



Please sign up for ONE of the workshops if you haven't already done so.



There is a hearing loop in this room if you need to use it.



There won't be a fire alarm practice today so if the alarm sounds the evacuation information is on each table.



Toilets including disabled toilets are in the corridor outside.



A copy of this presentation will be circulated after the meeting.



# Partners in Care and Health Investing in What Matters: Sharing Learning from the PCH Working Age Adults Programme

27 March 2026

# Welcome and Introductions

Kirstie Haines, Principal Improvement Adviser PCH



1	Welcome and Introductions.....	11:30 – 11:35am
2	Learning from Partners in Care and Health Working Age Adults’ Projects, PCH Learning Disability and Autistic People Team.....	11:35 – 12:00pm
3	Key Speaker 1 - Transitional Safeguarding, Dez Holmes, Strategic Director Practice & Programmes National Children’s Bureau and Director Research in Practice.....	12:00 – 12:30pm
4	Key Speaker 2 - Achieving visible good lives in the community for working age adults, Sam Clark, Chief Executive, Learning Disability England and Jordan Smith, expert by experience, LDE member and trustee.....	12:30 – 1:00pm
5	Lunch.....	1:00 – 2:00pm
6	Workshops - Ordinary Housing   Using Data   Co-produced Commissioning   Legal Literacy	2:00 – 3:00pm
7	Final Reflections, PCH Programme for 2026/27 and Close.....	3:00 – 3:30pm

## Placeholder – Mentimeter Icebreaker



## Placeholder – Mentimeter Workshop

- 1 Ordinary Housing**, Ian Copeman and Lois Beech, Housing Lin
- Using data to understand your population**, Kirstie Haines PCH Learning Disability and Autistic People Team
- Co-produced commissioning**, Amelia Rayment, Co-Production Officer, North Northamptonshire, David Burns, Expert by Experience and Stella Woodard Citizen Checkers
- Legal literacy to support young people moving to adult services**, **Vijay Patel** Head of Safeguarding Social Care Institute for Excellence and Sam Hanson, Service Manager, Adults Transitions, Children's and Adults Social Care, London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

# **Learning from Partners in Care and Health Working Age Adults' Programme from 2025/26, PCH Learning Disability and Autistic People Team**

Our work is about helping councils use their (limited) resources in ways that genuinely support local people to stay visible, connected and active in their communities.

***Or, as our lived experience peers Callum and Trevor put it:***

- ***To live in an ordinary home on an ordinary street.***
- ***To have relationships, work and fun.***
- ***To feel seen, heard and respected.***
- ***To be a valued member of society.***
- ***Exactly the same things you want for yourselves and your loved ones.***

# Overview

## Our Projects

- **Moving on from Children's Services – will run again in 2026-27**
- **New Models of Support at Home** (What Next for Supported Living)
- **Value for Money from ASC Spend on Adults 18-64 – will run again in 2026-27 as a combined project with New Models**

Project methodology:  
systemised approach,  
bespoke to each council, to  
collating quantitative and  
qualitative information.

- Analysis of long-term care arrangements provided to working age adults. 6,500+ lines of care reviewed.
- Benchmarking and trend analysis using national data sources – including, spend and activity by care need for ASC, EHCP trends, use of 38/52 week placements, NEETs and EHCP and analysis of children in need data by disability.
- Conversations with children and adult social workers – 500+ individuals talked to.
- Discussions with DASS, DCS, assistant directors and NHS provider./ICB clinical leads
- Conversations with commissioning leads in adults and children's (health and social care) – around 70 people spoken to.
- Conversations with ASC providers 4-10 for each council we worked with
- Visits and conversations with PCF and partnership boards.

## Diagnostic driven action plan.

- Mitigations for local drivers of cost and activity drawing in resources from PCH and SCIE.
- Suggesting areas for further work investigation.
- Maximising local transformation and change programmes

## Cross-Cutting Learning From Our Work in 2025-26



- 1 Keeping vulnerable people visible and active in communities needs whole-system partnership, not just adult social care.
- 2 'Drift' into long-term care arrangements due to limited NHS community support, housing constraints, and more limited focus on enablement/recovery for 18–64s.
- 3 Young people (18–25) enter adult services through multiple routes; not all benefit from PfA/transition pathways, so early support is missed.
- 4 Cultural issues: variable social work visibility in specifying support (incl. s117), and differing views on risk and legal frameworks.
- 5 Supported living - move from enablement model towards containment; some settings feel like 'hospitals in the community'.
- 6 Providers have strong ideas for sustainability and better fit, but lack of time and forums to share and shape solutions.



## A more flexible and diverse housing and accommodation offer.

Limited move-on options and access to general needs or private rented housing keep people in higher-cost settings. High supported living rents prevents people from returning to work.



## Commissioning that drives progression and innovation.

Some provision is risk-averse with limited focus on enabling people to gain skills.



## Strengthening short-term enablement, reablement and recovery services

Where these services are limited, long-term dependency grows



## More joined-up working with health to share risk and responsibility

Gaps in community mental health and crisis support often leave social care holding risk..



## Earlier, preventative and recovery-focused support

A shared theme is that people often reach services in crisis, leading to higher-intensity, longer-term arrangements.



## Visible social work leadership

Social workers' expertise is not always fully used in s117, discharge and complex planning. Stronger legal literacy and more collaborative, rights-based approaches can help balance risk with recovery and progression.



## Proportionate support and reduced reliance on 1:1/2:1 care

High-intensity packages often reflect risk aversion or limited alternatives.



## Transitions for young people

Late referrals and inconsistent pathways mean young adults often enter adult services with higher-cost needs.

# Moving on From Children's Services: Project Learning (1)

## Complexity rather than volume

- A growing number of young people are entering adulthood with high-intensity arrangements already in place,
- Young people with a learning disability remain the largest group, but the highest-cost packages increasingly relate to mental health and autism.
- Complexity is rising faster than volume - young people with autism-only or fluctuating mental health.

## Legislative Tensions and Parental Expectations

- The Children Act and Children and Families Act place significant emphasis on the parental voice, which can overshadow the young person's rights once they gain capacity.
- Parents often experience a sharp shift when the Care Act and Mental Capacity Act apply..
- Legal and inspection expectations of NHS, Children's Services and ASC do not align.

## Narrow Interpretation of "Preparation for Adulthood"

- PfA activity often focuses on young people with EHCPs, leaving those without plans
- Recovery, reablement and enablement pathways for 14–25s are limited or absent.
- Examples of councils working hard to secure employment opportunities but lots of focus on supported internship and less on IPS or place and train.

# Moving on From Children's Services: Project Learning (2)

## Legal Literacy, Assessing Capacity and Communication

- Understanding of mental capacity, fluctuating capacity and supported decision-making varies across children's and adults' practitioners.
- Families often receive inconsistent messages about rights and responsibilities at 16 and 18.
- Young people themselves are not always supported early enough to build decision-making skills.

## Trauma-Informed and Autism-Informed Practice

- Workforce confidence in supporting autistic young people or those fluctuating mental health, is mixed.
- Autism-only with mental health - often the most ASC expensive provision.
- Limited access to NHS community mental health and therapies at 18 putting extra pressure on ASC.

## Co-Production, Transitional Safeguarding and Shared Risk

- Co-produced risk planning with young people is rare.
- Transitional safeguarding principles are not yet embedded.
- Without shared frameworks, young people with contextual risk, exploitation histories or fluctuating mental health can fall between services.

## Young People Becoming "Stuck"

- High rents, unused care hours and complex welfare rules (PIP/UC, exempt rents) make it difficult for young people to move on.
- Tech solutions not always used – even when the young person has good ideas and preferences
- Social workers can carry the burden of navigating these systems without a coherent, cross-agency solution.



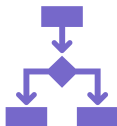
## Housing Driving Care Decisions

Supported living can be used to secure housing rather than care needs, limiting more appropriate independent living options



## Limited Choice and Pathways to Independence

A lack of diverse housing and support models restricts alternatives and reduces opportunities for people to move towards ordinary living



## System Inflexibility and 'Sticky' Provision

Once in supported living, financial and contractual constraints make it difficult for people to step down or move on, even when needs reduce



## Risk Aversion and Over Specification of Support

Cautious practice and skills gaps can lead to inflated care packages, with needs misunderstood and higher levels of support commissioned than necessary



## Underdeveloped Enablement and Recovery Models

Working age adults have limited access to reablement and recovery support, reinforcing assumptions of lifelong care rather than promoting independence

# Transitional Safeguarding

**Dez Holmes**

Strategic Director Practice & Programmes National Children's  
Bureau and Director Research in Practice



# Transitional Safeguarding



Dez Holmes

Director, Research in Practice

Strategic Director, NCB



“many young people face a ‘cliff edge’ as they approach age 18 and risk being left without support during this critical life-stage.”

(Winterbottom et al, 2023)

## Transitional Safeguarding means...

*‘safeguarding adolescents and young adults fluidly across developmental stages which builds on the best available evidence, learns from both children’s and adult safeguarding practice and which prepares young people for their adult lives’*

(Holmes & Smale, 2018)

- › Transitional Safeguarding is a concept for **whole-system** change, underpinned by six key principles – not a service or an intervention.

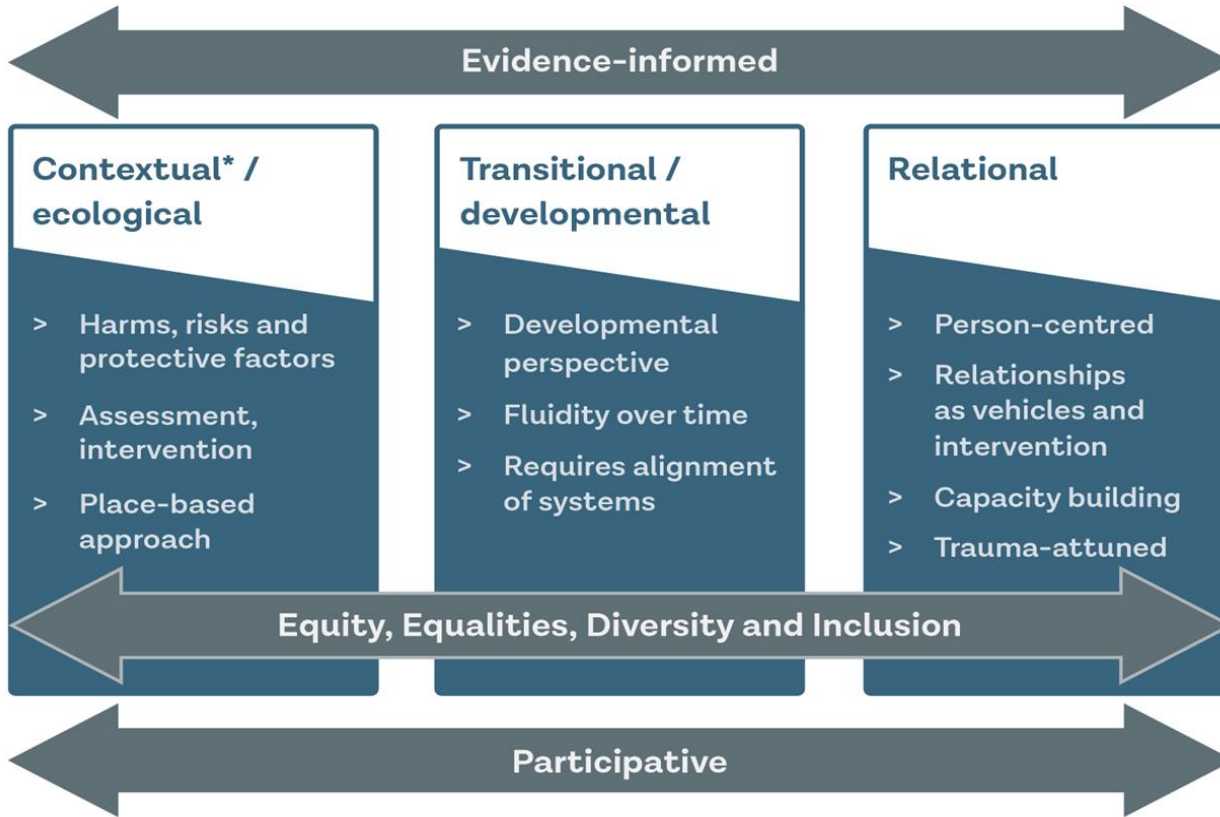
(Holmes, 2018; 2022).

