



SUPPORTING LONDON'S CARE LEAVERS

SEPTEMBER 2026 ISSUE

We use this space to help develop a 'community parenting' approach, bringing together the wide range of partners who support care experienced young people in London. We share news, great practice, and look to spark new initiatives to support our care experienced community.



The Newsletter is produced by the London Innovation and Improvement Alliance (LIIA), working closely with the London Children in Care Council and the regional Care Leavers Trust Board. We welcome your comments, feedback and news items.

To find out more about regional work to support Care Leavers in London, please visit the LIIA Care Leavers website page [here](#).



THIS MONTHS ISSUE INCLUDES:

- Local Offers - Updated Guidance
- Early Deaths of Care Leavers
- Care Leaver Housing - Legislation update
- Reducing Criminalisation of Children in Care and Care Leavers
- Care-experienced parents: what does your service provide?
- London Higher Care Leaver Guarantee
- Drive Forward Apprenticeship Report
- Youth Futures Foundation / Drive Forward Randomised Control Trial
- United for Change for Care Leavers, 17th November, Vox, Birmingham International



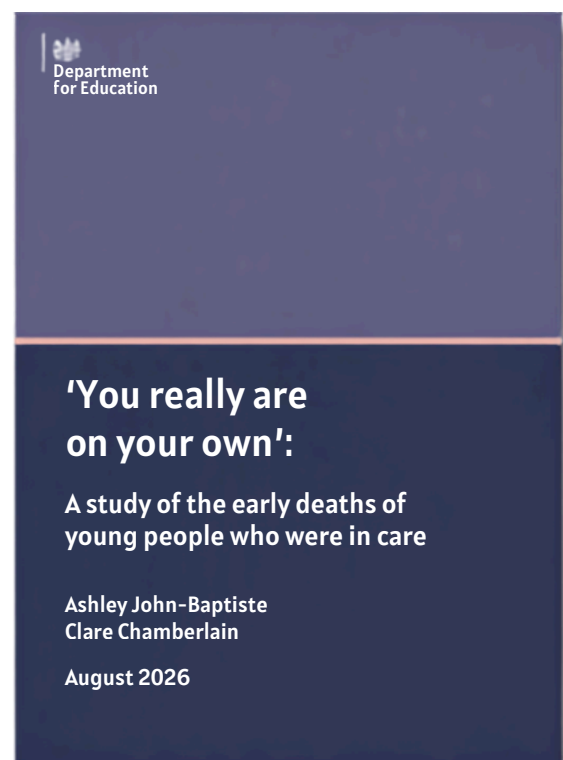
LOCAL OFFERS - UPDATED GUIDANCE

On 13th August, The DfE updated its guidance for what Local Authorities should include in their local offers. Updated local offers are expected to be published by 30th September. **[Read here for further information.](#)**

The guidance is relevant to partners as well as local authorities and we recommend all those working with care leavers familiarise themselves with the contents. We also note the push for strengthened housing, health, ETE and criminal justice offers, areas where the regional care leaving programme is also working to deliver improvement.

EARLY DEATHS OF CARE LEAVERS

The DfE have published '**You really are on your own:** A study of the early deaths of young people who were in care.' This report led by Ashley John-Baptiste and Clare Chamberlain aims to understand the circumstances surrounding care leaver deaths and identify lessons for policy and practice to help prevent future deaths.





CARE LEAVER HOUSING - LEGISLATION UPDATE

Please find below slides from the Ministry of Communities, Housing and Local Government highlighting emerging legislation and guidance affecting care leaver housing. It highlights the housing implications of the National Plan to End Homelessness, the Childrens Well Being and Schools Act, and the Supported Housing Regulatory Oversight Act. The regional care leaver housing group found the slides a helpful explainer.



MHCLG updates

Care Leaver Compact – Housing Group

July 2026

The recommendation from MCHLG colleagues is that housing and childrens services work closely together, including on the development of local homelessness strategies (due by 1 Dec 2026) and support housing strategies (due 31 March 2027) to ensure these are meeting the needs of care leavers.



