



ANNUAL REVIEW

2016 - 2017

**NATIONAL LEAVING CARE
BENCHMARKING FORUM**

**catch
22
nlcbf.**

INTRODUCTION

APRIL 2016 - MARCH 2017

THIS YEAR HAS BEEN AN EXCITING AND IMPORTANT CONSOLIDATION YEAR FOR THE NATIONAL LEAVING CARE BENCHMARKING FORUM, BUILDING ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM 2015-16 TO DEVELOP BOTH OUR INFLUENCE AND IMPACT.

- ✓ Influencing national policy and practice
- ✓ Website upgrade
- ✓ New linked structure for events
- ✓ 10% Membership increase

The past year has been set against the backdrop of a fast-moving political landscape and an increased national interest in improving outcomes.

The leaving care policy world has been dominated by the launch of the Government's new strategy, Keep on Caring and the Children and Social Work Act 2017, of which the Forum has played an important role through consultation.



MEMBERSHIP



- ✓ Increased membership means more sharing and dissemination of best practice and a louder voice with government
- ✓ A body of evidence about what works and what needs to change to influence policy and practice
- ✓ 5 out of the 6 Ofsted rated 'outstanding' leaving care services are Forum members

We are delighted to have welcomed 8 new members to the Forum this year, taking our total from, 78 to 86 - **Stockport, Lancashire, Knowsley, Dudley, Warwickshire, Gateshead, Norfolk and Poole.**

Our steering group have been integral in supporting with membership.

We would like to thank Mark Bone (Gloucestershire) who is moving on from his role as Chair of the steering group. For the past 2 years he has expertly guided the Forum. We would like to welcome Steve Moutray (Liverpool) in his stead.

OUTCOMES

INCREASED MEMBERSHIP MEANS MORE SHARING AND DISSEMINATION OF BEST PRACTICE

5 OUT OF THE 6 'OUTSTANDING' LEAVING CARE SERVICES ARE MEMBERS

POLICY



We would like to thank the Department for Education for their continued support for the Forum and for the opportunity to feed into the Keep on Caring and Children and Social Work Bill Consultations:

- ✓ We focused specifically on the 'local offer', the development of the Personal Advisor (PA) role
- ✓ The Young People's Benchmarking Forum (YPBMF) were consulted on what the priorities should be for the strategy
- ✓ Keep on Caring is a 5 year strategy and we have used its identified outcomes as the structure for our ongoing business planning

- ✓ Members' voices are represented at the national HMPPS care leaver's forum
- ✓ We had a thematic focus on care leavers in custody
- ✓ Prison Governors attended our thematic event in Oxford and subsequently proposed a national conference in October 2017 to promote positive outcomes for care leavers in prison
- ✓ We look forward to supporting this event and inviting NLCBF members

Relationships with other key government agencies have been maintained throughout the year to ensure that care leavers remain a priority:

- ✓ The DWP presented at a managers meeting alongside new members, Stockport

We very much welcome the support of our sister organisation in Scotland, STAFSCOT, and their shared learning where Scottish leaving care legislation is 2 years ahead of England.

OUTCOMES

NATIONAL POLICY IS BEING DEVELOPED IN LINE WITH MEMBER RECOMMENDATIONS

This year has seen the development of a new relationship with Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS).

PRACTICE



SHARING OF BEST PRACTICE AND MUTUAL SUPPORT REMAINS THE BEDROCK OF THE FORUM AND SUPPORTING THIS HAS CONTINUED TO BE A SIGNIFICANT FOCUS FOR THE TEAM THIS YEAR

2016 -17 KEY PRIORITIES:

- ✓ Accommodation issues
- ✓ Asylum and immigration
- ✓ Custody and resettlement
- ✓ Challenging exploitation
- ✓ Education, training and employment
- ✓ Edge of leaving care

CARE LEAVERS IN LANCASHIRE HAVE ACCESS TO A FACEBOOK PAGE THANKS TO ATTENDANCE AT YPBMF AND NETWORKING GUIDANCE FROM COVENTRY.

WORKERS HAVE ACCESS TO THE ASDAN LIVING INDEPENDENTLY WORK BOOKS TO SUPPORT THEIR WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE.