- › ‘early help for grown-ups’ (not ‘transitions’) – an ethos / lens
- › ‘young people’

## Why Transitional Safeguarding?

- › The current binary approach bears significant **human and economic costs**
- › Harm, trauma and development **don't stop at 18**
- › **Beyond statutory duties** – holistic, flexible, person-centred
- › We need a system not a service... drawing on the rich expertise across the multi-agency partnership and communities - **whole place whole person**
- › Because **binaries reinforce binaries**: childhood Vs adulthood; victim Vs perpetrator; vulnerable Vs culpable
- › **Safeguarding is a verb, not a noun**

## Key (non-negotiable) principles

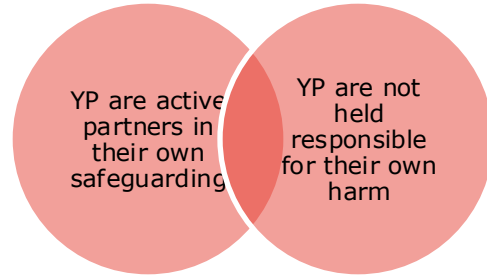
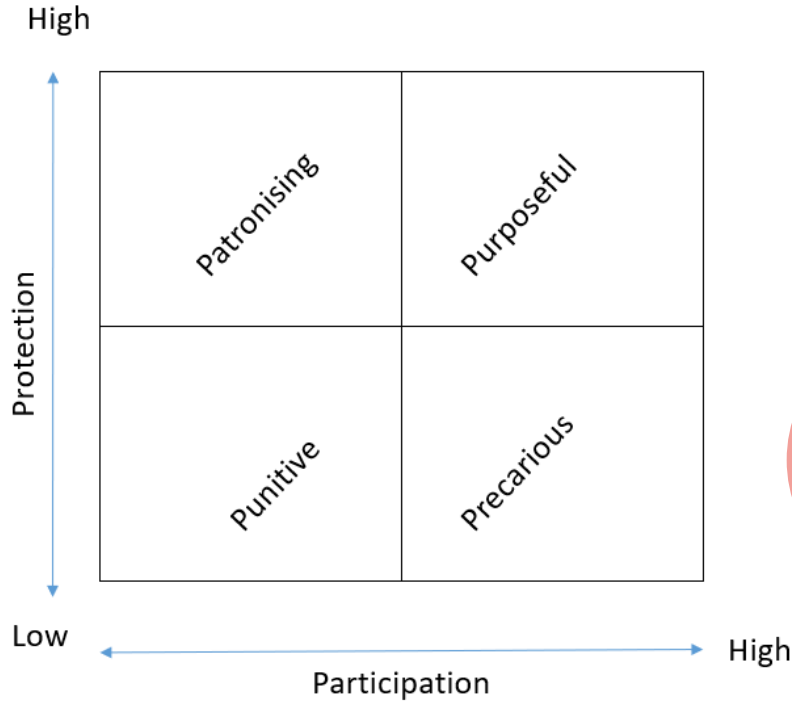


\* See Firmin's work

(Holmes, 2018)

# Balancing protection and participation

(Holmes, in Cocker et al, 2024)



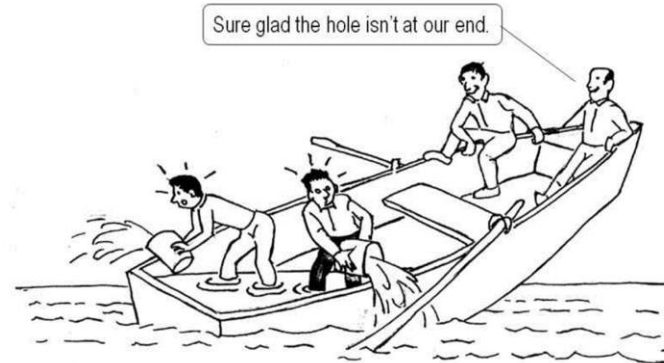
## What's helping local areas to develop this

- › Explicitly co-owned local leadership of the agenda
- › Engaging with liminality and complexity
- › Expansive definition of 'partnership' – inc communities
- › 'A system not a service' - A salad not a soup
- › Active knowledge and skills exchange (Cocker et al, 2021)
- › Culture of innovation ('the soft stuff is the hard stuff')
- › Philosophy of practice
- › Place-based problem solving (rather than problem displacement)
- › Building the local case, diverse sources of evidence

- › The economic context makes innovation as difficult as it is essential... BUT the current approach is remarkably poor value for money...
- › Investing in preventative and recovery-oriented work to promote people's safety and wellbeing can play an important role in avoiding the costs of later intervention.
- › Evidence from the UK and international contexts suggests that failing to help young people recover from harm and trauma can mean that problems persist and/or worsen in adulthood, creating higher costs for the public purse.  
(Chowdry and Fitzsimons, 2016; Kezelman *et al*, 2015)
- › The system (and the spend) is connected... Maternal wellbeing (SM, MH) and CP/care; care and criminal justice; mental health needs, costs Vs funding; family relationships and homelessness; domestic abuse and community violence etc.
- › Resource constraints are **the lever** not just the barrier to adopting a Transitional Safeguarding approach

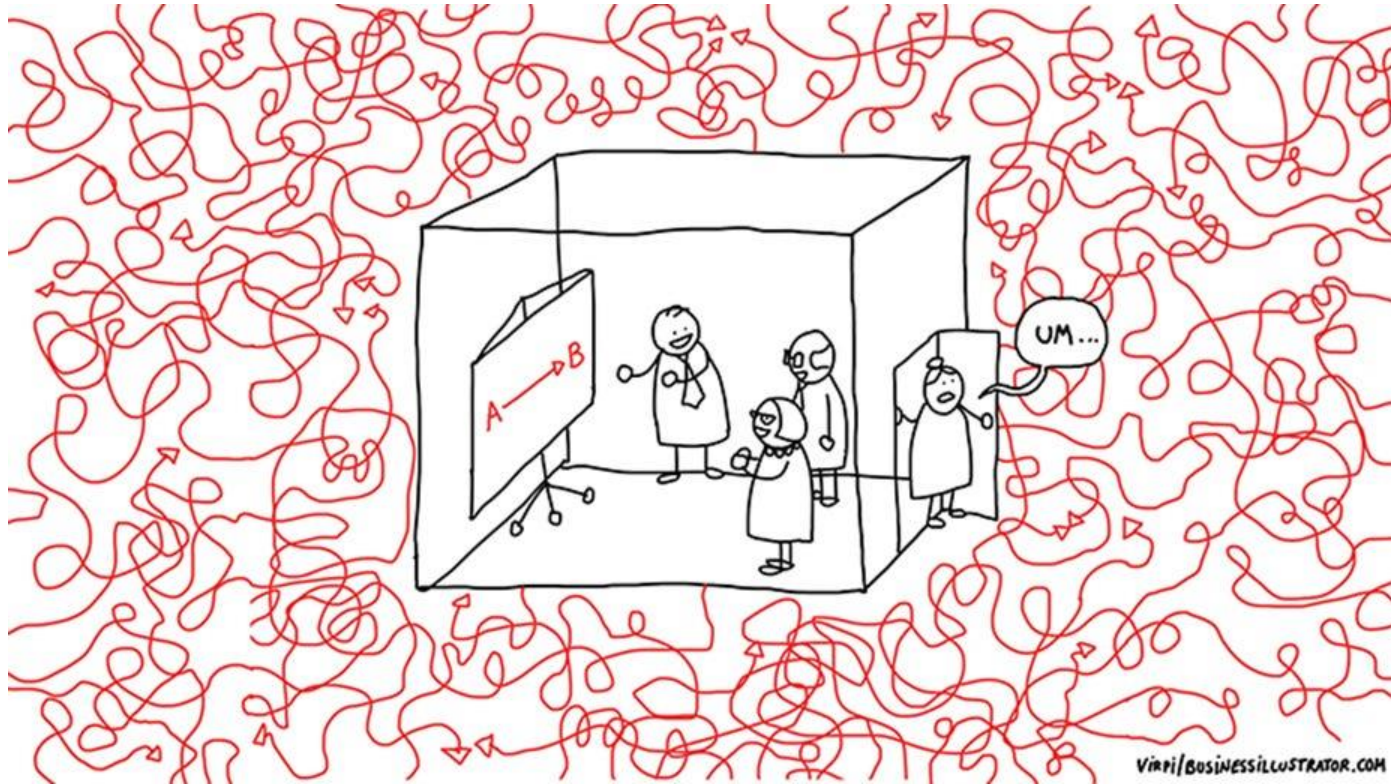
## Boundary-spanning; systems leadership

- > Boundary-spanning - reaching across borders, margins, or sections to build relationships, interconnections and interdependencies in order to manage complex problems.  
(Williams, 2002; 2011)
- > ‘think like a system - act like an entrepreneur’ (Conway et al, 2017)
- > *“leadership that bridges boundaries between groups in service of a larger organizational vision, mission, or goal”* (Ernst & Yip, 2009:1)



## What can hinder...

- › An eligibility / diagnostic criteria led construct of 'transitions'
- › Measuring service access rather than strategic needs assessment
- › Prevention being eclipsed by proceduralism / siloed funding
- › Using BAU tools and approaches to an exercise in imagination
- › Lack of space / permission to unlearn and experiment
- › Lack of opportunities for colleagues to learn from each other



research  
in practice





- Transitional Safeguarding (2018) original briefing:  
<https://www.researchinpractice.org.uk/all/publications/2018/august/transitional-safeguarding-adolescence-to-adulthood-strategic-briefing-2018/>
- Updated briefing for leaders (2025) [Transitional Safeguarding briefing for sector leaders: Strategic Briefing \(2025\) | Research in Practice](#)
- A short animation explaining what Transitional Safeguarding is and why we need it:  
<https://vimeo.com/794130649>
- The role of adult social work & adult safeguarding to the Transitional Safeguarding agenda (2021):  
[https://www.researchinpractice.org.uk/media/5420/67346\\_dhsc\\_trans-safe-report\\_bridging-the-gap\\_web.pdf](https://www.researchinpractice.org.uk/media/5420/67346_dhsc_trans-safe-report_bridging-the-gap_web.pdf)
- Transitional Safeguarding and justice: <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2022/03/Academic-Insights-Holmes-and-Smith-RM.pdf>
- [Transitional Safeguarding in youth justice and probation services: A scoping study](#) (HMIP, 2025)
- The relationship between Contextual Safeguarding, Complex Safeguarding and Transitional Safeguarding (2019): <https://www.researchinpractice.org.uk/children/publications/2019/january/safeguarding-during-adolescence-the-relationship-between-contextual-safeguarding-complex-safeguarding-and-transitional-safeguarding-2019/>
- <https://www2.local.gov.uk/our-support/partners-care-and-health/safeguarding-resources/transitional-safeguarding-resources>

# Achieving visible good lives in the community for working age adults

**Sam Clark**

Chief Executive, Learning Disability England and Jordan Smith,  
expert by experience, LDE member and trustee



# Achieving visible good lives in the community for working age adults

27<sup>th</sup> March 2026

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# Learning Disability England



**Jordan Smith**  
**Member and Trustee**



**Sam Clark**  
**Chief Executive**

# Learning Disability England

Exists to make life better for and with people with Learning Disabilities and their families.

