

Welcome to the webinar!

Using care leavers' voices and views to develop services

New Belongings Programme

16th November 2022

12.00pm – 1.30pm

The story of New Belongings

What is it and how can it help?

8 local authorities
took part in New
Belongings from
2019 to 2022



United
Kingdom

NORTH TYNESIDE

NORTH YORKSHIRE

OLDHAM

STOCKPORT

COVENTRY

HERTFORDSHIRE

WANDSWORTH

DORSET

What was offered to local authorities in the New Belongings Programme?



- Support for 2 years – being a critical friend and involvement of care-experienced consultants (CECs).
- Baker-Dixon self-assessment tool.
- Your Life Beyond Care survey x2.
- 8 visits to help facilitate co-production.
- Peer support sessions.

New Belongings timeline

- **November 2019 to March 2020** – set up meeting with the 8 LAs
- **March 2020 to July 2020** – LAs run YLBC and complete self-assessment (baseline assessment)
- **September to November 2020**- Feedback on baseline YP identify their priorities for change
- **September to March 2021** – Joint planning with YP and partners.
- **March 2021 on** - LAs jointly implementing plans
- **January February 2022** – LAs complete Reassessment
- **May to July 2022** – Feedback on re assessment, YP identify their priorities for future plans.

New Belongings tools

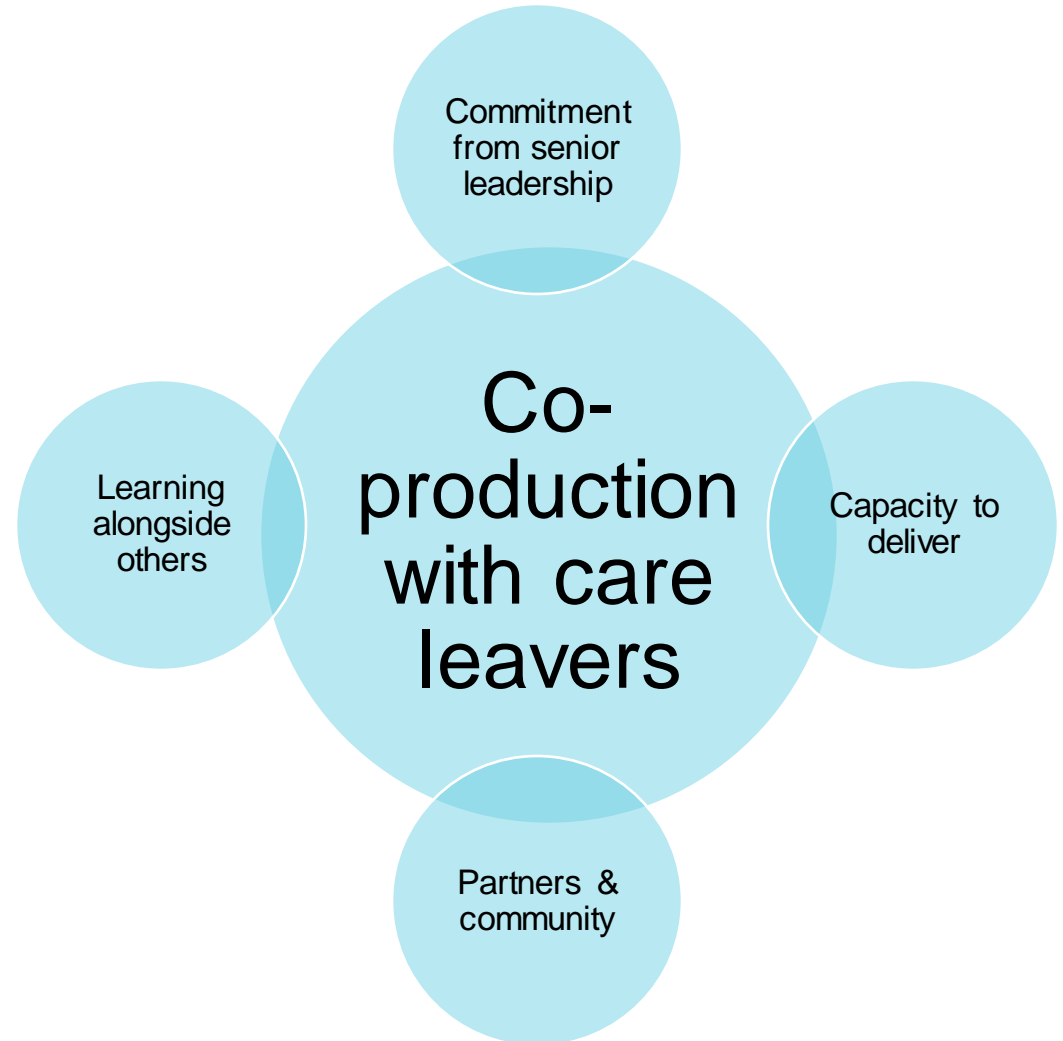
The **Your Life Beyond Care (YLBC)** survey, focuses on the thoughts, feelings and experiences of care leavers. It was developed together with care leavers based on a review of research into young people's views and the issues that young people felt made their lives good. So far 47 local authorities have now used the survey to explore the views of their young people (over 7,000 responses).

