

Better Together
STRENGTHENING
FAMILIES.
BUILDING
COMMUNITIES.

Diamond Project Tower Hamlets




Diamonds are strong and unbreakable.

The project supports parents to see these qualities within themselves and empower them to make changes in their lives



Tower Hamlets in-house model

- Diamond Project is a pilot service for parents in Tower Hamlets who have been separated from their children in care proceedings.
- We aim to help these parents focus on other areas of their lives and help them understand why their children were removed.



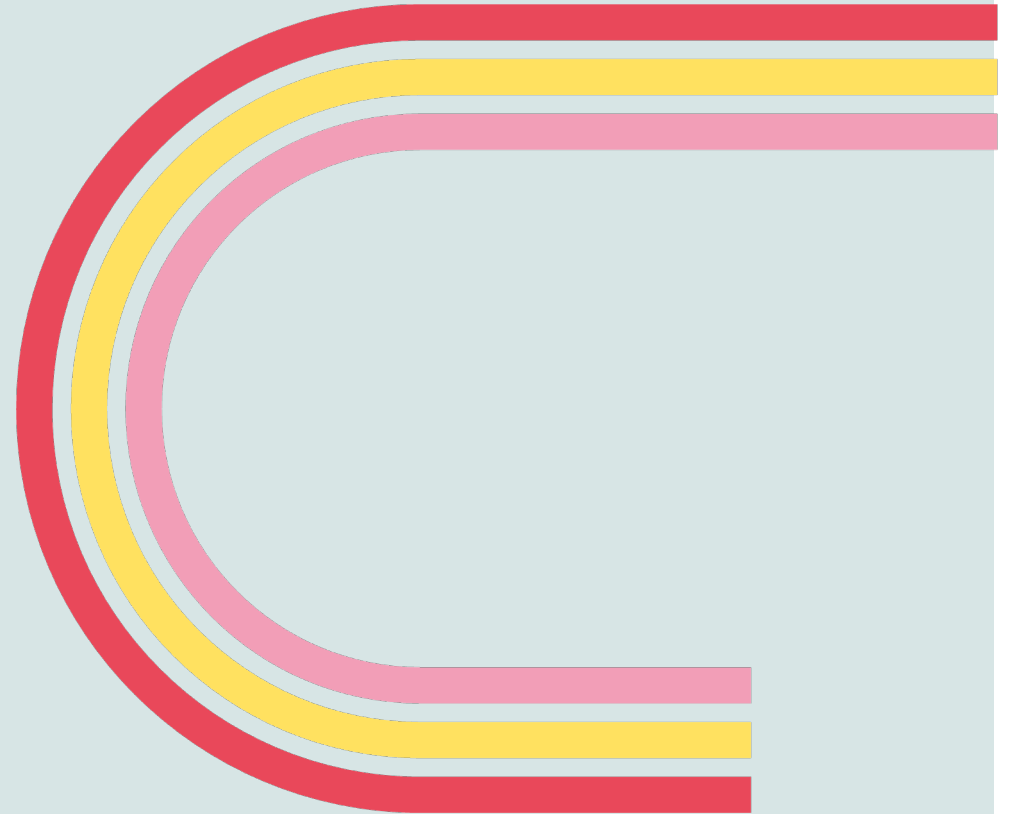
Diamond Project purpose:

Without this support, we worry about the outcomes for children and their parents. The worst scenario would be if projects like Diamond project didn't exist.

