

**NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL****EXECUTIVE****25<sup>th</sup> September 2018****Introduction of The Local Offer for Care Leavers****Report of the Corporate Director – Children and Young Peoples Services****1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 Section 2 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 requires each local authority to consult on and publish a local offer for its care leavers. This report outlines the process of the development of the Local Offer and requests approval to launch the attached document as North Yorkshire's Local Offer.

**2.0 ISSUES**

- 2.1 The guidance suggests that the Offer should include information about all the services and support that is available to care leavers from the local authority, including information about both their statutory entitlements as well as any discretionary support that a local authority chooses to provide. It should include details of the services and support that may assist care leavers in, or moving to, adulthood and independent living that the local authority provides in regard to the corporate parenting principles of:
- Health and Wellbeing
  - Relationships
  - Education and training
  - Employment
  - Accommodation
  - Participation in Society

Whilst the Local Offer is a standalone document, the offer is very much a part of the looked after children strategy and will be embedded within its content.

**3.0 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 North Yorkshire has taken the requirement to consult with care leavers on its development very seriously and the offer has been drawn up following a series of four formal consultation events with young people

across the county, alongside ongoing discussion with staff working with care leavers.

- 3.2 A requirement of the offer is that it should be easily available and accessible to all care leavers in the local authority area. Feedback from care leavers was that they were keen to have the local offer in a digital format in preference to a paper copy. Consequently whilst the attached draft is in a paper format with the initial design, access to the web based leaflet via a QR code will be the preferred method of distribution to care leavers. The QR code will be published on all care leaver documentation, including a specific card with the code available for care leavers to easily access.
- 3.3 There is no deadline for the publication of the Local Offer but the Government expects the offer to be available 6-9 months after April 2018. We are proposing that our offer is officially launched in Care leaver week at our Care Leaver conference on 25<sup>th</sup> October, but will be available from October 1<sup>st</sup> following sign off by Executive members. It is expected that the Local Offer should be reviewed regularly and updated at least every two to three years, following further consultation with care leavers. We would expect our core offer to be revised within 2 years to ensure it reflects on going developments within the service
- 3.4 This is the first Local Offer published and we will expect to review sooner than the 2/3 years recommended by government, to ensure the offer fully reflects the ongoing developments within our service and the ongoing work that will be happening around corporate parenting with our district colleagues and other wider partners. Consequently changes will be incorporated as required.

#### **4.0 ISSUES**

- 4.1 The Local offer reflects the priorities that young people identified as important, alongside our desire to be ambitious and aspirational for our young people. Within the confines of the budget we have tried to reflect these priorities and principles. For instance dental care was seen as a high priority at the consultation events, which has led to the commitment to consider funding private dental care if NHS dental treatment was not available. However if the service found itself in this situation the case workers would be expected to liaise with health service colleagues, escalating to managers as required to ensure NHS dentist was provided as a commitment from our health colleagues in their role as corporate parents. A commitment to ensure young people have adequate ID documents including provisional driving licences are part of our core offer.
- 4.2 The financial framework has been in place since 2015. It is proposed that a larger piece of work is undertaken during the next year to enable the financial framework to better reflect NYCC's ambition for our care leavers. This would form part of the Local offer review.

- 4.3 There have been numerous changes in the world of benefits since 2015. To better reflect the Universal Credit position of paying benefit in arrears and to enable young people to have money available during this period we have proposed 3 ways forward to access money to help during this period.

“If you’re on a low income or claiming certain benefits we realise that money is tight. We will help you to maximise your income ensuring you’re aware of everything you are entitled to, including Council Tax Reductions, Child Benefit and Universal Credit. If you are struggling to manage whilst waiting for a first payment of Universal Credit we can do one of three things to help:

- Provide you with a weekly living allowance which we will deduct from your setting up home allowance.
- Provide you with a weekly living allowance which you pay back to us, once your payments come though.
- If you are eligible, help you to apply for an advance payment which will be deducted from your Universal Credit.”

This is the only proposed change to the financial framework.

- 4.4 The core offer will be publicised via numerous events and opportunities. For example via the NYCC leaving care Facebook page, the NYCC website, the care leaver events in care leaver week, individually with all our young people and partner agencies and within the LAC strategy events with the District councils in the Autumn.

## **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Local offer outlines in one document the support both financially and corporately the Local Authority and it’s partners can support care leavers with, but this will not require any additional financial resources.

