

Children and Young People in Care Supported Accommodation Team



Annual Report 2021/2022

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Children and Young People in Care**

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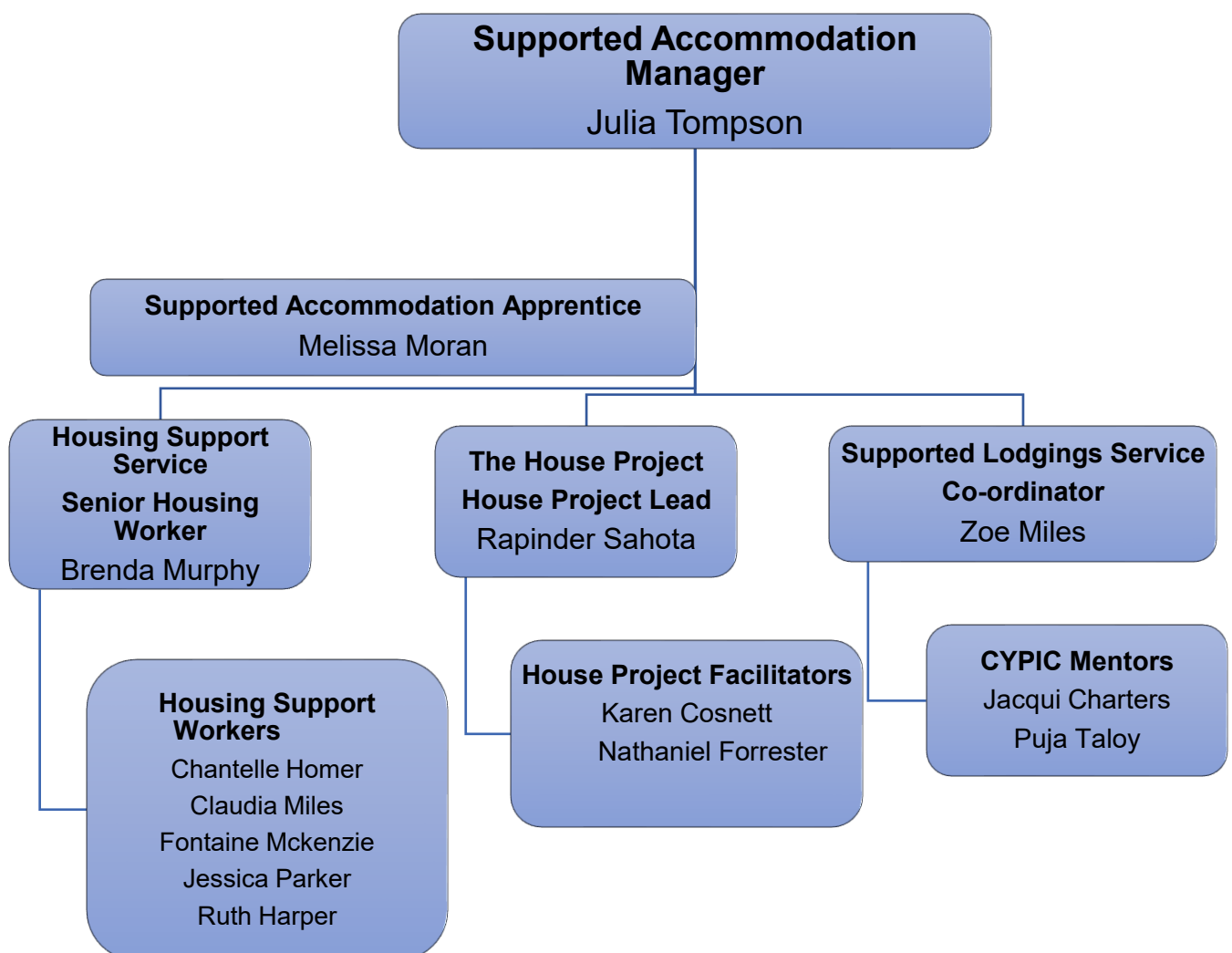
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is the first annual report of the Supported Accommodation Team, which is situated within the Children and Young People in Care Service. Since 2015, the service has been offering accommodation to young people in care and leaving care via its well-established Housing Support Service. It has been operating as a multi-disciplinary team since 2019, with the introduction of the Wolverhampton House Project, then an internal Supported Lodgings Service in 2020 and the final addition of the Mentoring Service in April 2021. The focus of the team is to provide a high level of efficient and effective accommodation and support options to young people in care and leaving care.

This report will highlight the successes and outcomes achieved by the service, also explain the challenges we have faced, our lessons learned and our plan to develop and improve our offer to the young people of Wolverhampton.

CURRENT TEAM STRUCTURE:



The team is managed by the Supported Accommodation Manager, Julia Tompson, who is responsible for the strategic management of all the services, with the aim of

providing a choice of high-quality supported accommodation provisions for Children and Young People in Care and Care Leavers. In addition, support is provided to Children and Young People in Care Social Work teams and Reach Care Leaving Team to offer support and guidance with identifying appropriate move on accommodation for young people leaving care as they transition into independence.

2.0 HOUSING RELATED SUPPORT SERVICE

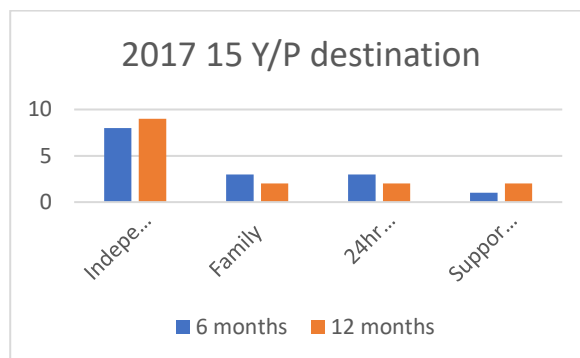
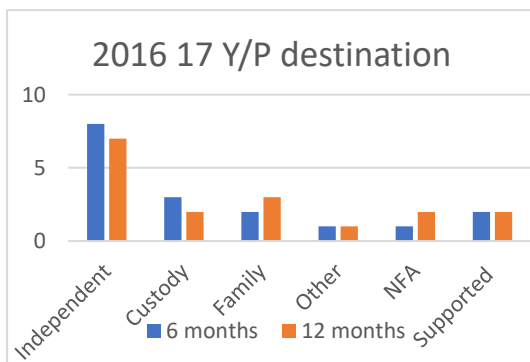
The Housing Support Service is well established and has been operating since April 2013 and following transfer from an external provision, NACRO, to being managed internally. In 2014, Cabinet approved the expansion of the service by increasing the current stock to 10 units from Wolverhampton Homes stock. In 2016, further approval was granted to increase the property stock levels to 33 flats.

