

# Service Review of the Young People's Supported Housing Pathway

# Contents

1	Executive Summary .....	2
1.1	Key Messages.....	3
	Commissioned Services .....	3
	In-House Services .....	7
1.2	Recommendations.....	10
	Commissioned Services .....	10
	In-House Services .....	15
2	Review of Young People’s Supported Housing Pathway Services .....	18
2.1	Background .....	18
	A Challenging Context.....	19
	Local Context .....	24
	Existing Model of Young People’s Supported Housing Pathway Services in Oxfordshire.....	26
	Commissioned Services .....	28
	In-House Services .....	32
2.2	Key Findings of this Review.....	33
	Commissioned Services .....	34
	In-House Services .....	47
2.3	Recommendations.....	54
	Commissioned Services .....	54
	In-House Services .....	68
2.4	Areas of Challenge for Consideration .....	73
2.5	Next Steps.....	73

# 1 Executive Summary

This review was instigated to increase our understanding of the effectiveness of the commissioned services within our Young People's Supported Housing Pathway (YPSHP) to inform service recommissioning as contracts end in 2020. Data has also been analysed and reported on for our in-house provision to help us to better understand how the whole of the YPSHP is working for our homeless young people aged 16-24 years.

This review was undertaken with the involvement of District and County Council staff, colleagues from partner agencies and young people who have used supported housing services.

The following methods were used:

- Online and hard copy surveys
- Site visits
- Workshops and focus groups
- Semi structured telephone and face to face interviews
- Desktop analysis of quantitative data
- Desktop review of national best practice learning

The findings of this review will be used to strengthen both commissioned and in-house YPSHP services, for young people in Oxfordshire.

## 1.1 Key Messages

### Commissioned Services

1. More work needs to happen to prevent young people, especially those aged 16 and 17 years, from entering the YPSHP. Once a person enters the YPSHP, they rarely sustain living independently from professional support in the long term.
2. Young people aged 16 and 17 years do not thrive in the current YPSHP and are put at risk through living with young people/ adults with their own additional and complex needs. There should be alternative provision within the pathway for young people in this age group.
3. There needs to be more reunification work prior to young people entering the YPSHP and this should continue with family members (where it is safe to do so) when the young person is in pathway accommodation.
4. Young people, their families and professionals do not always consider the implications of homelessness. There are also unrealistic expectations of the accommodation and support that a young person will access through the YPSHP, with limited options upon leaving.
5. More resources are needed in the Placement Team to manage the volume of referrals and work generated around the placements. Additional resources are also needed in the Quality and Contracts Team for more intensive quality monitoring activities and data analysis across the projects, to identify trends and inform the forecasting of demand and throughput.
6. There is not enough capacity in the pathway to meet demand, with placements resource lead rather than needs lead, with admission into the pathway taking too long. Housing providers can feel pressurised into accepting referrals when they know they will struggle to manage the risks of young people entering, alongside the risks of existing young people in the provision.

7. Over a quarter of the units in the YPSHP are occupied by people aged over 18 years who are not care leavers. Whilst they meet current eligibility criteria of the YPSHP, OCC do not have a statutory duty to accommodate them. If there are issues around demand management in the pathway, then pathway eligibility criteria will need review to ensure resources are targeted to meet OCC's statutory duties.
8. Over a third of units in the pathway are occupied by young people under the age of 18. There are 41 (19%) with Looked After Child/Leaving Care status, with 26 (12%) of young people accommodated under Section 17<sup>1</sup> due to safeguarding issues. If eligibility changes to meet statutory duties only, then due consideration will need to be given to young people under the age of 18 who do not have LAC/LC status, as when they reach 18, they would not be eligible for onward support through the YPSHP, despite their level of vulnerability.
9. There is good geographical coverage of provision across the county but too much variability in the standard of accommodation, with provision falling below standard in several projects. Where provision is in more rural locations, young people can struggle to access positive activities and employment, education and training (EET).
10. There needs to be additional provision for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) outside of Oxford City, which offers UASC the opportunity to develop networks in their local community. UASCs can struggle to move on from Support Package 4 (SP4)<sup>2</sup> provision into the larger projects within the YPSHP, and there can be conflict which can arise between groups of UASC and citizenship young people within the projects.

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<sup>1</sup> Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 states that it is the general duty of every local authority to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need; and so far, as it is consistent with that duty, to promote the upbringing of such children by their families.

<sup>2</sup> Dedicated specialist package of support for UASC

11. Young people are more likely to thrive in shared accommodation which houses a maximum of 4 young people, with many struggling to make progress in the larger-style accommodation when they are accommodated with other vulnerable young people.
12. Housing Support Workers (HSWs) develop positive relationships with young people and professionals from other agencies but can often feel deskilled and undervalued which is reflected in poor retention, poor pay and high staff turnover.
13. The professional 'team around the young person' appears to fall away as young people enter the YPSHP, with a lack of clarity around roles and responsibilities between professionals.
14. Projects do not always have the staffing resources to increase staffing to manage risk and help young people to feel safe and there can be variability around the quality of staffing support across the projects.
15. Additional staffing resources need to be made accessible to the projects around particular issues such as mental health and substance misuse, with particular challenges to accessing health services for the young people/adults aged 18 years and over. There is too much reliance on accessing services external of the YPSHP, where there are limited services with high thresholds or long waiting lists.
16. Three quarters of young people feel that they have someone to talk to and HSW provide emotional support to young people in the projects. However, HSWs are often left holding high levels of risk and working in a reactive way to daily incidents impacting one or more residents, with limited opportunities for planned interventions.
17. There needs to be more flexibility and intensity of support a young person can access in the YPSHP to better meet their needs and support them to achieve long term change. The trauma a young person has experienced is not always identified and addressed.

18. The concerns around 'county lines'<sup>3</sup> is increasing with substance misuse and knife crime becoming increasingly problematic for residents and whilst the movement around the pathway for some residents provides safety, for others it further exacerbates these problems.
19. Whilst young people are provided with the opportunity to manage money and handle bills whilst in the pathway, this appears to put many at increasing risk<sup>4</sup> of entering debt or risk-taking behaviour. Charges seem inconsistent and unreflective of services received across the YPSHP and escalating arrears have a long-term impact upon onward housing options but limited effect for onwards behaviours around money management.
20. The charging systems and benefits payments do not always act as an incentive to work or maintain full-time employment for residents. Housing benefit is tapered as a young person gains employment so that they are only marginally better off in work and face financial issues if they are also having to pay accrued rent arrears. The system in place can act as a dis-incentive to work, placing further reliance on the benefit system in the longer term. Young people and staff working in the projects remain confused and lack confidence in understanding benefit entitlements, with more specialist input needed.
21. The impact of the YPSHP does not appear to make much of a difference to a person's ability to secure or sustain living independently of supported housing services. Young people can become dependent on the professional support that they accessed in the pathway and then struggle to identify who they need to ask for support when it is needed and actively progress this, once they have left the YPSHP.

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<sup>3</sup> Criminal exploitation is also known as 'county lines' and is when gangs and organised crime networks exploit children to sell drugs. Often these children are made to travel across counties, and they use dedicated mobile phone 'lines' to supply drugs.

<sup>4</sup> Especially those aged 16 and 17 years old.

22. There are challenges around accuracy, collection and sharing of data within the pathway services. The current data collected as part of the contract monitoring of services provides limited understanding of outcomes made for young people through the projects' services.

23. There are challenges with forecasting young people who are likely to need access to the YPSHP, as well as challenges in the system to instigate suitable accommodation for move on, to be able to effectively manage demand and throughput in these services.

24. Projects have limited budget (if any) for positive play and leisure opportunities or onsite activities and no certification scheme in place to motivate and reward young people's achievements.

## In-House Services

### House Project

1. As the House Project (HP) supports a small number of young people, their individual needs can be met by professionals, with project team staff getting to know the young people well, which helps to identify and work through any difficulties as they arise.
2. The long lead in time means the project cannot accommodate people quickly when they are in housing crisis.
3. Young People in the HP have been working well together and demonstrated that they have developed some independent living skills, but professional feedback echoes that at 16 years, they would struggle if left to be fully independent.

### Move On Homes

4. The Move On Homes (MOHs) provide a very high standard of accommodation and a nurturing environment and staff benefit from having a clinical team that work alongside them.



5. The MOH staff teams have a breadth of skills and flexibility around the support package they can offer to meet individual need, with a budget for activities and resources to support their work with a young person.
6. Staff have begun to provide reunification work between young people and family members and the MOH environment offers a conducive environment for this.
7. The jump between the Children's Home environment and support, to the MOH model is great and the needs of the young people entering the MOH are complex, with them often struggling to be able to sustain long term change after just 6 months of input from the MOH, suggesting the need for increased flexibility around length of stay.
8. The MOH model appears to work best for aspirational young people who have multiple needs but whose needs are not too complex, to act as too much of a barrier to progress during their 6 month stay. Whilst this may be the case, the MOHs have facilitated a transition process for very high needs young people in high-cost out of county Children's Homes where they were not making adequate progress.
9. The MOH license agreement does not always match with what the young people accessing the provision are capable of and there can be an unrealistic expectation of what young people can achieve in their 6 months at the MOH, given the complexity of their needs when they arrive.
10. There is a vast difference in the standard of accommodation and staff support between the MOH and the YPSHP commissioned services which is reflected in the budget variance, with the young person's expectations being raised whilst in MOH accommodation. The young person can find entry into the YPSHP commissioned services challenging as their staffing support drops and the quality of the accommodation changes, with increased contact with other vulnerable young people.

## Supported Lodgings Scheme

11. More Hosts are needed, especially in urban areas and many want the scheme expanded to accommodate more young people, whilst also recruiting Hosts who can accommodate young people with more challenging behaviours, which could include young people in the Youth Offending Service where a Supported Lodging (SL) placement could prevent a young person receiving a custodial sentence. However, there is the recognition that SLs isn't often suitable for young people with extremely challenging behaviour.
12. The support and accommodation offered through this scheme is highly valued and provides a good stepping stone for young people towards reaching independence. Hosts provide a bespoke support package to meet the individual needs of a young person and can encourage them to participate in family or individual activities with the Host.
13. This type of provision can be particularly suitable for 16 and 17 year olds who have had wrap around staff support in residential care homes or foster care and newly arriving UASCs, but less successful for young people with very challenging behaviour who would likely find the support too intensive or exposing for those with offending behaviour or issues with substance misuse.
14. There are challenges with progressing Hosts' assessments quickly due to capacity limitations within the City Fostering Team. Additional resources are required to be able to recruit, train, supervise and support an increased number of Hosts.
15. Moving back to shared accommodation in the pathway is reported as detrimental when a placement with a Host breaks down. There need to be increased opportunities to remain with a Host, move into SLs with an alternative Host or support to access accommodation outside of the YPSHP.

## 1.2 Recommendations

### Commissioned Services

1. Identify families at risk of breakdown earlier and deliver intensive family work. Forecast cases where entry into the pathway is likely, so that better consideration can be given to demand management and throughput. Undertake a Family group conference (FGC)/mediation prior to pathway entry to ensure that all options have been exhausted within the family and extended family. Reinstate the role of Specialist Housing Assessment Social Workers to ensure that families receive a robust message about their responsibilities not to abandon their child and the implications of homelessness or entering the YPSHP.
2. Commission the delivery of housing options education work for staff and pupils in schools, colleges and Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) which covers the reality of housing options/choices and increase access to training about housing for professionals across the county working with children, young people and families.
3. Review the number of beds for each type of package when services are recommissioned based upon forecasted need and demand in District areas. Do not recommission beds specifically for step down accommodation and revise Emergency bed (E-bed) model and review the referral process. Include some flexibility for providers to meet fluctuating demand for the different support packages (where appropriate) where voids are held.
4. Ensure young people aged 16 and 17 years have access to different accommodation and services to those of young people/adults aged 18+ and that Social Workers consider the impact upon onward access to services when young

people are accommodated under Section 17, rather than Section 20<sup>5</sup> or Section 31<sup>6</sup> status.

5. Commission provision both within and outside of Oxford City for UASC, with a model which provides short term accommodation for the statutory assessments to be undertaken (i.e. a Welcome Assessment House) with longer term provision provided in a small project, dedicated to supporting UASC. Prioritise keeping UASC in the locality in which they have built support networks upon arrival.
6. Review existing capacity, roles and responsibilities of staff within the Placement Team and make changes as required to match the volume of work being generated. Review existing processes and forms (including risk identification and young person's compatibility with other young people in the project) used for admission into the pathway. Identify ways in which to better involve the young person in considering which project in the YPSHP will best meet their needs, their compatibility with others in the project and the support they will need from professionals with the move.
7. Review the eligibility for entry into the YPSHP to ensure that OCC's available resources meet the needs of young people there is a statutory duty to accommodate. Consider the implications around accommodating young people aged 16 and 17 years under section 17, if young people aged 18+ who are not care leavers are not eligible for the YPSHP (if resources outside of OCC cannot be identified). Review and amend referral processes to improve transparency around decision making around legal status and between the Adults Homeless Pathway (AHP) and YPSHP to ensure that people access the support that will best meet their needs and do not fall between services.

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<sup>5</sup> Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 sets out how a Local Authority can provide accommodation for a child within their area if that child is in need of it, due to the child being lost/abandoned or there is no person with parental responsibility for that child.

<sup>6</sup> The court can create a care order under Section 31 of the Children Act 1989, placing a child in the care of a designated local authority, with parental responsibility being shared between the parents and the local authority.