## **6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The publication of a Local offer is now a Statutory responsibility of the Local Authority

## **7.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES**

- 7.1 Consultation was held with care leavers and staff within the service.

## **8.0 IMPACT ON OTHER SERVICES/ORGANISATIONS**

- 8.1 Ongoing work with both District councils and other partners within North Yorkshire will develop the Local offer for care leavers during subsequent years. Revisions will be made as appropriate.

**9.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 8.1 That the Executive endorse the attached draft Local Offer .  
That the Executive agree to the proposal outlined above regarding arrangements to support care leavers accessing universal credit payments for the first time.

Stuart Carlton  
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Children and Young Peoples Services

COUNTY HALL  
NORTHALLERTON  
13<sup>th</sup> September 2018

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Presenter of report – Vicky Metheringham Head of LAC, Leaving Care and Permanence

Background Documents – *(MANDATORY if any have been referred to in preparing the report)*



North Yorkshire  
County Council

# Core offer to care leavers



# Introduction to the core offer to care leavers

We have created this Core Offer to tell you about all the services and support that we have in North Yorkshire for you as a care leaver. We know that leaving care might be difficult at times and we want you to know that just because you are leaving or have left care, we haven't stopped caring about you.

The Core Offer to Care Leavers aims to clearly set out your entitlements and what you can expect from us in one document. We hope it will help you make the most out of the services available to you. Your Leaving Care Case Worker will talk to you about the information in the Core Offer but if you have any questions or if you feel you need something different, just ask them. If we agree to help you with something which we haven't put in the Core Offer, we will record this clearly in your Pathway Plan, which means if we don't do what we have agreed with you, you can hold us to account.

We want to make sure that you feel listened to and know that what you say matters to us. To do this we ask our care leavers what is important to them and what they think about what we do. We have used this feedback to help us write this document and we will continue to listen to your views to make sure the help we give you is the help you need.

## Who are the leaving care team?

North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) and all its departments have a responsibility to act as your 'Corporate Parent', which means it is a shared responsibility to be good parents to you and to other young people leaving the care of NYCC. The Leaving Care Team sit within NYCC's Children and Families Service and will be your main point of contact. Your Leaving Care Case Worker will support you directly

whilst also coordinating any additional support you receive, either from NYCC or its partners. Our Leaving Care Case Workers all have different backgrounds but usually will have experience in a field such as Youth Work, Social Work, Children's Residential Care or Teaching. We also have more specialist workers within our team who we may ask to work with you, people like Clinical Psychologists, Speech and Language Therapists, Family Group Conference workers and Opportunity Brokers who can help you find work, education and create opportunities just for you. We also have a manager in each of our 4 areas who organise their teams to help give you the best possible support we can.

## When will I need a leaving care worker?

Your Leaving Care Case Worker is a different person to your Social Worker and is there to help you to prepare for independence and offer advice and support after you leave care. You would usually be introduced to your Leaving Care Case Worker when you are around 17½ but you can ask for one any time after turning 16. Before you meet your worker, you will be given a profile that tells you about them. Where possible we will give you several profiles so you can tell us who you would prefer to be your worker.

