

# Preventing Homelessness and Promoting Independence: A Positive Pathway to Adulthood

## Guidance and Good Practice

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.  
This document is also available in Welsh.

# **Preventing Homelessness and Promoting Independence: A Positive Pathway to Adulthood**

## **Guidance and Good Practice**

### ***Supporting young people on their journey to economic independence and success through housing advice, options and homelessness prevention***

In drawing up the Welsh 'Positive Pathway' framework the Welsh Government has consulted with a wide range of local authorities, homelessness agencies, housing associations and the Welsh Local Government Association. In addition, we have consulted with young people through Cymorth Cymru. We want to thank everyone for their help. Their combined advice, sharing of expertise and positive support has been very informative and helped to shape this document.

The framework within this document promotes a 'positive pathway' to adulthood. It is based on the 'Positive Pathway' that St Basils, a youth homelessness agency in England has developed, with the advice and support of other agencies, young people and the Department for Communities and Local Government. We would like to thank St Basils for giving us their permission to adapt the England version.

Alongside this 'Positive Pathway' document, there is a 'sister' version which Barnardo's have developed specifically for young people leaving care in Wales. The 'Care Leaver Accommodation and Support framework' can be found here:

Contained in this document are examples of what is reported to be working well and some examples of innovative service delivery. It should be noted that across Wales there are many other examples - often characterised by partnership working between local authorities, housing associations, the third sector and other public bodies.

Alongside this 'Positive Pathway' document, there is a 'sister' version which Barnardo's have developed specifically for young people leaving care in Wales. The 'Care Leaver Accommodation and Support framework' can be found here:

[http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/barnardos\\_today/wales/wales\\_policy/cym\\_policy\\_research\\_publications.htm](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/barnardos_today/wales/wales_policy/cym_policy_research_publications.htm)

## **Contents**

<b>1) Introduction</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
<b>2) Diagram of the framework</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>3) The picture in 2016</b>	<b>Page 10</b>
<b>4) A Positive Pathway for young people in Wales</b>	<b>Page 13</b>
<b>5) From the crisis response to planning for transitions</b>	<b>Page 15</b>
<b>6) Young people with multiple and complex needs</b>	<b>Page 17</b>
<b>7) Joint planning, joint commissioning and joint working</b>	<b>Page 18</b>
<b>8) Assumptions that underpin the framework</b>	<b>Page 19</b>
<b>9) The underpinning features of a Positive Pathway approach</b>	<b>Page 21</b>
<b>10) The 5 elements of the Positive Pathway framework</b>	<b>Page 22</b>
<b>10.1 Information and advice for young people and families</b>	<b>Page 22</b>
<b>10.2 Early Help</b>	<b>Page 26</b>
<b>10.3 Integrated response &amp; gateway to commissioned accommodation &amp; support</b>	<b>Page 32</b>
<b>10.4 Commissioned accommodation &amp; support services</b>	<b>Page 43</b>
<b>10.5 A range of housing options</b>	<b>Page 53</b>
<b>Appendix One: Childhood experience of adults with Multiple Exclusion</b>	<b>Page 59</b>
<b>Appendix Two: Suggested approach for ending the use of Bed and Breakfast</b>	<b>Page 61</b>
<b>Appendix Three: Example of an Outcomes Framework</b>	<b>Page 64</b>

## 1. Introduction

The 'Positive Pathway' is a flexible framework for local authorities and their partners to use to provide a planned approach to homelessness prevention and housing options for young people. It aims to help public service commissioners and providers of services work together in planning and delivering services for young people. The pathway has been developed recognising that safe, decent and affordable housing underpins achievement of other positive outcomes - whether these relate to education, training, employment, health, or safer communities.

The 'Positive Pathway' framework does not look at housing and homelessness in isolation. Its aim is to assist joint planning, commissioning and delivery of services across Housing, Childrens Services and wider portfolios to achieve outcomes across a range of domains for some of the most vulnerable groups of young people in Wales.

In 2016 the Welsh Government commissioned a project with the aim of developing youth housing options, pathways and homelessness prevention for young people. This 'Positive Pathway' framework is part of that project and the document has been developed through a combination of learning from what works well already, research, consultation, thinking about how to best respond to changes in policy and current practice in Wales and the UK.

There has been significant progress in Wales to improve homelessness prevention, including the introduction of new legislation in 2015 which placed a statutory duty on local authorities to both prevent and relieve homelessness for all households in Wales<sup>1</sup>.

Alongside this, the new Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014<sup>2</sup> has introduced some changes relating to entitlements for young people leaving care and other groups of vulnerable young people, as well as a general duty around the local provision of information, advice and assistance for both children and adults. The Act also places the duty on a person exercising functions in relation to a child to have due regard to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).<sup>3</sup> Decisions made, for example, regarding the provision of services or the allocation of resources therefore need to take into account the rights of all young people under the age of 18.

On the ground, local authorities, other public sector agencies, housing associations and third sector agencies continue to work together to provide services to vulnerable young people at risk of homelessness. There are significant challenges facing young people, families and the services that support them. In light of this, some local areas are reviewing and reshaping local services for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds who, at the point of transition to adulthood, need advice and support, not just around accommodation options, but other elements of their lives as they become more independent.

In every area there are some young people with complex lives who need additional support to make a successful transition to adulthood. But others have a straightforward housing need which, if not addressed, could 'tip into' homelessness and all the difficulties that can

---

<sup>1</sup> The Housing Act (Wales) 2014 places a duty on local authorities to prevent and/or relieve homelessness amongst all households who are 'eligible'. See Part 2 of the Act here: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2014/7/contents/enacted>

<sup>2</sup> For more detail on the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014 see:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2014/4/contents/enacted>

<sup>3</sup> Section 7(2) Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

present. Local authorities, education and training agencies, local NHS services, the National Probation Service and Wales Community Rehabilitation Company can all have a part to play in improving local responses if longer term costs are to be avoided and improved outcomes achieved.

The principles and rationale underpinning the 'Positive Pathway' framework resonate with and support the aspiration and practical application of the Well Being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015.<sup>4</sup>

The 5 well being principles of the Well Being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 can be usefully applied to the Positive Pathway approach.

**Long Term** - *The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.*

**Prevention** - *How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.*

**Integration** - *Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.*

**Collaboration** - *Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.*

**Involvement** - *The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves<sup>5</sup>.*

In practice locally this means:

- A focus on successful outcomes for young people - many of whom have multiple and complex needs across a range of areas of their lives;
- Organising services around young people's journeys and what they say makes the difference;
- An integrated approach from planning and commissioning through to service delivery;
- What already works well – and recognising the challenges ahead;
- Systems thinking - how to prevent homelessness and plan more effectively together;
- Involving young people in service improvement and development; and
- Sharing of data for analysis and planning and better use of technology.

---

<sup>4</sup> For more information about The Well-Being of Future Generations Act 2015 see:  
<http://thewaleswewant.co.uk/about/well-being-future-generations-wales-act-2015/well-being-future-generations-wales-act-2015>

<sup>5</sup> For more information about the Well Being Of Future Generations Act ( Wales) 2015 please see:  
<http://thewaleswewant.co.uk/about>

There are some positive policy shifts in Wales around homelessness prevention. New duties to prevent and relieve homelessness brought in by the Welsh Government in April 2015 are reported to be having a significant impact and are being heralded as leading the way in the UK<sup>6</sup>. That is not to say that there are not some inevitable 'bedding in' issues and early learning, but overall this move is viewed as very positive and in particular it is giving more prevention and relief options to single homeless people.

The thinking for this Welsh 'Positive Pathway' framework has been shaped by the overall direction of travel of UK and Welsh Government policy, in terms of the challenges and opportunities, even though the details of some welfare reforms have yet to be developed. As employment becomes even more important to young people's ability to secure accommodation outside the family home the risk of young people finding themselves staying in unsafe places may increase<sup>7</sup>. Local partnerships will increasingly need to identify and help safeguard young people at risk and to provide effective support for progression into learning and work alongside housing support. In so doing, partners will be working together on delivering common outcomes. For example, in terms of increasing employability, the needs and barriers faced by an individual (as well as their assets and resources) can be considered holistically, where partners and services are working together to increase an individual's chances of securing and remaining in employment. There are real opportunities to do this in Wales by better aligning commissioning, services and programmes, across Housing and Social Services.

The 'Positive Pathway' framework is about moving from a 'deficit' response where the housing needs of young people are often only addressed when a young person is in the throes of a homelessness crisis, to a much more pro-active, early intervention housing options based approach. This is not about encouraging young people to leave home at an early age. It's about giving parents and young people the relevant and realistic information they need to come to their own decisions. Evidence shows that young people are staying at home longer where this is an option. Understanding what the housing options are in each area and being able to plan for the future is important for all young people and their families. Identifying gaps in supply and meeting the needs of those who have no option to remain at home is a key role for public authorities and local housing providers.

The Positive Pathway framework outlined within the document proposes a universal offer of local access to information and advice for young people and their families or carers to help them understand the realistic housing options available locally and to inform decisions they make. For those at risk of homelessness or unable to meet their housing needs through their own resources and networks there is a need to advise, assist and provide access to planned options at an early stage before crises emerge. For those facing homelessness there is an integrated service response, with access to a range of supported housing options via a targeted and integrated service gateway if needed.

Each element of the framework provides an opportunity for local authorities and their partners to examine and analyse data about who will require targeted or responsive

---

<sup>6</sup> See the Crisis Monitor Wales Report 2015

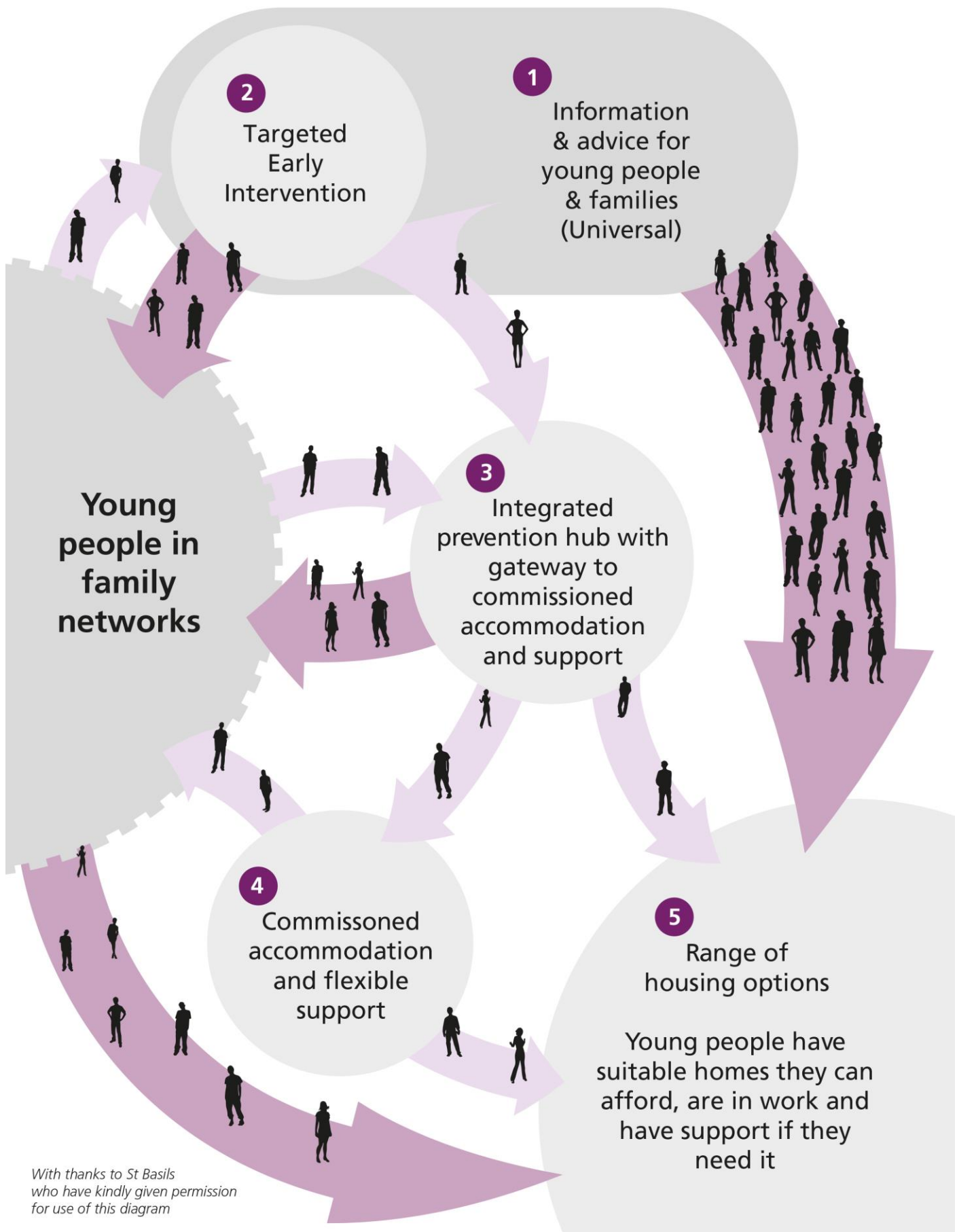
[http://www.crisis.org.uk/data/files/publications/HomelessnessMonitorWales2015\\_final.pdf](http://www.crisis.org.uk/data/files/publications/HomelessnessMonitorWales2015_final.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> See the 2016 Depaul UK report on hidden homelessness amongst young people:

<https://uk.depaulcharity.org/sites/default/files/Depaul-UK-Report-Danger-Zones-and-Stepping-Stones-April-2016.pdf>

services, what is the most effective method of delivery locally, how to improve primary and secondary prevention of homelessness and enable more families and young people to take advantage of universal options. This is an iterative process that benefits from a cycle of monitoring, analysis, review and revision underpinned by clarity about intended outcomes.

# Positive Pathway Model



## **Positive Pathway Framework: The 5 Service Areas**

### **1. Information and advice for all young people and families**

The Service: Timely, accurate information and advice about local housing options available to everyone, delivered in a range of ways including web-based information and through schools to reach young people, families and professionals.

Desired results:

- Young people and families are empowered to plan transitions to independent living without support from specialist services.
- They understand the links between housing choice and their financial and employment situation.
- They know where to get help if they need it.

### **2. Targeted early intervention**

The Service: Early intervention is targeted to reach households where young people are most likely to be at risk of homelessness. Delivery involving all local services working with young people and families at risk, e.g. Families First, Intensive Family Support Services (IFSS), Youth Services and Youth Offending/Justice Services. The provision of information, advice, assistance and the assessment of any care and support needs as required.

Desired Results:

- Prevention and protection - young people stay in the family network where possible, are safe and are supported to make planned moves if they need to move out.

### **3. Integrated response ('hub' or 'virtual hub') and gateway to commissioned accommodation and support**

The Service: Led by the Housing Authority and Children's Services, an integrated service for young people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or need help with planned transitions to independence. Housing options and homelessness prevention services come together, often co-located, with other services including support for pathways into learning and work. This is underpinned by information, advice and assistance and the assessment of any care and support as well as housing needs. Includes a needs driven 'gateway' into commissioned supported accommodation and flexible floating support services.

This is a key data collection point which will inform on-going development of the local pathway.

Desired Results:

- Homelessness is prevented wherever possible, for example by supporting young people to stay in their family network or preventing the loss of a tenancy.
- Young people who need accommodation and/or support get it, including quick access suitable emergency accommodation and immediate and on-going support where needed.
- Young people's accommodation and support underpins rather than disrupts their pathways in to learning and work.

### **4. Commissioned accommodation and support**

The Service: A range of accommodation and support options designed for younger and more vulnerable young people. Aligned to these options are local training and employment programmes.

Accommodation and support is linked together in some options, for example: supported accommodation schemes, supported lodgings, post 18 living arrangements under Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 “When I am ready” and Housing First. Flexible outreach support is also available to support young people wherever they live (including in the family home) and if it’s needed, it sticks with them when they move.