8. Increase the accommodation budget when services are recommissioned to secure improved countywide accommodation. Ensure that young people continue to be prioritised within their existing locality (unless safeguarding issues are identified for re-location). Improve processes to better ensure that vacancies/voids in projects are turned around quickly and rooms are adequately ready for young people arriving.
9. Ensure when services are recommissioned that the support packages are able to meet the needs of higher risk young people and young people with low level learning disabilities, through flexibility in staffing to meet need and appropriately mitigate risk.
10. Instruct providers to source properties no larger than four beds when retendering services, to exclude the use of large hostel style accommodation, to achieve better outcomes for young people.
11. Develop a 'Working Together' agreement which housing providers and partners use consistently from case outset which clarifies roles and responsibilities of each professional involved in a case, with expectations that are realistic. This should be reviewed, amended to be case specific and signed by all professionals as a young person enters the YPSHP to help ensure that the 'Team Around the Young Person' approach continues as young people enter services.
12. Increase understanding about the CAMHS Mental Health Worker role<sup>7</sup> across all workers in the projects to ensure it is used effectively. Identify if increased capacity is required as the post holder is used more consistently.
13. Increase the use of Substance Misuse Worker role<sup>8</sup> across the projects to support individual young people and professionals working with the young person. Identify if increased capacity is required as the post holder is used more consistently.

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<sup>7</sup> Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are commissioned to provide this role.

<sup>8</sup> Aquarius are commissioned to provide this role.

14. Provide HSWs with access to reflective practice sessions and case formulation from a Clinical Psychologist (such as those within the REoC Clinical team). Increase HSW access to multi-agency and multi-project training. Ensure that providers offer career progression and continuing professional development opportunities to their staff.
15. Explore the resources required to extend the remit of the Phoenix team to provide health support to care leavers up to 25 years.
16. Increase the delivery of evidenced based interventions within the HSW job description and person specification, with salary scales reflecting this. Ensure that reunification work with family members (where it is safe to do so) is incorporated into a Young Person's Support Plan, with the HSW having an active role in taking this piece of work forward. Omit general cleaning and gardening duties within the HSWs job description, with dedicated staff employed specifically for these duties.
17. Commission the delivery of EET interventions by professionals external to the YPSHP, if there is no dedicated resource to meet this need through existing OCC EET workers in the Family Solutions Service (FSS). Explore better access to alternative educational provision, where access to college isn't possible mid-year, for 18+ year olds.
18. Encourage projects to become accredited assessors for certification such as with the Assessment Qualification Alliance (AQAs) or have access to an assessor<sup>9</sup>, with certification provided to young people to mark achievements and increase motivation. Projects should have access to funding for positive play and leisure activities or for onsite activity resources for their young people for individual or group activities.

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<sup>9</sup> An example of this is Riverside acting as the assessor for AQAs completed by young people in the MOHs.

19. Increase consistency and flexibility in Housing Support Plans, so that young people can access the intensity of support identified through their assessment of need, prior to entry into the YPSHP. Improve the identification of trauma and impact of trauma, using a Clinical Psychologist where required, for young people accessing the YPSHP. Ensure that the behaviour management and eviction policy is consistent across providers and that the outreach model is flexible, varying in intensity and duration to meet individual need upon leaving the pathway.
20. Seek the advice of the Child Exploitation sub-group on how to prevent escalation of 'county lines' through movement around the YPSHP. Encourage police Officers to have increased contact with young people in the pathway to develop positive relationships and prevent/de-escalate criminal activity including knife crime, whilst managing any issues around data sharing/confidentiality.
21. Prevent giving young people, aged 16 and 17 years, large amounts of money to manage and offer support through a dedicated professional to facilitate them towards making appropriate choices around spend. Increase independence using a phased approach once money management skills have been demonstrated, which may include completion of an intensive money management course.
22. Ensure that service charging falls within a consistent range across all providers. Recruit additional benefit specialists, external to the projects, who have dedicated time within each of the projects to offer drop in surgeries for young people and staff, training for staff and can also be contacted outside of this surgery as required for specific queries.
23. Commission extensive work to be undertaken with Private Landlords, which complements the work already underway through District Councils, to offer incentives where they provide tenancies for young people that have come from YPSHP services. Commission extensive work to be undertaken with Employers to identify where opportunities can be increased for young people to access apprenticeships, volunteering opportunities and paid employment.

24. District Council Housing colleagues to undertake work with HSW, to improve relationships and increase understanding of processes in each of the District areas.
25. Develop and provide a hard copy and online 'Support Service Guide' to young people upon leaving the project, so that they have details all in one place for onward professional support required.
26. Review data processes and sharing requirements to make improvements for when services are recommissioned and reduce barriers to the sharing of information.
27. Revise the use of planned/unplanned move categories and identify better mechanisms to identify positive destinations and the achievement of long-term sustainability.
28. Explore the use of 'payment by results' when recommissioning services to enhance provider performance and reward positive outcomes achieved by young people. Increase the resources available to offer more intensive contract monitoring, to better monitor and support providers to deliver high-quality services.

## In-House Services

### The House Project

1. Use early learning evidenced through implementation of the House Project (HP) to inform future recommissioning.
2. Ensure that staff and young people are made aware of future plans for the HP at the earliest opportunity to alleviate future uncertainty.



3. Conduct an 'options appraisal' to identify the recommended option for delivery, if this project is to continue in the long-term after the pilot funding ends.

### Move On Homes

4. Continue to ensure that workers build reunification work with family members (where appropriate) into a young person's support plan and that they take an active role in harnessing positive relationships.
5. Review the eligibility of the Move On Homes (MOH) to ensure that it is still meeting demand and that there is a seamless fit with the wider eligibility of the YPSHP and SL scheme, with further consideration given to the transition between services.
6. Rename the provision so that there is greater clarity of purpose to manage expectations of professionals and young people and their families.
7. Review the license agreement and build flexibility within its terms, to ensure that young people who are being referred into the provision can realistically uphold the requirements of the agreement. Ensure that there is greater consistency around the sending of licensing breach letters to demonstrate fairness and transparency across the young people residing at the home.
8. Review the length of time young people can remain at the MOH and consider greater flexibility in the offer to better meet individual need. Uphold the lead in time for referrals into the MOH to ensure that adequate outreach support can be undertaken by the team to prepare the young person for the provision and develop solid relationships from the outset.
9. Review the charging structure to ensure that it aligns with the charges made in provision within the commissioned services, SL scheme or local accommodation charges outside of the pathway.

10. Identify which outcome tool(s) is consistently used across the MOH to measure progress made and outcomes through the MOH provision. Align this tool(s) with the outcome tool(s) used by providers in the commissioned services and SL scheme.
11. Review the eviction policy and consider how it can align to the eviction policy in place in the commissioned services and SL scheme.

### Supported Lodgings Scheme

12. Increase the capacity of the Supported Lodgings (SL) Team so that there can be additional marketing, recruitment, training and support to an increased pool of Hosts.
13. Increase the pool of Hosts with a focus on identifying Hosts in urban areas and increase the number of Hosts who are trained to support young people with more complex needs (whilst recognising that young people with very challenging behaviour aren't often suited to this type of provision), including those who have a history of offending behaviour.
14. Increase flexibility in the length of time a young person can remain in SL provision to meet the needs of the young person and Host.
15. Ensure that referral to the scheme is consistent with referral into the wider YPSHP, rather than referrals being processed via alternative routes.
16. Review charges made to the young person and increase consistency with charging made in provision within the commissioned services, MOH or provision outside of the pathway.
17. Develop Host peer support groups to offer the opportunity for reflective practice, peer support and access to group training (such as that which is offered to Foster Carers).
18. Retain the in-house delivery model of the SL Scheme with increased budget and capacity.

## 2 Review of Young People’s Supported Housing Pathway Services

### 2.1 Background

Our Vision is that every child and young person in Oxfordshire should have access to a full range of housing services and the opportunity for a decent and affordable home suitable to their needs; and that vulnerable families should be enabled to live in safe and suitable housing as a basis for supportive family relationships and thriving communities<sup>10</sup>.

The aim of the Young People’s Supported Housing Pathway (YPSHP) is to enable young people in Oxfordshire who need supported accommodation to gain and maintain independence skills, to be facilitated into education, employment or training and to gain the knowledge and skills to make informed choices about their accommodation options outside of the YPSHP.

This review was instigated to increase our understanding of the effectiveness of the commissioned services within our YPSHP to inform service recommissioning as contracts end in 2020. Whilst much of this report focuses on the findings from performance analysis of our commissioned services, data has also been analysed and reported on for our in-house provision. This will help us to better understand how the whole of the pathway is working for our homeless young people aged 16-24 years, as well as the interface with the Adult Homeless Pathway (AHP)<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> Housing and Homelessness Strategy and Needs Analysis for Vulnerable Young People and Families in Oxfordshire 2019-2024

<sup>11</sup> The Adults Homeless Pathway is delivered by 4 providers and supports 285 people across the Oxfordshire. People accessing the service are primarily aged 18 to 65 years and have been verified as rough sleeps or vulnerable and/or having complex needs and on the point of homelessness. They are provided with accommodation-based housing related support services for up to 9 months.

This review was undertaken with the involvement of District and County Council staff, colleagues from partner agencies and young people who have used supported housing services. The findings of this review will be used to strengthen both commissioned and in-house YPSHP services for young people in Oxfordshire.

## A Challenging Context

Young people are facing increasingly more financial barriers to owning or renting social or private properties. Young people have been heavily impacted by welfare benefit reforms<sup>12</sup> and unemployment rates for 16 to 24 year olds are higher than for other working age people<sup>13</sup>. Young people who do work, are often employed in jobs that are low paid, temporary and often hold few opportunities for career development. Therefore, young people face higher risk of homelessness, poverty and destitution.

National findings indicate that roughly half of the individuals who access homelessness services in England are between the ages of 18 to 24<sup>14</sup>. One study identified that one third of care leavers became homeless within the first two years of leaving care, and 25% of homeless people have been in care at some point in their lives<sup>15</sup>. 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 pro-active housing, support and advice options earlier on, to encourage young people with their parents/family to plan together and avoid crisis<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> Young people's Housing Benefit entitlement is restricted to the cost of a renting a single room in a shared house, and young people also receive a lower rate of income support within Jobseeker's Allowance and Universal Credit.

<sup>13</sup> Homeless Link's 2017 Annual Review: Support for Single Homeless People in England

<sup>14</sup> Homeless Link's 2017 Annual Review: Support for Single Homeless People in England

<sup>15</sup> National Audit Office (2015) Care leavers' transition to adulthood. Available at:

<https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Care-leavers-transition-to-adulthood.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> St Basil's (2015) Developing Positive Pathways to Adulthood. Available at:

[https://stbasils.org.uk/files/2015-08-35/10\\_FINAL\\_pathwaysA4\\_booklet\\_98812.pdf](https://stbasils.org.uk/files/2015-08-35/10_FINAL_pathwaysA4_booklet_98812.pdf)

Many young people learn about their housing choices from their families, but parents and older family members are not always familiar with the new challenges within the housing market for young people such as welfare reform, limited choices due to affordability and a tightening supply of social housing<sup>17</sup>. Young people consistently feedback that they want and need good information on housing options and the realities (not just on homelessness), but also that they rarely access this at school<sup>18</sup>.

The autonomy of schools and academies means there is likely to be a varied response to education and information on housing options and homelessness<sup>19</sup>. 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 with little access to any information.

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. Family relationship breakdown continues to be the leading cause of youth homelessness, with 49% of young people accessing services becoming homeless for this reason. Local authorities, schools and other agencies already know which young people are at high risk of homelessness before they reach the age of 16 and don't often prevent homelessness or plan with these families the routes young people can take if they cannot stay at home<sup>20</sup>.

There is a lack of awareness amongst some professionals advising young people about the realities of leaving home at a young age (particularly around choice and affordability in the longer term) and the options available when young people leave supported accommodation<sup>21</sup>. 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. It is challenging to establish systems whereby the full range of local services can systematically identify young people who are at high risk of homelessness and proactively work to

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<sup>17</sup> St Basil's (2015) Developing Positive Pathways to Adulthood

<sup>18</sup> Homeless Link's 2017 Annual Review: Support for Single Homeless People in England

<sup>19</sup> St Basil's (2015) Developing Positive Pathways to Adulthood

<sup>20</sup> St Basil's (2015) Developing Positive Pathways to Adulthood

<sup>21</sup> St Basil's (2015) Developing Positive Pathways to Adulthood

prevent a homelessness crisis, sustaining young people within their family networks and where necessary working in partnership to facilitate planned moves<sup>22</sup>. The opportunities to do more reality checking with the whole family, about what options there are and how difficult leaving home at a young age is, are often missed<sup>23</sup>.

Local authorities have been working to address and safely reduce the rate of family breakdown for vulnerable young people. There is no single approach to this, and no reliable data to compare the results but there are initiatives that succeeded to support young people presenting as homeless to live with family members. Key features of successful interventions are<sup>24</sup>:

- Incorporating multi-component interventions or multi-disciplinary teams of professionals working intensively with the young person and their family
- Addressing practical, relational, cultural and organisational barriers to change within the family
- Embedding a 'family focus' at all points of contact
- Making sure prevention work always takes place alongside assessment
- Using family support and family group conferencing services where appropriate

Where there is family breakdown, emergency accommodation plays a key role in preventing young people from sleeping rough or staying in unsafe temporary living arrangements where they face considerable risk of harm (e.g., sexual, mental or physical abuse, or pressure to take drugs or alcohol). However, research findings suggest a continued shortage of suitable emergency housing options for young people in many areas of England<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>22</sup> St Basil's (2015) Developing Positive Pathways to Adulthood

<sup>23</sup> St Basil's (2015) Developing Positive Pathways to Adulthood

<sup>24</sup> Markham, F (2018) YP support Housing Background paper from desktop review

<sup>25</sup> Homeless Link's 2017 Annual Review: Support for Single Homeless People in England

Building based supported accommodation is increasingly in short supply and 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, rents and service charges, the latter two primarily funded by housing benefit, except for looked after young people aged 16 and 17 years.