## How we work:

**Support** others work

**Celebrate** others action or achievements

**Lead** when taking action together is best

## We do this through:

**Membership** – for people and organisations creating stronger links together

**Influence and campaigning** – speaking up and sharing others important work

**Solving problems together & sharing what works**

**Share information and build networks so we learn together**





jordan



Good Lives is a goal and a shared vision for a better future for people with learning disabilities.

Focus on a life not services and offers a role for everyone



Based on rights and the essential conditions needed for a good life.



# Good Lives include (but are not limited to)



**A Home**



**Health**



**Communication and  
Staying Connected**



**The Right Support**



**Effective Voice – Self  
Advocacy and Advocacy**



**To Love and be  
Loved**



**Employment and  
Contribution**

# What people tell us is most important: Good Lives



## The Good Lives Framework

Developed with hundreds of people with a learning disability, family members and people in paid roles from across social care, housing, health, advocacy, employment support and academia.

Good Lives is a goal and a shared vision for a better future for people with learning disabilities.



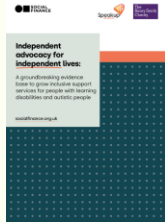
The framework helps define what a 'good life' looks like, sets clear goals and points to real examples of people and groups already making progress.

Good Lives builds on the work of others, connecting others' work and shared aims.

There are stories and examples of Action towards Good Lives [here](#)

# Its not all about money but how you use it

## Community Advocacy and self advocacy



### [Independent advocacy for independent lives](#)



### [Commissioning self-advocacy as a basis for effective co-production](#)

## Policies and how we work

Easy read, contact details and video links  
Easy read: Learning Disability - easy read | East Sussex County Council  
Email: [iaib@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:iaib@eastsussex.gov.uk)

Video links

- Discriminatory Abuse
  - [Short film](#)
  - [Full length film](#)
- [The Friendship Group](#)
- [Sarah Gonda, MBE, receives her Doctorate](#)
- [There's More To Me Than A Learning Disability](#)
- [There's Still More To Me Than A Learning Disability](#)
- [9 in 10: A film about hate crime](#)
  - [Part 1](#)
  - [Part 2](#)

### [Learning Disability Partnership Board in East Sussex](#)

# Get in Touch

If you have any questions, we would really like to hear it from you.


 0300 1110444


 [info@LDEngland.org.uk](mailto:info@LDEngland.org.uk)


 [www.learningdisabilityengland.org.uk](http://www.learningdisabilityengland.org.uk)

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Here's where you can follow us on social media:

 Facebook @learningdisabilityengland

 LinkedIn @learning-disability-england

 BlueSky @learningdiseng.bsky.social



# Be part of a **movement for change.** **Join Learning Disability England.**





Lunch until 2pm

1

### Ordinary Housing

Smith Square 1 – Ground floor

2

### Using Data

Westminster Room – 8th floor

3

### Co-produced Commissioning

Smith Square 4 – Ground floor

4

### Legal Literacy

Smith Square 3 – Ground floor

# Ordinary Housing

Ian Copeman and Lois Beech

Housing LIN





Housing LIN

*Connecting people, ideas and resources*

# **Best practice and insights report on improving housing choice for people with a learning disability**

**LGA event 27 March 2025**

Lois Beech & Ian Copeman

**Housing LIN**

# Introduction



Housing LIN

*Connecting people, ideas and resources*

The purpose of this work is to provide evidence of good practice and insights in relation to people with a learning disability having access to and living in ‘mainstream’ housing. In this context mainstream housing means:

- renting from a social housing landlord (typically a housing association or a council)
- renting from a private sector landlord
- being a home owner
- living in housing that has been arranged by family member or other informal supporters.

# Today



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We are going to consider:

- **Examples** of people living in mainstream housing
- The **barriers** to people with a learning disability accessing and living in mainstream housing
- The *practical actions* that councils are taking and can take to address these barriers, to help more people to live in mainstream housing
- Based on this evidence, the **case for change** setting out the benefits for people with a learning disability and for councils of more people living in mainstream housing

## Context: Accommodation status of people aged 18+ with a learning disability, by accommodation type, 2021/22



Housing LIN

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Accommodation category	Number of people age 18+	%
Residential care	21,142	14%
Nursing care	1,039	1%
Shared Lives (adult placement)	3,939	3%
Supported housing or supported living	35,478	23%
Living with family, friends or informal carers	54,827	36%
Living in mainstream housing with a care or support package	34,553	23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>150,979</b>	<b>100%</b>

- Recent research by the County Councils Network in relation to adult social care for working age and lifelong disabled adults has shown:
  - inappropriate and insufficient housing was highlighted through this report as a key issue preventing optimal outcomes being achieved for working age and lifelong disabled adults.
  - new housing solutions are required for disabled adults, to help move away from both a reliance on supported living being used due to a lack of alternative housing options
  - additional suitable housing provision is required to support individuals with moderate levels of need who reportedly rely more heavily on sometimes inappropriate supported living accommodation, due to a lack of suitable (local authority) housing

## Case studies



Housing LIN

*Connecting people, ideas and resources*

Renting from a social housing landlord

Renting from a private landlord



## Case studies



Housing LIN

*Connecting people, ideas and resources*

Home ownership

Family arranged housing options



## Barriers in relation to people with a learning disability having access to and living in mainstream housing



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- **Shortage of affordable housing.** Supply and availability of general needs social housing is not keeping pace with the demand for affordable housing. This is the case for affordable housing for single people (typically seeking one bed self-contained housing) which is likely to include people with a learning disability.
- **Inaccessible, difficult to understand and navigate systems for access to general needs social housing for rent** provided by housing associations and councils, for example through choice based letting systems.
- The **location of housing to rent** for people with a learning disability can be a particular consideration in terms of ensuring that a person is living in an area where they will be safe
- It can be particularly **difficult to find mainstream housing options** for people with a learning disability who may also have a **physical disability, sensory needs or needs related to autism.**

## Barriers in relation to people with a learning disability having access to and living in 'mainstream' housing



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- There is often **limited housing information and advice** in relation to accessing mainstream housing options that is tailored to the needs and requirements of people with a learning disability.
- The **affordability of housing in the private rented sector** can be a barrier particularly where people are restricted to local housing allowance rates to meet their rent costs
- There can be **limited awareness amongst private landlords, letting and estate agents** that people with a learning disability may want to access housing in the private rented sector and are often seeking to rent for the long term, so can often be longer term, easy to manage tenants
- Some landlords, both social and private landlords, **do not make reasonable adjustments** that would make it easier for people with a learning disability to live in mainstream housing, such as easy to read tenancy agreements and maintenance reporting arrangements.

## Actions by councils to assist people with a learning disability to access mainstream housing



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- Councils and social landlords have **adapted local choice based letting systems** so that people with a learning disability are well supported to use the system to access general needs social housing. North Lincolnshire Council has ensured that libraries and ‘local hubs’ are equipped to offer help to people who find choice based letting systems difficult to use.
- Councils and social landlords have made **lettings to general needs social housing to people with a learning disability outside of choice-based lettings**, in order to ensure that a person is able to access general needs social housing in a location where they will be safe. This is sometimes referred to as management or sensitive lettings.
- District and Borough Councils in Warwickshire have developed a [housing needs referral form](#) to be **used alongside the main housing register application form which can be used where a person has care or support needs**, including a learning disability, so that their housing and related care or support needs can be fully considered in relation to securing a suitable property.

## Actions by councils to assist people with a learning disability to access mainstream housing



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Connecting people, ideas and resources

- Some private landlords have recognised that people with a learning disability typically make good long-term tenants. For example, Wirral Council has used its **local private sector landlord forum** to engage with private landlords. This has increased access to good quality private sector housing for some people with a learning disability.
- **Some landlords have made reasonable adjustments** in relation to letting their properties. For example, [Ongo housing association](#) in North Lincolnshire has produced easy to read versions of tenancy agreements and other documentation provided to their tenants, for example in relation to reporting repairs.
- Councils are assisting families and carers of people with a learning disability by producing **information and advice about different housing options** including renting mainstream housing. For example, Wigan Council has produced a housing options information and advice [guide](#) specifically targeted at families and carers of people with a learning disability.
- Councils are encouraging **people with a learning disability to register their housing need on the local housing register**. For example, Dorset Council has ‘flags’ on its housing register to indicate that the applicant is a person with a learning disability and ‘flags’ for other additional needs such as a requirement for an adapted property. This enables the council to be better informed in relation to matching suitable available properties with people's housing and related needs.

## The case for change: Benefits for people with a learning disability



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Connecting people, ideas and resources

- It provides **access to a wider mix of housing options**, rather than a ‘menu’ of housing that is limited to different types of supported accommodation.
- It can provide a **greater degree of privacy**. *“Having a flat on my own means I can choose when I have staff and other people visit me.”*
- For some people it has **increased their social opportunities**. *“Living in my own home means I am more independent because I have my own place. I make my own decisions about what I do. I go out with my friends more often now I live in my own flat.”*
- Owning a home has the **benefit of owning an asset** which can help people become more resilient financially.

## The case for change: Benefits for people with a learning disability



Housing LIN

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- For some people it has **improved their personal finances**. Living in general needs social housing in particular is usually more affordable than living in supported housing.
- By living in affordable mainstream housing, such as renting general needs housing from a social landlord, it has improved some people's **ability to undertake paid work** (as the rents and service charges in mainstream housing are usually considerably lower than in supported housing).
- For some people living in **general needs social housing may offer greater security of tenure**, for example through having an assured tenancy (compared to the more typical use of assured shorthold tenancy agreements in supported housing and in the private rented sector).

## The case for change: Benefits for councils



Housing LIN

*Connecting people, ideas and resources*

- Enables councils **to target the use of supported housing and supported living for those people who need it most** or will benefit from it the most, including people who are currently living in care homes or hospital settings
- **Reduces reliance in the longer term on higher cost supported housing and supported living services** as more people with a learning disability live in mainstream housing instead
- **Enables councils to meet their full obligations** under the [Care Act 2014](#) to provide a genuine range of housing and care choices to people who are eligible for care and support
- Provides an **opportunity for extensive and creative use of different types of assistive and care technology** alongside paid staff to support more people with a learning disability to live independently in mainstream housing
- People living in mainstream housing can **avoid some of the compatibility issues that can arise in shared supported housing.**
- In some circumstances it **maybe be more feasible to adapt mainstream social housing** to make it better suited to age related needs than is possible in some supported housing.

