



# What's Changed For Children And Young People – Working In Partnership With Local Authorities





# Contents

Children, Young People and Participation	3
The Case Studies	4
The Box Youth Project – Sunderland	5
Birmingham Youth Service – The Maypole Centre	7
Newham Library Services – Help with homework and study support	9
Wheels On Water – Plymouth Disability Sailing Group	11
Weston-super-Mare Town Council – Barcode Youth Café	14
Hampshire County Council – Important Issues for Young People Leaving Care	16
Acknowledgements	20

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## Children, Young People and Participation

This briefing aims to capture stories of good practice from across England where local authorities have worked in partnership with children and young people to make positive change. These are stories of effective engagement and the development of strategies and policies which have resulted not only in change for the young people directly involved, but change for the wider locality, strengthening community cohesion and council service provision.

Legislation is in place to ensure that children and young people have the right to participate in any decision that is made which affects their life (see Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child). So when an organisation provides services for young people it is essential that young people take part in its decision-making processes. In a council setting, youth participation is often about engaging in decision making with young people in their community whilst ensuring that they have the skills, knowledge and confidence to be involved and crucially that their contribution is valued, acted on and leads to change.

Children and young people's participation directly benefits councils by ensuring services are appropriate, cost effective and designed with end users at the forefront of planned objectives to meet the needs and aspirations of young people in the area. Good participation practice helps to create more sustainable services which have greater quality, authority, authenticity, integrity and legitimacy because they are built around the real needs and views of the children and young people they are there to support.

In 2001, the National Youth Agency, with funding from the Local Government Association and in partnership with local councils, developed **Hear by Right** to help organisations and their service users reap the rewards of participation by building it reliably into the way they work. Hear by Right is a standards framework which enables children, young people and adults to work together to develop an organisational participation audit and action plan for improvement. It enables an organisation to produce its own tailored participation strategy. Organisations can also apply for a **Hear by Right Award** which proves to service users, funders and communities that they take the voice of young people seriously and that participation is at the heart of service delivery and development.

Today, Hear by Right has become the most widely recognized standard for youth participation in England, with more than 98% of local authorities knowing about Hear by Right and 78% using it to base their participation strategy on. Following the lead set by councils, many other parts of the public sector including Housing and Youth Justice are now adapting and using Hear by Right to develop their own participation strategies.

The NYA's **What's Changed for Young People** tool accompanies the Hear by Right standards framework and is designed to capture the changes that have occurred as a direct result of children and young people's participation. It is used to record, measure and report on the results of participation where a clear change has taken place.

It is often said that the youth sector need to get better at evidencing the benefits of the youth work approach in general and the advantages of embedding youth participation in the design of public services in particular. These case studies provide real-life evidence of the benefits of participation to young people, council's and their services, and local communities, and are just a selection of the many examples on the Hear by Right website: <http://www.nya.org.uk/quality/hear-by-right>.

## The Case Studies

The following six exemplar case studies have been developed from **What's Changed** stories submitted to the National Youth Agency and were featured, along with many other stories, on the NYA's **What's Changed** pages: <http://www.nya.org.uk/quality/hear-by-right/what-s-changed>.

In the North East, the *Box Youth Project* was set up to provide facilities for young people in Sunderland. The project now holds the main contract for the constituency of Sunderland South youth provision and also gained local extended schools contracts (Sunderland South is now divided between Houghton and Sunderland South and Sunderland Central).

In the West Midlands, Birmingham Youth Service worked in partnership with young people on the Druids Heath Estate through the *Maypole Centre* to provide more facilities for young people in the area, as a direct result of young people taking action to improve their community.

In London, *Newham Library Services* worked in partnership with young library users to develop homework clubs in response to their requests for support with their homework and general studies.

In the South West, *WOW* (Wheels On Water) disability sailing group was set up in Plymouth to provide children and young people with disabilities the opportunity to learn to sail.

In Weston-super-Mare, Weston Youth Council worked with the local council to set up *Barcode Youth Café* in response to young people asking for help finding somewhere to go.