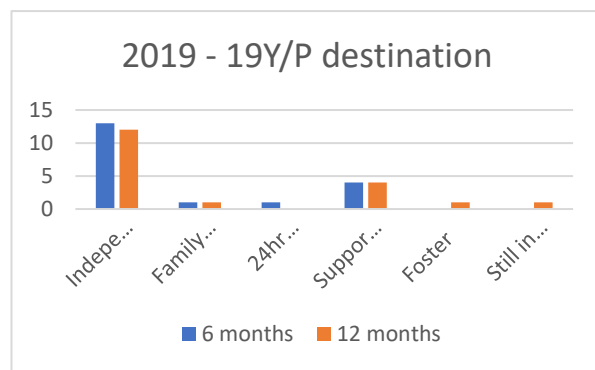
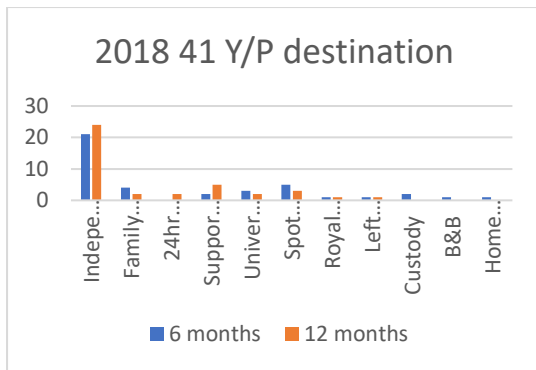
The service provides accommodation and housing related support to young people leaving care and supports and guides them to move on to independent living. The 33 flats were allocated to 2 emergency crash pads, 2 training flats and 29 studio or one bedroomed properties situated around the city.

The housing related support is delivered in response to the young person's needs working towards independent living and offers up to 30 hours support per week. Each young person has an individualised support plan, broken down into specific areas where support is offered to develop the young person's independence skills, understanding, and developing their ability to manage their own tenancy and live in a community. In addition, the service operates between the hours of 8:00am to 8:00pm on a Monday through to Friday, and between 10:00am and 4:00pm on Saturday and Sunday. The primary aim of the service is to enable young people to move on into independence when they reach 18 or are suitably ready. If the young person can evidence their ability to manage their property and their tenancy, they have the choice to either take on the tenancy with Wolverhampton Homes or access the housing waiting list as a priority and bid for a property in an area of their choice within the City.

2.1 Young People Accessing the Service

Since 2013, the service has seen 158 young people leaving care access the service and has a success rate for 2019/2020 of 92% young people who have moved on from the service into independence are still maintaining their tenancy for more than 6 months. The tables below demonstrates where young people have moved onto when leaving the service.





We are unable to provide full data for young who have moved into independence during 2020 -2021, particularly around the 12-month period. This is primarily due to the delay in move-on caused by Covid, the closure of the housing waiting list during the pandemic and having 5 UASC's in our service with no leave to remain which inhibits their ability to access social housing. Of the 13 young people accessing the Housing Support service in 2020/2021, 7 have moved into independence and are still maintaining their tenancy 6 months on. Young People have received, in total 4207 hours of support during 21/22.

The service continues to operate with 100% of young people in the service having an individualised support plan, with a designated Housing Support Worker allocated to them through their stay in the service, with 100% of reviews taking place every month, where appropriate and 100% of Health and Safety checks being carried out.

2.2 Challenges

The service has had its challenges throughout 2019 – 2021, with a reduction in the number of young people accessing the service. The primary factors for this are the introduction of the House Project, Supported Lodgings service and the drive to reduce the numbers of young people in care. This was also hampered by a change in the structure of CYPIC Service which now operates 3 Social Work teams working with children 0-17, whereas previously there was a dedicated 14 plus Reach team. This means additional time has needed to be invested for all 3 Social Work Teams to understand of the Accommodation options and whether it would be an appropriate move on option. The team have visited Social Work team meetings to create a further awareness of the service, and our aim is for this to be a regular occurrence now home working is a long-term feature. In addition, previously the Supported Accommodation Manager would meet with the Social Work in the former Reach Team on a 3-monthly basis but with the number of Social Workers reaching 31 FTE posts, this is an unachievable task. Drop-in sessions were created to enable SW to attend and seek support/advice, but only 1 Social Work attended.

The Supported Accommodation Manager and Senior Housing Worker have implemented a monthly meeting to look at 16 plus young people and ascertain whether the Housing Support Service is the most suitable path for them. We are working extremely hard to create a greater awareness of the service and to encourage young people to be referred. This has seen an increase in young people accessing the service again.

The data table below show the numbers of young people accessing the Housing Support Service:

Year	Total no. young people
04/2016– 03/2017	17
04/2017– 03/2018	15
04/2018– 03/2019	41
04/2019– 03/2020	19
04/2020– 03/2021	13
04/2021– 03/2022	15
04/2022	5 planned

2.3 Current Situation

Due to the challenges, described above and to ensure cost efficiencies, accessing replacement properties when a young person moved on or took the tenancy on has been delayed ensuring that properties were not left vacant. We have only replaced and as when needed, which has subsequently seen a reduction in rent charges.