# Widening housing options in practice



Housing LIN

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- Housing LIN has worked with several councils to undertake assessments of need for housing options for people with learning disability that includes specialist, supported and mainstream housing and accommodation options. Considers
  - Learning disability population change over 10-15 years
  - Needs and preferences of people with learning disability
  - Council and other local stakeholder insights
- Changing need for:
  - Mainstream housing
  - Shared Lives
  - Supported housing/supported living
  - Specially designed housing for 'complex needs'
  - Care homes
- Case study: Essex County Council 2025

# Resources



Housing LIN

*Connecting people, ideas and resources*

- Best practice and insights report on improving housing choice for people with a learning disability: <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/News/LGA-Report-Highlights-Housing-Solutions-for-People-with-Learning-Disabilities/>
- Housing LIN housing and learning disability resources: <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/HousingLearningDisabilities/>
- Widening housing options: need assessments and strategies:
- Essex housing need assessment: <https://www.essexproviderhub.org/supported-and-specialist-housing-and-accommodation-need-assessment-2025/>
- Cornwall housing need assessment and strategy: <https://www.providers.cornwall.gov.uk/Page/35530>
- Merseyside learning disability housing strategy: <https://www.wirralhealthwellbeingknowledgehub.co.uk/media/dcrekpu0/cm-ld-autism-housing-strategy-final.pdf>
- North Tyneside housing market position statement: <https://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/supported-and-specialist-housing-market-position-statement/people-learning-disabilityautistic>

# Using data to understand your population - Learning from WAA Programme

**Kirstie Haines**

PCH Learning Disability and Autistic People Team



- 1 Introductions
- 2 What national data or local data are you using to target improvement programmes or shape specifications?
- 3 Contexts and Caveats
- 4 Some examples of using national data sets to target improvement work /further investigations.
- 5 Local data – questions to ask
- 6 Some examples of using local data to better understand local drivers of demand and/or spend

**Interactive Session – Ask Questions and Join Discussion**



- Councils use a wide range of systems to record care arrangements and costs, and they take very different approaches to using that data. Some have strong analytical capacity in their finance teams, while others have far less support.
- To help the councils we worked with to build a clearer picture of who is drawing on different types of support and the weekly costs involved we focused on a small set of questions. The aim was to generate new insights that help the council tell a meaningful story about their activity and spend.
- National adult social care data sets, going back to 2014–15, are not perfect but they do show clear trends in long-term care use and spending patterns.
- We also explored the data to create simple proxy measures that help councils compare who is drawing on care and what it costs—for example, the proportion of the working-age adult population receiving long-term support, or an ‘average’ spend per head.
- Regional, national and peer comparisons were used to help councils reflect on underlying structural issues and to notice where local patterns differ from wider trends.
- The Institute of Public Care at Oxford Brookes supported us in pulling together national data sets in ways that help councils to get a clearer sense of changes over time and comparison with other statistical peers.

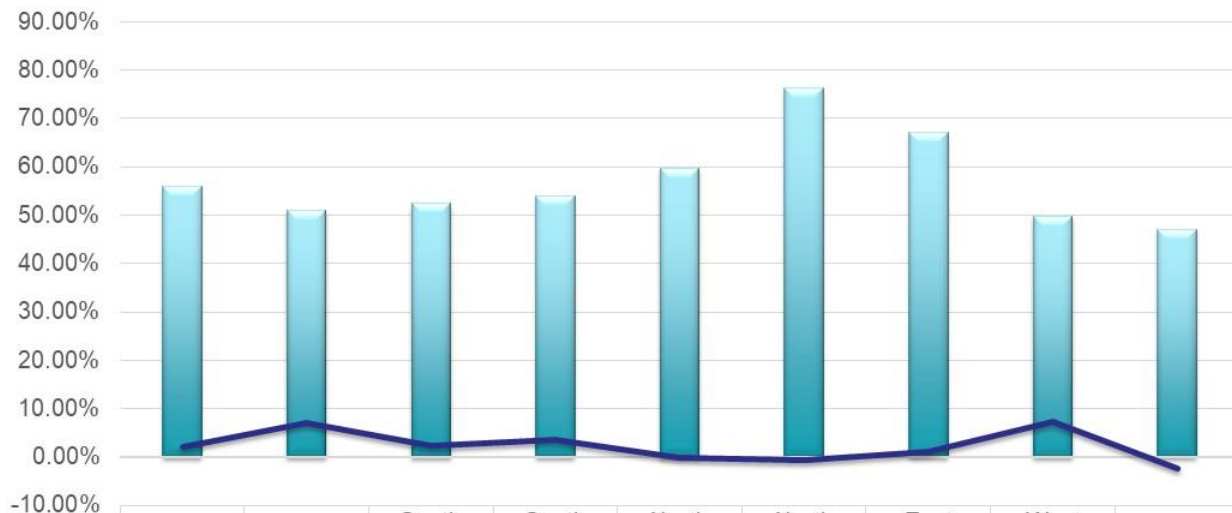
# Caveats

- Used a business analytics approach – looking a short to medium opportunities to influence business cases and plans. Not academic research.
- National data only looks at net spend – i.e. after NHS funding and individual contributions have been removed.
- Quality of national data – always an area for debate but can be a helpful starting point.
- Asked for net spend from councils for local data analysis – but this was often hard to do – so often gross spend is included in their submissions. This provided useful insights on s117 and CHC arrangements (or not) for some high intensity packages – and conversations on the accuracy of data in local systems (!)
- Covid Years have very different spend and activity profiles to previous year – we've tended not to discount these but to use them to illustrate recent fluctuations in spend and uptake of ASC services.
- A starting point for further discussion – always needs to be triangulated against what practitioners, providers and local people are saying.

# Using National Data Comparisons to Prioritise Areas for Further Investigation



## % Changes in Numbers Receiving and Net Expenditure on Long-Term Support - Learning Disability Need



■ % change Total NET Spend on Long-Term Support Learning Disability 2019-20 to 2024-25  
— % change in numbers receiving long-term ASC support for a learning disability need 2019-20 to 2024-25

	England	London	South East	South West	North West	North East	East Midlands	West Midlands	Eastern
% change Total NET Spend on Long-Term Support Learning Disability 2019-20 to 2024-25	55.90%	51.00%	52.40%	54.00%	59.70%	76.30%	67.10%	49.80%	47.10%
% change in numbers receiving long-term ASC support for a learning disability need 2019-20 to 2024-25	2.10%	7.00%	2.30%	3.60%	-0.20%	-0.60%	1.00%	7.20%	-2.30%



## Using Comparative Data to Help Focus Change or Improvement Programmes – Example 1

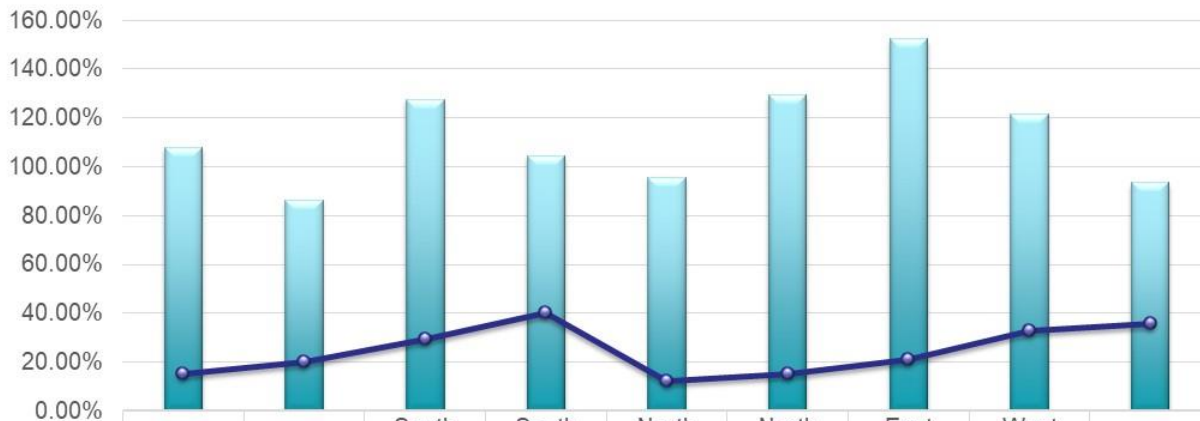
Learning Disability Support – Numbers Receiving Long-Term Support	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	% change 2019-20 to 2024-25
England	126,775	125,480	124,635	125,795	127,610	129,375	2.1%
Yorkshire and the Humber	12,705	12,510	12,375	12,470	12,915	12,580	-1.0%
Council Z	340	410	410	400	390	385	13.2%



Learning Disability Support – Net Spend on Long-Term Support	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	% change 2019-20 to 2024-25
England	£4,955,346,000	£5,125,459,000	£5,309,837,000	£5,845,360,000	£6,551,861,221	£7,724,094,844	55.9%
Yorkshire and the Humber	£452,232,000	£482,213,000	£504,608,000	£555,072,000	£610,060,582	£751,248,479	66.1%
Council Z	£21,208,000	£20,736,000	£21,781,000	£23,217,000	£24,864,000	£29,520,275	39.2%

Council Z – spend is not growing as quickly as England or region – but numbers receiving long-term support is going up more quickly. Opportunity to review front door and access to short-term provision. Also considering future care needs/ risk of people losing independence resulting in further financial pressure in the future



## % Changes in Numbers Receiving and Net Expenditure on Long-Term Support – Mental Health Need



	% change Total NET Spend on Long-Term Support Mental Health Need 2019-20 to 2024-25	107.90%	86.30%	127.60%	104.60%	95.80%	129.40%	152.30%	121.80%	93.50%
	% change in numbers receiving long-term ASC support for a mental health need 2019-20 to 2024-25	15.20%	20.00%	29.30%	40.20%	12.10%	15.30%	21.20%	32.90%	35.60%



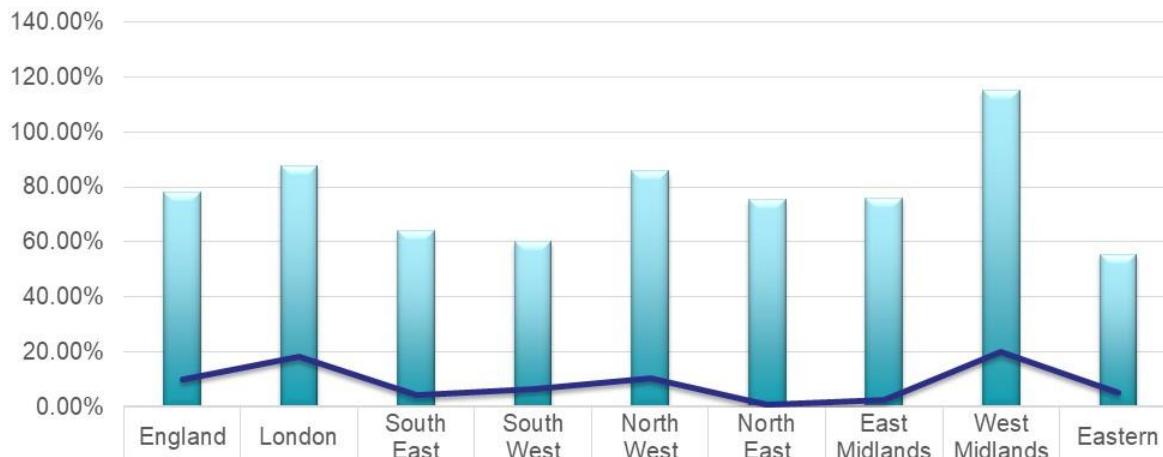
## Using Comparative Data to Help Focus Change or Improvement Programmes – Example 2