In the South East, *Hampshire County Council* works in partnership with children and young people in and leaving care, to develop services and support packages to meet their particular needs.

# The Box Youth Project – Sunderland

## Provision for young people in the constituency of Sunderland South

### The issue raised by children and young people

Back in 2003 there was no youth service provision for Sunderland South. Young people living in the area wanted to develop a youth centre and identified a disused community building that was suitable.

### What happened?

Young people wanted to develop facilities in their area and in particular a youth centre, so from the onset led the project. After attending a public meeting, interested young people formed the Area Youth Forum to campaign for youth services in the district.

Following major redevelopments in the Sunderland South area, Sunderland City Council employed an area development worker to implement a three year action plan that aimed to develop youth service provision in the area. Initially the city council employed a youth worker to facilitate young people led service development so that youth services could be designed for young people by young people. This included developing a voluntary sector organisation within the area to bring Sunderland South in line with other areas of the city.

Young people identified a disused community building that they wished to turn into a youth centre and consulted with the local community from Doxford Park and surrounding areas to develop their plans for the project.

Young people then attended a residential with local parents, and visited other youth projects in Sunderland and Leeds to get more advice about setting up a new project.

Youth workers supported the young people with the practicalities of such a large scale project, such as booking meeting rooms and helping with council planning applications but at all stages the young people involved remained the core group, sustaining the project and devising the constitution for the Box Youth Project.

### What Changed?

Sunderland City Council leased the disused community building to the *Box Youth Project* in February 2006. Young people applied for funding to develop the centre – they also identified the facilities that were needed, designed the interior and worked as a team to get the interior painted.

The project now provides a place for young people to meet with their friends and also somewhere that they can go for help and guidance if they need it.

There are Youth Clubs for young people aged 13-19 and Kids and Junior Clubs for younger children. The project also runs various activities and trips in the summer holidays.

Youth workers provide an outreach service and there is sexual health support for young people aged 14-19.

*The Box Youth Project* Youth Forum 'SR3 SPEAK UP' is open to any young person who resides in the local area aged between 11 – 19. The Youth Forum currently meet as and when required.

Sunderland City Council Youth Development Group has outsourced its youth provision and *The Box Youth Project* now holds the tender for youth provision in the south of the city. The centre is sustainable and has gained contracts for extended school work and also holds the main contract for Sunderland South.

## What do children and young people say?

*'We all got involved so that young people don't have to hang around on the streets and have somewhere to go for help and guidance if they need it'*

*'I personally got involved to have somewhere for my 3 year old son to go, as I had nowhere when I was growing up'*

*'We went into our learning room and decided what colour we would put on the walls .....When the paint came, we worked as a team to get all four walls painted... We also helped in the rest of the centre where other groups of young people were doing their bits'*

*'We have created a chill-out area with sofas, a TV, Playstations, a dance mat, table tennis table, a football table, leaflet racks, notice boards and a few magazine racks where we get information from'*

*'We knew that it wouldn't happen overnight and that it would be hard work. We had a lot of criticism from people saying that it would never work, but we never stopped believing that we would have a youth project in our area. I think that the success of the project is because we were treated like adults from the start which we have never had before and also we had staff members that were behind us 100 per cent, although we had never done anything like this before'*

*'I have become a different person while working on the Box Youth Project; if it were not for the staff and the committee of the project I would not be where I am today – a professional youth worker. Before I got involved I did not know where I was going in life' (Scott)*

## Further Information

If you would like to find out more about The Box Youth Project in Sunderland, you can contact Lisa Wilson Riddell, Project Manager on 0191 522 5031 or email [theboxyouthproject@googlemail.com](mailto:theboxyouthproject@googlemail.com)

You can also visit their website at [www.theboxyouthproject.co.uk](http://www.theboxyouthproject.co.uk)



# Birmingham Youth Service

## *The Maypole Centre* – Improved facilities for young people on the Druid's Heath Estate

### The issue raised by children and young people

Young people from the Druid's Heath estate on the outskirts of Birmingham were constantly being moved on when they were hanging out with friends but felt they had nowhere to go in their local area.

