



**PLYMOUTH**  
CITY COUNCIL

**Response to the Independent Review of  
Children's Social Care and The Five Missions  
for Care Experienced Children & Young People  
SEPTEMBER 2022**

## The Five Missions are:



1. No young person should leave care without at least two loving relationships, by 2027
2. Double the proportion of care leavers attending university, and particularly high tariff universities, by 2026
3. Create at least 3,500 new well paid jobs and apprenticeships for care leavers each year, by 2026
4. Reduce care experience homelessness now, before ending it entirely
5. To increase the life expectancy of care experienced people, by narrowing health inequalities with the wider population

# I. No young person should leave care without at least two loving relationships



The Care Journeys partnership delivers Links, an integrated co-resourced umbrella for care experienced young people which provides meaningful one-to-one relationships and group work opportunities in a holistic way to address loneliness and isolation:

- **Lifelong Links** will launch in November 2022 and will focus on reconnecting care experienced young people with trusted adults from their childhood who they have lost touch with ensuring that care experienced young people are connected with a positive support network.
- **Mentoring Positive Connectors-** 1:1 mentoring offer matching a care experienced young person with a volunteer with the aim of creating a positive and supportive long term relationship.
- **Group work co-designed by young people** – supporting group identity, reducing loneliness and isolation and promoting social action.
- Monthly social activities are arranged by the Personal Advisors, Care Journeys and Participation Team.
- We are progressing the development of a Care Leavers Centre – the ambition is for a co-designed central place of support and service access away from the corporate office

## 2. Double the proportion of care leavers attending university, and particularly high tariff universities,



- The Care Leavers Team financially supported 22 students attending university in 2021/2022 either at Undergraduate or Masters level. The Local Offer supports young people attending University with three bursaries each academic year totalling £3000 a year.
- In 2021/2022 the Care Leavers Team also financially supported 2 students studying at Masters level, which is additional to the Local Offer.
- In 2021/2022, the Care Leavers Team also financially supported a student who started her higher education after her 25<sup>th</sup> birthday and are providing her second year placement within the permanence service. A further student is being supported in a similar way in 2022/2023.
- The Permanence Service supported a young person care to attend a Psychology summer school at Oxford University in 2021 to support his aspiration to attend Oxford or Cambridge University in 2023.
- The Plymouth City Council Care Leaver Covenant states that we will support at least one staff member per year per Directorate to be trained as a mentor for care experienced young people. We aspire to provide a mentor to all university students who want one.

### 3. Create at least 3,500 new well paid jobs and apprenticeships for care leavers each year



- Plymouth City Council has adopted a 'Whole Council' approach to ensure our 'family business' offers practical, specific support and opportunities across all Directorates to improve outcomes for care experienced people. The commitments set out in the covenant document endorsed by the Chief Executive, Tracey Lee, include:
  - a commitment to all Directorates offering at least one care leaver a paid offer of apprenticeship or employment each year paid at the national living wage
  - Work experience opportunities will be offered by all Directorates.
  - Care experienced young people will be considered for any apprenticeship opportunity they are interested in
- Work is underway to ring-fence a care experienced apprentice post within the Permanence Service and the Targeted Support Service.
- Plymouth City Council has joined the Care Leaver Covenant organisation and will formally launch at the Full Council Meeting in September 2022. This will match care experienced young people with offers made by individuals and businesses.

## 4. Reduce care experience homelessness now, before ending it entirely



- The Joint Housing Protocol has now been signed off and is more robust in the offer to care experienced young people.
- The Plymouth City Council Care Leaver Covenant states that we will not end our homelessness duties to care experienced young people without sign off by a senior manager to be sure that all possible solutions have been pursued. This is now embedded in practice.
- Plymouth Care Leavers are now exempt from or have their council tax paid until the age of 25, whether they live in Plymouth or elsewhere in the UK.
- The Plymouth City Council Care Leaver Covenant also states that care experienced young people will be given priority when it comes to accessing social housing and we will ensure you have choices about where your home is and will work with you to find the home you want. This is our ambition for 2022/2023.
- The 2022 review of the Local Offer will include reviewing the Leaving Care Grant and consideration to a standardised housing starter pack, which should include carpets and white goods and a wi-fi data package.
- We are exploring a Guarantor Scheme to open up private rental options for young people.

## 5. Increase the life expectancy of care experienced people, by narrowing health inequalities with the wider population



- Since April 2022 all care experienced young people aged 18 – 25 have been entitled to a free leisure pass for swimming and gym access at all Plymouth Active Leisure facilities. To date 97 young people have taken up this offer.
- In April 2022 we launched Ask Jan (Rees Foundation) membership for any care leaver aged 18 – 25 if the young person wishes to take the offer. To date 71 young people have taken up this annual membership which includes 24 hour access to telephone counselling, a range of helplines and face to face counselling.
- The Specialist Nurses for Children in Care extend their offer to all care experienced young people up to the age of 25. They are available to meet on a drop in basis every Friday along with Care Journeys colleagues or on an individual basis at request.
- There is ongoing work with health to improve the offer in respect of dental access, free prescriptions, dental care and eye care to care leavers up to 25yrs.