Desired Results:

- Young people gain the stability and skills they need, engage with learning, training and work and move on to greater independence.

## **5. Range of Housing Options**

The Service: A range of safe, decent, affordable housing options, shared and self-contained, in the private and social housing sectors. The local offer will be shaped according to the local housing market and outlined in local housing strategies, using partnerships if needed to create options for young people starting out on low incomes. This may include creative approaches such as partnerships with learning providers, employers and employment services to link the provision of accommodation to opportunities for learning and work. Promote access to flexible outreach/floating support in case young people need it.

Desired Results:

Young people are economically active and have suitable homes that they can afford - they can build for their future.

### 3. The picture in 2016

In the current housing market, young people face greater economic disadvantage than any other group; their incomes are often low as they continue education and/or start out in work; they lack experience in finding and sustaining accommodation and are more likely to experience discrimination by landlords due to age-associated perceptions about a range of risks as prospective tenants.

Overall housing patterns amongst young people have shifted significantly over the last decade. Firstly, more young people are remaining in the parental home for longer, or returning back to the parental home<sup>8</sup>.

In addition to this, private rented accommodation as a tenure type for all age groups and household types in Wales has increase by 100% in 10 years.

Social housing tenure as a housing option for under 25s is estimated to have reduced for under 25 year olds by around 23%, and owner occupation has declined by 37%<sup>9</sup>. These patterns are not expected to change in the foreseeable future<sup>10</sup>, although there are some policy changes to support owner occupation amongst first time buyers.

On the supply side, leading housing and homelessness agencies<sup>11</sup> are continuing to monitor the impact of welfare reform since 2011, in particular a range of changes to levels of Housing Benefit<sup>12</sup> which has further diminished the supply of affordable housing in the private rented sector available to young people on low incomes.

In some areas of Wales, it is reported by local authorities that there are very few opportunities for young people on low incomes to access the private rented sector. The Shared Accommodation Rate combined with reductions to the level of housing benefit payable locally is anecdotally reported to be having an adverse impact on the availability of private rented accommodation, and in particular on the under 25 year old group, who are reported to be being displaced out of the market by the 26-35 year old group and other young people in employment but not yet able to get a mortgage. Overall, the proportion of people living in poverty who are in the private rented sector is increasing (New Policy Institute / JRF / Households Below Average Income Data for Wales).

Within the overall 16–24 cohort are a group of young people who have been identified by housing academics as having ‘chaotic’ housing pathways, in part identified through their experience of homelessness. By 2020 this group is predicted to include 81,000 18–24 year

---

<sup>8</sup> See: <http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/families/bulletins/familiesandhouseholds/2015-11-05#young-adults-living-with-their-parents>

<sup>9</sup> See D Quilgars and J Rugg in Youth and Policy May 2015: <http://www.youthandpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/rugg-quilgars-young-people-and-housing1.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> See David Clapham et al, Cardiff University and Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2012 [http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/young-people-housing-options-full\\_0.pdf](http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/young-people-housing-options-full_0.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> For example, Shelter Cymru, Cymorth Cymru and Community Housing Cymru

<sup>12</sup> The main changes are: the Shared Accommodation Rate, which limits the amount of housing benefit payable for private rented accommodation to a room in a shared house and has been extended from under 25s age group to under 35s; the level at which local housing allowance is determined having moved from the 50<sup>th</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup> percentile, reducing the number of affordable properties/rooms available to those in receipt of Housing Benefit in any local area; and in social housing, the under occupation rules from April 2013 leading to a reduction in the amount of available single person accommodation as people downsize from larger properties.

olds across the UK<sup>13</sup> who are unable to access long term settled accommodation and will be living in the bottom end of the private rented sector, experiencing difficulty in maintaining their tenancies. Imminent welfare reforms impacting on young people are likely to exacerbate this position. Beyond homelessness prevention and small-scale initiatives in local areas, there is an absence of coherent pro-active housing policy for this group.

In terms of numbers, based on statutory reporting of homeless, there was a significant reduction in acceptances of 16/17 year olds between 2011/12 and 2014/15. Acceptances in this group fell from 460 in 2011/12 to 200 in 2014/15. This reduction is in part due to improved joint prevention work between Housing Authorities and Children's Services, but is also in part explained by an increase in young people aged 16/17 becoming looked after as a result of homelessness.<sup>14</sup>

Amongst care leavers and other vulnerable young people 18 – 21 the position over the same 4 years of reporting has remained pretty steady, with 130 acceptances within this group in 2014/15.

Statutory data does not capture the more difficult to measure elements of youth homelessness. 'Hidden' homelessness includes over-crowding, squatting or staying at friends/acquaintances on a casual, very temporary basis, often called 'sofa surfing'. Within these types of arrangements and settings the levels of risk young people can be exposed to can be very high, including sexual and criminal exploitation<sup>15</sup>.

Rough sleeping can be more visible than other forms of hidden homelessness. It is generally recognised that rough sleeping patterns amongst young people are different than older adults and instances of rough sleeping tend to be for shorter periods of time. Young people are more likely to try to make use of their social networks to avoid rough sleeping. The extent of rough sleeping amongst young people in Wales is not known, as there is no age based counting of rough sleeping<sup>16</sup>.

Under 25s are 3 times more likely to be homeless than their adult counterparts<sup>17</sup> and some welfare reform changes outlined earlier in this document are widely predicted to increase homelessness amongst this age group. The diminishing levels of affordable 'move on' housing for single young people mean there is likely to be an increase in young people remaining for long periods in relatively high cost supported accommodation, because they have nowhere to move on to. The position is worsening due to welfare reform changes since 2010 which are recognised nationally as impacting most negatively on under 25 year olds.

---

<sup>13</sup> See David Clapham et al, Cardiff University and Joseph Rowntree Foundation 2012  
[http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/young-people-housing-options-full\\_0.pdf](http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/young-people-housing-options-full_0.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> The G v Southwark ruling 2009 clarified that children's law takes precedence over housing law in the case of homeless 16/17 year olds. In 2010/11 in Wales there were 119 new admissions into care of 16/17 year olds, but by 2013/14 the numbers had risen to 242 young people, in effect a doubling of this age group. It should be noted though that not all of these young people will be looked after due to homelessness (e.g. some may be looked after through remand status, safeguarding or being an unaccompanied child seeking asylum).

<sup>15</sup> See the 2016 Depaul UK report on hidden homelessness amongst young people:  
<https://uk.depaulcharity.org/sites/default/files/Depaul-UK-Report-Danger-Zones-and-Stepping-Stones-April-2016.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> See Beth Watts, Heriot Watt University - OVO report on UK youth homelessness 2015, page 57  
<https://ihurerblog.files.wordpress.com/2015/11/youth-homelessness-in-the-uk.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> See Beth Watts report, as above

The Job Seekers Allowance level for under 25s, fixed until 2020, has been described as being at ‘sub destitution’ level<sup>18</sup> and combined with other Government policy, gives those under 25s with no family option to fall back on, very few affordable options. This combined with the paucity of supply of one-bed social housing in many areas of Wales and lack of shared private rented accommodation that is affordable on housing benefit reduce options. It remains to be seen how housing associations square the circle of providing housing for those under 35’s whose housing benefit will be limited to the Shared Accommodation Rate, which is, in many cases, well below current housing association rents.

This position is likely to result in more “silt up” of supported accommodation, increasing the risk of some local authorities placing young people into bed and breakfast accommodation, which is always deemed to be unsuitable.

From both practical and policy perspectives, where young people who are not able to stay at home or with former foster carers/residential care would realistically go and the knotty interplay between legislation on welfare, homelessness, housing and young people has yet to be detailed.

In spite of all the challenges and pressures, the changes locally and nationally, and the unknowns ahead, there are many positives to draw on. There is new legislation on homelessness which although at an early stage has significant potential to reduce risks of homelessness amongst young people. There is a new duty within the Social Services and Well-Being Act (Wales) 2014 enabling many young people to stay with foster carers beyond their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. All over Wales there are examples of innovation, ‘join up’ between agencies and a focus on improving prevention of youth homelessness. More so than ever before we will need to draw on what works well and collaborate to keep young people out of homelessness and moving forward positively.

---

<sup>18</sup> See 2016 report by Joseph Rowntree Foundation: *Destitution in the UK* by Suzanne Fitzpatrick, Glen Bramley, Filip Sosenko, Janice Blenkinsopp, Sarah Johnsen, Mandy Littlewood, Gina Netto and Beth Watts  
<https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/destitution-uk>

#### 4. A Positive Pathway for young people in Wales

Three key drivers have shaped the development of the 'Positive Pathway' framework in Wales. The first and second relate to 'what' needs to change and the third is more of a 'how to change' driver.

Firstly, the new homelessness legislation is an opportunity to tackle the systems for addressing housing need amongst young people, and the legislation can be a vehicle for bringing about cultural and behavioural changes within organisations and communities over time. Alongside this, the new duty within the Social Services and Well-Being Act (Wales) 2014 to provide IAA (Information, Advice and Assistance) at an early point is also a change in focus from crisis to earlier, lower level provision of services.

Secondly, many local authorities and provider organisations report - again anecdotally - that there is a higher proportion of young people with complex or multiple needs becoming homeless or leaving care. Many young people have at least one or more of the following: offending behaviour; mental health problems; substance misuse; homelessness<sup>19</sup>. The support needed for this group to make a positive transition to adulthood is much more intensive than most Supporting People commissioned services are able to offer, but how can services be better developed for this group given the pressures on local authority and wider public sector budgets?

So the third question is a pragmatic one - 'how' to make changes? Joint planning and joint commissioning to achieve improvements and savings are arguably more critical than ever before.

A set of shared local outcomes is the starting place for joint working. It must be recognised that there is already a Supporting People Programme outcomes framework, but for the 'Positive Pathway', which is broader than supported housing, outcomes need to be more specifically about young people and transition to adulthood, with a focus on other elements or stages of the 'Positive Pathway', such as prevention activity and move on.

In the last part of this document and Appendix 3 we suggest some possible outcomes in more detail, which link to some of the National Indicators for Wales<sup>20</sup>. From the outset our thinking is framed around the overarching outcome of young people being economically active. This underpins all other desired outcomes for young people. Financially independent young people who are in employment are more likely to:

- be healthy, both physically and emotionally
- have positive relationships
- stay safe and not be involved in criminal or anti-social behaviour
- be involved in meaningful, enjoyable activities
- make a positive contribution to their local community.

---

<sup>19</sup> There is no commonly accepted definition complex/multiple needs, but we would suggest the taking the definition as outlined on page 12 of the Hard Edges Mapping 2015 report, see : <http://lankellychase.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Hard-Edges-Mapping-SMD-2015.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> See here for the set of 46 National Indicators for Wales: <http://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/160316-national-indicators-to-be-laid-before-nafw-en.pdf>

Housing and financial security go hand in hand. Without a decent, safe place to live, it is almost impossible to get ready for the world of work or hold down a job. Without financial security, young people have little prospect of living in decent, safe accommodation as young adults.

The approach to housing and young people described in the guidance is reflective of the good practice examples across Wales – and encourages a more positive and universal offer that can help more young people and their families avoid crisis and take more control over their pathways to independence. These three drivers and the changes needed are considered in more detail below.

## 5. From the crisis response to planning for transitions

### Housing advice and options work

Through all of the shared learning, consultation and projecting ahead there is a clear message that we need to move beyond what is seen as a “deficit/crisis” approach to meeting young people’s accommodation and support needs.

Many young people try to resolve their housing problems and homelessness before they come to the local authority for help<sup>21</sup>. This suggests there is likely to be a greater opportunity for successful resolution of housing need and homelessness if young people are encouraged to seek information, advice and assistance, including support with homelessness prevention much earlier.

A more universal housing advice and options approach is required. This would mean that planners, housing strategists and providers would need to develop a broader, more appropriate universal but very much local housing ‘offer’ for young people which encourages aspiration and employment alongside planning of housing pathways.

### Planning of housing options and opening up of supply

Safe, decent and affordable housing is a vital foundation stone for young people as they become young economically active adults. However, young peoples’ routes to finding their own independent housing are getting more complex, taking longer and getting harder to navigate<sup>22</sup>. Local authorities also report that young people’s expectations of their housing outcome – usually a flat of their own – are not based on the local reality of availability or affordability.

Young people progress through all sorts of different situations; staying with parents, extended family or foster carers; living with friends; moving in with a partner; going off to university or college; living in supported accommodation; sharing in private rented accommodation; taking out a mortgage or living in social housing.

In terms of supply of housing the picture is very varied across Wales. In some areas social housing is more readily available and can be accessed by some groups through additional preference in the local authority’s Allocations Scheme - for example, young people leaving care and young people who are ready to move on from supported accommodation. In many areas there is an acute shortage of one-bed social housing<sup>23</sup> but some availability for those on low incomes to share in the private rented sector. In some local authorities there is a shortage of both social housing and very limited private rented accommodation for young people on low incomes.

---

<sup>21</sup> See: Suzanne Fitzpatrick and N Pleace et al, *Statutory Homelessness in England: The experience of families and 16-17 year olds*, DCLG, 2008 and also see Centrepoin’s 2015 report, ‘Out of Reach: Young People’s Experience of Rough Sleeping and Sofa Surfing’

<sup>22</sup> See D Quilgars and J Rugg in Youth and Policy May 2015: <http://www.youthandpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/rugg-quilgars-young-people-and-housing1.pdf>

<sup>23</sup> One bed social housing that is ‘general needs’ housing and is available to young people - i.e. not designated for older people through local lettings policies

As a result of the factors above there are reports of increased 'silting up' in supported accommodation, with young people ready to move on but with no offer of settled accommodation.

Some local authorities have commissioned more 'step down' accommodation - which is another short-term 'progression' option within the supported housing set of options locally, usually attached to an existing accommodation scheme, as a final step before a young person has their own independent tenancy. The use of the private rented sector as a move on option is increasingly prevalent,<sup>24</sup> usually resulting in young people sharing with others. There are some examples of shared social housing for young people in Wales, but this is not an option which has been developed in most areas. But with the backdrop of social rents being capped to the Local Housing Allowance rates, this must now be an option that needs to be promoted.<sup>25</sup> This option is not an answer by itself but it can be one of the options locally. This option can maximise the use of larger void stock, but it does require pro-active development by social landlords in the absence of affordable and decent alternatives.

Re-thinking a universal offer to young people regarding housing options makes good strategic sense. But it does mean that those working on housing strategy, planning, allocations, access to the private rented sector and employment strategies will need to be part of the discussion and planning to develop supply options locally. There are a number of innovative schemes and useful learning from pilots on young people sharing<sup>26</sup> to assist thinking. Examples of these are outlined later, in the description of the final element of the 'Positive Pathway'. A recent report commissioned by Community Housing Cymru and the Welsh Local Government Association<sup>27</sup> to identify affordable housing options for single under 35 year olds, subject to the Shared Accommodation Rate, is a helpful 'think-piece' for social landlords and should assist in informing housing options planning in Wales.

---

<sup>24</sup> See <http://ppi.w.org.uk/ppiw-report-publication-the-potential-role-of-the-private-rented-sector-in-wales/> and see page 6 of D Quilgars and J Rugg in Youth and Policy May 2015: <http://www.youthandpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/rugg-quilgars-young-people-and-housing1.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> See Anna Clarke and Andrew Heywood, *Feasibility Study on the Prospect of Developing a Viable Housing Model for those entitled only to access the Shared Accommodation Rate*, Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research, University of Cambridge, June 2016 <http://chcymru.org.uk/en/view-news/chc-and-wlga-viable-housing-model-research>

<sup>26</sup> See Crisis toolkits on opening up access to the Private Rented sector for young people: <http://www.crisis.org.uk/data/files/publications/PRS%20Youth%20Homelessness%20Toolkit.pdf> and their evaluation and toolkit from the 'Sharing Solutions' programme: see <http://www.crisis.org.uk/pages/sharing-solutions-programme.html>

<sup>27</sup> See Anna Clarke and Andrew Heywood, *Feasibility Study on the Prospect of Developing a Viable Housing Model for those entitled only to access the Shared Accommodation Rate*, Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research, University of Cambridge, June 2016 <http://chcymru.org.uk/en/view-news/chc-and-wlga-viable-housing-model-research>

## 6. Young people with multiple and complex needs

Homelessness at a young age is not usually just about lack of accommodation. The underlying causes often stem back to much earlier problems or factors in childhood. In a recent piece of significant national research<sup>28</sup> from England, which maps severe and multiple disadvantage (defined as homelessness, involvement in the criminal justice system and substance misuse) **25%** of adults interviewed with the most acute form of severe and multiple disadvantage were aged **18–25**.

