposed layout  
but are indicators of how the Centre might look.**

## Location and Setting



Aveley is located on the western edge of Thurrock Unitary Authority. It is one of two villages that form part of Thurrock but are also inside the M25, the other being Purfleet. The western boundary of Aveley is with the London Borough of Havering.

The construction of the Aveley Bypass split Aveley into two distinct communities. The area to the north of the bypass is known as Kenningtons and that to the south as Aveley Village.

Both have differing characteristics but share a common social and economic centre located around Aveley High Street.

Aveley is built on the rising land to the north of the Mardyke, a small river that flows into the Thames. The area surrounding Aveley is mostly open space and country parks and is Green Belt land. Some of the green spaces are recovered land fill sites.

Aveley was originally a small farming village dating from Roman times and grew slowly until after the Second World War. The 1931 pre-war census shows a population of 2003. After the war major re-location and the building of new estates in both Aveley and Belhus saw over 20,000 new residents and the population in Aveley alone grew to 6,000. Further building programs has seen the population rise to around 10,000. With the proposals for 1750 new houses in the next few years this figure could rise by a further 6,000.

Until the major housing programs of the 50's and 60's Aveley was able to support its population but the sudden large influx of people saw growing problems. By the 1990's Aveley saw much of its population, services and infrastructure ranked among the 10% most deprived wards on the Office of National Statistics' (ONS) Index of Multiple Deprivation. Whilst progress has been made parts of Aveley still show similar levels of deprivation, especially in the areas of Education, Skills & Training, Barriers to Housing and Services and Crime & Disorder. In the domain of Education, Skills and Training, no part of Aveley escapes the 30% worst deprived.

Much of the overall increase was due to the closure of a number of land fill sites and their subsequent return to green spaces. If this factor is taken into account then most of Aveley falls within the 20% worst deprived areas on the 2001 ONS Index of Multiple Deprivation. This factor has also had an effect on the latest figures.

However, whilst there were some increases, the latest figures from the Index of Multiple Deprivation shows that Aveley has moved further into deprivation. Over half of Aveley has shown a marked increase in multiple deprivation with 22 of the 42 deprivation markers falling behind the figures 2004. Once again, the environment has shown its effect on the overall figures with standards rising by up to 7,000 places. Had this not taken place then most of Aveley would still be in the worst 20% most deprived areas of the country.

## Comparative Deprivation Indices

These indices show the comparative level of deprivation throughout England. It has divided the country into 32,482 Super Output Areas (SOA). Each of these SOAs consists of around 1,500 people so a Ward may have a number of SOAs. This system improves on the old ward based system when the country was divided into 8,414 areas. This system tended to hide places where there were pockets of high deprivation or enhance areas that had an area that was more prosperous than the surrounding deprived community. The index shows the most deprived area as number 1 and the most prosperous area as 32,482. From this it can be seen what areas suffer most and what the specific problems are.

### Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004

STwardname	IMD	EMPLOYMENT	EDUCATION SKILLS AND TRAINING	HEALTH DEPRIVATION AND DISABILITY	BARRIERS TO HOUSING AND SERVICES	LIVING ENVIRONMENT	CRIME AND DISORDER SCORE	INCOME
Aveley and Uplands	9341	19147	5946	13914	1814	8225	6555	11828
Aveley and Uplands	7309	11181	1617	11978	12546	11913	7690	6705
Aveley and Uplands	12651	12602	7192	15105	9901	19487	12626	13611
Aveley and Uplands	9436	13479	2862	13752	12134	12071	5277	11875
Aveley and Uplands	15507	19212	9898	22415	9497	21492	3068	20908
Aveley and Uplands	13972	14444	9428	16530	22022	10050	12176	13046

### Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007

STwardname	IMD	EMPLOYMENT	EDUCATION SKILLS AND TRAINING	HEALTH DEPRIVATION AND DISABILITY	BARRIERS TO HOUSING AND SERVICES	LIVING ENVIRONMENT	CRIME AND DISORDER SCORE	INCOME
Aveley and Uplands	7611	16481	2857	13617	1121	5312	8534	11824
Aveley and Uplands	5548	7199	1080	11982	20053	18525	4917	6576
Aveley and Uplands	10640	8409	5827	10983	17479	16719	13193	11841
Aveley and Uplands	9546	9644	3035	10489	19177	17999	8870	11114
Aveley and Uplands	16656	17571	8272	22445	16260	26865	3433	22703
Aveley and Uplands	14730	14589	9663	15198	25901	14756	13584	11772

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010								
STwardname	IMD	EMPLOYMENT	EDUCATION SKILLS AND TRAINING	HEALTH DEPRIVATION AND DISABILITY	BARRIERS TO HOUSING AND SERVICES	LIVING ENVIRONMENT	CRIME AND DISORDER SCORE	INCOME
Aveley and Uplands	7243	14540	4245	19769	1018	5549	3590	10409
Aveley and Uplands	6962	6354	1125	14961	21188	11033	11226	7268
Aveley and Uplands	11369	8699	6341	18178	17404	15270	10984	11254
Aveley and Uplands	9968	10961	3563	16375	18918	12393	5295	11368
Aveley and Uplands	18235	19132	9139	23651	15281	23299	8454	20148
Aveley and Uplands	13665	14631	9020	24394	25524	7234	10427	10631

