

Report of the Southwark young people aged over 16 years old support and housing project – May 2017

Transforming support and housing for looked after children/care leavers and young people in Southwark at risk of homelessness aged over 16 years old – preparing for independent living

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Contents

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
2. INTRODUCTION (PART 1) – SETTING THE SCENE	6
3. INTRODUCTION (PART 2) – SOUTHWARK – LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN/CHILDREN LEAVING CARE AND YOUNG PEOPLE (16+) AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS – SERVICES AND SPEND (2016/17)	10
4. THE SOUTHWARK 16+ SUPPORT AND HOUSING PROJECT	13
5. FINDINGS OF THE 16+ SUPPORT AND HOUSING PROJECT - (PART 1) - YOUNG PEOPLE/SERVICE USERS	15
6. FINDINGS OF THE 16+ SUPPORT AND HOUSING PROJECT - (PART 2) CURRENT MODEL IN SOUTHWARK - SUPPORT PATHWAY.....	31
7. FINDINGS OF THE 16+ SUPPORT AND HOUSING PROJECT – (PART 3) SUPPORT PROVIDERS.	37
8. FINDINGS OF THE 16+ SUPPORT AND HOUSING PROJECT - (PART 4) HOUSING.....	49
9. FINDINGS OF THE 16+ SUPPORT AND HOUSING PROJECT - (PART 5) LEADERSHIP, COMMISSIONING AND BUDGETS	61
10. RECOMMENDATIONS: A NEW MODEL FOR 16+ SUPPORT AND HOUSING SERVICES IN SOUTHWARK	68

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Young people – the journey to independence

- 1.1 Supporting young people to prepare for adulthood and, when ready, to move into a home of their own is a critical responsibility for those with a parenting role. For children who are in the care of the local authority and also for those young people who are at risk of becoming homeless this transition period can be an especially testing, stressful and risk-filled time. The Council has particular duties, in different roles, to help both these cohorts of young people after they reach the age of 16 to take these key steps towards independence, to find a home, and to stay safe from harm.
- 1.2 The move to independent living is a formative time in many young people's lives. It is a time when many young people finish their education, take up employment and begin to pay rent and other bills in what may be their first home away from their families and foster carers. For many this is an exciting time, a time when they are able to flourish as adults, but also a time when they will be taking up the greater responsibilities that come with more independence. Still it is recognised that not every young person who turns 16 or 18 will be ready and prepared for this change. For some young people this can be a very challenging time, a time when they may be at risk of being exploited financially or by criminal or gang-related activity, and when many may struggle to cope with the additional tasks of living in their own home.
- 1.3 Southwark Council takes its different but overlapping duties to children leaving the care system and to those young people who are at risk of becoming homeless extremely seriously. Through the day-to-day dedication, professionalism and work provided by keyworkers, personal advisers, social and housing workers and volunteers, young people are helped to achieve better individual outcomes, to leave care equipped with the skills necessary to live independent lives, and to access good quality, affordable housing in places where each individual has the opportunity to build and deliver on their creativity and potential.

“The move to independent living is a formative time in many young people's lives. It is a time when many young people finish their education, take up employment and begin to pay rent and other bills in what may be their first home away from their families and foster carers.”

The challenge of housing

- 1.4 For many people, finding a home is a challenging experience and for care leavers and young people at risk of homelessness setting off – perhaps for the first time – to find a place of their own to live, this task can be particularly daunting. The options faced can appear numerous and include decisions on which neighbourhood, town or community the person wants to live in, whether to live in a flat or perhaps share a house, whether to live with friends or to move in on their own, and how far they may wish to be from their place of education or work. All of these options are important and each may play a role in setting the direction of a person's life. Still, when these are put into the context of a housing crisis that is evident across London – and perhaps at its most acute in inner-London areas like Southwark – it is recognised that these issues can sometimes feel slight – and that questions of where to live can be vastly outweighed by the question of affordability.
- 1.5 Numerous national commitments to build new homes and to tackle the housing crisis in London have so far failed to stem a

“Put into the context of a housing crisis that is evident across London – and perhaps at its most acute in inner-London areas like Southwark - it is recognised that...questions of where to live can be vastly outweighed by the question of affordability.”

situation in which many people, and often young people in particular, cannot afford to rent or own a home. In order to meet this housing need, the Council has led work to both foster the availability and affordability of housing in Southwark, including through community-led regeneration projects and with its trailblazing commitment to build 11,000 new council homes. And yet, despite these important local programmes, for young people leaving care or who are at risk of becoming homeless, the context of a lack of available homes to rent and move into, or of homes which are affordable, can often mean that an already challenging time can appear a near-impossible task.

Supporting young people – preparation and resettlement

- 1.6 It is in recognition of these multiple challenges that the Council has put in place a diverse range of services which ensure that for children leaving care and for other young people aged over 16 years old, there is provision which allows access to both support and housing. The two elements - support and housing - are in any case fundamentally interdependent and it is recognised that any approach that attempts to separate them, say, by helping a young person to find work when they do not have a place to live, or indeed to sustain a tenancy without the support to meet the crucial tasks of independent living, would be both detrimental and self-defeating. Indeed it is in this understanding that the Council has established holistic services that meet both needs of the young person, helping them to gain the skills and make other preparations for independent living, but also in an encouraging and safe environment.
- “The two elements – support and housing – are in any case fundamentally interdependent and it is recognised that any approach that attempts to separate them, say, by helping a young person to find work when they do not have a place to live, or indeed to sustain a tenancy without the support to meet the crucial tasks of independent living, would be both detrimental and self-defeating.”
- 1.7 The Southwark 16+ support and housing services comprise a diverse set of schemes, support workers and accommodation which, taken together, supported 485 care leavers and other young people in 2016/17. Whether it is a flat with an attached key worker who is helping the young person sustain their education or find employment, or a secure or therapeutic service, or a specialist home for young mothers and babies, the 16+ support and housing services aim to help prepare young people for independent living and, when ready, to move to a new home outside of services.
- 1.8 Each of the 16+ support and housing services is tailored to meet the different and individual needs of the young people that they support. So it is that - just as not every care leaver or young person is best suited to prepare for adulthood in an inner-London setting, and many in fact later choose to live elsewhere - so a proportion of the 16+ support and housing services are located in Southwark, whilst others are located in nearby and other areas. The key principle driving the different models is that of *successful resettlement*, that is, a focus on the young person being prepared to move onto, not just any flat that is available, but rather to a home and place where they will be able to flourish, where they will be able to continue in education, training and employment, and where they will be able to sustain their newfound independence without the risk of becoming homeless.
- “Given the importance of 16+ services to the life chances of care leavers and other young people, it is of particular concern that these schemes are coming under increasing pressure.”

Challenges to 16+ support and housing services

- 1.9 Given the importance of 16+ services to the life chances of care leavers and other young people, it is of particular concern that these schemes are coming under increasing pressure. In part due to

the context of the housing crisis but also with the unprecedented reduction in local authority funding, services have begun to report that it is becoming more difficult to help young people both prepare for and then move onto their own home, with an impact that valuable places in 16+ schemes are “silting up” and, in consequence, more young people are having to be placed in emergency and residential settings. At the same time, there has been an increase in the number of young people with complex and challenging behaviour entering services. For individual 16+ support and housing schemes, the need to adapt to these unprecedented circumstances can sometimes lie beyond their means.

- 1.10 It was in this context that the Council established the Southwark 16+ support and housing project with a primary objective to review current service provision and to bring forward a refreshed and sustainable approach to helping care leavers and other young people to prepare for and move onto independent living. The outcome of this work and recommendations for change are set out in the following report.

“...Valuable places in 16+ schemes are ‘*silting up*’ and, in consequence, more young people are having to be placed in emergency and residential settings.”

2. INTRODUCTION (PART 1) – SETTING THE SCENE

- 2.1 The transition from being a young person to an adult can be a challenging journey for any person. And for those young people who are in the care of the local authority or who are at risk of becoming homeless this can be an especially testing, stressful and risk-filled period. Southwark Council takes its different but overlapping duties to children and care and young people who are at risk of becoming homeless extremely seriously. The Council provides services that support these young people to achieve better individual outcomes, to leave care equipped with the skills necessary to live independent lives, and to access good quality, affordable housing in places where each individual has the opportunity to flourish.
- 2.2 The Council's statutory duties in this area are set out below:

Legislation	Responsible Body	Duties
Children's Act 1989 (s20/22G)¹	Council	To provide looked after children with accommodation that, in so far as is practically reasonable, is (a) within the authority's area and (b) meets the needs of those children.
Housing Act 1996 (s1891c)	Council	To provide housing to people who are statutory homeless, including those who are in priority need due to (a) being aged 16 or 17 years old ² or (b) aged under or over 21 years who are vulnerable as a result of being in local authority care.
Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 [s23B]	Council	To safeguard and promote the child's welfare and, unless they are satisfied that child's welfare does not require it, support them by (a) maintaining them (b) providing them with or maintaining them in suitable accommodation and (c) providing support of such other descriptions as may be prescribed.

Table 1. LAC/care leavers and young people (16+) – statutory duties

Southwark – looked after children and children leaving care

- 2.3 In mid-2016 there were 70,440 children being looked after nationally. Whilst the overall statistics indicate a decrease in the number of children coming into care, this is outweighed by the fact that an increasing number of children and young people are struggling to leave care. An increase in the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) supported by local authorities, 1,470 during 2015/16 in London alone, has impacted on the overall number of children looked after in the country.
- 2.4 In mid-2016, there were 475 Looked After Children (LAC) and care leavers in Southwark with 236 between the ages of 16-25. The number of children being looked after by the Council is above the national average and, since 2012, Southwark has consistently been within the top three London local authorities supporting the highest number of LAC annually. The number of younger children coming into care in the borough has continued to decrease year on year, although there is an increasing issue around leaving care, which also mirrors the national picture.

¹ Section 31A of the Children's Act 1989 sets out that the local authority, as a corporate parent, must assess the child's needs and draw up a care plan.

² Priority need for 16 and 17 year olds was introduced in England by the 2002 Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) Order.

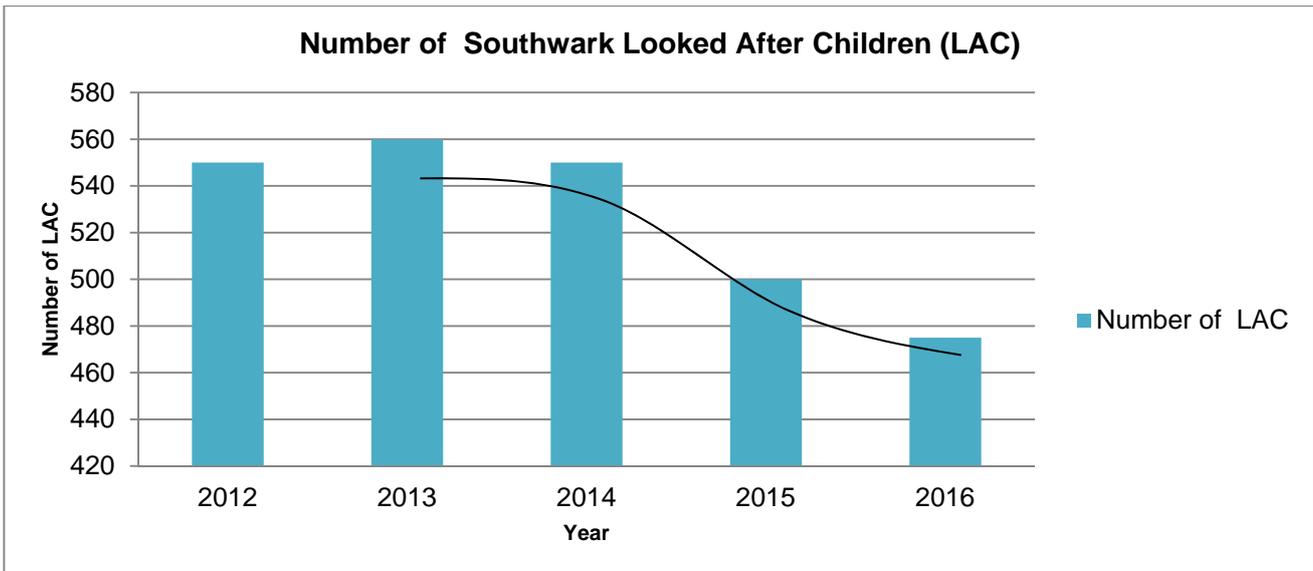


Chart 1. LAC Trends in Southwark – total number for period 2012-2016

- 2.5 The Council also supports a number of young people who are late entrants into the care system. 235 children/young people were taken into care in 2016/17, of which a significant number were late entrants (that is, aged between 14-17 years). The reasons why children and young people become late entrants into care services vary, although it is recognised that this is often as a result of children coming from a chaotic family lifestyle and ending up in need or due to unaccompanied asylum children who then decide to settle in the borough.
- 2.6 Children in the care of the local authority will usually leave care services on their 18th birthday. Local authorities however have a duty to continue to provide support to young people until they reach the age of 21 (or 25 if they are still in education or training). The preparation and planning to leave care normally starts at around 16 years old at which point young people may leave their foster or other placement and move instead into a semi-supported housing arrangement where they can develop the skills, resilience and confidence in order to successfully move into their own home.
- 2.7 For some looked after young people however the best place for them to stay during this period would be with their foster carer. In these circumstances the Council will put in place an agreement with the foster carer to allow the young person to 'stay put' beyond their 18th birthday, and the young person will continue to receive support and housing there.
- 2.8 Whatever circumstances young people preparing to leave care are in, the Council will provide them with the support to help them to make a tailored choice which best meets their own needs and aspirations.

Southwark – young people (16+) at risk of homelessness

- 2.9 During 2016/17, the Council also supported 81 young people who were at risk of homelessness by providing them with support and housing. Following the Southwark Judgement³ which was made by the Supreme Court in May 2009, the Council now has an additional duty to, at the point that a young people becomes homeless, to give this person information about their right to be assessed as a child in need and therefore to become looked after.

³ The Southwark Judgement, made by the Law Lords in May 2009, is a piece of case law that obliges local authorities' children's services to provide accommodation and support to homeless 16- and 17-year-olds. In the past, many children's services deemed that young people in this age group did not necessarily "need care" from local authorities but "help and support" in accessing housing benefits. Since the judgement, councils have had a legal obligation provide accommodation and often care services to this group of young people.

- 2.10 For the most part young people do not choose to become looked after children, but for those that do, the Council will have the same responsibilities to them as any other looked after young person. 22 young people became 'looked after' via this route during the last 18 months. There were also a number of children who were provided support under the Council's housing duties as they were at risk of becoming homeless. These young people were supported into other forms of accommodation or may have returned to their family homes, but they did not become looked after children.
- 2.11 Although the Council has different duties to young people being looked after/leaving care and those at risk of homelessness, it is recognised that both cohorts are in need of support to prepare them for adulthood. For many young people it may not particularly matter which cohort they are in, as many are receiving support from the same services – and they may even live next door to – young people from the other cohort.

Local policy context – looked after children/children leaving care and young people (16+) at risk of homelessness

- 2.12 A number of local and national drivers underpin the services which support LAC/care leavers and young people (16+) at risk of homelessness. The key local policy drivers are set out below:
- The 2012 Ofsted inspection of Southwark noted challenges around the quality of pathway planning for young people and requested that the Council take a closer look at how it helps young people be and feel safe in their homes and access services. Of equal importance, Ofsted noted the need to ensure improved outcomes for young people. Independent research through the Speakerbox Young Inspectors Accommodation Programme and the Care Leavers review undertaken by the social business, Catch 22, further highlighted that children in care wanted to feel safe, receive support to be near their family/siblings, have regular contact with their social workers and gain the necessary skills needed to be able to live independently.
 - Following these recommendations, also in 2012, the Council endorsed the Department for Education's Care Leavers Charter. The national principles, listed below, are applied to all young people that the Council supports:
 - to respect and honour your identity.
 - to believe in you.
 - to listen to you.
 - to inform you.
 - to support you.
 - to find a home.
 - to be a lifelong champion.
 - The Southwark Children and Young People's Plan (2013-18) sets out the Council's vision for children, young people and families in the borough so that "every child, young person and family in Southwark thrives and is empowered to lead a safe and healthy life." The plan was developed following consultation with more than 1,300 children, young people, parents, carers, staff and practitioners. The plan includes a specific approach to service delivery for care leavers, which will be guided by a number of local principles to:
 - listen and act on concerns raised.
 - keep young people actively involved in plans and decision making for their future.

- ensure care leavers have safe and stable accommodation, are able to live independently and sustain tenancies.
 - advise care leavers about their entitlements and provide financial support.
 - support them to continue in education, access training that meets their career plans and find suitable jobs.
 - help them to access health provision where this is required.
 - provide continued support through a dedicated personal adviser.
- The Council Plan 2014-2018 set out a commitment to give children and young people the best start in life by ensuring that every child, young person and family in Southwark thrives and is empowered to lead a safe and healthy life.
 - The Sufficiency Duty in the Children's Act 1989 places a duty on the Council to take such steps, so far as is practically possible, to ensure that there is sufficient high quality support and housing within the local authority area to meet the needs of the local LAC population and those on the edge of care.
 - The Southwark Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy 2016-19 further outlines the need to improve the resilience of children and young people and prepare them for a successful adult life where they can live independently. The document sets out the Council's key work in addressing a number of challenges for this cohort including the need for young people to 'feel safe, secure in their placements, live closer to home in housing that meets their needs' and to ensure that young people are cared for and prepared for adulthood.
 - The Southwark Five Year Forward View for Health and Social Care sets out a shared vision for health and social care across the NHS Southwark Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Southwark Council. The shared local ambition is to create a stronger emphasis on prevention and early action as well as deeper integration across health and social care, and wider council services, so that every possible step is taken to tackle the social as well as the physical determinants of health and wellbeing.
 - The Joint Strategic Framework for Children and Young People focuses on Looked After Children as a key group to improve outcomes for. Young People aged 11-25, particularly those who are exhibiting risky behaviours, are also a shared priority.
 - In 2016-17 Southwark was successful, with its partner, Catch 22, in winning an Innovation Bid to work in new ways to support young people leaving care. Catch 22 is a national charity with expertise in working with care leavers and innovation, as well as challenging social issues around young people. The timing of this work is well suited to working together on the transformation of support and housing for looked after children leaving care. The approach is also consistent with Southwark's Looked After Children and Care Leavers Strategy.

3. INTRODUCTION (PART 2) – SOUTHWARK – LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN/CHILDREN LEAVING CARE AND YOUNG PEOPLE (16+) AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS – SERVICES AND SPEND (2016/17)

16+ support and housing services

3.1 Looked after children/children leaving care and young people (16+) at risk of homelessness in Southwark are provided with support and housing in a number of settings including specialist and therapeutic residential care, adoption and fostering services or semi-supported housing, with the latter commissioned specifically for young people aged 16-18 years. Placements are dependent on age, the level of need and the availability of an appropriate placement.

3.2 The different types of placements utilised in Southwark are summarised below.

Placement	Cohort	Type of support
1. Specialist residential	Looked after Children/ Care Leavers	Challenging behaviour; social, emotional and behavioural difficulties; therapeutic; child abuse, neglect; special educational needs and disabilities (SEND); autism; and trauma
2. Semi-independent (support tied to specific accommodation)	Looked after Children/ Care Leavers	Employment and education support; tenancy sustainment; social inclusion; independence skills.
3. Fostering placement (16/17 year olds remaining in foster placements)	Looked after Children/ Care Leavers	Generalist and specialist (parent and child; disabled; remand) fostering placements.
4. Supported housing (support tied to specific accommodation)	Looked after Children/ Care Leavers/ 16+17 year old homeless	Employment and education support; tenancy sustainment; social inclusion; independence skills.
5. Floating support (support not tied to a specific building)	Looked after Children/ Care Leavers/ 16+17 year old homeless	Tenancy sustainment; access to education, training and employment; healthy lifestyles; decrease criminal activity and anti social behaviour; independence skills.
6. Staying put (18+ year olds remaining in foster placements)	Looked after Children/ Care Leavers	Generalist and specialist (parent and child; disabled; remand) fostering placements.
7. Family placement (Placed with a member of the young person's own family)	Looked after Children/ Care Leavers	Support within a family placement.
8. B&B (temporary and emergency placement)	Looked after Children/ Care Leavers/ 16+17 year old homeless	Temporary and emergency accommodation for young people at risk of homelessness.

Table 2. LAC/care leavers and young people (16+) – different types of placements in Southwark

16+ support and housing services – spend 2016/17

3.3 In the financial year 2016/17, the Council spent £7.9 million on support and housing for children in case/children leaving care and young people (16+) at risk of homelessness.

3.4 Differentiating what is spent on *support* (for example, a key worker to help coordinate a skills training programme) and what is spent on *housing* (for example, rent, gas, electricity and other

charges) can be particularly complex to distinguish in this area. The following sets out the key issues in determining this:

- young people under the age of 18 cannot access Housing Benefit (HB)/Universal Credit and so, for these young people, the Council will fund the total housing and support costs.
- for young people over the age of 18 in semi-independent supported housing and foster placements, Housing Benefit (HB)/Universal Credit (which is funded by central government) will pay for the housing costs, and the Council will only pay for the support.
- for young people in specialist residential placements or emergency bed and breakfast accommodation, whether these people are over or under the age of 18, Housing Benefit (HB)/Universal Credit does not apply and the Council will fund the total cost of the support and housing.

3.5 The figures set out below only take into account council spend on these services and do not include funding provided by Housing Benefit (HB)/Universal Credit.

3.6 A breakdown of Council spend in this area is set out below.

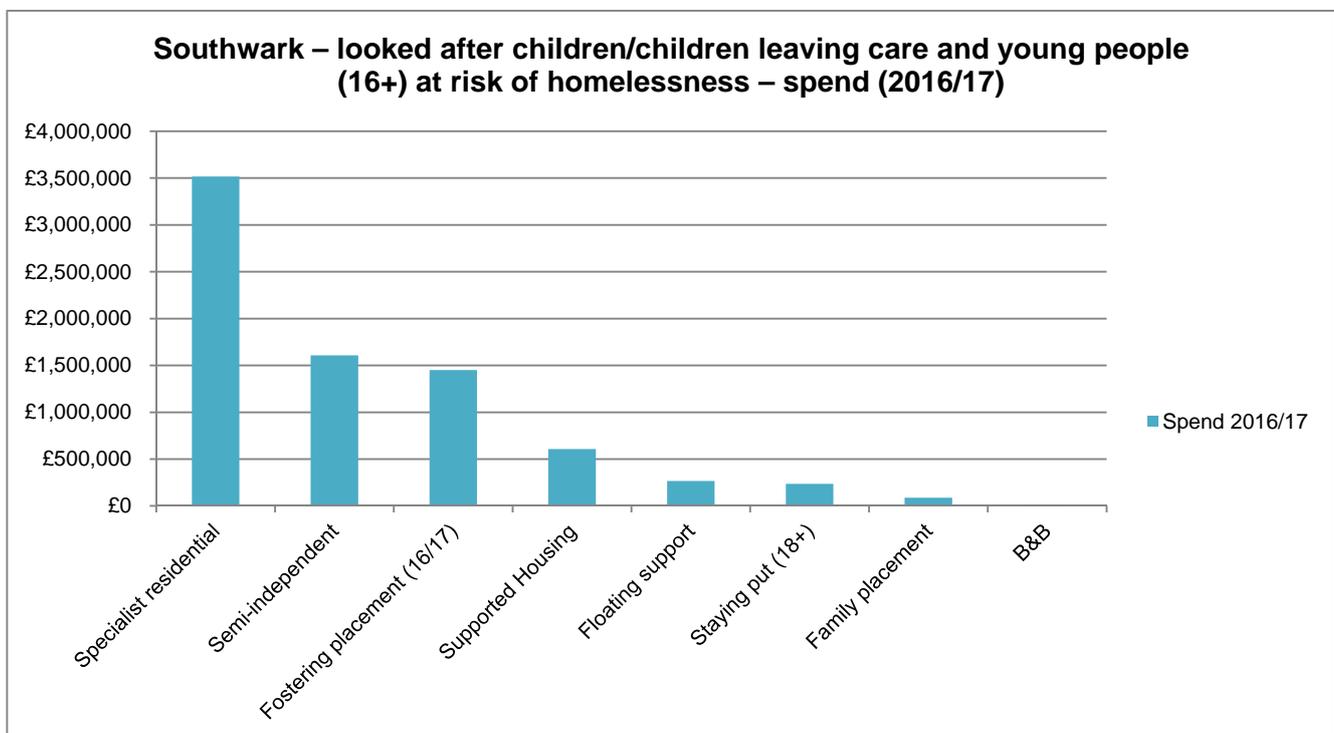


Chart 2. LAC/care leavers and young people (16+) at risk of homelessness – spend 2016/17

16+ Support and Housing Services	Specialist residential	Semi-independent	Fostering placement (16/17)	Supported Housing	Floating support	Staying put (18+)	Family placement	Emergency B&B	TOTAL
Council Spend 2016/17	£3,516,573	£1,607,290	£1,451,531	£608,000	£266,760	£236,278	£86,969	£16,819	£7,90,220
Number of clients – 2016/17	31	115	41	147	123	16	8	4	485
Average cost per client/per year	£113,438	£13,976	£35,403	£4,136	£2,169	£14,767	£10,871	N/A	£16,062.31

Table 3. LAC/care leavers and young people (16+) at risk of homelessness – spend and numbers 2016/17

3.7 The average cost of services per person, per day is set out below.

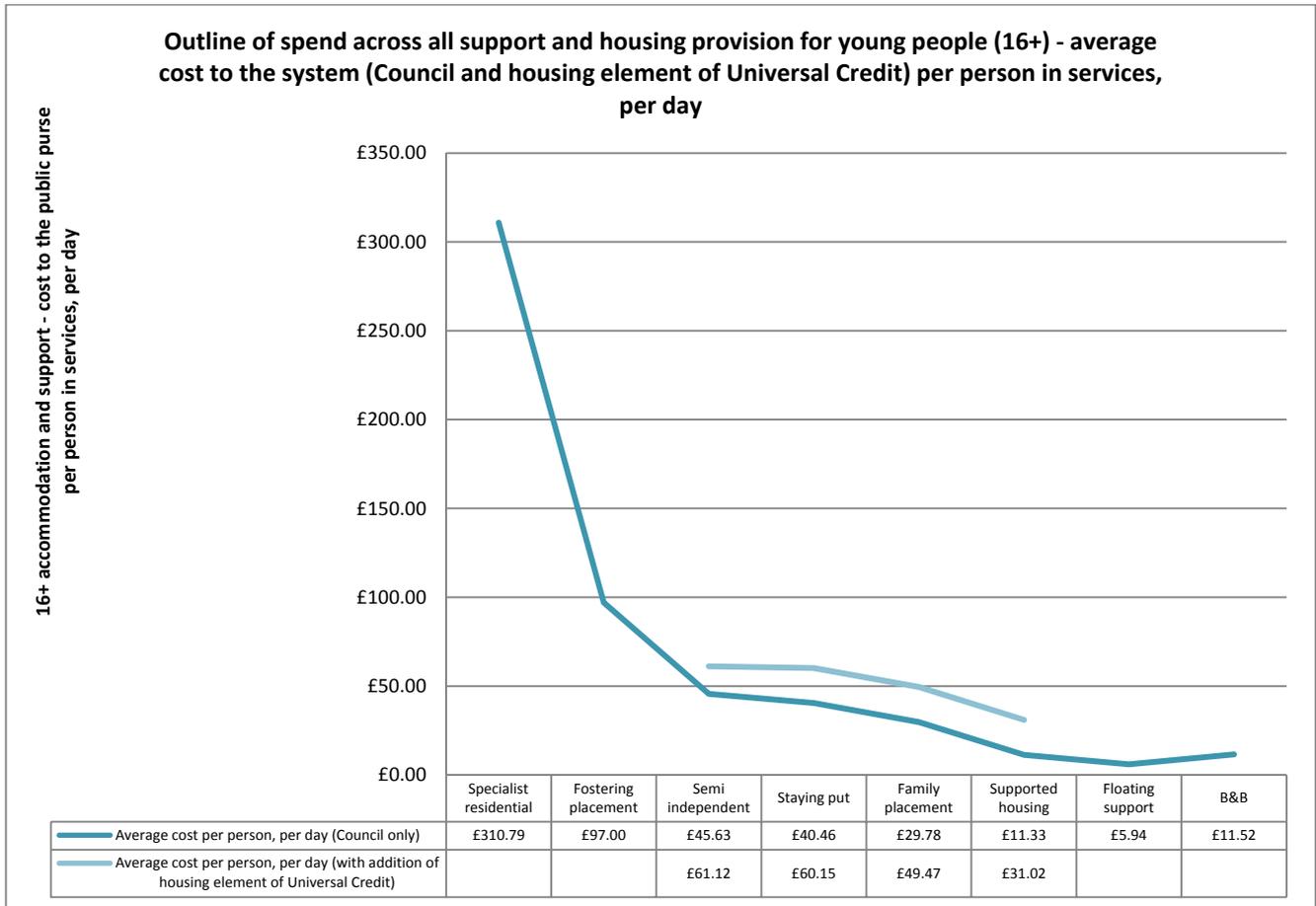


Chart 3. LAC/care leavers and young people (16+) at risk of homelessness – average cost per person per day - spend 2016/17

4. THE SOUTHWARK 16+ SUPPORT AND HOUSING PROJECT

16+ Support and Housing Project - overview

4.1 This report sets out the outcomes of the Southwark 16+ support and housing project. The paper includes key findings from the project, as well as recommendations for change in order to support the Council's aims to enable young people and care leavers to overcome challenges, prepare for adulthood and move into an independent living setting.