Mental Health Support – Numbers Receiving Long-Term Support	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	% change 2019-20 to 2024-25
England	44,485	45,120	43,505	45,470	47,550	51,260	15.2%
North West	7,300	7,675	7,605	7,870	8,080	8,185	12.1%
Council Y	110	65	100	110	135	150	36.4%

Mental Health Support – Net Spend on Long-Term Support	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	% change 2019-20 to 2024-25
England	£704,117,000	£782,938,000	£864,526,000	£1,014,087,000	£1,189,107,311	£1,464,046,584	107.9%
North West	£127,698,000	£130,796,000	£141,749,000	£168,140,000	£195,687,150	£250,084,125	95.8%
Council Y	£2,452,000	£2,775,000	£3,366,000	£4,443,000	£5,153,984	£7,931,000	223.5%

Council Y – is experiencing a much more rapid increase in the numbers receiving long-term support for a MH – alongside very rapid increase in spend. A focus on front-door, assessments, short-term recovery provision and discharge routes could help mitigate growth in numbers. A focus on intensity of support provided and skills of social care providers could help to mitigate cost pressures. NB Average spend per person receiving long-term support. England =£28,561, NW Region =£30,553 and Council Y =£52,873

## % Changes in Numbers Receiving and Net Expenditure on Long-Term Support - Physical Health Needs ALL



	England	London	South East	South West	North West	North East	East Midlands	West Midlands	Eastern
% change Total NET Spend on Long-Term Support Physical Support (Mobility and/or Personal Care) 2019-20 to 2024-25	78.20%	87.90%	64.10%	60.20%	85.90%	75.30%	76.10%	115.20%	55.50%
% change in numbers receiving long-term ASC support for a physical support need (mobility and/or personal care) 2019-20 to 2024-25	10.20%	18.40%	4.50%	6.70%	10.60%	1.00%	2.70%	20.10%	5.30%



## Using Comparative Data to Help Focus Change or Improvement Programmes – Example 3

Physical Disability Support – Numbers Receiving Long-Term Support	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	% change 2019-20 to 2024-25
England	69,950	71,595	71,290	72,775	74,300	77,070	10.2%
North West	10,520	10,695	10,600	10,710	11,015	11,635	10.6%
Council X	480	480	480	480	480	480	0.0%

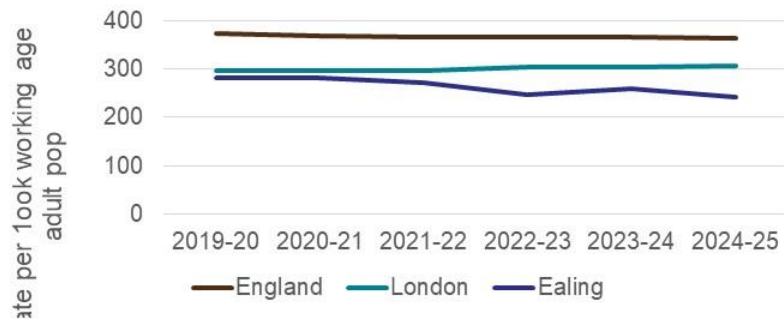
Physical Disability Support – Net Spend on Long-Term Support	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	% change 2019-20 to 2024-25
England	£1,176,716,000	£1,235,018,000	£1,310,604,000	£1,439,791,000	£1,686,231,636	£2,096,665,243	78.2%
North West	£161,341,000	£172,755,000	£180,838,000	£194,666,000	£227,340,095	£300,003,056	85.9%
Council X	£4,013,000	-	£4,167,000	£6,680,000	£8,563,672	£9,227,408	129.9%

Council X – no growth in the numbers receiving support for a physical support need but a much higher increase in total net spend on this group. Areas for further investigation to understand what is driving spend could include – intensity of provision including use of double handed care, access to adapted housing, use of long-term residential provision and D2A routes for younger adults.

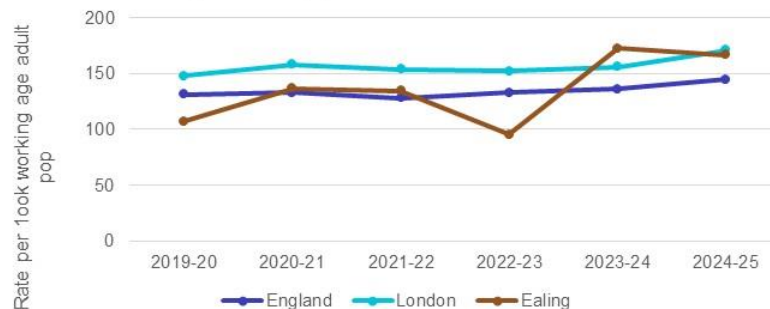


## Other Good Data to Compare

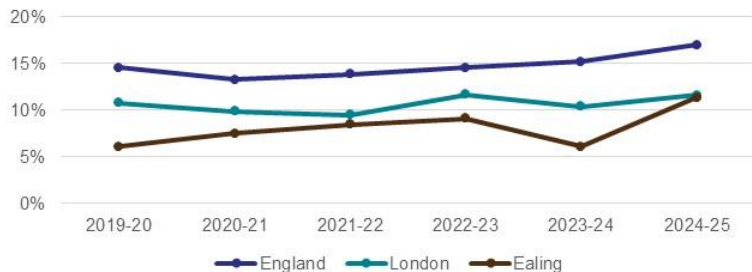
Proportion of working age adults with long-term support need trend - Learning Disability



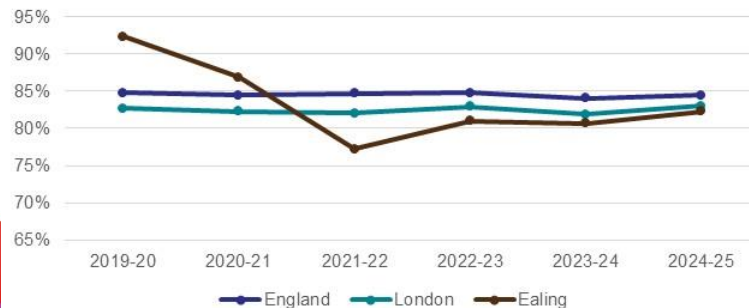
Proportion of working age adults with long-term support need - Mental Health



% of LT clients changed from community to nursing/residential settings in year

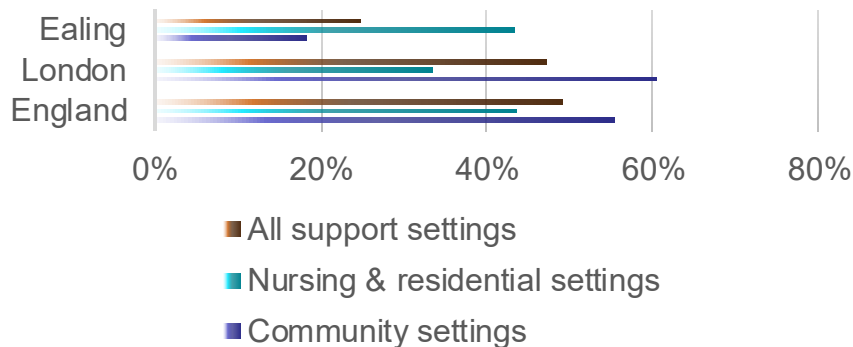


% of LT clients needs met for 12 months or more

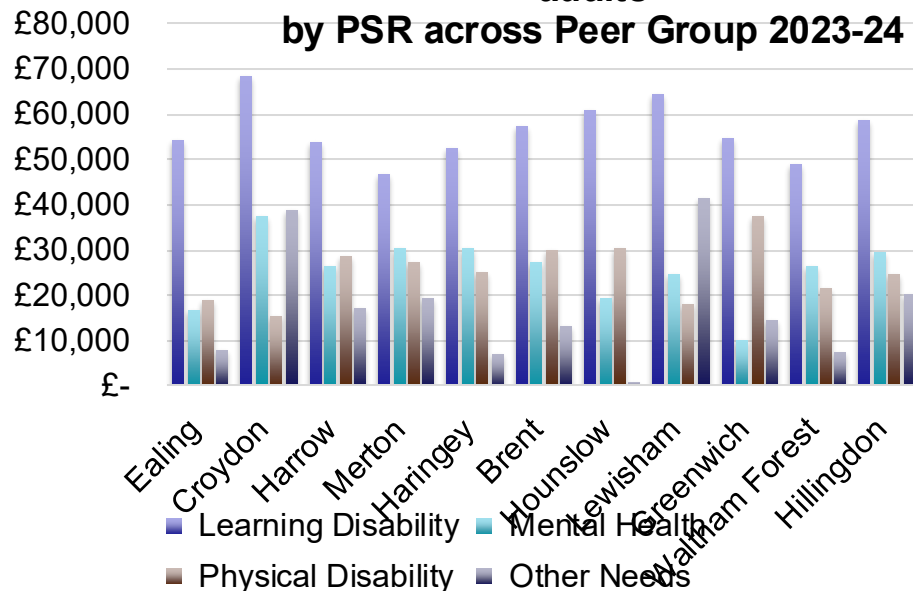


## Other Good Data to Compare

**COMPARATIVE % CHANGE IN SPEND PER HEAD FOR 18-64 ADULTS RECEIVING LT SUPPORT BY SETTING BETWEEN 2018-19 & 2023-24**



**LT spend per head for working age adults by PSR across Peer Group 2023-24**



# Unpicking Local Data



## Using your local CRM (Mosaic etc) to understand local demand and spend drivers

### Approach

- Snapshots of data on a particular day – is an easy way to get some quick insight into what is happening in your system.
- Not a year-end or final position but helps to better understand where things are changing or potential new cost pressures.
- Ask some questions about characteristics not just about total spend by setting or care need.
- Starting point – not an end point

### Questions to ask

- Type of Care
- Weekly Cost
- Data Care Started
- 25 and under (helps to understand transitions and changes in care types for young people) (Y/N)
- Other diagnosis
- Care Levels Increased over the last twelve months (Y/N)
- Out of Area (Y/N)
- Social work team that undertook the last assessment or review.
- DoLs status
- S117 status (Y/N)
- CHC status (Y/N)