The **Leaving Care Service self-assessment** tool was developed by the researchers who conducted the 2016 evaluation of the New Belongings Programme (Dixon & Baker, 2016). The self-assessment tool draws on existing evidence and recognised frameworks setting out what makes a good leaving care service, including planning and Transitions guidance and the Ofsted Inspection framework .

The data from the survey and the self-assessment informed local authority action plans and provided a snapshot of the well-being of care leavers and state of existing services, which could be reviewed towards the end of the local authority's involvement in the programme, when both were re-done and a new action plan developed.

Core elements of the New Belongings model

1. **Co-production** with care leavers – making sure offer a varied menu of participation options.
2. Commitment from **senior leadership** to drive change (political & executive).
3. Local authority **capacity to deliver** (programme lead / staff time).
4. Whole system approach - **engagement of partners** & wider community.
5. **Learning alongside others** (peer learning & ‘critical friend facilitation role’ from Coram Voice).





In our words: What is New Belongings?



Coram Voice's Care Experienced Consultants (CEC) worked with young people from all the participating local authorities to define what New Belongings meant to them.

Where is your local authority on its co-production journey?



Scan the QR code,
or go to: www.menti.com

Enter code: **6730 8997**

Journey to co-production

The overall aim of the New Belongings Programme is to **amplify and embed the voices of care leavers to create lasting improvements in local authority services for young care leavers.**

New Belongings is a model for improving support for care leavers **based on engagement and involvement of young people as experts in their own experience.**

Critical to New Belongings was the co-production approach. **A move away from just 'listening to' young people and adults coming up with the solutions, to working directly with care leavers to find solutions and develop plans to address the issues raised.**

The aim was to support the local authority's Care Leaver Forums to **help identify key areas for change and implement the changes in the local authority using a co-production approach.**

The impact of Covid-19

- The pandemic, altered plans.
- Some local authorities struggled to sustain their leaving carers forum with not having face to face sessions.
- Instead LAs adapted their practice and developed different arrangements for supporting care leavers to take part.
- Engaging care leavers required multiple means, as 'one size doesn't fit all'. Some young people were, for example, interested in one issue and were keen to get involved with that, but not other issues. Some liked being part of a more formally-run group like the leaving care council, while others preferred sharing their opinions through more informal sessions, social media or through their Personal Adviser.
- It is however important that anyone who works with young people are supported with the tools to engage well and that activities are meaningful for young people, avoiding tokenism, decoration or manipulation.

We do we really mean when we talk about ‘co-production’?

“Co-production is an approach to decision-making and service design, rather than a specific method. The term co-production refers to a way of working where service providers and users work together to reach a collective outcome. The approach is value-driven and built on the principle that those who are affected by a service are best placed to help design it”

[Co-production](#)

How were young people involved?

- The aim of New Belongings was to support the 8 authorities to co-produce changes to services with their young people.
- However, we found that not all the changes made were co-produced.
- We developed this triangle of involvement to reflect the work of the 8 authorities.



How were young people involved?