A reminder for everyone

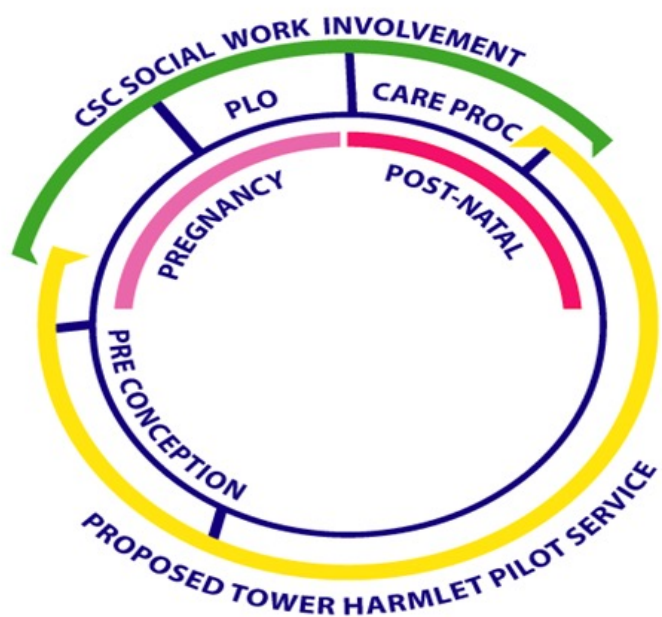
“A family justice system that removes the fourth, fifth, or sixth child from families without addressing the underlying reasons for removal is a failing system.” – the late Nicholas Crichton (District Judge)

Project Model and Features



The Operating Model

CYCLE OF RECURRENT CARE PROCEEDINGS



Project Model and Features

Intervention post-proceedings

Intensive support from the pilot practitioner – for 18 months.

Peer group offer as support for step down

Who is involved?
A team around the parent

An assertive outreach, trauma informed and relationship-based practice approach

Fits into an already existing “Edge of Care team” – a multi-disciplinary team

Care-leavers are a priority

20 referrals – 13 accepted.
(Sign-posted those to other services)

Eligibility criteria for the project

Consent required

One or more children aged under five removed from their care in the previous five years

Care proceedings have concluded

Must have a current connection to LBTH

No children in their care and not currently pregnant

Who do we work with?

- In year 1, in the project worked with 10 parents
- The parents have had a total of 39 children removed from their care
- The project predominantly supports mothers, but has also worked with some fathers, involving them in the contact with their children.



We support in four key areas

- 1. Being a parent:** Staying in contact with their children and contributing to their lives.
- 2. Staying healthy:** Improving their health, including mental health, self-regard, and safer sexual practices.
- 3. Staying safe:** Avoiding abusive relationships and building safer ones.
- 4. Being in control:** Building security, accommodation, income, employment, and self-confidence.

Novel Project Features

Linked within an established multi-disciplinary team we offer clinical supervision and management support.

The success of the project so far - none of the parents involved have been subject to further proceedings.

The value that is placed on an in-house project by Judges and the local Family Courts and how we've been supported and valued

A lot of interest from neighbouring local authorities in scaling up – we are exploring a sub-regional event to take this idea forward.

The cost savings of an in-house service for the Council.

The huge importance of partnering with the community network and individual pathways we can access.

Success Stories and Impact



Success stories in first 12 months

The pilot service achieved several positive outcomes for the 10 parents in the 12 months of the project:

70% of the women have had discussions with the Diamond project to understand professional concerns.

70% have started letterbox contact with their children.

50% are now having direct contact with some of their children.

40% have been supported to read their letters.

20% have started a photo exchange for their children.

80% have discussed taking a break from parenting.

20% have been supported to attend their children's reviews and court hearings.

40% have been supported with housing needs / emergency housing access.

Success stories

We supported a parent to be diagnosed with learning disabilities, post care proceedings and she now benefits greatly from the adult's service.

A parent in a repeated pattern of getting pregnant before care proceedings have finished has now been working with us for 20 months and is not pregnant.

A pregnant woman is being supported to improve her relationship with local authority and she feels hopeful for a different outcome after 6 years since her last child was removed.

Two parents have agreed to an open adoption plan due to their ongoing commitment and recent advancements in child contact and permanency work, which are benefiting them.

Some parents have started letter box contact, for the first time, for one parent it was the first time in 5 years.

Supported to make final contacts special.