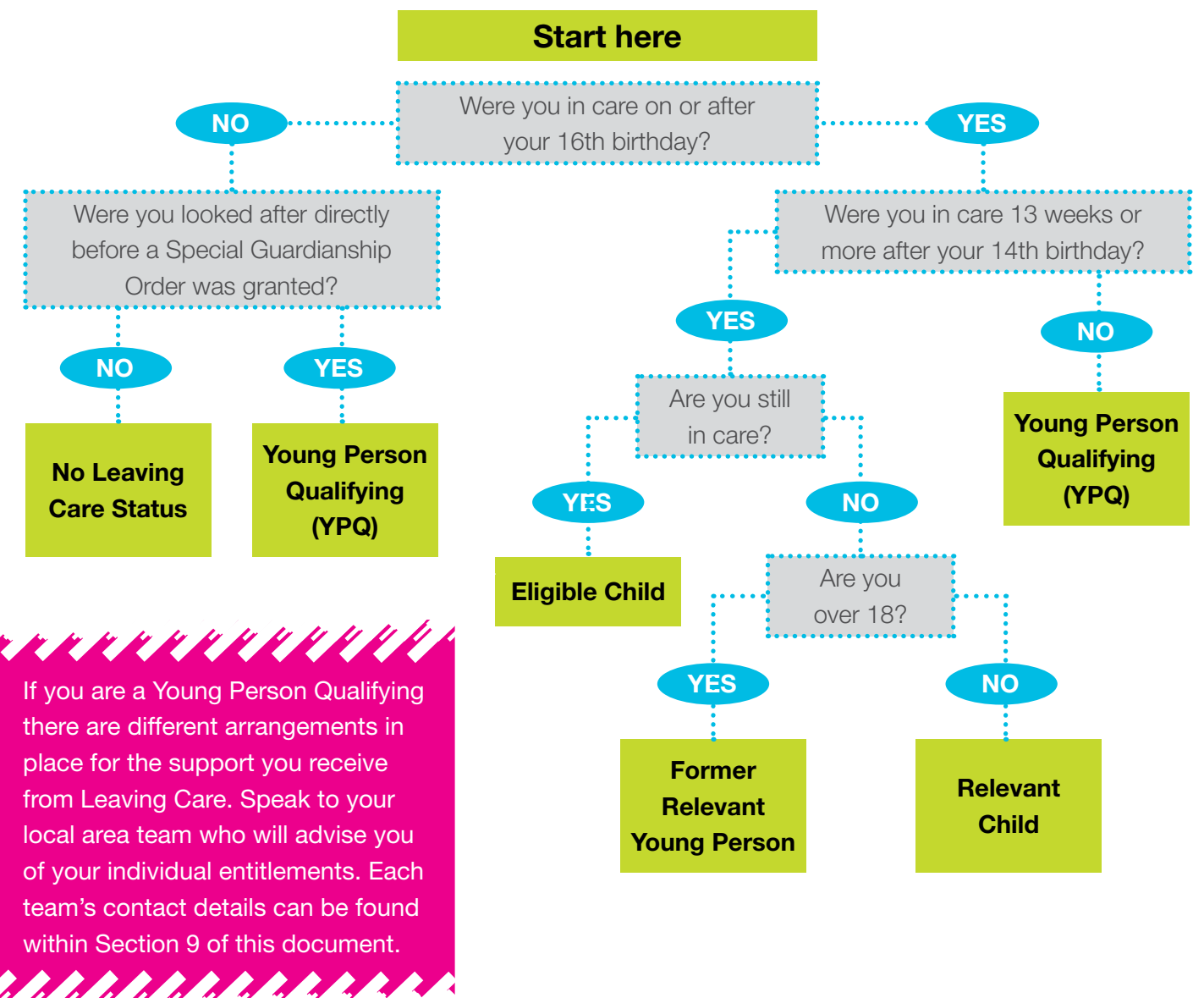
We will make sure you have a Leaving Care Case Worker until you reach at least 21 and we will keep working with you until you're 25 if you are happy to have this extra support. We will try to make sure you to keep the same worker throughout your time with Leaving Care, though this will not always be possible. The amount of support that you receive from your worker will depend on your circumstances and what we have agreed in your Pathway Plan.

## What support does the Leaving Care Team offer?

We will talk to you about what you think is important and work with you to achieve what you want from life. We will help and encourage you to achieve and celebrate with you when you do. We will do this by seeing you regularly, at least every 2 months but this can be much more often if needed. We will write a pathway plan with you and other people who are important to you at least once every 6 months. During this process we will assess what you need and agree what help we are going to give you. You will also have tasks to complete for your Pathway Plan which we hope will help you to achieve your goals.

