

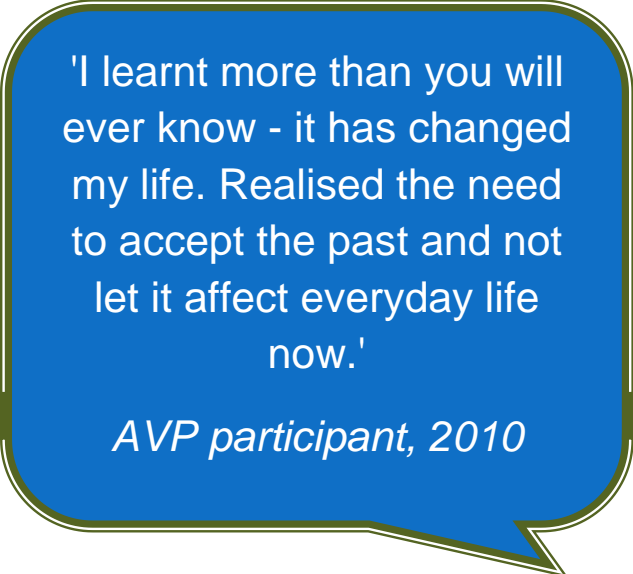
Alternatives to Violence Project, Britain

Annual Report, 2010-11



avp
alternatives
to violence
project

Patron: Baroness Vivien Stern



'I learnt more than you will ever know - it has changed my life. Realised the need to accept the past and not let it affect everyday life now.'

AVP participant, 2010

This report describes the work of AVP Britain between April 2010 and March 2011 and was approved by AVP Britain Board of Directors in September 2011.

The document is available to download at www.avpbritain.org.uk

Also available in large print

Printed on FSC-certified recycled paper.



As Patron of the Alternatives to Violence Project I am very pleased to present this Annual Report. I am a great supporter of this project because violence, whether physical or psychological, from bullying in the workplace, violence in domestic situations or on the streets is hugely damaging.

The Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) is an organisation that recognises the potential of conflict, when handled well, to deepen understanding, create opportunities for co-operation, and challenge injustice. Through a programme of two- to three-day workshops run by trained volunteer facilitators for groups from prisons and the wider community AVP aims to help individuals from all walks of life to handle conflict and build better relationships.

This Report sets out the work AVP does and I hope you will find it interesting and useful.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vivien Stern', written in a cursive style.

Baroness Vivien Stern, Crossbench Peer, House of Lords

About the Alternatives to Violence Project

AVP supports people to handle conflict nonviolently and to build good relationships

The Alternatives to Violence Project, Britain (AVP) is a small, dynamic charity delivering highly effective, low-cost group workshops for people who want to handle conflict well and build better relationships.

We work all over Britain in communities, in the criminal justice system and in partnership with other organisations. Our participants come from diverse backgrounds and situations and are mainly people whose lives have been affected by violence.

Our facilitators are trained, continuously supported volunteers and all are former workshop participants; seven are prison inmates. Workshop participants' feedback shows that AVP volunteers maintain a high standard of practice.



As a volunteer-led programme, AVP is unique in offering a low-cost, informal and effective approach that is accessible and relevant to all, including people with enduring mental health problems or low levels of literacy.

AVP's approach is proving effective in over 50 countries, with workshops operating in all situations from refugee camps in Kenya to prisons in the United States to schools in Australia.

How AVP works

AVP workshops combine experiential learning with practical training to develop conflict awareness and skills.

AVP is more than an anger-management or violence-reduction programme. Our workshops combine self-development, self-awareness and group-building with communication skills and conflict-handling techniques. This all-round approach helps participants not only to manage strong feelings and conflicts, but also to recognise root causes and to build better relationships in the long-term.

The benefits of one person learning to handle conflict and build better relationships are shared by those around them. In this way AVP contributes to a culture of non-violence, leading to safer and healthier communities.

Each AVP workshop is a minimum of 15 hours of session time, usually held over three days with an average of 10 participants. The workshop is delivered by a team of 3 or 4 facilitators who take part in the workshop alongside the participants.

Using exercises, discussions, games and role-plays, participants develop five core conditions for handling conflict and building healthier relationships:

- Self-esteem combined with self-awareness
- Communication skills, especially listening and assertiveness
- Trust, cooperation and sense of belonging
- Sense of own values
- Skills for handling conflict in the moment and solving problems in relationships

Research literature shows strong associations between each of these core conditions on the one hand, and good relationships and reduced violence on the other (a summary is available on request).