- All of the actions in the local authority plans were based on what is important to young people, and their priorities for change, but in reality young people were not always involved in implementing changes
- Only about a quarter (27%) of the actions the authorities identified in their plans appeared to involve young people – when young people were not explicitly engaged there seemed to be 4 main reasons for this:
 1. **The nature of the change** – many of the actions included in the plan were about changes to internal administrative processes.
 2. **Practice varied between LAs** - co-production did require resources and time from authorities and the capacity of authorities varied.
 3. **Young people's interest & availability**– authorities did look to engage young people in co-producing changes but young people's involvement varied depending on the specific project and young people's interest in it, changes in young people lives and availability.
 4. **The understanding and capacity of partner agencies** – to engage with care leavers.

What did we learn together?

- Local authorities also acknowledged that it could be difficult when young people who had been closely involved with the programme or specific pieces of work moved on due to changing circumstances and commitments in their lives, whether it being starting university, becoming a parent or personal issues.
- While this is a common feature of youth participation, local authorities occasionally found it hard to maintain consistency and momentum when new young people were recruited and engaged, especially when improvement work required a longer-term focus.

What did Coram Voice learn?

Coram Voice employed Care Experienced Consultants (CECs), paid sessional workers, to support New Belongings.

- Loss of structure with losing in person meetings.
- Loss of direct work with other young people.
- Issues with other commitments and sessional work in order to be able to get CECs to be available for meetings.
- The importance of continuity and continuous engagement so not to lose momentum.
- The need to build in re-recruitment, training and team building costs within the project.
- Need to resource online engagement – we managed to source equipment, but not sourced for the first crucial first period and some may not have had internet at home.

Elements of co-production

Based on interviews with Local Authority Leads and the New Belongings Team we identified three key enablers to deliver co-production with young people:

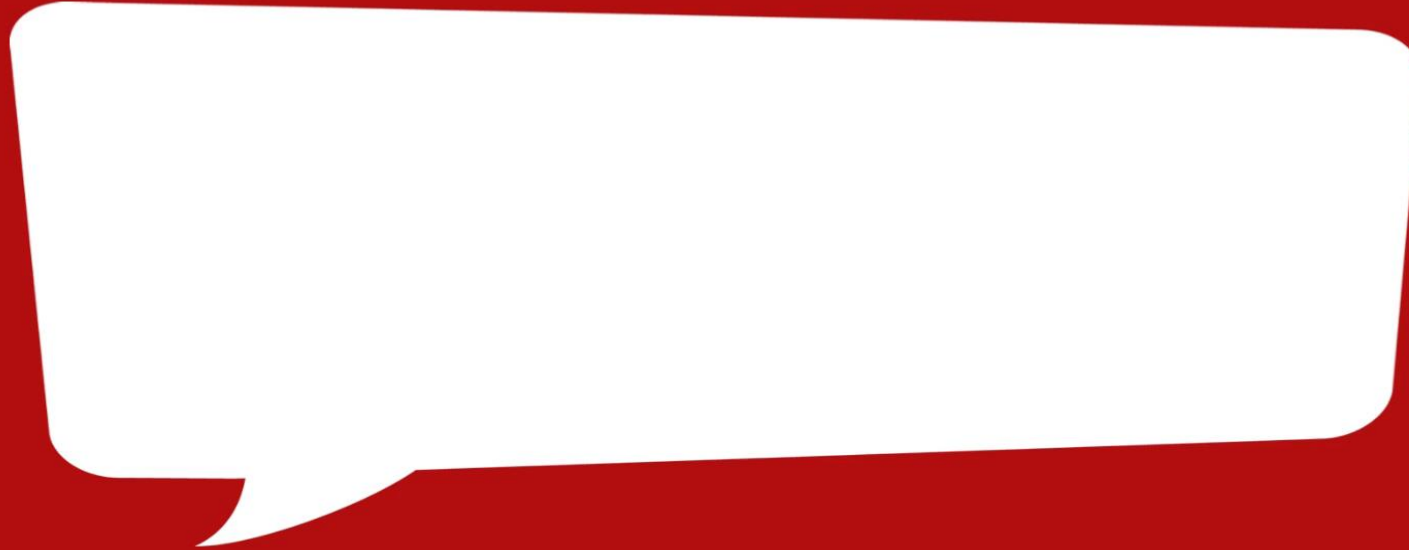
- Consistency of staff.
- Committed service managers supported by senior managers.
- Resources to do participation well.

Some have used the New Belongings Programme structure to get the basics right, while others aimed higher and embed co-production more widely within their decision-making structures.