The research highlights the links between severe multiple disadvantage and childhood trauma, including abuse (sexual, physical, emotional and neglect), living with violence and substance misuse in the family home, running away from home, a parent with mental health problems, family homelessness, being in care and youth homelessness. 85% of all those interviewed had a range of these experiences. Other factors such as not going to school and school exclusion, involvement in the criminal justice system at a young age and mental health problems underpin the childhoods of many in this group. Please see Appendix 1 for a useful outline of life experiences of those experiencing long term multiple exclusion - this is UK wide research from 2013<sup>29</sup>.

This group are the young people that all parts of the public sector acknowledge are the hardest to assist in achieving different positive outcomes - for example in physical and mental health, education, training and employment, community safety. Positive outcomes for this group are possible but this requires an approach which is additional to the level of support usually commissioned through the Supporting People Programme. The right help at the right time can transform these young people's lives – but a different way of thinking about delivering support is needed.

Most commissioners and providers in local areas would agree that there is a mismatch between the needs of this group and the available services locally. This is not only about preventing homelessness, but other negative outcomes – for example, poor health, NEET status and offending.

---

<sup>28</sup> G.Bramley and S.Fitzpatrick et al. *'Hard Edges – Mapping Severe and Multiple Disadvantage in England'* published by Lankelly Chase Foundation 2015

<sup>29</sup>

## 7. Joint planning, joint commissioning, joint working

Joint commissioning and joint working is a business critical factor in public services. This means that public sector agencies need to agree their joint strategic priorities, the outcomes they seek and streamline their respective planning cycles in order to do so. The Supporting People Programme guidance can be an enabler not a blocker to this.

All the evidence points to greater success for young people and better, more efficient delivery for agencies when services are designed around young people. This approach is much more likely to improve outcomes across a range of domains and will therefore save public money in the short and longer term.

**Appendix 3** sets out an example of a shared outcomes framework that may be of interest as a starting point for local discussion on increased service alignment or integration.

Ideally the way forward is to establish or improve on your local 'pathway' for vulnerable young people, through a more joined-up response to multi-faceted issues, with locally tailored joint commissioning across the public sector agencies that together are committed to a set of outcomes that are inter-dependent. This Positive Pathway should be an agenda item for regional and local commissioning groups, it is anticipated that it will be an item for Regional Collaborative Committees and local authority Supporting People Planning Groups. Discussions and planning activity should take place in partnership with commissioning partners in Children Services, Supporting People and NOMS teams.

The challenge is how to move from single issue commissioning (for example, addressing NEET status, homelessness, housing related support through the Supporting People Programme, offending, leaving care, mental health), to more joint planning and commissioning across the whole of the local 'pathway'. Effective and successful support and housing interventions for younger people is an investment that in turn reduces demand on services.

The importance of collecting and analysing of data in joint working cannot be understated. Generally speaking, this is a gap in most local areas. But data is the platform which guides planning, shapes commissioning and enables on-going analysis and understanding of impact across services and different groups of young people.

## 8. Assumptions that underpin the Positive Pathway framework

- Young people are not a homogenous group; there is significant variation in the age at which they leave the parental home, the support parents/family provide, the type of accommodation they first move into and the reasons for moving out of the parental home.
- Most young people will only be able to afford to live independently if they are in employment or in work based training unless they have additional financial support from their own parents/family or the local authority as a 'corporate parent'. Cost of living increases, benefit reductions in real terms and in particular the impending changes to welfare benefits for 18 to 21 year olds - the ending of automatic entitlement to housing benefit and the introduction of a Youth Obligation with stronger and more time limited conditionality than Job Seekers Allowance - are all factors that contribute to this position<sup>30</sup>.
- The housing market is not currently meeting the accommodation needs of young people on low incomes who are not able to live with family. Landlords are more likely to respond positively to this gap if confidence in local areas can be created through pro-actively offering an integrated pathway approach, tying in education, training and employment more closely with accommodation and more pro-actively preparing young people as young tenants – these approaches can lessen perceived and actual risks for both private and social landlords.
- Young people and their parents/carers need to be given clear information whilst young people are still at school/college about local housing options and the realities of living independently, in terms of affordability issues, local choice, hidden costs, sharing of accommodation and landlord expectations.
- Each local area has its own unique housing market conditions and will create local solutions to youth accommodation needs, based on local circumstances and opportunities.
- Accommodation should be safe, decent and affordable and its cost should not be a barrier for young people taking up training, apprenticeships or employment.
- The pathway should be a progression and help young people with their aspirations. But it also needs to allow for young people making mistakes as part of their learning, physiological development and experience as young adults.
- Mobility is critical for young people entering the world of further education, training and employment; issues of local connection in terms of access to accommodation should not perversely limit opportunities.
- Despite limited housing options for single young people in many areas of Wales and the welfare reform challenges, there could still be opportunities to open up shared supply and develop new accommodation options for young people. For example, there are

---

<sup>30</sup> Note the detail of this welfare reform is not yet available but impacts could be significant – for example it is estimated that 11,449 young people in social housing will be affected (see Inside Housing, 14<sup>th</sup> May 2015).

innovative approaches which need to be replicated, regarding sharing of social housing and supporting access to private rented accommodation.

- The homelessness route is a negative and stigmatising experience for young people and should be avoided wherever possible by the provision of a range of other more proactive housing, support and advice options earlier on, to encourage young people with their parents/family to plan together and avoid crisis.
- It is usually the most vulnerable and disadvantaged young people who leave the family home earliest and with no support or option to return home. Local authorities, schools and other agencies already know which young people are at high risk of homelessness before they reach the age of 16. It is possible to prevent homelessness and plan with these families the routes young people will take if they cannot stay at home.
- An integrated approach locally is most likely to deliver effective prevention and successful transition support. There are a wide range of prospective partners, for example Children's Services Authorities, Housing Authorities, housing associations, Supporting People commissioners, Job Centre Plus, education and training providers, employers, specialist and primary health providers, Careers Wales, Youth Offending Services, Wales Community Rehabilitation Company, the National Probation Service Wales and Third Sector providers. Engagement with skills development and employment opportunities need to be an explicit expectation of services for young people.
- Different young people have different levels of need when they live independently of their families— a small minority need a period of intensive support to make a successful transition to adulthood, whilst others never need more than minimal “light touch” housing management support.
- A successful transition to adulthood for young people with multiple or complex needs requires an integrated approach from a range of agencies. Supporting People funded services alone are not usually able meet the needs of those young people with a very high level of need.

## **9. What are the underpinning features of a positive pathway approach for young people?**

Below are some of the suggested principles and the rationale needed at a local level to achieve a change in working practices and culture.

- A whole-systems, integrated approach to preventing youth homelessness in the first place and supporting, where necessary, young people's planned moves to independence through a positive pathway.
- Developing services and practices which invest in universal housing options advice and targeted early intervention rather than just reacting to crisis.
- Provision of seamless, easy to use services, making better use of scarce resources through joining up and co-ordinating of services. This includes pooling the budgets of agencies where it is effective to do so, and building on local knowledge, existing community assets and voluntary effort.
- Providing information, advice and assistance for young people and their families across all stages of the pathway, not only about housing, education, training and employment but on other aspects of young people's lives as they make the transition to adulthood, including safety, health, cultural opportunities and sport.
- A progression to independence for young people, through having a range of accommodation options to meet different needs and a continually strong focus on building up the skills, experience and motivation needed to ultimately gain employment.
- An ethos which places young people and their parents/families at the heart of planning and delivery – significant, supportive relationships with one or two skilled professionals are often the key for vulnerable young people making a successful transition
- Involving young people in how services are shaped and delivered, including as peer educators and supporters, can lead to excellence in provision and gives young people important learning opportunities for the future.
- Addressing the supply conundrum of what is truly affordable, safe and decent accommodation for young people with low incomes and for some, time limited access to housing benefit assistance.

## 10.The elements of the Positive Pathway framework

### 1) Information and advice for young people and families (a universal offer)

#### The Service:

Timely, accurate information and advice about local housing options available to everyone, delivered in a range of ways including web-based information and through schools to reach young people, families and professionals.

#### Desired result:

Young people and families are empowered to plan transitions to independent living without support from specialist services. They understand the links between housing choice and their financial and employment situation. They know where to get help if they need it.

#### **What young people said**

- *There is no one way to reach young people – everyone is different*
- *Make is simple and straightforward – ask young people to help design messages - less words more pictures!*
- *Facebook and Twitter are good - you can find things out in the privacy of your own home*
- *‘We are too sheltered in what we do sometimes and when you get out you don’t know anything - but you have to fend for yourself’*
- *‘Young people in school learn about maths.... trigonometry.... but when they go out and get their own place they don’t know how to work an oven – you need to teach them about housing and what it’s really like’*
- *Parents need to know where to get help and information –doctor’s surgeries, school and other websites*
- *‘Tell parents we are in today’s reality’*

#### **The service**

The offer in this part of the pathway might include:

- Housing options education work in schools and colleges as part of the financial literacy curriculum<sup>31</sup> work with young people. This could cover the reality of housing options/choices, the financial aspects of living independently, homelessness and how to avoid this – and critically where to go for early help and advice.

<sup>31</sup> See: <http://learning.gov.wales/resources/learningpacks/financial-education/?lang=en>

- Youth work sessions with young people.
- Information and advice for parents and families to ensure their understanding of the housing options that are available and affordable to young people in their area is realistic and up to date.
- Information, advice and resources to promote understanding amongst professionals and volunteers working with young people regarding where to go for help and the realities of housing options and homelessness at a young age.

## **Considerations and tips**

### Reaching young people

Feedback from young people is that they want and need good information on housing options and the realities of living independently (not just on homelessness), but they do not usually get it at school.

As well as reaching children and young people in schools, FE colleges and youth centres, other communication channels could be developed locally, for example, high quality web based information that can be shared on social media, which signposts to a local telephone advice line if needed. Involving young people in the design of this is likely to be very helpful.

Some secondary schools in Wales may opt for 'collapsed timetable' days, where there is more of a focus on a specific area of the curriculum. This may be a way of delivering elements of Personal and Social Education (PSE), through inviting external agencies into school to deliver information and advice to pupils. Housing options workshops could be included in these days.

This sort of work could involve a number of stakeholders who have an interest in young people as successful tenants of the future – not just Housing Authorities but other social landlords, Children's Services and Third Sector agencies. It could make longer-term business sense to jointly fund or jointly support input into schools and FE colleges, focusing on housing options and affordability as well as homelessness. This should not be all 'doom and gloom' and can be framed in an aspirational but realistic way, focused on housing choice linked to pathways into economic activity. It also needs to include information about where to go for early advice/help.

Young people under the school leaving age who are not attending school or college have a higher risk of being homeless at a young age, so consideration is needed about how to reach them, for example through Pupil Referral Units and other alternatives to mainstream school provisions and youth work provision.

Methods of communication include:

- Use of existing technology to get general advice and information across to young people via social media, existing portals in schools, FE colleges and local authority websites.

- Peer education, which can work well in a classroom setting. It has a high impact with young people who are able to ask questions directly and learn from a peer who has direct experience of homelessness.
- Theatre and discussion workshops, which can effectively engage young people.
- Short films featuring young peoples' voices which can be played as part of structured sessions with an external person/people running the session, or with a teacher who has had some briefing beforehand. The general feedback is that delivery by external agencies works better, but it is more costly in terms of time.
- Workshops run by trained and skilled staff, delivering an engaging package of information and advice to young people in classroom and more informal settings.

#### **EXAMPLE – ‘Going It Alone Project – Conwy and Denbighshire’**

The ‘Going it Alone’ Project – Raising awareness of the realities of youth homelessness and independent living.

The award winning Going It Alone project is funded by Welsh Government and Grŵp Cynefin. The project works in partnership with Cartrefi Conwy, North Wales Housing, Conwy County Borough Council and Denbighshire County Council and delivers a range of education and support programs across Conwy and Denbighshire.

The project offers flexible, preventative, educational services to young people (up to age 25) within schools, Further Education, Alternative Education and other youth provision, and to vulnerable young people such as care leavers and those living in supported accommodation.

Projects range from accredited preventative courses for at risk young people, to one-off skills workshops. In addition the project can work one-to-one with young people at high risk of homelessness.

One of the projects recent educational initiatives is its new board game, ‘Going it Alone’, developed by the project in partnership with Grŵp Cynefin, Cartrefi Conwy, North Wales Housing and The Bus Stop Project. Research was carried out and found that the interaction of playing a board game was more beneficial to engaging young people in learning than the more obvious route of creating a digital game. Developed by the Young Housing Network, who have all experienced homelessness themselves, the bilingual game is available for schools and community groups across Wales to access and use as a learning tool.

Other resources included the original Going it Alone leaflet and signposting card, and the Going it Alone app and website [www.goingitalone.co.uk](http://www.goingitalone.co.uk). For more information contact [gemma@goingitalone.co.uk](mailto:gemma@goingitalone.co.uk)

#### Reaching parents/carers

Many young people learn about their housing choices from their families, but parents and older family members may not be familiar with the new challenges within the housing market for young people e.g. welfare reform, limited choices for young people due to affordability and a tightening supply of social housing.

It can therefore be helpful to place information for both parents and young people on local authority and housing association websites and in leaflet format covering:

- Housing options for young people locally and the realistic affordability considerations
- How difficult it is for young people to manage if they leave home at a young age
- Planning moves with young people leaving home
- Where to go for advice and support on housing issues
- Who to contact if a parent is finding things difficult with a teenage child

### Reaching other professionals

There is reported to be a lack of awareness amongst some professionals advising young people about the realities of leaving home at a young age (in particular, choice and affordability in the longer term) and the options available when young people leave supported accommodation. It can be valuable to develop a short briefing that can be delivered periodically to local teams working with young people and families covering:

- Housing options locally for young people, affordability and welfare reform challenges
- The negative impact of homelessness on young people and communities, including the types of risky situations young people with nowhere safe to stay may face
- The prevention approach and concept of the Positive Pathway
- The legal position
- The trigger /risk factors experienced by teenagers that can lead to homelessness later on.
- Sources of information, advice and specialist support available to young people and families.

## 2) Early intervention - a targeted offer

### The Service:

Early intervention is targeted to reach households where young people are most likely to be at risk of homelessness. Delivery involving all local services working with young people and families at risk, e.g. Families First, Intensive Family Support Services (IFSS), Youth Services and Youth Offending/Justice Services. Provision of IAA (Information, Advice and Assistance) if needed. Assessment of any care and support needs as required.

### Desired result:

Prevention and protection - young people stay in the family network where possible, are safe and are supported to make planned moves if they need to move out.

### **What young people said**

- *'They talk about your problems - but they don't sort them'*
- *Give families more real help – get mental health services and mediation into family homes*
- *More mediation services are needed*
- *Be honest about what's going to happen if you leave home– but don't use scare tactics to make young people stay*
- *'We think the grass is greener but when you get there, it's not'*
- *'If they had said what it was like – well it could have made a difference'*

### **The Service**

Early intervention work is targeted to keep young people at high risk of homelessness within the family home/network where it's safe to do so. The focus is on planning and preparing with young people at high risk of homelessness and their parents/family BEFORE they are in crisis - a critical element of the Positive Pathway.

