

What is the Grand Campaign?

As stated in the [DfE Transition into Adulthood Guidance](#), all local authorities should help care leavers with the costs of setting up their new home. This help is usually called the Setting Up Home Allowance or the Leaving Care Grant. For consistency, in this report we refer to it as the Setting Up Home Allowance.

On 1 April 2023, the Government raised the minimum amount for this allowance from £2,000 to £3,000.

This money is meant to help care leavers buy essentials like furniture, appliances, and other things they need when moving into their first independent home.

Local authorities are in charge of giving out this allowance.

The increase was part of the Government's plan to improve children's social care.

A National Voice (ANV) found that not all local authorities are giving the full £3,000, and the rules can be different depending on where you live, so they started the Grand Campaign to address this.

Our goals

1 Every local authority should offer the full £3,000 Setting Up Home Allowance to all care leavers up to age 25.

2 Clear and fair rules for everyone.

3 No more postcode lottery – the amount shouldn't depend on where you live.

The whole point of being a corporate parent is ensuring that children and young people in care have the best possible start in life. They need to know they're entitled to this uplift, especially during an economic crisis.

Care experienced young person

The Grand Campaign aims to make sure that all care leavers receive the increased Setting Up Home Allowance amount nationally. We also want to make care leavers more aware of the change in Government policy.

We want to empower care leavers to talk about what is available to them locally and try to achieve a consistent approach across the country.

What did we do?

1 We sent a Freedom of Information (FOI) request to 153 local councils in England to find out if they had increased the Setting Up Home Allowance to £3,000, as the Government recommended. 124 councils (81%) replied to our FOI request.

2 We ran an online workshop with care experienced young people to get their views.

3 Our ANV ambassadors, care experienced young people aged 16-25, helped shape this report and recommendations.



What we found

1

Most authorities pay £3,000

9 out of 10 local authorities report giving £3,000 in Setting Up Home Allowance. But, 11 months after the Government changed its policy, 1 in 10 still gave less. Out of the 11 areas paying less than £3,000, 8 planned to raise it in 2024, but 3 were not sure yet.

2

Big differences

In the area paying the least, care leavers got £1,500, while in the highest paying area, they got nearly £3,500 – more than double!

3

Some get less

Some areas said they offer 'up to' £3,000, meaning some care leavers could still get less than that.

4

Extra financial help

8 out of 10 areas offer extra financial support on top of the Setting Up Home Allowance, like paying for TV licences or a first grocery shop, but what they help with can be different depending on where care leavers live.

5

Unequal support

Two care leavers in similar situations could get different levels of support depending on the local authority that supports them, because the rules on who is eligible for the allowance are really different.

6

Lack of written guidelines

Less than three-quarters (73%) of local authorities have a clear, written policy about the Setting Up Home Allowance, and local authorities refer to the allowance by different names, with different interpretation as to what it covers. Without clear, consistent information it is hard to know your rights and how to make sure you get what you are entitled to.

What we want to see improved

1

Fairness

Every local authority should offer at least £3,000 Setting Up Home Allowance – no exceptions.

2

Clear guidelines

No more confusion! Everyone should have a clear, written document outlining exactly what they are entitled to. The document should be easy to find and easy to understand, so care leavers know their rights and can speak up if they don't get what they have a right to.

3

Freedom to choose

Care leavers should have more control over how they spend their money.

4

£3,000 for all care leavers

ANV want every care leaver, up to age 25, to get the full £3,000 to help set up their home.

5

Enough support

The allowance should cover everything young people need to start out in their own home.

6

Regular reviews

The Setting Up Home Allowance must be looked at least every year to make sure it keeps up with rising costs.