Some parents have improved their dental health, aiming to boost their confidence and self-esteem, leading to training and employment opportunities

Strengthened and improved relationships with the social work teams

Avoided homelessness

Community of Practice - inspiration:

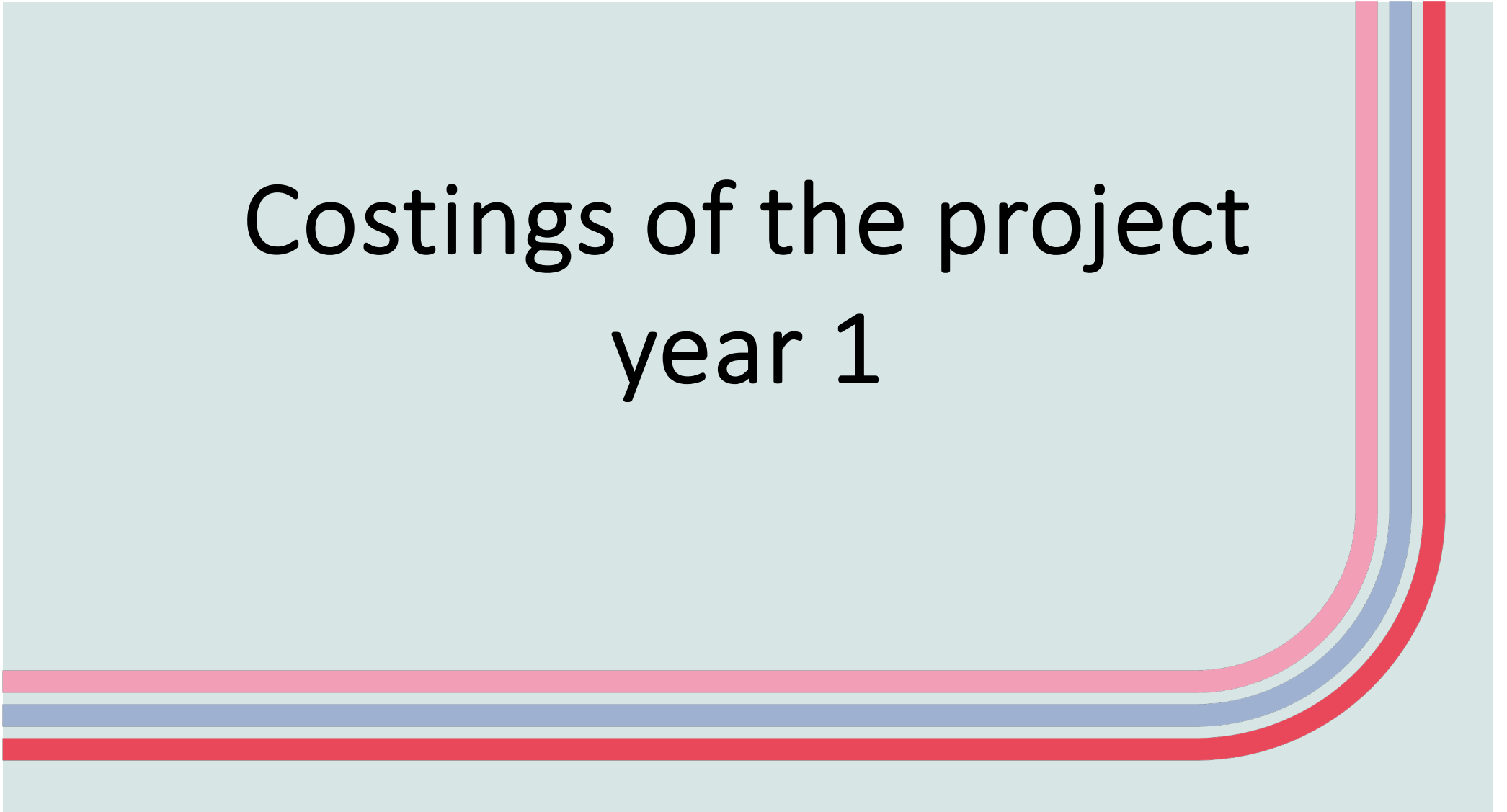
Attending the Community of Practice (CoP) with Research in Practice, (face to face event in Birmingham). We left feeling motivated to explore innovative methods to support parents and children.