Supported accommodation is generally thought to be most beneficial for those who are still relatively young and need time to learn life skills to cope with living independently (i.e. 16 - 20) and for those with high /medium support needs. For 16 and 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. The high rents often associated with supported accommodation costs, within the current benefits system, can be a significant barrier to young people entering low paid work<sup>26</sup>.

It is critical to ensure 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. Practice and research have 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. There is a real challenge for providers to ensure young people are ready to move on into other types of accommodation and sustain it<sup>27</sup>.

Reflecting findings from previous years, the most commonly identified support need, among young people accessing homelessness services, related to them not being involved in education, employment or training (44% of the respondents).

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<sup>26</sup> St Basil's (2015) Developing Positive Pathways to Adulthood

<sup>27</sup> St Basil's (2015) Developing Positive Pathways to Adulthood

Homelessness services play a key role in improving the future employment prospects of young people, for example, through training and skills programmes<sup>28</sup>.

A lack of independent living skills was the second most commonly reported support need (41%). Many young people may have no prior experience of managing a tenancy, liaising with landlords, or paying bills. As such, homelessness accommodation and support services have a key role to play in helping develop skills to access and sustain future accommodation<sup>29</sup>.

Homelessness service providers reported that 35% of the young people accessing their services experienced mental health problems. Mental illness can be a causal or a preceding factor for a young person becoming homeless or exacerbated because of homelessness<sup>30</sup>.

Homelessness service providers reported that 28% of young people had needs relating to substance misuse. Research demonstrates that, compared to the substance misuse issues experienced by adults seeking treatment, young people are more likely to seek help for cannabis use. Some of the young people stated in the interviews that they would use cannabis to self-medicate for mental health problems and earlier experiences of trauma<sup>31</sup>.

Research has shown that people accessing homelessness services experience extremely high levels of isolation and loneliness, which may then negatively affect their moving on. Services can play a key role in mitigating feelings of isolation and loneliness; particularly by means of regular group activities and facilitating interactions with other young people supported by the service<sup>32</sup>.

Homelessness service providers highlighted a lack of relationship skills (20%), a lack of numeracy skills (16%), and offending histories (15%) as further key support needs of the young people accessing their services.

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<sup>28</sup> Homeless Link's 2017 Annual Review: Support for Single Homeless People in England

<sup>29</sup> Homeless Link's 2017 Annual Review: Support for Single Homeless People in England

<sup>30</sup> Homeless Link's 2017 Annual Review: Support for Single Homeless People in England

<sup>31</sup> Homeless Link's 2017 Annual Review: Support for Single Homeless People in England

<sup>32</sup> Homeless Link's 2017 Annual Review: Support for Single Homeless People in England



There were 83% of providers who identified that the number of young people presenting with multiple and complex needs had increased in the last year due to limited capacity and resources in the homelessness sector, a lack of specialist mental health services and inadequate early intervention initiatives<sup>33</sup>.

## Local Context

The County Council has a statutory duty to provide housing and support for the following vulnerable young people:

- Looked After (LAC) and Leaving Care aged 16 to 21 years or to 24 years in some circumstances.
- Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) aged 16 and 17 years.
- UASC of 18 to 21 years with no recourse to public funds subject to a Human Rights assessment.
- Young people who are homeless aged 16 and 17 years.
- Young people remanded through the youth justice system aged 16 and 17 years.

The District Councils have a responsibility for providing housing for vulnerable young people and families who:

- Become homeless.
- Are deemed in priority need as defined by the Housing Act 1996.
- Are aged 16 and 17<sup>34</sup> and not Looked After or Leaving Care.
- Are deemed not Intentionally Homeless.
- Are pending the outcome of investigations regarding statutory responsibilities.

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<sup>33</sup> Homeless Link's 2017 Annual Review: Support for Single Homeless People in England

<sup>34</sup> The County Council has the primary responsibility around young people aged 16 and 17 years and District Councils would refer them to the young people's supported housing pathway. Under 18 year olds cannot hold a tenancy.

The number of Looked After Children (LAC) in Oxfordshire is rising sharply in line with national figures, with 789 children currently in care<sup>35</sup>. These children and young people are placed across a wide range of carers, ranging from Kinship carers, Foster Carers and Residential homes. This is significant in a housing context because of the local authorities' increased obligation<sup>36</sup> towards these young people until the age of 25<sup>37</sup>. Oxfordshire poses a hostile housing environment for young people, with Oxford City ranked as the least affordable city in England regarding house purchase, and third least affordable regarding rent<sup>38</sup>.

The housing benefit element of Universal Credit falls short of the median rent by approx. £44 per week in Oxford city £53 per week in Banbury. Falling into rent arrears with one housing provider significantly affects a young person or a family's ability to secure alternative accommodation<sup>39</sup>. Whilst Oxfordshire is still below the national average on many indicators of social need, there are pockets of exceptionally high need. Areas of Oxford City and Banbury are in the top quintile in the country for social care referrals and domestic violence notifications<sup>40</sup>.

A Housing Needs Analysis<sup>41</sup> was conducted that demonstrated that the increase in LAC means additional pressure of 9 places per year in the pathway. There has been a sharp increase in UASC arrivals, with OCC currently looking after 65<sup>42</sup> There are also approximately 10-15 young offenders needing housing with additional support at any one time, 7 young families per year needing to move to independent accommodation and 40 entries per year of young people into the Adult Homeless

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<sup>35</sup> Weekly LAC statistics w/b 4 February 19.

<sup>36</sup> Section 3 of the Children & Social Work Act 2017 has introduced a new duty on local authorities which requires them to offer Personal Advisor (PA) support to all care leavers up to age 25, irrespective of whether they are engaged in education or training. This includes care leavers who return to the local authority at any point after the age of 21 up to age 25 and request PA support.

<sup>37</sup> There are currently 24 Care Leavers aged 21+. Data taken from weekly LAC statistics w/b 4 February 19.

<sup>38</sup> Oxford City Council 2017

<sup>39</sup> Housing and Homelessness Strategy and Needs Analysis for Vulnerable Young People and Families in Oxfordshire 2019-2024

<sup>40</sup> Housing and Homelessness Strategy and Needs Analysis for Vulnerable Young People and Families in Oxfordshire 2019-2024

<sup>41</sup> Housing and Homelessness Strategy and Needs Analysis for Vulnerable Young People and Families in Oxfordshire 2019-2024

<sup>42</sup> Weekly LAC statistics w/b 4 February 19.

Pathway (AHP). The needs analysis data showed that approximately 140 Care Leavers (CLs) will need single independent accommodation by December 2020.

Where the number of LAC has risen and there isn't enough suitable supported housing, residential and foster care placements across the county to accommodate this rise, OCC has been required to spot purchase out of county accommodation for children and young people becoming looked after, which has put huge pressure on the social care budget<sup>43</sup>.

It is vital that the most efficient and effective YPSHP is identified, to ensure that increasing demand and complex needs can be best managed by staff to achieve positive outcomes, and families are able to access a quick and responsive service when a young person is entering local authority accommodation.

### Existing Model of Young People's Supported Housing Pathway Services in Oxfordshire

OCC currently has a mixed delivery model of services within its YPSHP, through commissioning services<sup>44</sup> as well as delivering some services in-house.

YPSHP services are accessible to those who:

- Are aged 16 to 24 at the point of entry<sup>45</sup>.
- Have completed year 11 of statutory education.
- Are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness.
- Who have a housing related support need and not solely or primarily a housing need<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Out of county specialist regulated provision has an average weekly unit cost of £4000. Specialist non-regulated supported housing provision for post year 11 children has an average weekly unit cost of £3,400. Unregulated crisis provision for children too young to enter the pathway where there are agency staff costs, rental costs and external support costs can be more than £23,000 per week.

<sup>44</sup> Existing services were commissioned in 2015.

<sup>45</sup> From 22 years young people can also access the Single Homeless Pathway- supported housing for adults - in Oxfordshire. Allocation and access between the two pathways are decided on a case by case basis.

<sup>46</sup> The only exception to this is Service Package 2C - Step-Down provision.

Entry to the YPSHP is managed by a referral into the Placements Team. A referring agency must complete both a Young Person's Housing Assessment (YPHA) and a thorough, up to date Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Plan (MARAMP). All other options should be explored (e.g. family reconciliation) and ruled out before pursuing and planning a referral to the pathway. A referrer will stipulate which service package they are referring the young person for.

Young people being referred into the pathway will be facing one or more of the following issues:

- Separation and loss having been prevented from remaining with their family
- A range of historical experiences which include but is not limited to:
  - Victim of and/or witness to trauma, abuse or neglect
  - Family breakdown
  - Parental drug and alcohol issues
  - Parental mental health or disability issues
- Challenging behaviours because of their experiences which need to be understood and addressed positively and supportively including negative learned behaviours and coping strategies
- Multiple needs including but not limited to:
  - Drug and alcohol issues
  - Anger management issues
  - Low self-esteem
  - Mental health (either diagnosed or undiagnosed)
  - Learning disability issues<sup>47</sup> (either diagnosed or undiagnosed)
  - Domestic abuse issues
  - Offending issues
  - Financial or sexual exploitation issues

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<sup>47</sup> Including Asperger's and Autism

## Commissioned Services

OCC currently commissions much of its housing and support services for homeless young people<sup>48</sup> to 5 providers who deliver 228 units of accommodation across Oxfordshire. The annual block contract<sup>49</sup> cost of the current provision is £2,562,586 which is funded<sup>50</sup> by OCC's Children's Services<sup>51</sup>.

The service model is divided into four discrete service packages as follows:

- **Service Package 1** - Parents: Accommodation and support for parent(s) with children.
- **Service Package 2** - Singles (shared): Accommodation and support for single young people who are assessed as able to live with others given appropriate support. This will be the package required for most of the young people entering the Pathway.
- **Service Package 3** - Singles (self-contained dispersed): Accommodation and support for single young people whose level or type of risk/vulnerability mean they cannot live in a shared environment.
- **Service Package 4** - Specialist: Accommodation and support for young people whose needs/risks/vulnerabilities require a specialist response that attracts joint funding from other agencies such as the Home Office, Health, Adult Services or some Children's Social Care teams. This package includes newly arrived UASC. This Service will deliver support at short notice and will be able to deliver spot purchase of additional beds and/or support hours at short notice and to bespoke requirements.

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<sup>48</sup> Aged 16-24 years of age

<sup>49</sup> The existing contracts come to an end on 31 March 2020.

<sup>50</sup> The City Council fund two E-beds within the pathway at a cost of £6000 per annum.

<sup>51</sup> There is a separate pathway funded by OCC's Adults services for vulnerable adults with additional needs.

The table shows a breakdown of the total number of units in each of the service packages and providers deliver a range of packages in various locality areas:

<b>Service Package No.</b>	<b>Total No. of units</b>
1 (Parents)	56
2 (Singles- shared)	135
3 (Singles- self- contained)	16
4 (Specialist)	21

Once admitted to the pathway, a young person may move through three stages of support<sup>52</sup> (though it is possible for a more independent young person to be directly referred for move-on).

- Assessment & Intervention (up to 8 weeks) - multi-agency assessment and planning for and with the YP.
- Intervention & Progression - (no time frame - dependent on young person's progress) - the focus is on delivering and reviewing the action plans which are put in place during the assessment phase. During this period, the provider works with other agencies, alongside the young person to support them in developing and maintaining the skills and confidence they will need to gain and maintain independence.
- Move-on –The housing provider will support the young people in identifying appropriate accommodation options and will also deliver outreach resettlement support of up to 12 weeks to facilitate a successful and sustainable exit from the pathway.

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<sup>52</sup> Taken from the Young People Supported Housing Service Specification, 2015

Young people are predominantly referred into the YPSHP by Social Workers or District Housing Workers. Referrals are triaged by the Placement Team who hold information on where there are places available in the pathway provision. Professionals can make a referral for a general bed, a step- down bed or an E-bed<sup>53</sup>.

A general bed offers accommodation and support from a housing worker for up to 2 years on housing related matters to support the young person to reach independence. A step-down bed offers short term accommodation and housing worker support for up to 6 months and is used for young people who have been assessed as needing some minimal support before being ready to move out of the pathway. Young people can move from a general bed to a step- down bed or enter the pathway straight into a step- down bed. E-beds can be used for up to 14 days when a young person is assessed as being at risk of immediate and significant harm due to homelessness or housing related issues. They can also be used whilst services identify the most appropriate housing option for each young person and the next steps to achieve this. Access to emergency accommodation does not automatically enable access to a general bed within the YPSHP.

All accommodation and locations are expected to be safe, easily accessible by public transport and have access to local amenities to facilitate young people's access to education, employment and training opportunities, to services and to community activities. The type of accommodation in the pathway varies from bed-sit or flat in a block/hostel or dispersed in the community. Some provision is self - contained, whilst in other accommodation young people will have their own room but live in shared accommodation.

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<sup>53</sup> Young people aged 18 years upwards can be referred into the adult pathway, which is for adults with additional and significant needs that need supported accommodation to live independently, if it can be demonstrated that their needs cannot be accommodated in the young person's pathway. Young people/adults aged 22 years are generally referred directly into the Adult's Supported Housing pathway, rather than the young people's pathway. There are currently 14 adults who have complex needs and are in the adult pathway. All 14 adults have complex needs which could not be met in the young people's pathway and 20% of them are care leavers.

Staff should be appropriately trained, skilled and work in partnership with other agencies to support the young person. Whilst the level of intensity of support will vary across the support packages, the support offered should be supporting the young people to achieve the following outcomes:

- Self-manage all aspects of their life needed for independence.
- Engage with their wider community.
- Engage in EET.
- Sustain good health.
- Enable them to be and feel safe.

