



## Practical support & opportunities

Coventry City Council

# Supporting care leavers with housing

March 2021

Coventry's leaving care service consulted with their young people to find ways to ensure accommodation is appropriate and effective.

## Why?

Coventry ran the Bright Spots Your Life Beyond Care survey for care leavers as part of their involvement in the New Belongings Programme. Findings from this identified that **a third of their care leavers did not feel safe in their home**. Young people shared that the move on process sometimes led to them needing to take housing which does not meet their needs in areas which they did not feel safe. Others said that they are not always comfortable discussing housing issues with their PA and that **they wanted to be involved in more conversations about housing**.

## What did they do?

- A **short questionnaire** was co-designed with young people to understand the housing issues that were occurring.
- Meetings were held to discuss housing with *Through Care* (a local housing provider).
- Coventry's Housing Team and young people created a **checklist** for care leavers to ensure a property was suitable for their needs. The checklist is used when a PA shows a care leaver around a potential property and focus areas like, 'each young person is provided with a bedroom or self-contained area which is lockable' and 'appropriate arrangements are in place for young people to access help in a crisis or emergency, 24 hours a day, including reporting repairs'.
- *Through Care* worked in partnership with Coventry's housing team to launch **The House Project** to support and ensure better accommodation options for young people. It ensures that 'home' becomes a base to become independent and transition into adulthood. And it ensures that young people maintain and sustain their tenancies by developing a community of support around them. [Read more here](#).

## What difference is it making?

Care leavers have been central to the development of *The House Project*. It gives them practical skills and helps them to develop friendships and build a support network.

The plan is for the first cohort of young people on the project to act as **mentors** to the next group.

The checklist is helping care leavers make informed choices and allows for more detailed discussions with providers.

The success of young people's participation in the decision making process has led *Through Care* to explore other ways to further involve young people.