



Violence & Vulnerability Unit Newsletter

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Sir David Amess, 1952 – 2021

The Violence and Vulnerability Partnership was shocked and saddened by the death of Sir David Amess on the 15 October.

David was an MP for Southend West for 24 years and a south Essex MP for nearly 40 years. He had a huge impact on many people during this time and actively championed his constituents, campaigning on their behalf.

The tragic killing of Sir David has left us all stunned and in disbelief that something like this could happen within our Essex communities.

We send our thoughts and prayers to Sir David's family, friends and colleagues.

For local information, tributes and links to obituaries, please click on the link below which will take you to the [Southend-on-Sea Borough Council website](#).

Rainbow Services

Last week the VVU visited Rainbow Services in Harlow, and specifically a fantastic project they run that helps young people gain qualifications in construction.

Young people referred to the Workshop at Rainbow Services are welcomed into a supportive and practical community-based environment. With help from volunteer mentors they then learn how to build and construct using wood.

Those attending the workshop can be referred into the project by any agency working with young people, for example the local youth offending team or school. Parents worried about their children can also make individual referrals.

The young people work towards the Gateway qualification Level 1 Award—Skills for Construction, covering both health and safety in construction, and carpentry hand tools qualifications.

Through a portfolio of written and practical work they:

- Build new woodwork skills
- Understand the importance of health and safety
- Develop a sense of teamwork and self-worth



- Feel that they are giving back to community
- Build skills based on interests and manual and physical activity

Following completion of the course the young people are signposted to activities in the wider community which helps to prevent anti-social behaviour, disengagement from education and society, and becoming involved with gangs and violence. The young people start to think more positively about their future opportunities and involvement in community activity.

While visiting the workshop we saw some beautiful oak bat boxes the young people had created to be installed around Harlow's parks, nature reserve and green spaces. We also admired bespoke creations such as benches, wooden toys and name plates. It was clear the pride and care that had gone into making everything in the workshop.

The young people learn how to use carpentry hand tools in a safe, non-judgemental space – and are also supported in other areas of development such as reading, writing and mental health needs, as well as personal development – confidence, self-worth and team work.

The VVU supports Rainbow Services as part of our localities workstream – understanding that there are often key moments in an individual's life to intervene and provide support. If this intervention is targeted correctly then we can positively affect the lives of young people and their communities.



County Lines Intensification Week

Specialist officers from Essex Police made 55 arrests, seized £180,000 and took more than 6kg of drugs off the Essex streets as part of a nationwide week of action focussed on disrupting County Lines drug supply.

County Lines Intensification Week took place across the country between October 11 and October 17 and as a result of the action, 13 County Lines have been disrupted.

As well as seizing cash and drugs, weapons – including swords, knives and knuckle dusters – and phones were also seized.

It is also important to remember that behind these County Lines are vulnerable people being exploited for criminal gain. Every County Line disrupted protects these vulnerable individuals from further harm and so we were pleased to learn that within the week of intensification ten people were referred for safeguarding.

If you would like to find out more about any of the items in this newsletter please get in touch katie.canning@essex.gov.uk Visit our website www.essexvvu.co.uk or follow us on Twitter [@EssexVVU](https://twitter.com/EssexVVU)

Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Essex

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