Providers work with local Housing Benefit Departments to ensure robust and sufficient arrangements are in place for Housing Benefit and Eligible Service Charge to support housing management and concierge costs. Where young people are aged 16 or 17 and are LAC or CLs, OCC funds to the same level in place as the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). Every effort is made to keep the cost to young people as low as possible to reduce negative impact on their opportunities to engage in and benefit from paid employment.

Young people over 18 in the pathway are required to pay rent. Unless they are earning significantly this will be paid in part or in full via Universal Credit (UC). Their benefit payment will include the Eligible Service Charge (ESC). This includes things the young person does not have a choice over such as communal areas and facilities. This additional charge provides a significant part of the pathway providers' income. In some cases, the ESC is greater than the rent. There are also Ineligible Service Charges (ISC) which the young person is also responsible for paying but cannot be claimed for under UC. These are things the young person does have a choice over such as individual heating, additional internet access and a TV licence etc.



## In-House Services

### The House Project

The House Project (HP) is a pilot funded through an award by the Department for Education (DfE) for Innovation funding<sup>54</sup>. Oxfordshire has received £369,062 funding up until March 2020 to establish the project and develop an independent organisation to take forward the project beyond March 2020. The HP provides accommodation, support and employment or training opportunities for care leavers. Social workers have worked with the HP team to identify ten care leavers aged 16-18 for the project. These young people have then worked together, with the HP team, to identify shared properties that they could live in. The properties identified are being released on a temporary basis to the HP<sup>55</sup> and when young people feel able to manage with less support they 'graduate' from the HP community team and the young people remain in the property as a tenant.

### Move On Homes

There are two Move On Homes (MOHs) that sit within the Residential Edge of Care (REoC) service with a revenue cost of £440,000 for each home, providing a total of 8 units, which have operated to near 100% occupancy since opening in 2016. The MOHs provide a time limited programme for post year 11, 16 to 21-year olds who would benefit from an enhanced level of support and supervision, from that available within the YPSHP projects and SLs scheme. This in recognition of the fact that historically many of the LAC/LC population have either been denied access to the YPSHP services due to their level of need or have experienced multiple evictions from the YPSHP because of their lack of preparedness for this type of provision. The MOHs prioritise supporting young people leaving the residential Children's Homes or those that are moving from out of county residential provision back into Oxfordshire.

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<sup>54</sup> There was a successful pilot in Stoke on Trent which led to this being rolled out to five local authorities (including Oxfordshire) for a second pilot phase to test if the approach can be implemented elsewhere in the country.

<sup>55</sup> A provider called Response have been funded through the project to support with property identification and risk share on behalf of the House project team in Oxon.

## Supported Lodgings Scheme<sup>56</sup>

The Supported Lodgings (SL) team recruit, train and support a pool of SL Hosts. These Hosts are paid to provide accommodation and more intensive support than the pathway provides<sup>57</sup>, with 10 Hosts currently offering 8 placements to young people. The SL Scheme sits within the City Fostering Service and is run on an annual budget of £90,000.

## 2.2 Key Findings of this Review

The key findings of this review are based upon the following data sources:

- 3 x Workshops with a total of 67 professionals
- 4 x Focus groups with a total of 19 professionals
- 12 x Semi structured telephone interviews with a total of 13 professionals
- Analysis of 75 surveys<sup>58</sup> from professionals
- Analysis of 49 surveys from young people
- 18 x face to face interviews with young people
- 11 x case files reviewed on Framework-I
- 7 social worker case studies reviewed
- 4 x property visits to pathway premises
- Analysis of performance<sup>59</sup> and budgetary data
- Analysis of recent stakeholder feedback collated through other linked projects/ service reviews<sup>60</sup>.
- Desktop review of relevant internal documents
- Desktop review of national best practice learning
- Learning from contact with 6 x local authorities<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> This scheme has been commissioned in the past but returned for in- house delivery when the contractual requirements could not be met, and the scheme needed to be maintained.

<sup>57</sup> Hosts are expected to provide accommodation, a minimum of 10 hours of support a week to help a young person to develop independent living skills and encourage the young person to participate in social activities with the Host and other family members.

<sup>58</sup> This includes 12 surveys specifically focused on supported lodging provision.

<sup>59</sup> The data used was collated from the providers data returns to the Placement Team in December 2018 so there may be some inaccuracies. Please use the data provided in this paper as a guide to current trend.

<sup>60</sup> This includes feedback through Children in Care Council (CiCC) and Foster Care Service review

<sup>61</sup> This includes Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Camden, Birmingham (St Basil's), Leeds and Warwickshire.

The findings are split into those about the commissioned services and those about the in-house services which includes the House Project (HP), Move On Homes (MOHs) and Supported Lodgings (SL) Scheme.

## Commissioned Services

The key findings about the commissioned services are split into the following sub-sections:

- Preventing young people from entering services
- Managing referrals
- Quality of accommodation
- Staffing resources
- Support provided
- Work, benefit payments and service charges within services
- Moving young people on from services
- Contract monitoring of services and performance data

## Preventing Young People from Entering Services

Most preventative interventions are delivered through the Family Solutions Service (FSS), which includes Children's Social Care Family Support (statutory service) and Early Help services (non-statutory service). The REoC service provides a short-term intervention to children and families on the brink of a child going in to care and bring together Social and Family Support Workers and other agencies to identify and address barriers and risks within families.

This review has identified that more work needs to happen to prevent young people, especially those aged 16 and 17 years, from entering the YPSHP as once they enter it, the majority become dependent on the support they have received and then struggle to sustain independence once services have ended<sup>62</sup>. Young people aged 16 and 17 years do not thrive in the YPSHP and are put at risk through living with young people/ adults with their own additional and complex needs and evidence

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<sup>62</sup> The FSS provides support and interventions through case work and targeted interventions to vulnerable children and families to reduce safeguarding concerns. This includes support to children in need, those on child protection plans and those who are looked after by OCC.

strongly suggests that there should be alternative provision for young people in this age group.

There is limited evidence of enough work being undertaken with family members and wider family networks at an early enough stage to allow positive connections to be re-established. Once young people enter the YPSHP it appears that relationships have completely broken down, with minimal chance of repair. FGCs/mediation services are not generally used as a tool to explore and exhaust all options prior to entry into the YPSHP.

Evidence suggests that young people, their families and professionals have limited understanding of the implications of homelessness and unrealistic expectations of the accommodation and support that a young person will access through the YPSHP. Being housed with young people with similar complexities of need brings additional challenges and vulnerabilities which aren't always considered when a solution to a reactive situation is being sought. There appears to be a lack of understanding about the long-term outcomes and choices a young person is likely to have, after accessing the YPSHP. Once a person enters supported housing services, they rarely sustain living independently from professional support in the long term.

Emergency beds (E-beds) are not always meeting the needs of professionals or young people, with issues around availability, despite some projects working flexibly at times to provide additional E-beds beyond their contractual requirements. It can take several days to access a bed in an emergency, with E-beds not always ready for the young person's arrival and at times the room can be below minimum standard. Referrals to these beds are still made via the Placements Team but professionals describe that they struggle to complete the referral paperwork required for an E-bed in an emergency.

Once young people can access an E- bed, they are then likely to remain in that bed for longer than 14 days, with a move into a general bed within the pathway rather than having a housing resolution found outside of the YPSHP. Of the young people who accessed E-bed provision last year<sup>63</sup>, two thirds of the young people moved from an E-bed to a general bed in the same project<sup>64</sup>. The move from an E-bed to a general bed within the same project can cause confusion for the young person as staffing support will then kick in through the housing project’s team and this support isn’t available when they are isolated in an E-bed and need it most.

Young people should not remain in an E-bed for any longer than 14 days but the data from last year shows that the average length of stay was 20 days<sup>65</sup>. The table below shows a breakdown of the duration of stay in the E-bed provision with 61% of young people exceeding the 14 day maximum stay:

<b>Length of stay</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>
Less than 7 days	8	21%
8-14 days	7	18%
15- 28 days	12	32%
29 days to 90 days	11	29%
Total	38	100%

There is minimal professional support provided to the young person during this time and there isn’t a keyworker identified within the project, so there are challenges with co-ordinating professional support.

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<sup>63</sup> A sample of 15 young people (quarter of the total cases identified) was used to look at the placement journey of those accessing E-bed provision.

<sup>64</sup> The other third moved into a general bed in a different project within the pathway

<sup>65</sup> Placement Team data, December 2018

## Managing Referrals

The Placements Team has one Senior Placement Officer who predominantly coordinates all the Placements. Providers with vacancies in their projects are contacted with the referral information to identify if a placement match can be made and they are also required to make a weekly return to demonstrate occupied and vacant/void beds.

Whilst there is one point of entry for referral into the pathway, with recognition of the expertise and knowledge of the Placement Team, final decision-making outcomes do not always appear transparent to professionals. More resources are needed in the Placement Team to manage the volume of referrals and work generated around the placements.

Whilst consideration is given about the needs of other young people in projects, as there is such limited capacity in the pathway, placements can be resource lead rather than needs lead. Housing providers can feel pressurised into accepting referrals for young people where they will struggle to manage the risks of young people entering, alongside the risks of existing young people in the provision. Professionals that know the young person best, do not liaise directly with the provider to provide clarity about the young person's needs and associated risks.

With an increasing number of UASC arriving spontaneously in Oxfordshire, there is not enough capacity within SP4 and this requires the spot purchasing of beds which can sometimes be outside of the county so after a long journey to Oxfordshire, the journey for the young person continues and social workers struggle to provide the relevant support. There can also be a bottle neck within the provision, with young people not wanting to move onto provision in the wider YPSHP, especially if it is outside of the City area where most of the services which support UASC are based and where they have begun to develop networks with other young people. When moved on to the larger provision in the YPSHP, there have been some issues between UASCs and citizenship young people which has been difficult at times for staff to manage.

In 2017/18 there were 336 referrals<sup>66</sup> for 251 people<sup>67</sup>. Of the 251 people referred, 160 (64%) were admitted and 91 referrals were rejected which suggests that further work is needed with professionals to reduce the level of referrals being made which do not meet eligibility for pathway access. There needs to be cultural change across operational teams with the YPSHP only used as a very last resort, when all other options have been exhausted. There is variability around the quality of MARAMPS and YPHA and this impacts upon how risk is identified and mitigated.

Admission into the pathway takes too long for most young people, with limited beds available and vacancy/void turn around slow, for some providers. On average it was 47 days from referral to admission into a project which evidences challenges with demand management based upon the pathway's current capacity and eligibility criteria. The peak age for admission was 17 years old, with 76% being accepted and admitted, demonstrating that this was also the most successful age for referrals being accepted into the pathway.

The data also demonstrated that:

- Females (66%) are marginally more likely than males (62%) to be admitted.
- Ethnic minorities (76%) are more likely to be admitted than white young people (61%).
- A professional is twice as likely to be successful in their referral if the referral is from social care, rather than from a housing team.
- Being pregnant did not have a big impact on whether you were admitted.
- The amount of needs<sup>68</sup> you had didn't affect whether you would be admitted.
- 72% of referrals of care leavers led to an admission.
- 76% of 'known to social care but not LAC' were admitted.
- 43% of people not known to social care were admitted.

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<sup>66</sup> If someone moves from an e-bed to a main bed another referral is required and counted.

<sup>67</sup> One person had 6 referrals

<sup>68</sup> Such as issues around physical Health, mental health, domestic violence, substance misuse, money management, NEET etc

We currently have a high occupancy rate of 214 open episodes of people in the 228 units with a young person on average in their latest placement for over 8 months, with a quarter in their pathway placement for over a year.

Of the 214 open episodes, 67 are supporting young people under the age of 18 and 147 are supporting adults aged 18 years and over. Of those 67 young people under the age of 18, 41 (19%) have LAC/LC status, with 26 (12%) of young people accommodated under section 17 due to safeguarding issues. Of the 147 adults supported, 61 (29%) are not care leavers and whilst they have been assessed as being vulnerable and requiring housing support, OCC do not have a statutory duty to provide them with accommodation within the YPSHP. If there are issues around demand management in the pathway, then pathway eligibility criteria will need review to ensure resources are targeted to meet OCC's statutory duties. If eligibility changes to meet statutory duties only, then due consideration will need to be given to young people under the age of 18 who do not have LAC/LC status, as when they reach 18, they would not be eligible for onward support through the YPSHP, despite their level of vulnerability. Social Workers will need consider the impact upon onward access to services when young people are accommodated under Section 17, rather than Section 20 or Section 31 status.

The table below shows a breakdown of the actual number and percentage of units being used by each age group and the young person's recorded legal status:

	<b>Under 18</b>	<b>18-25</b>	<b>Total</b>
LAC/LC	41 (19%)	86 (40%)	127 (59%)
< 18 safeguarding duty	26 (12%)	0 (0%)	26 (12%)
> 18 no duty	0 (0%)	61 (29%)	61 (29%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>67 (31%)</b>	<b>147 (69%)</b>	<b>214 (100%)</b>



Most recorded vacancies/voids were in E-bed (SP2A), step down (SP2C) and family provision (SP1)<sup>69</sup>, with none recorded for single self- contained (SP3) or specialist (SP4) provision:

<b>Package type</b>	<b>Percentage vacant</b>
1 (Families)	14%
2 (Singles shared) A- E-beds	40%
2 (Singles shared) B- General	15%
2 (Singles shared) C- Step downs	22%
3 (Singles shared) Self-contained	0%
4 (Specialist)	0%

Last year there were 6 young people that accessed step down provision and 4 closed with an average stay of 189 days, ranging from 90-270 days. There are 2 recorded as still accessing this provision, each with a stay of more than 420 days. With the step-down bed maximum stay of 180 days, this data suggests that most young people either required more support than was expected when they accessed a step- down bed or that they are ‘stuck’ in the pathway and unable to move on.