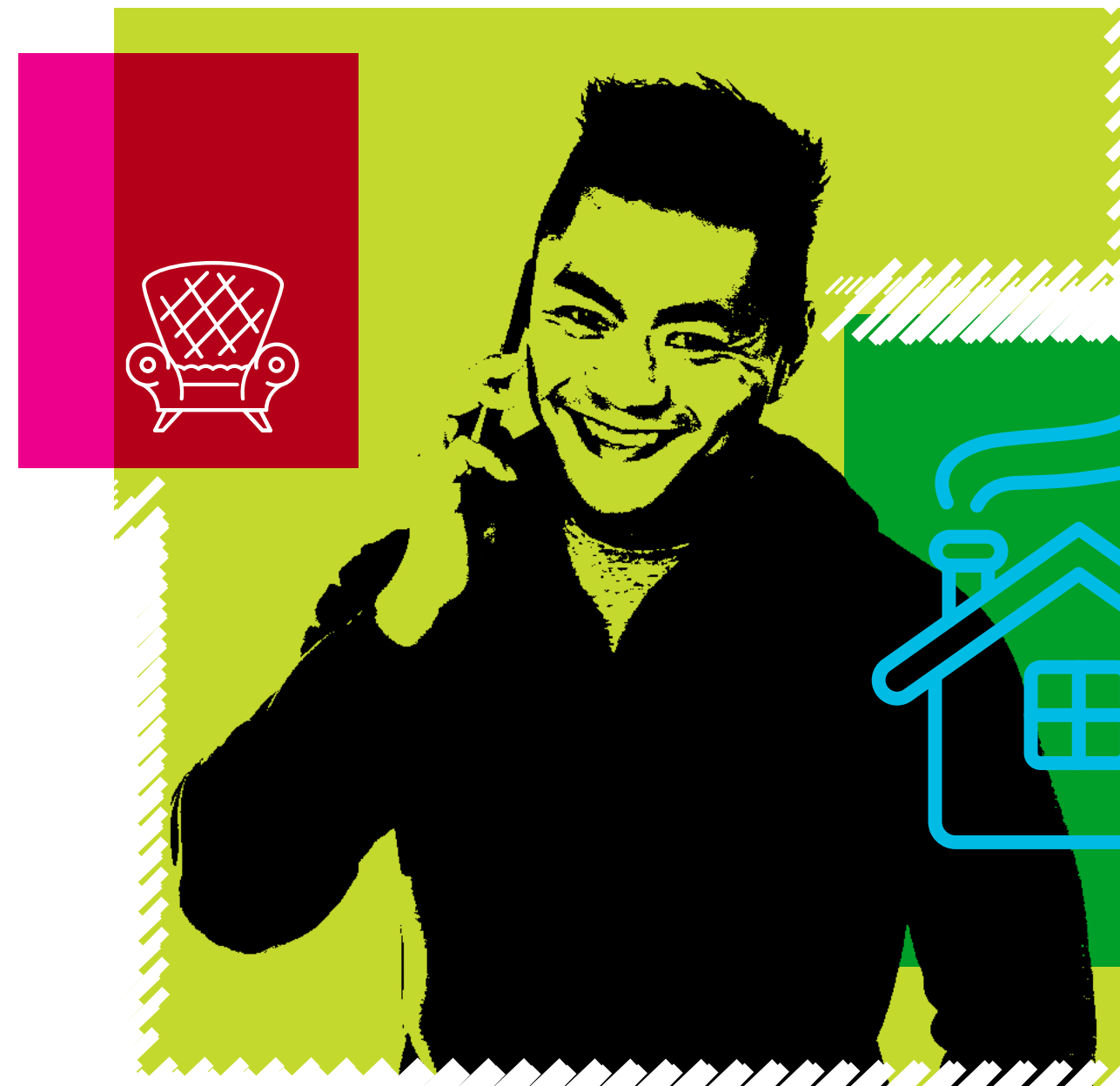
To be able to get the support set out in this document, you must have been in care for a period of at least 13 weeks (or periods amounting to 13 weeks) which began after age 14 and included some time after your 16th birthday. If you are not sure whether you are entitled to support, then ask your Leaving Care Case Worker. There is also a flow chart below which will help you to work out your Leaving Care Status.

Below is a flow chart of how you may move through the different housing pathways. There are also two typical scenarios of the route we expect young people will take, represented by dotted lines.



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## Section 1 - Your accommodation and where you live

There are different housing options available in North Yorkshire, some with support included and some without. Ultimately, you will decide what accommodation to accept but we will be considering your needs and your level of independent living skills to ensure the accommodation offered to you is suitable and appropriate. We will also liaise with housing on your behalf to ensure that your views are listened to and accounted for throughout the process.