- ✓ **Speed Benchmarking** Now a regular feature of managers meetings and a productive method of consultation and feedback for our national stakeholders
- ✓ **Spotlight Sessions** 12 local authority members have shared their practice and experience. The team have represented NLCBF at a number of national conferences to promote and share best practice, including the presentation of LIFT research findings at the EUSARF conference in Spain, pathway planning best practice at the IFCO conference in Sheffield and the same in Bristol at the NNECL conference
- ✓ **Website Upgrade** The website upgrade has resulted in a marked increase of use by members

Speed Benchmarking
Speed benchmarking provides delegates with the opportunity to explore and share experience of 6/7 key current issues in the leaving care world within a 90 minute session. It provides conference organisers with accumulated knowledge and exemplars from over 80 delegates on 6 or 7 topics in 90 minutes

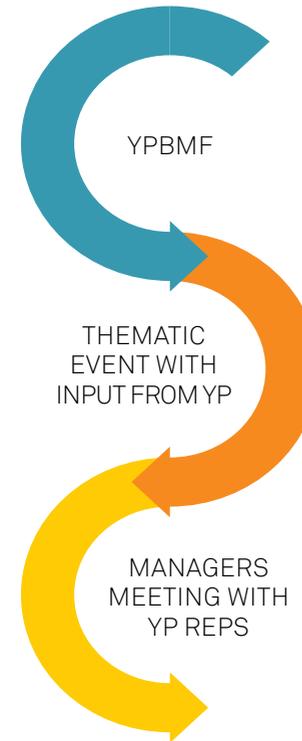
EVENTS

EVENT	TOTAL DELEGATES	MEMBERS	GOOD OR VERY GOOD
Asylum and immigration for care leavers - thematic June 16	83	43	91%
Managers forum July 16	68	59	90%
Edge of care and accommodation - thematic Oct 16	68	55	95%
Managers forum Nov. 16	85	61	94%
Custody and resettlement – thematic Feb 17	63	45	88%
Managers forum March 17	71	67	98%

“ SOLIHULL HAS UNDERTAKEN SOME TRAINING WITH US ON SUPPORTING UASC – WE HAVE LITTLE EXPERIENCE IN THIS AREA ”
CORNWALL

Following member feedback we have adopted a three location model for events – The North, South and Midlands. We will continue to monitor to ensure member satisfaction.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S BENCHMARKING FORUM



- ✓ Young peoples' voices remain at the centre of everything that follows
- ✓ Young people appreciate and value this approach
- ✓ Young people are informing national policy and improving the practice of Forum members
- ✓ Overall improved outcomes for care leavers

Over 200 care leavers have attended YPBMF events throughout the year, including the hugely successful care leavers event at Chelsea Football club in Care leavers week. Champions have then contributed to the delivery of 6 NLCBF events.

The YPBMF is playing an increasingly important role informing national policy and the reputation is growing.

- ✓ During this year YPBMF have contributed to the Ofsted consultation on the new inspection framework
- ✓ We are hoping to support the DfE with the development of the 'care leaver advisory group' to monitor the Keep on Caring strategy

The power of the YPBMF is tangible and we are constantly hearing reports of changes that have been made in service delivery as a result of the YPBMF:

The introduction of council tax exemption for care leavers between 18 – 21 which started in North Somerset

- ✓ The participation worker presented the idea as part of the champions presentation at a managers meeting and YPBMF event in Oxford
- ✓ Participation workers and young people shared tactics across the country resulting in 15 member authorities exempting their care leavers by March

The YPBMF has gone from strength to strength this year with the development of a new joined-up approach to events and themes and with Forum members moving into positions as sessional staff.

CONCLUSION



THIS YEAR HAS BEEN BUSY AND PRODUCTIVE FOR OUR MEMBERS AND THE NLCBF TEAM.

It has been fantastic to see 4 more local authorities (3 members) receive an 'excellent' outcome from Ofsted inspections and to see care leavers move up the political agenda with the Forum able to positively influence policy.

The NLCBF team and Catch22 are excited about the prospect of what 2017-18 will bring with new innovation projects and the introduction of new legislation to support our work. We feel confident that the Forum will continue to grow and promote the development of best practice across the country and inform national developments.

Thank you for your continued support in making the forum a success, both in policy and practice.

Alice Frank
NLCBF Manager
June 2017

“ COUNCIL TAX BEING EXEMPT FOR CARE LEAVERS. WE NOW HAVE COUNCIL TAX EXEMPTION FOR CARE LEAVERS BETWEEN 18 AND 21 AND IT'S REALLY POSITIVE ”