There are currently 14 adults aged between 18 and 24 in the Adult Homeless Pathway (AHP)<sup>70</sup>. These adults have complex needs and it has been identified that their needs would be best met in the adult’s pathway rather than the young person’s pathway. However, there is minimal case information available to get a better understanding of the decision-making around these cases. There is a need to better join up the processes between the AHP and the YPSHP to ensure that the person receives the service which will offer them the best outcomes and that resources are targeted appropriately and efficiently.

<sup>69</sup> Within minimal voids in the single general beds.

<sup>70</sup> Data provided by Quality and Contracts Officer, February 2019.

## Quality of Accommodation

There is good geographical coverage of provision across the county but too much variability in the standard of accommodation, with provision falling below standard in several projects. Professionals do not know where or how to escalate concerns about the quality of accommodation or when they have, there can be minimal change, if any.

Young people are not able to view the property that they are moving into and when they arrive, and it does not meet their expectations there is no alternative due to capacity issues within the pathway or for safeguarding reasons. A third of young people would like more support with the move and did not have a transition plan in place that they were aware of.

A room isn't always ready for the young person to move into and young people report that repairs in some of the projects are not always fixed or are fixed slowly. There is a lack of clarity and consistency around who should provide basic items for living such as crockery, bedding etc and young people do not always feel safe in their accommodation. Young people can experience greater isolation or increased vulnerability or risk when placed in the larger provisions and young people are more likely to thrive in shared accommodation which houses a maximum of 4 young people.

## Staffing Resources

Housing Support Workers (HSWs) develop positive relationships with young people and professionals from other agencies. Whilst some professionals are working well together to support young people, there is still some lack of clarity around roles and responsibilities between professional teams. Projects do not have the staffing resources to increase staffing to manage risk and help young people to feel safe and there can be variability around the quality of staffing support across the projects. Where UASC are moved onto provision outside of SP4 in the larger pathway provision, staff do not always feel confident with supporting their needs and when

there are clashes between groups of UASC and citizenship young people, this can be challenging to resolve.

Additional staffing resources need to be made accessible to the projects around particular issues such as mental health and substance misuse and where the CAMHS Mental Health Worker and Substance Misuse worker are used by projects, their input is considered valuable. There are particular challenges to accessing health services for the young people/adults aged 18 years and over, including care leavers.

HSW often feel deskilled and undervalued which is reflected in poor retention and high turnover. Salary rates are poor and there are limited opportunities for development and progression. The breadth of the workers role to move between practical support such as cleaning and gardening through to emotional support, living skills, benefits and employment, education and training (EET), is too broad and prevents the adequate focus required on each of the support areas identified. The HSW remit does not allow workers to utilise their skills, experience and qualifications and respond to need as it arises. There are not enough opportunities for continuing professional development, peer supervision and reflective practice sessions to share learning and skills and generate staff motivation.

### Support Provided

Three quarters of young people feel that they have someone to talk to and housing workers provide emotional support to young people in the projects. However, HSWs are often left holding high levels of risk and working in a reactive way to daily incidents affecting one or more residents, with limited opportunities for planned interventions for individuals or groups within the projects. Where direct work is undertaken around basic living skills, HSWs do not have access to a certification scheme that they can use with the young people to mark their achievements and improve motivation. There are limited (if any) funds for accessing play and leisure opportunities for an individual or group in the projects, or art and craft supplies for onsite activities.

The professional 'team around the young person' appears to fall away as young people enter the YPSHP, with much left to the restrictive support package available through the remit of housing workers. There is too much reliance on access to services external of the YPSHP, where there are limited services with high thresholds or long waiting lists. The support package is inflexible and does not meet most young people's needs for immediate or long-term change. The trauma they have experienced is not always identified and addressed and no work is undertaken to help family members to reconnect and develop improved relationships.

Once young people in the pathway reach 18 years, services such as virtual school and Phoenix team fall away which presents further challenges to accessing services. The concerns around 'county lines'<sup>71</sup> is increasing with substance misuse and knife crime becoming increasingly problematic for residents and whilst movement around the YPSHP can be safer for some residents, for others it can further exacerbate these problems. EET is also disrupted as young people move to alternative placements within the YPSHP or move on from the YPSHP.

### Work, Benefit payments and Service charges whilst in Services

Whilst young people are provided with the opportunity to manage money and handle bills whilst in the YPSHP, this appears to put them at increasing risk<sup>72</sup> of entering debt or risk-taking behaviour and consequences appear inconsistent or disproportionate across projects. Charges seem inconsistent and unreflective of services received across the YPSHP projects and escalating arrears have a long-term impact upon onward housing options but limited effect for onwards behaviours around money management.

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<sup>71</sup> Criminal exploitation is also known as 'county lines' and is when gangs and organised crime networks exploit children to sell drugs. Often these children are made to travel across counties, and they use dedicated mobile phone 'lines' to supply drugs.

<sup>72</sup> Especially those aged 16 and 17 years old.

The charging systems and benefits payments do not always make it pay to work or maintain full-time employment for residents and so the system in place can act as a dis-incentive, placing further reliance on the benefit system in the longer term for some young people. As a young person's earnings increase, their benefit drops but the eligible service charge of their total rent remains high. This means that the young person is unlikely to gain much financially from working while they remain in the YPSHP, with this compounded if they are also having to pay accrued rent arrears. Rent payments are not always prioritised by the young person and they can quickly fall into large arrears which seriously jeopardises their ability to find move on accommodation.

Where there is limited specialist input around benefits, young people and staff working in the projects remain confused and lack confidence in understanding benefit entitlements.

### Moving Young People on from the Young People's Supported Housing Pathway

Providers should support young people to identify when they are ready to move into accommodation outside the YPSHP, with the necessary independent living skills to sustain this. However, the housing market does not appear to be able to provide move on housing solutions at the time when young people identify as being ready to move on from the YPSHP.

Young people that come into the YPSHP have behaviours that have become entrenched over many years and the commissioned pathway is not a therapeutic specialist environment but a generic supported pathway, so young people can often leave the pathway experiencing the same emotional and behavioural challenges.

This year the projects tell us 161 people have left a scheme, which may include going elsewhere in the pathway, with moves recorded as 'planned' or 'unplanned'. There are over a third recorded as unplanned moves and the remaining two thirds as planned moves, with planned moves not necessarily relating to a positively planned transition but known by the provider to be taking place. Planned moves

can include evictions, which are on the rise and may leave a young person homeless<sup>73</sup>.

Other examples of planned moves recorded which may not offer sustainable independent living, include a planned move to a 'caravan,' living with friends which is in reality 'sofa surfing'<sup>74</sup>, a move back to live with family members where no work may have been completed to ensure previous safeguarding issues have been addressed, or a young person moving to an alternative placement within the pathway due to placement breakdown.

The impact of the YPSHP does not appear to make much of a difference to a person's ability to secure or sustain living independently of supported housing services with only 27 moves (17%) last year that appeared to be positive/appropriate moves onto independent living. Positive/appropriate destination examples include young people moving on to secure social/private housing tenancies or moving into Adult Supported Living services, if they have ongoing mild-moderate learning difficulties, with onward support identified.

Across District areas, young people who have accessed the YPSHP are prioritised for the highest banding level to improve access to social housing. Private Landlords are reluctant to offer tenancies to people on benefits and historical rent arrears or anti-social behaviour further reduces the options for young people upon leaving the pathway. Outreach support across the projects is variable and there is limited flexibility in the outreach offer to adjust intensity and duration to meet individuals' needs. Young people have become dependent of the professional support that they accessed in the pathway and then struggle to identify who they need to ask for support where required and actively progress this, once they have left the pathway.

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<sup>73</sup> Where an eviction is being sought from a property the Provider will be required to demonstrate that despite active partnership work to address the issues being faced, that all options have been exhausted. For immediate evictions there will be a clear, imminent and significant risk of harm to other residents, staff or specific members of the community.

<sup>74</sup> Staying temporarily with various friends and relatives while attempting to find permanent accommodation.

## Contract Monitoring of Services and Performance Data

There are challenges around accuracy, collection and sharing of data within the services and OCC staff are reliant on the weekly returns made by providers to understand placement availability through vacancy/void information. Case information is held on providers' internal systems, rather than Framework-I, so OCC staff are left with limited access to information about the journey or the young person and progress made. Where there is Social Worker involvement, case contact, assessment and planning information should be held on Framework-I, Social Care's case recording and management system, but there can be gaps in the case file.

Providers are expected to deliver the contractual requirements of their supported housing services and these requirements are closely monitored by OCC's Quality and Contracts Officers (QCOs) through the following activities:

- Quarterly Contract Monitoring Meetings
- Bi-annual Wellbeing visits of all sites
- Frequent ad-hoc visits to sites in response to issues
- Quarterly provider forums
- Annual Quality Monitoring Review
- Annual Section 11 Safeguarding Audit

Data returns from providers focus on the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) within the current contract, which are high-level outcomes that make it challenging to track progress made of individual young people. Whilst there are the appropriate representatives attending quarterly contract monitoring meetings, chaired by the QCOs, the quality of data provided for these meetings can vary.

Where there were significant staffing challenges and turnover of staff in 2018-19 for some providers, this led to the loss of key contractual information for some services. Therefore, this has impacted on the reliability over the overall current data collected as part of the contract monitoring of services.

Whilst this has limited the understanding of outcomes made for young people through the projects' services, there is clear evidence from the data that providers are repeatedly not meeting some KPIs, for example EET targets. Providers have expressed that this is due to the complexities of the young people that they are supporting, including other influencing factors such as UASC often not legally being allowed to access education or work.

QCOs have limited capacity to spend time on detailed data analysis. This includes forecasting young people who are likely to need access to services to support demand and throughput and analysing patterns of voids to enable challenge or support to providers and, if appropriate, reclaim payments if units are vacant due delays in maintenance work. In acknowledgment of this, QCOs have worked with the Placements Team to allow providers, under certain criteria, to use some of the provision more flexibly to support move-on and prevent blockages in the pathway.

Despite these challenges and desire to increase monitoring, particularly around data analysis, quality monitoring activities are effectively monitoring and supporting providers to meet their contractual requirements. QCOs have good relationships and communication with providers and are made aware and respond to incidents on a regular basis. Intensive work has supported individual providers to achieve improved performance around identified issues and the quarterly provider forums bring providers together, with local authority staff, to explore shared issues and consider resolutions together.

## In-House Services

### House Project

The House Project (HP) team<sup>75</sup> have worked with young people, who have been identified for the project, to locate suitable private rented properties which has managed the young people's expectations as they have been involved in the decision- making process. As the House project supports a small number of young

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<sup>75</sup> An organisation called Response have been funded through the House project to support the identification of suitable properties and to mitigate the risks around the properties identified.



people, their individual needs can be met by professionals, with HP staff getting to know the young people well so they can identify and work through any difficulties.

There are 8 young people<sup>76</sup> aged 16 and 17 at the time of referral who moved into two properties in March 2019, with three quarters of them male and just under a third UASC. The long lead in time means the project cannot accommodate people quickly when they are in housing crisis, with previous accommodation either a residential children's home, supported housing placement or a MOH.

Young People in the HP have been working well together and demonstrated that they have developed some independent living skills, but professional feedback echoes that at 16 years, they would struggle if left to be fully independent.

There are another 3 young people moving into another property in August 2019 who have not yet been confirmed but temporary contracts mean insecurity for staff and young people about the sustainability and reliability of project. It is too early to collate any robust evidence to measure project effectiveness.

### Move On Homes

The Move On Homes (MOHs) provide a very high standard of accommodation and a nurturing environment and staff benefit from having a clinical team that work alongside them, advising workers on their cases through individual and group sessions.

The MOH staff teams have a breadth of skills and flexibility around the support package they can offer to meet individual need, with a budget for activities and resources to support their work with a young person. Staff have begun to provide reunification work between young people and family members and the MOH environment offers a conducive environment for this.

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<sup>76</sup> With section 20 or full care order legal status.

Last year, there were 16 young people who accessed a place at a MOH, with the average time between referral and entry into the home as 62 days<sup>77</sup> which offered limited (if any) opportunity for outreach work prior to the move for the staff team which is part of the MOH delivery model<sup>78</sup>.

The following table gives a breakdown of length of time it took young people to access a place, following referral:

<b>No. of Days Between Referral and Access</b>	<b>No. of Young People</b>
Same day	2
1-30 days	4
31-60 days	4
61-90 days	3
91- 180 days	0
Over 181 days	2
Referral date note recorded	1

Of the 16 children who started at a MOH, there were 12 who were in care settings before the MOH (4 from out of county Residential Children’s Homes; 3 from in-county Assessment Homes; 2 from in-house Residential Children’s Homes; 2 out of county Foster Care placements and 1 at a YPSHP project). There were 4 who came from other provision which includes a hospital, supported lodgings (SL), prison/custody or needed emergency accommodation whilst awaiting a place in the YPSHP.

Professionals describe the jump between the Children’s Home environment and support, to the MOH model as great and that the young people’s needs are complex, with challenges with making long-term change in the 6 months available to them. Professionals describe that there are many young people who would have benefited from accessing a place as their needs would better be met by the MOH model, but

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<sup>77</sup> This excludes one young person where no referral date was recorded so the length of time could not be established.

<sup>78</sup> The MOHs should get 3 months warning prior to a young person moving in, which should allow them to offer outreach support prior to the young person moving in.

do not meet the current eligibility criteria. The MOH model works best for aspirational young people who have multiple needs but whose needs are not too complex, to act as too much of a barrier to progress during their 6 month stay. Whilst this may be the case, the MOH have facilitated a transition process for very high needs young people in high-cost out of Children's Homes where they were not making adequate progress.