In addition, when the service was increased, it was estimated that 10 Housing Support Workers would be required to maximise the 30 hours support offered, should a young person need it, we have naturally reduced staffing numbers to 6 Housing Support Worker posts to correlate this. Savings has been made by transferring Housing Support Worker posts into other roles within the team – funding an addition House Project Facilitator Post, part funding a Supported Lodgings Co-ordinator post and creating a Supported Accommodation Apprentice. We currently have budget for 1.5 vacant Housing Support Worker posts which will be filled when capacity increases. At present, we have 26 flats in operation, and we are awaiting 3 further flats from Wolverhampton Homes.

2.3.1 Donations

The service has this year received donations from services/foster carers to enable young people to have a greater start in their journey to independence:

- WV Living – a Wolverhampton-based house builder has gifted show home furniture from 3 of its properties to the young people in both the Housing Support Service and the House Project Team, this furniture has been greatly welcomed by the young people.
- Foster carers raised a significant amount of money and donated this to the young people in the Housing Support Service – it is our intention to offer fun days out for our young people with a Bowling evening already planned.

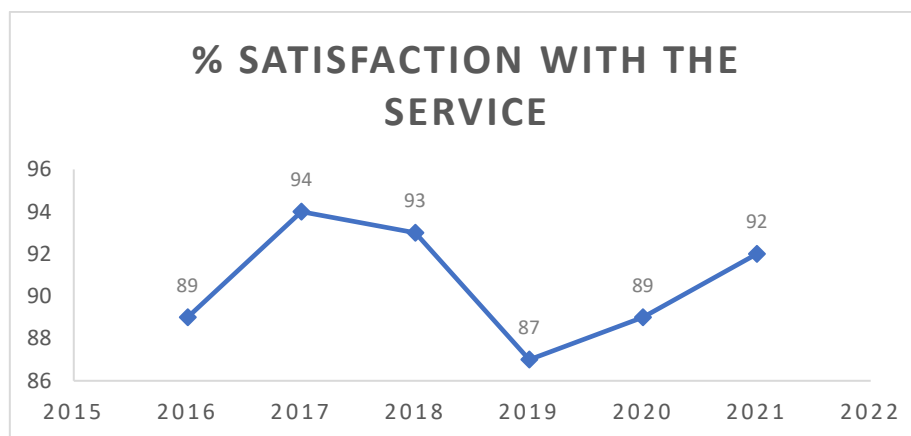
2.3.2 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

The service has seen an increase in UASCs accessing accommodation, we currently have 9 in the flats. Since 2016, we have supported 25 unaccompanied young people, we have had 10 that have transitioned into independent living and 1 that went to university. The 9 remaining young people, are being supported intensely to become part of the community, access local amenities appropriate to their culture and educational provisions.

It is important to note that whilst these young people are awaiting their leave to remain, they are unable to access Social Housing, and this can often mean that they remain in the service for longer than their 18th birthday.

2.4 Service reviews

Service improvement reviews are carried out within 3 months of the young person moving into their property and an exit review is carried out when they progress into independence, both are demonstrating positive experiences and evidence how young people are supported to develop their independence skills. Analysis of the surveys shows that the majority of young people are happy with the service they receive. The data chart below shows a relatively consistent percentage of satisfaction. There is a dip in 2019, but this can be explained; we had one young person who was not coping, under significant peer pressure, and needed to move to a more supported provision with 24-hour support where he could keep himself safe. Whilst he did move across to another provision, he felt he was not supported of his desire to stay in the flat and responded to his exit review negatively.



Snapshot comments from some of the surveys are:

“My housing support worker has helped me through everything- living in my own property, and anything that I have struggled with, she has always been there to help me”

“the guidance and support I have received has helped me grow my independence skills along the way from first moving into the property”

2.5 ASDAN

As part of the young person’s individualised support plan, the primary focus is preparation for independence and incorporated within this is the ASDAN short course, Living Independently. Young people are supported to achieve this accreditation during their stay. It requires them to complete 6 individual units, evidencing the skills that they have learned. The evidence can be in the form of written pieces of work or photographic evidence of them completing the tasks: (see examples photos below)



CHOOSE TWO SUPERMARKETS AND CREATE A PRICE COMPARISON CHART OF 20 ESSENTIAL FOOD ITEMS THAT YOU USE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD. WHICH SUPERMARKET WOULD YOU CHOOSE TO SHOP AT AND WHY? (Question 6)

Price		Top 10		10 items	
Supermarket 1	Supermarket 2	Supermarket 1	Supermarket 1	Supermarket 1	Supermarket 1
1 pasta - £1.50	1 pasta - £1.50	1 pasta - £1.50	1 pasta - £1.50	1 pasta - £1.50	1 pasta - £1.50
2 milk - £1.00	2 milk - £1.00	2 milk - £1.00	2 milk - £1.00	2 milk - £1.00	2 milk - £1.00
3 bread - £1.00	3 bread - £1.00	3 bread - £1.00	3 bread - £1.00	3 bread - £1.00	3 bread - £1.00
4 eggs - £1.00	4 eggs - £1.00	4 eggs - £1.00	4 eggs - £1.00	4 eggs - £1.00	4 eggs - £1.00
5 butter - £1.00	5 butter - £1.00	5 butter - £1.00	5 butter - £1.00	5 butter - £1.00	5 butter - £1.00
6 sugar - £1.00	6 sugar - £1.00	6 sugar - £1.00	6 sugar - £1.00	6 sugar - £1.00	6 sugar - £1.00
7	7	7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9	9	9
10	10	10	10	10	10

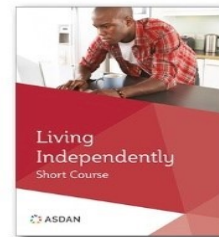


Since April 2021, 10 young people have completed their ASDAN and have received their certificates to evidence that they have completed their accreditation.

Living Independently

The ASDAN Living Independently Short Course is focused on helping looked-after children make a successful transition from school education to adulthood.

Developed in collaboration with local authorities, the course supports the cross-government strategy to transform support for young people leaving care – ‘Keep on caring: supporting young people from care to independence.’