Young people's feedback

NEW BELONGINGS

Improving services for care
leavers with care leavers

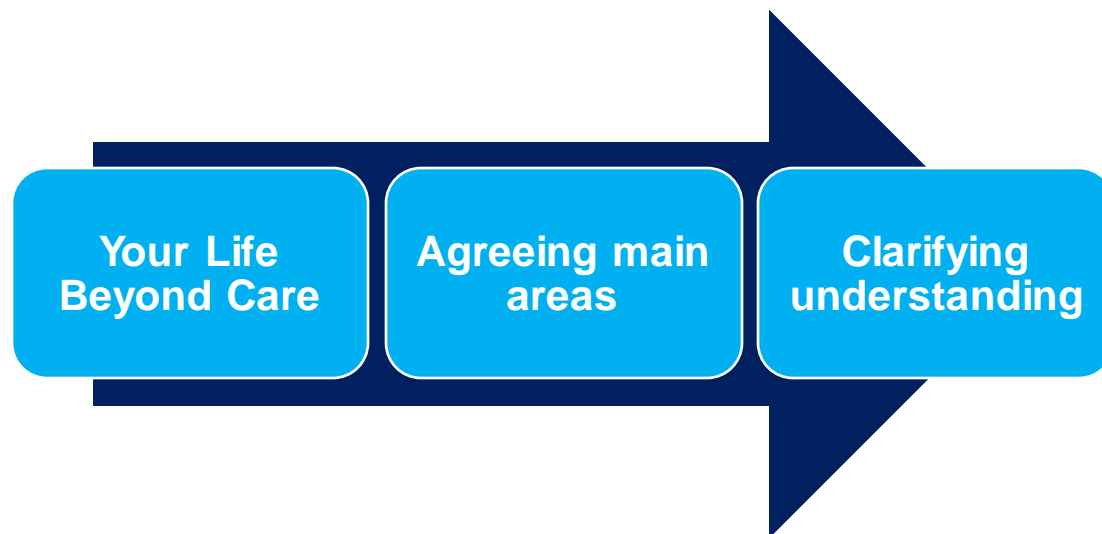


Working with young people in North Tyneside

Working with young people in North Tyneside



The process:



Combined individual
and group feedback to:

Action Plan

- Mental health and wellbeing
- Transitions
- Support network
- Role of the PA

Working with young people in North Tyneside



Impact

- Breadth of cohort
- Individual discussion
- Genuine understanding of priorities
- Clarity for service direction



- Lots of work
- Individualised
- Losing momentum



Learning

- Professional tendency to find solutions.
- Required ongoing involvement to ensure clarity.
- Risk of repetition impacting on engagement.
- Young people need to see actions and responses.
- Clarity on goals and structures to achieve goals.

Working with young people in North Tyneside



Any questions?

Task force leaders in Dorset

Task force leaders in Dorset

Why? Dorset wanted to make sure young people were involved in the work and had opportunities to meet senior decision-makers.

What?

- A new role of ‘task force leader’ was created.
- The taskforce leaders had a specific interest and experiences in the 4 areas of the Dorset New Belongings action plan.
- They met with managers from the relevant services to share their views and ideas, so managers were better informed of the issues needing to be addressed.
- Together the managers and task force leaders jointly developed the action plan.
- The meetings were held online, so a wide range of young people could be involved – e.g., those out of area, young parents. Meetings were held at times that were convenient for young people and were run in a flexible way – for example, some young people only felt able to contribute if their cameras were switched off

Task force leaders in Dorset

We're recruiting young people who are care experienced from Dorset to be...

TASK FORCE LEADERS

You will be trained and supported to think through problems for Dorset Care Leavers and come up with solutions to solve them!

You will also have a bunch of fun, make new friends, get an accreditation.

You will build your team work, leadership, communication, confidence and influencing skills!

Meet and influence the BIG BOSSES including CEO's and influencers.

The Aim - to make Dorset's Leaving Care Service be the BEST it can be for children and young people!

You need to:

- Be aged 16-25
- Want to develop new skills
- Have a sense of humour
- Want to have fun!

Accommodation.
You told us:
60% of you were less likely to always feel safe in your home.
33% did not feel you were in appropriate accommodation.

Support with leaving care.
You told us:
92% of you told us that you trusted your leaving care worker most or all of the time.