Whilst the MOHs were set up to work with the most challenging young people, it is felt that the MOH license agreement does not always match with what the young people accessing the provision are capable of which is reflected in part by some of the recent evictions. There are young people entering the MOHs with complex needs that have not been in education, employment or training (EET) for a considerable length of time, so 30 hours EET is very unrealistic for them. It is described that when young people breach their license agreement in the MOHs, that there is not always consistency with issuing breach letters.

There are 6 young people who are currently resident at the MOHs and they have been in the MOH provision for an average of 143 days; with 2 for 30-90 days, 2 for 91- 180 days and 2 for 181- 270 days. Young people can only stay in the MOHs for 6 months (with option to extend for 3 months) and they are then required to move on, even if they are not ready for this. There can be an unrealistic expectation of what young people can achieve in their 6 months at the MOH, given the complexity of their needs when they arrive. However, it is recognised that due to the demand for places that if the length of stay was increased, that there would be less throughput, which would increase the length of time young people remain within expensive out of county placements, whilst awaiting a place in a MOH.

There is a vast difference in the funding levels between the commissioned services and the MOHs which is reflected in the standard of accommodation and staff support, which can be challenging for young people to adjust to upon entry into the projects in the YPSHP. Whilst the MOH model provides an environment for young people to thrive and remodel behaviours, once they move into the projects in the YPSHP, they can revert to old behaviours where their vulnerability is increased through the reduction in staffing support and increased interaction with other young

people with complex needs. It is described that dependency can be created for some young people through the MOH model, and some describe the name of the provision as confusing to young people and professionals, raising expectation about what they will be 'moving on' to which is often shared, lower quality accommodation in the wider YPSHP.

Last year there were 14 young people who exited the MOH, with 12 moves recorded as planned and 2 young people who were evicted. Of these 12 young people, there were 6 who went on to an alternative project in the YPSHP, 2 who returned home, 1 who went to live with a friend, 2 that went into Adult Supported Living services and 1 who moved into Social Housing. There isn't one consistent formal assessment used in the MOH to measure outcomes which makes it challenging to evidence the impact made across the cohort.

### Supported Lodgings Scheme

There are currently 10 active Supported Lodgings (SL) Hosts<sup>79</sup> who are paid to provide accommodation and up to 10 hours of support per week to the young people living with them. More Hosts are needed, especially in urban areas and many want the scheme expanded to accommodate more young people, whilst also recruiting Hosts who can accommodate young people with more challenging behaviours. This could include young people in the Youth Offending Service where a SL placement could prevent a young person receiving a custodial sentence.

This scheme is highly valued and provides a good stepping stone for young people towards reaching independence. The Host can offer a balance of nurture/support in a homely environment, alongside promoting independence skills in preparation for move on into adulthood. Hosts provide a bespoke support package to meet the individual needs of a young person and can encourage them to participate in family or individual activities with the Host.

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<sup>79</sup> There are 3 assessments underway for new Hosts, 3 on hold due to capacity issues for progressing and 5 initial enquiries which may lead to assessment.

SLs is a particularly effective option for young people who are aspirational and those who are identified as requiring more support than the pathway can provide or where shared accommodation would put them at risk or impact upon their progress. This type of provision can be particularly suitable for 16 and 17 year olds who have had wrap around staff support in Residential Children's Homes or Foster Care and newly arriving UASCs, but less successful for young people with very challenging behaviour who would find the support too intensive or exposing for those with offending behaviour or issues with substance misuse.

There are currently 8 young people in a placement who have been in placement for an average of 268 days<sup>80</sup>. There are not enough SL Hosts to meet demand and there are challenges with progressing Hosts' assessments quickly due to capacity limitations within the City Fostering team. Additional resources are required to be able to recruit, train, supervise and support an increased number of Hosts. Professionals describe that the service works well being delivered in-house, but that some professionals can create challenges when they do not follow the referral route into this service via the Placement Team.

The SL team can ensure that the placements are being well utilised by the young people and that carers are responding to their needs effectively, although professionals describe that there can be some variability around the quality and support provided by the Host. Some Hosts can struggle to offer the dedicated support time required due to pressures on their time such as paid employment or family life.

Last year, 11 young people had a 'planned' move on from a SL placement and there were no 'unplanned' moves. There were 9 young people hosted which were UASC, 1 young person hosted due to placement breakdown and another as they were homeless. Of the 11 young people who left supported lodgings, 1 young person moved onto independent accommodation, with the remaining young people entering alternative accommodation in the pathway or not being given leave to remain. Last

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<sup>80</sup> One Host is listed as holding a vacancy and the other is for emergency use only. None of the young people currently being hosted are UASC.

year, young people stayed an average of 160 days<sup>81</sup> and a full breakdown of duration of stay for these 11 young people is in the table below:

<b>Duration of Stay</b>	<b>No. of Young People</b>
Under 7 days	3
Under 30 days	2
Between 31-90 days	2
Over 91 days	1
Over 365 days	3

Moving back to shared accommodation in the YPSHP due to placement breakdown was reported as detrimental to the progress some young people had made whilst in SL and that there needs to be increased opportunities to remain with a Host, move into SL with an alternative Host or have support to access accommodation outside of the YPSHP.

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<sup>81</sup> 3 stayed in placement for over a year.

## 2.3 Recommendations

### Commissioned Services

Area of Work	Recommendation	No.	Deliverables	Action required	Lead for progressing identified action
Prevention	Earlier identification of families at risk of breakdown by Family Solutions Service (FSS) and Assessment team. Dedicated family work completed or referral to REoC for family work made, to ensure that intensive prevention work can be completed to keep young people at home where appropriate. Assessment centres and Riverside to continue to be used where respite/family activities are required.	1.	Increased family work to resolve issues and prevent family breakdown	Supervisors to provide challenge in supervision where a whole family approach isn't being adopted by workers.	Case work supervisors in Family Solutions and Assessment Team.
Prevention	Earlier identification of families at risk of breakdown by Family Solutions Service (FSS) and Assessment team. Dedicated family work completed or referral to REoC for family work made, to ensure that intensive prevention work can be completed to keep young people at home where appropriate. Assessment centres and Riverside to continue to be used where respite/family activities are required.	2.	Communication to FSS and Social Care Assessment team to increase understanding of REoC remit and at what point they should refer a case.	REoC service guidance and referral process and forms to be circulated to workers and made available on the intranet.	REoC Service Manager, FSS Strategic Lead and Area Social Care Managers.
		3.	Referrals to REoC for individual and family work prior to family breakdown.	REoC service guidance and referral process and forms to be circulated to workers and made available on the intranet.	REoC Service Manager, Family Solutions Strategic Lead and Area Social Care Managers.
Prevention	Undertake a Family group conference (FGC)/mediation prior to pathway entry to ensure that all options have been exhausted within the family.	4.	FGC/Mediation explores options with family members/wider family networks and solutions identified within these networks, preventing family breakdown and diverting young people from supported housing.	Processes revised to include FGC/mediation work prior to referral for supported housing. Explore resource implications and if additional resources are required to build capacity.	Strategic lead for FGCs, LAC/LC managers and Placement Team.
Prevention	Reinstate Specialist Housing Assessment Workers in social care teams, to prevent homelessness and divert young people from the YPSHP.	5.	Families are more informed about the implications of homelessness and the outcomes for young people if they enter the YPSHP. Young people are diverted from homelessness and entering the YPSHP.	Explore resource implications of reinstating these posts and how this would fit with team structures and the Housing Champion leads in teams.	Strategic Lead for FSS and Area Social Care Managers.

Area of Work	Recommendation	No.	Deliverables	Action required	Lead for progressing identified action
Prevention	Commission the delivery of housing options education work for staff and pupils in schools, colleges and PRU which covers 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. Information to also be available online and targeted sessions to be run for parents/carers.	6.	Housing options education work is delivered in schools, colleges and PRU. This includes improved content and access to online information for professionals, young people and parents/carers.	Approval required from DLT for budget to commission this piece of work.	Commissioning and Virtual School team.
		7.	Theatre production offered to schools to increase pupil and staff understanding around homelessness and housing options.	Approval required from DLT for budget to commission this piece of work.	Commissioning and Virtual School team
Prevention	Increase access to training about housing for professionals across the county working with children, young people and families.	8.	Face to face multi-agency training programme planned and delivered at no charge for attendance.	Approval required from DLT for budget to commission this piece of work.	Commissioning, Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (OSCB)/Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB), Learning and Development team
		9.	Online e-learning course available for professionals about housing using in-house web services, with course completion as mandatory for Social Workers.	Approval required from DLT for budget for web services to create this with staff input.	Commissioning, Placement Team, LAC/LC staff and Web Services
		10.	Multi-agency Housing Champion Network in place so that there are an increased number of professionals sitting in frontline teams, who have a better understanding of housing related matters.	A champion network is already under development. Further involvement of District Council Housing representatives in the network meetings is needed.  Agree how and where progress and impact will be monitored and if there need to be champions identified from other teams/partner agencies.	Strategic Manager for Housing and Immigration and Joint Housing Steering Group members



Area of Work	Recommendation	No.	Deliverables	Action required	Lead for progressing identified action
Prevention	Revise the emergency bed (E-bed) model and referral process when retendering Supported Housing services. The model may include a range of emergency bed options based upon learning from other local authorities and issues identified through reviewing existing E-bed services.	11.	Improved and quicker access to an E-bed which is of a good standard of accommodation and offers professional support to the individual and wider family (where appropriate).	Explore the variety of options used by other local authorities which may include night stop services, short term supported lodgings, “crash pad”, assessment centres, self-contained units of temporary accommodation, ‘Time out’ schemes where respite accommodation is available alongside an opportunity to further utilise family mediation. Build learning into tender documents following internal approval of agreed E-bed model.	Commissioning, LAC/LC Managers and Placements Team
Managing Referrals	Review the number of beds for each type of package when services are recommissioned based upon forecasted need and demand in District areas. Include some flexibility (with approval process for change) in bed use for providers to meet fluctuating demand for the different support packages.	12.	Recommissioned services meet current and future volume of referrals for the various packages. There are minimal vacancies/voids reported across the projects.	Use data to forecast current and future demand to commission the required number of beds in each package in each District area. Build flexibility around use of bed into recommissioning model.	Commissioning
Managing Referrals	Do not recommission beds specifically for step down accommodation.	13.	Young people can move onto independent accommodation when they are ready. Less vacancies/voids in the services, with more flexibility about how long young people can remain in the pathway.	Step down model not included within the recommissioning of services.	Commissioning
Managing Referrals	Increase the internal activity to forecast young people at risk of family breakdown who have a high risk of entering the pathway to better manage the throughput of beds.	14.	Reduction in waiting time for beds, reduction in time a young person spends in an E-bed and reduced spot purchasing costs where additional beds are required outside of the pathway.	Use data to forecast upcoming demand and identify pressures and activities required to better manage throughput.	Placement Team, QCOs, Assessment team and FSS

Area of Work	Recommendation	No.	Deliverables	Action required	Lead for progressing identified action
Managing Referrals	Review existing capacity, roles and responsibilities of staff within the Placement Team and match the resources available to meet the volume of work being generated.	15.	Placement Team staff structure better reflects the volume of work generated and there is adequate capacity for the workload.	Review completed, and recommendations generated for internal approval. Changes to be progressed for implementation by 1 March 2020 at the latest.	Placement Service Manager and Strategic Lead for Placements and Sourcing.
Managing Referrals	Review existing processes and forms (including risk identification and young person's compatibility with others) used for admission into the pathway.	16.	Processes are more streamlined and referral information suitably identifies need and risk.	Review of existing processes and paperwork to be completed and changes made. Communicate changes to social work teams and partners.	Placement Team and LAC/LC Managers
Managing Referrals	Identify improved processes to involve young people in considering which YPSHP provision will best meet their needs, their compatibility with others in the accommodation and the support they will need from professionals with the move.	17.	Young people are involved in working with professionals to identify the accommodation options which will best meet their needs.	Build greater young person input into decision making processes when revising referral processes (see recommendation 15).	Placement Team and LAC/LC Managers
Managing Referrals	Remodel the pathway so that when services are recommissioned, young people aged 16 and 17 years have access to different accommodation and services to those of young people/adults aged 18+.	18.	Young people aged 16 and 17 years live with other young people aged 16 and 17 years old so that their needs can be better met, and they aren't put at increased vulnerability.	When recommissioning services have a support package for 16 and 17 year olds only.	Commissioning, Placement team and LAC/LC Managers

Area of Work	Recommendation	No.	Deliverables	Action required	Lead for progressing identified action
Managing Referrals	Review the eligibility of the pathway to focus resources on meeting OCC's statutory duties. Young people aged 18+ who are not Care Leavers (CLs), will not supported within the YPSHP when services are recommissioned, if additional resources outside OCC are not identified.	19.	YPSHP achieves positive outcomes for young people who OCC have a statutory duty to accommodate and support.	<p>Criteria for access into the young people's supported housing pathway is amended in tendering documentation and internal processes when services are recommissioned if no additional resources are identified outside of OCC.</p> <p>Social Workers consider implications for access to onward support if a young person is accommodated under Section 17, rather than Section 20 or Section 31.</p>	Commissioning, Placement team, District Council Housing Leads, Social Workers.
Managing Referrals	Commission additional provision for UASC outside of Oxford City, where there is access to multi-cultural services. Commission provision which is for short term whilst assessment is underway (Welcome Assessment House) and then onward provision for the longer term. Avoid placing UASC in the city in the short term if longer term accommodation is likely to be outside of the city.	20.	<p>UASC can access specialist provision which meets their needs. Staff can carry out the statutory assessments quickly and efficiently within required timeframes.</p> <p>Young people do not create bottle necks in the provision as they understand from the outset that they will be moving on to alternative accommodation in the longer term and so are compliant with this.</p> <p>Young people do not gravitate back to the city, when accommodated elsewhere in the county as they have been supported to create networks outside of the city.</p>	Build additional provision and model of support when recommissioning services.	Commissioning, UASC Team and Placement Team.