Childhood experiences/issues including Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), which can indicate a high risk of early homelessness and future homelessness and multiple exclusion<sup>32</sup> – and which a range of agencies are usually aware of before the age of 16 - include:

<sup>32</sup> See: Appendix One in this document, it is taken from a report, ' Pathways into multiple exclusion homelessness in seven UK cities' by S. Fitzpatrick et al 2013. The full report here: [https://pureapps2.hw.ac.uk/portal/files/7456915/US\\_Pathways.pdf](https://pureapps2.hw.ac.uk/portal/files/7456915/US_Pathways.pdf) And also see page 286 of Chapter 12 of Statutory Homelessness report from England, which looks at the personal experiences of 350 16/17 year olds. This remains the most detailed research on homelessness for this age group: <https://www.york.ac.uk/media/chp/documents/2008/Family%20Homelessness%20final%20report.pdf>

- Not attending school/excluded from school
- Involvement in the criminal justice system
- Running away/going missing for one night or more
- Neglect
- Substance misuse - referred to services in Tiers 2 /3 /4
- Domestic abuse/violence in the family home
- Mental health issues in the family (parents and/or young person)
- Older siblings previously presenting as homeless at a young age

## **Considerations and tips**

Many young people report that they do not know where to go to get help. Research has shown that around 80% of young people try other options first before coming to a local authority. By this time, opportunities to prevent homelessness may have reduced.

In most authorities the majority of young people presenting to the local authority as homeless are already known to and getting support from other, often statutory services. Some local authorities have gone through an exercise to try to identify young people at high risk, including Conwy and Caerphilly. The following services – and others – will be working with young people at high risk of homelessness:

- Schools
- Pupil Referral Units
- Families First
- Integrated Family Support Service
- Youth Offending/Justice Service
- CAMHS
- Children's Social Services – teenagers in care, on the edge of care, subject to child protection plans, those getting family support services
- FE Colleges
- Third Sector agencies

But some young people are not involved in services before they become homeless, so identifying this group is not possible. Clear and accessible local information about what to do and where to get advice is important.

Awareness of professionals regarding the difficulties of leaving home at a young age is often limited. There may be some instances where leaving home and presenting as homeless/going into supported accommodation is too easily resorted to – perhaps as a short term 'solution' to family difficulties. The challenge is to establish systems whereby the full range of local services are able to systematically identify young people who are at high risk of homelessness and take action to prevent a homelessness crisis, sustaining young people within their family networks and where necessary working in partnership to facilitate planned moves.

## Early help and support to stay at home

- There are already national preventative intervention programmes, such as Families First and Integrated Family Support Services running in all local authorities for young people at risk and their parents. In addition, there are other services provided or commissioned by Children's Social Services, Education, Health and Youth Offending/Justice Services that aim to support families with specific issues. It is important that the referral criteria between services includes homelessness and risk of homelessness as a trigger to activate interventions.
- Six regionally based Safeguarding Children Boards oversee safeguarding across groupings of local authorities. They co-ordinate the implementation of national safeguarding priorities, new policies and set out any local priorities. Many teenagers at high risk of homelessness will be experiencing or displaying factors that are known to be associated with youth homelessness (e.g. child sexual exploitation, going missing, neglect, living with violence in the family home, mental health problems, self-harm, substance misuse). It may therefore be helpful jointly develop guidance through the Safeguarding Board which can be available for professionals regarding identifying the issues/risks that may lead to youth homelessness, where to go for help and the realities of leaving home at a young age.
- The Families First Programme, the Integrated Family Support Service (IFSS) and the 'Positive Pathway' model are all premised on multi-agency working and practical support, within a model of prevention, protection and remedy and a whole-systems approach which focuses on improved outcomes. The criteria for support for families with older teenagers has a clear link with some of the causal factors which can lead to youth homelessness (e.g. parents with substance misuse problems, violence in the family home, mental health problems, anti-social behaviour, not going to school/excluded). Locally there are likely to be opportunities to align more closely the IFSS work, Families First and this part of the 'Positive Pathway' work, which focuses on keeping young people at home where possible. Young people advise that working with the whole family in the family home and consistently trying to be practical and realistic is most helpful.
- Consider how to avoid the 'cliff edge' of services that support young people to stay at home/within the family network dropping away at the age of 16 or 17. For Children's Services there is a strong 'spend to save' argument for continuing to work with young people up to age of 18 and their families, given the costs further down the line of meeting statutory duties to homeless 16/17 year olds<sup>33</sup>.
- Continuity of practical support, which is flexible enough to go beyond traditional service boundaries and follows young people beyond the age of 18, can help to prevent homelessness. Children's Social Services support is likely to drop away at the age of 18, but other support could continue or be picked up – dependent on how integrated

---

<sup>33</sup> House of Lords - G v Southwark judgment 2009 and 2010 Welsh Government statutory guidance "Provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year old young people who may be homeless" See: <http://gov.wales/docs/dhss/publications/100915housingcircularen.pdf> .Please note that at the time of writing ( August 2016) this guidance needs updating in light of recent changes to homelessness and children's legislation.

your local service delivery is. The kind of support that might be offered could be, for example, on-going work with a Families First or IFSS worker, a Third Sector agency offering parenting support, family mediation or family group conferencing.

### **Planning with families to prevent crisis**

- There are some young people in every local area who, for a variety of reasons, are not able to stay at home and need to leave the parental home. Despite all the best efforts of, for example, supportive family members and professionals, staying at home is not safe or is not going to be tenable in the long term.
- Where young people are likely to need to move, pro-active planning with the young person and their family could be considered. This is not about encouraging young people to move out when they don't need to, or about giving up on young people and families, but making contingency plans with them, based on the professional judgment within local authorities and with their partners.
- It is also an opportunity to do more reality checking with the whole family about what options there are and how difficult leaving home at a young age is. Family group conferencing could be a useful tool at this point to ensure the family is closely involved in all the planning – and ideally the family leads or co-leads the planning. Where there are no significant safeguarding issues, smoother transitions which support ongoing contact between young people and their families are likely to result in better outcomes than more 'fractured' departures from the family home.
- Consider developing options to delay young people moving out in crisis where safeguarding is not an issue. There are some examples of schemes that might usefully be considered which incentivise staying at home and then if needed, planning a move. Some of these could be adapted for your local context. For example, there are some examples where moves are delayed, in negotiation with the family. On-going family support or mediation is available, but there is an agreement reached regarding a requirement that the young person does some pre-tenancy training and is engaged in education or training before they could be considered for a move.

### **Mediation work**

Llamau is a Third Sector agency which specialises in working with young people and women at risk of homelessness across Wales. The mediation services that Llamau deliver across 10 local authorities are embedded or aligned with statutory youth homelessness prevention services, a good example being the Vale of Glamorgan, where a 'one stop shop' approach brings Llamau's mediation service together with Children's Services, Housing and Llamau's Jigso service - a housing / welfare rights advice and supported lodgings service. The mediation services work with families and with young people in care as well, where placement breakdown is a risk.

The model of mediation used fits into both Stages Two and Three of the Positive Pathway. It is proactive, offering where needed an immediate response to carers/families, using home visiting – an essential prevention tool in its own right - and more informal negotiation as well as mediation skills. Nationally many young people say that if they had known the realities of leaving home or care early they may have worked harder to get along with their carers/parents. Whilst always mindful of safeguarding, Llamau provide some pragmatic reality checking in terms of the likely types of accommodation on offer to young people, location and affordability challenges. But even when young people cannot stay at home or in care placements, Mediation workers try to support more planned moves and importantly promote on –going positive contact with carers/parents where it's safe to do so. Young people report that this is a major benefit of mediation even when they can't stay within the carer or family home.

Where funding and contracts permit, Mediation Workers will work with younger teenagers, aged 14 - 15. This is reported to be highly effective in stopping crisis homelessness presentations at an older age.

Their model of delivery is highly effective due to its 'can do' approach, the alignment or integration with statutory services and the skills and commitment of the staff. It is recognised nationally as an example of best practice.

Contact: Joe Payne, Head of Cardiff & Vale Services and Family Mediation:  
joepayne@llamau.org.uk

### **Solas Family Intervention Project: PREVENTING youth homelessness in Newport and Monmouthshire**

Solas is funded by Newport and Monmouthshire councils, as well as Charter Housing and Monmouthshire Housing Association to deliver a high level of support to families with children where there is a risk of homelessness. By working with the whole household, using local expertise to co-ordinate the right support at the right time and by not giving up easily - and not being afraid to tackle the difficult issues such as domestic abuse - Solas are preventing future problems which could lead to evictions and youth homelessness.

Solas are working with families with multi-faceted, inter-generational problem; recent work shows that 56% of the adults in the families were themselves Looked After Children and 90% of the families have children or young people not in education training or employment, 80% have an

adult with a mental health issue, 80% had someone in the household misusing substances and 70% experience domestic abuse. These factors are all key triggers into teenagers leaving home and becoming homeless at a young age.

Solas can work with a family for up to 2 years or more if needed. The work is both very practical but also addresses issues around family dysfunction and deep seated problems. It focuses on self-sustaining solutions within the family and local community. This can involve a range of practical solutions as well as mediation and rebuilding of relationships in the local community. The Solas team are skilled and trained to deliver evidence-based psycho-social interventions so that no issues is ignored or seen as not relevant.

A high percentage of families working with Solas include young people not in training, education or employment (NEET). Achieving success in this area has a positive impact on the family, the local community and of course the individual young person. In Caerphilly last year, 90% of the young people Solas worked with were NEET, after their intervention this was only 10%.

For more information contact: Charlotte Waite, Director of Children, Young People and

Families: [Charlotte.Waite@solas-cymru.co.uk](mailto:Charlotte.Waite@solas-cymru.co.uk)

### 3) Integrated response for young people who need help with housing and Gateway to commissioned accommodation and support

#### The Service:

Led by the Housing Authority and Children's Services, an integrated service for young people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or need help with planned transitions to independence. Housing options and homelessness prevention services come together, often co-located, with other services including support for pathways into learning and work. Underpinned by IAA (Information, Advice and Assistance) and assessment of any care and support as well as housing needs. Includes a needs driven 'gateway' into commissioned supported accommodation and flexible floating support services. This is a key data collection point which will inform on-going development of the local pathway.

#### Desired results:

- Homelessness is prevented wherever possible, for example by supporting young people to stay in their family network or preventing the loss of a tenancy
- Young people who need accommodation and/or support get it, including quick access suitable emergency accommodation and immediate and on-going support where needed
- Young people's accommodation and support underpins rather than disrupts their pathways in learning and work

#### **What young people said**

- *'Why can't we have all the services in one place rather than go back and forth?'*
- *'You have to explain what's happened over and over again'*
- *'If services didn't have rifts between them it would be so easy'*
- *'You feel passed around and dropped at any time'*
- *'There's a very strong stigma attached to being young and homeless. People don't believe it's not your fault, we are not taken seriously.'*
- *'I was literally on the street in a vest top before I went to the Council.'*
- *'It's important that workers are friendly and listen to young people.'*
- *'A cup of tea and a biscuit won't break the bank – it makes a big difference to us'*
- *'Social Services need to get the child and the parent together to sort it out, if it's safe to do that.'*
- *'Home visits can be good'*
- *'Sometimes parents don't say what's really happening, you need to listen carefully to what young people are saying'*

#### **The Service**

A local authority has a seamless, joined up approach to pro-actively preventing young people becoming homeless when they approach for help with housing. Ideally there is a

single, integrated “front door” with Children’s Services and Housing Authorities working together, often with a Third Sector partner. Where this is not possible, sometimes due to the rural nature of a local area, there is a ‘virtual’ single entry to services, with Housing, Children’s Services and other agencies all working together to resolve housing need, homelessness and the surrounding issues.

The service functions include assessment of need, planning, advice, housing options and prevention activity. Short stay/emergency accommodation is available if needed and there is signposting or access to other services – e.g. advice/support on education, training and employment, health services, life skills and any benefit entitlements. There should be clear identification of the steps needed to make a young person ready for employment and how they will be supported to achieve them.

The ‘gateway’ or ‘single access point’ into supported accommodation for young people is also provided through or closely aligned to this function – in effect this is the day to day access into all Supporting People and any other supported housing commissioned provision for young people, not only the ‘immediate access’ or emergency provision.

The various housing and support related functions within a single integrated service ‘hub’ are described below.

### **Advice on housing options**

Housing advice and options involves giving a realistic picture of what sorts of accommodation might be available and the pros and cons of each - for example affordability, the likelihood of availability, waiting times, locations, and expectations of landlords. All options should be explored including staying with family and friends and sharing with others. The concept of progression – working towards living independently - is also part of the options advice.

There could be access to the local social lettings agency or private rented access scheme and some linkage with the Housing Register.

Affordability is already a major consideration for any new young tenant and landlord relationship. For young people, the ability to manage a tenancy on a low income is a key factor which will be even more under scrutiny for many once planned changes to Housing Benefit entitlement for 18 – 21s being to be implemented from April 2017. Please note that at the point of writing this document (August 2016) there is limited detail on this policy proposal. Capping of social rents in April 2018 to the Local Housing Allowance levels, including the Shared Accommodation Rate for under 35s will also be starting to have an impact on social lettings to single young people now, as this policy change will apply in 2018 to most new tenants from April 2016. This is why it is so important that support for young people includes a clear path toward employment.

### **Assessment and planning of housing and other support needs**

Many young people have a range of other needs, which will not necessarily be obvious unless a thorough assessment takes place. This goes beyond looking at housing/accommodation and into other dimensions of young people’s lives, such as family,

relationships, identity, health, education/training/employment, self-care and practical living skills.

Assessment of needs is often not a one-off activity but on-going, informing planning the best options for young people and the services they may need to support them. The starting point is a low level assessment of their current situation and immediate needs. From this point decisions will be taken with them about the most appropriate way forward and whether a more detailed or statutory assessment is needed.

If any young person aged 16 and over approaches the local authority saying they are or could be at risk of homeless, the local authority has a duty to try to prevent homelessness within 56 days, or if they are or become homeless, there is a 56 day duty to help to relieve their homelessness<sup>34</sup>. For 16/17 year olds, if they are actually or imminently homeless, Children's Services will want to undertake an assessment of their needs and situation, but this would not prevent Children's Services from accommodating a homeless child under Section 76 of the Social Services and Well Being Act (Wales) 2014<sup>35</sup>, as they no longer need to be assessed as a 'child in need' in order to be accommodated. Ordinarily 16/17 year olds who are without accommodation should be supported through the provisions contained within Social Services legislation in the first instance.

Where a young person is likely to need short stay or supported accommodation, a risk assessment will be needed, and dependent on local working arrangements with supported accommodation providers this may be undertaken through the integrated service hub or gateway.

## **Prevention of homelessness**

There are a range of prevention tools which can be used to reduce homelessness. An unpinning approach or ethos which works well is to slow things down at the point when a young person presents as being homeless. This does not mean that the young person's needs are ignored, or the young person feels "fobbed off", but that there is not an immediate assumption that the young person is homeless and has no other solution than emergency accommodation. Individual situations and needs have to be assessed and prevention tools used where appropriate, based on professional judgment.

Examples of these tools are: home visits quickly - within 48 hours; informal negotiation and mediation between family members; more formal family mediation or family group conferencing; debt and benefits advice work; use of short term prevention funds (e.g. through use of Children's Services' budget<sup>36</sup> and homelessness prevention funds) or, if applicable, access to Discretionary Housing Payments; stays with extended family members/friends; actively assisting the young person into college or training; floating support; assigning the young person a youth support worker; or planning a move for the whole family (e.g. where overcrowding is an issue).

---

<sup>34</sup> See Sections 66 and 73 of the Housing(Wales) Act 2014 here:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2014/7/contents/enacted>

<sup>35</sup> See Sections 21, 22, 76 here: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2014/4/contents/enacted>

<sup>36</sup> See Part 4 of the Social Services and Well Being Act (Wales) 2014: Sections 34, 37 or 38 (3)

The combining of Children's Services and Housing expertise is essential at this point to ensure the chance of prevention amongst 16/17 year olds, young offenders, care leavers and other young people is optimised.