Find out more: www.asdan.org.uk/living-independently

2.6 Move on to independence

In addition to supporting young people in the service to move on, the Senior Housing Worker within the team, works closely with the Young People’s Team at Wolverhampton Homes and meets weekly to ensure that all Care Leavers applications for move on are monitored and progressed through the process efficiently. We also support young people with the first week’s rent to compliment the 3-week subsidy from Wolverhampton Homes as part of the local offer.

2.7 Training flat



The Supported Accommodation training flats enable young people in care, leaving care and care leavers an opportunity to experience independence and be supported in acquiring the skills to live independently. This opportunity is also offered to young people in Staying Put placements to provide them with the same experiences. For some young people, living more independently offers them freedom, privacy and control, but they are often unprepared for the responsibility, loneliness and isolation this entails.



There are two training flats available and currently young people can access them for day sessions and anything between 3 days and up to two weeks and they provide young people with:

- The opportunity to experience the challenges of independent living, and the potential tenancy failure, without this having an impact on future housing options
- A move from a more supportive arrangement but can also offer an opportunity for a young person who has failed to live more independently and requires more support or has a missing skill set.
- Replication of reality by giving young people an allowance that will mirror what they would receive if in low paid employment, at college or on benefits.
- Self-contained accommodation.
- A reflection of the standards, location and facilities of the accommodation they are likely to move onto, e.g., the white goods, floor coverings, decoration the young person can expect.

A Housing Support Worker provides support throughout their stay, supporting them and enabling them to develop their independence skills. Stays in the training flats are not supervised 24 hours a day, seven days a week as this enables the young person to experience staying alone so they can be supported in developing strategies in managing that. Whilst a young person stays in the training flat their ability to manage living more independently is assessed by the Supported Accommodation Team and is shared with the young person and their Social Worker/Young Persons Advisor. This assessment enables their social worker to be more informed and supports the pathway planning process and informs the decision about their next accommodation option.

Data below detailing number of young people accessing the training flat over the last 12 months. It shows which provision young people are in when they access the training flats. This provision has enabled young people, such as those in Staying Put or Supported Accommodation the opportunity to establish whether they are ready to take the next step before making their application for independence.

	18+	House project	Staying put	Offered flat	Moved in to CYPIC flat	Supported Accommodation	UASC	TOTAL
2021/22	3	18	10	7	4	10	8	59

To enable young people to develop their skills further, the team have worked closely with the House Project Team and enabled young people in the project to access stays in the training flat to develop and have their independence skills assessed. This has proved beneficial and an integral part of the young people moving into independence, particular during the pandemic.

2.8 Future Plans

It has been our aspirations for a couple of years now to implement group sessions for the young people in the flats, to enable them to have peer support, and to complete elements of their ASDAN portfolios. This ambition has been hampered due to the pandemic, but as the hub is now available for group sessions, the team will be arranging some drop in/information sessions with the young people to look at how we can make group sessions work for them.

As identified earlier, we need to further promote the service and create a greater understanding amongst Social Work Teams about the Housing Support Service. We aim to hold quarterly information sessions and also attend team meetings regularly to ensure that social workers can support young people to make informed choices about their future. This will enable new Social Workers to have a greater understanding of what services we can offer to young people and assist them in care planning.

It has been identified that accurate data can be collated via our Eclipse system, enabling Business Intelligence to create a scorecard/analysis of Housing Support visits/number of hours spent with young people. A request has been submitted for this piece of work to be carried out; to date we have no completion date, but all the necessary information has been passed through to the team. As we are always aspiring to improve, we aim to benchmark our service with other local authorities, to see where we can learn from our partners and develop our offer further. It is our intention to undertake this benchmarking during April – June 2022.

3.0 THE WOLVERHAMPTON HOUSE PROJECT



The Wolverhampton House Project has now been operational since October 2019 following the endorsement by Cabinet in July 2019. This is in partnership with the National House Project (NHP), Wolverhampton is one of 13 House Projects across the United Kingdom working under the NHP framework. In January 2021, The House Project Steering Group members agreed that the end date for formal project management/support could be brought forward to April 2021. This decision was based on the success of cohort 1, and at the time with the progress of cohort 2, and the present Covid restrictions and the likelihood that progress to cohort 3 might be delayed

beyond the original project end date of July 2021. This decision was also taken in consultation with the National House Project and external partner Reconomy who both agreed that Wolverhampton's local House Project (HP) was sufficiently mature to succeed as part of business-as-usual activity.

In March 2021, we won the CYP NOW award for the Leaving Care

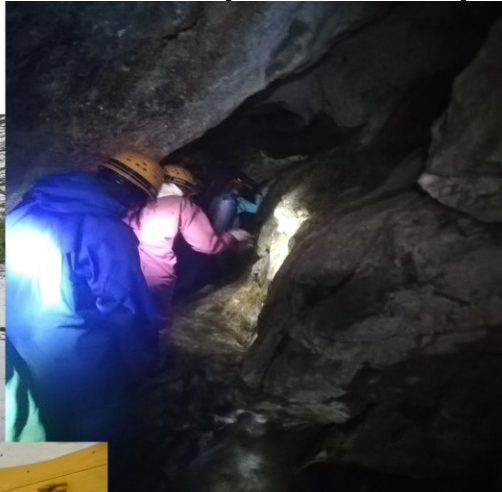


3.1 Current situation

Despite the challenges faced with Covid 19, the young people progressed extremely well, both cohorts 1 and 2 completed their House Project Journey and moved into independence or appropriate accommodation. Whilst not actively engaged regularly with the HP staff, the young people will communicate and access support if they need it. The graduation ceremony for these 16 young people was held on 28th March 2022, where all the young people and relevant adults/professionals in their lives came together to celebrate their success on the HP journey. Cohort 3 began in October 2021, and 11 young people completed their application forms. However, despite regular one to one visits and encouragement from HP staff, 5 young people no longer wanted to engage in the project.