Changes in Deprivation Ratings		
Worse Off	About the Same	Better Off

The first table shows the levels of deprivation in Aveley that were established in 2004. The second table shows how the area changed between 2004 and 2007. The red areas are those that got worse over the three years between the two studies. The third table shows the latest figures available. The red areas are those that have worsened further and are below those for 2004. To help put this in context 1 is the worst area and 32411 is the best. Anything below 6480 is in the worst 20% most deprived areas in the country. And while some areas show an improvement over 2007 the trend is still downwards.

## Estimated Project Costs

The table below gives an estimate of the costs for the whole building broken down into the estimated costs for each section. Some items may be exempt or zero-rated for VAT these figures are shown in red. It may also be possible to recover VAT at the time of building. The first section shows the physical building costs allocated by floor space at the rate of £1,250 per square metre. The second section shows the non build costs. Project management and staffing figures are for three years.

### Aveley Local Centre - Preferred Options

	Rate (£ per m2)	Area m2	Cost
<b>Internal Areas</b>			
Public hall	£1,400	303	£424,200
Youth wing	£1,400	230	£322,000
Community café	£1,400	61	£85,400
Community café kitchen	£1,400	31	£43,400
Office accommodation (Enterprise Zone)	£1,400	270	£378,000
Public Hall Kitchen	£1,400	25	£35,000
Reception area	£1,400	19	£26,600
Plant room	£1,400	48	£67,200
Storage	£1,400	49	£68,600
Public toilets	£1,400	59	£82,600
Forum office	£1,400	25	£35,000
Circulation	£1,400	150	£210,000
Training/Classroom	£1,400	46	£64,400
<b>Sub Total (rounded)</b>		<b>1,316</b>	<b>£1,842,000</b>
<b>Other Costs (provisional sums)</b>			
Outdoor play	prov sum		£0
Parking	prov sum	74	£118,400
Land purchase costs	prov sum		£0
Access improvements	prov sum		£200,000
Other external works & landscaping	prov sum		£100,000
Demolition	prov sum		£0
<b>Sub Total (rounded)</b>			<b>£418,000</b>
<b>Total (Excluding Prelims, Fees &amp; Contingency)</b>		<b>1,316</b>	<b>£2,260,000</b>
<b>Contingency &amp; Fees</b>			
Contingency	13%		£283,000
<b>Total Construction Cost</b>		<b>1,316</b>	<b>£2,543,000</b>
Professional fees	12%		£305,000
<b>Total Cost of Option</b>			<b>£2,848,000</b>

## Sustainability

The short term strategy for sustainability is to raise funds at the beginning of the project to allow it to run for three years without any other income. The long term strategy is slightly more complicated and depends on the management structure for each of the components that will make up the Intergenerational Community Centre.

### Long Term Strategy

This strategy is based on parts of the Centre being run as separate entities. This would see the library, public hall and Youth Centre being run by the appropriate groups (Thurrock Council for library and Youth Centre and Public Hall Trustees for the hall). Each group would be responsible for the management and funding of their own parts of the Centre.

Aveley Village Community Forum would be responsible for the remainder of the building. The Forum would be responsible for raising the funding needed to maintain the enterprise zone, the nursery, cafeteria and common areas.

The majority of the funding will come from renting out these areas. It is estimated that rental income would be in the range of £140,000 per annum. This is based on estimates provided by the Thurrock Local Enterprise Agency and research into local rents charged.

It has been estimated that staffing the areas of the Centre not separately managed would cost in the region of £90,000 per annum. It can be seen from these figures that a 64% average occupancy would ensure staffing costs are met. Any income over 64% would be applied partly to reserves and partly to fund projects within the Centre.

Renting out of property may well not fall within the charitable aims of the Forum so it may be necessary to form a "Trading Arm" to administer the commercial side of the Centre's work. This would take the form of a Charitable Interest Company. This company would transfer or donate all its profits or surpluses to the Forum.

This is the basic structure for the long term strategy but it can be adapted should it be decided on a different management or ownership structure for various components.

## Employment and Volunteering Opportunities

The viability of a community very often depends on its economy. The Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation Master Plan for Aveley and South Ockendon recognises this fact in its executive summary stating: "*The research and consultation has shown that Aveley and South Ockendon are not sustainable communities in their current form.*"

It continues on to say: "*South Ockendon and Aveley have a weak office market, in part related to an extremely limited stock base. Potential flexible-use small scale light industrial/workshop/office units may foster and grow this market, and provide job opportunities*"

The Intergenerational Community Centre also recognises this and seeks to address this by the provision of the Enterprise Zone. The provision of nursery or start-up units and extra office space will provide new job opportunities in Aveley which will, in turn, support the local shops and businesses.

