

Improving numbers of in-house foster carers in Buckinghamshire

Buckinghamshire County Council worked with iMPower to use a range of techniques including values modes analysis to build insight into the motivations of current foster carers. The aim of the project was to increase the number of in-house foster carers in the county, helping the council avoid more expensive alternatives such as the use of independent agencies or children's homes, and also providing children with caring homes.

Guided by the question 'what is it that we could do better or differently to inspire more interest in foster care and sustain that motivation?', current foster carers were segmented according to their values sets, thereby revealing the core beliefs and behavioural drivers of foster carers, and why they want to be foster carers. These insights led to the development of new messages to guide recruitment campaigns and changes to the ongoing relationship with foster carers to help improve retention.

Buckinghamshire Council are working towards the recruitment of 50 additional foster carers, which would add more than 50 percent to existing capacity, and anticipate savings from the work in the region of £1m. These improvements are in line with projects elsewhere which have used similar approaches; for example work using values modes analysis in Hertfordshire led to a net gain of 50 in-house foster carers in 2013/14, with savings of approximately £1.25m.

Extract taken from:

Managing Demand: Building Future Public Services

By Anna Randle and Henry Kippin

The RSA

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<https://www.thersa.org/discover/publications-and-articles/reports/managing-demand-building-future-public-services/>