REDUCING CRIMINALISATION OF CHILDREN IN CARE AND CARE LEAVERS

There is momentum on multiple fronts around reducing criminalisation of children in care and care leavers:

MoPAC and LIA held a workshop with London Local Authorities on 23 June to establish the detail of how the London protocol can be delivered on a local footprint. A set of proposals is in development – these will need consultation across corporate parenting partners and stakeholders, with the intention for a consistent London corporate parenting approach to be in place for the Autumn.

Catch 22's National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum have mapped support for care leavers in custody – **[please see the report here.](#)**

MAPPING EXERCISE: GOOD PRACTICE IN SUPPORTING CARE-EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE IN CUSTODY OR AT RISK



NLCBF members can also access the new **PA Handbook: 'Supporting care experienced young people in custody'**. This is a very helpful best practice guide for an area where approaches vary widely.

CARE-EXPERIENCED PARENTS: WHAT DOES YOUR SERVICE PROVIDE?

Becoming a parent is a time when many young people look to family for practical and emotional support. **What does this mean for the role of a corporate parent?**

Research led by the Children's Social Care Research and Development Centre (CASCADE) at Cardiff University found that care-experienced parents can experience stigma, discrimination and inadequate support.

A good-practice Charter, co-produced with care-experienced parents, promotes a holistic approach to support before, during and after becoming a parent.

The Charter and supporting resources offer local authorities and partners an opportunity to reflect on their local offer: what support is available to care-experienced parents, and how could it be strengthened?

The resources are free to access and can be adapted and developed to reflect local needs and preferences.

[Explore the Charter and resources here](#)



LONDON HIGHER CARE LEAVER GUARANTEE

London Higher Education Institutions are developing a new **Pan-London Care Leaver Support Guarantee** to improve consistency of support for care-experienced students studying in higher education across the capital. The initiative has been developed through the Pan London Care Leavers Compact, following collaborative work between higher education institutions, local authorities, London Higher and the National Network for the Education of Care Leavers (NNECL).

The Guarantee proposes a set of core commitments that participating universities will work towards, including:

- A named point of contact throughout a student's time at university.
- Clear information about financial support and access to tailored assistance.
- No requirement for students to provide a guarantor for university-managed accommodation.
- Access to community networks, careers support and opportunities that promote progression and success.

Although London has comparatively high rates of participation in higher education, care-experienced students often face additional barriers, including high living costs, housing insecurity and inconsistent levels of support between institutions. The proposed Guarantee aims to create a more equitable and joined-up approach across London.

Alongside the Guarantee, **a supporting Blueprint is being developed** to strengthen collaboration between universities, local authorities, Virtual Schools and employers. This work will focus on improving pathways into higher education, supporting student success, and enhancing progression into employment and independent adulthood.

Also on the subject of care experienced people in higher education is this [NNECL report](#).



Championing Futures?

Localised patterns in higher education participation for young care-experienced learners in England



June 2026
Charity No. 1180793
nnecl.org



Visit lha.london to learn more



DRIVE FORWARD APPRENTICESHIP REPORT

Please see [Drive Forwards report](#) which explores how apprenticeships can become a more accessible and supportive pathway into employment for care-experienced young people.



YOUTH FUTURES FOUNDATION / DRIVE FORWARD RANDOMISED CONTROL TRIAL



Also on Drive Forward news, we are delighted that the **Randomised Control Trial** being run in partnership with Local Authorities on their Care to Career programme has had funding approved to move from pilot to full trial. **9 London LA's are currently partnering on this trial.**

There may be space for one or two more to join – if your LA is interested please contact matthew.raleigh@londoncouncils.gov.uk.

Benefits are that you are supporting 'what works' research into care leaver employment, and also that your young people receive a funded Drive Forward service.

UNITED FOR CHANGE FOR CARE LEAVERS, 17TH NOVEMBER, VOX, BIRMINGHAM INTERNATIONAL

This event will bring together care experienced young people, local authorities, charities, government and business for an inspiring day for sharing good practice and hearing from care experienced young people.



(NLCBF member local authorities can book their 3 free places & additional places at a reduced rate via the NLCBF website)

[BOOK YOUR TICKETS HERE](#)



GET IN TOUCH

Please visit our website: lila.london for more detailed information on each of the ALDCS priorities, or contact the team directly to discuss anything in greater detail.

Please let us know your feedback on this newsletter [via email](#) so we can keep improving future editions.

THANKS FOR READING!

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