The Centre will also offer a wide range of volunteering opportunities which will lead to more people being involved in the community, increase the opportunity for new skills development as volunteers train while taking part in their activities and help people have a bigger say in how their community develops.

The table below shows:

- Jobs Safeguarded, which are those jobs that continue from their present location to the new one at the Intergenerational Community Centre.
- New Jobs, which are jobs that currently do not exist
- Opportunities for Volunteering. These are opportunities that currently do not exist and are shown in the areas that are most likely to maximise the use of volunteers

	Jobs Safeguarded	New Jobs	Opportunity for Volunteering
Public Hall	1	0	Yes
Youth Centre		6	Yes
Kitchen		4	Yes
Nursery		8	Yes
Enterprise Zone		30	No
Community Café		1	Yes
Communal Areas		4	Yes
Community Forum	1	2	Yes
Totals	4	55	

## Training and Education

The Intergenerational Community Centre will provide a wide range of training and educational facilities. The Centre will have the double advantage of both providing new facilities and in an easily accessible location. There is a further benefit in having a range of services in one location. For example books needed for a training course will be available in the same building.

With a dedicated Youth Centre and the availability of training rooms the potential for long-term training courses is greatly enhanced. The increased capacity of the library will give greater access to IT facilities for both young people and the growing number of “Silver Surfers”.

Within the Centre a number of courses or events can take place at the same time. These can range from one-off events, such as First Aid, longer term courses, such as Adult Literacy, or continuous programmes, such as life long learning programmes.

The range of facilities could see Sports Coach training in part of the Public Hall, Heritage Education in the library with IT training also taking place, Personal Development in the Youth Centre, Vocational Training in the workshops or kitchen and corporate training in a training room taking place at the same time.

This is only one possibility but with these facilities people can be taken further along their educational path. Volunteers who have developed an interest in a field or subject from the on job training whilst working as a volunteer will be able to go further via the opportunities on site or via the signposting available. Young people will be able to get personal or careers guidance in a place they feel is their own. The opportunities for all parts of the community to learn and grow will build the communities capacity for development and to face the future with confidence.

## Partners Involved

This project evolved from ideas from the community of Aveley and was developed using the skills and knowledge of the various partner groups. As the project develops, this partnership will form the backbone of the skills and knowledge base needed to bring it to fruition.

Partners include:

- Thurrock Council (various departments including libraries, village halls, Youth Service, Early Years, Local Enterprise)
- SW Essex PCT
- TTGDC
- Thurrock Local Enterprise Agency
- Essex Police
- Aveley Medical Centre
- ngage

## Case for a Multi-Agency Partnership

Although for reasons of maximising funding opportunities it would make sense for Aveley Village Community Forum to be the lead partner, there is every reason to bring in the partners listed above. In fact, it is highly unlikely this project would have any possibility of success without them.

However the partnership is not solely for the benefit of the Forum but is very much a two way street. From a purely financial viewpoint, the project will be able to access funding not available to some of the partners. From a practical point of view, the shared knowledge and skills will help to overcome the inevitable questions and problems that will occur.

The third benefit is that the outputs and outcomes from the projects will help partners to meet their own targets. With national government targets and national and EU funders moving away from output target to outcome based results, the success of a project now depends much more on participation than the fact it actually takes place.

Research and experience show that members of the public tend to combine reasons for visiting town or village centres but only have one object if visiting somewhere not centrally located.

For example, a resident who lives in South Ockendon could, in one visit, go shopping, take back library books, visit the council office and get advice from the South Ockendon Community Forum. They can do this because all these places are within a few yards of each other.

In Aveley it is likely that a visit to the library is a special trip. Accessing services means a trip to Ockendon or Grays. And, whilst they are likely to do their shopping on these visits, it is likely that these will be less often. It also means that shopping outside the village of Aveley makes it harder for the community to be economically viable.

The Intergenerational Community Centre, being a multi-agency project, can offer a range of services at the same place and at the same time. This would increase the number of people using services where they would not have done so due to location. It would also increase the number of visits each resident is likely to make. With employment within the building adding to the number of visitors, the economic situation in Aveley should improve.

There are further benefits which are detailed in the Links to Local and National Strategies Section.

## Links to Local and National Strategies

This section will detail how, in addition to the benefits mentioned in the previous section, this project contributes to local and national strategies. These links will be explained and where possible, space permitting, will be detailed more fully at the end of this document.

### Thurrock Council Strategies

#### Destination 2012

The Council has its own set of organisational priorities, which complement and contribute to the Sustainable Community Strategy priorities. They too reflect what the community say they want in the way of services and also meet our statutory obligations for delivering services. Our organisational priorities also reflect our political leadership's ambitions in their role of leading the community, as well as taking note of national priorities.

In June 2005 the Council agreed its Destination 2012 agenda, which set out its ambitions to deliver against 5 Council priorities in the short, medium and long term.

The Council has four priorities that focus on service delivery.

- Children, Young People & Lifelong Learning
- Including People
- Safer Environment
- Cleaner and Greener Environment

There is a further overriding priority of

- Delivering excellence and achieving value for money

The Intergenerational Community Centre supports all four targets for 2012. It assists in meeting 10 of the 36 targets. The Centre will also contribute towards the overriding priority by ensuring all designs and projects deliver state of the art facilities and programmes.