Area of Work	Recommendation	No.	Deliverables	Action required	Lead for progressing identified action
Managing Referrals	Referral processes are reviewed and amended to increase transparency around decision making between the AHP and YPSHP.	21.	People access the most appropriate service to meet their needs and resources are targeted more effectively.	Processes reviewed and amended and built into working practices when services are recommissioned.	Commissioning, Placements Team, Quality and Contracts (Q&C) Team for both AHP and YPSHP.
Quality of Accommodation	There is increased budget for providers to secure improved accommodation when services are recommissioned. There will be clearer expectations around minimum standards within contractual requirements to provide consistency around quality. This will include a checklist of what a provider is expected to make available upon arrival and what a social worker/other professional is expected to purchase.	22.	High quality accommodation that is well maintained.	Agree budget needed to improve accommodation quality for providers to secure as part of pathway provision. Robust mechanisms in place for evaluating providers accommodation and property maintenance delivery models when recommissioning services.  Checklist to be developed and used as part of contractual requirements for recommissioned services.	Commissioning, Property Services and Placement Team.
Quality of Accommodation	Countywide geographical coverage to remain within tender documentation which reflects forecasted demand. Young people to continue to be prioritised within their existing locality area (unless safeguarding issues are identified which require a move to an alternative area).	23.	High quality accommodation across District areas.	Agree spread of accommodation when recommissioning services.	Commissioning, District Council Housing Leads, Property Services and Placement team.
Quality of Accommodation	Improved processes to better ensure that vacancies/voids are turned around quickly by providers and rooms are ready for young people arriving.	24.	Minimal vacancies/voids and young people can access their room upon arrival.	Explore model for vacancy/void turn around when recommissioning services. Successful providers for new contracts have vacancies/voids effectively monitored and challenged where appropriate.	Commissioning, Placement and Q&C Teams.

Area of Work	Recommendation	No.	Deliverables	Action required	Lead for progressing identified action
Quality of Accommodation	Clear processes communicated to professionals working with young people in the YPSHP so that they understand how to escalate concerns appropriately, with clear expectations about how their concern will be responded to.	25.	Welcome book made available to young person and professionals working with the young person upon entry, which includes information about escalating concerns.  QCOs receive information to inform quality improvement cycle.	Welcome book to be part of contractual requirements when recommissioning services. This should be consistent across providers with local variations as appropriate.  Professionals made aware of escalation route for concerns with process in place to alert quality and contracts officers as needed.	Commissioning and QCOs
Quality of Accommodation	Accommodation and support identified for higher risk young people and young people with low level learning disabilities (with appropriate staffing levels will match this to mitigate risk) when services are recommissioned.	26.	Young people feel safe as there are the appropriate staff and safety mechanisms in place. Risk assessments are completed on the properties and residents on a regular basis to ensure effective risk mitigation.	Explore security and safety model providers will use and how they will mitigate risk when recommissioning services.	Commissioning and Q&C Team.
Quality of Accommodation	All accommodation will need to have CCTV as a minimum expectation. Additional safety measures will be identified for some properties and providers will need to ensure that safety requirements are met to ensure the safety of young people.	27.	Providers will need to evidence that they have gathered feedback from young people living in the property about if they feel safe and if they do not feel safe, measures will have been taken to address this.	Explore security and safety model providers will use and how they will mitigate risk when recommissioning services and how they will involve young people in safety solutions.	Commissioning and Q&C Team.
Quality of Accommodation	Properties sourced by providers will be no larger than four beds. Large foyer/hostel style provision will not be considered satisfactory to meet the needs of young people in Oxfordshire in the YPSHP when retendering services.	28.	A range of housing options for young people where they will be safe and make positive relationships.	Build property requirements into the tender documentation when recommissioning services.	Commissioning

Area of Work	Recommendation	No.	Deliverables	Action required	Lead for progressing identified action
Staffing Resources	'Working Together' agreement developed and used from the case outset which clarifies roles and responsibilities of professionals working with the young person. This should be reviewed, amended and signed by all professionals as a young person enters the YPSHP.	29.	Improved working practices between professionals with clarity around roles and responsibilities.	Develop 'Working Together' agreement template and build into processes when services are recommissioned.	Commissioning, Placement and LAC/LC Teams.
Staffing Resources	Increase flexibility in the staffing models' providers will use to manage risk and meet the needs of individuals when retendering services.	30.	Staff available to meet the needs of the young person.	Encourage staffing flexibility to meet need in tender documents and explore staffing models when recommissioning services.	Commissioning
Staffing Resources	CAMHS Mental Health Worker role to be better understood and used across all projects. Additional capacity to be considered if required once there is better usage across all projects.	31.	All projects and staff access this resource to better meeting the mental health needs of their young people.	Develop and cascade materials to communicate understanding about this role and how it can be used. Monitoring of use of this role to be part of contract monitoring procedures.	Commissioning, CAMHS Commissioning and QCOs.
Staffing Resources	Increased capacity and use of Substance Misuse Worker role across the projects to support individual young people and professionals working with the young person.	32.	Young people have quick access to support around substance misuse issues.	Review existing usage, capacity and identify resources and budget required to build capacity to increase access to substance misuse support for young people in the YPSHP.	Commissioning and Aquarius
Staffing Resources	Housing staff have access to reflective practice sessions and case formulation from a Clinical Psychologist external of their housing project staff team (such as those within REoC).	33.	Housing staff have clinical input into their cases and attend reflective practice sessions.	Explore if this can be offered through existing resources or if additional budget is needed for additional resources.	Commissioning and REoC Clinical Lead.

Area of Work	Recommendation	No.	Deliverables	Action required	Lead for progressing identified action
Staffing Resources	HSWs from across projects have access to multi-agency and multi-project training. Career progression and continuing professional development opportunities to be available to the staff team.	34.	Training programme specific HSWs to be developed which includes trauma and attachment, alongside increasing access to Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children's Board OSCB/OSAB multi-agency training opportunities.	Providers to have an identified training budget within their bids and model for CPD and career progression. Commissioning to work with OSCB and OSAB and Workforce Development to identify where existing training can be attended by HSWs, current gaps and the additional budget needed to fund specific training gaps across the workforce.	Commissioning, workforce development, OSCB, OSAB, LAC/LC Team
Staffing Resources	Explore the resources required to extend the Phoenix team remit to meet the health needs of CLs up to 25 years.	35.	CLs have access to known health professionals who have supported them through LAC services.	Explore the resources and budgetary implications of this for consideration by CCG and OCC.	Commissioning-OCC and CCG
Staffing Resources	HSW job description and person specification to be consistent across projects and include increased delivery of evidenced based interventions. Worker salaries of workers to reflect the changes.	36.	Greater consistency across projects and ability to meet young people's needs. Better retention of staff.	Staffing requirements built into tender documents and staffing delivery models evaluated when recommissioning services.	Commissioning
Staffing Resources	General cleaning and gardening duties to fall outside of the HSW job description, with dedicated staff employed specifically for these duties.	37.	Reduced breadth in housing worker role, with increased capacity for direct work with young person.	Staffing delivery models evaluated at tender.	Commissioning
Support Provided	Employment, education and training (EET) interventions to be delivered by professionals external to the YPSHP.	38.	Dedicated time and interventions to provide specialist support and access to EET.	Explore if EET support can be provided to young people in the YPSHP through existing resources or commission an EET support to support young people in the YPSHP.	Commissioning
Support Provided	'Team around the Young Person' approach to continue as young people enter the YPSHP.	39.	Professionals work together to improve outcomes for young people through a shared and co-ordinated support plan.	Ensure this is built into revised processes and 'Working Together' agreement (see recommendation 29).	Commissioning and QCOs

Area of Work	Recommendation	No.	Deliverables	Action required	Lead for progressing identified action
Support Provided	Housing projects become accredited assessors for certification such as with the Assessment Qualification Alliance (AQAs) or have access to an assessor. Certification to be provided to young people to mark achievements and increase motivation.	40.	Young people motivated through recognition via certification for developing their skills.	Explore certification options and budget requirements. Build this into tender documentation if approval given.	Commissioning and LAC/LC Team Managers
Support Provided	Projects have access to funding for positive play and leisure activities or for onsite activity resources for their young people for individual or group activities.	41.	Young people can socialise in a safe environment and build positive relationships.	Explore options and likely budgetary consideration. Build this into tender documentation.	Commissioning
Support Provided	There is flexibility around the intensity of support offered to young people at entry point into YPSHP, following outcome of assessment of need. Support plan to be regularly reviewed.	42.	Young people access the support required to meet their needs.	Tender documentation encourages flexibility around staffing intensity to meet need. Delivery models evaluated when recommissioning services.	Commissioning
Support Provided	Behaviour management and eviction policy to be consistent across providers.	43.	Young people are treated fairly and consequences for actions are consistent across the pathway.	Tender documentation reflects how behaviour should be managed and the approach will be evaluated when recommissioning services.	Commissioning
Support Provided	Trauma and impact of trauma to be identified with professional intervention from clinical psychologist (where required) upon entry into the YPSHP.	44.	Trauma based intervention work is completed with the young person (as appropriate).	Clinical intervention into the pathway is available and built into revised processes around support, when recommissioning services	Commissioning and REoC Clinical Lead.
Support Provided	Access to alternative educational provision, where access to college isn't possible mid-year, for 18+ year olds.	45.	Young people/adults can access educational input whilst awaiting a college place.	Liaise with Virtual School to discuss the options around additional support for this group of young people and agree internally how best to progress this and the resources required.	Commissioning and Virtual School



Area of Work	Recommendation	No.	Deliverables	Action required	Lead for progressing identified action
Support Provided	Child Exploitation sub-group to advise on how to prevent escalation of County Lines through movement around the supported housing pathway.	46.	Issues around County Lines are not exacerbated through movement of young people in the supported housing pathway.	Explore issues and agree what changes need to be incorporated when recommissioning services to avoid issues continuing.	Commissioning and Child Exploitation sub-group
Support Provided	Encourage Police Officers to have increased contact with young people in the pathway to develop positive relationships and prevent/de-escalate criminal activity, including knife crime.	47.	Police Officers have positive established relationships with young people in the projects.	Liaise with police officers about how this can be put in place when services are recommissioned with issues around data sharing/confidentiality agreed.	Commissioning and Thames Valley Police
Support Provided	Sustainability plan for EET considered from the outset if there is a placement move or young people move on from YPSHP.	48.	Young people access EET opportunities which will result in minimal disruption through YPSHP movement.	Build this requirement into commissioned/internal EET services.	Commissioning and FSS
Support Provided	Review the maximum length of time young people can stay in the YPSHP, with consideration of need, likelihood of dependence and move on opportunities.	49.	Young people do not become dependent on YPSHP services.	Build this into delivery model and outcomes framework for recommissioned services.	Commissioning and Q&C Team.
Support Provided	Reunification work with family members (where it is safe to do so) is incorporated into a young person's support plan.	50.	Plan in place for family members to visit young person in YPSHP accommodation.	Build into support package model for recommissioned services.	Commissioning
		51.	Staff to support with facilitation of family visits/sessions.	Build into support package model for recommissioned services.	Commissioning
		52.	Staff to actively work with the young person and family members to rebuild historical issues which led to breakdown.	Build into support package model for recommissioned services.	Commissioning

Area of Work	Recommendation	No.	Deliverables	Action required	Lead for progressing identified action
Work, benefit payments and Service Charges	Young people aged 16 and 17 years are not given large amounts of money to manage and are supported by a dedicated professional to facilitate them towards making appropriate choices around spend. Independence is increased using a phased approach once money management skills have been demonstrated.	53.	Young people can manage money and make appropriate choices around spend and do not fall into rent/service charge arrears.	Build this into support package for recommissioned services.  Explore if an intensive money management course should be commissioned external to the support delivered through the projects.	Commissioning, LAC/LC Team.
Work, benefit payments and Service Charges	Young people aged 18 years plus, are informed about the benefits of direct payment to the Housing provider of their housing benefit to avoid arrears and encouraged to take this payment plan option.	54.	Young people can manage money and make appropriate choices around spend and do not fall into rent/service charge arrears.	Build this into support package for recommissioned services.	Commissioning, LAC/ LC Team.
Work, benefit payments and Service Charges	Service charging falls within a consistent range across all providers.	55.	The charges are consistent across the projects and reflective of the market rate for services received.	Further exploration required charging to inform tender documents.	Commissioning, District Council Housing Leads, LAC/LC Team
Work, benefit payments and Service Charges	Benefit specialists are recruited external to the projects who have dedicated time within each of the projects to offer drop in surgeries for young people and staff, training for staff and can also be contacted outside of this surgery as required for specific queries.	56.	Housing staff and young people can access support around benefits and entitlements.	Commission benefit specialists which are external to the housing projects.	Commissioning
Moving Young People On	Commission extensive work to be undertaken with private landlords to offer incentives where they provide tenancies for young people that have come from supported housing services.	57.	Young people can rent high quality accommodation in the private rental sector.	Commission a provider to undertake work with Private Landlords to increase stock available in Oxfordshire.	District Councils, Commissioning, Property Services