Well-being.
You told us:
33% of you reported low life satisfaction, and twice as many of you often felt lonely when compared to the general population

Interested? Contact Lucy - Personal Adviser
lucy.benham@dorsetcouncil.org.uk
or text "New Belongings + name + age" to 07501159086 by **24 February 2021**

Recruitment

New Belongings Task Force Leaders

What's in it for you?

- A thank you for participating upto the value of £90.
- AQA accreditation!
- CV and interview support from a BIG BOSS!
- Recognition of your expertise of being in care and leaving care.
- Use your expertise to improve services and support.
- Build communication, confidence & ability to influence others.
- Celebration at the end of the project.

Profile

Dorset's New Belongings Task Force are a group of young people who are passionate about getting young people's voices heard. They are aged 16-25 and are care experienced.

You will be trained and supported to help problem solve challenges that Dorset Council faces.

As a team, you will work together to find solutions. Finally, bringing experts together to make services better for Dorset's Care Leavers for years to come!

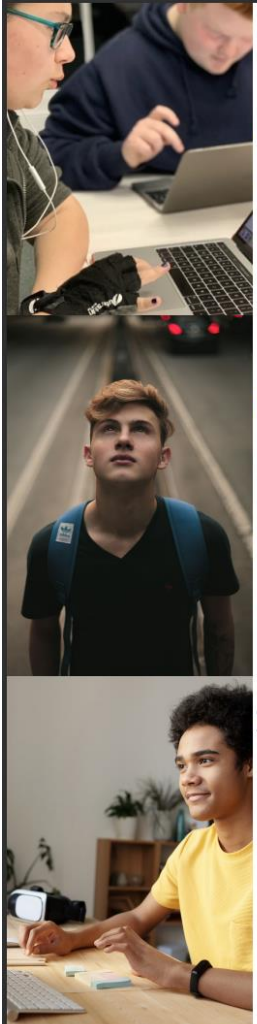
Phase 1

6 meetings From February - March - Rewarded to the value of £45

- Introduction
- Training
- Developing appropriate and safe accommodation options
- Looking at ways to improve wellbeing and life satisfaction
- Communication Information & support about care leaving services
- Better access to education, employment and training

Phase 2

3 meetings over 6 months (April - Sept) to advice, guide and monitor progress.
Rewarded to the value of £45



Task force leaders in Dorset

Highs and lows:

- Transition from commissioned to in-house participation.
- Managing expectations.
- Maintaining motivation.

Task force leaders in Dorset

New Belongings – what Dorset’s young people are proud of:

- Care leavers having more voice. Our opinions are valued.
- Visible changes in the service. E.g. website improvements.
- Greater awareness of care leavers and feeling that they are valued.
- Change is being made by care leavers.

Task force leaders in Dorset



Task force leaders feeding back to senior managers.

Task force leaders in Dorset

Outcomes:

- Ask Jan Membership (Rees Foundation).
- Care leaver nurse increased hours.
- Increased focus of senior managers.
- Care leaver's Delivery Group reaching across the organisation.
- Increase of x5 PAs and x2 senior PAs.

Task force leaders in Dorset



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z07x4njHas8>



Task force leaders in Dorset



Any questions?

Tools for voice and influence

Through the New Belongings Programme we reflected on what worked well in our engagement through lockdown, shared learning through a participation lead peer learning group, and pulled together some useful resources to help staff get the most from their interactions with young people.

- Add on's that you can use in online meetings to make them more interactive - <https://www.sessionlab.com/blog/online-tools-for-workshops/>
- Top tips for Facilitators in online sessions - https://campaignbootcamp.org/blog/2020/going-virtual-top-tips-for-trainers-and-facilitators/?mc_cid=eccd6b7e7a&mc_eid=b78ff1c5b9
- Different modes of online youth work, a look at some of the options you have available and different ways to reach young people - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RvCp8S-IQZo>
- Framework for Human Connection (the importance of creating human connection in online spaces and some tips and activities included on how to do this) - <https://www.deepr.cc/framework>
- Up skill yourself in Digital youth work - https://digipathways.io/content/uploads/2019/11/Training_Toolkit_Skill_IT.pdf
- Included: Practical tips for online engagement <https://www.catch-22.org.uk/news/included-practical-tips-for-online-engagement/>
- Lots more ideas and info can be found on this padlet - https://padlet.com/dan_moxon1/codesign

Sharing the learning from New Belongings

- **23rd November 12.00 to 1..30** - New Belongings - key messages from the programme
- **30th November 12.00 to 1.30** - Responding to the emotional health and wellbeing needs of care leavers.