### What happened?

A group of young people from the estate who were part of the Maypole Action Group decided to find out what other young people thought about the estate where they lived.

They devised a questionnaire to ask local children and young people where they hung out and why, whether they felt safe, whether there were enough facilities for children and young people and what facilities they would like to see in place.

Nearly 150 children and young people responded to the survey and the analysis of the results found that children and young people thought the estate was a dirty and boring place to live. The survey found that 90% wanted to see more facilities for young people generally, but in particular would like an adventure swing, a multi-purpose sports area, a skate park and more seating areas and shelters.

Young people then presented the results of the survey to a group of local decision makers including the Parks Officer, the District Officer responsible for community facilities, housing providers and police.

### What Changed?

Following the presentation by the young people outlining what facilities they wanted on the estate, local services got together and the Parks Department submitted a successful bid for Neighbourhood Renewal Funding.

The money was then used to build the facilities that young people had requested.

A MUGA (Multi Use Game Arena) was built enabling young people to play basketball and football and a new shelter and a new bench area were also created.

The facilities attract young people from all over the estate and young people organise their own games and matches.

The police have reported a reduction in anti-social behaviour since the facilities have been in place.

The Maypole Action Group received a Record of Achievement Award from the Council House and The Lord Mayor of Birmingham.

## What do children and young people say?

*"They say go and play on the fields, but they're covered in dog mess. You can't play there"*

*"Its stupid, we want to be active, but there's nowhere to go"*

*"We got ideas for different facilities from going round Birmingham and taking photos of things like seating areas, skate parks, football and basketball pitches, adventure swings and floodlighting"*

*"Young people now have a place to call our own" – Shaunna*

*"Its great to have a place to play football" – Daniel*

*"Its great to finish a game with out being moved on by residents/police" – Ashley*

## Further Information

To find out more about the *Maypole Centre* you can contact Pete Norman at Birmingham City Council on 0121 4646172 or [Pete\\_Norman@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:Pete_Norman@birmingham.gov.uk)

# Newham Library Services

## Help with homework and study support

### The issue raised by children and young people

Children and young people advised *Newham Library Services* that they wanted more study support and help with their homework at their local libraries.

### What happened?

*Newham Library Services* carry out an annual children's survey every three years and this revealed that children and young people wanted help with their homework and further study support at their local libraries. However, part of the problem was that they were not bringing their homework to the libraries.

In response to this, library staff worked in various partnerships. To begin with NewCeys (Newham Community Education and Youth Service) agreed to fund 10 staff to work two hours every week to establish weekly homework clubs in some of the libraries in Newham. With the recent contraction of funds, a new partnership has been formed with Newham Volunteers. The aim is for each club to have a dedicated volunteer helper and a Programme Facilitator to provide children with help and advice to use computers and choose books, national curriculum resources, free internet and other library resources tailored to support children with their homework and studies.

Staff time – via Programme Facilitators – was allocated to allow a Homework Helper to produce worksheets for different key stages and a Homework Club Learning Booklet was produced so that children could record their learning each term and also show their parents or carers what they had achieved.

Specific training was made available for library staff to widen their stock knowledge and support them in demonstrating ICT and information retrieval to children and young people. Plans for a self issue system were taken forward at The Gate, East Ham and Stratford libraries in order to free up library staff time which then allowed staff to provide more focused support to children.

### What Changed?

Children and young people now have the opportunity to attend a weekly homework club at all of the 10 static libraries across Newham and homework clubs are now part of the Newham Library's core service offer, providing study support to children and young people aged 7-14.

The clubs are free of charge and operate on an open access basis every week during term time (including half term). The sessions are two hours long and are tailored to help children with the homework they have been given; children are also able to obtain additional activity and worksheets to help their educational attainment.

Children and young people are given priority use of computers during the sessions and are also able to print their homework for free.