16+ Support and Housing Project - objectives

4.2 The 16+ support and housing project was set up in mid-2016. The primary aim of this work was to bring forward an approach that would ensure that:

- there is provision of services to support young people to gain independence skills, employment and emotional resilience.
- the Council has a range of appropriate good quality accommodation for young people including care leavers.
- young people are given realistic expectations and helped with preparations to sustainably move into an independent living setting.
- the support and housing model for young people keeps them safe from harm whilst allowing them to make mistakes and to be able to learn.
- the service model is financially viable in the long term.

4.3 The 16+ support and housing project was set up specifically not to include those young people who have very high support needs and who, due to these, have been assessed as being unable to live a completely independent life. These young people – including those aged over 16 years - are instead being considered as part of a review of the 0-25 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) pathway⁴.

16+ Support and Housing Project - work

4.4 Since its commencement, the 16+ support and housing project has considered the totality of the current offer for young people aged 16+ in Southwark, that is children in care (aged 16/17 years), care leavers (18+) and those young people who are at risk of homelessness or on the edge of care.

4.5 In order to assess both the level of support and housing needs that young people require to fully enable them to have independent lives, the project considered pathways into services from the point of referral, how young people are supported practically and emotionally during their residence and the processes for move-on to sustain more permanent accommodation.

4.6 Young people have been involved in every part of the project, including through involvement in engagement exercises, workshops and through specific work to help design the right model that will help them. Further information about the outcome of the various pieces of engagement work are set out later in this report.

4.7 The work plan for the project team was set out into four work streams and included a full analysis of the current model, additional data reviews of current semi-independent/supported housing

⁴ There are however some interdependencies. It is recognised that a number of young people who require specialist residential care are also within the SEND pathway. A key aspect in any shift away from the need for specialist residential care will undoubtedly be related to the provision of services for SEND in other settings.

services, engagement with service users, internal stakeholders and service providers. Key activities of the project team include:

- service-user engagement, engagement forums and questionnaires.
- a provider forum with all of our 16+ support and housing services.
- engagement with joint CCG-Council Children's Commissioning Development Group (CDG), voluntary sector external provider lead group (PLG) and Southwark Information Advice and Support Team (SIAS)
- consideration at Education and Children's Scrutiny committee
- reviewed of the specialist residential care offer and links with health services (including mental health)
- analysis of the impact of the upcoming Housing Benefit cap (and recent Government decision on proposals to delegate a ring-fenced budget for supported housing)
- an analysis of current financial information
- benchmarking with other Local authorities

4.8 The 16+ support and housing project was led by Council Directors drawn from both the Housing and Modernisation and Children's and Adults' Departments.

16+ Support and Housing Project – underpinning statistical analysis

4.9 The 16+ support and housing project has utilised a number of datasets which have been drawn from multiple departments and organisations. As may have been expected from undertaking a task of this complexity, there have been challenges around ensuring that data drawn from different systems is aligned in a way that enables clear analysis. For the most part, the data set out in this paper is drawn from information collected in mid-2016.

4.10 The data gathering exercises were carried out in two stages:

- in mid-2016, information from providers was collected around young people who are supported, including placement location, health needs, hours of support, primary and secondary presenting needs, and Not in Employment, Education and Training (NEET) status.
- In late-2016, contract review visits were carried out by the Children's and Adults Commissioning Contract Monitoring Team, whilst 16 out of the 21 semi-independent providers were visited and a sample of properties were inspected.

5. FINDINGS OF THE 16+ SUPPORT AND HOUSING PROJECT - (PART 1) - YOUNG PEOPLE/SERVICE USERS

Young People/Service Users - overview

- 5.1 The 16+ support and housing project undertook a “whole system” approach to its work. The information gathered represents data from across the 16+ support and housing system and also includes outcomes from engagement carried out with young people, including feedback from engagement work undertaken by the Children’s Rights Team.
- 5.2 Where relevant, the data has been broken down into the two different framework agreements employed by the Council in the delivery of services for young people, these are:
- the semi-independent living services framework for support and housing services for looked after children and care leavers, which was established in September 2013.
 - the prevention and inclusion services framework for care leavers and young people aged 16/17 years old at risk of homelessness, which was established in June 2014.
- 5.3 In mid-2016, there were 485 young people⁵ aged over 16 years being supported by services across the Southwark 16+ support and housing system. Of these, 262 (54%) were being housed in either supported housing or semi-independent provision, 65 (13%) were in a fostering placement scheme, 31 (6%) had been placed in a specialist residential placement and 4 (0.8%) were in an emergency bed and breakfast scheme. A quarter of the group, 123 (25%) young people were living independently but required ongoing floating support to help them to develop independence skills in their own homes.

Demographics – LAC/care leavers and young people (16+) at risk of homelessness

Age

- 5.4 The age profile of young people in support and housing services shows two peaks where service use is highest, the first around age 17-18 and the second slightly lower peak at 21-22 years old. It is recognised that this profile relates in part to the shift of looked after children/care leavers into housing services, to an increase in the number of young people needing support in their own home – which is often their first independent home - including support provided to young people who are mothers with babies, and also the addition of young people who are at risk of homelessness into services. As young people are supported to move on, this profile reduces to around 9% of young people who are still in services at ages 25 and 26.
- 5.5 The age profile of young people in all services breaks down as 259 (37%) young people aged between 16-18 years old, 207 (29%) 19-21 years old and 240 (34%) 22-26 years old.
- 5.6 There is considerable variation in the age profile of different young people in services, which itself is related to the types of services and who they were commissioned for.

⁵ Of these, 246 (50.7%) were looked after children/care leavers and 239 (49.3%) were homeless 16/17 year olds with priority need.

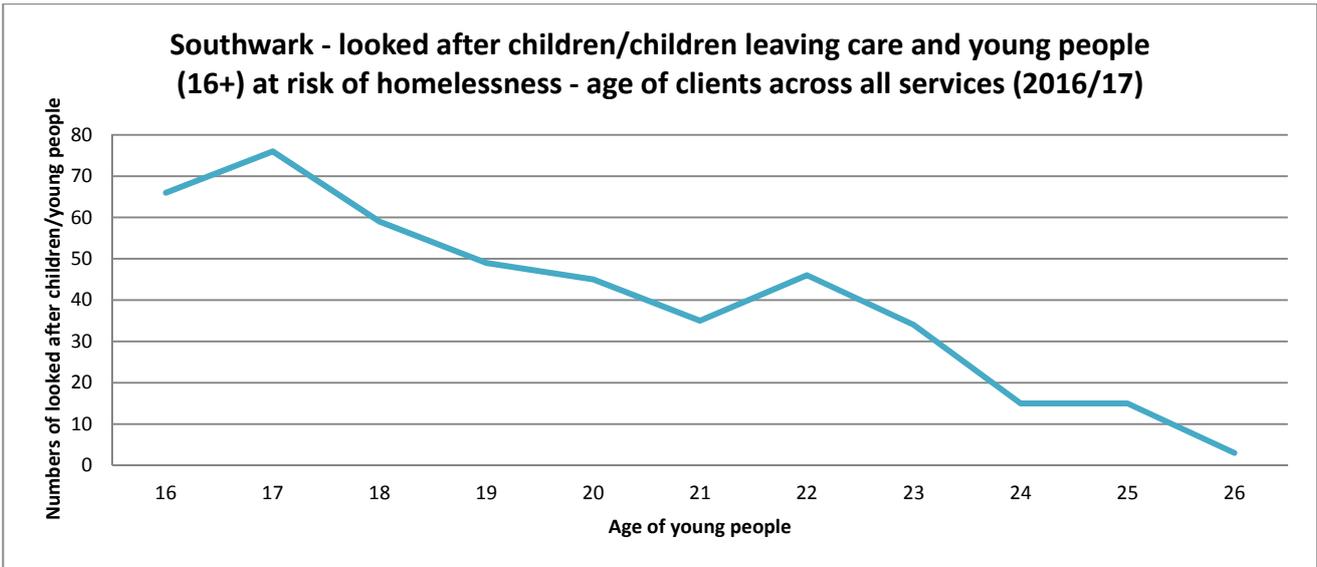


Chart 4. LAC/care leavers and young people (16+) at risk of homelessness – age of clients across all services 2016/17

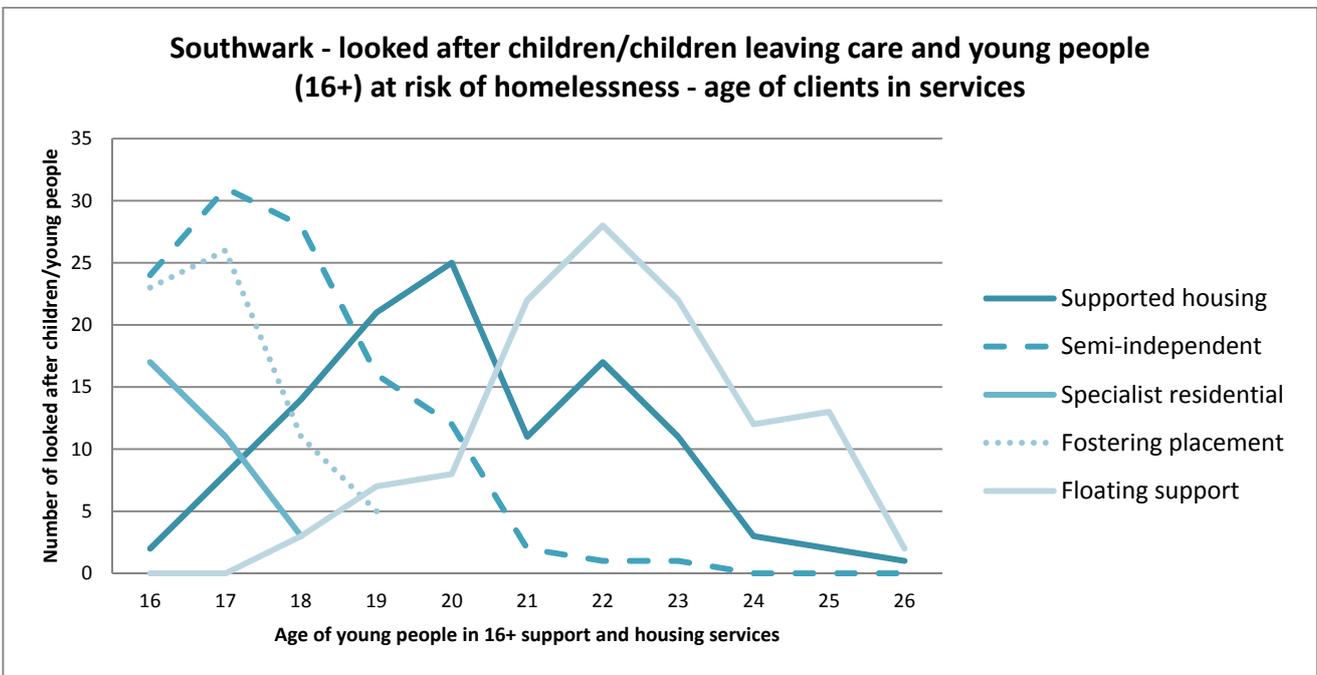


Chart 5. LAC/care leavers and young people (16+) at risk of homelessness – age of clients in services (2016/17)

5.7 The highest number of young people in any one age category are those in semi-independent provision aged over 18 years. These services were designed primarily to support those aged 16-18, with an expectation that over time the number of young people over 18 years would start to decrease. For other supported housing services, there are two different age groups, the first up to age 18 (in two of the three supported housing schemes⁶) and the second up to age 21 (in the third service⁷). There are relatively few young people in either residential or fostering placements overall, and none after the age of 19. This may signal that more needs to be done to support young people who may wish to stay in their foster home after the age of 18 through the “Staying Put” policy (as introduced by the Government in 2013).

⁶ That is, Oasis and Springfield Lodge.

⁷ That is, the Southwark Accommodation Based Support Service (SABS).

- 5.8 After young people move into their own flat, a significant number (17%) receive ongoing floating support to help enable them to maintain their own tenancy. For many young people who require support and housing services, this provides a number of options as they move through services, hopefully gaining skills and developing greater resilience, with an end result being a small amount of floating support each week prior to leaving services altogether.
- 5.9 Overall, regardless of a young person's pathway into accommodation it is recognised that there are a relatively high number of young people being supported well after their 20th birthday (sometimes up to 2 years longer than the services commissioned were planned for). The reasons for this are set out in the coming sections.

Gender

- 5.10 The overall gender profile in Southwark 16+ support and housing services is one where there are slightly more females (55%) to males (45%). However this does not take into account the very varied gender differences in different services, with more males (looked after children) in specialist residential and semi-independent services – typically aged between 16-18 years old. There are far fewer males in services after age 21, after which a cohort of women – often mothers with babies – predominate in the services. This relates to the specific services that Southwark has commissioned to support young mothers and babies, with floating support services (as well as SABs) fulfilling this role. This may explain why the vast majority of clients (77%) in floating support services are female.

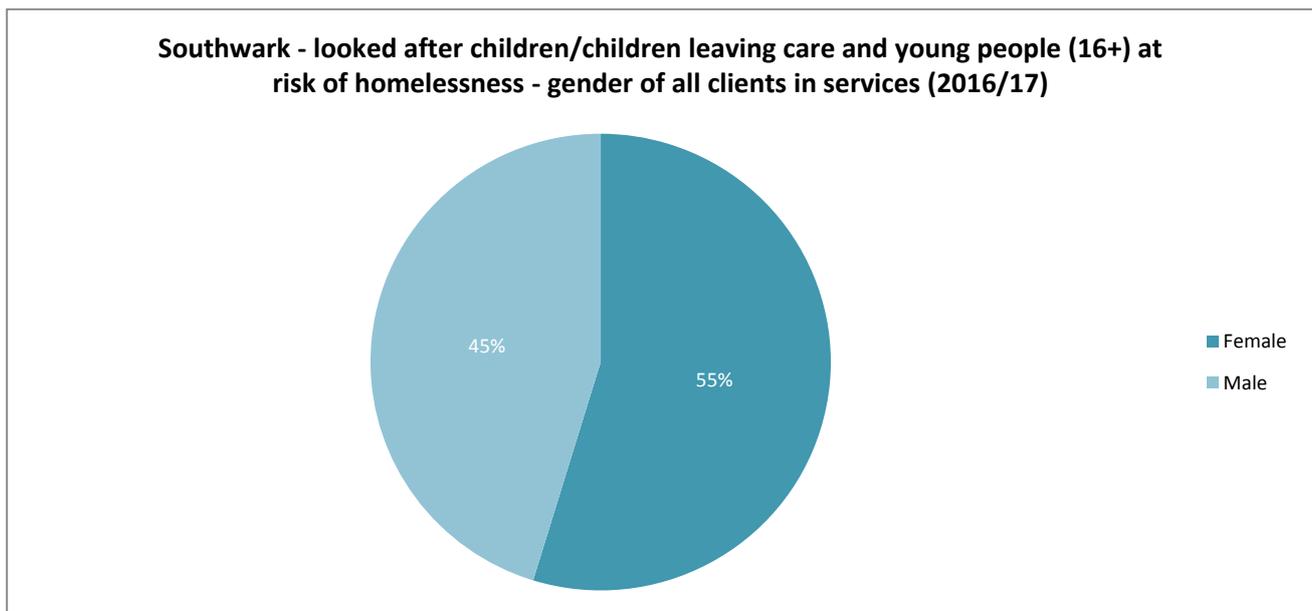


Chart 6. LAC/care leavers and young people (16+) at risk of homelessness – gender across all services (total)

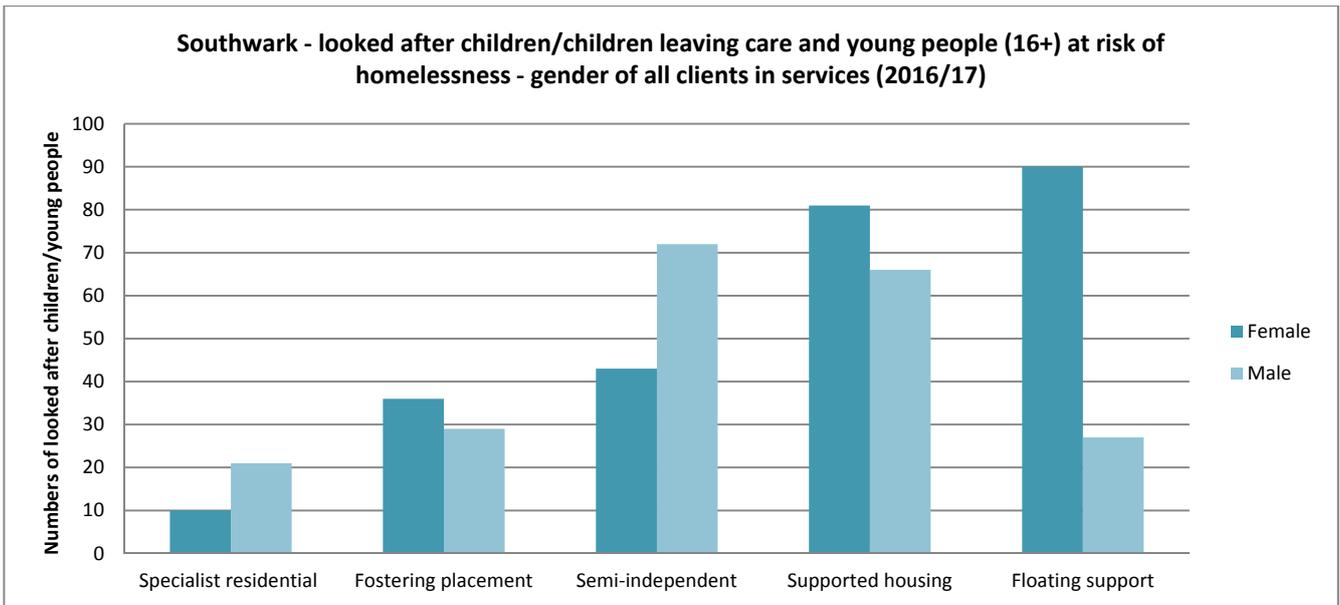


Chart 7. LAC/care leavers and young people (16+) at risk of homelessness – gender across all services (by service)

- 5.11 The design of support and housing services for 16+ young people must take into account these different needs, with a predominantly looked after/care leaver and male population in services for 16-18 year olds, which is then superseded with a majority female (often mothers) at risk of homelessness population in ages 21 onwards.

Ethnicity

- 5.12 Southwark has an ethnically diverse population with the highest proportion of residents in the country who were born in Africa as well as a significant Latin American population. 75% of reception age children are from black and minority ethnic groups. This is reflected in the ethnicity of young people in support and housing services where 244 (51%) are from a black background compared to 152 (32%) who are from a white background. There are also 41 (9%) young people who are mixed.
- 5.13 The proportionately of different ethnicities across different services does not appear to be a factor, with a relatively similar profile of different groupings in different services. This may be due to the way that all Southwark services are commissioned for all ethnicities – with the resulting mix based on overall population need.
- 5.14 When comparing the ethnic profile of young people in 16+ support and housing services to that of Southwark's population as a whole (utilising data in the last census in 2011), there are some notable differences, with a relatively smaller white population (1/3 less than the Southwark average) and a very high relative black Caribbean population – which is nearly three times as high as the Southwark average. There are also, proportionately, far fewer Asian clients and far more, both Black African and Black Other clients. The reasons for this profile are complex and this report does not attempt to explain every detail. That said, it is recognised that some of these findings correspond to the relative deprivation of different ethnicity groups in the borough, and are also of course linked to the ethnic background of the looked after child population in Southwark, which has a disproportionately high number of black children. This ethnic mix will need to be considered in the development of future 16+ support and housing services, in order to best meet the needs of different backgrounds.