Home visiting, combined with the use of informal negotiation and mediation skills is highly effective when used consistently. Offering on-going support – and continuing to engage with the young person and their family after the immediate crisis/flashpoint has passed, is essential to sustaining the prevention.

But there are some young people who cannot and should not remain at home due to risk of significant harm. Assessment and professional judgment will determine which young people are at risk and do need to leave home.

**Torfaen's Young People's Support Service ( TYPSS)** is an example of a 'hub' or one stop shop for young people. Led by Torfaen County Borough Council, a range of departments and agencies fund posts and provide services. Instead of designing 'standalone' services within various funding and professional silos, young people and positive outcomes have been at the heart of service planning. Integrated service delivery follows logically when planning is based around young people's needs. TYPSS has been evolving over several years, it includes the 16+ leaving care service and offers all young people careers advice, sexual health/contraception sessions, welfare rights advice, family mediation and housing advice. For the last 4 years there has been a dedicated Young Person Housing Officer imbedded within the Service.

The decision to commit a post from Housing to TYPSS was due to a change in case law – the 2009 Southwark Judgment - but also local evidence on numbers and need, identified through independent research commissioned by the Supporting People commissioners within the local authority which pointed to a need for a more coordinated approach in dealing with young people at risk of homelessness.

The impact of the specialist Housing Officer is that young people have a more consistent response and the one stop approach makes it easier for them to engage and then access other services. Outcomes of the investment are provided to Supporting People on a quarterly basis. It is viewed as having a positive effect on both prevention and resettlement.

Contact: Sheryl Thomas, Homelessness and Housing advice manager, [Sheryl.Thomas@torfaen.gov.uk](mailto:Sheryl.Thomas@torfaen.gov.uk) or Chesney Chick, 16+ Manager and TYPSS Manager [Chesney.Chick@torfaen.gov.uk](mailto:Chesney.Chick@torfaen.gov.uk)

## Young People's housing options work in Vale of Glamorgan

Over the last 6 years the Vale of Glamorgan with their partners have made huge progress in developing services for young people at risk of homelessness. Strong, trusting relationships underpin the partnership approach in the Vale, along with a focus on continual improvement. Within the local 'offer' to young people and their families is a joined up service, with 'one front door', known locally as "236" for young people at risk of homelessness. The funding for '236' is joined up, with Children's Services, Supporting People, Housing and Welsh Government S180 funding being planned together to ensure there is a seamless approach. Once inside that 'door' other elements of their local 'pathway' are easily accessed:

- Llamau's Jigso service providing young people's housing options and welfare rights advice
- Work in schools and local colleges raises the awareness locally amongst young people and teachers regarding housing options and homelessness
- Llamau's Mediation Service sees all young people who present as homeless and undertake home visits to meet with families.
- Homelessness assessments, which include Children's Services and Housing working together on 16/17s at risk of homelessness. A 15+ Children's Social Care Officer is based within the service
- The single access point or 'gateway' into a range of supported housing options, including supported lodgings and floating support, managed jointly through Children's Services, Supporting People, Housing and with provider partners Gwalia and Llamau.
- A diverse set of supported accommodation options, including supported lodgings, high, medium and lower supported housing and 'step down' shared houses
- Barnardos run a young people's counselling service from "236"
- Llamau's bespoke Learning 4 Life provision, offering a range of educational options for young people, including links to Symud Ymlaen – whereby care leavers and young people with criminal justice involvement can be prepared for and then offered a six month paid work placement
- Life Skills training
- A 4 weekly 'move on' panel for these leaving supported accommodation
- Access to private rented sector through Cadwyn's CanDo social lettings agency and the successful Vale Assisted Tenancy Scheme, which works hard to identify solutions to assist those in housing need

## Young people in and leaving care

It is sometimes the case that placements begin to "break down" for 16/17 year olds who are in care (i.e. foster care or residential care), or if they have already left care but are still staying with ex-foster carers<sup>37</sup>, things can start to get difficult. The prevention approach can be utilised for these young people as well – not all of the prevention tools outlined in the examples apply, but many can still be used to try to support young people and their carers, to either stay in their accommodation or to plan a move if they are not able to stay in the longer term.

---

<sup>37</sup> See here for the Welsh Government When I am Ready Scheme Good Practice Guide, March 2016 <http://gov.wales/docs/dhss/publications/160307guidanceen.pdf> and also see Section 108 of the Social Services and Well Being Act ( Wales) 2015

## Young people in custody

It is estimated that around 50% of young people aged 16-24 who leave custody have housing needs and are at high risk of homelessness at the point of release. A joint approach can reduce risks of homelessness for this group. All 16/17 year olds will be looked after whilst on remand and some will have leaving care status. Planning is needed to prevent homelessness for these young people, regardless of whether they are looked after children, care leavers or not, as without suitable and safe accommodation there is a far higher risk of re-offending and exposure to significant risks. Again, a range of the prevention tools mentioned can be utilised with good effect, but a joint approach is needed with Youth Offending Services, Wales Community Rehabilitation Company and the Wales Probation Trust.

### **Llamau: Reintegration & Resettlement Partnerships - Improving the planning for young people coming out of custody**

Llamau is a Third Sector agency working with young people and women at risk of homelessness across Wales. In 2013 they were awarded a contract by the Youth Justice Board and the Welsh Government to employ 2 'resettlement brokers, one for the South and one for the North of Wales.

The learning from this work is valuable in its own right for improving services to this highly vulnerable group of young people who are characterised in part by being at a high risk of homelessness. Many of these young people also looked after children or care leavers. But the model Llamau with their partners have developed, of bringing agencies together to problem solve and plan pro-actively can also be applied across other groups of vulnerable young people where homelessness is a key concern.

The 2 resettlement brokers have brought together multi agency panels in different areas to support the youth justice services/youth offending services locally and secure estate (e.g. young offenders institutions and secure children's homes) to move forward with the YJB's plans on reintegration and resettlement in Wales.

Often deemed as too high risk for supported accommodation options, this group is at a higher risk of being placed into bed and breakfast than any other group of young people in some local authorities, especially at the point of release from custody. The purpose of the panels is to engage relevant local agencies - both statutory and Third Sector – in the focused planning, problem solving and delivery of resettlement and reintegration support and services.

The resources and co-operation that are required from partners aim to plug gaps and bring down the barriers to effective reintegration and resettlement for young people leaving custody, but also those at risk of custody, at risk of reoffending or with an unmet need.

The focus on reintegration aims to stop offending through enabling young people to access the services and opportunities they need. The resettlement is not just about housing - its broadly classified into the seven linked areas all of which are pertinent to the 'Positive Pathway' model locally:

- Accommodation
- Education, training and employment
- Health, including mental health
- Substance misuse

- Families
- Finance, benefits and debt
- Transitions & case management

The funding for this work has now ceased, although the project is currently continuing and further funding is being sought. A report covering both the South and the North Wales project areas summarising all the project learning, outcomes and achievements, alongside further recommendations for continuing development has been produced. You can find it here: [www.llamau.org.uk/creo\\_files/default/final\\_report\\_on\\_the\\_resettlement\\_broker\\_project.pdf](http://www.llamau.org.uk/creo_files/default/final_report_on_the_resettlement_broker_project.pdf)

For more information please contact: Tracey Kinsey Resettlement Broker ( South Wales) [traceykinsey@llamau.org.uk](mailto:traceykinsey@llamau.org.uk) and Kathy Hampson, Resettlement Broker ( North Wales) [kathyhampson@llamau.org.uk](mailto:kathyhampson@llamau.org.uk)

### **A single “gateway” into emergency accommodation and supported accommodation**

As part of an integrated service, it is strongly recommended there is a single access point or “gateway” in to all supported accommodation in the local area, including emergency accommodation or short stay accommodation. This could be part of a wider ‘gateway’ which covers all Supporting People provision or could be a specifically designated ‘gateway’ for young people, including those who are still looked after aged 16/17 who may require supported accommodation and care leavers, for whom moves should be more planned.

A ‘gateway’ means that no young person can go into supported accommodation unless it’s in a planned way, involving an assessment and where homelessness is a risk, that prevention options have been explored. In effect this ends the ability of any young person to self-refer and is recommended as a more appropriate means to determine which young people enter supported accommodation than self-referral. It would also mean that any waiting lists would need to be managed centrally in a local authority, rather than by the local providers each having their own waiting list.

A gateway enables:

- A more consistent approach to needs assessment and understanding of available provision, leading to better opportunities to match young people with accommodation options, taking into account their needs, support networks, preferences and the risks they may face and present.
- Better use of very limited resources, ensuring that those with the highest needs are accessing the services they need
- Improved safeguarding, with a shared knowledge of possible risk, agreed approaches to manage risks and knowledge of who is placed where
- Ability to prevent evictions of young people through joint approaches to their support and through collaboration between providers to enable ‘managed moves’ where tenancies are at risk
- Improved ability to continue with prevention work, so young people can be supported to return home/to family/friends if this is safe and appropriate
- Improved ability to plan moves with young people and their families
- An overview of planned and unplanned move on

- Prompt and appropriate filling of voids.

Ultimately a “gateway”, as opposed to young people self-referring into supported accommodation, ensures that priority is given to those who most need supported accommodation and that all other prevention options have been exhausted prior to a referral being made to a supported accommodation provider.

### **Immediate access and short stay accommodation**

If a young person is homeless and there is no possibility of a return to the family or stay with friends then accommodation is likely to be needed, even if it's just for a short period of time. There are no single solutions to provision of emergency or short stay accommodation. Every area has its own unique set of challenges in terms of both types of available accommodation and for rural authorities, a significant geographical challenge as well. But it is certainly the case that where an authority makes a decision to stop using bed and breakfast and that is corporately supported, then alternatives do develop to reduce and then end the use of bed and breakfast. See Appendix Two for some suggestions on this.

There are different models of suitable short stay accommodation including:

- Nightstop services, where a young person is placed with a trained and vetted “host” in their own home for a few nights.
- Short term supported lodgings where young people can stay with a host household for a few weeks or more.
- “Crash pad” beds in larger supported housing schemes/foyers, ring fenced for young people in crisis.
- Assessment centres, where young people can stay usually for between 6–12 weeks.
- Self-contained units of temporary accommodation run by a local authority – but it should be noted that this option is not generally viewed as appropriate for most 16/17s who are still legally children.
- ‘Time out’ schemes where respite accommodation is available alongside an opportunity to utilise family mediation.

A stay in short stay accommodation is a chance to continue to try to prevent homelessness and enable a young person to return to the family /extended family/carers or any friends where it is safe and possible to do so. It should be a time of purposeful assessment, planning and, where it's safe to do so, regular family contact, led by a skilled professional. Actively supporting young people to continue with or start again at school, college or training is also part of the work.

## Nightstop - short stay accommodation in family homes

There are 3 Nightstop schemes in Wales, covering 4 local authority areas (Powys, Isle of Anglesey and a joint scheme between Flintshire and Denbighshire). All 3 schemes are accredited by Depaul UK and provide emergency accommodation in trained 'hosts' own homes. These are a useful short stay option in any local authority area and are often used as an option in more rural areas, where supported accommodation schemes can be a long way from a young person's local area.

Nightstop is a very short stay option, immediate access provision – with stays for up to 3 nights, or a 'Nightstop Plus' scheme can provide accommodation for a little longer. Nightstop is not usually suitable for young people with higher levels of needs e.g. with a substance misuse problem, a history of violence or significant offending and serious mental health problems.

The cross authority scheme between Flintshire and Denbighshire came about through both local authorities agreeing to work more regionally to tackle the number of homeless young people being accommodated in B&B and hostel accommodation. Feedback received via consultation with stakeholders regarding the development of Nightstop was positive. The aim of the Nightstop service was agreed between the Supporting People teams in Flintshire and Denbighshire and Local Solutions in April 2013. It made good sense in terms of economies of scale and the nature of the scheme in reducing B&B use in more rural areas.

Some learning from the scheme is that whilst Nightstop gives immediate, same day access, its important to get risk assessments from Youth Offending Team and Children's Services in a timely manner, make sure there is buy in from these services, ensuring young people can be accommodated the same day.

For Flintshire and Denbighshire the value for money benefits for this option are as follows:

- Payments to Householders - 622 nights @ £15 per night, Total of £9,330
- Average cost of B&B (Flintshire) = £38.50 per night ( with foster placements for 16/17 year olds being more expensive) 622 nights in B&B = £23,947
- Accommodation saving of £14,617 which does not take into consideration the additional support provided by householders and the positive outcomes. Preventing the repeat cycle of homelessness often seen in this age group is the real saving.

Contact: Debbie Cooke, Director, Young People & Families, Local Solutions.  
[Debbie.cooke@localsolutions.org.uk](mailto:Debbie.cooke@localsolutions.org.uk)

Also see <https://uk.depaulcharity.org/NightstopUK> for more information

## Considerations and tips

- Young people usually contact local authorities only when they are at high risk of homelessness. There is a challenge to look at service redesign at other points in the Positive Pathway regarding culture and systems change which encourage and enable young people and/or their families to seek advice on housing issues from **before** the crisis of homelessness.

- The foundation for a single integrated service gateway is Children's Services and Housing Authorities working together. There is strong evidence that a Third Sector input is also highly effective at this point in the pathway.
- A local single "front door" into services for housing options advice and working with young people who are in housing need or at risk of homelessness ensures a more consistent approach and high rates of prevention. If this is not possible then a more streamlined approach with partners, which requires agreement on the key processes, roles and responsibilities of partners, with an aim of minimising the number of different contacts and separate assessments young people have.
- Making the business case for a more integrated way of working – starting with the local understanding of the client groups and evidence that local authorities that have the best prevention rates amongst young people are the ones where there is a more integrated approach. There are helpful resources available to assist in redesigning public services<sup>38</sup> so there is much closer alignment with other agencies/services whose primary objectives are to improve outcomes for vulnerable young people. Every local area is different but the sorts of services which might be located within or linked closely with an integrated service model include:
  - CareersWales
  - Training and employment programmes for young people
  - DWP /Job Centre Plus services
  - Benefits advice /income maximisation and debt counselling
  - Youth Offending Services
  - Leaving care services
  - Substance misuse services
  - Mental health services
  - Sexual health advice
  - Life skills training
- It is not always possible to develop one stop shops or 'Youth Hubs' for a range of reasons – e.g. size of area, numbers/demand, geography, location/buildings, priorities of other partners and of course budget. But there are compelling 'cost benefit' reasons to consider this option, even on a 'virtual' basis, which a cost benefit analysis could evidence.
- Whatever the model, young people say that friendly, approachable services work best. This is not difficult to achieve – the staff are the service and need to be skilled at working with young people and their families - and actively enjoy working with this age group.
- Data collection is a key part of any service re-design – it enables a local authority to understand needs, trends and prevention outcomes at this point of the Pathway.

Ending the use of Bed and Breakfast is a key priority in Wales. Many local authorities have already taken decisive steps to do avoid and eliminate placing young people into B&B and

---

<sup>38</sup> See <http://publicservicetransformation.org> for examples of cost benefit analysis work and service re-design ideas

others are beginning to do so.

### **Working in Swansea to eliminate the use of bed and breakfast**

One of several examples is Swansea, where the local authority has recently taken a decision to address pro-actively the use of bed and breakfast. In order to do this a lead officer led a multi-agency steering group with representatives from Social Services, Supporting People, Housing, the Youth Offending Service, Barnardos, Wallich, Swansea Young Single Homeless Project and Gwalia.

Together they have devised a more bespoke approach to meeting the support needs of young people at risk of going into bed and breakfast and planning of alternative provision. This is having a significant impact on use of bed and breakfast in terms of stopping young people being placed, but is also changing the way in which bed and breakfast is viewed locally – it is no longer seen as a viable option.

The scheme started in November 2015 and at the time of writing this example (July 2016) there has been one instance of bed and breakfast being used for a young person aged over 18. See Appendix Two for some more suggestions on working locally to end the use of Bed and Breakfast.