Pregnancy – It led us to reviewing our support to a parent who is recently pregnant. Our goal now is to help her collaborate, and work with the health agencies to support a healthy birth.

For Children’s services, the Diamond Project involvement enabled early intervention and support to be offered. We know about the family early, and the right level of support can be identified.

We included the parent in the process, prioritizing co-production to include her wishes and feelings from the outset.

Costings of the project year 1





Project costs

- The £30k from the London Innovation and Improvement Alliance (LIIA) helped launch the project and support consultancy and evaluation across the North-East sub-region. Tower Hamlets Children's Services fully covered staffing costs.
- The cost to remove an infant permanently from parental care is estimated at around £250K per child, including legal fees, social work, and placements.

Pilot Project Staffing Costs:

Details	Notes	Costs	Resource
Team Manager 'E of C'	30% - 50 % of their time	30,000 (not included in the costing.	EOC facility
Pilot Practitioner	Salary + oncosts	69,000	CSC funded post
Training	Practitioner resources	1,500	LIIA
Project Development	Research, evaluation, consultancy	18,000	LIIA
Client Resources	Travel, vouchers, interpretation costs	5,000	LIIA
Project Support	Oversight, governance, admin	5,000	LIIA
		99,000	

Challenges and Future Steps

Challenges for the project

Exploration of the longer-term sustainability and scale up with neighbouring boroughs. How do we move from pilot to team?

We would like to offer more support than we do with birth fathers', but capacity is an issue for us in a small team.

We hold a safe and confidential space for the parent to make changes in their lives. The project's goal isn't to give false hopes about children being reunited with their parents.

We have been asked for reports for Court, but we aren't able to provide such detailed requests.

Our next steps and actions

In our second year, we've expanded the project and now have two staff practitioners.

To reduce our intensive involvement, we planned a peer support group for parents starting in November 2024, as a step down after 18 months of support.

We've already trialed an online group in October 2024 to input the feedback from parents of their wants and needs from a group space.

Developed our own group program which will provide a safe space without requiring parents to retell their stories, focusing instead on moving forward positively.

Activities will include guest speakers, self-care practices, confidence-building sessions, practical advice, icebreakers, crafts, CBT, and mindfulness sessions to balance serious and lighter topics and foster connection.



Parent Feedback



Parent voices – feedback:

- **Positive Feedback:** Participants described their experience as **brilliant, excellent, and fantastic.**
- **Support and Listening:** Staff were praised for their **supportive nature** and willingness to **listen.**
- **Personal Changes:** Participants expressed a **desire to improve their health,** better their lives, and **gain independence.**
- **Service Satisfaction:** Most participants are satisfied with the services and did **not** suggest any improvements.
- **Impact on Confidence:** The project helped parents become **more confident in asking for help** and interacting with others.
- **Future Aspirations:** To be more independent, improve their health, **achieve educational and housing goals,** and **maintain family relationships.**
- **Overall impact:** Diamond Project has made a **significant positive impact,** helping parents to **feel supported,** confident, and **hopeful for the future.**

(Parent voice - anonymized)

Q. What do you want other people to understand about your experience of working with the Diamond project?

‘The Diamond project is good for people to go on. It helps people achieve things they thought they couldn’t do. I built trust, and she gave me the space to talk and listened to me. I feel so much better in myself after being a part of it. I didn’t trust people, so she really helped me’.

Contact us:

For further information and to make a referral
email: DiamondProject@towerhamlets.gov.uk

Come and talk to us at our stall.

Thank you everyone.