An analysis of the homework clubs carried out by the library service showed that there is a real need for this study support and that the children that attend generally have English as a second language, receive free school meals and have been allocated school action plans in greater concentration than the Newham average.

The newly integrated Front Office and Newham Volunteers work closely together to keep a stream of volunteers assisting these clubs. This has increased attendance figures, and allows more focused support to children, particularly those at risk of underachieving.

### What do children and young people say?

There is ongoing work with the children and young people using the homework clubs to improve the service but also to ensure that they continue to enjoy and attend the clubs. Children are consulted formally via CPLUS surveys, feedback and comments sheets, and periodic interviews. They are also able to give more informal verbal feedback in discussions with their Programme Facilitator.

### Children and young people said:

*"It's better because my friends were there to help me and the teachers too, and it was quiet so you could do your work without people making a noise and throwing things and shouting, and it was fun because you could borrow books and videos"*

*"It helped me get better at reading and writing and maths. It is a nice club"*

The homework clubs are well attended and as a result children asked for *"more tutors, more tables and chairs"* and *"further reading and writing support"*.

### Further Information

Newham Libraries have now merged with Local Service Centres and the Contact Centre and collectively are known as the Front Office.

If you would like to find out more about the homework clubs at Newham Libraries contact Zainab Umar, [Zainab.umar@newham.gov.uk](mailto:Zainab.umar@newham.gov.uk).

See also the London Borough of Newham's website at <http://www.newham.gov.uk/EntertainmentandLeisure/Libraries/LibraryServicesForYoungPeople/HomeworkClubs.htm>

# WOW – Wheels On Water Plymouth Disability Sailing Group

Sailing For Children and Young People with Disabilities



## The issue raised by children and young people

In partnership with Social Services, special schools in Plymouth ran some sailing taster sessions for disabled pupils. One young person was particularly keen to continue sailing and after discussing this with his school and the local council, he was invited to help start a sailing group for children and young people with disabilities.

## What happened?

A Watersports Clubs Development Officer from Plymouth University and a Children's Services Officer from Plymouth City Council organised a meeting with young people with a range of disabilities and their parents, to find out if they would like the opportunity to go sailing.

Young people were eager to take part so more taster sessions were organised and the first few were supported by the Mount Batten Centre in Plymouth along with Plymouth Children's Services.

The sessions were very well attended and the young people taking part really enjoyed them, so further meetings took place with some of the young people and their parents to explore funding opportunities and discuss a way forward to enable the group to continue sailing.

The group decided to apply for money from Plymouth's Youth Opportunity Fund (YOF). All decisions were made by the young people with adults only providing support where it was needed, for example, with getting prices from the Mount Batten Centre. The young people wanted to continue to sail and work towards gaining sailing qualifications and they also wanted to find out more about taking part in other water sports and adventurous activities.

### What Changed?

Wheels On Water (WOW) Plymouth Disability Sailing Group was established in 2006. The group was successful in securing finance through the YOF and continues to expand. WOW is run by volunteers and parents and now operates out of the Mount Batten Centre in Plymouth on a Wednesday evening. The Centre is a nationally recognised RYA (Royal Yachting Association) Training Centre and provides the group with qualified Instructors who have attended RYA Disability Awareness Training to ensure safety and that the different needs of group members are met.

WOW offers both disabled and able children and young people the opportunity to learn to sail and follows the RYA Sailability Award Scheme so they receive awards for their sailing progression. Sailing sessions also count towards the physical section of their Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Parents, carers and siblings are also encouraged to be part of the group so it is an activity that the whole family can enjoy together.

### What do children and young people and their parents say?

Young people taking part in sailing activities have increased their skills and confidence and have made good friends as part of the WOW group. Because of the difficulties that some of the members have in expressing their thoughts and ideas about WOW, much of the feedback was provided by parents or carers on their behalf.