#### 4) Commissioned Accommodation and Support

##### The service:

A range of accommodation and support options designed for younger and more vulnerable young people. Access is through a single point of access or 'gateway'. Accommodation and support is linked together in some options, for example, supported accommodation projects, supported lodgings and Housing First. Flexible outreach support is also available to support young people wherever they live (including in the family home) and stick with them when they move if needed.

##### Desired results:

Young people gain the stability and the range of skills they need to live successfully independently and they are engaged with learning and work.

##### **What young people said:**

- *'It can be hard living with people at different stages of support'*
- *You are trapped in supported accommodation – you're better off staying on benefits*
- *'I was working – a good job too – but I had to stop when I went into supported lodgings - I just couldn't afford it'.*
- *For young people who are over 18 and not care leavers - they can't go to college and get their benefit paid - it's very difficult.*
- *It's good to have shared houses for young people to move into that are near to supported accommodation projects – you can still get some support.*
- *'In shared houses you get less support and less money - but more privacy'*

#### **The Service**

This part of the pathway is where the biggest investment of public funds is usually made, hence the development of 'gateway' systems in some local authorities to ensure the resources are allocated and managed in order to meet statutory duties and the needs of young people as effectively as possible. The range of commissioned services varies widely, depending on factors such as the funding available; local practice in commissioning and procurement; the level of collaboration between Supporting People commissioning and departments; local geographic factors (particularly urban and rural settings); and the other resources, particularly buildings designed or adaptable for the provision of supported accommodation, available locally.

A range of different options, organised into an accommodation and support pathway, is usually required to meet the needs of the range of young people in any local area at different stages in their journeys. Models within local pathways include:

- Building based supported accommodation services with staff on site. They vary enormously in size, facilities and the level of support provided to young people. Higher support / 24 hour cover services often include an element of emergency/crash pad provision.
- Supported lodgings, where young people live in the homes of vetted and trained 'host' households. Nightstop services (see the example on page 40) can provide emergency accommodation in volunteer's homes and schemes often operate both models together
- Dispersed building based schemes can act as 'step down' progression accommodation from higher support larger schemes. In this model, young people may live in self-contained or more usually in small shared properties. They receive floating or outreach support until they are ready to move on into their own tenancy (which is likely to be shared accommodation for most). A 'core and cluster' approach is sometimes used so that support is easily accessible to young people from the larger supported accommodation they have moved from.
- Floating or flexible support services which are not attached to a particular property and can support young people wherever they are living, including in the family home, and stick with them when their circumstances change.
- 'Housing First'<sup>39</sup> services for young people with complex needs and for whom communal living is not a suitable option. Young people are placed in settled accommodation without any expectation that they should be 'ready' for independent living, and are supported intensively to build from the base of a secure place to live. This model has a strong evidence base for older people with multiple and complex needs and early research shows promising outcomes for some young people. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation estimates scaling up Housing First in the UK could save around £200m per annum after two years in relation to the current group of homeless adults with the most complex needs. In other European countries and the USA considerable cost savings are being claimed for Housing First. These have been demonstrated convincingly in the USA and are consistent with findings in the more limited UK evidence base<sup>40</sup>.

Progression is about planning moves based on individual needs and a readiness to succeed. Young people should be able to move between accommodation options, so if a

---

<sup>39</sup> Housing first is premised on addressing homelessness through solving the housing need on an unconditional basis – provision of settled accommodation to those at risk of chronic long term homeless and then additional support services being available according to needs. See a useful piece on the model here:

<http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2014/oct/20/housing-first-the-counterintuitive-method-for-solving-urban-homelessness>, and a useful think piece on adapting the Housing First model for young people here:

<http://www.feantsaresearch.org/IMG/pdf/think-piece-1-4.pdf>

<sup>40</sup> See the JRF piece on Housing First here:

<https://www.york.ac.uk/media/chp/documents/2015/Housing%20First%20England%20Report%20February%202015.pdf>

move does not work out, they could, in theory, try another type of option. Progression through each option towards independence may be right for some, but for others, their route may be more directly into more independence, with their own front door and a small amount of support to settle in.

The critical point is that there are choices and young people are not 'stuck' in the system, in higher cost, high support provision when they are ready for moving on, because there is not enough housing supply to move them on to. The model allows for young people who need more support moving back into higher support provision, if it looks like they are at high risk of tenancy breakdown in their current accommodation.

A wide range of organisations provide these services, most commonly housing associations, Third Sector and private sector providers. In Wales there are two main local authority commissioning and/or procurement routes for accommodation and support options for young people aged 16 and above:

- the local Supporting People Programme.
- placements for young people who are looked after and leaving care aged 16 and over, commissioned by Children's Social Services.

There is some experience in Wales of bringing some elements of these separate systems together in the interest of improving value for money and increasing the quality and choice of provision in a local area. For example, in Swansea supported lodgings are jointly commissioned and Children's Services fund with Supporting People a local provider, Gwalia, to provide accommodation for care leavers.

By jointly commissioning - agreeing funding from separate budgets or pooling of budgets - another advantage is that the 'cliff edge' of some young people leaving care having to move placements at 18 can also be addressed locally. For those that are not staying with foster carers under the 'When I Am Ready' scheme, leaving care can be 'compressed and accelerated'<sup>41</sup> around the young person's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday as the funding for the placement ends. More streamlined planning and commissioning can address this.

Procurement routes vary between block contracts - usually through Supporting People - and spot purchasing most usually through Children's Services. Prices can vary widely and not necessarily in line with service levels or quality.

Building based supported accommodation is relatively expensive because it comes with a package of support and relatively high housing management costs. These costs are generally met through a combination of local authority funding and service charges and rents. The rent is primarily funded by housing benefit, with the exception of looked after young people and care leavers aged 16/17. But this is a changing picture – the Department for Work and Pensions has announced changes in relation to supported housing costs and housing benefit funding streams in the future, relating to 'exempt' and 'specified' accommodation being outside Universal Credit arrangements<sup>42</sup>.

---

<sup>41</sup> See Stein, M. (2004) What Works for Young People Leaving Care? Barking: Barnardo's

<sup>42</sup> See <http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN06080#fullreport>

Generally supported accommodation is most beneficial for those who are still relatively young and need time to learn life skills to cope with living independently (e.g. 16 – 19 year olds) and also for those with high /medium support needs.

#### **Solas - George Street scheme for young people with complex and multiple needs.**

Funded in part by Newport Supporting People commissioners and also through spot purchasing of beds by other local authorities, the George Street scheme has been developed specifically for young people who are transitioning from care to independence, but particularly for those with complex and multiple needs who are often a risk to themselves or others. The scheme has 8 self contained flats, with a high level of staffing and a clear model or 'theory of change,' rooted in work with young people with complex trauma. See: <http://www.solas-cymru.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/FINAL-GEORGE-BROCHURE-PDF1.pdf>

The scheme has been developed in recognition that for some young people housing related support - even at a high level of support – will not meet the range of needs that they have. Staff are trained to work in a 'psychologically informed' environment with young people and are supervised by an attachment specialist. As well as group work there are one-to-one sessions for young people and/or their families/significant others if appropriate. The aim is to support and work with the young people to help them move on successfully and in a planned way, with the emphasis on training and/or employment.

For more information contact: Charlotte Waite, Director of Children, Young People and Families,  
: [Charlotte.Waite@solas-cymru.co.uk](mailto:Charlotte.Waite@solas-cymru.co.uk)

#### **GISDA – working with young people with complex and multiple needs**

GISDA is a charity working with vulnerable and homeless young people aged 14 – 25 in North Wales. They provide a wide range of different services to young people, including young parents and care leavers, including family mediation, preventative work in schools, confidence building programmes, mentoring for young parents, setting up social enterprises to further youth employment and supported housing projects.

In recognition of complex needs of many young people who are at risk of homelessness and living in supported accommodation in Gwynedd, GISDA have developed a model which is similar to PIE (Psychological Informed Environment) and TIC (Trauma Informed Care). Within their model is an element which focusses on the importance of receiving intense support when moving towards employment.

Since adopting a therapeutic model, GISDA report that it has:

- Meant they could take referrals for young people evicted from other provision
- Developed a range of responses that focus on restorative practice and mediation to avoid formal warnings and evictions

- Been able to move young people between their own services for 'cooling off' periods if needed
- Reduced risk of eviction due to arrears through making access to wi-fi contingent on payment of service charges
- Improved relationships between staff and young people
- Significantly reduced evictions from supported accommodation, despite taking more young people with complex and multiple needs. 2 young people were evicted in the last 2 years.

A service framework and training toolkit for staff is being developed to formalise current practice. The toolkit will ensure that all young people have their own progression pathway that are ambitious and will assist them alongside GISDA's therapeutic support service towards independent living. The progression plan will take into consideration external factors which can influence the ability to move forward towards independent living such as the transition from relying on benefit to employment.

For more information contact: Sian Elen Tomos, [sian@gisda.co.uk](mailto:sian@gisda.co.uk)

**The Isle of Anglesey County Council** has developed a menu of accommodation options for young people, including a scheme for those with complex or multiple needs. A 7 bed supported housing scheme is run by **Digartref** and is located in Llangefni. The project accepts young people with higher levels of need that would, in the majority of cases, be considered too high for placement within other supported housing provision. Young people's needs include substance misuse and/or offending, mental health problems, including self-harm and extremely challenging behaviours. The service has been commissioned since May 2013, and from the outset has involved a multi-agency allocation panel which meets to consider referrals and general sharing of information, good practice on a monthly basis or when a vacancy arises. Agencies represented on the Group include Children Services, Housing Services, Mental Health Services, Youth Offending, Supporting People commissioners, Probation and Digartref as the service provider. Demand for this service has been much higher than initially anticipated and the referral process must be via one of the statutory agencies mentioned above. However, feedback from the above agencies has been extremely complementary and the level of outcomes measured against the Supporting People National Framework has been very positive. The void levels have been negligible, and given the level of challenging needs presented by some of the young people accessing the service, the results achieved within this project is testament to the commitment and dedication of the service provider and the willingness of all partner agencies to work together to ensure the best possible outcomes to these challenging but highly vulnerable young people.

In addition to 7 bed scheme there is also a cluster of two properties which can be used as a move-on/ 'step-down' resource or for a young person who is either of lower risk, or is better suited to a non-shared environment or maybe pregnant.

For more information please contact: Arwel Jones, Principal Development Officer, Housing Services, Isle of Anglesey County Council : [RArwel.Jones@ynysmon.gov.uk](mailto:RArwel.Jones@ynysmon.gov.uk)

For 16/17 year olds in particular, there is a strong argument for most to remain in supported accommodation until they are well prepared and equipped to succeed. Apart from having the life skills and maturity to succeed living independently, the legal age at which a tenancy can be granted is 18<sup>43</sup>.

<sup>43</sup> Generally, a tenancy is created in law automatically when a person is given the right to occupy accommodation with exclusive occupation for a period in return for rent. However, a 16/17 year old cannot hold a legal estate in land and this means they cannot hold a legal tenancy. The landlord may grant a legal tenancy to a trustee to hold on behalf of the 16/17 until he or she reaches 18.

There will be local arrangements about how long a young person can stay in this provision. Supporting People commissioners monitor the lengths of stay in supported housing provision. Often a maximum of 2 years is cited, but many young people need less time than this in the higher cost, higher support provision, but are not quite ready for their own tenancy.

It is anecdotally reported that within the current benefits system high rents often associated with supported accommodation costs can be a significant barrier to young people entering low paid work. This is where 'step down', lower cost and lower support provision is a good option.

#### **'Step down' shared housing – progression from larger supported accommodation schemes**

**Vale of Glamorgan Council** have leased properties from private landlords for young people to move in to as a 'step down' from higher cost supported housing schemes. Young people share these properties, which enables them to move more readily into training and employment.

Contact: Ian Jones, Housing Solutions Manager, Vale of Glamorgan Council:  
[ILJones@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk](mailto:ILJones@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk)

The **Clwyd Alyn** Isallt scheme in Llandudno provides 12 units of supported accommodation and 13 units of floating support in 'move on' accommodation for young people. This model is one which potentially gives young people more progression into less supported provision before their own tenancy and is a 'step down' from higher cost supported accommodation and can reduce the risk of 'occupancy blocking' in the accommodation. Contact Scott Robinson, Manager of Issalt, [Scott.Robinson@clwydalyn.co.uk](mailto:Scott.Robinson@clwydalyn.co.uk)

Practice and research has shown that young people are particularly at risk of repeat homelessness, financial hardship and debt following resettlement. Research by Kings College, London showed that young people were more than twice as likely as older groups to experience repeat homelessness and much more likely to accrue debt in the 5 years following resettlement from supported accommodation<sup>44</sup>. There is a real challenge for providers to ensure young people are ready to move on into other types of accommodation and sustain it.

In order to reduce the risk of tenancy failure, there are lots of different types of pre tenancy training courses that local authorities and social landlords have developed.

Some are more directed at those who may be moving into social housing – like MyPad (see below) but the Renting Ready national programme developed by the homelessness charity Crisis is specifically aimed at single people who will be renting from private landlords.

<sup>44</sup> See Rebuilding Lives by Crane et al of Kings College London (2015)  
[http://centrepoin.org.uk/media/1450188/rebuilding\\_lives\\_report.pdf](http://centrepoin.org.uk/media/1450188/rebuilding_lives_report.pdf)

### **Renting Ready - Denbighshire**

An officer in Denbighshire County Council is working with Crisis and is getting trained to deliver the Renting Ready programme locally. See: <http://www.crisis.org.uk/pages/pre-tenancy-training.html>

In addition Denbighshire County Council has procured an empty homes property with North Wales Housing for sharing as a training house, the plan is for single people to be trained in the shared house, then move in to leased accommodation and then - if all goes well - to take on an AST after 12 months. For more information please contact John Sweeney, Manager of the Housing Solutions Services: [John.sweeney@denbighshire.gov.uk](mailto:John.sweeney@denbighshire.gov.uk)

### **MyPad – Newport**

A number of agencies in Newport have worked in partnership to develop the award winning MyPad project, which offers pre-tenancy training to young people under 25. Following some research into tenancy failure amongst young people in the city, Charter Housing, Newport City Council, Supporting People, Newport City Homes, Linc-Cymru, and Melin have worked together since 2012 to deliver a programme, which takes young people through budgeting, legal aspects of being a tenant, practical skills and then a visit to an empty flat to put their learning into a realistic context.

A visit to Wastesavers, a local furniture recycling project, is part of the course and young people can consider volunteering which may help in obtaining employment. Learning is through debate, a quiz and a film and once rehoused young people receive a voucher from Wastesavers in order to help with setting up their home.

For more information please contact: [mypad@charterhousing.co.uk](mailto:mypad@charterhousing.co.uk)

In supported accommodation, each young person should have their own named support worker and a support plan and be working to agreed goals around for example, their life skills, education, training and employment, health, relationships and emotional well-being. Commissioners are increasingly looking for outcomes beyond housing related support and are focussing on success in education and training and provision of support around emotional well-being. This is where joint commissioning can make an impact on positive outcomes across a range of domains ( see Appendix 3 for an example of an outcomes framework).

Young people advise that as a general rule, the floating support they receive is most effective when it's flexible and able to respond to changing circumstances, rather than be a relatively rigid block of agreed support hours per week.

### **Conwy Vulnerable Peoples Service**

Most local authorities and their partners recognise that at the point of transition to adulthood there is a gap in service provision for vulnerable young people, who often display chaotic and challenging behaviours. Their needs are not high enough to get statutory adult services but they are too vulnerable to manage independently and need more than housing related support. Conwy's new

Vulnerable People's team aims to provide a service to some of the most vulnerable and excluded people in the community in Conwy, including young people, who can fall between the gaps in thresholds for adult statutory services.