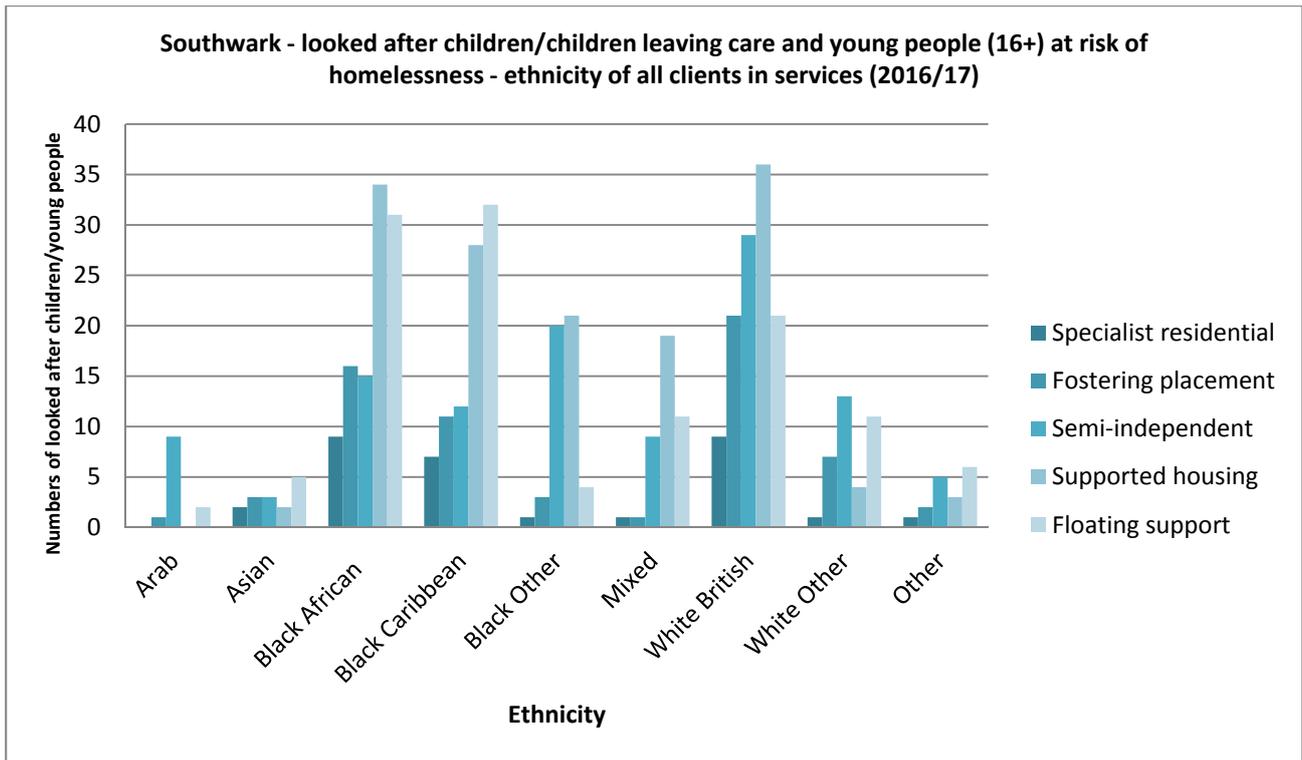


Chart 8. LAC/care leavers and young people (16+) at risk of homelessness – ethnicity across all services (by service)

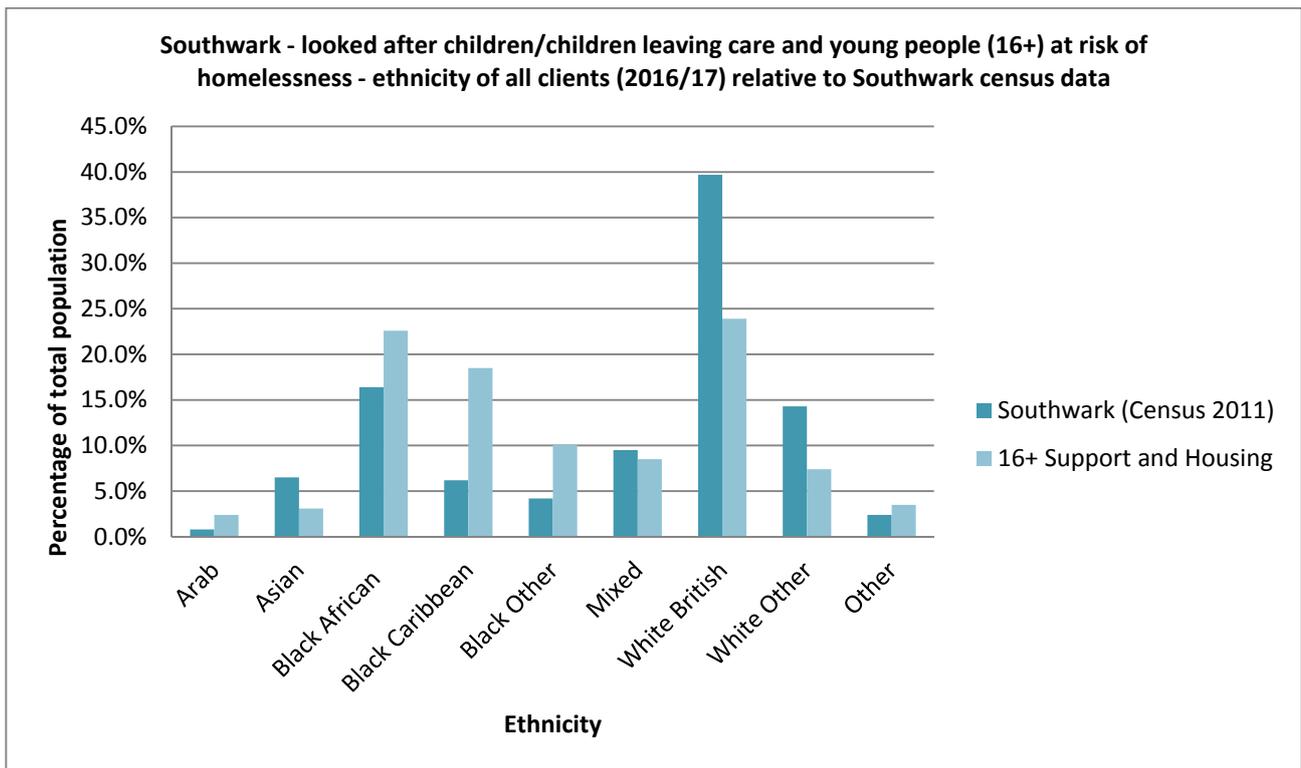


Chart 9. LAC/care leavers and young people (16+) at risk of homelessness – ethnicity of all clients relative to total Southwark population

Employment, Education or Training (NEET)

- 5.15 Over two-fifths (41%) of young people in 16+ support and housing services are not in education, employment or training. Of these, 49 (25%) are looked after children/care leavers in semi-independent services, 52 (26%) are in supported housing and 47 (24%) are in their own homes receiving floating support. The NEET population are of course a significant focus of the support and housing services in Southwark, with a key aim of all commissioned services being to help young people into education, work or training.
- 5.16 138 (29%) of young people in services are in education (school/college) and this is relatively proportionate across all services (although lower at older ages, and for those in floating support services). 79 (16%) of young people are in either full-time or part-time work, and this is particularly the case in floating support services where 28 (23%) of young people are in some form of work.
- 5.17 There remains however a significant challenge in helping young people to gain a good education, and to access employment and training opportunities. This must be a key focus in any future support and housing services for young people in Southwark.

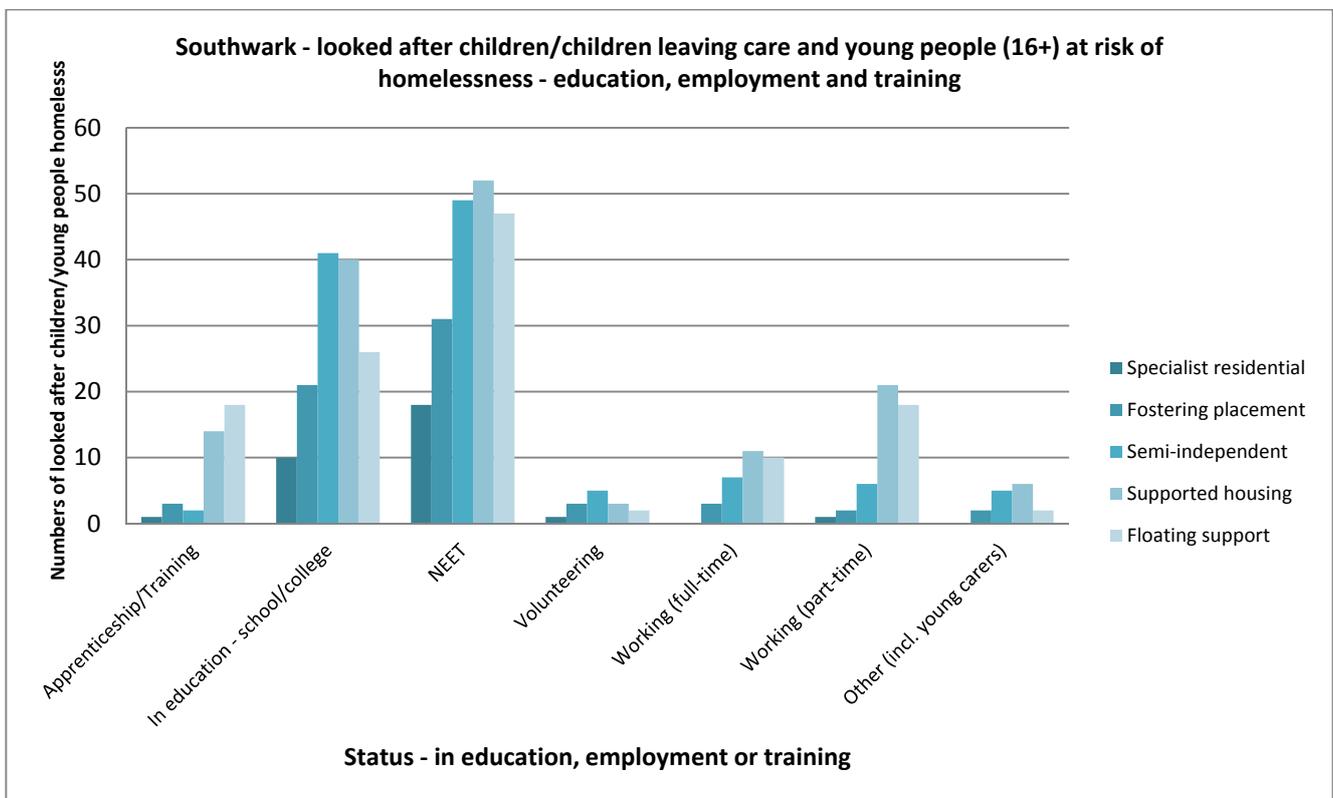


Chart 10. LAC/care leavers and young people (16+) at risk of homelessness – education, employment and training

Health Needs

- 5.18 Just under a quarter (24%) of young people in Southwark 16+ support and housing services have a recognised ongoing health condition, the majority of whom have some degree of mental ill health. A number of young people (5%) have a long term physical health condition.
- 5.19 All looked after children/care leavers have access to a designated nurse/GP who undertakes a statutory health assessment for this population. A leaving care medical report is also completed for all care leavers. The health assessment can result in referral onto other specialist services, further assessment and/or clinical support. Funding for all health assessments is met by NHS Southwark Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) including assessments for Southwark children carried out in other boroughs. For all those in support and housing services, young people will be

supported to access universal GP and other health services. There are in addition a wide number of health projects within different services, including around sexual health, wellbeing and mother/baby care.

- 5.20 In mid-2016, housing service providers reported that they were supporting 39 young people with a recognised mental ill health condition. Further data received from NHS Southwark CCG confirms that of the young people visited by the dedicated looked after children nurse in Q1 2016/17 (April–June), there were 22 young people with ongoing health issues, 2 had an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) diagnosis, 2 young people were reported as having Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and a further 2 young people had been admitted to psychiatric in-patient services in the last year. Young people needing specialist mental health support can access the South London and Maudsley (SLAM) NHS Foundation Trust Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), including the joint specialist development centre at Sunshine House in Camberwell.
- 5.21 Young people over 18 years receiving services from the CAMHS continue to receive a service until they are able to be discharged or transferred on to adult services. At the end of June 2016, there were 21 young people receiving a service from the core CAMHS services (this includes Carelink and the LAC CAMHS service) although not all were care leavers.

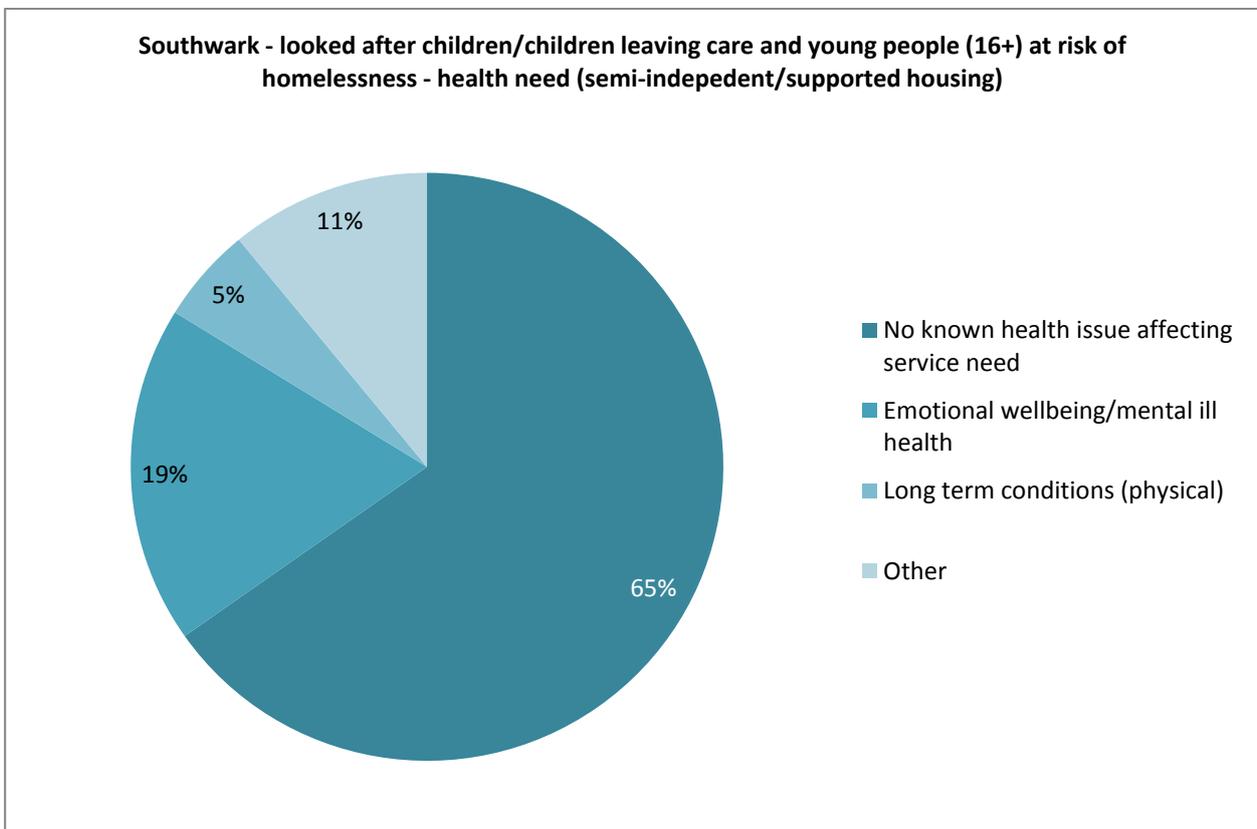


Chart 11. LAC/care leavers and young people (16+) at risk of homelessness – health need

5.22 The key identified health needs of young people in 16+ support and housing services is set out below.

Emotional Wellbeing and Mental	Additional Support Needs	Long term conditions
Anxiety	ADHD	Asthma

Psychosis	Addiction issues	Anaemia
Depression	Aspergers	Back pain
PSTD	Learning Disability	Bone issues
Insomnia	Migraine	Rheumatoid
PSTD/Physical Disability	Partially deaf	Arthritis
Borderline personality disorder	Poor eyesight	Sickle cell
Difficulty sleeping	Possible autism (not diagnosed)	Cutaneous
Functional psychotic illness	Pregnant	Neurofibromatosis
Gender dysphoria	Psoriasis	
Previous history of self-harm		

Table 4. Health needs identified across housing services emerging areas of focus for joint CDG

- 5.23 The Council is entering joint commissioning arrangements with NHS Southwark CCG, including in the area of services for children and young people. A key priority in the emerging partnership is improving health outcomes for looked after children and care leavers. Given this, the new joint Council-CCG commissioning partnership will be helping to shape future 16+ support and housing services to ensure that good health outcomes are embedded in service provision – and that there is a holistic approach across health, support and housing in the delivery of support for care leavers and other young people in Southwark.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)/No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)

- 5.24 During period 2015/16, the Council supported 25 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) ASC (all ages). Nationally during the same period, 3,043 unaccompanied children claimed asylum in the UK, this is a 56 % increase from those who claimed asylum in 2014/15. Over the last 4 years (2012-16), the number of UASC supported by Southwark has averaged 24 at any time, but it is likely that this will increase with the new duty for local authorities to accept the transfer of relevant children under the mandatory national placements scheme⁸.
- 5.25 As well as this new duty, the Immigration Act 2016 also makes provision for how No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) clients are accommodated and supported. Where currently local authorities are able to provide NRPF care leavers with accommodation, care and financial support under s23C(4)(c) of the Children's Act 1989 (eg. by staying put with a foster carer and with access to a Personal Adviser⁹), under the new scheme, NRPF clients will be provided for under paragraph 10A and 10B of the Immigration Act 2016 and excluded from receiving all forms of further care leaving. The result of these changes is that there will be two parallel systems of support for young people leaving care, which in turn will have an impact on the approach to service delivery for 16+ support and housing.
- 5.26 Nationally, for UASC aged 16-17 years, half of these children were placed in semi-independent living arrangements and half in foster care. This trend reflects the profile in Southwark where, in

⁸ As set out in the Immigration Act 2016.

⁹ The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 made it a requirement for local authorities in England and Wales to provide a "Personal Adviser" service to all young people leaving looked after care, to support the young person with the transition to full independent living. In Southwark, each care-leaver has a named Personal Adviser with whom they can build a long-term and supportive relationship, and this ensures they always have someone they can turn to for help and advice, whatever the issue might be.

mid-2016, 23 UASC and individuals with NRPF aged 16+ years were living in semi-independent and supported housing.

- 5.27 One area of concern for services is the ongoing number of young people with NRPF who are awaiting a final decision on their status from the Home Office. This is a challenge both for the young people themselves but also for services who – in this context - may struggle to help these young people to develop the skills, and then move to, an independent setting. The longer this issue remains unresolved, the more other young people who may have benefitted from moving into services cannot, as the space needed is being used by someone else awaiting a final decision on their residency status.

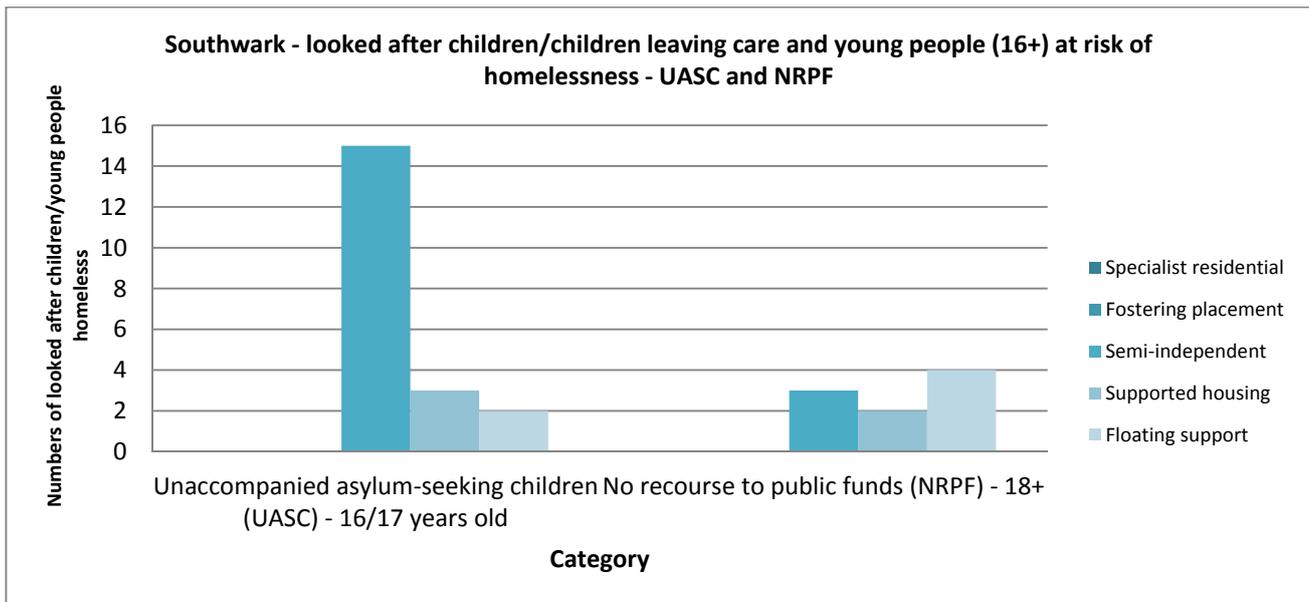


Chart 12. LAC/care leavers and young people (16+) at risk of homelessness – UASC and NRPF [without data for residential/fostering]

Length of stay in services

- 5.28 Over half of young people (55%) entering 16+ support and housing services in Southwark are able to access the help they need in order to move on within one year. A further 123 young people (26%) are able to move on within two years. In the undertaking of the 16+ support and housing project, the team heard of many stories of young people who – after a short stay in services – were able to gain the skills and help they needed to overcome challenges and move into a tenancy of their own. For many young people this is their experience of services, which is particularly true for young people in specialist residential where stays are typically for very short periods of time.
- 5.29 It is also encouraging to note that, of the cohort of young people who have moved to independent living but who require some level of short-term targeted support to settle into their homes, 72 (60%) do not require any further support after one year – primarily as they have been able to develop the skills to cope on their own after this point.
- 5.30 That said, one in five young people (20%) in 16+ support and housing services remain in services over two years, and in the period of study, 13 young people (3%) had been in services over 5 years. As all commissioned services have a target to support young people to be able to move on to independent living within a two year timeframe, this is of course very concerning. Whilst the 16+

support and housing project was unable to compare historical like-for-like data¹⁰, it is recognised that the trend of young people staying services longer and not moving on has been worsening over time. This area is considered further in looking at “move on” data, and also in relation to the availability of affordable housing which is set out later in this report.

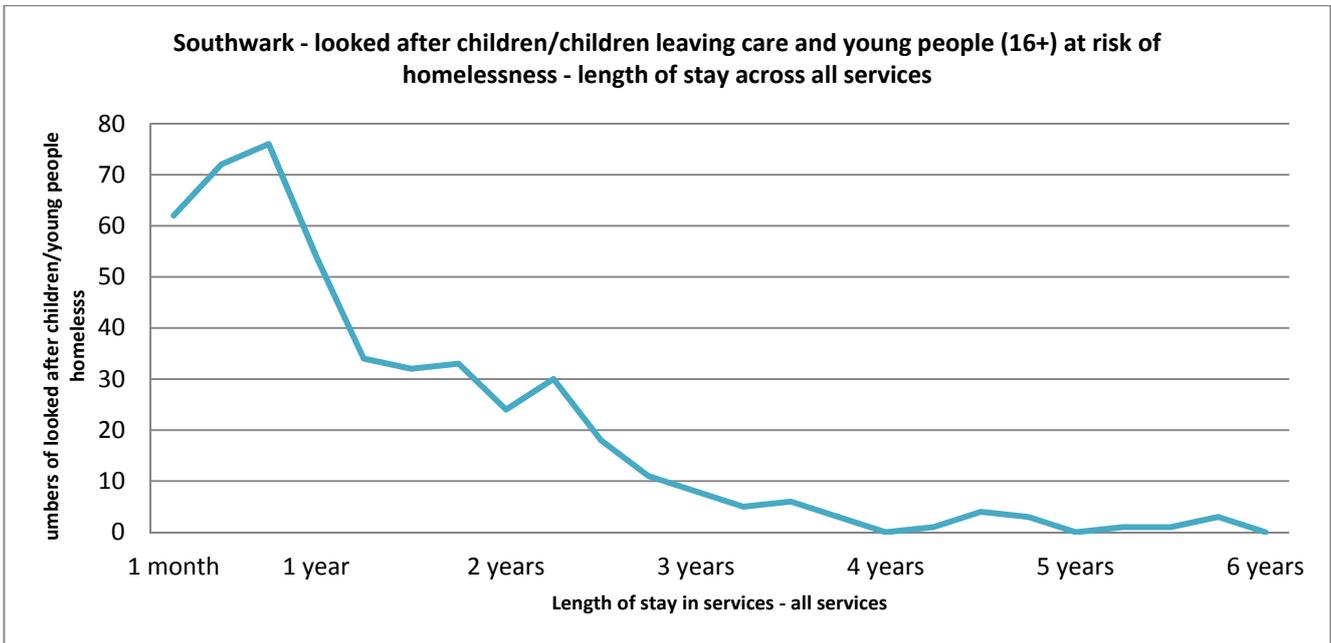


Chart 13. LAC/care leavers and young people (16+) at risk of homelessness – length of stay across all services

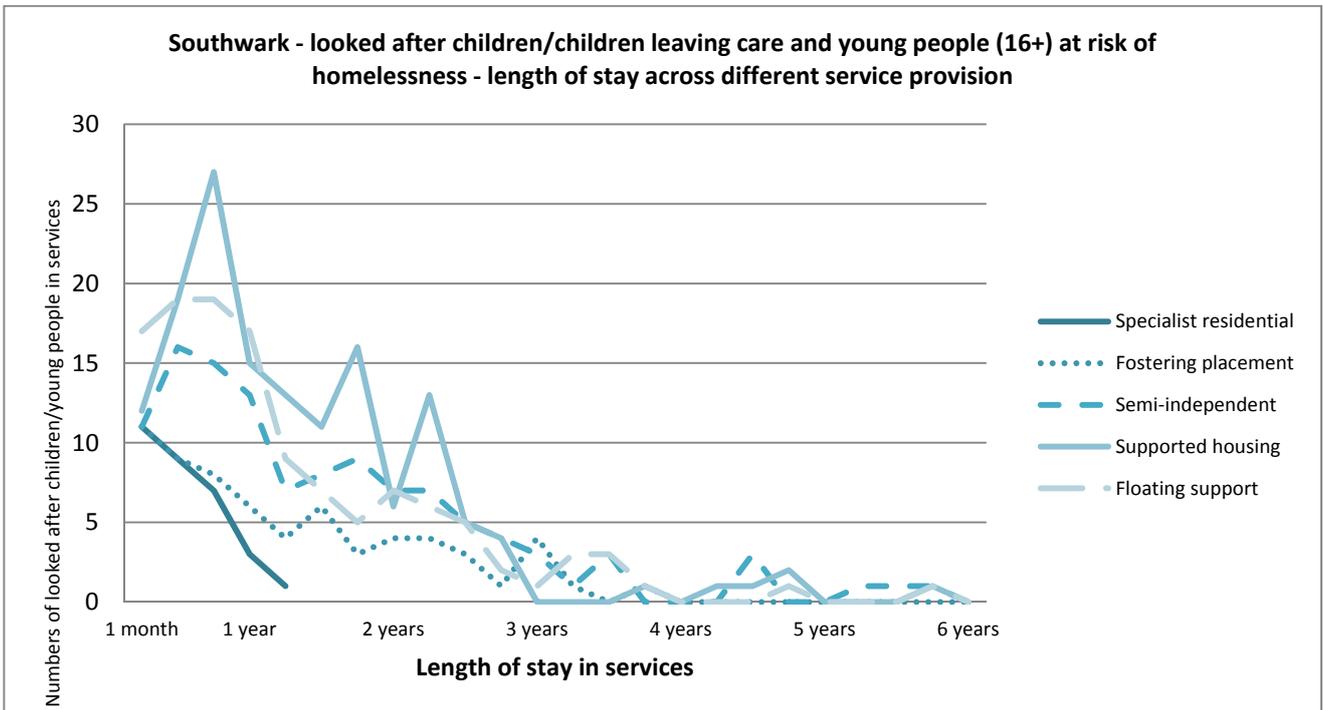


Chart 14. LAC/care leavers and young people (16+) at risk of homelessness – length of stay in services

¹⁰ The Southwark 16+ support and housing project in 2016/17 was the first time that data from across a number of different service areas (including social care, housing and health) was brought together to take a holistic look at the total service pathway. As such, it has not been possible to look in detail or in totality at historic trends – although some assumptions and analysis have been made based on partial data and from engagement with professionals working in the area.