In February 2022, the young people from cohort 3 attended their residential. This forms part of their HP Journey and is one of the modules on their AQA accreditation. Following a successful pitch, they headed off to Derbyshire for two days.

Just some of their adventures -



The ethos of the House Project is around promoting a sense of community and working in a group is instrumental in this. The group has recently been able to access the Co-production hub, which has seen their relationships develop and this along with the residential has had a significant impact on the young people's confidence and friendships. In addition, they are working extremely well together and are achieving positive results on their House Project Journey.

3.2 Successes

Young people have thrived on the House Project, and we are extremely proud of their successes:

- a) 21 young people have now been part of the House Project, with 12 now living independently, a further 4 are now living in accommodation suitable to their needs, and we have 2 in our current cohort planning to move into their own properties.
- b) The co-production hub has opened which has enabled us to deliver group face to face sessions and enable our young people to develop communities of support with their peers.
- c) The House Project was shortlisted for the MJ Awards for the Best Social Housing Initiative in May 2022.
- d) Winner of Children and Young People Now Award 2021 in the Care Leaver category for the impact of the House Project on improved outcomes for young people.

We have 11 young people continuing to maintain their tenancies, some for more than 12 months, a further 5 are in accommodation that is appropriate to their needs. In addition, we have one young person who is maintaining an apprenticeship.

The table below shows each cohort, what type of accommodation they moved into and how they are maintaining their tenancy.

Cohort No.	No of young people	Independence	Supported	Living with parent	Time in tenancy (average)	In EET
1	10	7	1	2	17 months	4
2	6	5	1		8 months	4
3	6					

Our young people in Cohorts 1 and 2 have finally been able to “graduate” from the House Project, celebrating in style with their peers and HP community. A celebration evening was held, where all young people, HP staff and partners came together to celebrate their achievements.



Two young people are currently active members of the Care Leavers National Movement which is made up of care leavers from Local House Projects across the country. They use their skills as expert advisers to develop House Projects and improve outcomes for all young people leaving care. In addition, one of our young people is also Vice Chair of Wolverhampton's Care Leavers Independence Collective and uses the skills she has developed on the House Project to ensure that our Care Leavers receive the best services and support.

3.2 Benefits

Benefits outlined in the 2021 Closure Report and 2022 annual review updates are:-

- a) Reduction in high-cost residential and semi-independent spot purchased placement durations – This has been 'Partially Achieved' in as much as: -
 - ✓ Reduction in placement costs over the 3 years has not achieved the forecasted saving the project had envisaged
 - ✓ The overall CYPIC placement costs (for all CYPIC) have not reduced due to the number of children and young people presenting with complex high-level needs in the younger age groups
 - ✓ The timeliness of portfolio completion and young people's readiness to move within the planned 6-month period necessary to achieve cost savings.

- b) Young people leaving care involvement in project decision making processes – Yes, this benefit was wholly met and has been evidenced by young people participation in local HP Steering Group, Local Care Leaver groups, and National HP groups

- c) More flexibility in identification and allocation of housing for Care Leavers – Yes, this benefit has been wholly met and is evidenced by the active engagement of Wolverhampton Homes with the young people involved in the HP project
- d) Personal development of Care Leavers (Initially cohort 1 followed by cohorts 2,3,4 etc) - Yes, this benefit has been wholly met and is evidenced by the readiness of the young people involved in the project to sustain their own tenancy and build and sustain personal relationships with other members of the project and the wider House Project community.
- e) Development of a peer support network within the community for care leavers (Initially cohort 1 then cohorts 2,3,4 etc) - Yes, this benefit has been wholly met and is evidenced by participation in 'Drop-Ins', Community Events, Residentials etc.

3.4 Future plans

We are actively looking to start identifying Cohort 4, and as identified with the Housing Support Service, we need to further promote the service and create a greater understanding amongst Social Work Teams about the House Project. We have already scheduled time at CYPIC Social Work team meetings to encourage and support Social Workers to identify young people who may benefit from the House Project. We are also aiming to hold face to face information sessions with young people to make them aware of what the House Project has to offer.

We are still awaiting Implementation of the new Outcomes and Learning Framework Reporting System by the National House Project. The system has been in draft since September 2021. The NHP are currently refining g a reporting function to enable both NHP and LHP to run live reports.

3.5 Feedback from young people:

I feel as though this is a golden opportunity to learn new skills and become independent as well as taking responsibility.

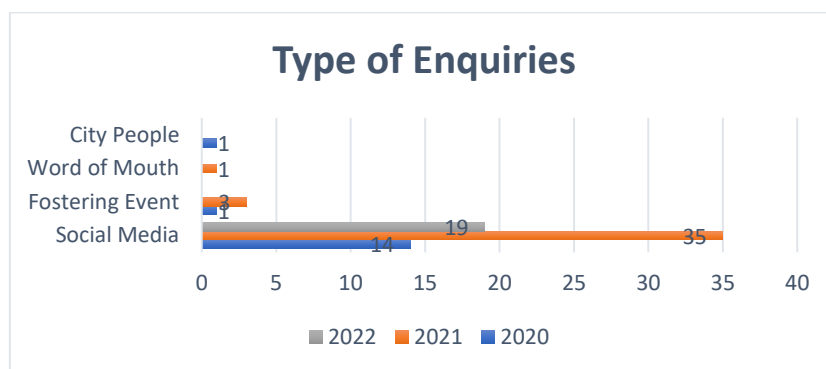
I feel I have achieved confidence as well as being an important part of the team and take part in all the activities.

I think it's a really good idea to allow young people to build an environment they are comfortable with, especially when they're at a stage where they are basically alone.