The new Service in Conwy is built on learning and data from the Vulnerable Adult Panel, set up in 2010. With the imminent introduction of the Social Care and Well Being Act in 2016, Conwy evaluated current service provision and reorganised team structures to meet the identified unmet need for vulnerable people, including young people. Social workers and occupational therapists who had expressed an interest were given the opportunity to apply to work in the newly established team, which has a creative multi-agency approach to supporting vulnerable people in the community.

The multi-agency Vulnerable People's Panel meets on a monthly basis with regular attendance from the following:

- Disability service
- Older peoples service
- Mental health service
- Fire service
- Police
- Housing
- Environmental health
- Substance misuse.

Complex cases are discussed within the Panel and strategies to support individuals in the community are developed. Where there are risks identified separate risk planning meetings are held. Where individuals have dual diagnosis it is possible within the panel to agree for joint assessments to be completed between teams rather than batting them between teams.

There is close work with the Youth Offending Team and a referral process is being developed so young people can be supported by the appropriate team in a timely manner. Work with a local school aims to identifying young people who may have traditionally fallen through the net.

Through developing an understanding of what young people need, a partnership with a local housing association and care provider has led to a new service development, Kick Start. In June 2016 a new supported living house for young care leavers will open. The house will be part of a general needs housing development and as the young people develop their skills this will give them the opportunity to move into available accommodation on the site where there are a number of individual flats with floating support from the house. This Project gives 4 young people the opportunity to move out of foster care and residential care to start their development journey which will ultimately lead to successful independent living.

The success of developing the Vulnerable Peoples service has been possible due to the commitment of Senior Managers to meet the needs of this client group and the level of support.

The team itself has minimum access to a care budget and therefore the members of the team are reliant on themselves as a social work and OT resource to address the needs of the clients. They are particularly creative and make strong links with Third Sector organisations to enable their clients to access the universal services available in the community.

For more information please contact:

Tesni Hadwin, Service Manager, Conway County Borough Council [tesni.hadwin@conwy.gov.uk](mailto:tesni.hadwin@conwy.gov.uk)  
Or Cathy Roberts, Section Manager [cathy.roberts@conwy.gov.uk](mailto:cathy.roberts@conwy.gov.uk)

## Considerations and tips

- A 'gateway' or single access point into all supported accommodation is very useful in order to provide:
  - Better use of limited resources, ensuring those with the highest needs access the services they need
  - Improved safeguarding, with a shared knowledge of potential risk, agreed approaches to managing risk and knowledge of who is placed where
  - Prompt and appropriate filling of voids
- Joint commissioning and joint delivery by a range of public sector commissioners enhances positive outcomes, beyond the traditional 'housing related support' function. This does not mean necessarily new monies for this client group, but a realignment of service provision to pro-actively reach and then support effectively young people who are living in supported accommodation or receiving floating support. This should include care leavers as well as other young people. These are the young people all over Wales who are highest risk of poor outcomes in later life – e.g. unemployment, mental health and physical health problems, homelessness and involvement in the criminal justice system.
- Examples of joint commissioning and more integrated delivery of existing services around support to young people not able to live at home or in care include:
  - Children's Services for looked after 16 /17 year olds so they do not hit a 'cliff edge' at 18 and for suitable alternative to custodial remand options for young people aged 16/17
  - Health commissioning - in particular mental health and substance misuse services
  - Training and employment support
  - Adult Social Care, where young people meet the thresholds for services
  - Criminal justice agencies – e.g. Wales Community Rehabilitation Company and the National Probation Service, who need to ensure there is not only accommodation but appropriate support for young people coming out of custody, or as an alternative to custody. Many of these young people have multiple needs.
- To reduce duplication and improve joint working and data collection, a shared referral form and common risk assessment process between all housing related support providers could be useful. This firstly stops young people having to 'tell their story' several times but can also help to pick up any trends regarding the changes to the length of stay for young people, outcomes and any links to, for example, increased repeat presentations/homelessness.
- To avoid unplanned moves and evictions, local authorities can develop with their providers a 'planned move' protocol, to ensure that any risks of eviction are minimised through pre-empting difficulties together. This is very important to reduce the risk of the most vulnerable young people going into unsuitable short stay accommodation – including bed and breakfast and all age night shelters. Where there is only one provider in a local authority, and there is a risk that eviction would mean no other options at all, it could be set out in their contract that young people are not excluded from the whole

provision, just individual schemes and this is only by agreement with the commissioners. There are examples of this to draw on e.g. Depaul UK in the London borough of Greenwich.

- It is very helpful to all parties to hold regular multi-agency 'panel' meetings to discuss young people coming in to and at risk of falling out of their local pathway. This usually includes care leavers at the point of leaving care and young offenders due to come out of custody, as well as other young people. It can also be used for agreeing who is ready for move on.
- Some local authorities have found 'move-on panels' helpful to assess which young people are ready for move-on and identify the most suitable options. These could be linked to a local private rented access scheme and/or social lettings agency, so young people can access rent deposits or bonds.
- In order to prepare young people for sharing with others as their move on option, provider organisations could consider adjusting their pre-tenancy training. There is useful learning from the Crisis 'Sharing Solutions' evaluation and toolkit<sup>45</sup>.

#### **Move on panels:**

Many local authorities now have 'move on' panels, including the **Vale of Glamorgan**. Representatives from Housing, Children's Services and local providers, Llamau and Gwalia meet monthly to discuss cases of young people who are put forward as ready for a move into independence. It is no longer assumed social housing will be the destination for young people and through CanDo lettings (Cadwyn Housing Association) there is increased access into the private rented sector.

In **Caerphilly**, if the Move On Panel's decision is that a young person is not quite ready for their own tenancy, a creative solution has been found by the local authority's Temporary Accommodation Manager. Some young people who are almost ready are offered a further 'progression' step - a short term trial of living independently. They try living by themselves in self-contained temporary accommodation to see how they manage. If and when it's agreed with the Temporary Accommodation Manager that they are ready, they go back to the Panel with evidence of how they have managed.

---

<sup>45</sup> See <http://www.crisis.org.uk/pages/sharing-solutions-programme.html>

## 5) A Range of Housing Options

### The service:

A range of safe, decent, affordable housing options, shared and some self-contained, in the private and social housing sectors. Where the market doesn't provide, the offer is shaped through local housing strategies and partnerships to create options for young people starting out on low incomes. This may include creative approaches such as partnerships with learning providers, employers and employment services to link the provision of accommodation to opportunities for learning and work. There are connections with the flexible floating /outreach support provided Stage 4 in case young people need it.

### The results:

Young people are economically active and have suitable homes that they can afford - they can build for their future.

### **What young people said**

- *Young people need to meet the other people that they are going to be sharing with*
- *We have to find a way to make sharing work*
- *'Having a mate but then sharing with a mate isn't always going to work'*
- *Mediation support could be good – so if things are starting to go sour in the house there is more help to sort it out*
- *You need to work with landlords so they understand more about what can make sharing work*
- *Young people could be in a circle of homelessness when the changes to housing benefit for 18 – 21s come in 2017*

### **Description**

The underpinning feature of this section is of young people being in safe, decent and affordable accommodation. For most that means staying in the family home and delaying a move, but we are concerned here with young people that are unlikely to have that option.

There are many journeys and routes into more independent accommodation. Most young people move on independently, with the support of their family, without ever needing housing advice/options services or living in supported accommodation. But some young people who ask for help from a Housing Options Service could be assisted to access accommodation – the type of available accommodation will vary depending on local circumstances and supply. Other young people who are living in specialist supported accommodation or 'progression' accommodation will see this as their final 'move on' option and may have worked towards 'move-on' for months or years.

The overriding linked issues for all young people are that of local supply and of affordability – can a young person find decent, safe accommodation and can they manage their financial commitments in the long-term in their accommodation?

As housing markets tighten and affordability grows as a challenge there is a need to think creatively and pro-actively about how to generate suitable, affordable housing options for young people starting out on low incomes.

Owner occupation and shared ownership options are a long way off - if on the radar at all - for most young people, and renting in the private or social sector is the default option. In the face of the imminent welfare reform changes that will impact on young people<sup>46</sup>, local authorities and partnerships will need to continue to work hard to find ways of making the rented market more accessible for young people, for example through:

- Ensuring young people are tenancy-ready - through accredited pre-tenancy training on managing finances and other living skills ( see examples above) and critically an engagement in education, training and/or employment
- Pro-active support of schemes to increase the supply of shared private rented accommodation available to young people
- Introducing sharing options in social housing, using existing stock and/or leasing
- Promoting lodgings as an option

An emerging approach is specially developed accommodation for young people in learning or work, often in partnership between landlords and learning providers and/or employers. - This can provide low cost, shared housing for young people as a stepping stone as they start out into independence. Features of this type of provision could include:

- Affordability - the rents need to be low, pegged at the Local Housing Allowance level or a level truly affordable for young people. Local analysis of young people's income levels as part of the development of any scheme is essential in this.
- Some enhanced housing management and "light touch" support possibly via a 'peer' or 'lead' tenant, or a college or training provider. Commonweal Housing<sup>47</sup> have funded 2 agencies in London to run Peer Landlord schemes. This is a model which could be replicated anywhere and is well worth considering as a low cost option<sup>48</sup>.
- Strong links with FE colleges, apprenticeship programmes, training providers and Job Centre Plus and whilst still available, any European funded programmes around youth employment
- Referral routes could be linked exclusively to these partnerships.
- Investment in the social fabric of the scheme, for example in mentors and positive role models or 'lead tenants' (see above), a social area, a residents' committee with a small budget.

---

<sup>46</sup> Ending of automatic entitlement to housing costs for 18 – 21s in 2017 and the capping of social rents to the LHA rates in 2018, including the SAR for under 35s.

<sup>47</sup> See the report of the programme here; <https://www.commonwealhousing.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/FINAL-PEER-LANDLORD-SUMMARY-REPORT-OF-KEY-POINTS-AND-LEARNING-JUNE-2016-8-6-16.pdf>

<sup>48</sup> See: <https://www.commonwealhousing.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/FINAL-PEER-LANDLORD-SUMMARY-REPORT-OF-KEY-POINTS-AND-LEARNING-JUNE-2016-8-6-16.pdf>

- An ethos of study, work and aspiration, perhaps supported by evening classes and access to a range of learning and development opportunities on the premises.
- IT facilities
- Help to find and move on to more settled accommodation

Locally different types of accommodation could be available, dependent on supply and availability, including clusters of small shared units, larger blocks of accommodation or shared houses.

#### **EXAMPLE The 'Live and Work' Scheme**

St Basils and Sandwell & West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust have developed a ground breaking new scheme to offer homeless young people both paid apprenticeships and nearby accommodation, making good use of formerly empty ex-nurses lodgings which have been renovated.

This innovative new scheme was funded through a grant from the English Government's Empty Homes Community Grant Programme (EHCGP) to renovate empty properties on the hospital site. 27 young people have moved into the scheme and share the accommodation but it is hoped the partnership will continue and through the learning from this first scheme, be replicated elsewhere.

Young people live benefit free as the rents have been deflated to an affordable level for young apprentices. See: <http://www.stbasils.org.uk/how-we-help/our-services/live-and-work/>

**Sharing** of social housing amongst young people is not well developed in most areas of the UK and at the time of writing imminent welfare reform changes make development of schemes a challenge for landlords. Sharing schemes tend to focus on 'move on' from supported accommodation or housing for vulnerable young people. These are important but just as essential are more 'general needs' sharing options for young people, who just need low cost, decent shared housing at the Local Housing Allowance rate, rather than higher cost supported housing. In relation to sharing, a very useful research report with recommendations is available on the Community Housing Cymru website<sup>49</sup>.

At the time of writing there are a number of small scale examples in Wales to draw on, which aim to provide housing for those moving on from larger supported accommodation schemes.

Where young people live, access to public transport and what sort of local amenities are available (e.g. public transport, shopping, primary health services), proximity to support networks are important factors, as these will impact on any assessment of the ability to be economically active and affordability overall.

<sup>49</sup> See: <http://chcymru.org.uk/en/view-news/chc-and-wlga-viable-housing-model-research>

## **Hafod – trialling of sharing models**

### **Shared Accommodation - Hafod Housing Association**

Hafod Housing Association has trialed several different models of shared accommodation and is learning from all of them. Like every social landlord who has embarked on sharing as an option, learning from what works – and what doesn't - is critical.

Partnership and a clear understanding of roles and responsibilities between partners is a key learning point through all the examples below.

### **Shared social housing:**

A small pilot of shared social housing in one local authority incurred a number of losses for Hafod through:

- Loss of rent through rent arrears
- Loss of rent through void loss
- Additional management time
- Additional void works
- Council Tax costs

The Association has been cautious about repeating this pilot but is in discussions with other local authorities. The pilot highlighted a number of issues:

- The Shared Accommodation pilot did not financially stack up for Hafod
- Local authorities need to relax the housing need criteria when looking at nominations to shared accommodation, the compatibility of potential tenants should be balanced with housing need
- Concentrating single persons with high needs in shared accommodation brings greater risks
- Local authorities need to consider the development of shared accommodation to rehouse all single persons under 35 not just those who are homeless / high needs etc.
- Local authorities need to consider how they can help reduce the risks for landlords to manage shared accommodation
- Local authorities should consider the provision of supporting people packages for single under 35s in shared accommodation

**Further information contact Michelle Holmes, email [michelle.holmes@hafod.org.uk](mailto:michelle.holmes@hafod.org.uk)**

**Leasing of private rented accommodation:** Piloting of a scheme in one authority offers settled shared accommodation in private rented housing, managed by Hafod.

Again, there have been lessons learnt through the pilot but the scheme is due to continue. Advice from this scheme is that 3 or at most 4 is the optimum number for sharing but this is led by the landlord and the return they expect for letting their property through the scheme. Initially there were too many partners involved in the scheme which made the boundaries blurred in terms of who was responsible for different elements. The re-launched scheme has some modifications, including CCTV.

This model has been subsidised by the local authority to attract private landlords and offset any management losses and Hafod has been paid a management fee. Without subsidy this initiative is unlikely to succeed.

Hafod also lease a 5 bed property in one area from a private landlord, in order to provide temporary accommodation to single homelessness people of all ages. Whilst modelled differently due to the temporary accommodation subsidy, there are useful lessons to be learned from this in terms of intensive housing management of a larger sharing house.

**For Further information contact Diana Turner, email [diana.turner@hafod.org.uk](mailto:diana.turner@hafod.org.uk)**

## Considerations and tips

- Landlords – both social and private - are increasingly concerned about young people's ability to afford accommodation. Affordability checks on prospective tenants are sometimes undertaken and some young people might not be offered tenancies due to their low incomes and their ability to manage payment of rent now and in the future. High quality pre-tenancy training on financial management will assist young people as future tenants and could be accredited. Many providers of supported accommodation have programmes but these can be optional. However, some local partnerships, often through move-on panels, are making move-on offers dependent on completion of a pre-tenancy training scheme.
- It is reported that there is limited understanding amongst some professionals regarding options beyond a tenancy in self-contained social housing, which in turn creates an expectation amongst young people that social housing is the only or best option. This means discussion of other options including the option of sharing of accommodation is not happening routinely in many areas, and issues of affordability in the private rented sector may not be part of any preparation work.
- Settled accommodation implies independence and the ability to manage with no or very minimal support. A short period of floating support is often needed for some young people to help them settle in, and ideally for continuity, their key worker from the previous accommodation provides this.
- It is recognised that some young people, for example, those who are disabled or have enduring mental health problems, will always need support, but moving into their own settled accommodation, even with a higher level of floating support, is the ambition for the vast majority of young people. A Housing First model for those with complex and multiple needs offering flexible tapering support would fit here.
- Sharing in social housing could be developed by housing associations and the local authority as an option for some young people. It can help to address affordability and better use of stock. Some examples of sharing accommodation for the longer term are outlined above as examples. In addition see the Crisis report, 'Spare to Share' on shared social housing here: <http://www.crisis.org.uk/pages/spare-to-share.html> and also read the new report commissioned by Welsh Local Government Association and Community Housing Cymru here: <http://chcymru.org.uk/en/view-news/chc-and-wlga-viable-housing-model-research>
- Young people will need to buy furniture and white goods in order to settle in to a new home. Applications to the Discretionary Assistance Fund<sup>50</sup> can be made for those leaving care and supported accommodation. Additional sources of funding are limited and unless providers assist young people in saving up and accessing local furniture schemes and charitable grants, the experience of setting up a home is likely to be very difficult. Lack of basic furnishings and household equipment can make tenancy failure more likely.