#### Sustainable Communities Strategy

This strategy states that the vision for Thurrock is: *“Thurrock will be the location of choice - a place where people thrive and prosper; where you can access services that will make a difference; and where development is sustainable and supports our new and existing communities as they grow.”*

Within this strategy there are three cross-cutting themes that contain 12 Strategic Objectives (SO's). This project contributes to 8 of these objectives.

#### Local Agenda 21

The Local agenda strategy adopted by Thurrock Council states *“Sustainability is not just an environmental issue it is about quality of life, not only for us but for future generations. It is concerned with allowing us to continue to develop today, but in a way which do not damage our children's and grandchildren's opportunities to develop. We must look at ways of keeping our economy vibrant, and providing for our needs, that do not use up all of the borough's resources and damage our environment.”*

Within this strategy Local Agenda 21 has four priorities to achieve sustainability:

- Social progression which recognises the needs of everyone.
- Protection of the environment.
- Prudent use of natural resources.
- Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth.

The Intergenerational Community Centre contributes directly to the first and fourth of these priorities and, by providing information and training can support the other two.

## Thurrock's Learning Strategy for All who live, learn and work here 2006-2021

Section 3 of this strategy states:

*"The vision which underpins strategy is as follows:-*

*In order to achieve economic well-being, social justice, individual and civic pride, the health and well-being of the individual, community and society, the Thurrock Learning Partnership is committed to develop the highest quality formal and informal learning experiences for all who live and work in Thurrock.*

*The aims of the strategy are inclusive. They cover all who live, learn and work in Thurrock. They are:-*

- To increase learning opportunities, seeking investment to stimulate new provision where gaps exist*
- To remove barriers to learning thereby improving access*
- To raise aspirations and self-belief*
- To encourage community involvement and participation*
- To promote the enjoyment of learning for all and learner centred practice.*
- To secure the learning and skills essential to engage and support a strong and diverse employment base in Thurrock"*

The Intergenerational Community Centre contributes directly to this strategy in general and specifically contributes to 13 individual targets. Furthermore this particular strategy also links to 23 other national and regional strategies. These targets and strategies are listed with the extracts from this strategy at the end of this document.

## Shaping Thurrock for Everyone

This strategy is highly comprehensive and is contained in a document 84 pages long and, as such, is too long to be included in this business plan.



However, the picture on the left shows what the strategy aims to combat. It is used as the cover for the strategy document and it is included here as its aims neatly set out and reflect the common objectives of Aveley Village Community Forum and the Intergenerational Community Centre.

The strategy sets out many methods to achieve its objectives. A large number of these can be provided via the Centre and help bring about the changes desired.

# Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation

## Aveley & Ockendon Master Plan

As part of its overall strategy for Thurrock the Development Corporation produced a Master Plan for Aveley & Ockendon. In its Executive Summary it states: *“The research and consultation has shown that Aveley and South Ockendon are not sustainable communities in their current form. The residents of Aveley and South Ockendon clearly identified a number of key social and physical infrastructure concerns, particularly the deficit in health and youth facilities”*

The vision for Aveley and South Ockendon addresses broad strategic themes, including:

- improving the supply of good quality homes;
  - generating jobs and diversifying employment;
  - developing and enhancing local skills;
  - improving social infrastructure and transport access;
  - improving the design and quality of the public realm;
  - balancing the social structure of the Borough;
- and
- enhancing the cultural life and well-being of the Borough.

The Master Plan specifically designates an Intergenerational Community Centre as the centre of its policy for Aveley and whilst this Centre will address many of the local problems the Master plan points out two in particular. These are Young People and Office Provision. These are outlined here:

There is a paucity of high quality youth services in both settlements, a lack of dynamic cultural and sporting facilities, and a need for a new secondary school. New growth will put extra strain on the existing services. Therefore, it is important that the Master Plan identifies opportunities to provide new services and facilities which can help to develop confidence and skills, and provide recreation and play for young people in Aveley and South Ockendon.

And:

South Ockendon and Aveley have a weak office market, in part related to an extremely limited stock base. Potential flexible-use small scale light industrial/workshop/office units may foster and grow this market, and provide job opportunities;

## Cabinet Office for the Third Sector

### Local Government Performance Framework

This is a new performance framework for monitoring and regulating local government is set out in Chapter 6 of the Local Government White Paper: 'Strong and Prosperous Communities', October 2006. Key elements of the new framework include:

- Local Strategic Partnerships:
- Local Area Agreements:
- National Indicators:
- Comprehensive Area Assessments

This project contributes to this performance framework in two particular National Indicators.

These are:

- National Indicator 6: 'Participation in regular volunteering'
- National Indicator 7: 'An environment for a thriving third sector'

## **East of England Development Agency**

### **Regional economic strategy**

EEDA has set out a regional strategy (RES) aimed at reversing the current falling economic trend in the region. It has set out seven priorities and developed programmes for each of them. The Intergenerational Community Centre contributes particularly from the Economic Participation programme. Their vision for the region echoes that of the ethos for the Centre.