Mother and baby

- 5.31 At the time of the review in mid-2016, 16+ support and housing providers reported that there were 46 (10%) young women who were either expectant or young mothers. A number of these clients were placed in specialist mother and baby housing within the Southwark Accommodation Based Services (SABs) project where a dedicated member of staff with expertise in this area provides support. Additionally a number of women were being supported in both semi-independent settings and also, for those in their own tenancy, by floating support services.
- 5.32 It is recognised that many of the young mothers in 16+ support and housing services are provided with additional support by the Guys and St Thomas's NHS Foundation Trust (GSTT) Family Nurse Partnership (FNP). This project supports young vulnerable women prior to and after birth with specific, practical help – as well as clinical support and professional advice. Whilst not all the young women seen by the FNP would be within the 16+ cohort, it is recognised that consideration should be made for the additional needs expectant and young mothers might have, particularly with the difficulty faced in their own transition to adulthood as well as caring for a young child.
- 5.33 This is an area of particular focus for the joint Council-CCG partnership commissioning team and will be looked at further in the development of holistic health, support and housing services going forward.

Youth offending and gang-related activity

- 5.34 Data received from the youth service indicated that at the beginning of the year (2016/17), there were 151 young people receiving support from Southwark's Youth Offending Service (YOS) with 96 of these over the age of 16. Of this 96, 8 were serving a custodial sentence, 2 were remanded in custody and 86 were in the living in the community. 10 young people were recorded as being a looked after child (LAC).
- 5.35 There are many reasons why offending behaviour starts and in some cases escalates, and it is recognised that some young people have experienced long term neglect, parental drug misuse or mental ill health and may develop harmful behaviours themselves. Often home relationships break down due the reasons highlighted above and/or parents cannot cope with the pressures caused by the young persons offending behaviour.
- 5.36 There is a relationship between support and housing services for young people and the criminal justice system, with many of the same people who are receiving support from the Southwark YOS also those who are within the 16+ support and housing pathway. Also, in some cases, young people who have offended require one of the different 16+ support and housing services as they may not be able to return to their family or another home due to a risk to themselves or others. Of those young people leaving custody in 2015/16 for example, only 23% were accommodated in specialist residential, foster care or semi-independent provision.
- 5.37 There is in addition a recognised issue with gang-related activity and young people in 16+ support and housing services, with many of the young people in services also associated with or members of a different gang. Whilst data on gang-related activity is notoriously difficult to collect, one provider noted that 31 of the 32 young people in their scheme were associated with or members of a local gang. Helping young people to break away from gang-related activity is of course a key part of the work of 16+ support and housing services, helping young people to escape from the toxic mixture of inappropriate relationships and anti-social and often criminal activity. Continuing the links between 16+ support and housing services and the wider work of the Council, police and others in providing community safety and rehabilitation would be of value in tackling this issue.

- 5.38 There may be a need for specialist provision within 16+ support and housing services for young people leaving custody who would benefit from short term support. This will need to be considered in the development of future provision.

Location of services

- 5.39 Southwark young people aged over 16 years in support and housing services are provided with appropriate services to best meet their support needs. For some young people who require specific and specialist services, or where a particular location - often one away from inner-London - may best meet their needs, this may mean that they are placed in services outside of Southwark. The key factor in determining placements is the needs of the young person.
- 5.40 The location of services is of course extremely important, and this was brought up on a number of occasions through the work of the 16+ support and housing project. For some young people, a service in Southwark (as an inner-London borough) may be the right approach, as it may be near their local communities, a school or supportive friends and family members. However, for some young people, receiving support and housing in Southwark may not be the right approach – and may not offer the long-term stability and affordable housing where they can live in the long-term.
- 5.41 The 16+ support and housing project noted that the importance on where services were located was not so much on whether they were in one or another borough, but on whether they provided good quality housing, and were close to schools, transport and opportunities to gain skills and employment opportunities. It is also recognised that for some young people, Southwark may be associated with historic memories and feelings which are detrimental to building the resilience and skills for independent living – and this also needs to be considered.

Moving on after services

- 5.42 The key role played by 16+ support and housing services in Southwark is to help prepare young people to overcome challenges, and to build the skills and resilience, in order to move safely and successfully onto independent living. From the work of the 16+ support and housing project it is now clear that for half of the young people in services (50%) this means planning to move into a council or another type of social tenancy. The prevalence of council housing (33% of young people in the pathway have plans to move to a council tenancy) as the end destination in the 16+ support pathway is not peculiar to this cohort, and it is recognised that this is reflected in both the large historic level of council housing in the borough and, also, the significant difference between the cost of rent for a council tenancy as compared to that in the Private Rented Sector (PRS) in Southwark.
- 5.43 For care leavers moving-on to a home after services is significantly easier as the Council offers priority¹¹ status to this client group in its housing allocations policy. This is an exceptional offer and, understandably, many services are set-up to support young people to move into a council tenancy at the end of their stay in services. It is however recognised that – due to the policy direction of successive national governments – the level of council housing in Southwark, as elsewhere, is diminishing. This means that for care leavers as others in the 16+ support and housing pathway, it is becoming more challenging to access a council tenancy at the end of their time in services. As the cost of the PRS in Southwark is also prohibitive this can leave young people without many options, which it is recognised is one of the key reasons why more young people are staying services longer.

¹¹ The Council's housing allocations policy comprises of four priority bandings with Band 1 being the highest priority level and Band 4 the lowest. By making provision for care leavers to have Band 2 status, the Council enables them to typically gain access to their own tenancy within 3-4 months, if they are regularly "bidding" for available properties and do not refuse to take up offers.

- 5.44 For 16+ young people who are at risk of homelessness (but who are not care leavers) the Council provides a route to access priority need status through the Move On Allocation Allowance (MOAA) scheme – which supports all young people and adults in supported housing in Southwark. The awarding of priority need status for this group is not guaranteed and requires the young people to meet certain criteria set out by the Council’s housing department.

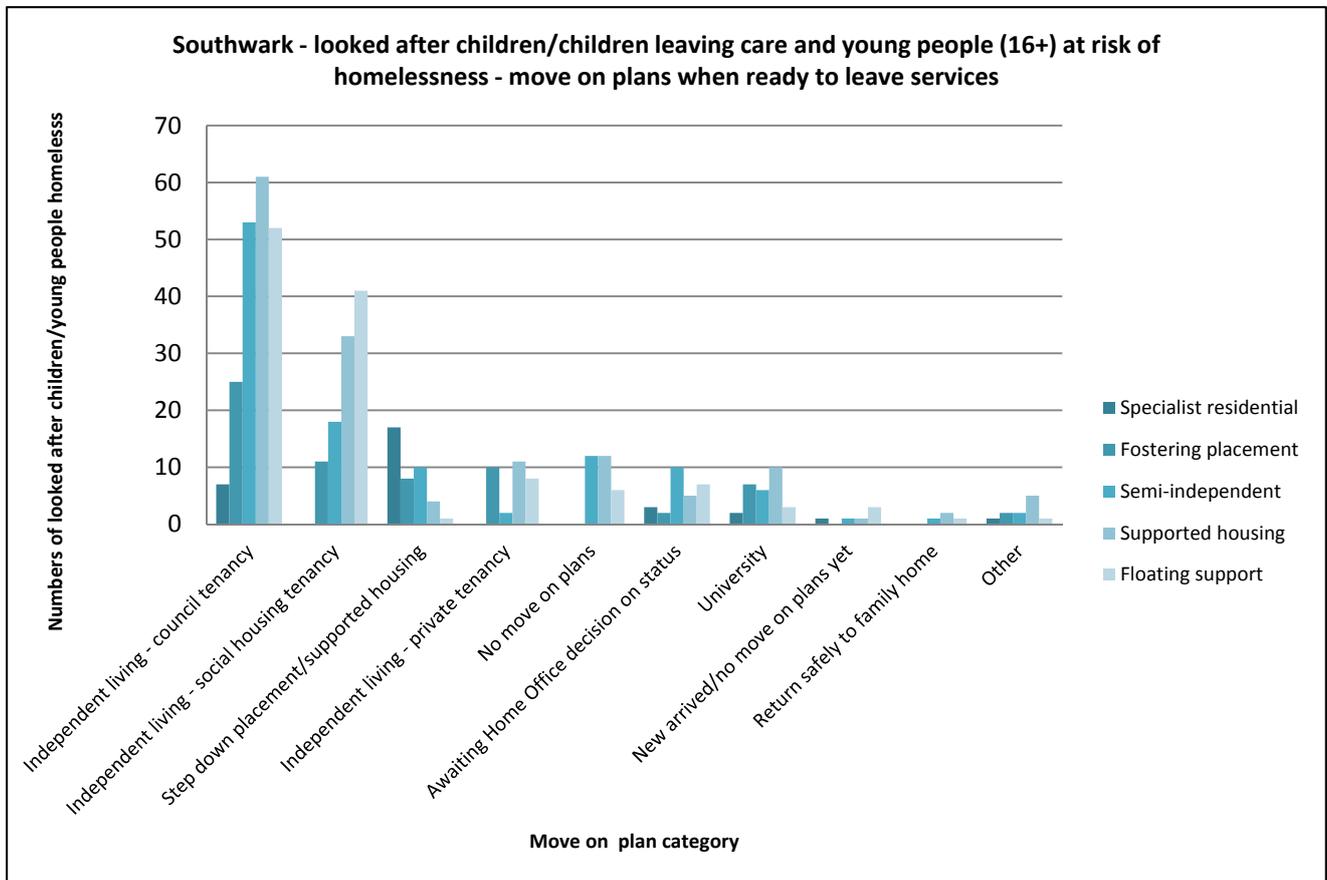


Chart 15. LAC/care leavers and young people (16+) at risk of homelessness – move on plans when ready to leave services

- 5.45 The prevalence of council housing as a move on route for young people in the 16+ support and housing pathway is not sustainable in the medium or long term, as – simply put – there will not be the level of council tenancies available to meet the needs of this entire cohort. (And central government policy restricts the possibility of the Council building any new council homes at the scale that would be required). Whilst council tenancies will continue to play an important part in helping young people to move on to new homes, the current 16+ pathway and the disproportionate focus on council housing is no longer sustainable.
- 5.46 At this time only 31 (5%) of young people in the 16+ support and housing pathway were planning to move on to a tenancy in the private rented sector. In fact, more young people were planning to move on to another supported housing scheme than were planning to rent privately. Given the shift away from council housing provision, this is not sustainable – and it is recognised that more young people will need to be supported to live safely in good quality and affordable private rented housing. This is a key challenge for the 16+ pathway in supporting young people into available housing at a time of considerable scarcity in the housing market.
- 5.47 As part of the 16+ support and housing project, a number of young people were invited to take part in a series of engagement events across different services. The key discussion topic brought up by the for young people was their frustration about how to move on from services, the

processes for moving on, and who decides when they were ready to move on. Many felt that, even when it was felt that they and their support worker felt that they were ready to move on, the final decision was often made by the Council's housing department who had no previous contact with them.

- 5.48 For looked after children/care leavers, the decision on when young people are ready to move on is made between the young person and their social worker/personal adviser. The approach enables each individuals' support and care plans to be lined up with their own tailored approach to preparing for independent living – and, in fact, social workers recognise that these areas are best considered as one total approach. In these instances there may need to be a further interaction with the Council's housing department if the right move on option for the young person is to gain a council tenancy.
- 5.49 The engagement events with young people in 16+ support and housing services showed that many young people believe that they are ready to move on from services, but cannot leave for reasons they feel are outside of their control. The outcome of the 16+ support and housing 'tell it like it is survey' with young people in services is set out below:

I'm not prepared at all	I need a lot more support	I think I'm almost there	I am very prepared
0%	18.1%	45.5%	36.4%

- 5.50 Further details of the outcomes of all of the engagement exercises carried out by the 16+ support and housing project are set out below.

'It depends, it could be us and our worker, but we decide and then we have to rely on someone else who don't even know us making a decision about if we are ready or not'

'I've been here for 9 months, I know I'm ready, even my key worker says I'm ready, but I've just got to sit here and wait, I need to follow the process' [Service Users]

- 5.51 Amongst the messages that young people reiterated was that they felt they were given different messages from social care, support providers and the Council's housing department. A number of young people noted that they had agreed milestones with their key worker (for instance, engaging with the service, attending key work sessions and receiving nomination for accommodation), however even when they completed these, the outcomes in terms of moving on had not been what they expected. Of the nine young people spoken to at one focus group six said they were ready for independence, two were already in their own tenancies and one young person said they were not ready yet due to the affordability of getting a tenancy of their own.
- 5.52 Young people noted some confusion around nomination rights and priority need status. Young People asked for clarity in processes and to understand what their options were for move on and how to be better prepared after their time in supported housing services.

'Why is it some [young people] get accommodation and others don't, why do some people get Band 2¹² and others got to jump through so many hoops to get a Band 2 and even then its not guaranteed – why did I have to go to a charity to get support?' [Service User]

- 5.53 Many young people engaged with both in supported housing and children in care/care leavers explained that they had several placement moves with one young person having moved thirteen

¹² That is, priority need status at band 2 level on the council's housing allocations policy.

times, one young women seven times and others on average of three times. This is not uncommon with young people in care but it is also now recognised that this is a key issue for young people who are in homeless pathway also. Ensuring that there is stability in placements is a key focus for the Council and must be a key consideration in the design of 16+ support and housing services going forward.

- 5.54 Young people also discussed the need for more training flats and opportunities to learn the skills for independent living.

'[You should] Introduce a 1 week or 2 week period where young people can live in a flat with all the responsibility to get the feeling instead of semi independent which is half the experience'

'Introduce people who have struggled in the system and made it to influence the minds of younger people as young people prefer [to speak to] people they can relate to'. [ex Service User]

- 5.55 Many young people also noted the 'cliff edge' in services when they move on from services, which can involve losing contacts with key workers, friends and other support networks. Even with floating support, it is recognised that this is a challenging period for a young person – in starting out in their own home – and many young people unfortunately lose their tenancy at this point and end up as homeless.

'When leaving care [I was told by staff they were] dropping my claim and handing it to new team this is a new relationship which I don't want' [Service User]

- 5.56 A number of young people were enthusiastic about the idea of having a 'peer mentor' or someone else who had gone through services, and knew what to expect. Some young people said that it might help them to have someone of a similar background or ethnicity who could give them advice. A peer mentor scheme has now been set-up to support adults in the mental health and mental health homelessness pathway, and it may be that a similar scheme would be of value if established to support young people in 16+ support and housing services.

SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS - YOUNG PEOPLE/SERVICE USERS

- There are an increasing number of young people staying in 16+ support and housing services for longer periods than was originally intended. Many young people are struggling to move on due to the costs of housing (rent, utility bills etc) and others are awaiting the Council to help them to move into their own council tenancy. Without changing the current model and helping more young people to prepare for and then successfully move onto their own home, the Southwark 16+ support and housing services will not be sustainable in the medium term.
- The 16+ support and housing pathway needs to prepare young people for independent living and there should be an emphasis on ensuring that there is no "cliff edge" for young people when they leave services, but that they are continued to be supported – as needed for a time – into their new independent living setting.
- There is a disproportionately high number of black (and particularly Black Caribbean) young people in 16+ support and housing services. The future design of services should take this in consideration, and ensure that different communities are able to both shape and be linked into the services going forward. The development of a cross-service peer mentor scheme, including by drawing in trusted individuals from different communities in Southwark, would provide additional advice and help to the young people in services.

- There should be a common approach across social care, providers and housing – with a single pathway and clear messages for young people. The current approach across the different services can be confusing for young people as there are different routes into move on housing options through schemes including the Move On Allocation Allowance (MOAA).
- Young people should be provided with good advice and support throughout the pathway, and they should be given realistic expectations about what to expect in terms of housing outcomes in the current national and local context.
- The 16+ support and housing pathway needs to take into account both looked after children/care leavers (who below the age of 21 are primarily male) but also young mothers with babies (who are increasingly prevalent in services after age 21). There should be appropriate provision for all groups, and targeted support and specialist advice for mothers through schemes like the Family Nurse Partnership (FNP).
- The links between 16+ support and housing services and other elements of the community safety system should continue to tackle issues including gang-related activity.
- There is a need for some specialist provision (for example, post-custodial and mother and baby services) as part of the Southwark 16+ support and housing services. By increasing targeted and specialist provision this may prevent the need for young people to be placed in specialist residential care.
- The location of services should be tailored to the needs of individuals. Not all services should be in Southwark, as this is not appropriate for all young people, although the Council should maintain some level of in-borough provision. Given the needs of the 16+ cohort, it would seem appropriate if all services were within a reasonable travel distance from Southwark. Services should be located within close proximity to good schools, green spaces, affordable local housing options, health services (including mental health) and with access to employment and training opportunities.
- There is an opportunity to better shape services around support, housing - and health – with the joint approach between the Council and CCG around children and young people’s commissioning. This is an area where there could be a particular focus around CAMHS, the LAC nurse, health visiting (Family Nurse Partnership) and mental and physical health needs.

6. FINDINGS OF THE 16+ SUPPORT AND HOUSING PROJECT - (PART 2) CURRENT MODEL IN SOUTHWARK - SUPPORT PATHWAY

Support pathway - overview

6.1 The 16+ project undertook work to map and analyse the totality of the current support and housing pathway for young people in Southwark. The following section sets out the outcome of this work.

16+ support and housing – support pathway

6.2 The diagram below sets out the current support pathways for young people in these services.

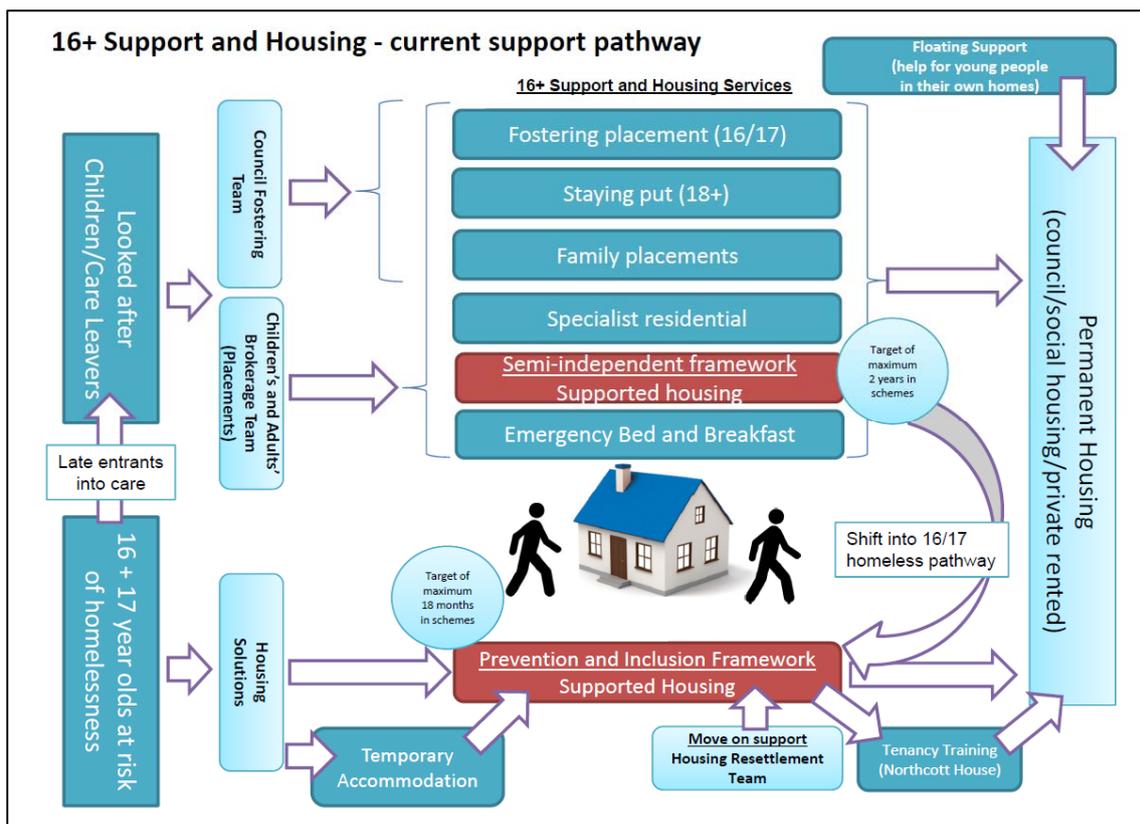


Chart 16. Current operational model (access to 16+ support and housing services) for both LAC and young people at risk of homelessness

- 6.3 The current operational model for 16+ support and housing is underpinned by the Council's different but overlapping duties for (a) looked after children/care leavers who require support and housing and (b) young people who are at risk of homelessness and are in priority need due to being aged 16 or 17 years old.
- 6.4 Over time, the operational model that has developed in Southwark is comprised of two core pathways which are running in parallel, and which have certain points at which young people may pass between one pathway to another. From the engagement work that has taken place as part of the 16+ support and housing project it is clear that there is very little understanding of the twin pathways for the young people receiving services within these and, for some, the different routes were viewed as complex and confusing.

- 6.5 It should also be noted that the support and housing service pathway includes two separately commissioned supported housing services (in red on the chart) which, on the whole, deliver very similar outcomes – although due to the way these have been commissioned – they can act in very different ways.

Looked After Children/Care Leavers Pathway

- 6.6 When a child or young person is taken into local authority care, the Council has a duty to ensure that the looked after child is safely placed in appropriate accommodation. For young people below the age of 16, where this is appropriate for a young person, this is normally with a foster carer organised by the Council's fostering service. As these young people reach 16 years and then 18 years old, the Council will continue to support them to stay in their fostering placement – including through "Staying Put" arrangements¹³ for those aged over 18 years (and up to the age of 25). That said, in Southwark the majority of young people do not stay in fostering services after the age of 16 but instead move into semi-independent supported housing services.
- 6.7 The significant reduction in the proportion of young people in fostering services after age 16 is recognised as a challenge. For many young people it may be that staying with their foster carer in the home that they have grown up in may be the best and most sustainable space for them. Many young people, on reaching 16 and 18, are enthusiastic about moving as quickly as possible into their own independent home – and this is seen by many as a sign of becoming an adult. However, for many, leaving their childhood home can be a difficult period. This is a period where young people are at a higher risk of becoming homeless. This is why, for those young people where this meets their needs and is the most suitable place to help young people prepare for independence, the Council would support those young people to stay with their foster carer.
- 6.8 For those looked after children and care leavers who are either moving on from their foster carer, or for whom fostering is not a viable option, the young person will be referred to one of the following services by the Children's brokerage team¹⁴:
- specialist residential
 - semi-independent - supported housing
 - emergency bed and breakfast accommodation
- 6.9 For those young people placed in specialist residential or emergency bed and breakfast accommodation, social care and brokerage will look to support the young people to 'step down' to a supported housing or fostering placement as soon as they are ready to move. This is because, whilst specialist residential and bed and breakfast accommodation can meet specific emergency, secure or therapeutic needs, these models are not ideally suited in enabling young people to develop the skills and resilience for independent living. As an example of this - it might be noted that it is highly unusual for a young person to move into independent living directly from a specialist residential scheme.
- 6.10 When looked after children and care leavers are ready to move on to their own home after services, they are typically supported to do so by their social worker, personal adviser and service provider. The vast majority of this cohort apply for a council tenancy and, given that this group are

¹³ The Department for Education (DFE) published guidance for local authorities around "Staying Put" arrangements in 2013, this provided a framework to support councils to help young people who wished to stay with their foster carer after they turned 18, without a reduction in support funding provided. From the age of 18, the Council however would no longer pay for the housing costs (rent, utility bills etc) of the young person, this would be picked up by the housing element of Universal Credit (UC).

¹⁴ Social care brokerage teams are responsible for organising and agreeing payment for appropriate placements for eligible clients. In Southwark, the brokerage team is located in Children's and Adults' Services and works alongside commissioning and social care in the delivery of sufficient and sustainable places for young people. Brokerage also manage 'change of placement' requests for looked after children and these placements can be also be made at any point of a young persons journey (for example, due to placement breakdown or the changing needs of the individual).

awarded priority need status, many are able to do so after bidding through Southwark Homesearch¹⁵. If the young person bids for properties on a regular basis, and does not turn down offers, through their priority status, they would usually expect to be accepted into a new home within 3-4 months.

- 6.11 For many looked after children¹⁶, following their time in specialist residential, semi-independent and fostering placements, and if they are not yet ready to move on to a permanent tenancy, there is then a further move into the parallel homeless pathway – and a shift to another supported housing scheme. Alongside the breakdown of placements for other reasons (say, due to the accommodation not meeting an individual's specific health or care needs) this contributes to a significant churn through the system – with many young people moving home and services multiple times prior to moving to independent living. This level of change and uncertainty is of course not conducive in helping young people to develop skills and resilience and to prepare for independent living.

16-17 Year Olds Homeless Priority Need Pathway

- 6.12 When an individual approaches the Council as homeless or at risk of homelessness, the Council has a duty¹⁷ – provided they meet statutory requirements - to rehouse them. For young people in priority need due to being 16 or 17 years old, these are assessed for support by the Housing Solutions team. This team works with young people to prevent homelessness and, where appropriate, places young people in temporary or supported housing schemes.
- 6.13 The core part of the work of the Council's Housing Solutions team is to ensure that people at risk of homelessness are provided with excellent advice and resources in order to be able to make decisions about their own housing and other needs. For young people at risk of homelessness, the team find that many have actually decided to leave their parental home under a false expectation about the type of housing that the Council would be able to provide to them through the homeless route. For many, the best place for them would actually be to return to their parental home until they are ready to move into a home of their own – for example, by sharing the costs of a rented flat with friends. The Housing Solutions team ensure that all young people are provided with good advice to help them with these choices, whilst looking to ensure young people are kept safe¹⁸.
- 6.14 Any young person at risk of homelessness may seek at this stage to be accepted by the Council as a looked after child¹⁹, that is, to be accepted under section 20 of the Children Act 1989. In these circumstances the young person would switch across to the looked after children pathway and would be able to access services including specialist residential, semi-independent and fostering services. It is recognised however that for the majority of young people, being taken into local authority care may be detrimental to their journey to independence. For some, it may unintentionally create an impression that someone else rather than the young person themselves will always be there to meet their needs and overcome any challenges. This may even be more of an issue for those aged over 16 years old and who are in the final stages of becoming adults.
- 6.15 For those young people who are accepted as 16-17 year old priority need homeless, there may be an emergency need to be placed in temporary accommodation such as a shared or self-

¹⁵ Southwark Homesearch is the Council's choice-based lettings system which enables people on the housing list to bid for council and partner housing association homes. There are four priority bandings, with Band 1 being the highest priority level and Band 4 the lowest.