*"I enjoy WOW as it gets me out in the open and I meet new friends. I love sailing and cannot wait to go. I like the way that I have been able to improve to now sailing on my own and the Access 303 are great craft" – Christian*

*"Christian really enjoys the sessions and they are improving his confidence because of the pace of the instruction and the enjoyment and fun that he gets out of it. We have also linked the sessions to his learning targets as Christian finds academic work at best challenging. Through the practical side of sailing he is able to express himself and is keen to learn more".*

*"There is also the wider picture – families with children with a mix of various disabilities can meet up for either a chat or get out on the water to support the children" Christian's Mum*

*"Funding from the grant was used to train 3 x helms to sail with WOW. Attending the training for the RYA Keel boat course has added to my skill set in being able to become involved with the running of WOW. There is a sense of pride when I look back to see how confident I am at helming the Hawk 20 compared to when I was just a passenger enjoying the ride. The use of the grant has also enabled the group to reduce its running costs, as WOW helms are free, thus being able to help the group keep down its running costs and keep its future strong. The grant to WOW has not only given me new skills and an outlet but enabled me to find an activity that my son and I can participate in which we were struggling to achieve" Shaun – Adult Helper*

*"WOW has become the highlight of the week for Sarah over the summer. Years ago I used to race weekly, but have never had the confidence to take her out in a boat on my own. The weekly sail has given me back confidence and the love of being out on the water. That love has rapidly been shared with Sarah.....she gets very excited when she gets home on Wednesday evenings from school. In addition it has become something that my other daughter has loved sharing with her. Having a child with disabilities does mean that many things are hard to do as a family, but sailing is achievable for all, and WOW makes it so" Joanna – Sarah's Mum.*

## Further Information

Wheels On Water would really like to hear from children and young people that would like to go sailing in Plymouth.

If you are interested in finding out more about WOW contact the Chair, David Walker by email at [wowsailing@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:wowsailing@hotmail.co.uk) or phone the **Mount Batten Centre Plymouth** on **01752 404567**



# Weston-super-Mare Town Council

## *Barcode Youth Café*

### The issue raised by children and young people

Young people in Weston-super-Mare approached the Weston Youth Council asking them to help find somewhere for young people to go.

### What happened?

Weston Youth Council was set up in 2001 to represent the young people of Weston-super-Mare and give them the opportunity to have a voice and make a difference. Members are aged between 11 and 18.

The Youth Council works to support the quality of life and opportunities of all young people in Weston-super-Mare and encourages their participation and citizenship.

In response to the issue raised, the Youth Council sent out questionnaires in their quarterly newsletter to find out what young people wanted to do.

Weston Youth Council then met with the Town Council to discuss the provision of a youth café in the town. Despite some initial concerns from some adult councillors, the town council agreed to the proposal and asked the young people to find a venue that was suitable for their needs in the town.

Young people found a venue in the centre of town with its lease due for renewal that was an ideal location for the youth café.

The Council agreed to buy the lease and additional funding was provided by the Youth Council, North Somerset Council, Community Safety and Driving Action Team and local business and community organisations.

### What Changed?

*Barcode Youth Café* opened on October 26th 2005 and entry for young people is free for all sessions apart from "Friday Night New Noise" – although discounts are available.

*Barcode* is open on the weekends, and during term time is open from Tuesday to Friday 5:30pm till 9:30pm – the hours change in the school holidays. The facility also opens 11am – 3pm Monday to Friday during term time for college students to use.

In addition to refreshments, *Barcode* offers themed evenings, music nights, arcades, pod air hockey and the number of young people attending continues to grow.



*Barcode* receives Big Lottery funding and works in partnership with North Somerset Youth Service, North Somerset Library Service and The Brandon Trust to run specific projects for young people.

Health Code and Life Code are projects that *Barcode* offers in partnership with North Somerset Youth Services which aim to educate young people and develop their skills and understanding in relation to their health, well-being and life choices. There are regular sessions to raise awareness of the dangers of smoking, drink and drugs.

There is also a regular "No Worries" clinic on Fridays which provides young people with support and advice in relation to their sexual health.