4.0 SUPPORTED LODGINGS

The Supported Lodgings Service was implemented in July 2020 with the aim of recruiting internal supported lodgings providers (hosts) to provide supported accommodation for vulnerable young people who are not ready to live independently. The service provides homes for Children and Young People in Care and care leavers aged between 16 and 21 years. The intention is to meet the needs of young people,

with the focus being on living an independent life but having some support available when needed. It is aimed at young people with low level needs e.g. young people who are responsible, have independence skills and have no major challenges. Young people accessing the service have reached a level of maturity to manage in a setting where they are expected to mainly take responsibility for themselves and will not require the intensity of support provided in foster care or residential care. The implementation of this and subsequent recruitment of hosts was challenging particularly due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Understandably, people were apprehensive and reluctant to open their home during an extremely anxious time. Marketing was carried out via City People, social media, fostering events and through the fostering portal. Whilst we have had significant numbers of interest (see table below) there has been little following through once information was provided to them



From the total number of enquiries, only 7 progressed through to the assessment process. 5 of which were approved, 1 declined to agree to the DBS process, and one is currently undergoing assessment. More recently, one host has withdrawn fully due to personal circumstances, and one is on hold due to a family bereavement. All enquiries are followed up by a telephone call discussion and then a clear information booklet is sent out to inform their decision further. There is a clear area of work identified here in relation to reasons why interest is not progressing and with effect from April 2022, whilst most cited that this was not something they wanted to pursue, further research will be carried out into the reasons why there is no progression.

4.1 Referrals

Referrals to the service have been sporadic and require regular prompting via team meetings or via email by the Supported Lodgings Co-ordinator.

Year	Hosts approved	Hosts closed	Referrals	Placed	Closed	Reason for closure
2020	2		9	2	7	No longer needed
2021	3	1	8	2	6	No longer needed
2022		1	1	1		

We will continue to promote the service and identify young people whose needs are appropriate to accessing the supported lodgings service via monthly reviews of young people's care plans.

4.2 Supported Lodgings Supervisions

Supervision is offered monthly with the focus being on supporting the host and ensuring that the young person is feeling supported in their placement. These have been carried out both virtually and face to face during the pandemic. A management oversight exercise of these supervisions has found them to be timely and effective.

4.3 Reviews

As part of our commitment to ensure that this new service is effective and that we are supporting our hosts effectively, we carry out reviews within 3 months of placement and when a young person moves on. Whilst our numbers are low in placements, the surveys evidence that our hosts are satisfied with the support that they are receiving from the service.

4.4 Case Study:

Norean and Nigel live in a three-bedroom mid terrace house in Willenhall. Norean has 13 years previous experience working in residential care with young people and has also been a foster carer. The couple decided to become hosts for supported lodgings after they had recently helped an ex-foster daughter and her two children move on to independence. Norean and Nigel completed the assessment process and became hosts for Wolverhampton Supported Lodgings service in March 2021.

YP, 16, arrived in the UK as an unaccompanied minor. He needed time to settle in a supportive environment, conducive to learning the self-care skills he needed to enable him to move onto independent living accommodation within the community. YP had not previously lived on his own due to his age; his mother passed away when he was around 14 /15 years of age and it was unclear what level of independence he had, if any. Naturally his vulnerability was high, with limited English, creating communication difficulties. He could not read or write and had no familiarity with English culture.

When YP was first accommodated in the care of Wolverhampton he was due to be placed in his own independent flat with help, support, and guidance via the Supported Accommodation Team. However, YP became extremely upset and broke down upon arrival, asking to be placed with a family. Acting on YP's request, his social worker made a referral to Supported Lodgings.

After introductions were made, YP stated he was happy to live with Norean and Nigel and was placed shortly afterwards. Norean has gone above and beyond her role as a host, supporting YP with his health needs such as Dentist, Doctors and Optician's, taking him to a Kurdish community in Wolverhampton to enable YP to make friends and purchase food. YP also had his hair cut here and whilst talking to the barber discovered that they have a football team. YP has now joined this and attends weekly. Norean has also supported YP's religious beliefs by sourcing out local mosques for YP to attend and educational needs by finding a college to suit YP's ability's and where he can study basic maths and English. His English has improved which helps YP communicate with his hosts. She has also accompanied him on public transport taking him on several bus routes to help him find his way and to ensure he understands payments/stops/locations etc. Norean has also promoted YP's independent living skills such as cooking, cleaning, washing, budgeting, and prompting personal hygiene. YP has also been helping Norean with DIY tasks around the house.

YP has now been in placement for nearly 8 months and is now ready to take the next step into more independent accommodation. A plan is in place for him to move across to the Housing Support Service, where he can further develop his independence skills in preparation for adulthood. YP now has the confidence to travel around Wolverhampton and surrounding areas independently, has made new friendship groups, attends college regularly and enjoys playing football.

4.5 Future Plans

This service is relatively new to CYPIC and to the team and it has been a learning curve around how we market hosts, whilst we are recording all expressions of interest, and refusals, as advised earlier and with effect from April 2022, further research will be carried out into the reasons why there is no progression.

It has been identified that accurate data can be collated via our Eclipse system, enabling Business Intelligence to create a scorecard/analysis of Supported Lodgings supervisions. A request has been submitted for this piece of work to be carried out; to date we have no completion date, but all the necessary information has been passed through to the team.

5.0 STAYING PUT

The oversight and management of Staying Put was transferred over to the Supported Accommodation Manager in 2015, and the new policy was implemented enabling young people to remain with their former foster carers up to the age of 21. The policy sets out clear guidance around what the Staying Put offer was to young people and their carers and created a one point of contact, setting our clear guidance around the offer and payments. The City of Wolverhampton have seen a significant increase in Staying Put placements, along with a clear process and guidelines around what the local authority offers. In addition, the implementation of a retainer payment to those placements where a young person has gone to university and has the option to return to their home during vacation times has provided stability to our young people.

