



Where they live is right for them; Participation

Isle of Wight
**Involving care
leavers in
commissioning new
supported living
accommodation**
Jan 2021

Care Leavers reported that they did not feel safe where they were living, and the LA responded by involving young people in commissioning new accommodation.

Why?

The Bright Spots survey shows that young people need to feel safe and settled where they live, and that where they live should be right for them. Care leavers who feel unsettled are more likely to have low well-being.

What did they do?

The LA asked senior managers to provide more suitable accommodation for care leavers. Young people were involved in the commissioning process:

That was a massive piece of work ...starting a tender process inviting potential providers to get involved There were questions that young people wrote that were included in [the application form]. When providers came to an information session it was co-hosted by young people ... [they helped with] the scoring of applications at every stage, making sure it was fit for purpose.... That took over a year to do. It was done in the right way and the result been the best outcome for our young people."

(Participation worker)

What difference is it making?

This piece of work demonstrates that it is possible to involve young people complex decision-making. For those young people involved they felt listened to and increased confidence:

"It blew their mind that they were able to have an input into something at a strategic level." (Participation worker)

Future survey findings will show if the accommodation is more suitable and whether young people report feeling safer and more settled.

"Children and young people are involved in all sorts of aspects of how we commission services and evaluate services."

**Commissioning
Manager**