# Example Council A – Understanding Packages over £500,000 per year

Primary Support Reason	Service Type	Total Gross Weekly Cost	Age<=25	S117	CHC	New Client since Sep 2023	S37/41
Learning Disability Support	Long Term - Residential	£24,953	N	Y	N	N	N
Learning Disability Support	Long Term - Community: Supported Living	£16,887	Y	N	Y	Y	N
Learning Disability Support	Long Term - Community: Supported Living	£15,014	N	Y	N	N	N
Physical Support - Personal Care Support	Long Term - Community: Supported Living	£13,960	N	N	N	N	N
Learning Disability Support	Long Term - Residential	£13,464	N	Y	N	N	N
Mental Health Support	Long Term - Residential	£11,753	Y	N	N	Y	N
Physical Support - Personal Care Support	Long Term - Community: Home Care	£11,348	N	N	Y	Y	N
Learning Disability Support	Long Term - Community: Supported Living	£11,145	N	Y	N	N	N
Physical Support - Personal Care Support	Long Term - Community: Supported Living	£10,994	N	N	Y	Y	N
Learning Disability Support	Long Term - Community: Supported Living	£10,988	N	Y	N	Y	N
Learning Disability Support	Long Term - Community: Supported Living	£10,988	N	Y	N	N	N
Learning Disability Support	Long Term - Community: Supported Living	£10,843	N	N	Y	N	N
Physical Support - Personal Care Support	Long Term - Community: Home Care	£10,473	N	N	Y	N	N
Physical Support - Personal Care Support	Long Term - Community: Home Care	£10,473	N	N	Y	N	N
Physical Support - Personal Care Support	Long Term - Community: Home Care	£10,473	N	N	Y	N	N
Physical Support - Personal Care Support	Long Term - Community: Home Care	£10,473	N	N	Y	N	N
Physical Support - Personal Care Support	Long Term - Community: Supported Living	£10,237	N	N	N	N	N
Learning Disability Support	Long Term - Community: Supported Living	£10,121	Y	N	Y	N	N

There are 18 packages of care with predicted costs of over £500,000 per year. 9 of these are for learning disability support, 8 for physical support and 1 for mental health support. 3 are in residential settings, 5 are home care and 10 are supported living settings. All of them will represent highly restrictive environments with at least 2:1 support. It is therefore surprising that less than a 1/3 of these are the result of a s117 arrangement and none include those with the highest levels of restriction at discharge s37/41 of the MHA..

## Example Council B – Understanding Age Profile of Weekly Costs

Care Type	Primary care Need	Average Weekly Cost Clients 26-64 Years	Average weekly Cost Clients 25 and under
Residential and Nursing	Learning Disability	£2,333	£1625
Supported Living	Learning Disability	£2,427	£4786 H
Home Care	Learning Disability	£148.00	£1283 H
Direct payments	Learning Disability	£94	£446 H
Residential and Nursing	Mental Health	£682	£1981
Supported Living	Mental Health	£1,690	£3012 H
Home Care	Mental Health	£302	£1952 H
Direct payments	Mental Health	£0	£838 H
Supported Living	Physical Support ALL	£387	£761
Residential and Nursing	Physical Support ALL	£2,702	£5952 H
Direct payments	Physical Support ALL	£1,332	£1738 H
Home Care	Physical Support ALL	£403	£388
Supported Living	Social Support - social Isolation	£218	£1258 H
			£2059 H
Residential and Nursing	Support with memory and cognition	£0	
Supported Living	Support with memory and cognition	£718	£3880 H

# Example Council C 18-25 Years Autistic People Profile of Support

	Total	Learning Disability	Mental Health	Physical Support (All)	Sensory and Social (All)	Memory and Cognition
Number of people (18-25)	58	38	15	3	2	0
Average weekly cost of total care package	£1,202	£1,028	£1,782	£1,148	£385	-
Number of packages with multiple support	10	8	1	1	0	0
Average weekly cost of packages with multiple support elements	£2,068	£1,439	£8,218	£950	-	-

## Insights:

- Fifty-eight autistic young people receive support. Most autistic young people are supported within learning disability (38 people) or mental health pathways (15 people), which may indicate gaps in autism-specific provision.
- Learning disability packages average £1,028 per week, rising to £1,439 where needs are more complex or multi-element — a reminder that complexity, not volume, drives spend. Mental health packages are the highest-cost group (£1,782 per week), with one very complex case at £8,218 per week, highlighting the value of earlier stabilisation and joint planning.

## Example D: Supported Living by Characteristic

	Average Annual Spend	Number
All	£57,982	622
18-25 Years	£71,382	148
New Packages/Items Since September 2025	£40,766	40
Out of Area	£71,151	196
S117	£40,202	182
CHC	£174,814	27
Active/ Authorised DoLs	£91,588	74
Initial Investigation DoLs	£29,050	9

As expected, costs for CHC funded supported living and those with DoLs are higher than other groups. However, there could be possible to review intensity of support and MCA for some people discharged from hospital. Potential to do jointly with ICB In line with the local transformation programme and strengths-based practice reviews the costs of support has reduced for new packages/ reviewed packages. However, 18-25 years remain much higher than other groups.

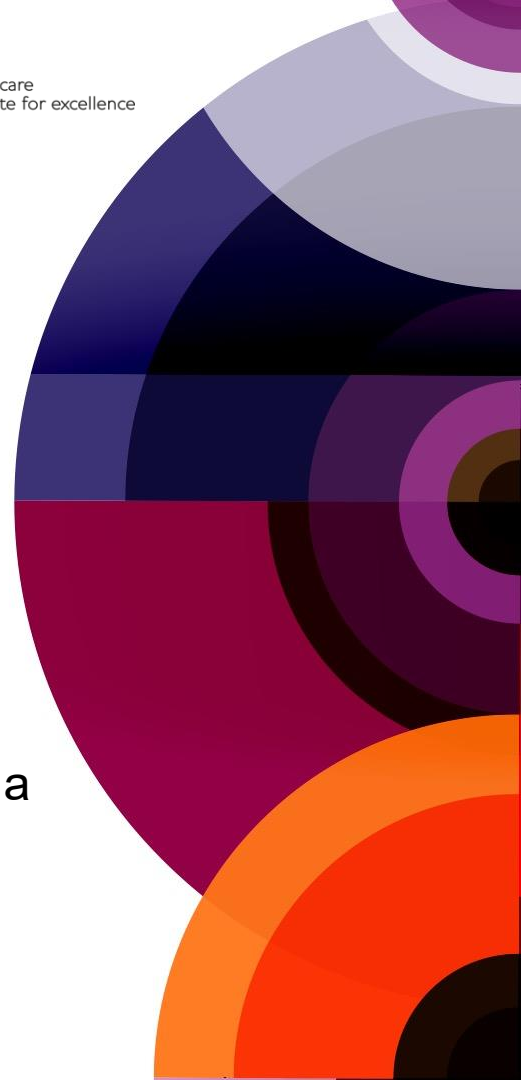


# Final Thoughts and Questions



# Co-produced commissioning

David Burns and Stella Woodard (Citizen Checkers) and Amelia Rayment – Co-production Officer (North Northamptonshire Council)



# Agenda

- 1** Introductions..... Amelia, David and Stella
- 2** Group Introductions..... David and Stella
- 3** 7 Keys to Citizenship across Cornwall..... David and Stella
- 4** Co-production and commissioning example..... Amelia
- 5** Group Exercise Commissioning Cycle..... Amelia
- 6** Questions..... Amelia, David and Stella



# Introduction

- Amelia Rayment – Co-Production Officer for Adult Social Care at North Northamptonshire Council
- Supporting the workforce to embed co-production and meaningfully work with Experts by Experience
- Supporting Experts by Experience to get involved, engaging with communities and building relationships



**citizen checkers** 

# comissioning and co- production

starting well.

presented by David and Stella

# who are citizen checkers



## leaders by lived experience

We work alongside services and commissioners



## Our role is

help people speak up  
And to make sure what people say  
leads to change



## citizenship

we support people to Speak up and be heard  
Know their rights  
live ordinary lives with the same opportunities as everyone else

At your tables introduce yourselves.  
But instead of saying your job...

Say:

Your name and what kind of biscuit you  
are today — and why.



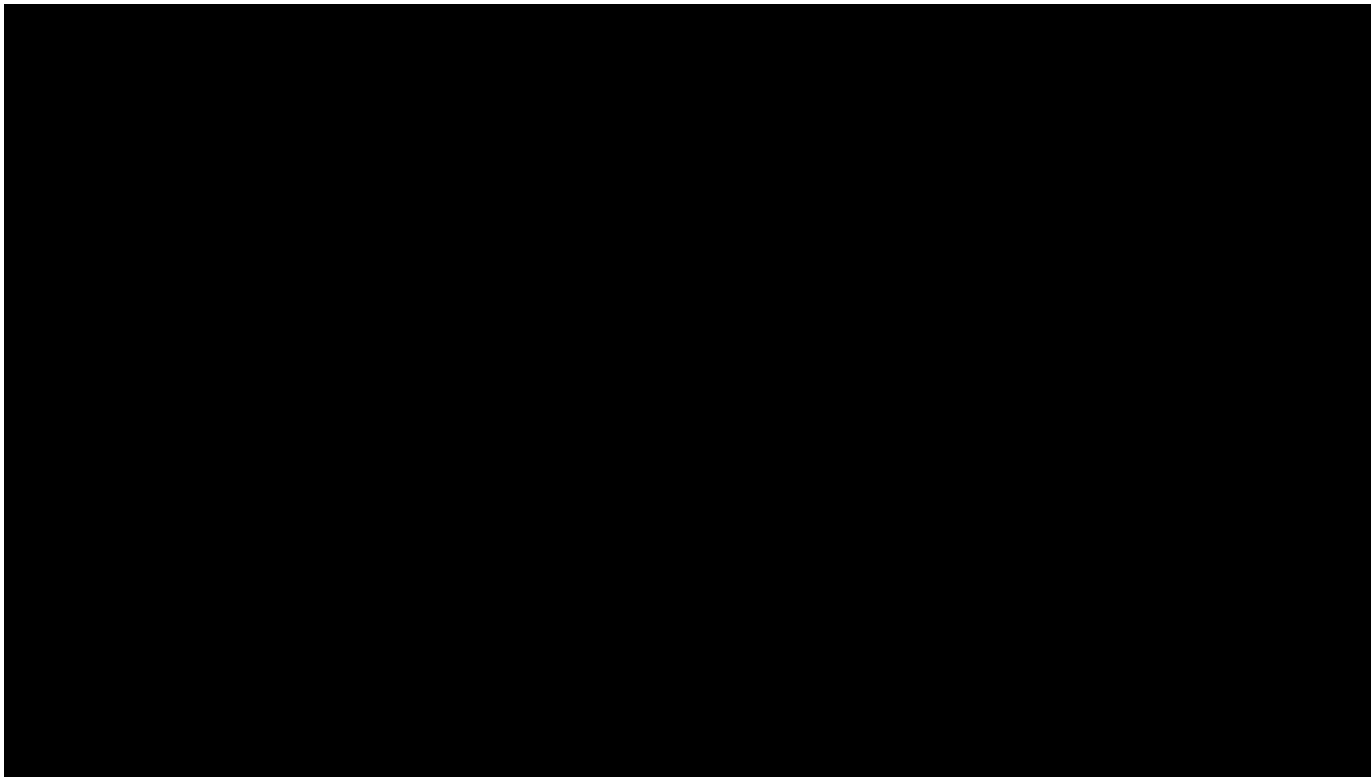
What did you notice about that  
introduction? How did it change things  
from your normal introduction?