¹⁶ In 2016/17, this was 16% of the total LAC/care population in 16+ support and housing.

¹⁷ As originally set out in the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977. These were amended in the Housing Act 1996 to include priority need categories and in the 2002 Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) Order to include, amongst other categories, young people who are 16 or 17 years old at risk of homelessness but not a looked after child or care leaver.

¹⁸ It is acknowledged that returning to the parental home may not be safe for young people where there is the risk of harm or abuse. In these circumstances this will not be an option for the young person and other options, including a supported housing placement, will need to be considered.

¹⁹ That is as a "late entrant to care".

contained bed and breakfast room, a hostel, or an in-house leased accommodation or estate void. This emergency placement is primarily used whilst a place in a more appropriate supported housing scheme becomes available.

- 6.16 There are three in-borough supported housing schemes available for young people in this pathway, including specialist mother and baby units and a female-only scheme.
- 6.17 During the period 2014/2015, 47 young people in total were placed in short-term temporary accommodation, although there were only 4 recorded in mid-2016 and none of these were from the homeless route.
- 6.18 For those young people placed in supported housing, the Council operates a Move on Allocation Allowance (MOAA) scheme²⁰ to enable those who meet certain criteria to gain access to council and other social housing. MOAA is an annual ring-fenced number of special allocations which allow vulnerable young people and adults living in supported housing schemes the opportunity to be placed on the Council's housing register with priority need [Band 2] status. The criteria for MOAA acceptance requires that applicants:
- have engaged positively with services in all aspects of their support plan
 - are in employment, education or training
 - have a social or medical need.
 - may need to stay in Northcott House²¹ for a period and undertake pre-tenancy training.
- 6.19 The total MOAA allowance for all vulnerable clients during 2016/17 was 126, of which 25 young people received access to social housing. For young people outside of the looked after children/care leavers pathway²², a MOAA acceptance into council or social housing was the route taken by a full 1/3 of all young people who moved on from services in 2016/17.
- 6.20 The Council supports young people to move on from services through schemes like MOAA and Northcott House through its Housing Resettlement Team. The resettlement team includes specialist 'move on officers' whose role includes helping work to ensure that this cohort of young people bid for appropriate houses that are advertised on Southwark Homesearch, that they are accepted into the correct banding level on the Council's housing list²³ and that the young people are provided with advice and support around their housing needs.

Views of young people in the different pathways

- 6.21 Engagement with young people across the 16+ support and housing services in late 2016, highlighted that many were confused and felt that they had been told different messages about their options from the Council. Some young people said they felt disbelieved by Council staff when they tried to explain their circumstances. One young person said they had been advised to return to their parental home when this was not healthy for them, and eventually they were supported into temporary accommodation. Whilst the young people generally understood that the Council had a job to do, many said that they did not feel treated with respect.

²⁰ This scheme operates across all supported housing schemes in Southwark (both for adults and children) and therefore also incorporates adults with mental ill health, learning disabilities and women and children who are the victims of domestic abuse. Given the size of the total population in contention for places, acceptance onto MOAA for people in supported housing schemes is highly prized. For many it appears to be the only option available to move on to permanent accommodation, reinforcing a view expressed in the engagement exercises, across a number of schemes, that it is primarily for the Council and not for individuals (with support) to resolve their own housing needs.

²¹ Northcott House is located near Waterloo Road. It is temporary accommodation which the Council leases as temporary 'step down' provision and accommodates up to 45 single homeless adults and young people up to the age of 65 years. Pre-tenancy training in the service includes work on budget management, tenancy agreements and healthy living. A move on from Northcott House into council or social housing is usually made within 2-4 months although it may take up to 6 months.

²² Who get automatic Band 2 status, so MOAA would be of no value.

²³ That is, the Council's housing allocations policy - http://www.2.southwark.gov.uk/downloads/download/3913/housing_allocations_policy.

'[Council] staff are rude, they don't give you any respect, you tell them why you're homeless and they tell you you're lying, you look too clean to be homeless' [Service Users]

'I told them I couldn't stay in my house but they sent me back home – I think I had a counsellor come to the house' [Service Users]

'I think they [Council Staff] got to make it hard for you, I understand they're doing their job, but they don't care' [Service Users]

- 6.22 One young person said that because they had representation at the initial assessment meeting, Council staff were more likely to listen to them than if they had attended alone. One young person said if they had known that after two years they would still be without a permanent home they would have been able to prepare themselves and moved on sooner.
- 6.23 In discussions about the processes for move on, some young people in supported housing did not understand why they needed to have an additional move to Northcott House when they could learn to be independent where they were. Other young people felt ready to live independently and did not want to move to another supported housing scheme or have a 'trial run' before moving to their own accommodation.
- 6.24 It was noted during the 16+ project that a reorganisation of housing functions was completed in November 2016 and that these changes had improved the customer journey with all single people who are at risk of homelessness now the responsibility of the Housing Solutions service. This change will provide a strong foundation for the development of a new offer for young people in 16+ support and housing services as set out later in this report.

SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS – CURRENT MODEL IN SOUTHWARK – SUPPORT PATHWAY

- The two parallel pathways for care leavers and 16-17 priority need homeless is complex and, for many young people, confusing. The current dual pathways may inhibit the Council's ability to deliver clear communication messages and means that some schemes (such as pre-tenancy training) are open to some young people but not others. The Council should move to a single pathway for all young people, whilst at all times making sure that its particular duties to looked after children and care leavers are met.
- The Council should develop a preventative approach that helps ensure that young people who do not need to enter the care system are not brought into care this through the homeless route. A single approach across children's social care and housing with clear and common decision-making processes across both areas would build on strong work already undertaken in these areas to help prevent young people aged over 16 years from needing to enter care.
- For many young people in foster care, it may be that – on turning 18 years old – the best approach for them, in terms of preparing for independent living, may be to stay on with their current foster carer for a time (that is, through "Staying Put" arrangements). Guidance from the Department for Education (2013) has set out a framework for delivering "Staying Put" and this should be embedded across Southwark 16+ support and housing services.
- The offer of priority need status for looked after children/care leavers on the Council housing list is extremely valuable and should remain for this cohort. That said, a council tenancy – and a long term home in Southwark – will not be the right housing outcome for every looked after

child or care leaver. The 16+ support and housing model should ensure that young people have all the options available to them, and are helped to move on from services to homes that best meet their needs – wherever and whatever those are.

- The 16+ support and housing model is predicated on the majority of young people eventually gaining a council tenancy. A historic combination of high levels of council housing in Southwark, alongside priority need status for care leavers and the MOAA scheme, underpin this. However, with the reduction in council housing due to national government policy, this approach is no longer sustainable for all young people. More so, a council tenancy in Southwark (as an inner-London borough) may not be the right place for many young people to move into, many as their first home.
- The focus on council support, council housing and council ‘move on’ schemes may diminish the feeling that young people are gaining independence. The core focus of 16+ support and housing services, whilst keeping young people safe, should be to enable the young people themselves, when ready, to find and move into new housing. This should include helping a group of friends to find a flat to share together, and for some – where this is safe and healthy to do so – a return to their parental home after a stay in services.
- Pre-tenancy training should be a part of every young person’s journey through 16+ support and housing services and a common approach should be applied to every scheme – wherever a young person is – whether fostering, residential, supported housing or temporary accommodation. For looked after children and care leavers, this may be best achieved through refreshed support plans that additionally incorporate this area.

7. FINDINGS OF THE 16+ SUPPORT AND HOUSING PROJECT – (PART 3) SUPPORT PROVIDERS

Support providers - overview

- 7.1 The 16+ support and housing project undertook work to map and analyse the current provider landscape across these services. The following section sets out the outcome of this work.
- 7.2 In 2016/17, there were 78 support providers who provided services to young people in the Southwark 16+ support and housing pathway. Whilst the different providers cover a range of different specialist and other services, all have a common purpose to help the young people that they support to overcome challenges and to prepare for, and move on to, independent living.
- 7.3 The different providers are set out below:

Placement	Number of provider organisations	Number of clients	Type of providers
1. Specialist residential	23	31	Private and not-for-profit organisations
2. Fostering placement (incl. staying put and family placements)	19 ²⁴	65	Registered foster carers
3. Semi-independent (support tied to specific accommodation)	28	115	Private and not-for-profit organisations
4. Supported housing (support tied to specific accommodation)	3	147	Private and not-for-profit organisations
5. Floating support (support not tied to a specific building)	1	123	Private
6. Emergency Bed and Breakfast	4	4	Private
Total	78		

Table 4. List of service providers across the Southwark 16+ support and housing system

- 7.4 The ratio of the number of providers to the number of clients is of course not indicative of the type or quality of services that each young person will be receiving. For young people with particular or complex needs, there may be a need for providers which operate a speciality model (for example, with children with autism, or who are disabled). For other young people, there may be a need to locate them in a certain area due to, for example, proximity to a family member who acts as a stabilising influence. In these cases, the provider that is best suited for the young person may not be in Southwark, and may not be one that is specifically contracted by the Council to provide these services.
- 7.5 That said, if there are a large number of providers in a service pathway, many of whom are undertaking identical or near-identical services, it may be that this is creating unnecessary complexity and inefficiency where a smaller number of organisations, in partnership with the Council, could better focus on delivering outcomes for the entire population's needs.

Specialist residential – service providers

²⁴ This number relates to the number of utilised Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs) as opposed to the number of foster carers.

7.6 The 16+ support and housing project undertook an analysis of current specialist residential services taken up by Southwark young people. This is an area of significant churn, and the majority of young people are only with services for a relatively short time (typically less than 1 year, and some for only a few months). This is both because these services are utilised for emergency and urgent cases, but also because it is recognised that a residential model is unsuited to meeting the aims of young people to increase independence.

7.7 Specialist residential services being used by Southwark young people in 2016/17 are set out below:

Name of Provider	Location	Type of service
Aitch Group Children's Home	Kent	Learning disabilities; autism
Amegreen	Berkshire	Complex cases; therapeutic; health and care
Arnfield Care	Cheshire	Complex cases; therapeutic; specialist education
Caldecott Foundation Children's Home	Kent	Complex cases; therapeutic; health and care
Cambian Group Children's Home	Various	Complex cases; therapeutic; specialist education
Cove Care	Lancashire	Complex cases; therapeutic; crisis intervention
Crusoe Care	Sussex	Emotional and behavioural disorders; mental health
Care2Share Children's Home	London	Complex cases; therapeutic; crisis intervention
Ebonycare	London	Complex cases; therapeutic; crisis intervention
Drive Group - Swanley House	Kent	Learning disabilities; autism
Footsteps Care	London	Learning disabilities
Heartwood Care Group	London	Complex cases; therapeutic; building resilience
Holibrook Homes	London	Supported housing
Jamores	Kent	Emotional and behavioural disorders; mental health
Keys Group - Child Care and Crisis	Various	Complex cases; therapeutic; crisis intervention
Kirby Moor School	Cumbria	Complex cases; therapeutic; specialist education
Merryvale Children's Home	London	Complex cases; therapeutic
Oakdene House	London	Learning and physical disabilities; autism
Swanley House	Kent	Learning and physical disabilities; autism
Priory Group - Castlecare	Leicestershire	Complex cases; therapeutic; specialist education
Priory Group - Tadley Horizon School	Hampshire	Learning disabilities; autism
Quality Protects	Liverpool	Complex cases; therapeutic; mother and baby
Sherico Group	London	Complex cases; therapeutic; post-custodial

Table 5. Southwark 16+ support and housing 2016/17: key specialist residential providers used by Southwark in mid-2016

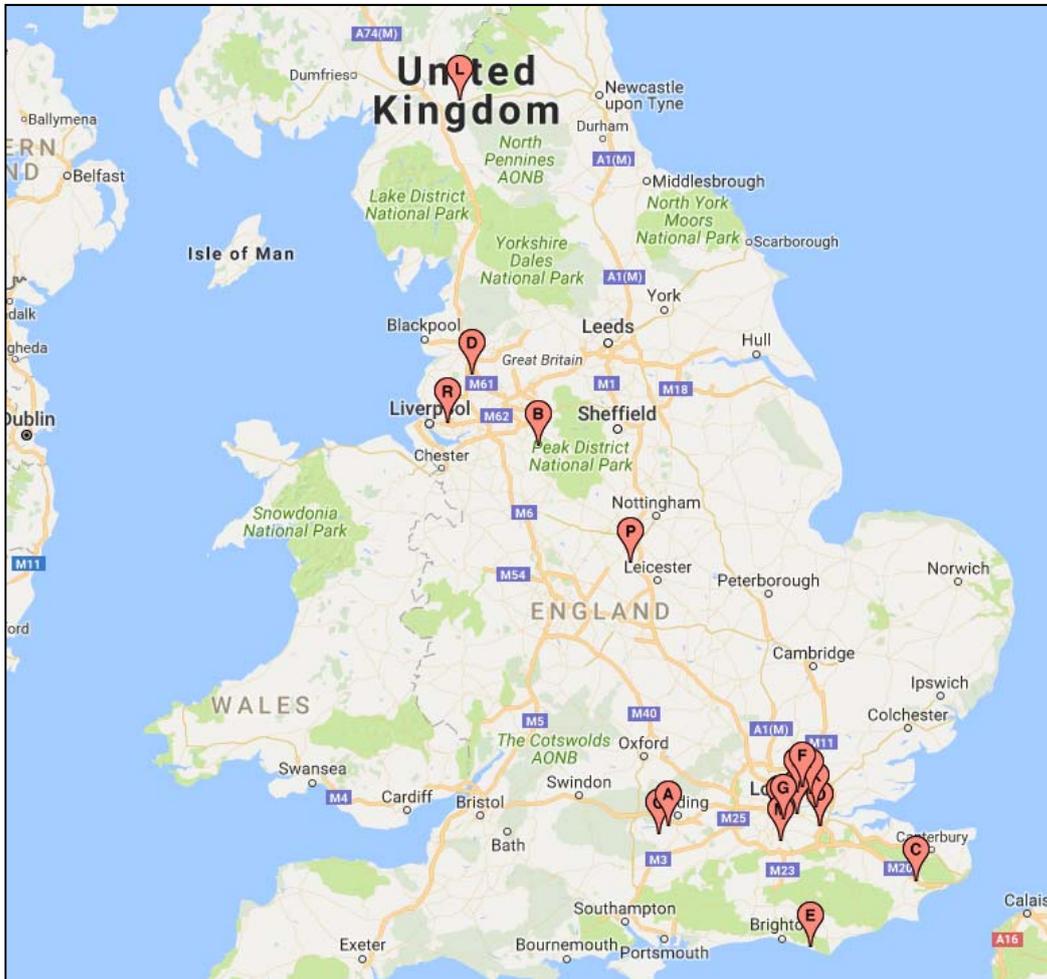
7.8 The majority of specialist residential providers used by Southwark are private limited companies who own a small number of secure children's homes (usually 3-4 buildings) from which they operate services specifically aimed at complex cases. Many of the services operated are in relatively tranquil settings, and some are also specialist schools. In 2016/17, 6 of the 58 schemes used by Southwark are specifically designed for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), including autism and learning disabilities.

7.9 With a very small exception, the majority of specialist residential schemes had only one Southwark child placed in them in 2016/17. The services will also have received young people from other areas, and it is recognised that in some cases, there have been positive benefits where Southwark children have mixed and made friends with young people from different backgrounds and areas.

7.10 The residential schemes used in 2016/17 offer a number of different specialities including:

- emergency and special education for excluded young people, or for young people who have had to move away from their own schools and colleges at short notice.
- therapeutic and other interventions specifically designed for young people who have experienced abuse, neglect, trauma and/or sexual exploitation.

- specific services for young people with disabilities, autism, asperger's syndrome and physical and/or mental health problems.
- specific services for young people with social, mental and/or emotional health (SMEH) needs.
- services for young people with mild, moderate and severe learning disabilities.



Map 1. Residential placements for 16+ young people in support and housing services (data from mid-2016); letter markers (ie A, B, C) correspond to different residential schemes. Each marker denotes a postcode and does not take into account the number of young people placed at each address.

- 7.11 The majority of specialist residential placements providing Southwark 16+ support and housing services are located in London, or in North Kent. This is due to the need for safe emergency support and accommodation services within the vicinity of Southwark and prior to a subsequent move into a supported housing scheme or another service (when a place becomes available). That said, there were a small number of young people placed in areas further away from London, including Hampshire, Leicestershire and Cumbria. This was primarily due to either (a) a need for a speciality service or (b) a link to these areas which was of assistance to the young person. Both of these reasons would require support to be sourced in areas at a distance from Southwark.
- 7.12 It was noted as part of the 16+ project that the need for specialist residential placements had been increasing. The reason for this was as a result of semi-independent and other providers being unable (a) to meet demand and/or (b) to offer the level or type of support required, primarily due to an increase in requests for young people with complex needs or who have challenging behaviour. This change in the profile of young people requiring 16+ support and housing services requires a shift in provision, which will require the development of more specialist schemes designed for this

cohort. The risk of not putting in this provision would be a further reliance on out-of-borough placements, including unsuitable or geographically distant schemes.

- 7.13 The cost of specialist residential services is relatively very high at an average (in 2016/17) of £2,181 per young person, per week (although as high as £4,000 per week at one scheme). There were no young people aged over 18 in the schemes during the course of the 16+ support and housing project, however it is recognised that there is a risk that any young person aged over 18 would have to forego their housing benefit²⁵ (HB) entitlements as this would not be applied whilst the young person was situated in a residential scheme.

Fostering placement – service providers

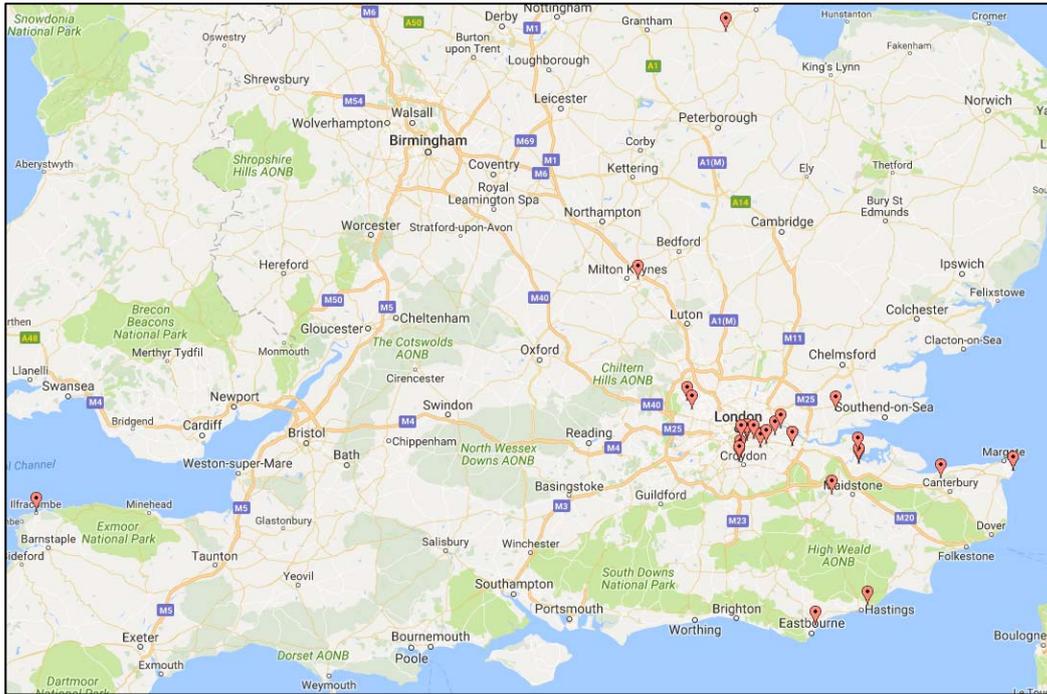
- 7.14 Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs) recruit, assess, provide support to, train and - on the behalf of the Council - pay for foster carers. There is a national shortage of foster carers at this time, and the different organisations seek to encourage individuals and families to come forward to take on this important role, whilst also vetting all potential foster carers and ensuring that any young people placed with a carer are kept safe.
- 7.15 The IFAs that organised foster carers for young people in Southwark 16+ services (in 2016/17) are set out below:

Name of Provider	Location	Type of service
Affinity Fostering	Essex	Independent Fostering Agency
By the Bridge	Kent	Independent Fostering Agency
Capital Care and Fostering	Kent	Independent Fostering Agency
Capstone Foster Care	Kent	Independent Fostering Agency
Child First Fostering	Essex	Independent Fostering Agency
Child Focus Fostering	London	Independent Fostering Agency
Children of all Nations Fostering	London	Independent Fostering Agency
Children of Colour Fostering	London	Independent Fostering Agency
Chrysalis Care	London	Independent Fostering Agency
Core Assets Childcare and Fostering	Midlands	Independent Fostering Agency
Croham Services for Children	London	Independent Fostering Agency
Family First Fostering	London	Independent Fostering Agency
Foster Care UK	Kent	Independent Fostering Agency
Greater London Fostering	London	Independent Fostering Agency
ISP Fostering	London	Independent Fostering Agency
National Fostering Agency	London	Independent Fostering Agency
Real Fostering	Hampshire	Independent Fostering Agency
Xcel 2000 Fostering	Kent	Independent Fostering Agency

Table 6. Current 16+ support and housing providers contracted with under the Semi-Independent Framework Agreement

- 7.16 As with residential schemes, the majority of foster carer placements for 16+ looked after children are located in London, or in North Kent. This is due to the need for these services within the vicinity of Southwark. That said, there were a small number of young people placed in areas further away from London, including Devon, Milton Keynes and Yorkshire.

²⁵ Universal Credit (UC) – which includes housing benefit – provides a payment to support people on a low income or who are out of work and who are aged over 18 years old. The housing benefit element of UC covers both the rent and the service charge (utilities; building maintenance etc.) – however this only applies in certain housing schemes, including supported housing, and does not cover specialist residential schemes.



Map 2. Fostering placements for 16+ young people in support and housing services (data from mid-2016); markers correspond to the address of individual foster carers supporting a Southwark young person aged over 16 years. Each marker denotes a postcode and does not take into account the number of young people placed at each address

7.17 The cost for different foster placements organised through IFAs varies considerably, with an average cost of £687 per week (in 2016/17). Whilst an IFA placement is relatively costly compared to some other types of provision, it is recognised that a foster carer is normally the most suitable placement for a young person, in terms of developing skills and preparing for adulthood.

Semi-independent – service providers

7.18 Semi-independent service providers provide supported housing support for looked after children and care leavers in order to meet the aims of the Southwark Semi-Independent Framework Agreement²⁶ (SIFA) which was originally commissioned in 2013. The service providers on the framework were contracted to:

- secure accommodation for young people aged 16-18 years.
- to help equip those young people with the life skills necessary to support transition to adulthood where they can live independently in their own homes.

7.19 In total, there are 9 providers on the semi-independent framework and each of these leases a number of properties from private or registered social landlords²⁷ (RSLs) in order to meet the number of places required by young people in Southwark. The Council in addition purchases a number of services from other providers where the semi-independent framework cannot meet needs. The housing leased by the different providers is a mixture of twenty-four hour units,

²⁶ A contractual framework is an agreement with a number of different suppliers for the delivery of services during the life of the overall contractual agreement. Local authorities and other commissioning organisations use frameworks in order to put in place agreements with a small number of vetted/evaluated providers for the delivery of services, which would otherwise need to be tendered to the entire market at each stage. In some cases frameworks can abet the delivery of greater partnership commissioning, enabling the council to work closely with a small number of procured providers for the delivery of services.

²⁷ A registered social landlord (also known as a Housing Association) are independent, not-for-profit organisations that provide housing in order to provide homes for people in need. The key RSLs in Southwark's supported housing market are Hyde Housing, London and Quadrant (L&Q) and Metropolitan Housing Association.

Houses in Multiple Occupation²⁸ (HMO) or stand-alone units. The majority of services provided are small, with perhaps 1-4 young people each placed in a leased private house, with support workers visiting on a regular basis.

7.20 As well as the provision of housing, each support provider organisation employs dedicated key workers which provide outreach support to young people to develop independent living skills based on their support plans and needs. This work can include linking the young people into appropriate community-based and statutory services. Semi-independent services can vary the level of support that they provide, although all young people receive a minimum of 7 hours support a week for their first 6 months in services²⁹. After this initial period, young people will receive support based on need with 3 hours a week considered a low level of support compared to 14 hours as high support.

7.21 The semi-independent providers are set out below:

Name of Provider ³⁰	Location	Type of service
Artemis	Bromley, Lewisham	Stand Alone/Shared Flats
Bridging the Gap	Kent	Stand Alone/Shared Flats
Cameron Support Service	Luton	Stand Alone/Shared Flats
Cornerstone Care	Redbridge	Stand Alone/Shared Flats
Creating Lifestyles	Southwark, Kent	Stand Alone/Shared Houses
Fine Fair Ltd	Southwark, Enfield	Stand Alone/Shared Houses
Freshstart	Kent	Stand Alone/Shared Houses
Future Foundations	Southwark, Croydon, Lewisham	Stand Alone and x 3 24 Hour Units
Holibrook Homes	Lewisham	Stand Alone/Shared Houses
Holmdene Housing	Bromley, Croydon, Lewisham, Lambeth	Shared Flats and 4X 24 Hour Units
Independent Way	Kent	Stand Alone/Shared Flats
KRJ Care	Lewisham	Stand Alone/Shared Houses
Krossroads (Care R Us)	Barnet, Enfield	Stand Alone/Shared Flats
Liberty Group	Kent	Stand Alone/Shared Flats
Look Ahead Care and Support	Southwark	24 Hour Units
Medusa Project	Lewisham	Stand Alone/Shared Flats
My Life	Kent	Stand Alone/Shared Flats
New Beginnings	Southwark	Stand Alone/Shared Flats
Netpex	Croydon, Kingston, Mottingham	Stand Alone/Shared Flats
Next Step Care Management	Kent	Stand Alone/Shared Flats
Phase II Care	North London	Stand Alone/Shared Flats
Property Ace	Kent	Stand Alone/Shared Flats
Purple Pebbles	Croydon	Shared Houses/24 Hour Units
Rela	Kent	Stand Alone/Shared Houses
Sanctuary Care	Lambeth	Stand Alone/Shared Houses
Silver Birch	East and North London	Shared/Stand Alone 2X 24 Hour Units
Step Ahead	Croydon, Lewisham, Lambeth	Shared/Stand Alone 2X 24 Hour Units
Young Futures	Lewisham, Lambeth, Southwark	Shared Flats/Stand Alone

Table 7. Current 16+ support and housing providers contracted with either (a) under the Semi-Independent Framework Agreement or (b) as a spot purchase where the semi-independent framework was not able to meet need

7.22 Whilst semi-independent services are designed to cater only for young people aged between 16-18 years, there is provision for young people to stay in services after the age of 18 in order to support a smooth transition to a new home. That said, the services were not designed for the increasing numbers of young people who are now remaining in services after this age – and in some cases until their mid-20s.