### **Vision for the region**

The vision set out in the RES is for the region to be:

- internationally competitive with a global reputation for innovation and business growth
- a region that harnesses and develops the talents and creativity of all
- at the forefront of the low-carbon and resource-efficient economy.

And known for:

- exceptional landscapes, vibrant places and quality of life
- being a confident, outward-looking region with strong leadership
- and where communities actively shape their future.

## Current Partnership Sites and Proposed Acquisitions

The proposed location for the Intergenerational Community Centre is on the site where the current car park in Aveley Recreation Ground is located. This land is currently owned by Thurrock Council. For the benefit of this project, the land has been given a provisional value of £2,000,000. This location has been chosen because it is just behind the shops which form the economic and social centre to Aveley Village. It is in easy walking distance for most of the village and is easily accessible by bus and taxi.

The two sites that will become un-needed once the Intergenerational Community Centre is fully open are the Library and the Aveley Public Hall. These two sites share the same footprint and, for the sake of this project, the site has been given the notional value of £1.100.000. This land is also owned by Thurrock Council.

### Site Acquisition

Although both sites are owned by Thurrock Council, the method of transfer will differ. The car park land will stay in use as the footprint of the new building so it would only be a matter of land transfer or long-term lease.

With regard to the site of the Library and Public Hall, the original plans were to use the proceeds from the sale of the land to fund the new buildings.

The transfer of assets is a very important part of this project. Without such transfers, whether in the form of cash or land transfer or in lease, it is highly unlikely this project would go forward. Funding for areas regarded as statutory provision, such as the Library and Youth Centre, is very rare if available at all to charitable bodies.

However, the Government in its Change Up programme addresses these specific issues. The Government set up this programme *"to create voluntary and community organisations that are effective and independent because they are financially sustainable."*

The Charities Aid Foundation has produced a document called "The Finance Hub" which sets out to explain how Asset Transfer can be of benefit to both a local council and the community. It states that *"This briefing provides some background to the issues surrounding the transfer of land and property assets from local government to the third sector. It is aimed at practitioners in both the third and statutory sectors."*

*Local government has immense potential as a source of asset transfer, with a land and property portfolio worth approximately £130 billion (Urban Land Institute, 2006), and it is stated government policy that local authorities should dispose of a substantial element of this asset base. In July 2004 the Chancellor announced a government objective to dispose of £30 billion of public assets by 2010, £24 billion of which was to come from the local government sector (HM Treasury, 2004)"*

This document recognises that councils face challenges with Asset Transfers but also points out the benefits saying: *Transferring assets to community organisations can help a local authority achieve its strategic policy aims through the way it manages its land and property assets. As well as transferring control, the local authority will also perform an important strategic role in 'mapping' the assets it owns, whether or not it manages them, and evaluating their viability and current level of maintenance.*

*One important factor when making the decision to transfer assets will be the local authority's need to meet its fiduciary duty to manage its assets in a way that makes best use of resources. Local authorities face particular pressure to realise market value for their assets as a means of reducing pressure on council tax levels. However, this needs to be balanced*

*against the high value for money often achieved through third sector organisations delivering services to client groups the authority finds difficult to access.”*

The programme also recognises that the transfer of assets to a third sector organisation may not be at full market value but suggests that such transfers are permissible as long as the project contributes to sustainable community plan objectives.

The Finance Hub goes on to explain this and says: *The legal context for asset transfer is provided by Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000, whereby every local authority is granted the power to undertake actions it considers are likely to achieve the economic, social or environmental well being of its area.*

*In terms of specific provisions, the Local Government Act 1972 requires local authorities to seek the Secretary of State’s agreement when disposing of an asset for less than best consideration. The General Disposal of Consent (England) 2003 addenda to the Act removed this requirement where the difference between the unrestricted value of the interest to be disposed of and the consideration accepted is £2 million or less.*

*Local authorities have the power to grant leases of premises at less than market rent for up to seven years and, in the case of premises used for ‘recreational purposes’, for any period.*

The Finance Hub gives a number of examples of Asset Transfer, one of which bears striking similarities to this project.

Southmead Development Trust, based in the deprived Southmead area to the north of Bristol, delivers community-based regeneration from the Greenway Centre, which it leases from Bristol City Council. The Greenway Centre is a substantial former secondary school site of 5.5 acres, containing buildings of approximately 50,000 square foot. Activities include training courses, leisure services, managed workspace and community activities. In the late 1990s Bristol City Council sold off a portion of the Greenway Centre site. It has retained the proceeds of £1.1 million as a capital reserve for use by the Trust for capital projects in Southmead.