Area of Work	Recommendation	No.	Deliverables	Action required	Lead for progressing identified action
Moving Young People On	Commission extensive work to be undertaken with employers to identify where opportunities can be increased for young people to access apprenticeships, volunteering opportunities and paid employment.	58.	Young people can access opportunities to develop skills and experience which leads to paid employment.	Commission a provider to undertake work around EET support which includes work with employers in Oxfordshire to increase the opportunities available to young people.	Commissioning
Moving Young People On	Outreach model, when young people are moving on, to be flexible in terms of intensity and duration to meet need upon leaving the pathway.	59.	Young people access ongoing support that meets their needs, helping them to achieve positive outcomes in the long term.	Build flexibility around outreach support into the recommissioning of services.	Commissioning
Moving Young People On	Further work to be undertaken with HSWs and Social Workers to improve relationships with District Council Housing colleagues and increase understanding of processes and decision- making.	60.	Improved relationships and understanding across HSWs, Social Workers and District Councils.	District Council Housing Leads to be invited to YPSHP Provider forum to discuss how best to progress this.	Q&C Team and Commissioning.
Moving Young People On	Work with District Council colleagues to increase likelihood of access to social housing, with particular regard to the City and Cherwell areas, for young people exiting supported housing.	61.	Young people access social housing and can move on from the pathway when they are ready.	Further meetings to be arranged with District Council Housing leads to explore this in greater detail.	Commissioning and District Council Housing Lead Officers.
Moving Young People On	Hard copy Support Guide given to young people upon leaving the project so that they have details all in one place for onward professional support required. Guide also made available to access online.	62.	Young people can access appropriate services in the local area, as and when they need them.	Use of guide to be built into future processes when recommissioning services. Guide to be developed with housing providers, young people and LAC/LC staff.	Commissioning, housing providers and LAC/LC team.
Performance Data and Contract Monitoring	Data processes and requirements are reviewed and improvements are built into contractual requirements for retendered services.	63.	Young people's outcomes from supported housing services can be accurately measured, monitored and evidenced. Provider's performance can be effectively celebrated and challenged where appropriate.	Detailed exploration of system challenges and how processes can be improved. Include new requirements when recommissioning services.	Commissioning, Data Performance team, Q&C and Placement Teams

Area of Work	Recommendation	No.	Deliverables	Action required	Lead for progressing identified action
Performance Data and Contract Monitoring	Data sharing protocol reviewed and improved to remove barriers to sharing information.	64.	Professionals working with a young person have a full understanding of their needs.	Work with the data and governance team to improve data sharing practices and introduce a new protocol when recommissioning services.	Commissioning, Quality and contracts and Information Management Teams.
Performance Data and Contract Monitoring	Regular forecasting of cases where entry into the YPSHP is likely, so that better consideration can be given to demand management and throughput.	65.	Young people can access the services they need quickly.	Identify improved processes between decision making panels and placement team to better understand what provision within the YPSHP may be required in the near future for a young person identified at risk of homelessness.	Placements, Q&C, Assessment, MASH and FSS Teams.
Performance Data and Contract Monitoring	Revise use of planned/unplanned move categories and identify better mechanisms to identify positive destinations and achievement of long-term sustainability.	66.	Young people's outcomes from YPSHP services can be measured, monitored and evidenced. Provider's performance can be celebrated and challenged where appropriate.	Explore better mechanisms for capturing this data to provide greater accuracy. Build this into the recommissioning of services.	Commissioning, Placement & Q&C Teams
Performance Data and Contract Monitoring	Explore the use of payment by results when recommissioning services to enhance provider performance and reward positive outcomes achieved for young people.	67.	Young people receive a high- quality service and achieve positive outcomes whilst in services and successfully move on to independent living.	Explore payment by results models used within other service areas and build into the recommissioning of services if deemed appropriate.	Commissioning
Performance Data and Contract Monitoring	Increase the capacity of contract monitoring resources to monitor and support providers more intensively to deliver high-quality YPSHP services.	68.	Providers can demonstrate positive outcomes and performance issues are identified earlier. There is increased data analysis to identify trends and forecast demand and throughput.	Review existing and historical contract monitoring mechanisms and KPIs. Identify revised processes, changes to KPIs when services are recommissioned, and the additional resources required.	Commissioning and Q&C Team.

## In-House Services

Area of Work	Recommendation	No.	Deliverables	Action required	Lead for progressing identified action
<b>House Project</b>	Use early learning of implementation of the HP to inform future recommissioning	1.	Learning is captured and fed through to inform national and local development of supported housing services for young people	Commissioning Manager to remain on House project board to capture learning identified.	Commissioning and HP Programme Board
<b>House Project</b>	Ensure that staff and young people are made aware of future project plans for the HP at the earliest opportunity to alleviate future uncertainty.	2.	Staff and young people can succession plan and uncertainty alleviated.	House project team to provide regular national and local updates as required.	HP Team
<b>House Project</b>	Undertake an 'options appraisal' to recommend long-term delivery of the project, once pilot funding draws to a close.	3.	Young people in phase 1 and 2 of House project continue to access accommodation and support through the HP team and long term delivery of the HP is agreed.	Options appraisal completed, and recommended delivery option approved for onward implementation.	HP Project Manager, Commissioning
<b>Move On Homes</b>	Workers continue to ensure that reunification (where appropriate) with family members is built into young people's support plan and that they take an active role in harnessing positive relationships.	4.	Young people have positive relationships and connections with family members.	Workers build reunification work into support plans and supervisors maintain oversight of this work through case supervision.	MOH workers and supervisors

Area of Work	Recommendation		Deliverables	Action required	Lead for progressing identified action
<b>Move On Homes</b>	Review the eligibility of the MOHs and transition onto wider pathway provision to ensure that there is a seamless fit with the wider YPSHP and SL scheme, whilst ensuring that the MOH provision is targeted appropriately across the cohort of young people requiring YPSHP services.	5.	Young people successfully manage a move onto alternative pathway services or in provision external to the pathway.  Professionals have greater clarity about which young people they can refer in for MOH provision.	REoC review the MOH eligibility alongside the criteria for the wider YPSHP and SL scheme.	REoC Service Manager and MOH Managers, Commissioning
<b>Move On Homes</b>	Rename the MOH provision so that there is greater clarity of purpose to manage expectations of professionals and young people and their families.	6.	There is increased understanding of the MOH remit, YPSHP projects and SL provision.	REoC review the name of the provision and communicate the change to professionals and families.	REoC Service Manager, MOH Team
<b>Move On Homes</b>	Review the license agreement to ensure that young people who are being referred into the provision can realistically uphold the requirements of the agreement, with flexibility in the terms.	7.	Young people can meet and maintain the requirements of the license.	Review and refresh the license agreement to match the ability of young people accessing the MOHs and increase flexibility around the terms to meet ability.	REoC Service Manager, MOH Team
<b>Move On Homes</b>	Ensure that there is greater consistency around the sending of licensing breach letters to demonstrate fairness and transparency across the young people residing at the home.	8.	License requirements enforced in a timely manner across all young people accessing the provision.	Review the process for the issuing of breach letters and re-engineer processes to improve consistency.	REoC Service Manager, MOH Team
<b>Move On Homes</b>	Review the length of time young people are able to remain at the MOH and consider greater flexibility in the offer to better meet individual need.	9.	Young people leave the MOH when they are prepared with the skills to successfully manage in the YPSHP projects, SL or provision outside of the YPSHP.	Review the MOH offer to ensure that it complements the wider pathway and meets the needs of young people who are accessing the provision.	REoC Service Manager, MOH Managers, Placements Team and Commissioning

Area of Work	Recommendation	No.	Deliverables	Action required	Lead for progressing identified action
<b>Move On Homes</b>	Uphold the lead in time for referrals into the MOH to ensure that adequate outreach support can be undertaken by the team to prepare the young person for the provision and develop solid relationships from the outset.	10.	Young people have developed relationships with staff and EET provision in place to access from the point of MOH entry.	Review the processes for referral with the Placement team and identify if any improvements are required to allow outreach work to be undertaken prior to a young person moving in.	MOH Managers and Placement Team
<b>Move On Homes</b>	Review the charging structure to ensure that it aligns with the charges made in provision within the YPSHP projects, SL scheme or provision outside of the pathway.	11.	Young people are prepared and able to meet the charges made in provision within the YPSHP projects, SL scheme or provision outside of the pathway.	Service charges across the whole of the YPSHP to be reviewed and amended as services are recommissioned.	Placements Team, MOH Managers, REoC Service Manager, Finance and Commissioning
<b>Move On Homes</b>	Identify which outcome tool(s) should be used consistently by workers across the MOH to measure progress made and outcomes through the MOH provision. Align this tool with the outcome tools used by providers in the YPSHP projects and SL scheme.	12.	Young people's progress and outcomes can be tracked across all supported accommodation in the pathway.	Identify which tool(s) can be used across all services in the housing pathway, prior to recommissioning services.	Placements Team, MOH Managers, REoC Service Manager, REoC Clinical Lead and Commissioning
<b>Move On Homes</b>	Review the eviction policy and consider how it can align to the eviction policy used within YPSHP projects and SL scheme.	13.	Eviction practices are more consistent across all services within the YPSHP.  Evictions are reduced.	Review eviction policies across all provision and agree where there need to be consistencies and where it is appropriate for there to be differences to better meet the needs of the young people accessing that type of provision.	MOH Managers, REoC Service Manager, Placements Team and Commissioning

Area of Work	Recommendation		Deliverables	Action required	Lead for progressing identified action
<b>Supported Lodgings Scheme</b>	Increase the capacity of the SL Team so that there can be additional marketing, recruitment, training and support to an increased pool of Hosts.	14.	There is an increased pool of Hosts and their applications are progressed quickly and training and support is offered that meets the needs of an increased volume of Hosts.	Identify roles required, working time and budget needed and seek approval from DLT.	City Fostering Team and Commissioning
<b>Supported Lodgings Scheme</b>	Increase the pool of Hosts with a focus on identifying Hosts in urban areas.	15.	There is an increased pool of Hosts across the county, particularly in urban areas where there is good access to local services.	Target recruitment activities to urban areas in the county and fast track applications.	City Fostering Team
<b>Supported Lodgings Scheme</b>	Increase the number of Hosts who are trained to support young people with more complex needs, which may include young people with a history of offending behaviour.	16.	Hosts can meet the needs of young people with more complex needs (with recognition that for young people with very challenging behaviour that alternative provision may be more suitable).	Review marketing materials, training needs and internal processes to be able to recruit, train and support Hosts who can support young people with more complex needs.	City Fostering Team
<b>Supported Lodgings Scheme</b>	Increase flexibility in the length of time a young person can remain in SL provision to meet the needs of the young person and Host.	17.	Young person can remain with a Host and then successfully move on when they have developed adequate skills.	Review processes prior to recommissioning of YPSHP services to ensure that the SL scheme complements the services being commissioned and meets the needs of the young people.	City Fostering Team and Commissioning
<b>Supported Lodgings Scheme</b>	Ensure that referral to the scheme is consistent with referral into the wider YPSHP projects, rather than referrals being processed via alternative routes.	18.	Young people are placed in the most appropriate provision available across all services in the YPSHP.	Reject referrals into the scheme via routes which are not through the placement Team.	City Fostering Team and Placements Team



Area of Work	Recommendation	No.	Deliverables	Action required	Lead for progressing identified action
<b>Supported Lodgings Scheme</b>	Review charges made to the young person and increase consistency with charging made in provision within the YPSHP projects, MOH or provision outside of the pathway.	19.	Young people are prepared and able to meet the charges made in provision within the YPSHP projects, MOH and provision outside of the pathway.	Agree charges across YPSHP, including MOH and SL prior to recommissioning of services.	City Fostering, Finance, MOH, Commissioning and Placements Teams
<b>Supported Lodgings Scheme</b>	Develop Host peer support groups to offer the opportunity for reflective practice, peer support and access to group training, similar to that accessed by Foster Carers.	20.	Hosts feel supported and confident in their ability to effectively support the young person living with them.	Develop project plan and resources required for implementation through engagement with existing Hosts.	City Fostering Team
<b>Supported Lodgings Scheme</b>	Keep the SL scheme in-house with increased budget and capacity and is not commissioned when the wider YPSHP services are recommissioned.	21.	The service is grown whilst quality is maintained, and the scheme is still part of the YPSHP and complements the offer of commissioned projects.	Identify the resources required to increase the scheme and get approval from DLT.	City Fostering, Placement Team and Commissioning.

## 2.4 Areas of Challenge for Consideration

- Additional resources are required at a time when budgets are already forecasting overspend.
- The delivery of YPSHP accommodation with fewer units comes at a much higher cost and so the various delivery models across the pathway need detailed exploration and costing.
- Detailed forecasting activities need to be undertaken to gain a better understanding of existing unmet demand through spot purchasing arrangements, future demand and the level of resources likely required.
- Commissioned services need retendering by April 2020 so revised service specifications for commissioned services will need to be developed in time for tenders to be advertised in the summer of this year, or alternative arrangements will need to be made if the timescale is unrealistic to ensure that there is adequate time for service mobilisation.
- Detailed work needs to be undertaken with District Council Housing colleagues to identify the adults who may be affected with changes to pathway eligibility criteria. If no additional resources can be identified outside of OCC for continuing to support these adults, then pathway eligibility will need to be changed to ensure that OCC can focus its resources on meeting its statutory duties. There needs to be due consideration given to the impact eligibility changes would have, on young people accommodated under Section 17 (rather than Section 20 or Section 31). A date would need to be agreed in which the Young People's Supported Housing pathway would no longer accept referrals for adults aged 18+ who are not Care Leavers.
- The Adult Homeless Pathway requires review and services will need recommissioning.

## 2.5 Next Steps

The findings and recommendations from this service review will be taken to the County Council's Senior Managers for consideration and actions will be progressed in line with their decision-making and budget confirmation.