The need for better relationships

The extent of interpersonal violence in Britain is twice the average for the industrialised world.¹

According to a range of studies, we can estimate that, of 100 randomly selected people in Britain – about the number aboard a rush-hour London Underground carriage – on average:

- 15 will have been sexually abused as children.²
- 7 will have been seriously physically abused as children by a parent or guardian – mostly repeatedly.³
- 30 will have been bullied at school.⁴
- 13 will have a history of self-harm as teenagers.⁵
- 21 will have suffered physical or sexual abuse by a partner or family member since the age of 16, and five will have experienced this at least once in the last 12 months.⁶

In about half of the cases of violent assault of any kind, the offender and the victim know each other.⁷ Women and people in socio-economically disadvantaged circumstances are most at risk.⁸

The personal, social and economic costs of personal violence and abuse are huge, reinforcing a culture of violence at a societal level.

The people we work with are from a broad social spectrum. Over half have experienced violence or abuse in their home life; most are socio-economically disadvantaged and one in ten reports an enduring mental health problem.

Our workshop participants closely reflect the ethnic diversity of Britain.

'[Before my AVP workshop] I had no desire to handle any conflict. I switched from Jekyll to Hyde in a split second and things did not go my way. [AVP] enabled me to look at my behaviour and the way I dealt with things, to find the root of my reaction and how then to do things different.'

AVP Level One participant, 2011

Outcomes, 2010-11

In 2010-11, AVP Britain delivered 46 15-hour workshops at basic and advanced levels, with 434 completing participants.

Workshops were held in 19 locations from the West Country to Scotland, including three prisons.

Seven new facilitators completed their initial training, joining our community of over 100 volunteer practitioners.

Our activity grew by 10% this year and we expect to grow again in 2011-12.

At least 92% of completing participants reported progress in each of five core conditions of nonviolence and good relationships and 98% described their experience of AVP as good or excellent.



Working in the Criminal Justice System

AVP was originally designed by prisoners and experienced group-workers in the USA

AVP originated in American prisons in 1975 when prisoners collaborated with experts in group work to produce an effective violence-reduction programme using a humanistic approach. AVP Britain started working in prisons in 1992 and has since worked in over 30 institutions.

Violence is widespread in prisons. In 2009 there were 15,180 recorded assaults and in 2008 over 6,000 prisoners were known to be committing acts of self-harm. The prevalence of personality disorders among inmates is estimated at 57-64%.



AVP ran five workshops for 57 people in Kilmarnock, Shepton Mallet and Woodhill prisons. Two of these workshops carried the additional benefit of Open College Network (OCN) credits in Developing Interpersonal Skills, supporting prisoners to work towards gaining a qualification. In some of our workshops prison officers have participated alongside inmates, which has led to increased trust and reduced violence on prison wings.

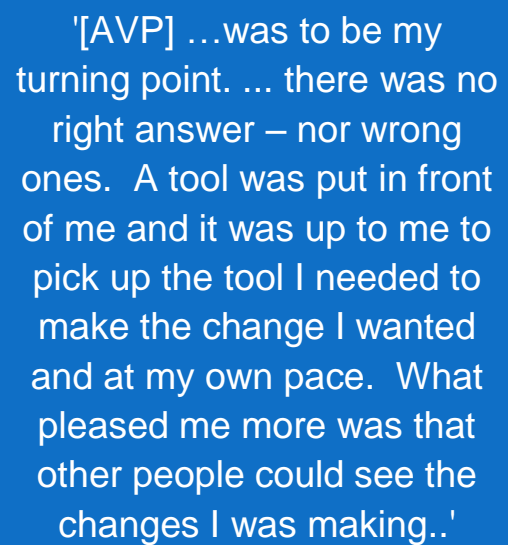
Seven of our volunteer facilitators are prison inmates, having completed their initial AVP training in 2009.

We are responding to prison service cuts by increasing our work with ex-offenders

Despite the very low cost of AVP's volunteer-based approach, it still costs a prison to host us. Due to significant cutbacks in their budgets, it has been more difficult for governors to invite AVP into their institutions.

We are now responding to this changed situation by increasing our work with ex-offenders and offenders in the community, thanks to grants from the Robertson Trust, City Bridge Trust and Lloyds TSB Foundation.

Our first workshop for ex-offenders was held in London with the Foundation Training Company this year. Similar workshops with other partners are now planned for 2011-12.