- **Evaluation report on New Belongings**

<https://www.coram.org.uk/resource/new-belongings-programme-final-evaluation-report-2022>

- **Bright Spots – Your Life Beyond Care survey**

<https://coramvoice.org.uk/for-professionals/bright-spots/bright-spots-programme/>

- **Baker – Dixon self –assessment**

<https://www.coram.org.uk/resource/baker-dixon-leaving-care-services-self-assessment-framework>

- **Resource Hub**

- <https://coramvoice.org.uk/for-professionals/bright-spots/resource-bank/>

Tools and resources

Home » For professionals » Bright spots » Resource Bank

Resource Hub

Since 2013, the Bright Spots programme has helped local authorities directly hear from their children in care and care leavers through two sets of surveys, *Your Life, Your Care* (for children in care aged 4-18 years) and *Your Life Beyond Care* (for care leavers aged 16-25 years).

This Resource Hub includes practice examples from local authorities who have listened to what their care experienced children and young people said was most important to them. There are also a wide range of other useful materials and learnings produced by Coram Voice over the years, such as national reports, publications and webinars.



- **Practice examples** from New Belongings and wider Bright Spots work with children in care and care leavers
- **Reports** including the Evaluation report on New Belongings and the Story of New Belongings (released end of November)
- <https://coramvoice.org.uk/for-professionals/bright-spots/resource-bank/>

Practice
example

WANDSWORTH

Future First Champions



Why? Wandsworth wanted to make sure care leavers jointly review progress of their New Belongings action plan and improvement to support for care leavers.

What?

- Four Future First Champions were elected by other care leavers (Future First is the name of the Wandsworth Leaving Care service).
- The champions had diverse backgrounds - this helped them reflect the different experiences of Wandsworth's care leavers.
- The Champions attended the monthly Care Leavers Action group – a meeting chaired by the Assistant Director along with managers from across the council and partner agencies.
- The Champions received the agenda, reports and updates before the meeting and were supported by a participation worker to prepare their responses and agreed how they wanted to present their views.
- They were paid expenses at the London Living Wage and their travel costs etc. were reimbursed.

Impact: The Future First champions were able to make informed and valued contributions to the Care Leavers Action group which oversaw the delivery of Wandsworth's action plan.

Practice example

HERTFORDSHIRE Menu of opportunities



Why? As part of the New Belongings programme Hertfordshire wanted to identify opportunities for care leavers to get involved and improve leaving care support.

What?

- Hertfordshire developed a 'menu of opportunities' setting out the projects that care leavers could get involved in.
- The menu set out areas that the authority wanted to improve, what young people could help with, how many young people could be involved and the time commitment involved.
- Young people could choose to get involved in the issues that interested them.
- The menu was shared with young people through social media.

Impact: A wide range of young people were able to join in projects they were interested in.

New Belongings: Opportunities for Care Leavers to get involved

Care Leavers, Hertfordshire County Council and Partner Agencies Joint Plan 2021

You Said, We Will

As part of our on-going commitment to improve outcomes for care leavers, Hertfordshire County Council are working with Coram Voice and the University of Oxford on New Belongings, a programme which aims to improve the outcomes for care leavers by identifying and promoting actions based on what care leavers say the priorities are.

Between May and September 2020 all care leavers in Hertfordshire were asked to participate in an online survey to find out how they felt about their lives. The survey identified areas working well and areas needing improvement.

Having worked hard to gather the views of Care Leavers, Hertfordshire County Council and CHICC

There's a varied range of opportunities for Care Leavers to get involved with and help shape future services. The only qualification you need is your lived experience of being a care leaver. Everybody's experience is different, and we want to engage with as many Care Leavers as possible.

We can pay High Street vouchers and will also pay for any travel expenses incurred. Volunteering looks great on your CV, and applications for university etc.

(Whilst Covid restrictions are in place, meetings and project work will be online instead of face to face).