²⁸ For example, a large house divided into 8-10 flats – some flats having private bathrooms, others having shared facilities.

²⁹ Except in very rare cases where the young person is demonstrating exceptional levels of stability and independence.

³⁰ The majority of semi-independent providers are limited companies.

7.23 The contractual focus on young people turning 18 in semi-independent services also means that there is a significant level of churn at this age, with many young people at this stage moving into other supported housing (that is, across the 16/17 homeless pathway), an approach which was considered needlessly disruptive and confusing to many young people who mentioned this during the engagement exercises.

7.24 The majority of semi-independent services are located in and around four geographical areas, that is:

- A – Southwark, Lambeth and Lewisham
- B – North-East London
- C – Croydon
- D – North Kent

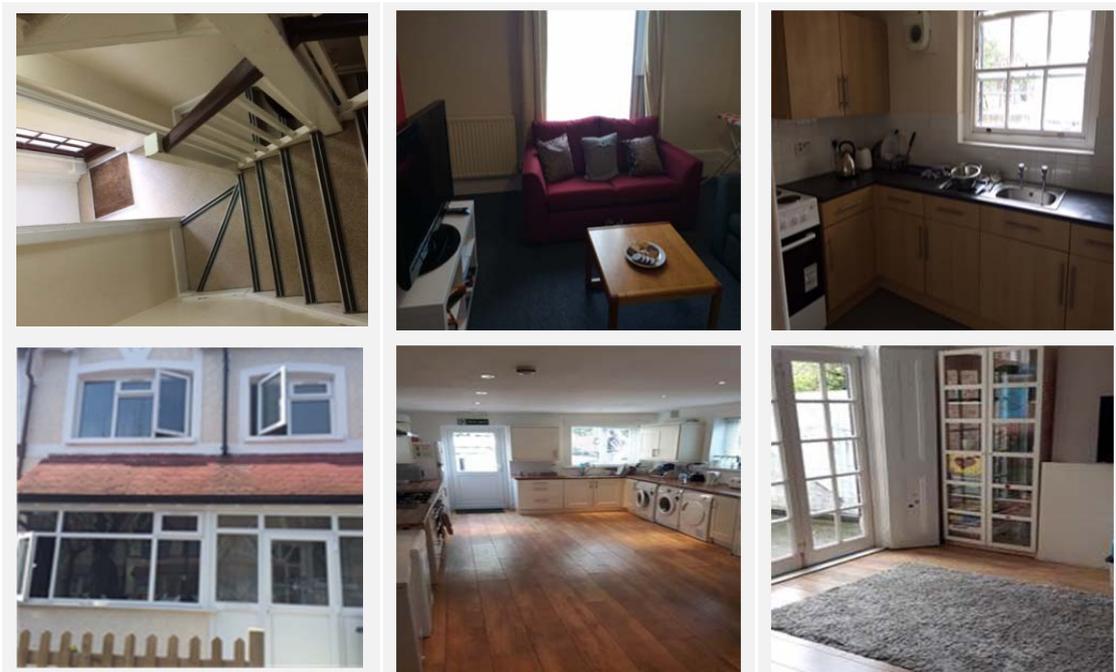


Map 3. Semi-independent supported housing services for 16+ young people in support and housing services (data from mid-2016). Each marker denotes a postcode and does not take into account the number of young people placed at each address

7.25 Whilst there is a presence of services in Southwark, it is recognised that by providing semi-independent schemes in other areas of London (within a reasonable travel distance of Southwark) young people may be better able to afford to move into homes in these areas, as they are outside of inner-London where housing can be less expensive. By ensuring that the schemes remain within a reasonable travel distance from Southwark, the young people will be able to access specific Southwark services including employment schemes.

7.26 The cost of a semi-independent placements varies by provider, accommodation type and the support needs of each young person. General provision is charged at a rate starting from £381 to £1,275 per week, with more tailored or specialist schemes from £770 to £1,485 per week. Any additional support hours (beyond those contracted by the Council) are charged at a rate of £22-£30 per hour.

- 7.27 Based on spend for the financial year 2015/16, the cost to the Council for accommodation and support provided under the SIFA was an estimated £39.00 per person per day. When compared to the spend for supported housing (which supported 42 more young people) this was an estimated £18.95 per person per day.
- 7.28 Feedback from the Council's annual monitoring review completed in April 2016 reported that overall there was some very good provision across semi-independent services although support provided by keyworkers was inconsistent and not always satisfactory. Of the 16 providers visited 2 were rated very good, 7 good and 7 adequate. 1 provider had also made investment in their service by introducing a therapeutic element.
- 7.29 Some photographs setting out the type of provision offered in semi-independent services is set out below:



Photographs 1 – sample of photographs of semi-independent accommodation provided for Southwark 16+ support and housing services

Supported housing – service providers

- 7.30 As their name suggests, supported housing services provide combined support and housing within a single service. The approach means that, for those who access these schemes, they will receive keyworker and other support in a specific house-setting (that is, in a designated property solely for that purpose) – they will stay in these services for a short period of time and prior to moving onto independent living.
- 7.31 The Council's 16+ supported housing schemes are contracted to meet the aims of the Council's 2015 Prevention and Inclusion Framework Agreement (PIFA)³¹, that is to deliver:
- a personalised preventative and early intervention housing support service.
 - the fostering of resilience and the development of skills to support independence.
 - a service that helps link individuals into employment support and other services.

³¹ The Prevention and Inclusion Framework covers other services beyond 16+ support and housing, including adult mental health and mental health homelessness and also refuges for women and children who have been the victims of domestic abuse.

- a service that empowers young people to participate in their local community, and supports the improvement of their health, wellbeing and quality of life.
- an approach to sustainable resettlement³².

7.32 The schemes cater for a mixture of young people who are 16+ years old who are homeless priority need and also for care leavers who have moved into these services from semi-independent or other provision. It is expected that young people will be supported for up to 18 months (or up to the age of 21) after which they will hopefully be able to move on into independent living.

7.33 In total there are ten organisations on the Council's young people's "lot"³³ of the PIFA, however only three providers are currently contracted with to provide these services. The Southwark 16+ supported housing services are set out below:

Name of Provider	No of Beds	Location	Type of service
Look Ahead (SABS - Southwark Accommodation Based Service)	93	Southwark (Various)	- shared houses/flats/standalone - 18+ services - mother and baby units
Oasis Aquila Housing	16	Southwark (Peckham)	Female only scheme (single sex unit)
Salvation Army (Springfield Lodge)	38	Southwark (Denmark Hill, Camberwell)	24 hour support mixed unit with single sex clusters

Table 8. Current 16+ support and housing providers contracted with on the Prevention and Inclusion Framework Agreement

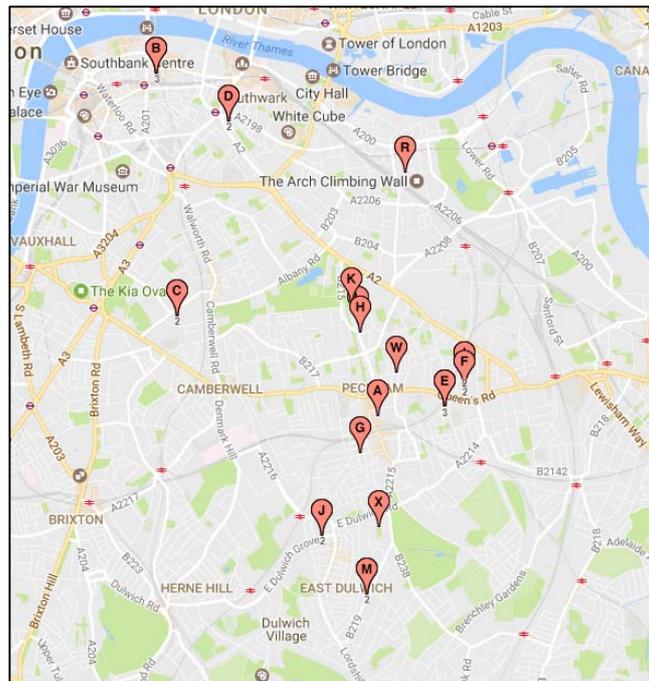
7.34 The Southwark 16+ supported housing services consists of a mixture of 24 hour support, shared accommodation and stand-alone flats. In all of these services the young people live in same sex cluster groups³⁴ whilst having access to their own cooking facilities and a dining/lounge communal area.

7.35 All of the 16+ supported housing schemes are located in Southwark, with the majority of services located around Peckham, Queens Road Peckham and East Dulwich. These locations are of course beneficial for the young people in as far as they are less likely to be displaced from their home boroughs when moving into schemes. That said, it is recognised that having such a high proportion of services in Southwark may make it more challenging for young people to find a local home to move into, given the cost of housing (rent etc) in the area. A balanced approach where the Council maintained some in-borough provision, whilst also establishing services outside of an inner-London setting is recognised as potentially more successful.

³² That is, to support individuals who are at risk of homelessness to "re-settle" safely and sustainably in communities and homes where they are able to continue living independently.

³³ There are five lots on the PIFA – for disabilities, mental ill health, vulnerable adults (mental health homelessness), women and children who have been the victims of domestic abuse (ie refugees) and young people.

³⁴ That is, whilst the young people may live in a house with members of the opposite sex, there will typically be a physical barrier (say separate front doors) which mean that male and female groups live separately. This model has developed around the identified needs of the young people, and has a focus on safety and privacy, whilst also enabling interaction – for those where this is appropriate - across the sexes.



Map 4. Supported housing services for 16+ young people in support and housing services (data from mid-2016); letter markers (ie A, B, C) correspond to different supported housing schemes. Each marker denotes a postcode and does not take into account the number of young people placed at each address

Floating support – service providers

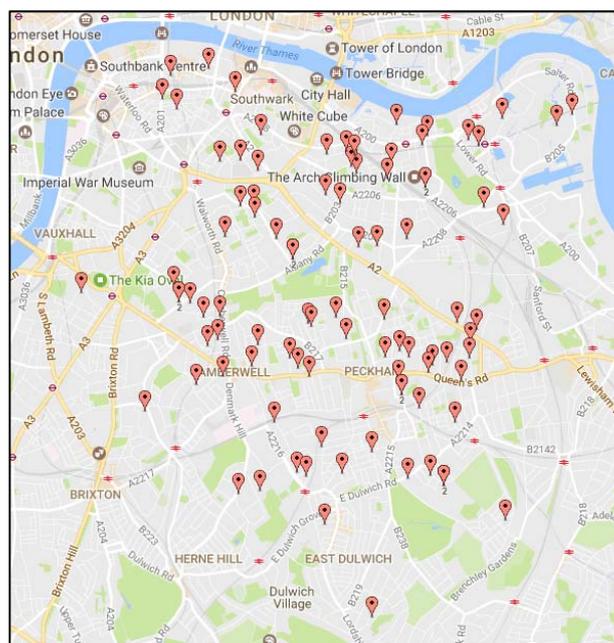
- 7.36 The Southwark 16+ floating support service provides ongoing help to those young people who have moved into a home of their own or who have lost their tenancy and are of no fixed abode (in many cases for young people who are “sofa surfing”³⁵). The young people are in some cases those who have moved out of semi-independent or supported housing, although the service also accepts referrals from young people who have not previously been in 16+ support and housing services.
- 7.37 The floating support service ensures that there is not a “cliff-edge” for young people when moving on from supported housing. The service ensures a continuation of support at that crucial time when the young people have just moved-into and started living in their own homes – a time when there is a heightened risk. The service has a particular role to play in terms of ensuring that young mothers are able to receive help to sustain their own tenancy, and also in linking young people in need to other local services including employment support, health, housing and care.
- 7.38 For those young people who may have lost their tenancy and are of no fixed abode (that is, for people “sofa surfing”), the service provides help for young people to access a home. This can often be particularly challenging as it is recognised that landlords may be more stringent with offering housing to young people who have previously lost their tenancy.
- 7.39 The service provides on average 3 hours of support per person per week. However, this level of support is based on need – with those who require more support able to access more, and those who need less and are on the cusp of independent living, taking less. The service is contracted to provide an overall level of support of between 240-450 hours per week.

³⁵ That is, they have no home or tenancy of their own so are living with friends or other acquaintances on a temporary basis, and often moving between different houses on a regular basis. This is a time when young people are particularly vulnerable to homelessness and street homelessness. At the time of the 16+ support and housing project 8 customers were sofa surfing and 1 was street homeless due to issues relating to their residency status. There were additionally 5 young people where it was unclear as to whether they were living with family or sofa surfing. Only 3 young people receiving floating support were renting privately.

7.40 The artificial³⁶ division of floating support from other 16+ support and housing services is recognised as unhelpful as it means that, for those young people moving on from a semi-independent or supported housing scheme, they will need to develop a new relationship with a new service. In the engagement exercise, a number of young people set out that they wanted to continue to see the same keyworker and to access the same services that they had in the supported housing scheme after they had moved on – and that this would aid, and not detract from, their own independence. The approach envisaged therefore is one where floating support is integrated into other services, whilst still having a proportion of support for young people referred into the service from outside supported housing.

Name of Provider	Clients	Location	Type of service
Look Ahead Young People Floating Support Service	(Up to 150 young people supported at any one time)	Primarily in Southwark, or in a few cases in neighbouring areas	Floating support

Table 9. Current 16+ support and housing services – floating support service for young people



Map 5. Location of young people in 16+ young people in support and housing services who access floating support (data from mid-2016).

SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS – SUPPORT PROVIDERS

- Whilst there are advantages in having many different providers, with each bringing their own unique expertise and skills to bear, the large number of providers in the Southwark 16+ support and housing system creates unnecessary complexity. A number of providers support only 1 or 2 young people from Southwark in a single building. This can make linking these young people into the overall Southwark pathway challenging. There will always be a need for provision of emergency and specialist provision (say, for young people with autism or disabilities), as well as for foster carers, however for supported housing and floating support service provision the Council should develop a new partnership with a small number of key providers.
- A new model with a partnership of key providers would better enable the Council to develop new services that could meet the needs of young people with complex and challenging behaviour – reducing the need for specialist residential settings. This should be an aim in the development of

³⁶ That is, contractually-driven.

new services.

- For some young people staying with their foster carer after the age of 18 (that is, “staying put”) may be the best way to support their journey to independence. The Council should work with foster agencies and carers to support this model wherever this meets the need of the young person.
- The Council should continue to provide services both in and outside of Southwark. All services should be within a reasonable travelling distance from Southwark.
- The dual frameworks for semi-independent and prevention and inclusion services are no longer fit for purpose and should be combined into a single supported housing model. This should also include floating support, in order to enable services to continue to offer support to young people for a time after they have left services. Some floating support provision should continue to be offered to young people who have not been in 16+ support and housing services, and for young people of no fixed abode (that is, young people who are “sofa surfing”). The new services will be called Southwark 16+ Support and Resettlement Services.

8. FINDINGS OF THE 16+ SUPPORT AND HOUSING PROJECT - (PART 4) HOUSING

Housing - overview

8.1 There are two areas of housing which are important in any consideration of 16+ support and housing services, that is (a) the cost of housing in services and (b) the homes that young people will move onto after services, and the approach taken to help young people, when ready, to move on.

The cost of housing in 16+ support and housing services

8.2 The housing element of 16+ support and housing services comprises three key areas:

- (a) the provision of shelter from a landlord. (*rent*)
- (b) the provision of utilities – including electricity, gas and water - and the maintenance of the property, grounds, furnishings and equipment of the home. (*service charge*)

8.3 For young people over the age of 18 who are eligible, the (a) rent and (b) service charge may be covered by the housing element of Universal Credit³⁷ (UC). For young people under the age of 18 in services this cost is wholly borne by the Council. In addition, specialist residential services (unlike supported housing) are not covered by the housing element of UC and so the Council will pay for the entire cost of services – both support and housing - even for young people over the age of 18.

8.4 The level at which UC will cover the rent and service charge in any particular area is known as the Local Housing Allowance (LHA)³⁸ – and in Southwark this is set at £204.08 a week³⁹ (that is, the combined total cost of the rent and service charge cannot exceed this level in order to be covered by benefits). For the majority of young people in 16+ support and housing services, some element of UC will be required due to low or no incomes for most of the young people in services. One of the key elements of work across all 16+ services of course is to help young people into education, employment and training to improve this situation – and some who enter employment may no longer require UC to cover their housing costs at all.

Move on

8.5 Whilst the preparedness of any young person for independent living is crucial (and 16+ support and housing services aim to help them with this), their ability to move on from services is of course also impacted on by the availability and affordability of housing in general. One area for consideration here are the various schemes to help young people to access appropriate housing run by the Council and others.

Areas for consideration in this section

8.6 The 16+ support and housing project considered the following areas related to housing:

- changes to the availability and affordability of housing in Southwark.
- an analysis of current housing costs in semi independent and supported housing schemes.

³⁷ Universal Credit is replacing Housing Benefit (and five other benefit systems) with a single monthly payment that will pay for those people who are eligible for this support (that is, people over 18 years old who are on a low income or who are out of work). Credit is nationally administered by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP).

³⁸ The LHA is set by national Government and determines the level of rent and service charge that will be covered by Universal Credit (previously Housing Benefit) in any particular area. The LHA rate is different in each area, depending on the different costs of housing.

³⁹ For a one-bedroom flat in a supported housing scheme.

- an analysis of the current use of tenancies for young people in 16+ support and housing services.
- proposed changes to the housing element of Universal Credit (UC) and how this will impact both current services and move-on.
- an analysis of the Move On Allocation Allowance (MOAA) scheme to support young people, when ready, to move on to their own home after a stay in services.

Changes to the availability and affordability of housing in Southwark

8.7 The Council's Housing Strategy⁴⁰ sets out a long-term approach to the delivery of quality and affordable housing in the borough, including through the building of 11,000 new council homes and through key regeneration schemes in areas such as the Aylesbury Estate⁴¹. The strategy was launched in January 2015 and set out four principles for the Council:

- the Council will use every tool at our disposal to increase the supply of all kinds of homes across Southwark.
- the Council will demand the highest standards of quality, making Southwark a place where you will not know whether you are visiting homes in private, housing association or council ownership.
- the Council will support and encourage all residents to take pride and responsibility in their homes and local area.
- the Council will help vulnerable individuals and families to meet their housing needs and live as independently as possible.

8.8 These important programmes are taking place in a national policy context that has often been counterproductive to local exercises to increase both overall housing and affordable housing supply in the borough. There are a number of national drivers that are impacting on this area, and which – within the context of the effect on 16+ support and housing services – need to be briefly considered.

National Driver	Description
Housing and Planning Act 2016	The Housing and Planning Act 2016 sets out widespread changes to previous housing and planning law. This includes provision to end secure tenancies ⁴² , the extension of right to buy to housing association tenants, and the requirement (if enacted) for local authorities to sell "higher value" homes as they become vacant. The Government have not at this stage enacted some elements of the Act including the selling of higher value homes. As an area with both relatively high levels of council housing, and being an area of high house prices, it is recognised that Southwark would be particularly impacted by this change.
Housing Revenue Account (HRA) ⁴³ - borrowing cap	Councils should be able to build more homes, where there is a local need, by borrowing against their current and future housing assets (as is the practice in the private sector). However, the amount councils are able to borrow is capped by National Government as, it is argued, this would contribute to the overall public sector deficit, and therefore just abide by the terms of the Public Sector Net Cash Requirement (PSNCR) ⁴⁴ . This issue is recognised as the primary cause of the inability of councils to directly increase the supply of social housing in their areas.

⁴⁰ <http://www.southwark.gov.uk/housing/housing-strategy>

⁴¹ The Aylesbury Estate is a large council estate in the Walworth area of Southwark which was built in the 1960s and 1970s. The Council has set out ambitious regeneration plans for the area.

⁴² Secure tenancies are lifetime tenancies, where tenants can only be evicted under certain conditions. The Government have set out an aim to replace these with fixed-term tenancies of between two and five years.

⁴³ The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is the ring-fenced element of a local authority's budget dedicated to its housing business.

⁴⁴ The Public Sector Net Cash Requirement (PSNCR) represents the annual national fiscal deficit (in cash terms): that is, the shortfall between public sector revenues and expenditure. The Government has a strategy to reduce the fiscal deficit to zero at some point in the next period.

The introduction of Universal Credit (UC) and proposed changes to the housing element of UC in supported housing	The Government are currently rolling-out Universal Credit (UC) which replaces six other benefits (including jobseekers allowance and housing benefit ⁴⁵) into a single payment. The change will see people under 35 in Southwark receiving a cap on the amount of money they will receive for housing at £95.18 a week ⁴⁶ . The Government are currently consulting on a further cap for supported housing schemes, with a limit on payments for housing at £204.08 a week in Southwark.
National Right to Buy Programme	Right to Buy is a national programme which enables tenants of council houses to purchase their own homes, with discounts of up to £103,900 in London. The programme was championed by former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher through the Housing Act 1980, and later expanded by David Cameron's Government in 2011. The majority of people who complete right to buy become leaseholders ⁴⁷ , with the council maintaining the freehold ⁴⁸ .

Table 10. List of key national drivers impacting on the availability and affordability (including tenure) of housing in Southwark

8.9 The impact of all of these national drivers, when taken together, has been to reduce the affordability of housing, including in areas like Southwark. The number of homes in Southwark have been rising since the 1980s and, in parallel to this, there has also been a linked rise in the population of the borough. In the same period there has been a significant shift in the tenure⁴⁹ of housing in the borough – with a significant decrease in council housing (by 38%) – and a particular rise in the levels of private housing in the area (with an increase of 216%). There has also been an increase in the level of housing association homes (which have more than doubled) – although this is from a much lower baseline.

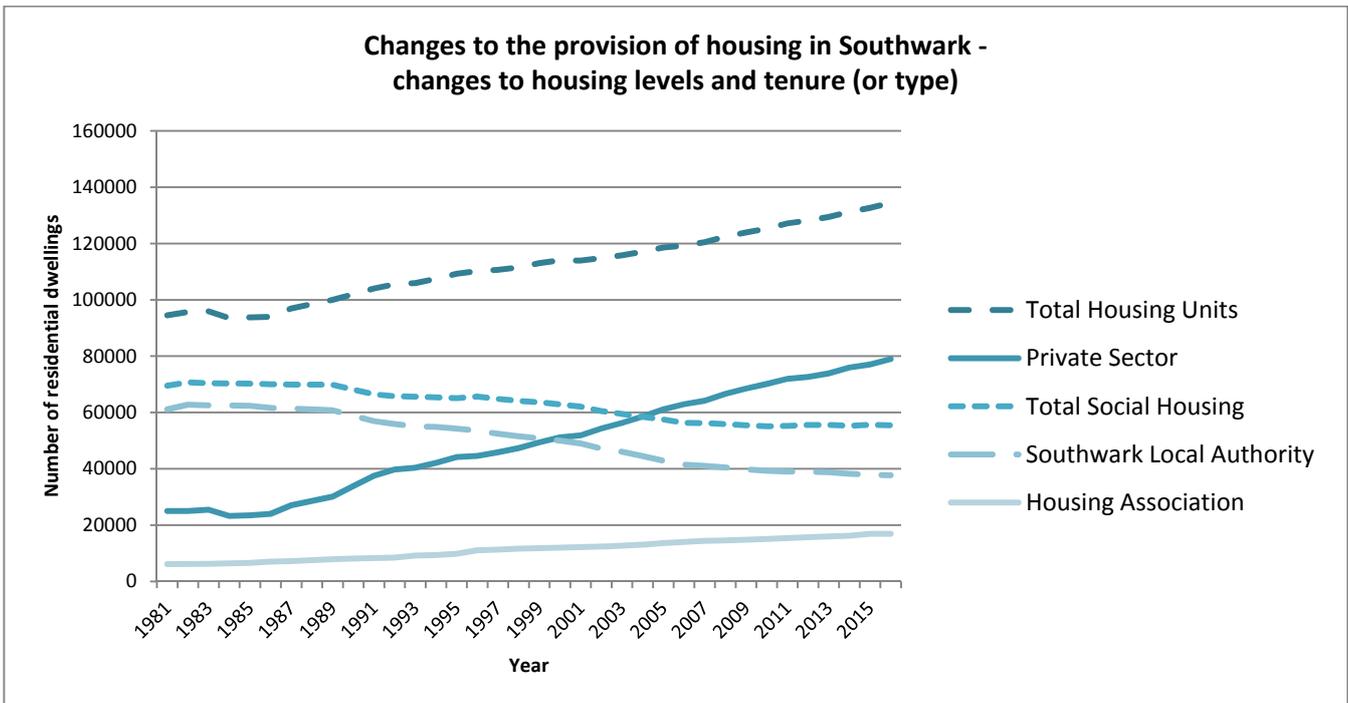


Chart 17. Overall changes to the provision of housing in Southwark (1981-2017) – changes to housing levels and tenure

⁴⁵ Housing Benefit (HB) was a previous benefit payment to people on no or low-incomes to pay for their (a) rent and (b) service charge (i.e. utility bills and home maintenance).

⁴⁶ Although care leavers will be able to access the higher level of £204.08 a week until such a time as they leave care.

⁴⁷ Leasehold is a type of home ownership. It means that the home owner has a lease from the freeholder (that is, the landlord) to use the home for a number of years. For right to buy leaseholders, the lease is normally for a long length of time, that is, for between 99-125 years.

⁴⁸ Freehold is a type of home ownership. The freeholder owns the building and land outright and in perpetuity (that is, forever).

⁴⁹ Housing tenure relates to the conditions under which people have a right to occupy their accommodation. The most common types of tenure are home-ownership (including homes owned outright and mortgaged) and renting (including social rented housing and private rented housing).