'[AVP] ...was to be my turning point. ... there was no right answer – nor wrong ones. A tool was put in front of me and it was up to me to pick up the tool I needed to make the change I wanted and at my own pace. What pleased me more was that other people could see the changes I was making..'

AVP workshop participant in a prison, 2010

Working in communities

Our community work brings together people with diverse backgrounds in a setting of trust and mutual learning.



Our community workshops are open to all, typically resulting in diverse groups of people who might not normally meet one another in everyday life.

Among community workshop participants are ex-offenders, former members of the armed forces, and people from backgrounds affected by domestic violence.

A low charge (£80) for the weekend's workshop supports a wide range of participation; generous concessionary fees are available and no-one is turned away for inability to pay.

In 2010-11 we ran 33 open workshops in communities around Britain.

Working in partnership

As we provide a valuable service for our partners' clients, so our partners enable us to work with people who benefit most from AVP.

In 2010-11 we ran community workshops in partnership with:

- The Conforti Institute near Glasgow
- Asylum Link in Merseyside
- Engage for Change in Newcastle
- Mind in Ashton and Doncaster
- Universities in Bradford and Manchester
- The Foundation Training Company and the Prisoners' Families and Friends Service in London

One of our long-standing partnerships is with Doncaster MIND, which hosts AVP workshops for clients with mental health needs. In 2010-11 we ran six workshops in Doncaster.

This year we also partnered with 'Engage for Change', a programme which emerged from community groups in the East End of Newcastle, who wanted to express the good things about their family and community life and to highlight and share the positive things they do to handle and resolve conflicts. Having run a series of AVP workshops for people in the community, we then trained a group of AVP participants to deliver mini-sessions on nonviolence with local young people.

'Doncaster MIND as an organisation has benefitted tremendously from the partnership in terms of our enhanced reputation locally as the only provider of effective conflict resolution.'

*Jackie Lewis, Director
Doncaster MIND*

Training volunteers as group leaders

AVP supports over 100 volunteer group leaders to deliver workshops in every region of Britain.

All our facilitators are volunteers who have come through the AVP process as participants in at least three workshops, including an advanced-level workshop.

Thereafter, subject to a self-assessment process and a recommendation from experienced facilitators, a new volunteer attends two training workshops and co-facilitates three workshops as an apprentice in order to complete their initial training, amounting to 150 hours. After further experience and training, volunteers may begin to lead facilitator teams.



Additional training workshops, such as on 'Facing up to violence' and 'Gender', are offered according to the emerging needs of our facilitator community. Our annual residential national gathering offers another opportunity for volunteers to share skills and take part in continuing training..

We hope to develop this provision into a coherent Continuous Professional Development programme for volunteers from 2011-12.

The volunteer contribution

Volunteers manage and steer the organisation



Few organisations rely on volunteers to provide a service in the way that AVP does. Were we to employ paid facilitator teams for our workshops, the extra cost to the organisation would be in the order of £92,000, equivalent to the 4,600 hours of volunteer facilitator time given during the year 2011-12. Volunteers also gave 1,450 hours of committee service during the year.

AVP Britain employs the equivalent of just 1.5 full-time-equivalent staff; the lion's share of the organisation's work and management is carried out by groups of committed volunteers. In 2010-11, volunteers filled over 50 seats on national and regional committees.

The AVP community

40 participants attended AVP's 2010 National Gathering in September at Coatbridge, near Glasgow.

The annual National Gathering is an opportunity for all of us involved with AVP to strengthen our skills while building our volunteer community. It also includes a review of the year's work and the Annual General Meeting. The cost to attend the gathering is subsidised by the organisation so that as many people as possible can attend.

In 2010 the event included lectures from the prison psychiatrist Bob Johnson and the criminal justice academic Mike Nellis, as well as numerous training sessions for volunteers.



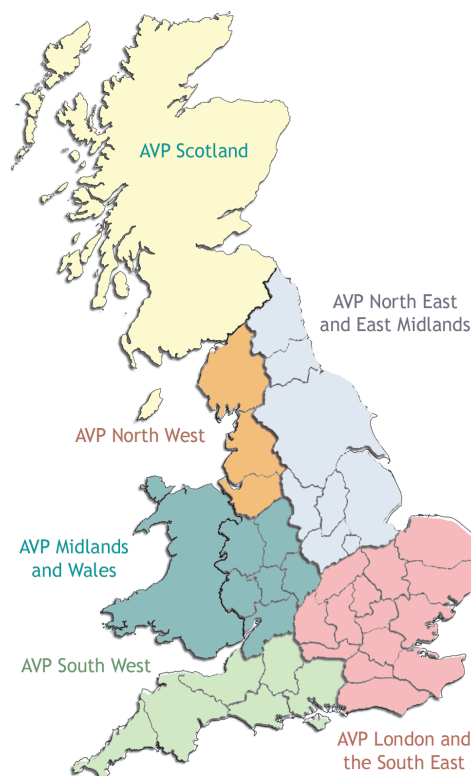
Developing our organisation

AVP Britain consists of six regions.