The document concludes as follows: *Asset transfer to third sector organisations will not be the appropriate solution in all cases, but if the circumstances are favourable can offer significant benefits to both parties. For the community, asset transfer offers the opportunity to achieve long-term sustainability and improved confidence and can act as a catalyst for future development. For the local authority, it can be a way of delivering services that are more in touch with community needs, refurbishing an iconic public building, and contributing to a range of sustainable community plan objectives.*

*The legal and finance framework is already in place. The barriers are often the capacity of third sector organisations to take on assets and lack of will among local politicians or council officers to consider the option. Local authorities are continually being exhorted to view their land and property assets strategically as a way of achieving their community plan objectives. This briefing demonstrates that transfer to third sector organisations should be seen as one of a range of options that can deliver real and lasting benefits. (the full document can be viewed at [www.financehub.org.uk](http://www.financehub.org.uk))*



The picture on the left shows an aerial view of the Recreation Ground. The proposed site for the Community Centre is on the footprint of the car park.

Further photos of the site are shown below.



## **Extracts from Strategies Detailed Above**

Earlier in this document referrals are made to links with various strategies. The full details were not included in that section so it was easier to read and the variety of the links could be more easily understood. This section lists extracts from those strategies in more detail.

### **Thurrock Council**

#### **Destination 2012**

The Council has its own set of organisational priorities, which complement and contribute to the Sustainable Community Strategy priorities. They too reflect what the community say they want in the way of services and also meet our statutory obligations for delivering services. Our organisational priorities also reflect our political leadership's ambitions in their role of leading the community, as well as taking note of national priorities.

In June 2005 the Council agreed its Destination 2012 agenda, which set out its ambitions to deliver against 5 Council priorities in the short, medium and long term.

The Council has four priorities that focus on service delivery.

- Children, Young People & Lifelong Learning
- Including People
- Safer Environment
- Cleaner and Greener Environment

There is a further overriding priority of

- Delivering excellence and achieving value for money

### **Sustainable Communities Strategy**

#### **Our Vision**

Thurrock will be the location of choice - a place where people thrive and prosper; where you can access services that will make a difference; and where development is sustainable and supports our new and existing communities as they grow.

#### **Achieving Our Vision**

To progress the journey towards our vision our refreshed Sustainable Community Strategy has three cross-cutting themes:

- A Place where People Thrive;
- Services that Make a Difference;
- Development that Supports New and Existing Communities.

The Sustainable Community Strategy provides a long-term road map which will enable us to achieve our vision. It is informed by other strategies, local and regional, that impact on Thurrock such as the Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation's Regeneration Framework, Thurrock Council's Local Development Framework and the East of England Regional Spatial Development Strategy.

We expect the themes and strategic objectives of our Sustainable Community Strategy to inform strategic planning in Thurrock for the next 10 years. We have recently carried out an

extensive public consultation exercise involving over 2000 Thurrock residents. The feedback that residents have given us about their priorities for improvements in Thurrock has informed the strategic objectives and the action plans that support our Sustainable Communities Strategy.

## **Sustainable Community Strategy - themes and strategic objectives**

A place where people thrive

***(SO1) We will enable a strong and diverse community voice in Thurrock so that development and improvements are best informed and targeted appropriately.***

***(SO2) We will create a safe environment where surroundings are clean and inviting, where Thurrock residents and workers will choose to locate themselves.***

***(SO3) We will promote Thurrock's culture and heritage and improve access to sports and leisure.***

***(SO4) We will promote healthy living lifestyles and reduce the health inequalities that exist between different parts of our community.***

Services that make a difference

***(SO5) We will provide support to increase the aspirations and educational achievement of our young people.***

***(SO6) We will provide better access to learning opportunities for skills and personal development.***

***(SO7) We will reduce crime and the impact of drugs and anti-social behaviour.***

***(SO8) We will provide health and social care services that meet individual needs and promote choice.***

Development that supports our new and existing communities

***(SO9) We will build well-planned quality housing as part of developments that are sustainable.***

***(SO10) We will invest in our local economy to create diverse local employment opportunities.***

***(SO11) We will improve access to and use of alternative and sustainable modes of transport.***

***(SO12) We will conserve and improve our environment.***

## **Thurrock's Learning Strategy for All who, live learn and work here 2006-2021**

### **Section 2: Introduction and Purpose**

- 2.1 Thurrock Learning Partnership is an inclusive body of partners (See Appendix A) dedicated to meeting the learning needs of their community and the local economy, taking into account the planned growth and development of Thurrock and the Thames Gateway. It recognises the need to work with partners from within and without the Learning Partnership and the broader agenda for Thurrock.
- 2.2 It aims to provide a strategic overview of lifelong learning in Thurrock, a forward looking, continuously developing and co-ordinated approach to delivery and a single point of reference for all stakeholders - internal and external.
- 2.3 This document sets out proposals for an inclusive learning strategy, encompassing all those who live and work in Thurrock. It recognises the importance of sharing good practice and resources to achieve its goals.
- 2.4 It's a bold attempt to seek an overarching consensus among all those who consume, provide, pay for and influence all aspects of formal and informal learning within Thurrock showing respect for the diversity, age range and difference among learners and the workforce.