With the North Somerset Library Service, *Barcode* takes part in a national scheme to engage young people with the Library Service. The project is called HeadSpace and is a library space based at *Barcode* designed by young people for young people. The project provides books, internet access and support with library resources for young people aged 11-18. The books were chosen by its users and the young people help to run the library. There is also a HeadSpace activities group which meets on Thursdays.

## What do children and young people say?

*"We sent out questionnaires for young people asking what they wanted and they all wanted a youth café... We then put this to the town council who met to talk about what to do"* (Gillian, 14)

*"There had been talk of a youth café in 2001. In 2005 we put a real effort into making the youth café work and a lot of work persuading the adult council it would work. Getting it set up took a lot of work by the adults. The young people were more involved in speaking about it. They go every night. It's somewhere to hang out"* (Hannah, 17)

*"Local businesses were very helpful. The whole community started getting behind the idea. The young people that go there are very enthusiastic"* (Adam, 18)

## Further Information

If you would like to find out more about *Barcode* Youth Café and the services and projects they offer, you can contact them on 01934 424365 or visit their web pages on Weston Town Council's website at <http://www.weston-super-maretowncouncil.gov.uk/barcode-cafe.aspx>

You can also email *Barcode*'s Manager Kevin Lilwall at [barcodeyouthcafekevin@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:barcodeyouthcafekevin@hotmail.co.uk)

# *Hampshire County Council*

## Important Issues for Young People Leaving Care

### The issue raised by children and young people

Children and young people leaving care and in the care of *Hampshire County Council* raised several issues with the Local authority about things that were important to them. This included access to appropriate accommodation, support for Further and Higher Education and access to Driving Lessons.

### What happened?

Back in 2005 *Hampshire County Council* (HCC) worked alongside a group of young people in and leaving care – The Care Action Team (CAT) – to develop services for children in care and their families.

They worked together with other partners to develop the 'Passport to Success' which was based on the premise that the County Council is a corporate parent to the young people whom they have looked after. The scheme was designed with care leavers to ensure they were offered the kind of support a parent would normally provide when a child leaves home. It included help with finding accommodation, and financial and emotional support with further education, work experience and driving lessons.

One of the issues that CAT raised was about appropriate accommodation. As part of a consultation event, young people said that the accommodation they were placed in after leaving care homes was often inappropriate, with inadequate support from staff, no access to quality washing and cooking facilities and exposure to crime and drugs. Many young people wanted to be able to live semi-independently before becoming independent.

Care leavers applying for a university place felt that they needed more support when applying and more emotional and financial support when attending university.

Most care leavers were unable to afford driving lessons and felt disadvantaged in not being able to drive as this affected their ability to travel to work and college.

*Hampshire County Council* set up a multi-agency steering group which included care leavers.

### What Changed?

#### Appropriate Accommodation

*Hampshire County Council* now maintains foster care placements until young people are 21 whenever appropriate. Young people staying at foster placements until they are 21 tend to be in further and/or higher education. CAT and the Passport to Success scheme highlighted that young people in higher levels of

education need a secure base to return to, and being able to go back to their foster parents has been of huge benefit to them.

Hampshire has also developed supported lodging schemes in partnership with local housing agencies.

### Support for Higher Education

*Hampshire County Council* built upon their existing good links with local universities and Care Leavers and HCC officers worked with the Aim Higher programme to develop a regional compact, outlining how universities and Local authorities can work together to support young people leaving care.

In partnership with Aim Higher, *HCC* runs summer schools for looked after children and care leavers to provide them with an opportunity to see what university life is like. Several care leavers now work with the Widening Participation Teams at their universities as student ambassadors. They attend meetings and events to give looked after children and care leavers an understanding of the reality of student life and the support that is available.

Winchester University ensures that the particular needs of young care leavers are met by providing them with accommodation outside of term time – young care leavers don't have to vacate premises during the holidays like other university students.