**citizen checkers** 

# The 7 Keys of Citizenship





[7 Keys - 60 secs\\_4x5\\_Final\\_12.08.26\\_14.25 on Vimeo](#)

# keys to citizenship



## purpose

Set your own direction in life having goals, hopes, dreams and meaning in life and a plan to achieve this.



## Freedom

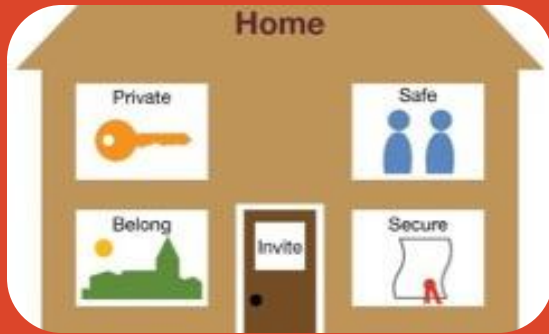
Take charge of your own life having control and the ability to speak up and be heard and to be legally visible in society part of a family, respecting ourselves and the rights of others.



## Money

Have enough money to live on, having enough money to live a good life, and control over how that money is spent or saved.

# keys to citizenship



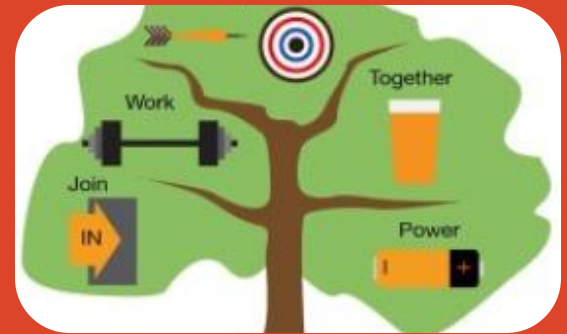
## Home

Have a place where you belong. Having a place that belongs to you where you have control over everything that happens there, and you feel safe.



## help

Getting good help from other people having good help that strengthens our gifts, talents and skills and supports our freedom, rights and responsibilities.



## life

Get involved and make a difference. Making an active contribution to our communities, sharing our gifts, creating change, learning with others, taking risks and having fun.

# And love



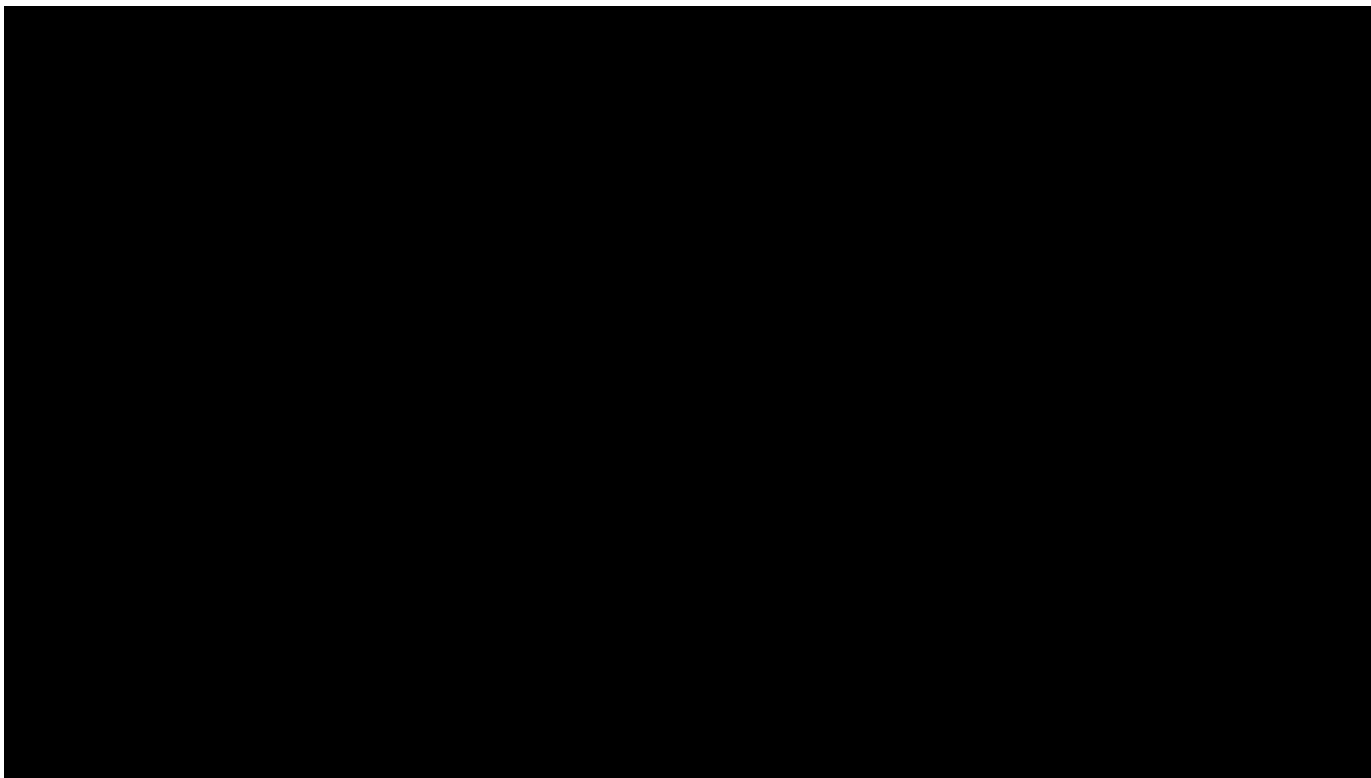
To have friendship, love and family. Having loving relationships and friendships, enjoying life, love and sex/intimacy, being part of a family, respecting ourselves and the rights of others.

In May 2024 we brought together commissioners, frontline staff, and people with lived experience to explore the 7 Keys to Citizenship. Our intention was simple — just to bring people into the same room as equals and see what might emerge from that shared conversation.

Because commissioners were part of the discussion, something important happened. The ideas didn't stay in the room. Cornwall has since begun using the Keys framework within commissioning contracts.

For us, this is a really powerful example of how co-production can genuinely influence the way commissioning happens locally. At the same time, we have learned that change like this often depends on the imagination and courage of particular individuals who are willing to try something





[Eden Event\\_Final\\_09.02.26 on Vimeo](#)

## What Do We Mean by Co-Production?

For us Co-production means:

People who use services, families, communities and professionals working together as equal partners.

We have found the following elements to really make a difference.

- Shared power
- Shared decision making
- Lived experience as expertise
- Designing solutions together





### Creating the conditions for co-production

Starting with problems can sometimes create tension, especially where people have experienced systems negatively in the past.

We often use Appreciative Inquiry, which focuses on what works and how we can build on it.

Research shows that exploring strengths and positive experiences together helps build trust, shared understanding, and better solutions.

In this exercise we will think about what needs to be in place for positive change to happen.

# Activity

appreciative enquiry

1

Activity: In pairs discuss:

Think of a time **outside work** when you worked with others on something that went really well.

Examples:

- organising a wedding
- planning a trip
- hosting a party.

# Activity

appreciative enquiry

2

At your table, agree on the things that made the experience good for you.

Write them down.

# Activity

appreciative enquiry

3

Whole Group Feedback  
tables to share their themes.

you have now created a template of what working together well might look like

## **citizen checkers** ✓

We believe Co-Production really Matters in Commissioning  
Because Commissioning decisions shape people's lives.

Co-production helps ensure:

- Services reflect real needs
- People feel ownership and trust
- Innovation emerges from lived experience and this leads to better outcomes

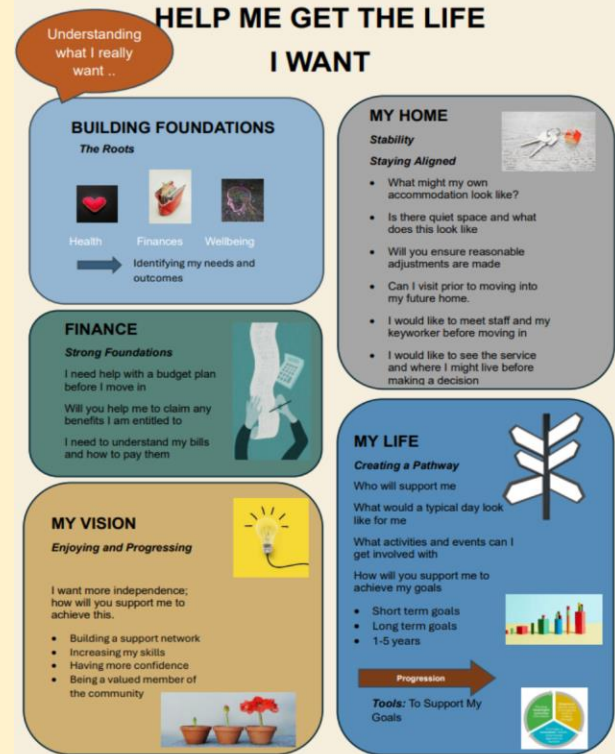


# Our experience with co-produced commissioning

- Recommissioning of Supported Living services, joint contract between North Northamptonshire Council and Northamptonshire ICB
- The role of Experts by Experience:
  - Designing the contract specification
  - Evaluation and scoring of provider bids
  - Soon to be part of the contract award meeting
  - Ongoing contract and quality monitoring

# Our journey

- A small amount of funding was secured for VoiceAbility to carry out some engagement and co-design sessions, with people who already live in a supported living setting
- During these sessions, the group produced a 'Help me get the life I want' document, outlining what matters most to them. This information was then used to inform and design the contract.



# Our journey (continued)

Tender bids went through a two-stage evaluation process:

- Stage 1:
  - Team of staff evaluate and moderate bids, filtering out of lower scoring providers due to high volume
  - Successful providers from Stage 1 were asked to produce a video for an Expert by Experience panel, addressing the "Help me get the life I want" criteria
- Stage 2:
  - Experts by Experience groups were formed for each Lot (Learning Disabilities, Mental Health, Autism)
  - Different facilitators allocated for each group
  - Groups met in-person for preparation sessions, training on procurement, information packs provided
  - Evaluations carried out by watching videos in a group, silent scoring, then moderation at the same time, with a member of the procurement team in the room
  - One individual did evaluate videos at home in their own time, and come together with the rest of the group for a moderation meeting

# Next steps

- De-brief sessions with the Experts by Experience groups – what went well, what we could do better
- Contract Award meeting – Experts by Experience offered to shape how they wish to be involved, sharing their experience with the providers
- Adult Social Care Mental Health Strategy – original Experts by Experience groups from the Supported Living project now invited to shape this new strategy
- Exploring ways to involve Experts by Experience in contract and quality monitoring – ensuring that a golden thread can be followed from initial design through to service delivery

# Barriers and Challenges

1. Timescales (dates pushed back)
2. Awareness of procurement (for both Experts by Experience, and Procurement Team)
3. Adapting language
4. Shared understanding of the task itself
5. Resource to organise, co-ordinate and facilitate

# Important lessons learned

- Relationships and building trust – must remain at the heart of everything
- Communication – arrange check-ins and catch-ups, even if there is no update
- Work with providers to support their understanding of the task, and give clarity on the expectations
- Opportunity to co-produce the task itself – ask Experts by Experience how they would like to be involved and what they think is the best way to achieve it



# Activity: Commissioning Cycle

Pinpoint on the cycle:

- Where are you currently involving people with lived experience?
- What could you do to move from consultation or engagement, to co-design or co-production?
- Where do you think there are opportunities that you **could** co-produce? What would you need to make it possible?
- Where do you think you **could not** co-produce? Why? List any barriers you might face, and how you could try to overcome them.