---

<sup>50</sup> See: <http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/communities/debt/discretionary-assistance-fund/?lang=en>

- Crisis have developed a number of useful tools to assist in setting up private rented sector sharing schemes. The Crisis 'Sharing Solutions' programme published an evaluation and toolkit in March 2015. This is based on 8 private rented sector sharing schemes piloted in 2014/15. Both publications provide invaluable insights into what makes sharing work – or not. Models of sharing include peer tenants/lead tenants and lodgings. They can be accessed here:  
<http://www.crisis.org.uk/pages/sharing-solutions-good-practice.html>
- Given the difficulty for young people under 25 on low incomes accessing the private rented sector, there could be a more specialist offer to private landlords to take young people which provides additional landlord incentives in relation to young people as tenants. There are 2 useful Private Rented Sector toolkit documents that Crisis have developed: <http://www.crisis.org.uk/pages/prs-toolkit.html> . The 2012 toolkit aimed at access for young people into the private rented sector is still useful although there are changes more recently in relation to welfare reform that should be taken into account when reading this:  
<http://www.crisis.org.uk/data/files/publications/PRS%20Youth%20Homelessness%20Toolkit.pdf>
- Crisis has also developed a free toolkit for how to deliver an information session for staff supporting clients to move on into private rented sector accommodation. It includes useful templates ranging from agendas, presentations, feedback forms and a myth-busting quiz, plus provides a useful overview on the private rented sector. This toolkit can be used by anyone looking to organise and deliver an information session to support staff who want to improve their knowledge about and confidence in the private rented sector.

## Appendix One

The table below is taken from some research: *'Pathways into multiple exclusion homelessness in seven UK cities'* by Suzanne Fitzpatrick; Glen Bramley and Sarah Johnsen. Published 2013, Urban Studies.

**Table 4. Multiple Exclusion Homelessness -relevant experiences and median age of first occurrence - 452 people across 7 different UK cities**

Experience	% this applied to	Median age
1. Abused solvents, gas or glue	23	15
2. Left local authority care	16	17
3. Thrown out by parents/carers	36	17
4. Had sex or engaged in sex act in exchange for money, drugs, etc.	10	17
5. Involved in street drinking	53	18
6. Used hard drugs	44	19
7. Had a period in life when had six or more alcoholic drinks on a daily basis	63	20
8. Stayed with friends or relatives because had no home of own	77	20
9. Shoplifted because needed things like food, drugs, alcohol or money for somewhere to stay	38	20
10. Were a victim of violent crime (including domestic violence)	43	20
11. Went to prison	46	21
12. Had a period in life when very anxious or depressed	79	22
13. Injected drugs	27	22
14. Slept rough	77	26
15. Admitted to hospital because of a mental health issue	29	26
16. Made redundant	23	26
17. Applied to the council as homeless	72	27
18. Stayed at a hostel, foyer, refuge, night shelter or B&B hotel	84	28
19. Begged (that is, asked passers-by for money in the street or another public place)	32	28
20. Evicted from a rented property	25	28

21. Experienced bankruptcy	6	29
22. Divorced or separated	44	32
23. Home was repossessed	6	34
24. A long-term partner died	10	43

## **Appendix Two:**

### **Planning to end the use of Bed and Breakfast – some suggestions:**

Please note this is with thanks to Swansea County and City Council - some of the content for the suggestions below have been taken from their pilot work to reduce B&B usage.

#### **1. Write a simple statement of corporate intention regarding ending use of Bed and Breakfast for 16/17s and 18 – 21s**

- Short statement outlining the corporate intention in terms of reducing/ending use of B&B.
- Ensure leading Elected Members and senior officers are aware of this and ideally directly involved in this.

#### **2. Consider if you want any terms of reference for any group that will oversee your plan to reduce B&B use**

#### **3. Where are you now? Create a summary position statement:**

For example:

- Why you are using B&B, in what circumstances?
- Which groups of young people?
- How many young people in 2015/16 were placed and by which part of the local authority?
- How many were placed within your local authority area, how many outside your local authority area?
- How many nights in total per year?
- Current cost of using B&B and any other information on costs ( e.g. if funding is used to buy in additional support for young people whilst in B&B).
- Where do young people end up living after time in B&B? Map out some of their journeys out of B&B – it can be very telling in terms of your whole accommodation pathway and commissioning.

#### **4. Summary of actions that will be taken to end the use of B&B**

For example:

- New reporting arrangements to senior managers and/or Elected Members.
- New authorisation procedures – for example, a senior officer authorising and limiting placement authorisation into B&B for 48 hours at a time.
- Improved planning and contingency planning - predicting those at high risk before they are in crisis, including young people coming out of custody.
- Use of a multi-agency 'Panel' meeting for some cases to manage risks and plan moves.
- Additional support to be offered to avoid use e.g. through Families First/family support/targeted youth support /floating support providers.

- Variation of contracts with supported accommodation providers to increase number of short stay/immediate access beds – changing the assumption on utilisation to ensure providers are not under pressure to fill voids – emergency beds need to be EMPTY to be available so need to be void for longer periods of time - this will cost more than other beds where housing benefit can be claimed.
- Variation of contracts with supported accommodation providers to enable admissions of young people out of office hours.
- Variation of contracts to re-focus support on those at high risk of B&B use due to eviction from supported accommodation.
- Reducing risks of placement breakdown for looked after children aged 16/17 and care leavers living in 'When I am Ready' arrangements - do you have accessible and effective mediation services available for this group?
- Reducing risks of eviction from other Supporting People provision through joint actions to plan moves where necessary before eviction, or add in additional support for young people.
- Would development of an accredited Nightstop locally be a useful addition - and could it be done across local authority boundaries to create a larger but more cost effective scheme?
- Piloting some actions and making a business case for mainstreaming successful changes.

## 5. Reporting and evidencing activity:

**Note that the Welsh Government now require all local authorities to report their use of B&B amongst young people on a quarterly basis – this includes both Children's Services and Housing.**

How will you report the impact of any changes, to whom and how often? Will Elected Members and senior officers be made aware?

What are your measures for success:

Short term ( e.g. 6 months)

Medium term ( e.g. 12 months)

Longer term ( e.g. 12 – 24 months)

## 6. Making the case:

Cost benefit analysis is not a science but a way of trying to understand costs in terms of both fiscal/cash costs to the public sector but also public value costs ( social and economic costs), which can include fiscal costs but also outcome costs such as engaging in training, improved health, reduced offending or less homelessness.

If you want to make a simple/basic cost benefit business case for ending the use of bed and breakfast, the best place to get information is here:

<http://neweconomymanchester.com/media/1443/2765-pu1617-cba-guidance-020414-1312-final.pdf>

And see here for a unit cost database – although you may have your own local unit costs available:

Below are some suggestions based on the approach Swansea took:

- Identify all the agencies involved in the current 'business as usual' provision of B&B and determine their unit costs per young person in B&B
- Identify the numbers in B&B over last year and total days used.
- Calculate the costs of B&B, including all the costs of staff time spent trying to AVOID the use of B&B.
- Add in any additional support that you have put in to support B&B placements in staff time.
- Make it real – and challenge your assumptions - by doing some costed case studies of two or more young people in B&B currently or in the last year, in terms of what happened, why they were placed, the costs of interventions and support as well as the B&B costs, during and after their placements in B&B, as far as you can work these out.
- You need to go beyond simply the accommodation and support, funding (in cash and kind) and look at unit costs around for example, health, housing/homelessness, criminal justice involvement.
- This all informs the 'Business As Usual' costing exercise.

b) Provision of additional service(s) to avoid the use of B&B

- Assess the new service delivery model, with the aim of identifying the same sorts of unit cost metric(s) as the Business as Usual case ( e.g. accommodation, support, homelessness prevention funding/ Children's Social Care funding, benefit claims).
- You could then also do case studies of young people where B&B was avoided and any cost benefits of the alternatives ( NB this is not so much about fiscal 'cashable' or 'non cashable' savings as its unlikely these will be extensive or accurate, but more about outcomes and any Public Value benefit of these).
- Again, you need to go beyond simply the accommodation and support, funding (in cash and kind) and look at costs around for example, health, housing/homelessness, criminal justice involvement, case reviews meetings.
- Challenge any assumptions of things that could have happened/not happened anyway in the 'business as usual' B&B provision (known as 'deadweight'). This helps to not overstate the impact of the new service delivery for young people.

## Appendix Three

### Example of an outcome framework for a local Positive Pathway

NB this will need to link to the Well Being National Indicators which can be found here:

<http://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/160316-national-indicators-to-be-laid-before-nafw-en.pdf>

Not all of the suggestions below will fit with your local structures and performance management processes. It is for information only where local authorities, with their partners wish to consider a shared set of outcomes for this group.

### **The overall impact: Young people in your area are in education, training or are economically active**

The rationale:

Poverty is a key determinant: it increases the risk of poor outcomes across all other areas of young people's lives: health, education, community safety, and housing.

Economic activity must be our over-arching desired impact for young people and for the local area– it can help to break the cycle of deprivation. This will increase the possibility of positive outcomes.

### **As many young people as possible live at home or with their carers until they are ready to leave in a planned way**

#### **Descriptor of activity along the Positive Pathway:**

Young people are planning their further education, training and employment routes and alongside this understand their future housing options because...

- They are getting relevant, easy to understand information about their housing choices and the financial considerations of these from a range of sources.
- They know where to go for more in-depth advice and help.
- Parents and professionals who work with young people understand housing options and the real challenges of leaving home at a young age and can advise young people.
- Families where teenagers are at high risk of homelessness have access within their local area to support through the Families First and/or Integrated Family Support Service programmes, family mediation and practical advice and help.

- The 'single front door' e.g. a one stop shop/youth hub has access to a range of prevention tools including signposting young people at high risk of leaving home in an unplanned way to and community based support (e.g. Families First programme or Integrated Family Support Service), family mediation, money advice, youth support etc.

### **Suggested measures to choose from:**

- ✓ Young people report a good understanding of housing options and affordability issues (*NB this is qualitative and would need to be done via snapshot surveys or monitoring through feedback*)
- ✓ Reduction in the number of young people presenting as homeless (*collected from your 'single front door' e.g a one stop shop/youth hub*)
- ✓ Reduction in number of homelessness assessments (s62 Housing Act 2014) and children's care and support assessments (s21 Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014) undertaken (*Housing Authorities and Children's Social Services*)
- ✓ Planned moves from family home or care increase (*a baseline would be needed and agreement about how to collect as it would involve other early intervention and support services, not only your 'single front door' e.g. one stop shop/youth hub*)
- ✓ Young people are prevented from homelessness and do not re-present to the single front door e.g. one stop shop/youth hub within 6 months

## **Young people have good physical and emotional well-being**

### **Descriptor of activity along the Positive Pathway:**

Young people who leave home or care at a young age have good physical and emotional well-being because...

- They understand their individual health needs and how to seek advice or help when needed.

- They are able to undertake activities which promote good physical health – physical exercise, healthy eating.
- They can see /experience their lives moving forward positively, which helps promote their emotional well being.
- They have social networks which support their emotional well being.
- When they need someone – a trusted adult - to talk to, they know who they can contact.

### **Some suggested measures to choose from**

Some suggestions for young people living in supported accommodation or receiving floating support:

- ✓ Registered with GP and dental service (*Supporting People contracted providers with links to the Leaving Care Service and Youth Offending/Justice Service*)
- ✓ Improved physical health (*Supporting People commissioners, information via Local Health Boards, Public Health Wales services and providers could be self-reported through a snapshot questionnaire e.g. a strengths and difficulties questionnaire*)
- ✓ Improved emotional health and well-being (*CAMHS, Mental Health Services, Supporting People commissioners, Public Health Wales and providers, could be self-reported through a snapshot questionnaire e.g. a strengths and difficulties questionnaire*)
- ✓ Reduced levels of substance misuse – or increased access to substance misuse services (*Providers and specialist substance misuse services for young people*)
- ✓ Increased access to sexual health services OR reduction in levels of sexually transmitted infections e.g. chlamydia - (*your local sexual health services*)

**Young people feel safe and contribute positively within their local community**

**Descriptor of activity along the Positive Pathway:**

Young people who leave home or care at a young age feel safe and contribute to others feeling safe because...

- Their individual levels of vulnerability and risk are well understood by those professionals with whom they work.
- There are systems in place to ensure there is a multi-agency response to those at high risk of significant harm, including young people aged 18 and over.
- Young people have been supported to understand how to make safe choices in all areas of their lives - including through social networking, targeting by gangs, bullying and sexual exploitation - and know where to go for help and advice.
- If a young person is at risk of offending/re-offending or anti-social behaviour, a multi-agency response and support to prevent and divert them is available.

### **Some suggested measures to choose from**

Some suggestions for young people living in supported accommodation or in their own accommodation aged under 25

- ✓ Reduction in first time entrants to the youth justice system, re-offending and youth custody rates (*Youth Offending/Justice Service, National Probation Service and Wales CRC*)
- ✓ Reduction in number of young people who are victims of crime including sexual exploitation (*Local Safeguarding Board, Police and Children's Social Services*)
- ✓ Young people report feeling safe (Supporting People commissioners providers) (*self-reported through a snapshot ,e.g. use of a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire*)

## Young people live in decent, safe, affordable accommodation

### Descriptor of activity along the Positive Pathway:

Young people live in decent, safe accommodation which they can afford on their income because...

- They have planned for their moves based on accurate and realistic information and knowledge.
- They have had some choice about where they live and the type of tenure.
- They have undertaken independent living skills training including financial literacy/budgeting.
- They have been assessed as able to afford and manage their tenancy/accommodation.
- If they are sharing accommodation with others, including returning to family, they have the skills to share successfully and know how to get help if needed.
- They have been encouraged to save prior to moving in.
- If needed they can access funds, or affordable loans via a Credit Union, or in kind help, to set up their new home.
- There is resettlement support and floating support if needed.
- They know where to go for help at an early point if things start to go wrong.

### Measures

Some suggestions for young people living in supported accommodation or in their own accommodation aged under 25:

- ✓ Reduction in social landlord tenancy failure rates amongst under 25s in bedsits and one bed accommodation (*Housing Authority with other local social landlords*)
- ✓ Reduction in Private Rented Sector tenancy failure where this is the housing option/move on option (*Housing Authority*)
- ✓ Reduction in repeat presentations to the local authority (e.g. at the one stop shop/youth hub) of young people after 6 months, 12 months and 18 months for young people who have had their own tenancy? (e.g. *one stop shop/youth hub*)
- ✓ Young people are satisfied with their housing outcome – (*Access to decent housing and some choice - measured by snapshot survey/focus group*) Who would take responsibility for this?)

## Young people are engaged in education, training or are economically active

### Descriptor of activity along the Positive Pathway:

Young people who have to leave home or care at a young age are confident and motivated to achieve their career aspirations because....

- They understand their strengths, challenges and the pathway to success they want to pursue.
- They have advice and support to assist them to make decisions.
- They have basic skills – literacy and numeracy.
- They have good social and job skills – communication, time keeping, reliability.
- They know where they can get help if they have a set back.

### Measures

Some suggestions for young people living in supported accommodation or receiving floating support whilst with parents/family home or living more independently:

- ✓ Engaged in education or training aged 16 – 19 (*Supporting People commissioners with providers – needs to link to other local authority services e.g. Children's Services and local employment, education and training data collection*)
- ✓ Engaged in employment, further education or training aged 19, 20 and 21 (*Supporting People commissioners with providers – needs to link to other local authority services e.g. Children's Services and local employment, education and training data collection*)