Each region employs a volunteer or (in one case) a part-time staff Regional Coordinator to organise the workshop programme.

In 2009-10 we worked with Pilotlight, a charity that teams experts from business with small, ambitious charities, to clarify our vision, mission, aims and values. Having reorganised our governance around these aims the result is a re-energised, forward-looking organisation, including three long-term working groups to drive our development:

- Communications, Outreach and Partnerships Committee, which brings AVP to new audiences and potential workshop participants.
- Workshops Committee, which evaluates and develops our workshops and holds the brief for quality assurance.
- Training and Volunteer Support Committee, which oversees our training programme and improves how we support and develop our volunteers.



During 2010-11 we:

- Prepared a 'Facing up to conflict' distance-learning course for people such as prisoners unable to attend our workshops, ready for trialling in 2011-12.
- Carried out a literature review to evaluate the theoretical basis of AVP's approach
- Successfully trialled our special workshop model accredited by the Open College Network
- Made a submission to the Ministry of Justice's Rehabilitation Revolution review.
- Implemented new quality assurance measures and improved our volunteer support and training.

Our plans

By 2013-14 we aim to be running a programme of monthly workshops in or within reach of every major urban centre in Britain, have a growing and sustainable programme of workshops in prisons and develop AVP as a national voice on issues of interpersonal violence in the media and among policymakers.

Our agreed objectives for 2011-12 are to:

- Expand and develop the workshop programme to 60 workshops (650 completing participants), focused on our main target groups, and build new partnerships with agencies working with our priority groups in each of our regions.
- Develop our work in and around the criminal justice system into a coherent and sustainable programme by expanding work with ex-offenders and with young offenders, as well as holding workshops in prisons currently holding our trained inmate facilitators.
- Build our nonviolence awareness and advocacy work by means of a new distance-learning nonviolence course, developing the website as a resource and seeking opportunities to influence policy on the rehabilitation of offenders.
- Continue to deliver AVP workshops accredited by the Open College Network.
- Increase our pool of trained facilitators to service an expanded workshop programme and improve our volunteer support and training with a new mentoring scheme.
- Recruit a new regional coordinator for Scotland.
- Use our literature review on the theoretical basis of AVP's approach to develop our work.
- Enhance our long-term sustainability by increasing our fundraising capacity and diversifying sources of income.

In 2010-11, charitable expenditure accounted for 96% of the total.

In 2009-10 it cost us £105,885 to run the organisation and deliver the programme. AVP Britain finished the year with a deficit of £11,599, due to the recession and the difficult funding climate.

Receipts from workshop fees comprised 28% of our income; grants, 55%; and donations, 17%.

In 2011-12 we are diversifying our income sources by increasing donations and boosting income from workshops by ensuring that as many as possible are fully subscribed. However, grant income will remain essential to make our programme fully accessible to all who may benefit.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES				
For the period 1/4/10 to 31/3/11				
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds	
	Funds	Funds	2011	2010
	£	£	£	£
Incoming Resources				
Grants	12,872	38,578	51,450	75,150
Donations	15,864		15,864	9,711
Workshop/Event Receipts	26,765		26,765	29,457
Interest Received	103		103	153
Other Income	104		104	3,782
Total Incoming Resources	55,708	38,578	94,286	118,253
Resources Expended				
Direct Charitable Expenditure	62,555	39,616	102,171	115,453
Fundraising & Publicity	824		824	1,850
Governance	2,890		2,890	2,446
Total Resources Expended	66,269	39,616	105,885	119,749
Net Resources before Fund Transfers	-10,561	-1,038	-11,599	-1,496
Transfers between Funds	231	-231	0	0
Net Movement in Funds	-10,330	-1,269	-11,599	-1,496
Balances brought forward at 1 April 2010	56,449	22,089	78,538	80,034
Balances carried forward at 31 March 2011	46,119	20,820	66,939	78,538

Please support us

AVP is a small, effective community organisation running on a low budget – please support us.



