

young people and care leavers

creative
service
solutions 



supporting young people and care leavers

We have over 30 years' experience of supporting young people and care leavers aged between 16 and 25 who, for many reasons, may need extra support.

We currently deliver 18 specialist services for 12 local authorities, supporting over 1200 young people every year make the transition to adulthood and independence.

Some people will come to us directly from care, challenging home environments or even the streets. Whatever their background, we know that with the right support, they can go on to achieve great things. Our services are designed to help improve both the lives *and* life chances of young people who may be vulnerable or leaving care, in support of the government's care leavers strategy.

They provide the support and stability young people need to make progress and help them to access new opportunities and experiences. We help young people to get back on track where there are difficulties and celebrate their successes at every opportunity.

We believe in providing young people with aspirational support, based on their potential not their 'problems'. We encourage them to recognise and build healthy relationships, learn skills or get into work and start identifying and working towards their goals and aspirations. Our new Lifeskills Programme is a key part of this, as we support individuals to build the skills, knowledge and confidence to move onto independent living.

We offer personalised, flexible support, caring, compassionate staff and a strong focus on ambition and aspiration. Across all our services, we're passionate about supporting our young people to fulfill their potential and move onto happy, independent lives.

our service models

We deliver a wide range of young people services including provision for looked after children and care leavers, supported housing, and parent and child schemes. We also have experience of delivering other types of services for young people including foyers, family mediation and respite.

Our broad provision means that we can meet a wide spectrum of need. In some areas, our services also enable us to provide a local pathway for customers leading to greater independence, choice and control.

Across this provision, we offer a number of distinct service models that have been developed to meet commissioner and customer requirements. Each of our models can be applied flexibly and responsively to meet the needs of young people and care leavers.



Service outcome data is drawn from a range of sources over the last twelve months (2016-17) including customer data, internal quality and outcomes monitoring and commissioner reporting.

Looked after children services

We provide looked after children services for 16-18 year olds who have previously been in care. Some of these services accept referrals from Leaving Care and Social Work Teams from across different local authorities and sometimes from all across the country. This means we can support people to build new lives potentially away from unhealthy relationships or gang activity.

Our staff teams work closely with Personal Advisors and Social Workers, take part in joint reviews and support each young person to move towards independent living in line with their individual Pathway Plan.

Ibis House, Newham

Looked after children service

Ibis House in Newham is a 24-hour accommodation-based support service specifically designed for young people leaving care, providing high quality self-contained flats for 15 customers. It can accept referrals from other local authorities which is of particular value to Leaving Care Teams who may lack this type of specialist provision in their own locality. Currently customers at Ibis House come from six different London boroughs.

Customers receive a support package of between five and ten hours of support each week from a highly skilled team of on-site specialist support staff. Support focuses on building strong, positive relationships and establishing independent living skills.

Amber*, Ibis House

Amber was placed into care at a young age due to difficulties at home: her mother had mental health needs and she had experience of domestic abuse.

Amber first came to Ibis House after several placement breakdowns. When she first arrived she had difficulty respecting staff members, and her behaviour was very challenging. Over the last few months this has significantly improved due to:

- The staff team's consistent approach which included setting and communicating clear expectations about acceptable behaviours, tolerances and consequences.
- Flexibility in how staff worked with Amber when she initially didn't want to engage – showing persistence and commitment in how they worked with her and offering her choices.
- Having a Mental Health Specialist Support Worker on-site as part of the staff team who was able to look at the reasons behind Amber's behaviour and support other staff on how best to work with her.

As a result, Amber's behaviour is continuing to improve; she responds more appropriately when she is unhappy and she has successfully maintained her placement. She is now more focused on her future and is taking steps to work towards her career aspirations.

*Name has been changed to protect individual anonymity.

supported housing

Most young people we work with receive support from our supported housing services. This includes hostel, step-down and floating support services.

Most customers start in our accommodation-based (hostel) services and receive support to get back on their feet, access specialist support and move on to their own accommodation. This is usually within two years, often less, and typically in the private rented sector. Some move

on to our step-down and visiting support services where they may live in shared accommodation and receive support from our visiting teams.

We also provide floating support to young people living in a variety of settings such as with friends or relatives. We provide practical support around managing and maintaining a home and support them to feel safe, secure and confident.

Mile End Young People, Tower Hamlets

Supported housing – hostel services and visiting support

Mile End Young People provide support for 63 young people with medium to high support needs. The service provides a pathway to progress within the service, from one of the four accommodation-based sites to the linked visiting or floating support services.

Most customers stay with the service for up to a year and move on to step-down services, independent accommodation, social housing or shared accommodation.

The service has a specialist ETE Coordinator who is responsible for working with customers who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) to help them find suitable opportunities. They help with CVs and interviews, and have links with external agencies providing opportunities for customers.

Recent **service outcomes** include:

- **75% customers** move on within 18 months to independent accommodation.
- **Six customers** who had issues with self-harm were supported to link in with health services and specialist local charities. All of them have now managed their self-harming.
- In accommodation-based sites, out of 41 customers, **16** are in education or training, **two** are completing apprenticeships, and **three** are employed.
- **A customer** is studying law at university and was supported through ETE sessions to create a law-specific CV, apply for jobs and consider extra-curricular activities.





Southwark Young People Floating Support

Supported housing – floating support

This service provides floating support for 107 young people at risk and care leavers aged 16-25. It also supports young mothers with children under two years of age. Customers are referred by external agencies, social services, ETE organisations, and the service also accepts self-referrals.

Customers may be living in their first tenancy, with friends or relatives, or may be sofa-surfing due to family breakdown. They are seen at least once a month and often more depending on their individual circumstances, and stay with the service on average for two years.