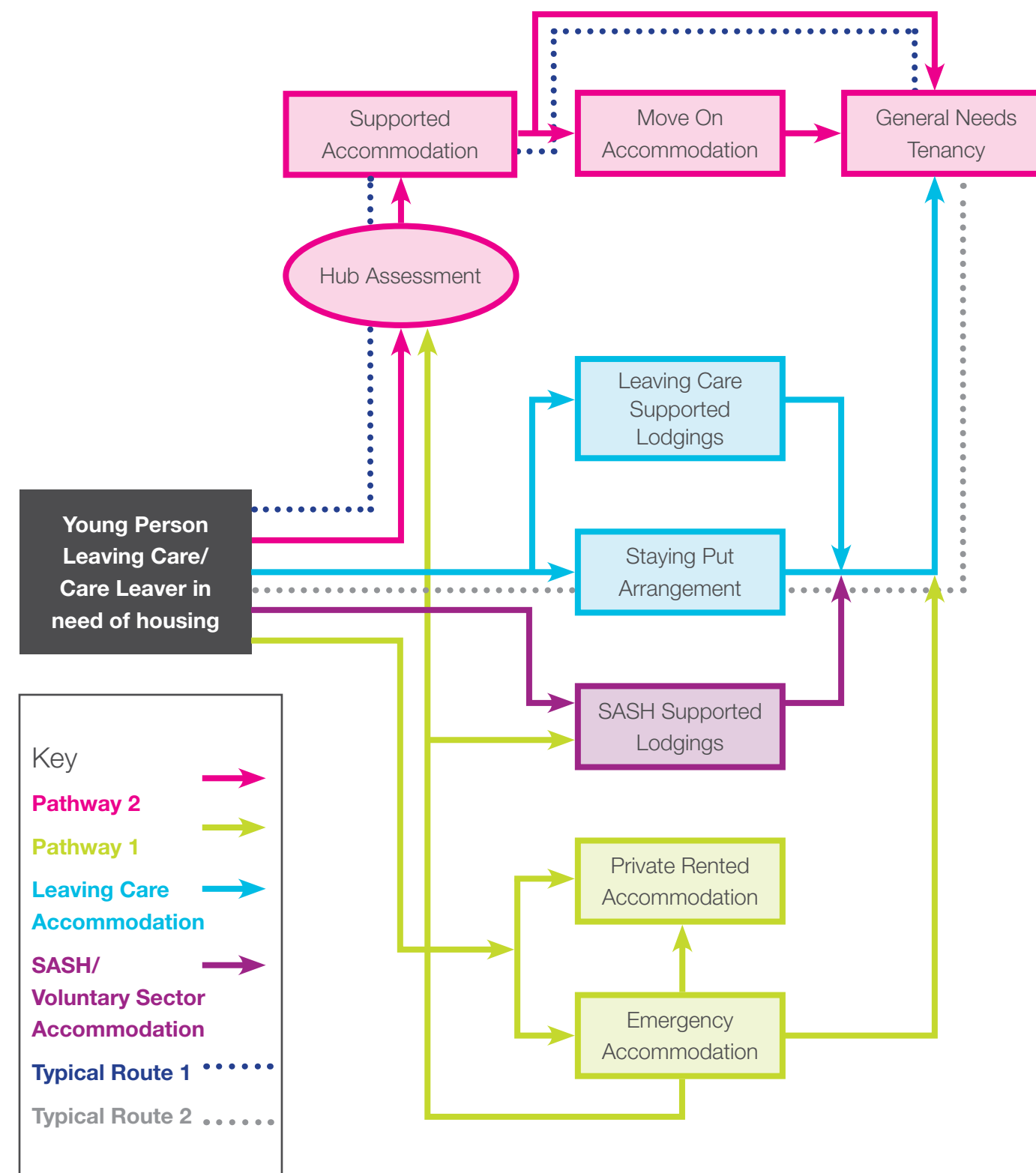
Staying with foster carers after you have turned 18 is called 'Staying Put', you can stay with your foster carer until you are 21 if this is agreed. This will not affect your entitlement to housing when you leave Staying Put as you will still be considered a priority.

There are lots of different types of supported housing options available to you, depending on your level of need. We will make sure you understand the options available to you and encourage you to accept housing which we believe is in your best interests.

If you are at university and need help with the cost of accommodation during vacation time, we will help you with this, please see the Education, Training and Employment section of this Offer.



Below is a flow chart of how you may move through the different housing pathways. There are also 2 typical scenarios of the route we expect young people will take, represented by dotted lines. Your leaving care caseworker will explain your accommodation options.