Support us with your time and energy by volunteering with us.

We are always looking for volunteer facilitators, office help and committee members, as well as volunteers with professional expertise to offer.

Support us financially.

Please visit

www.justgiving.com/avpbritain

to make a one-off, tax-effective donation or set up regular giving online.

Alternatively, please send a donation by cheque, payable to 'AVP Britain', to the address on the back page, or ask us to send you a standing order form.

Support us through your faith or community group.

Please recommend AVP for your charity collections. We can provide leaflets and other background information to help you.

Do you have a venue we could use for AVP workshops without charge or at a low rate? Please get in touch.

Directors' /Trustees' Report: 2010-11

Charitable activity

The vision of the Alternatives to Violence Project, Britain (AVPB) is a nonviolent society. Its mission is to serve people who want to respond to conflict and violence without using, or being the victim of, violence. In the community, prisons and other settings across Britain the charity delivers low-cost intensive, 15-hour workshops on managing interpersonal conflict.

The trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers and duties. The work of AVP Britain contributes to public benefit primarily by developing personal skills and attitudes for effective conflict resolution, a recognised charitable purpose under the Charities Act.

In the period covered by this report 48 full workshops were delivered (including Training for Facilitator workshops) for 448 completing participants.

Structure

Alternatives to Violence Project, Britain is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales, no. 4127409 (registered office The Grayston Centre, 28 Charles Square, London N1 6HT); and registered by the Charity Commission, no. 1085709 and registered in Scotland as charity no. SC039287.

During 2010-2011, the Directors were:

- Gill Bocock (from 10 September 2010)
- Colette Bone (to 10 September 2010)
- Donna Day Lafferty (to 14 August 2010)
- Shari Brown (Vice-Chair)
- Hubert Cassel (Chair)
- Stephen Griffiths (Treasurer)
- Michele Lee
- Hazel McGrath (from 18 January 2011)
- Erwin James Monahan
- Frederica West

During 2010-11, all Directors also served as Trustees. Membership of AVP Britain consisted of six representatives appointed by each of six AVP Britain Regional Management Committees.

The Governing Documents of AVP Britain are Articles and a Memorandum of Association. Company Members meet in an Annual General Meeting and appoint the Trustees/Directors. The latter appoint the officers: Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer. The Company Secretary is Margot Lunnon.

The National Management Committee manages the operations of AVP Britain, reporting to the Directors regularly. The NMC is composed principally of representatives from each AVP Britain Region, reporting on behalf of each Regional Management Committee.

The company's gross annual income exceeds £100,000 and does not exceed £500,000; its gross assets do not exceed £2.8m. Therefore the company is required to obtain an independent examination of its accounts and is not subject to statutory audit under the Companies Act 2006, as amended.

Staff

Regional Coordinators were Fran Townsend, AVP North West, part-time; and Becky Hoghton, AVP London and South-East, part-time. The National Coordinator was David Gee, part-time and the national Fundraising and Administrative Assistant was Kristen Neumann-Martienssen, part-time. The Projects Coordinator was Chris Walker, full-time. The Finance Administrator was Ed Hurren, part-time.

Health and safety report

The Safety Officer has received reports from all Regions. One person was taken ill and was treated at the time by a medically qualified person. This was correctly logged in the Incident Report Book, and no further treatment was necessary.

Policy on reserves

AVP Britain maintains financial reserves equivalent to six months' operating costs.

Thank you

We thank all our staff and volunteers for their dedication in managing the organisation and delivering our service.

Given the challenging economic climate for fundraising we are grateful to all our funders who have trusted us to use their resources well:

- AW.60 Charitable Trust
- C B and H H Taylor
- Flapjack Trust
- G M Morrison Charitable Trust
- Goldsmiths Company
- Hilden Charitable Trust
- Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation York Committee
- Lloyds TSB Foundation
- London Quaker Service Trust
- Newcastle Conflict Resolution Network
- Newcastle Quaker Meeting
- Sir James Reckitt Charity
- W F Southall Trust
- William P Bancroft No.2 Charitable Trust and Jenepher Gillett Trust
- York Friends Adult School

We also extend our thanks and appreciation to individual donors and the many Quaker Meetings who continue to support us.

Contact

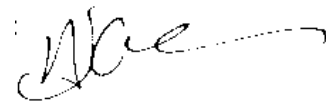
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Signed:



Hubert Cassel, Chair of the Board

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