### **Section 3: Principles**

- 3.1 The vision which underpins strategy is as follows :-  
In order to achieve economic well-being, social justice, individual and civic pride, the health and well-being of the individual, community and society, the Thurrock Learning Partnership is committed to develop the highest quality formal and informal learning experiences for all who live and work in Thurrock.
- 3.2 The aims of the strategy are inclusive. They cover all who live, learn and work in Thurrock. They are :-  
To increase learning opportunities, seeking investment to stimulate new provision where gaps exist  
To remove barriers to learning thereby improving access  
To raise aspirations and self-belief  
To encourage community involvement and participation  
To promote the enjoyment of learning for all and learner centred practice.  
To secure the learning and skills essential to engage and support a strong and diverse employment base in Thurrock

#### **Improve Learning for young people 5-13 & 13-19 by 2012**

- The NEET group will have reduced to 2%
- Have Increased intergenerational physical and creativity activities so that 50% of families are participating (Quality of Life Survey)
- Will have established "teenzones" in every library which are designed and stocked by young people themselves

#### **Improve Learning for young people 5-13 & 13-19 by 2020**

- The NEET group will have reduced to 1 %
- Have increased intergenerational physical and creativity activities for all (Quality of Life Survey)
- Libraries, Heritages and Cultural Services to have provided worthwhile informal learning opportunities to 40% of the cohort

#### **Improve Learning for adults 19+ by 2012**

- Have supported existing Thurrock businesses and encouraged new enterprises into the borough by ensuring
  - (a) They have access to a highly skilled and motivated resident population;
  - (b) Their staff have access to continual skills development to meet changing need;
  - (c) Delivery is flexible and in line with employer need
  - (d) Increased the age range in employment together with continuing development across the age range
- Libraries: Provide access for those groups who traditionally have not engaged in learning so that access is representative of the community (measure/benchmark?); Reposition libraries as centres for community focused informal learning and community engagement.
- Ensure flexible access to learning such as e-learning, especially for adults who have no, or limited qualifications (measure?)

#### **Improve Learning for adults 19+ 2021**

- Have supported existing Thurrock businesses and encouraged new enterprises into the borough by ensuring -

- (a) they have access to a highly skilled and motivated resident population;
- (b) their staff have access to continual skills development to meet changing need;
- (c) delivery is flexible and in line with employer need
- (d) Have an extended age range in employment together with continuing development across the age range
- Continue to profile the case for funding for learning for leisure, health and social benefits
- Provide managed transition from informal to formal learning in all libraries

## **Section 5: Related National, Regional and Local Strategies and Plans**

This over-arching strategy and all linked strategies and Delivery Plans incorporate the relevant Government and other key Strategies, policies and guidelines and specifically reflect the requirements of:

- Every Child Matters
- The Children's Act 2004
- *Skills for Life* (March 2001) - Basic Skills Agency
- *14-19: extending opportunities, raising standards* (Feb. 2002) - DfES
- *Workforce Development Strategy to 2005* (May 2002) - LSC
- *Success for All - Reforming Further Education and Training* (June 2002) - DfES
- *Education and Skills - investment for reform* (June 2002) - DfES
- *14-19: opportunity and excellence* (March 2003) - DfES
- *Progress Report- Working Group on 14-19 Reform* (July 2003) - DfES
- *Regional Social Strategy (March 2004) - East of England Development Agency*
- *Transforming Learning (April 2004) - LGA*
- *Thames Gateway Skills Audit (September 2004)*
- Opportunity Age (DWP 2004)
- 14- 19 White Paper (February 2005) - DfES
- *Skills: Getting on in business, getting on at work White Paper (March 2005)* DfES
- Relevant Sector Skills Plans as currently developed
- Youth Matters Green Paper (July 2005)
- LSC Agenda for Change (August 2005)
- Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation Regeneration Plan
- Local Strategic Partnership Community Plan
- The Future of Higher Education (2003) - DfES
- The Higher Education Act 2004
- Widening Participation in Higher Education 2003

## **Local Agenda 21**

### **Introduction**

In 1992 the UN held a conference on the environment more commonly known as the Rio Earth Summit. The conference raised many peoples concerns for the ways in which we are damaging the environment, possibly for ever. The conference launched a process called Agenda 21, a plan for sustainable development in the 21st century. Over 150 countries from around the world signed up to Agenda 21 and the implementation of Local Agenda 21 strategies.

Local Agenda 21 has four priorities to achieve sustainability:

- Social progression which recognises the needs of everyone.
- Protection of the environment.
- Prudent use of natural resources.
- Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth.

Sustainability is not just an environmental issue it is about quality of life, not only for us but for future generations. It is concerned with allowing us to continue to develop today, but in a way which do not damage our children's and grandchildren's opportunities to develop. We must look at ways of keeping our economy vibrant, and providing for our needs, that do not use up all of the borough's resources and damage our environment.