- 8.10 The reduction in council housing has driven primarily by the national right to buy programme, with many council tenants in Southwark taking up the opportunity to buy their home at a substantial discount.
- 8.11 One of the impacts of the change in tenure in the borough has been an overall increase in the cost of housing, as private rents are significantly higher than council rents. For people on no or low incomes who are relying on UC to pay their housing and service charges, the cost of renting privately in the borough is therefore unlikely to be a realistic option. This group normally includes young people in 16+ support and housing services.

Size of Dwelling	LHA Rate	Social Rent	Market Rent	
	Southwark Local Housing Allowance (LHA) ⁵⁰ Rate (per week)	Average Southwark Council Housing Rent + Service Charge (per week)	Lower Quartile Southwark Private Rent + Service Charge (per week)	Average Southwark Private Rent + Service Charge (per week)
Studio or Bedsit ⁵¹	£95.18	£81.00	£225.00	£287.50
1 Bedroom	£204.08	£92.20	£325.00	£384.50
2 Bedroom	£265.29	£101.77	£412.50	£487.50
3 Bedroom	£330.72	£111.23	£499.75	£612.25

Table 11. The average cost of rent and service charge in Southwark across council and private housing in 2016/17.

- 8.12 It was not within the scope of the 16+ support and housing project to explore these areas further, and these issues have already been looked at in detail in the Council's Housing Strategy. It is recognised however that the shift in the type and affordability of housing in Southwark is a key driver in terms of the number of young people:
- entering 16+ support and housing services due to the difficulty of finding a home or who are at risk of homelessness.
 - unable to move on from services, even when ready to do so, due to difficulty in finding a home.
 - who are planning to move onto council (as opposed to private or other) housing, even if they would prefer to live elsewhere.
- 8.13 In engaging with young people in services, the 16+ project heard many expressions of frustration from young people about the availability and affordability of housing. Some young people who lived in services out of borough were keen to move into Southwark; and others in Southwark wanted to move to other areas, to travel or to live outside of London. The current 16+ support and housing pathway was often considered too inflexible and many young people felt powerless to do anything but wait for the Council to find them a home.

Semi independent and supported housing - comparison

- 8.14 The overall cost of housing is also an issue within current 16+ support and housing services, and this is a particular issue in both semi-independent and support housing services.

⁵⁰ The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) is the level of housing benefit – now through Universal Credit – that can be claimed by people on no or low incomes.

⁵¹ Studios and bedsits are for single-person occupancy. A studio is a wholly self-contained room (typically with an en-suite bathroom and kitchenette). A bedsit is a rented room within a larger house, with all occupants in the home sharing certain facilities (such as the bathroom and kitchen).

8.15 The relative housing costs of semi-independent and supported housing services are set out below:

Average Cost of Housing in 16+ Support and Housing Services (per person, per week) – 2016/17		
Cost of Housing Elements	Semi-Independent	Supported Housing
(A) Weekly Rent (total)	£283.88	£110.69
Rent	£283.88	£110.69
(B) Service Charge (total)	£35.55	£20.20
Communal heat and lighting	£12.10	£1.86
Communal water charge	£1.51	£0.39
Communal cleaning and sundries	£0.00	£1.85
Window cleaning	£0.28	£1.10
Gardening	£0.00	£0.09
Grounds maintenance	£0.00	£0.88
Pest control	£0.00	£0.06
Refuse and waste management	£0.00	£0.06
White goods/repair and maintenance	£2.22	£3.01
Communal furnishings repair and replacement	£7.22	£1.11
Equipment service/PAT ⁵²	£2.78	£0.71
Administration costs	£6.33	£1.77
Other	£3.11	£7.31
(C) Personal Contribution (total)	£0.00	£7.22
Personal contribution by tenant	£0.00	£7.22
Total Cost of Housing (A + B + C)	£319.43	£138.11

Table 12. Relative average housing costs of 16+ support and housing providers – semi-independent and supported housing (per person, per week) - table

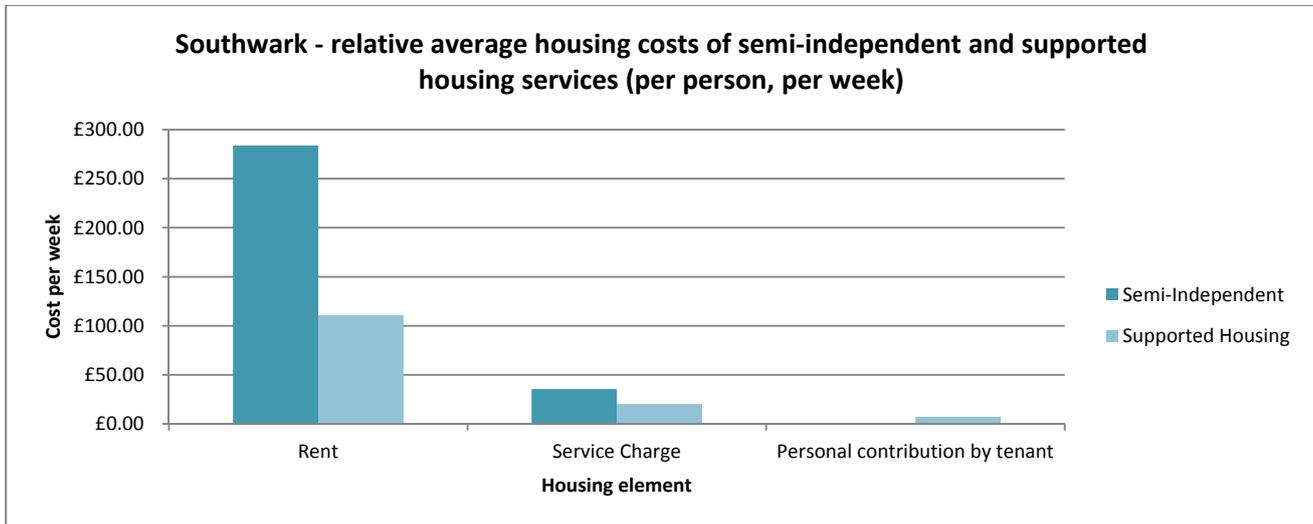


Chart 8. Relative average housing costs of 16+ support and housing providers – semi-independent and supported housing (per person, per week) – overview: chart

8.16 Overall, whilst 16+ services provided in semi-independent and supported housing are closely related, the cost of housing is disproportionately high in semi-independent provision (in fact, around 2 ½ times as high). For the most part, this cost is borne by the Council as the majority of young people in these services are under the age of 18. The high cost of housing in semi-

⁵² Portable Appliance Testing Equipment.

independent services contributes to the very few number of young people who are able to stay living there after the age of 18, as the Council will cease to pay these costs, and these will be too high for either the young person to realistically afford or for UC to cover – as this is above the LHA limit⁵³. This may impact on the young person’s preparedness for independent living with a need to move house at the age of 18, even if they are not yet ready to do so.

- 8.17 The impact on the high cost of housing for looked after children/care leavers in semi-independent housing may also be felt in the unrealistic raising of expectations about the type of housing that most young people in 16+ support and housing would be able to move into after leaving services. Whilst it is important to ensure that young people are able to access good quality housing, and to live in a safe and healthy space, it is recognised that only a minority of young people will be able to immediately afford weekly housing costs of between £300-£700⁵⁴.
- 8.18 For the majority of young people, their first home living independently after leaving services is unlikely to be of the same standard as the semi-independent accommodation – and this may in itself be an inhibitor to moving on. In the engagement events undertaken as part of the 16+ support and housing project, one social worker stated – when discussing this issue - that she feared “young people were being set up [with false expectations] to fail.”

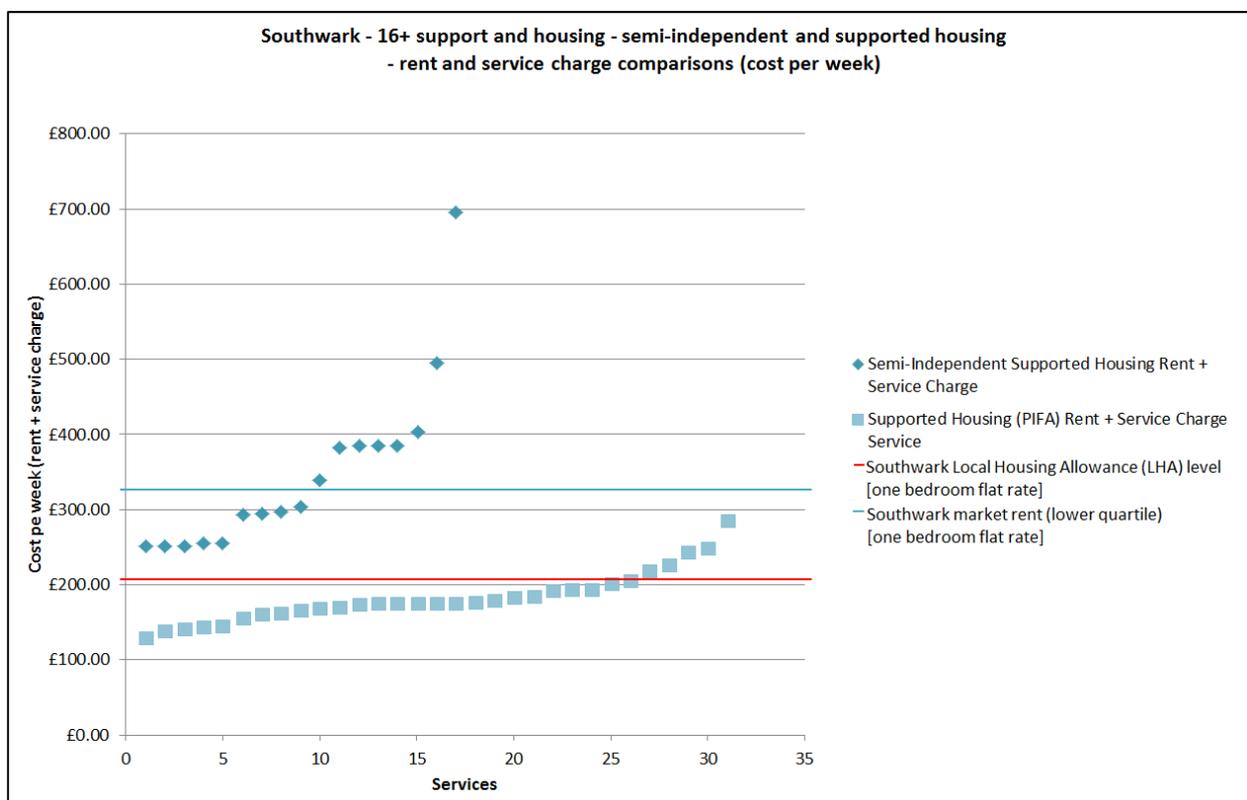


Chart 17. Southwark 16+ support and housing – semi-independent and supported housing - rent and service charge comparisons across different schemes

- 8.19 The majority of supported housing schemes in the 16+ services have a rent and service charge which is below the Southwark LHA level. One reason for this is likely to be that these services are more likely to be provided out of buildings owned by housing associations, which are non-profit making organisations, as compared to semi-independent services which are normally leased from private landlords.

⁵³ In fact, on average 1.5 times above the Southwark LHA level.

⁵⁴ That is, at the Southwark market rate as opposed to the LHA rate.

- 8.20 The Council has a duty to provide value for money in the services that it delivers, and to help prepare the young people in its care with support to be able to move on to independent living. In order to deliver on these aims, the Council should move to an approach in which the rent and service charge for future 16+ support and housing services is set at or below the area's LHA level⁵⁵ for all services. Any exceptions to this approach should have to be agreed by the Council on a case-by-case basis.
- 8.21 In order to transform current provision, the Council and providers should work with housing associations and other landlords to help locate appropriate buildings both in and outside of the borough which are at a fair cost (rent and service charge).
- 8.22 Where young people contribute towards their accommodation, they are taking part in one of the responsibilities involved with independent living – in the payment for shelter and other housing services. This is an important shift for all young people in becoming adults, in moving to a situation where they take more control over the money they spend, and the responsibilities of being in their own home. At this time there are personal contribution elements in supported housing but not in other services. This should change to ensure that, where a young person is able to make a contribution to their service (even at a very low level of around £7 a week) they should do so.

Licenses and tenancies for young people in 16+ support and housing services

- 8.23 16+ support and housing services are primarily provided out of residential buildings which are occupied by the young people placed in the scheme. As such, the young person is both a service-user (receiving support) and a resident (receiving housing), and for the housing element of their stay they will be granted one or another type of tenancy.
- 8.24 The type of tenancy that the young person is granted is typically determined by the landlord and if the young person does not abide by the terms of this agreement (for example, due to anti-social behaviour or due to high rent arrears⁵⁶) they risk being evicted from the service. The types of tenancy typically provided to young people in 16+ support and housing services are set out below:

Type of tenancy for young people in 16+ support and housing services	Summary of rights under the tenancy
Excluded tenancy or license	A licence is a personal permission to occupy a home. It may be withdrawn by the person giving the license with "reasonable notice" ⁵⁷ either verbally or through a written notice, and cannot be transferred to another person.
Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST)	Assured Shorthold Tenancies (ASTs) usually last for 6 or 12 months and provide some rights for tenants. These are the most common form of tenancy for people renting from a private or social landlord in the country. In order to evict any residents the landlord would need to issue a section 21 notice (Housing Act 1988), which may then be challenged in court.

Table 13. Tenancies provided to young people in Southwark 16+ support and housing services

- 8.25 The type of tenancy that young people receive needs to be appropriate for the type of provision that they are in, and it may be that a license is the right level of agreement for some young people in some services. For some young people the approach taken in 16+ services is where, as the young person shifts from less to more independent provision (sometimes within the same scheme), they will also progress from a license arrangement to a full tenancy – which is used as one way of both championing and celebrating the young person's increased responsibility.

⁵⁵ That is, the area in which the service operates – which would be a different level than in Southwark for services delivered in other areas.

⁵⁶ That is, if their rent is not paid over a period of time and the total is owed to the landlord.

⁵⁷ There is no specific timeframe for this which will be determined on the basis of the agreement between the landlord and tenant.

- 8.26 As with any agreement between a landlord and a tenant, it is crucial that the rights of both parties are recognised and understood. Young people both in and leaving 16+ support and housing services are particularly vulnerable to exploitation at a time when they are preparing for, and moving into, their own home – often for the first time. It is therefore particularly important that young people are provided with good advice and help, to make sure that their rights are understood, and that they are safe from financial and other forms of exploitation.
- 8.27 The Council should work with providers and landlords to ensure that the appropriate tenancy arrangements are in place for young people in 16+ support and housing services, whether with licenses or tenancies. The 16+ support and housing services should also ensure that young people’s rights are at the heart of service delivery, and that young people are able to access good advice and help around their rights when moving to independent living.

Changes to the housing element of Universal Credit (UC) and how this will impact both current services and move-on

- 8.28 There are two areas for consideration regarding the impact of changes to UC:
- the potential impact of Government proposals to cap the housing element of UC to supported housing schemes (including for 16+ support and housing services).
 - the potential impact of the Government’s decision to cap the level of the housing of UC to the single room rate for people under the age of 35.

Government consultation on changes to the funding of supported housing

- 8.29 During the course of the 16+ support and housing project, the Government commenced a consultation (in November 2016) on the future funding of supported housing – with a proposed cap on the housing element of UC for all supported housing services⁵⁸ to the LHA rate from 2019/20. The consultation also proposes that UC will no longer cover a number of costs in supported housing schemes, including the replacement and maintenance of any white goods (for example, if a refrigerator or washing machine breaks down) or any contribution towards communal heating and lighting for all residents in the scheme.
- 8.30 This change would impact on both semi-independent and supported housing schemes in Southwark with an anticipated loss of income to services as set out below:

Service	Total Units Affected by Proposed Government Housing Benefit (HB) cap from 2019/20	Estimated Service Loss Rent + Support (per week)	Estimated Service Loss Rent + Support (per year)
16+ Support and Housing Services	225	-£3,033	-£157,755

Table 14. Impact of proposed Government changes to the housing element of UC on 16+ support and housing services

- 8.31 The changes to UC risk impacting the very services which are helping the most vulnerable individuals (including 16+ young people) to overcome challenges, recover from stays in hospital and to then move onto independent living. One risk of these changes is that more adults and young people in Southwark would need to be placed in unsuitable and costly residential settings due to the impact on supported housing services.

⁵⁸ Note – this includes semi-independent services, which are also supported housing services, even if they have been given a different name for the purposes of service delivery.

- 8.32 The Government have proposed delegating a new ring-fenced grant to councils to help mitigate the impact of their changes to UC. It is not known what the level of this grant would be in Southwark, although it is recognised that this would need to help manage the impact of funding reductions across adults physical and learning disabilities, mental health, extra care and sheltered housing services as well as 16+ support and housing. The Council should continue to work with landlords and providers to prepare for any change and to mitigate any impact on service delivery.

Changes to the level of the housing element of UC accessible to people under the age of 35

- 8.33 The other impact of changes with UC relates to people under 35 who, as UC is rolled out throughout 2017, will now only be able to receive the single-room rate for the housing element of UC. This means that, in Southwark, they will not be able to receive more than £95.18 a week for housing – rather than the full LHA rate for their home. For an individual in a one-bedroom flat in Southwark, this will mean a loss of over £6.5K over the course of a year to pay for their rent and service charge.
- 8.34 For young people leaving 16+ support and housing services who may have to rely on UC to help pay for their housing, this is of course extremely difficult. The impact of this change will mean that, without additional income, they will have access to only one third of the lower quartile average cost of private renting in Southwark. For many young people the cost of living in Southwark, even at council or social rents, will be very challenging.
- 8.35 One of the aims of 16+ support and housing services is to ensure that young people are able to access education, training and employment (ETE) – including through schemes including Southwark Works and also local apprenticeship schemes. This key work ensures that young people are able to maximise their potential, including in work, and for many young people it will ensure that they are able to live independently – with an income commensurate with their need to pay the bills.
- 8.36 It is however recognised that the current level of young people in Southwark 16+ support and housing services who are NEET (not in education, employment or training) means that, for some, and due to the current housing situation, obtaining employment at an income which will allow them to afford the typical Southwark market rent may be very difficult. For all young people the Council will ensure that they are provided with good advice and support around their housing options, including through council housing where this is appropriate.

The Council's approach to supporting young people, when ready, to move on after a stay in services

- 8.37 Ensuring that young people in 16+ support and housing, when ready, are prepared and supported to move on to their own home is the primary aim of these services. The Council supports this through:
- granting all care leavers housing priority banding, that is band 2 status.
 - the move on allocation allowance (MOAA) scheme.
- 8.38 The MOAA scheme aims to assist all adults and young people in supported housing to move into their own homes. Clients who are placed on the scheme will receive dedicated support from a resettlement⁵⁹ officer in the Council and, for those who meet certain criteria, the

⁵⁹ Resettlement is work to support the move of a person at risk of homelessness from supported housing, street homelessness or temporary housing into more permanent, often independent, accommodation. At its best resettlement helps individuals to move to the right location and homes for them – places where they can live independent lives, with good wellbeing, in a healthy environment.

opportunity to receive help into private rented sector accommodation or, for others, the ability to gain priority need [band 2] status on the housing register. Unless there are extenuating circumstances clients who have been assessed by MOAA as ready for independent living will be referred to the training flats at Northcott House on Waterloo Road in order to receive additional support for independent living.

- 8.39 For young people in 16+ support and housing services who are not care leavers, the MOAA scheme is the primary route taken to move on from services. The scheme is recognised as valuable in how it offers support and help, on the basis of clear milestones achieved, and responsibilities fulfilled (for example, the young person needs to engage with education, employment and training over time). In the engagement exercises undertaken as part of the 16+ project, many service providers and young people set out how important this scheme was – and how, in many cases, this approach had prevented services from further ‘silting up’.
- 8.40 The MOAA scheme does not at this time recognise the value that friendships can have in fostering independence and supporting move on. However, for many young people in 16+ support and housing services, one of the key benefits for them in living in these schemes is the opportunity to develop friendships and support networks with people their own age, and who are in similar circumstances. During the engagement exercise, many young people talked about how the different people in the schemes supported each other, that they “were like a family” and that they did things for one another - for example, by cooking or shopping together – which aided one another’s independence.
- 8.41 The risk is that, when young people then come to move on from services (for example through MOAA), that these mutually-supportive relationships are lost – and that this in turn causes a set-back in the young people’s journey towards independence. For other young people, moving into their own home without other help may be too big a step, and an approach which sees them either in supported lodgings⁶⁰ or even for a short time returning to their parental home (where this is safe to do so) may be the right next step in their journey to independent living. It is recognised that the key to a successful approach is that each young person is supported in a way that is tailored to their individual needs.
- 8.42 The 16+ project has set out an ambition to shift to a single care, support and housing pathway for care leavers and other young people in 16+ support and housing services. One element of this change should be a refresh of the Council’s approach to helping young people to move on from services, including with a new young people specific scheme to replace and update this aspect of MOAA. The refreshed approach should include a focus on supporting friendships, on learning skills, on the ability to receive tenancy training and live in training flats or supported lodgings, and on different housing options that meet each young person’s individual needs.

SUMMARY KEY FINDINGS - HOUSING

- Ongoing work to deliver the Council’s Housing Strategy will help ensure that there is a good provision of available and affordable housing in Southwark, including council housing. This is a very challenging issue – particularly for inner-London areas like Southwark - and national policy is often counterproductive to the housing needs of the local population. For young people in 16+ support and housing services, it is becoming more difficult to find and move

⁶⁰ Supported lodgings is an accommodation scheme for young people who are not yet ready to live on their own. The scheme offers young people the opportunity to live in the home of an approved person who will help them prepare for independent living.

into their own home – and some are staying in services for far longer than originally intended due to the difficulty of finding and moving on to a permanent home.

- 16+ Support and Resettlement Services should be delivered in buildings which are at (or below) the LHA rate for the area in which the services are located in. The Council will agree to any costs above the LHA rate on a case by case basis. This will ensure value for money in the provision of these services.
- The Council should work with providers and landlords to ensure that the appropriate tenancy arrangements are in place for young people in 16+ support and housing services, whether with licenses or tenancies. The 16+ support and housing services should also ensure that young people's rights are at the heart of service delivery, and that young people are able to access good advice and help around their rights when moving to independent living.
- The Council should continue to work with landlords and providers to prepare for any changes that the Government makes to the level of Universal Credit (UC) available to supported housing schemes in order to mitigate any impact on local service delivery.
- The Council should deliver tailored support, advice and housing options to young people in order to enable them to make choices about their own future housing needs. It is recognised that – whilst a council home will remain the best place for some young people - not every young person will want to live in Southwark, or indeed in London, and not every young person will want to move into a council tenancy. The 16+ support and housing pathway should not be a “one size fits all” approach, but to provide good housing options to meet each person's individual needs.
- The Council should refresh and update the young people's element of MOAA scheme with an aim to establish a specific framework to best enable all young people in 16+ support and housing services (both care leavers and young people at risk of homelessness) to learn skills, and access a range of housing solutions for them – which will continue to include council housing. The new scheme will:
 - provide an approach which enables young people to make the right housing and move on choices for them, with good advice, help and support. In many cases young people may not need any help at all, and will plan and move on for themselves; in other cases the young person may need advice from a personal advisor or from their keyworker.
 - provide an approach in which people move into homes with their friends, in order to support one another in managing the shift to independent living together – where this is appropriate for them.
 - ensure that care leavers will continue to have access to priority need status on the housing list, and will be supported to move on to this accommodation where this best meets their needs. This approach will continue to help fulfil the Council's duties to care leavers.
 - include the option of supported lodgings for young people where this would be useful, and rent deposit schemes, where young people need help to access funds to pay for a deposit.
 - provide support to access both housing associations and private landlord housing and to look at opportunities where they can provide help and support to young people in moving on from services.

- not require young people to leave services as part of their move on process, but rather to have a common approach which is delivered across all 16+ support and housing services wherever these are.

9. FINDINGS OF THE 16+ SUPPORT AND HOUSING PROJECT - (PART 5) LEADERSHIP, COMMISSIONING AND BUDGETS

Leadership

- 9.1 The 16+ support and housing project recognised that there was no single point of leadership across the current system, with dual pathways (and decision-making points) across services for care leavers and young people at risk of homelessness. The engagement exercise with young people suggested that this approach has, at times, led to unclear communications across the system as a whole.
- 9.2 A joint leadership and oversight approach for all 16+ support and housing services would enable the Council to provide a clear point of decision-making and communications across all services. This leadership would be provided by a common approach across children’s social care, health, housing and support services.

Young people at the heart of the system

- 9.3 The engagement work undertaken through the 16+ support and housing project provided an excellent understanding of the views of young people in services. Whilst many young people felt in control of their own care, support and housing needs, others did not feel able to shape and direct their own services – many expressed a feeling of having been “done to”, often due to the impact of a housing market in crisis and which many felt unable to access.
- 9.4 The changes proposed to 16+ support and housing services need to ensure that the people who direct and shape any future provision are those who best know their own service need, that is, the young people themselves. The approach taken should be one where young people are able to shape their own support and housing services, whether it is the front door into provision, the services themselves, or the route into independent living.
- 9.5 The Council will work with 16+ support and housing services to ensure that young people are at the heart of service delivery, and are able to shape and design their own provision.

Commissioning, procurement and budgets - overview

- 9.6 The Council commissions 16+ support and housing services through a variety of mechanisms including through spot purchase⁶¹, contractual framework⁶² and block contract⁶³. The approach has been led solely by Children’s and Adults’ commissioning, with input from housing, health and other areas as required.

16+ Support and Housing	Contracting Mechanism	End date
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⁶¹ Spot purchasing is where a placement is agreed on an individual basis, and for a fee negotiated at the time of placement. This is recognised as the most appropriate form of commissioning arrangement for emergency placements where a young person needs to be placed in a service in a limited timeframe. The Council’s brokerage team will negotiate the placement and cost on behalf of children’s social care.

⁶² A contractual framework is where (in this case) the Council enters into an agreement with a number of suppliers for the delivery of services set out in the agreement. The Council will then “call off” the framework when it wishes to establish a specific service, which itself will be governed by the terms of the overall framework. There are three different frameworks that govern 16+ support and housing services, (a) the semi-independent living service for semi-independent providers, (b) the independent fostering agency framework for IFAs and (c) the prevention and inclusion framework for young people and adults’ supported housing services.