During their time in the service, young people are supported to gain and develop their skills so that they can find alternative accommodation (where appropriate), live independently and engage in meaningful occupation.

The staff offer personalised support where the customer can choose their Support Worker, where and when to meet, and what goals they want to work towards.

Recent **service outcomes** include:

- **49 customers** are currently in ETE, from volunteering in the community to studying full-time at university.
- **A customer** was supported to apply to university, and claim student finance and extra support for care leavers. He is now studying film production full-time.
- **A customer** is currently completing a work placement at St Thomas' Hospital, London.

parent and child services

Are you looking for a service which offers support for women from pregnancy to parenthood? Our teams help each young parent to meet the practical and emotional challenges of raising a child, establish support networks and build healthy relationships that benefit the whole family.



Summerfield House, Barking and Dagenham Parent and child service

Summerfield House supports 24 single women between the age of 16-25 who are pregnant, or have recently had a child. It is an accommodation-based service, providing high quality self-contained flats. The service usually works with young mothers for up to two years, supporting them to live independently and provide a stable and supportive home environment for their family.

Customers have a variety of different support needs, but most are first-time mothers living away from their own family for the first time.

Many of our young families have also experienced domestic abuse and mental health needs at some point. The service employs a Specialist Mental Health Worker, who alongside other professionals, facilitates domestic violence prevention sessions on site to support customers to maintain healthy relationships.

Recent **service outcomes** include:

- **15 customers** completed a six-week health and wellbeing programme focused on healthy relationships, recognising domestic abuse and emotional wellbeing.
- **A number** of the customers that have completed this programme are now volunteering at a local women's service to share their knowledge and experiences with others.
- **100% customers** were supported to move on from the service in a planned way.



features of our service models

Each of our innovative service models shares a number of key features; these are integral to our approach and our young people and care leavers' offer.



OUR LIFESKILLS PROGRAMME

Co-developed by staff and customers, our Lifeskills Programme has been designed to strengthen and support our offer to young people and care leavers, encouraging independence, confidence and resilience. It aims to give young people the life skills they need to live independently when they leave us.

Mapped to the government's care leavers strategy, it focuses on building practical skills and confidence in the different areas professionals look at when assessing a young people's ability to live independently.

Customers are supported to 'learn, do, reflect' as they work through 54 different modules increasing in difficulty as they progress to bronze, silver and gold certification. Customers can rate their own progress and evidence their achievements with both Look Ahead staff and their Leaving Care Team.

This is a core part of the support offered across our young people's services and a key way we engage with these customers.

EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT

Across all our young people's services, we have a strong focus on supporting individuals into appropriate ETE.

We do this in a variety of ways including through specialist support, partnership working and signposting to local services, apprenticeships and education providers. Some services have specialist ETE Coordinators who work with the staff

team to support customers to access and crucially maintain involvement with ETE through applying for jobs, CV writing and interviewing, and ongoing support to maintain placements.



INTEGRATED SERVICES DELIVERED IN PARTNERSHIP

Across all our young people's provision, we adopt a Team Around the Child (TAC) approach, working closely with Social Services, Leaving Care Teams, Housing Options and each young person's Personal Advisor. This ensures all agencies work together in a consistent, integrated way to deliver the best possible support and outcomes for each young person.

We also work with a range of local agencies to meet specialist need, improve customers' health and wellbeing and widen opportunities. These partnerships ensure a wrap-around approach for some of our most vulnerable young people.

BESPOKE PROPERTY SOLUTIONS



As a housing association and registered social landlord, we can offer commissioners bespoke property solutions alongside our care and support offer.

With over 2500 units, we have an extensive property portfolio, across almost 30 local authorities in London and the South East. This means we can offer commissioners a wide range of different property types and accommodation models depending on their needs and requirements.

Our Ibis House service for young people leaving care has been converted from an existing Look Ahead property that was previously redundant. Bringing the building back into use, the accommodation has been refurbished and now provides 15 high quality self-contained flats and communal spaces.

If you are looking for a property solution that is not currently available through our existing provision, we can still help. We have both the ability to invest capital and extensive networks and experience in this area. This means we can quickly source and develop quality accommodation, supporting you to meet local demand whilst reducing your high unit costs.

SAFE SERVICES THAT EFFECTIVELY MANAGE RISK AND BALANCE CUSTOMER FREEDOM

We adopt a positive risk taking approach across our services to support our young people to safeguard themselves from unhealthy relationships, gang activity, and child sexual exploitation, whilst also supporting their own independence. We work closely with local safeguarding teams and specialist agencies to achieve this.

Our 'See Think Act' approach, adapted from NHS guidelines for relational security, is also key to our approach.

As part of this, we train our staff to recognise and understand the relationships an individual has with their environment and the people around them, and how this translates into how they work with our young people. Through training and resources, managers embed the 'See Think Act' approach into local service delivery in our young people's services through team meetings, reflective practice, staff supervision and debriefings.

EXPERIENCED, SKILLED AND COMPASSIONATE STAFF

We know our people can and do make all the difference so we actively recruit experienced, qualified and compassionate support staff. They share our values and are deeply committed to working in genuine partnership with our customers and their families.

Staff are trained to Care Certificate standards, and in addition to our core safeguarding, risk management and support planning training, receive a wide range of expert training to build expertise in areas as diverse as child protection, emotional intelligence and mental health needs.

We also have considerable experience of quickly recruiting, developing and mobilising staff in response to emerging population and community needs or commissioner requirements.



If you would like to work with us to develop tailored solutions specific to the particular needs and challenges you face, please do not hesitate to get in touch.



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