## **Cabinet Office for the Third Sector**

### **Local Government Performance Framework (National Indicators 6&7)**

A new performance framework for monitoring and regulating local government is set out in Chapter 6 of the Local Government White Paper: 'Strong and Prosperous Communities', October 2006. Key elements of the new framework include:

- **Local Strategic Partnerships:** Under the framework, each local area will have a Local Strategic Partnership which will decide on local priorities. Third sector organisations are full and equal partners in LSPs and the partnerships have a duty to involve local citizens in decision-making.
- **Local Area Agreements:** The priorities agreed by the LSPs will be set out in Local Area Agreements (LAAs). LAAs are agreements between central government, local authorities and their partners to improve services and the quality of life in an area.
- **National Indicators:** The performance framework includes a set of 198 National Indicators. These indicators cover all the national priority outcomes which local authorities will be responsible for delivering. Each LAA will have up to 35 of these targets agreed as priorities. Performance against the priorities set out in the LAA will be assessed through Comprehensive Area Assessments (CAAs).
- **Comprehensive Area Assessments** CAAs consist of:
  1. an annual publication of the performance of all areas against all the measures in the 198 national indicators
  2. an 'annual risk assessment' for every area to be delivered jointly by the Audit Commission working with other inspectorates an annual scored 'direction of travel' judgement for every local authority – this will assess the effectiveness of each local authority in driving continuous improvement
  3. an annual scored 'use of resources' judgement by the Audit Commission for all councils, primary care trusts, fire and rescue authorities and police authorities – building on current judgements to provide public, independent assurance about the organisational effectiveness of these key local partners.

### **National Indicator 7: 'An environment for a thriving third sector'**

NI 7 will measure the contribution that local government and its partners make to the environment in which independent third sector organisations can operate successfully.

A stronger third sector can be an asset to every local authority area and this indicator has been included as a government priority in the National Indicator set in recognition of:

- **The importance of the third sector to strong, active and empowered communities:** A vibrant, diverse and independent third sector is a vital part of a fair

and enterprising society. It can help communities to be more cohesive and inclusive, and help individuals to have more say over issues that affect them

- **The value of the third sector to responsive and effective local government:** The third sector can help local statutory agencies to address a wide range of community concerns, from strengthening community cohesion; to increasing environmental sustainability; to tackling many of the causes and consequences of social and economic disadvantage.
- **The value of local government to the third sector:** Local statutory agencies can be influential in shaping the environment in which third sector organisations work. NI 7 is designed to capture the overall contribution made by local statutory agencies to the environment in which third sector organisations operate.

### **National Indicator 6: 'Participation in regular volunteering'**

NI 6 will measure the levels of volunteering in an area. High levels of volunteering are one sign of strong, active communities. Volunteers are vital in supporting the range of activity undertaken by third sector organisations and within the public services. Local government has an important role to play in creating a culture in which individuals are able to contribute to their communities by volunteering.

## **East of England Development Agency**

### **Regional economic strategy**

During 2006-08, the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) has been leading the development of the new, regional economic strategy (RES) for the East of England 2008-2031.

The strategy sets out a vision with bold targets and priorities so that we can drive forward as a globally-competitive region. The RES shows where we want to go and how we will get there. The strategy is owned by the region and will be delivered through the collective work of political, business and community leaders and institutions.

### **Vision for the region**

The vision set out in the RES is for the region to be:

- internationally competitive with a global reputation for innovation and business growth
- a region that harnesses and develops the talents and creativity of all
- at the forefront of the low-carbon and resource-efficient economy.

And known for:

- exceptional landscapes, vibrant places and quality of life
- being a confident, outward-looking region with strong leadership
- and where communities actively shape their future.

### **Economic Participation**

Unlocking the region's potential is essential for creating sustainable economic growth. Through the Economic Participation programme, EEDA is working to improve employability and increase economic opportunities for individuals to participate fully in the region's economy.

### **Why some people are unable to participate fully**

The East of England is experiencing economic success in many areas, however there are still people unable to participate fully in the economy.

This could be due to:

- lack of suitable skills, confidence or aspiration
- lack of access to appropriate support and training
- lack of capital for starting their own business
- long-term health problems
- employers' perceptions or practices.

### **Why economic participation is important at the East of England**

We need to harness the time and skills of people who aren't currently able to participate in the economy. This is because:

- economic growth is dependent on a growing workforce
- the economy can't reach its full potential if skilled workers are not participating
- non-participation often results in costs to the economy such as benefit payments
- increasing participation raises the quality of life for individuals and communities

### **How will economic participation be achieved?**

EEDA is identifying the barriers to economic participation and enabling individuals to access jobs or start their own business. This will involve:

- raising skill levels and addressing employment barriers
- maximising the economic benefits of migrant workers
- stimulating enterprise - for example, helping business start-ups access funding
- building capacity in the third sector - such as charities and the voluntary sector
- developing regional intelligence and influencing policy
- identifying and sharing good practice.

## Acknowledgements

Aveley Village Community Forum would like to thank the following for the use of photographs and information.

### Photographs

- Greenstead Community Centre, Colchester
- Brixton St Clements Community Centre, London
- Queens University, Belfast
- Islesburgh Centre, Lewick
- Tadley Community Centre, Tadley, Hampshire

### Maps

- Ordnance Survey
- Google Maps

### Statistics

- Office of National Statistics
- Department for Communities and Local Government