⁶³ A block contract is an agreement between (in this case) the Council and a supplier for the delivery of a specific service at a price agreed with the service provider.

Specialist Residential	Spot purchase	N/A
Semi-Independent	Framework	October 2017
Fostering Placements	Framework	October 2017
Supported Housing	Framework	July 2019
Floating Support	Block contract	July 2017

Table 15. Children's and Adults' commissioning and contracting arrangements – 16+ support and housing services

9.7 The current contracting mechanism for 16+ support and housing services will need to change in order to meet the overarching ambitions set out in this report. This section sets out a commissioning approach to deliver transformation across 16+ services, the outcome of supply and demand work and some benchmarking information from other areas.

Joint commissioning approach – care, housing and health

9.8 The delivery of a new approach to 16+ support and housing services will require changes to the current approach to the commissioning of services – with a need for a refreshed partnership across care, housing and health. The Council is entering into joint commissioning arrangements with NHS Southwark CCG, including in the area of children's and young people's services, and this will underpin a new model for the delivery of holistic commissioning in this area.

9.9 The Council should establish new contracts in order to deliver services at the conclusion of a number of different frameworks in late 2017.

Supply and Demand

9.10 One piece of work undertaken by the 16+ support and housing project was a total system supply and demand analysis, to best analyse upcoming demand for these services. The outcome of this work is set out below:

- a total transformation of the current 16+ support and housing model in Southwark, in which more young people are prevented from entering services and those able to are helped to move on from provision, would require less services overall.
- By considering the trajectory of upcoming service need, it is estimated that the Council requires 200 support and housing placements each year (not including foster placements or emergency and residential placements).
- by transforming current provision there would be a reduced need for specialist residential placements for some young people with complex needs⁶⁴.

9.11 It is recognised that these changes would avoid costs which would otherwise have been borne by the Council.

Benchmarking

9.12 Detailed benchmarking was carried out with the following boroughs as set out below. The areas chosen were determined on the basis of strong Ofsted results⁶⁵ relevant for 16+

⁶⁴ This does not include young people with learning disabilities or autism who are being considered as part of the 0-25 pathway. This

support and housing services. All of the areas were in London and were statistical neighbours⁶⁶ to Southwark.

Benchmarking - London Borough of Hackney

Hackney have recently made changes to the way they manage placements for young people aged 16+. There is a new placement team which is responsible for all young people aged over 16 years old, covering both care leavers and those who are accommodated through the homeless route. Changes were made due to the previous “over-complex system” and the borough now operates a one front door approach which allows for consistency and control of placements, with the placement team having oversight of all contracted provision.

The borough are currently in the process of re-commissioning a multi-supplier framework agreement for the provision of semi-independent type accommodation which is a mix of both block and spot purchase contracts so the number of beds may change – at present there are 266 supporting people beds and 147 beds in ‘semi-independent’ type provision for 16-24 years. Young people aged 16/17 years are not placed with those over 18 years. There is a block contract with two social landlords, spot purchase with private sector providers for complex/specialist needs and floating support offered through the service.

Young people can “step down” through the service and most of those in semi-independent accommodation are over 18 years. Once reaching 18, support hours are reduced and at this point landlords typically give the young people a tenancy (as opposed to a license).

There is a transition to independence team in the borough who manages young people over 18 years to support them to full independence.

Other information/lessons learned from changes:

- there is a need for more foyer⁶⁷-level accommodation due to impact of changes to local allowance.
- completing Universal Credit (UC) claims is a part of the service specification for providers who must encourage and facilitate claims for UC within 5 weeks after which weekly payments to the provider are reduced.

Benchmarking – Royal Borough of Greenwich

Greenwich has a one front door approach to deliver both housing support and support to care leavers. There are separate teams which work in an integrated manner within the same hub. The service delivered from the hub includes the youth offending service, sexual health, personal advisors, leaving care social workers and a nurse who can assess any mental health needs quickly.

⁶⁵ The Office for Standards in Education, Children’s Services and Skills (Ofsted) is the national regulator for children’s social care and education. The regulator inspects different areas children’s services on a rolling basis, with each area receiving a rating on the basis of their level of quality and improvement across a number of domains.

⁶⁶ That is, boroughs with similar performance to Southwark across key relevant indicators.

⁶⁷ Foyers are a type of housing scheme that provide housing for young people, along with help with education, training and finding work. Foyers are typically located in higher quality housing than supported housing (including hostels) and, as such, may attract a higher rent and service charge.

The Greenwich housing services were re-commissioned in last two years and now encompass two providers who deliver a mix of supported housing for young people, including mother and baby units. There are 142 beds with each provider split into four cluster areas which offer medium and high support. The maximum stay in services is 2 years. There is very little spot support and housing purchased, as if there is no accommodation available, where it is safe to do so, the young person will stay at home with floating support. Children's social care are responsible for commissioning semi-independent services however any young person who may be hard to engage with would be supported through the entire housing pathway.

All young people will undergo tenancy training accreditation at the Money House, including care leavers, in order to progress to a nomination for either a council or private tenancy (sometimes with floating support). Due to this integrated approach, no young person in the homeless route was taken into care in the last year – and a mediation service has helped to support this.

Young people are prepared for move-on 6 months in advance of any change, although these conversations start much earlier on in their independence journey. Joint quarterly meetings are held with providers to discuss and plan for move-on for all young people. Discussions with young people about moving on start as soon as possible and prior to the young person reaching 17 ½ years.

Other options available and used on occasion include Eelan – a 28 day placement via the Croydon Association for Young Single Homeless (CAYSH), the Night Stop project for young people (provided by the Depaul Trust), the Family Action mediation service and New Track (a Thames Reach project for the under 35s). The service also supplies rent deposits for young people who meet certain criteria.

Other information/lessons learned from changes:

- The borough is looking into commissioning more provision for mother and babies at this time.

Benchmarking – Westminster City Council

Westminster have one placements team and one front door into services. There are currently 10-14 providers on a semi-independent framework who provide accommodation for 16-18 year olds without complex needs (this is shared across the three tri-borough areas: Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham and Westminster). The borough also have access to a range of provision across an additional 10 providers who offer mainly 24 hour support for 16-18 years. There are additionally some providers who offer an outreach service as well as specialist provision for those young people on remand or who are mothers with babies.

The borough is currently in the process of transferring all young people from decommissioned provision to new services on the framework agreement. There is a clear 'pathway' for young people and depending on the individuals needs, this could mean several moves with the same providers, although young people are prepared and this is communicated early on. Providers deliver all the interventions but the looked after children (LAC) team deliver an in-house cooking club, access to money management and the team bring in speakers to cover a number of topics including sexual health.

Semi-independent accommodation costs vary but mini-competition can be beneficial. All young people pay a service charge irrespective of being a care leaver or via the housing route. Even if the young person is under 18 years they must pay a service charge which can be supplemented until the young person reaches 18 years. If no service charge is paid then a service plan is put in place and payment is taken from the young person by the provider. The latter also works for young people 'staying put' who are asked to contribute towards bills – as a signal of their increased independence (and responsibilities).

An important change in the Westminster approach is the nomination to permanent accommodation. Having more 18 plus young people in the system has risked causing a bottleneck, with young people not able to move on as planned. This has led to the re-design of nomination rights for young people leaving care, who are no longer automatically entitled to social housing - and a clear message that accommodation provided will be for up to 5 years only. The Council previously provided 14-16 young people with nominations into social housing⁶⁸, but this has now increased to 28 nominations a year and there is a process to ensure those most in need are able to access these. The Council has put in place a number of 'Home Truths' principles which are designed to dispel the myths for young people in looking for a home and also sets out the criteria for accessing accommodation.

Some young people in the borough move into private rented sector housing and, depending on need and certain criteria being met, Westminster will pay up to 5 months rent to secure this accommodation. The criteria to enter this scheme considers a number of areas including (a) whether a young person has a full care order (b) whether they have been in care for 3 years, (c) whether they were born in the borough, (d) whether they are an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child (UASC) and (e) what their individual level of need is.

Other information/lessons learned from changes:

- The borough allows the provider 6 weeks to support young person to complete a Universal Credit claim.
- The borough has considered developing a dynamic purchasing system⁶⁹ (DPS) to purchase framework contracts to give more flexibility for spot purchases, which in turn can be used as an opportunity for spot providers to join the framework.
- The borough also recognises that some young people may have better outcomes if not placed in a 24 hour residential unit and the pathway has been changed so that the best options for young people are considered in terms of placements.

Benchmarking – Hammersmith and Fulham

Hammersmith and Fulham shares a semi-independent framework with the other tri-borough areas, which enables the borough to access between 10-14 support and housing providers for young people without complex needs. There are in addition 10 providers which provide 24 hour residential support for 16-18 year olds, including an outreach service. A range of support is offered across

⁶⁸ That is, young people who meet certain criteria are able to access a council or housing association tenancy.

⁶⁹ A Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) is an electronic system through which contracting authorities can source services by inviting tenders from providers admitted to the DPS. Unlike with framework agreements, providers can apply to join the DPS at any time in the life of the DPS and they are not required to submit tenders in order to join the DPS.

services, ranging from 3-17 hours with option to buy in additional support hours.

The borough additionally has one block contract with a provider for 72 units over 10 properties for young people aged between 16 and 25 years, with an aim to house all care leavers and older looked after children in the area. The borough no longer has a stand-alone floating support service as this money has been reinvested in the block contract.

Benchmarking – Kensington and Chelsea

Kensington and Chelsea employ a one front door model in terms of placements access to all housing – with 2 assessment beds available for young people. All 16/17 year olds with a housing need are referred to Family and Children’s Department for an assessment – and they may be referred onto the single homeless team (part of housing) who will match young person to a suitable placement across the borough’s supported housing stock.

The borough has access to 124 beds with 5 supported housing contracts as well as 3 block contracts and a generic floating support service – although these are not specifically for young people. Young people may stay up to 2 years in supported housing schemes. There is also access to beds on the tri-borough semi-independent framework where the provider delivers all interventions. Move-on and resettlement is coordinated by a single homeless coordinator in partnership with support provider for all young people.

The move on option for majority of young people is the private sector, with a small percentage of young people eligible for allocation through housing nominations.

- 9.13 The detailed benchmarking exercise revealed that the top-performing areas often have a “one front door” approach across both care leavers and young people at risk of homelessness. In one case the one front door involved the establishment of a young people’s support and housing hub with access on site to sexual health, voluntary sector and other advice – alongside social workers and housing professionals.
- 9.14 Many areas have a common “move on” approach which helps to enable young people through clear pathways to make the shift to independent living. This approach is typically underpinned by priority need status on the Council’s housing list, but often makes no provision of automatic rights to this and in many cases includes a variety of tailored approaches including rent deposit schemes and social housing tenancies.
- 9.15 Overall the benchmarking exercise reflects many of the outcomes of the 16+ project, with other areas to explore in the design and establishment of any changes to the system overall.

SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS – COMMISSIONING, PROCUREMENT AND BUDGETS

- There should be a joint leadership approach to the delivery of services across care, health, support and housing.
- Young people should be at the heart of the system, and able to shape their own support and housing services, whether it is the front door into provision, the services themselves, or the

route into independent living.

- The Council should establish new services for 16+ support and housing in order to meet the aims of this report. A new approach to commissioning should be established across care, housing and health to deliver this work. This will in part be underpinned by the new partnership commissioning team that has been established between the Council and NHS Southwark CCG.
- The Council's supply and demand model has set out that there will be a reduction in the overall need for semi-independent and supported housing services for 16+ overall, with a proposed reduction in services from 250 to 200.
- The Council should take into account best practice areas in the design of any changes to 16+ support and housing services.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS: A NEW MODEL FOR 16+ SUPPORT AND HOUSING SERVICES IN SOUTHWARK

Southwark 16+ Support and Housing – case for change

10.1 The Southwark 16+ support and housing project undertook a range of different activities in its work, taking into account the views of the young people who use services, as well as providers, social and housing workers, and other key partners. The result is a total system view of the pressures on 16+ care, support and housing services in Southwark.

10.2 The key findings of this work were that:

- ongoing work to deliver the Council's Housing Strategy will help ensure that there is a good provision of available and affordable housing in Southwark, including council housing. This is a very challenging issue – particularly for inner-London areas like Southwark - and national policy can often operate counterproductively to the housing needs of the local population. For young people in 16+ support and housing services, it is becoming more difficult to find and move into their own home – and some are staying in services for far longer than originally intended due to the difficulty of finding and moving on to a permanent home. There is some evidence that services are beginning to 'silt up'. Due to this, the current delivery model for Southwark 16+ support and housing services is not sustainable in the medium term.
- the Council provides a diverse range of different services, providing help for care leavers and young people who are at risk of homelessness. The pathway for young people to prepare for independence is however complex and, in some cases, requires young people to undergo the disruption of moving services in order to get to the next stage in their journey to independence. The dual pathways for care leavers and young people at risk of homelessness adds further complexity and inhibits a total-system approach to delivering outcomes. For the young people in services, their journey to independent living can often seem arbitrarily and confusing.
- for many young people in foster care, it may be that – on turning 18 years old – the best approach for them, in terms of preparing for independent living, may be to stay on with their current foster carer for a time (that is, through "Staying Put" arrangements). For other young people, where it is safe, suitable and healthy to do so, they may wish to return to their parental home after a stay in services – perhaps following a reconciliation. Still other young people may wish to move outside of London, others to stay in Southwark. The approach to each young person should be tailored to meet their individual and different needs, and all young people should be provided with good advice and support to enable them to make choices that meet their own care and housing requirements. The complexity of the current service model may prohibit this tailored approach, and the predication on council housing risks a "one size fits all" course in places.

10.3 The primary outcome of the 16+ support and housing services is the following case for change:

In order for the Southwark 16+ support and housing services to meet the challenges identified in this report and to continue to support young people on their journey to independence, it is recommended that there is **a whole-system transformation of the current model of delivery**. This change would be underpinned by a common approach across care, health, housing and support, and would ensure

at all times that the young people who use services are at the heart of the delivery model, leading the design of their own support services. This new model would require a transformation, not only of commissioned services, including semi-independent and supported housing provision, but of the current support pathway – including how care and housing together support young people to overcome challenges, to develop skills and foster resilience and to live and flourish independently outside of services. This change will require the establishment of new services which it is proposed are called **Southwark Young People’s 16+ Support and Resettlement Services**.

Southwark 16+ Support and Housing – a new model for 16+ support and housing services

10.4 The proposed new model for 16+ Support and Housing Services is set out below:

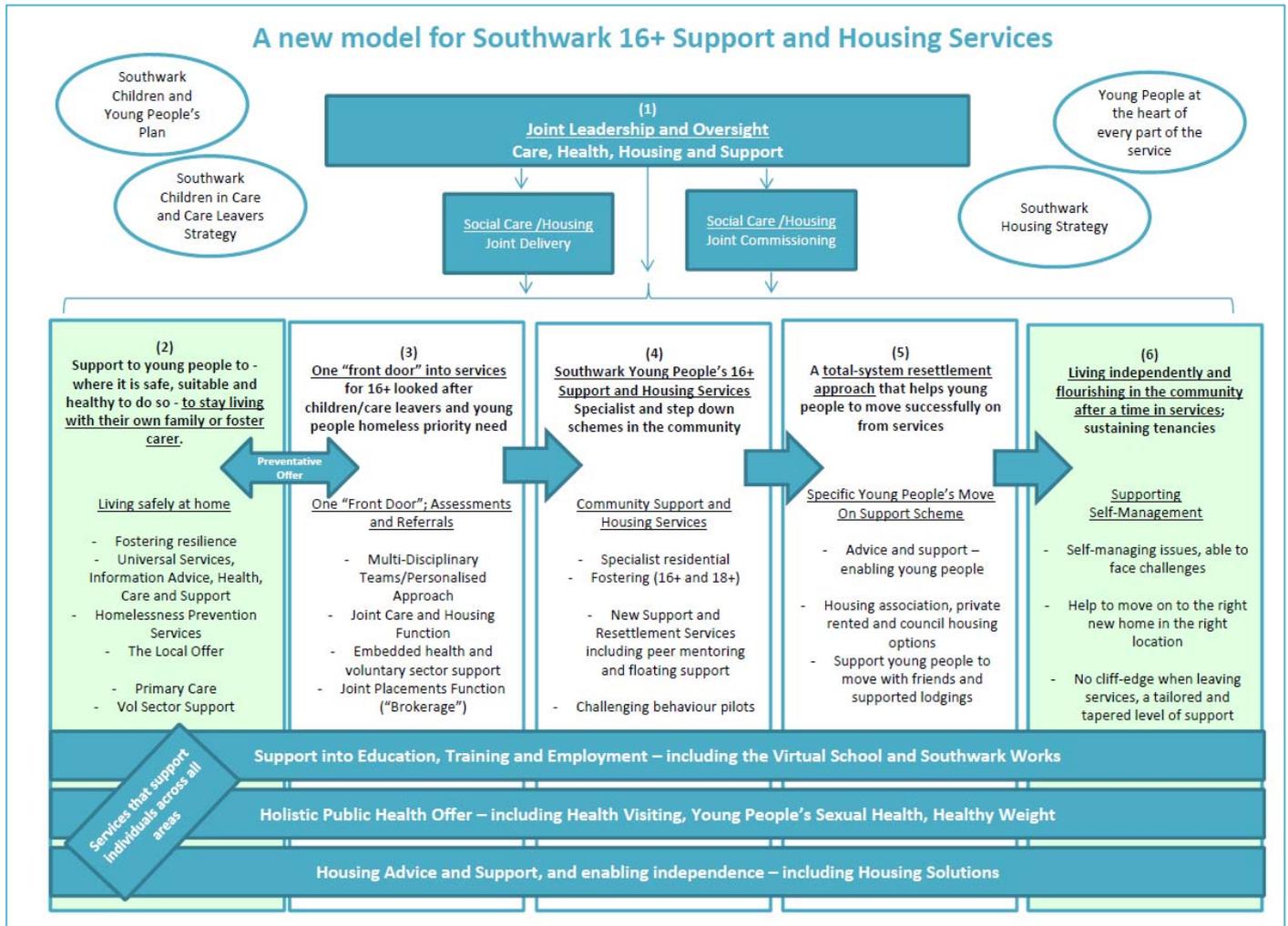


Chart 17. Proposed operational model (access to 16+ support and housing services) for both looked after children/care leavers and young people at risk of homelessness

10.5 The delivery of a new model for 16+ support and housing services will require a transformation of current services. The 16+ project has set out six recommendations to deliver this change and these recommendations are set out below:

(1) The Council should: establish a joint leadership approach across the total 16+ support and housing pathway, this will be underpinned by a commonality of purpose across care, health,

housing and support.

- The services would benefit from a joint leadership approach across the entire pathway, with clear communications, oversight and a commonality of purpose across care, health, housing and support. The young people who use services should be at the heart of the delivery model, leading the design and shape of their own support services.
- Young people should be at the heart of the system, and able to shape their own support and housing services, whether it is the front door into provision, the services themselves, or the route into independent living.
- The future design of services should ensure that different communities and groups are able to both shape and be linked into the services going forward, enhancing and enriching the experiences of the young people in services.
- Young people should be provided with good advice and support throughout the pathway, and they should be given realistic expectations about what to expect in terms of housing outcomes in the current national and local context.
- There is an opportunity to better shape services around care, support, housing - and health – in light of the partnership in place between the Council and CCG around children and young people's commissioning. This is an area where there could be a particular focus around Children's and Adolescents Mental Health Services (CAMHS), the Looked After Children (LAC) nurse, health visiting including the Family Nurse Partnership and physical health services.
- The 16+ support and housing pathway needs to take into account both looked after children/care leavers (who below the age of 21 are primarily male), young people at risk of homelessness and young mothers with babies (who are increasingly prevalent in services after age 21). There should be appropriate provision for all groups, and targeted support and specialist advice for mothers through schemes including the Family Nurse Partnership (FNP).
- The links between 16+ support and housing services and other elements of the community safety system should continue to tackle issues including gang-related activity.
- The Council should continue to work with landlords and providers to prepare for any changes that the Government makes to the level of Universal Credit (UC) available to supported housing schemes in order to mitigate any impact on local service delivery.

(2) The Council should: support young people to, where it is safe, suitable and healthy to do so, to stay living at home with their own family or foster carer.

- The Council will continue to provide good advice, support and help in the community to help prevent young people from becoming homeless or entering the care system. This approach will be underpinned by strong universal services including the local offer, homeless prevention services and other community services.
- The Council should develop a preventative approach that helps ensure that young people who do not need to enter the care system do not, due to a lack of help and advice, come into care

through the homeless route. A single approach across children's social care and housing with clear and common decision-making processes across both areas would build on strong work already undertaken in these areas to help prevent young people aged over 16 years from needing to enter care.

- For many young people in foster care, it may be that – on turning 18 years old – the best approach for them, in terms of preparing for independent living, may be to stay on with their current foster carer for a time (that is, through “Staying Put” arrangements).

(3) The Council should: establish a “one front door” into 16+ support and housing services for all looked after children/care leavers and young people at risk of homelessness, underpinned by a single approach across children's social care and housing.

- A single pathway for care leavers and young people at risk of homelessness will be founded on a “one front door” approach, bringing good professional advice together into a single place with multi-disciplinary teams. There should be a single placements function for the whole pathway, helping young people who need this help to be successfully placed in services.
- Embedded health and voluntary support should be a part of the “one front door” service to ensure that young people are able to access this advice and help when entering services.

(4) The Council should: establish new Southwark Young People's 16+ Support and Resettlement Services - shifting to a small number of providers delivering support options around preparing young people for independent living, training flats, resettlement and wellbeing. Some of these services will be located within the borders of Southwark and other services will be located within a reasonable travel distance of the borough.

- The Council should establish Southwark Young People's 16+ Support and Resettlement Services which would bring together current semi-independent, supported housing and floating support into a small number of holistic services. The services will:
 - deliver a tailored support plan to help prepare young people for independent living.
 - provide support and housing to young people referred into services.
 - link young people into education, employment and training.
 - link young people into local health and wellbeing services.
 - ensure young people aged over 18 are accessing Universal Credit (UC) [Housing Benefit] which will fund the housing element of their service, except where otherwise agreed by the Council.
 - provide some specialist provision (for example, post-custodial and mother and baby services), reducing the need for young people to be placed in specialist residential care.
 - provide a peer mentoring service, enabling both people who have moved on from services as well as other community leaders to share their knowledge and experience with the young people in services.
 - provide pre-tenancy training and training flats.
 - support the safe and successful resettlement of young people into a home outside of services.
 - provide ongoing tapered support to young people in need after they have left services.

- provide support to a number of other young people living outside of services in need and to young people with no fixed abode (“sofa surfing”).
- The location of 16+ Support and Resettlement Services should be tailored to the needs of individuals. Not all services should be in Southwark, as this is not appropriate for all young people, although there should remain some level of in-borough provision. All services should be within a reasonable travel distance from Southwark. New services should be located within close proximity to:
 - good schools.
 - green spaces.
 - affordable local housing options.
 - health services (including mental health).
 - access to employment and training opportunities.
- There will continue to be provision of emergency and specialist provision (say, for young people with autism or disabilities), as well as for foster carers. This will not be included in the delivery model for 16+ Support and Resettlement Services.
- 16+ Support and Resettlement Services should be delivered in buildings which are at (or below) the LHA rate for the area in which the services are located in. The Council will agree to any costs above the LHA rate on a case by case basis. This will ensure value for money in the provision of these services.
- 16+ Support and Resettlement Services should ensure that the appropriate tenancy arrangements are in place for young people in 16+ support and housing services, whether with licenses or tenancies. The 16+ support and housing services should also ensure that young people’s rights are at the heart of service delivery, and that young people are able to access good advice and help around their rights when moving to independent living.
- The Council will not pre-judge the approach to delivering 16+ Support and Resettlement Services (whether contracted out; or in-house; or a mixed-model), this will be considered in a separate report to establish the services.

(5) The Council should: establish a total-system young people’s move on and resettlement scheme, helping to enable young people, when ready, to move on from services. This approach will be underpinned by a principle of helping young people to make their own choices around their housing needs.

- The offer of priority need status for looked after children/care leavers on the Council housing list is extremely valuable and will remain for this cohort. That said, a council tenancy – and a long term home in Southwark – will not be the right housing outcome for every looked after child or care leaver. The 16+ support and housing model will ensure that all young people in services have all the options available to them, and are helped to move on from services to homes that best meet their needs – wherever and whatever those are.
- Pre-tenancy training should be a part of every young person’s journey through 16+ support and housing services and a common approach should be applied to every scheme – wherever a young person is – whether fostering, residential, supported housing or temporary

accommodation. For looked after children and care leavers, this may be best achieved through refreshed support plans that additionally incorporate this area.

- The Council should refresh and update the young people’s element of MOAA scheme with an aim to establish a specific framework to best enable all young people in 16+ support and housing services (both care leavers and young people at risk of homelessness) to learn skills, and access a range of housing solutions for them – which will continue to include council housing. The new scheme will:
 - provide an approach which enables young people to make the right housing and move on choices for them, with good advice, help and support. In many cases young people may not need any help at all, and will plan and move on for themselves; in other cases the young person may need advice from a personal advisor or from their keyworker.
 - provide an approach in which some young people are supported to move into homes with their friends, in order to support one another in managing the shift to independent living together – where this is appropriate for them.
 - ensure that care leavers will continue to have access to priority need status on the housing list, and will be supported to move on to this accommodation where this best meets their needs. This approach will continue to help fulfil the Council’s duties to care leavers.
 - include the option of supported lodgings for young people where this would be useful, and rent deposit schemes, where young people need help to access funds to pay for a deposit.
 - provide support to access both housing associations and private landlord housing and to look at opportunities where they can provide help and support to young people in moving on from services.
 - not require young people to leave services as part of their move on process, but rather to have a common approach which is delivered across all 16+ support and housing services wherever these are.

(6) The Council should: ensure that young people are supported to live independently in the community after a time in services, with no “cliff-edge” when leaving different support and housing schemes.

- The 16+ support and housing pathway needs to prepare young people for independent living and there should be an emphasis on ensuring that there is no “cliff edge” for young people when they leave services, but that they are continued to be supported – as needed for a time – into their new independent living setting. Southwark 16+ Support and Resettlement Services will provide ongoing tapered floating support for a time after young people in need leave services.