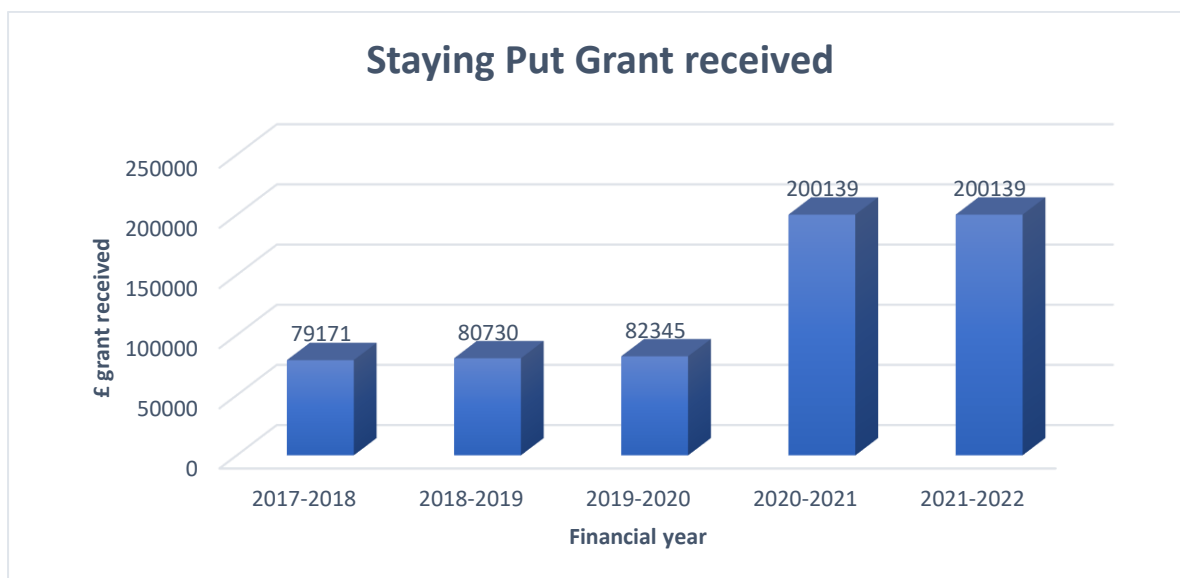
4.1 Staying Put Placements

Since 2015, and to present date, there have been a total of 101 Staying Put placements, 65 of which have now closed as the young person has progressed into adulthood. There are currently 33 live Staying Put placements. The table below shows where young people leaving Staying Put placements moved on to:

Year	Independence	Family	Stayed post 21	Supported Accommm	Left	University	Other	Totals
2016			1	1	1			3
2017	4		1	3				8
2018	2		2		3	1	1	9
2019	5	2	3		1	3		14
2020	7	2	3	3	1	1	1	18
2021	1	3	2	2	1	1		10
2022	1		1	1				3

5.2 Staying Put Grant

The large increase and success of Staying Put has also seen a significant increase in the grant provided to the local authority by Central Government, which enables financial support to the costs associated with maintaining a 'Staying Put' arrangement.



5.3 Staying Put Supervisions

A further review of the policy in 2020, saw the introduction of an offer of supervision and support to all Staying Put providers from the Supported Lodgings Co-ordinator. It was identified that former foster carers would often pull on the support of their previous Supervising Social Worker if challenges arose or they needed advice, so the option of supervision through the Supported Accommodation Team was introduced and offered to all new Staying Put providers. This has proven to be an effective offer which has been taken up by many. As we recognised that the young people in placement had support from their young person's advisors, we focus our support on our carers and supporting them to support our young people as they transition into adulthood.

Supervision is offered on a bi - monthly basis but is scheduled around the needs and request of the carers; this could also be bi-monthly if appropriate. To date we have 20 Staying Put providers accessing this support. Management oversight of these supervisions is carried out by the Supported Accommodation Manager and found these to be timely and of a good standard.

5.4 Future Plans

As with Supported Lodgings, it has been identified that accurate data can be collated via our Eclipse system, enabling Business Intelligence to create a scorecard/analysis of Staying Put supervisions. A request has been submitted for this piece of work to be carried out; to date we have no completion date, but all the necessary information has been passed through to the team.

In addition, we have plans to implement annual and exit reviews with all our carers around the Staying Put offer and the supervision we provide. We are looking to implement this during April 2022.

6.0 MENTORING SERVICE

The Children and Young People in Care Mentoring Service was transferred over into the team in April 2021 and is available for all children and young people in care and care leavers, irrespective of their age. The purpose, to build positive, respectful, and

empowering relationships with children and young people in care and care leavers, and to provide support and guidance to achieve their potential during their transition into adulthood. It comprises of two full time mentors.

The mentoring relationship is focused on working with and assisting the child, young person, and care leaver to achieve specified and agreed goals. The mentors aim to provide personal support and encouragement at a decisive or challenging moment in the life of children and young people in care and care leavers. Their main purpose is to work directly with children and young people in care and care leavers on a specific identified area/need. These areas are (but not limited to):

- Building confidence/self esteem
- Developing social skills
- Building positive relationships
- Internet safety
- CSE awareness
- Managing anxieties around the transition to adulthood and support with practical life skills

6.1 Referrals

On transfer in April, an interim new policy was devised, providing more specific guidance around the service and how this can be accessed within the Children and Young People in Care Service. There has also been a significant drive in acquiring more referrals to ensure that young people are offered support when it is needed. Since transfer into CYPIC in April 2021, and the push to offer the opportunity of all young people in care the opportunity to have mentoring support there have been 17 new referrals received.

The table below shows the primary factors for referrals, broken down into more specific categories. In most cases, each referral had an additional secondary factor as the reason for the request for mentoring support.