	What we plan to do:	What we want you to do	Possible Time Commitment
4	Care Leavers' Website The dedicated website for Care Leavers is called the "offer" and needs to reflect the information that Care Leavers want in a format they want and understand.	You will be invited to attend meetings and give your views and contribute ideas on the design and content of the website. You do not need any experiences in web design just a willingness to tell us what you think.	4 meetings over 6 months. Each meeting will usually last 2 hours.
10	Care Leavers' Covenant We are going to ensure commitments are made to Care Leavers that extend beyond those provided by the County Council - this may be from local charities or local business.	You will be invited to attend meetings to progress the Care Leaver Covenant where public, private and voluntary sector organisations pledge support, including apprenticeships work experience, free or discounted goods and services to Care Leavers.	This area is currently in development – time commitment to be confirmed.
5	Promoting Positive Stories Care leavers need to hear more from other care leavers who have succeeded – there should be success stories on websites and social media.	You will work within a small team promoting good news stories of care leavers.	4 meetings throughout the year.

Practice example

STOCKPORT

Sharing progress with young people



Why? Stockport wanted to keep young people informed of what the local authority was doing to improve support for care leavers and gather young people's views on progress.

What?

- Updates on Stockport's New Belongings plan for care leavers was updated every 3 months.
- Prior to its presentation to senior managers the report was sent to care leavers for their comments.
- All the care leavers comments were incorporated and presented to senior officers.

Impact: Progress is shared with care leavers and they have opportunities to scrutinise the work and give feedback.

Review Date: September 2021

Young People's Feedback:

YOU SAID	Young people's comments on progress made this Quarter
1. To support you to understand your life story and feel secure in your identity and maintain your family relationships	
2. To support you to make and sustain safe, healthy and trusted relationships with your friends/peers	
3. To support you to feel safe, supported and secure in your home	
4. To support you to have good emotional health and reduce isolation	
5. To support you to manage your money and make it stretch for the things you want to do	
6. To support you to transition to adulthood and have goals and aspirations for the future	

Your Feedback

We will re-run the New Belongings young people's survey during the month of January 2022 to invite your feedback to help us to keep improving services for you.

HERTFORDSHIRE

Co-produced Practice Standards

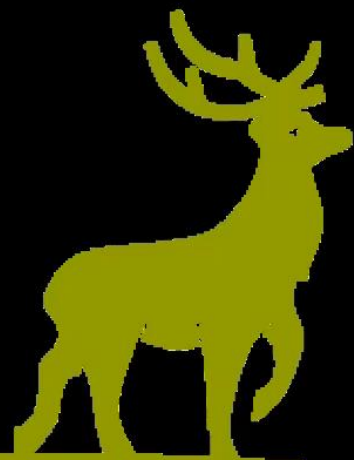


Why? In Hertfordshire 70% of care leavers reported they found it easy to contact their worker 'all or most of the time', but some reported uncertainty about the level of support they would receive. Managers wanted to ensure that despite being a large authority with over 750 care leavers a consistent service was offered to all young people.

What?

- The care leaver forum co-produced standards that set out the minimum levels of support a care leaver could expect to receive up to the age of 21.
- The standards will be adjust to meet individual needs and cover:
 - **Contact with their workers**- frequency of calls/ visits, names and number of managers and duty and cover arrangements
 - **Support at meetings and help with forms**- what meetings the PA will attend and how to build young people's confidence to manage on their own
 - **Moving into their own flat** – PA to attend 'sign up' meeting, the essentials for moving in and who will help with DIY/ decorating
 - **Support through difficult times**- the level of extra support. PAs have received mental health first aid training.
- Young people shared the standards with the leaving care services and they have been adopted by workers and managers.
- Young people were very positive about their work and felt they had been listened to.
- PAs felt they were helpful as it gave clarity to their work and managers are using them in supervision .

Impact: The standards are being shared with social workers, IRO and fostering staff so young people and those working with them are aware of the available support. Everybody is reporting that they are helpful and give a good starting basis to agree individual support plans.



Hertfordshire

Thank you!

Look out for two more webinars from Coram Voice:

Key messages from the New Belongings Programme

Wednesday 23rd November 12.00 – 1.30pm

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/new-belongings-key-messages-from-the-programme-tickets-444502126827>

Supporting care leavers' emotional health and well-being

Wednesday 30th November 12.00 – 1.30pm

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/new-belongings-supporting-care-leavers-emotional-health-and-well-being-tickets-444544182617>