### Access to Driving Lessons

Care Leavers met with the Executive Member for Children's Services and managers in *HCC's* Environment Department to discuss proposals to allow them access to driving lessons.

A scheme offering driving bursaries was developed, awarding eight driving bursaries to care leavers each year. The bursaries cover the cost of 20 driving lessons, a theory and practical test and Balfour Beatty and Mildren Construction Ltd each contribute £1000 towards these bursaries on a needs led basis.

## What do children and young people say?

The young people and *Hampshire County Council* received a Wavemakers Award in recognition of their achievements and the resulting benefits for young people in and leaving care.

Judges from the Wavemakers Award said:

*"The breadth of good ideas in their entirety showed how much this project can benefit young people in care – it is to be applauded".*

### Appropriate Accommodation

*'I presented my ideas to the Departmental Management Team and they've really taken on board what I said.'*

*'Staying with the same foster carers enabled me to maintain my place at university.'*

*'If it wasn't for my Personal Advisor (PA), I wouldn't know how to go about getting a flat and all the other support I'm now getting.'*

*'My PA put me in touch with two hostels and came to interviews with me. I feel she did everything that she could to help me.'*

### Support for Higher Education

*"Our friends at uni. have their parents to turn to when they're having a tough time – we don't have that".*

*"I think the support I get from HCC is great – I'm much better off than some of my friends at other universities".*

*"I know now that I'm not on my own".*

Feedback from young people attending the Winchester University summer school suggests that this has helped other looked after children consider going into Higher Education

*'I really enjoyed the summer school – I now really want to go to uni.'*

*'I found out that university wasn't boring like school.'*

*'It was like a taster of uni life.'*

*'Now I think I'll go to college. It'll be hard and a challenge but this summer school has made it easier to think about Higher Education.'*

### Access to Driving Lessons

*'Many of our peers are supported by their parents to learn to drive. For a lot of jobs, being able to drive is a real advantage.'*

*"We were told by others that it wouldn't be possible. But we presented our arguments to the politicians and managers and it's now come off the ground"*

*"I live in Cornwall and work in a quarry 20 miles away. Being able to drive has meant I can keep my job."*

### Further Information

The Care Action Team (CAT) and the 'Passport to Success' schemes have now been superseded by The Care Matters project with a new Care Ambassador Project called The Care Council.

*Hampshire* has employed 6 young people who are former care leavers to work with children and young people in the care of *Hampshire County Council* to support their participation in the care system. The former care leavers act as advocates and represent looked after young people when appropriate. They also have an advisory role, commenting on strategy and service development and delivery.

The Care Council meets monthly and transport is provided by Hampshire to maximise attendance and ensure everyone has a voice. In 2008 the Care Council designed a Children in Care Pledge which outlines six key areas

they wanted the *County Council* to improve regarding the services available to them.

To find out more about the work in Hampshire you can contact Lee Culhane, Participation Officer, on **01962 845313** and **lee.culhane@hants.gov.uk**

You can also visit *Hampshire County Council's* web pages providing information for children in care at **<http://www3.hants.gov.uk/childrens-services/families/caring-for-children/care-matters/info-cic.htm>**.

You can also read the original What's Changed Stories at **<http://www.nya.org.uk/quality/hear-by-right/what-s-changed/hampshire-county-council-care-action-team>**

## Acknowledgements

Our thanks go to all the organisations and children and young people that provided additional information and photographs to support these case studies.







## About the National Youth Agency

The National Youth Agency works in partnership with a wide range of public, private and voluntary sector organisations to support and improve services for young people. Our particular focus is on youth work and we believe strongly that by investing in young people's personal and social development, young people are better able to live more active and fulfilling lives.

Working with young people, we advocate for more youth-friendly services and policies. We have four themes:

- Developing quality standards in work with young people
- Supporting services for young people
- Developing the youth workforce
- Promoting positive public perceptions of young people.

We deliver our work through training and consultancy, campaigning, publishing and online communications. Through our activities we want to ensure that young people have a strong voice and positive influence in our society.

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