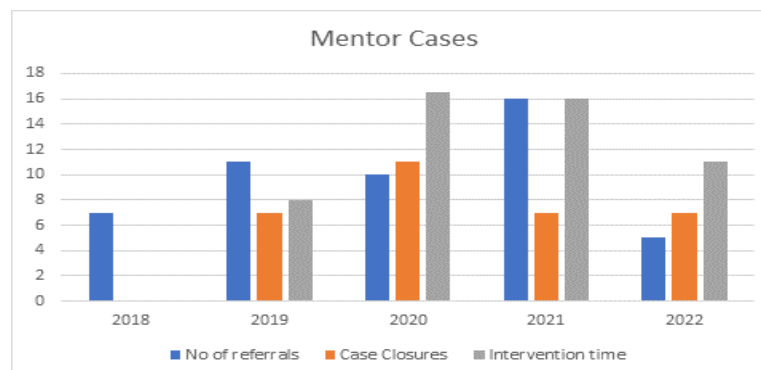
Referral Primary Factor	Secondary factors	Year: 2018	Year: 2019	Year: 2020	Year: 2021	Year 2022
Positive Activities	Engagement Living Skills	1	9	7	13	5
Poor home relationships	Positive Activities				1	
Missing	Behavioural EET engagement	4				
Mental Health	Anxiety Independence			3	1	2
EET	Independence		1			
Exploitation	EET engagement	1				
Behavioural	EET engagement	1				
Anxiety	EET engagement Mental Health		1		1	
Total Referrals		7	11	10	16	7

Once allocated, the young person will work with their mentor to devise a plan of support and to agree achievable SMART targets, with a focus on ensuring that the plan doesn't drift. Mentors use a variety of tools, including music, craft play, safety planning to encourage engagement from the young people and to make support sessions successful in ways which meet the needs of the young people. Support visits are generally once a week, with the frequency agreed with the child or young person and their carers. These are facilitated around the needs of the child or young person and to incorporate any educational needs. The Mentors are extremely flexible in their approach and adjust their working patterns to ensure that young people are supported at times that are suitable to them.



6.2 Case Closures

Since transfer, the service has been reviewing timescales around work completion and case closures and it has identified that often cases have been left open longer than needed. In addition, young people have moved out of city during the support period with mentors, into high costs placements with therapeutic support included. A review of all cases has been undertaken in March 2022 and closures have been made where support work has been completed or drifted. The table below evidences the number of months cases were open.



Of the 7 cases closed during April to December 2021, 5 were closed due to improvements in the behaviour, increase in engagement in education and missing episodes reduced, showing a success rate of 71%. The other 2 that were closed were

due to non-engagement despite many attempts to support the young person to engage.

6.3 Future Plans

There is no doubt that the Mentoring Service is effective and a valuable opportunity of support to our young people. The transfer across into the Supported Accommodation Team has provided an opportunity to review the service and plan to implement improvements whilst continuing to offer the existing service to children and young people in care. In addition, there has been a complete staffing change, which has also provided the opportunity for new eyes to look at how we are operating, streamline the service and ensure that there is a generic pool of resources. In addition, the completion of exit surveys with both the young person and the carer were hit and miss, but the completion of these will be at the forefront of the changes to be implemented. It is crucial that we look to the feedback from our colleagues and our young people to ensure that this service is meeting the needs of those that access the service.

Using the *Mentoring for Looked after Children's Dissemination Manual, Rainer*, we have identified the following areas, to develop/improve:

1. **Young Peoples feedback** – what would they want the service to look like. How will the service ensure young people's feedback informs the development of the service?
2. **Monitoring and evaluation** – how will the effectiveness of the service be ensured and reviewed?
3. **Length of relationships** - how long does this need to be to achieve the objectives of the mentoring intervention?
4. **Target setting** – what are realistic targets for service delivery?

7.0 SUMMARY

The Supported Accommodation Team has grown significantly since its conception in 2015, with 3 new services being devised and developed. We are an ever-evolving service who put the needs of young people at the heart of the services we provide. The pandemic brought its challenges, but all services continued to operate as normal, completing face to face visits throughout, ensuring that young people were supported in their transition to adulthood. All services within the team have made progress with many developments and successful outcomes as outlined above. The team benefits from experienced, young person-centred staff who are willing to adapt, go that extra mile and ensure young people are supported appropriately in their journey. The team also understands the importance of working with partners, both internally and externally to ensure that we offer the best possible support to young people to enable them to achieve their full potential.

Key Achievements

- A success rate of 92% of young people who have moved on from the Housing Support Service into independence are still maintaining their tenancy for more than 6 months.
- Young people in the Housing Support Service have received in total 4207 hours of support during 2021/22.
- During 2021/22 10 young people in the Housing Support Service have successfully completed their ASDAN short course, Living Independently

- 59 young people have had “taster sessions” in our training flats during 2021/2022.
- The House Project became business as usual, offering more placement choice for young people leaving care.
- Group sessions were implemented, young people attended their HP residential, and our young people were finally able to celebrate their success at their Graduation Ceremony
- A continued marketing campaign to recruit hosts, which saw 5 hosts approved during the pandemic.
- We have 33 live Staying Put placements.
- The implementation of Staying Put supervisions, offering more support to our former foster carers.
- Mentoring service referrals have increased, 23 in 2021/22, evidencing the need to provide young people with this opportunity.

Key Objectives 2022/23

- To maintain success rate of above 90% of young people who have moved on from the Housing Support Service into independence are still maintaining their tenancy for more than 6 months.
- To ensure all our internal colleagues are aware of our services and implement regular information sessions, ensuring that young people have greater placement choice and are aware of the services on offer by implementing quarterly accommodation information sessions on the services on offer to young people.
- To implement group sessions for young people accessing the Housing Support Service, to enable a sense of belonging and to develop peer relationships.
- To benchmark and review our current offer within the Housing Support Service, to develop a plan to improve our offer.
- To implement annual reviews for all our Staying Put placements.
- To formulate an improvement plan for our Mentoring Service, ensuring that young people receive an effective, yet efficient service.
- To look at how we can improve our marketing campaign for Supported Lodgings, ensuring we reach the right people.
- To recruit 2 further HOST families
- To continue to support our young people to thrive on their House Project journey by ensuring we reach those at need of it most. We will data capture the following: numbers in future cohorts, attendance levels at group sessions, completion rate of their HP Portfolios and the timescales around moving into independence.
- To work with our SCS and I&P colleagues, capturing business intelligence for management reporting.
- 15 young people to complete their ASDAN short course, Living Independently.
- 15 Staying Put arrangements to be achieved for 2022/23.