# Other Co-production approaches

- Initial phase of Co-production Training delivered to Adult Social Care teams:
  - 5 sessions delivered from September 2025 to January 2026
  - Total 49 people have attended Co-production Training
  - 32 Staff Co-production Champions – now formed an established Champions Network
  - 9 Heads of Service trained
  - 8 Team Managers trained
- Full report written which outlines the training delivery, successes, barriers and challenges, and a recommendation for future sustainability.
- We have also supported our in-house day opportunities service, the LIVE Team, to set up and offer Easy Read document translations, that are co-produced with people who have living experience of learning disabilities and autistic people
- Co-produced our own Recognition Policy to ensure Experts by Experience are valued and remunerated

# Questions?



# Thank you!

## Citizen Checkers

- For more info, visit [citizencheckers.co.uk](https://citizencheckers.co.uk)

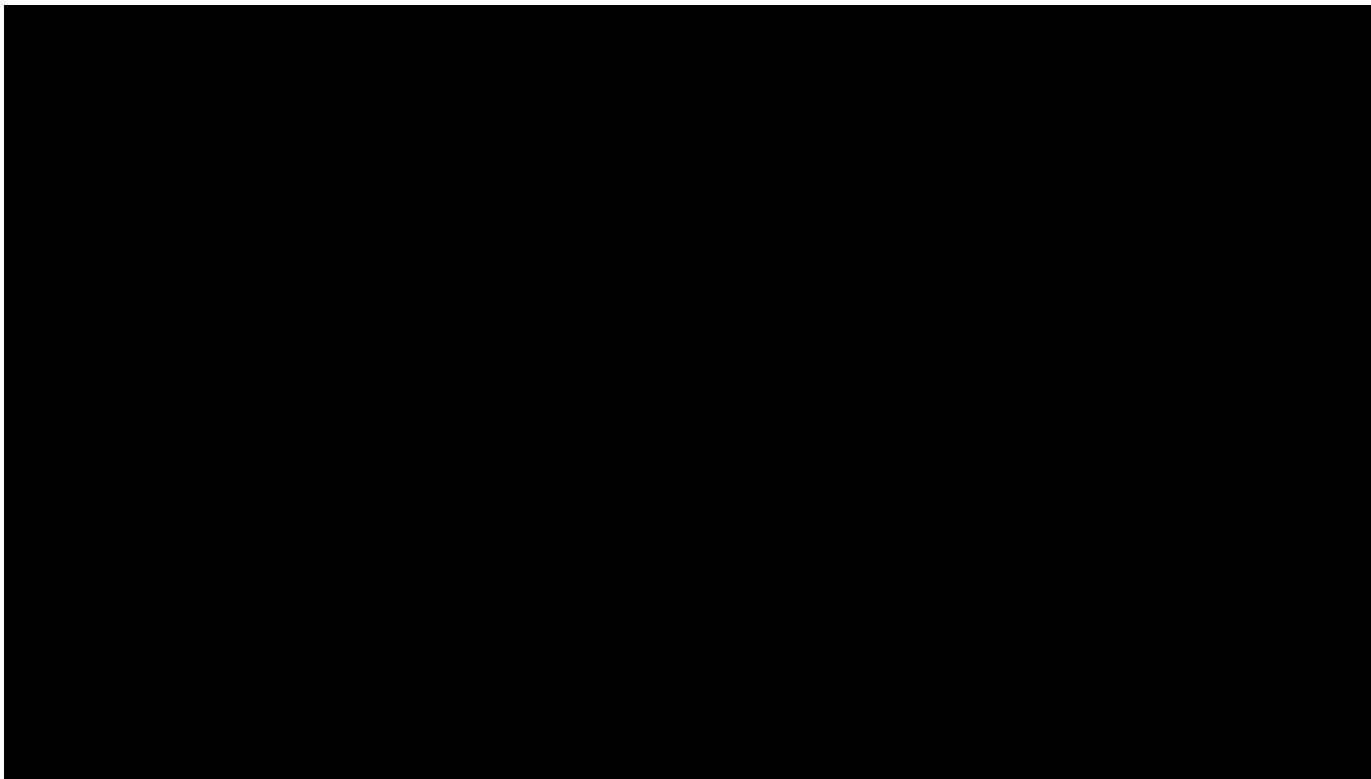
## North Northamptonshire Council

- Co-production general inbox: [ExpertsbyExperience@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:ExpertsbyExperience@northnorthants.gov.uk)
- Co-Production Officer: [Amelia.Rayment@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:Amelia.Rayment@northnorthants.gov.uk)

# Resources



# Open Letter to Commissioners of Learning Disability Service (November 2025)



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6\\_X3WpnyKhk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6_X3WpnyKhk)

# Legal literacy to support young people moving to adult services

Vijay Patel Head of Safeguarding Social Care Institute for Excellence and Sam Hanson, Service Manager, Adults Transitions, Children's and Adults Social Care, London Borough of Barking and Dagenham





social care  
institute for excellence

# Legal Literacy to Support Young People Moving to Adult Services



**Vijay Patel**

**Head of Safeguarding**

**[www.scie.org.uk](http://www.scie.org.uk)**

# Welcome and Overview

## **Workshop Introduction**

The session introduces the workshop's purpose and situates it within the wider programme for the day.

## **Importance of Legal Literacy**

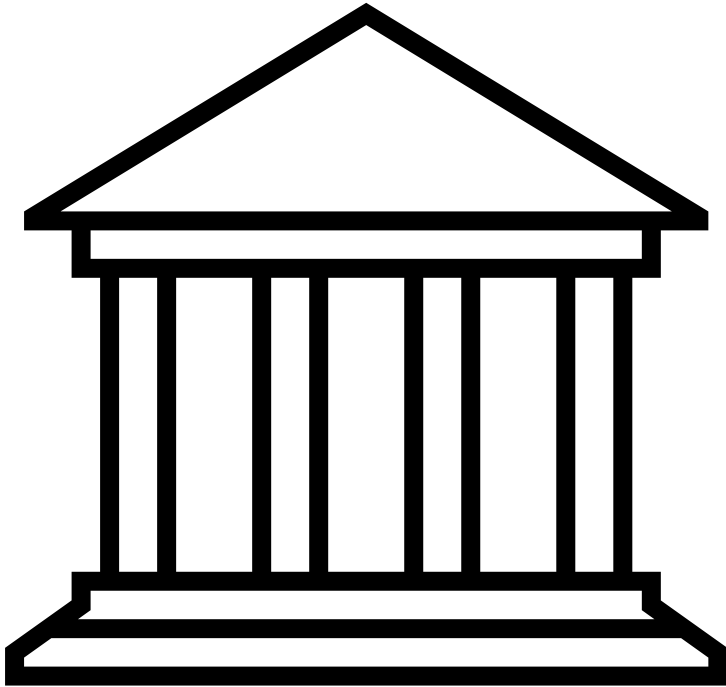
Legal literacy supports safeguarding young people's rights and builds practitioner clarity and confidence.

## **Participant Engagement**

Encourages reflection on legal frameworks and their impact on everyday professional practice.

## **Alignment with Organisational Goals**

Emphasises rights-based, person-centred practice as practical and essential competence.



# Importance of Legal Literacy

# Why Legal Literacy Matters



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## Ethical Practice

Legal literacy supports ethical, person-centred social work during critical life transitions from child to adult services.

## Enhances Decision-Making

Understanding legal duties helps practitioners challenge decisions, safeguard rights, and support client autonomy confidently.

## Promotes Consistency and Collaboration

Shared legal knowledge reduces practice inconsistencies and fosters smoother transitions and team collaboration.

## Strengthens Professional Identity

Legal literacy empowers practitioners to act confidently and compassionately within legal boundaries and organisational policies.



# Key Legal Frameworks

# Overview of Core Legal Duties

## Children Act 1989 and 2004

- Sets safeguarding and welfare duties for children, requiring local authorities to act in children's best interests

## Care Act 2014 & Mental Capacity Act 2005

- Focuses on transition rights, wellbeing, and autonomy for young adults, supporting decision-making from age 16 onward

## SEND Code & Human Rights Act

- Emphasizes early adulthood planning and frames decisions with rights to dignity, liberty, and family life.

## Equality Act 2010

- Requires reasonable adjustments and prohibits discrimination to ensure fair treatment in all practices.

## Human Rights Act 1998

- Brings the rights set out in the European Convention on Human Rights into UK law, meaning public bodies must respect and protect these rights in all decisions and actions. It ensures that individuals can challenge breaches of their rights in UK courts



# Applying the Law in Practice

# What Good Legally Literate Practice Looks Like

## Applying Legal Reasoning

- Good practice involves applying legal reasoning to enhance support quality for young people with clarity and transparency.

## High-Quality Recording

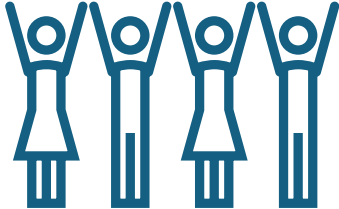
- Accurate recording captures decisions and rationale, showing balance of legal duties, risks, and individual wishes.

## Collaborative Approach

- Collaboration between children's and adult services reduces gaps, ensuring comprehensive support for young people.

## Empowering Through Law

- Law serves as a foundation to empower choice and independence, not as a barrier to creativity.





# Learning from Local Practice

# Barking & Dagenham

# Case Study



Jamal is 17 and has a diagnosis of autism and ADHD. He lives with his mum, who is his main carer. Jamal is approaching 18 and has told his social worker that he does not want to engage with adult services because he thinks it will be “too controlling” and “treat him like a child.” He wants to leave college and start working full-time in IT repair.

Jamal’s mum is very anxious about the future. She believes he won’t cope without high levels of structure and feels he is “making reckless decisions.” She asks for a carers’ assessment and says she can no longer manage his support needs alone.

The adults’ team say they are “not sure if he meets criteria” and would like to wait until his 18th birthday to assess. The college has raised concerns about increasing anxiety and some risky online behaviour, but Jamal declines support.

What would a legally literate approach look like in this situation?

How do you balance Jamal’s rights, wishes, and feelings with concerns raised by professionals and his mother?

What early planning should happen before his 18th birthday?

What does good legally literate recording look like?

# Key Takeaways and Reflection



## Legal Frameworks Importance

- Legal frameworks safeguard rights and guide ethical decision-making in professional practice.

## Collaboration for Transitions

- Strong collaboration between service areas is essential for successful transitions and consistent support.

## Youth Voices and Autonomy

- Valuing young people's voices and autonomy is central to person-centred practices.

## Reflection and Application

- Reflection encourages applying knowledge to embed learning into everyday professional behaviour.

# Final reflections



**Placeholder – Mentimeter Feedback**



**Close and thank-you!  
Have a safe journey home**