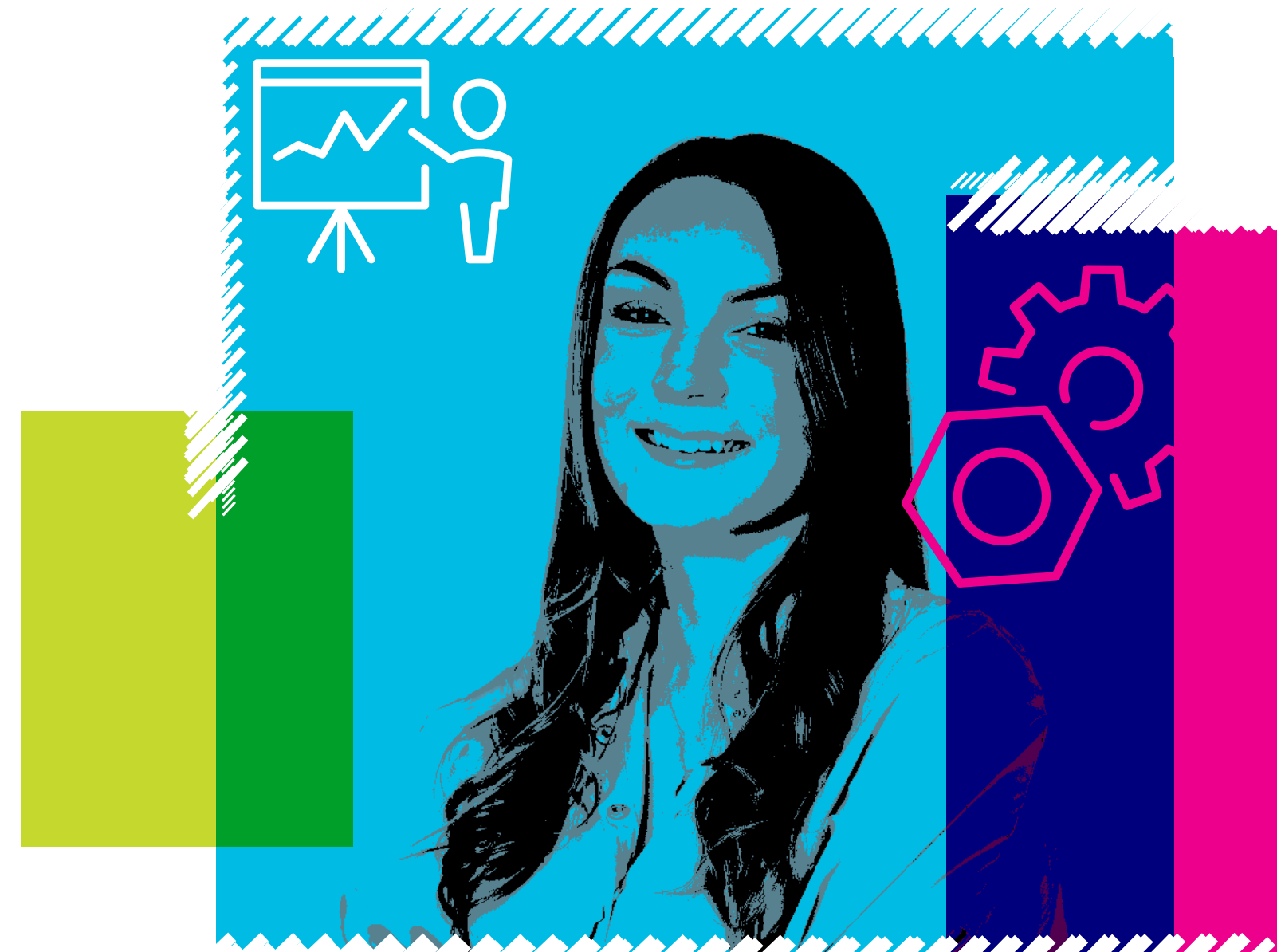


Within the table below is further information on these main types of accommodation and housing support available to you through Leaving Care or our partner agencies in North Yorkshire.

Type of accommodation	Who is responsible for the accommodation?	What support is included, who is eligible and where to get further information
Staying Put Arrangements	NYCC Leaving Care Team	Staying Put is available to any eligible young person approaching 18 who wishes to continue living with their foster carers. If your foster carers cannot offer Staying Put then we will look for another foster placement which can. You can stay within this arrangement until you are 21 years old. Staying Put can also be accessed whilst you are at University or engaging in another training programme that requires you to live away from home. You will get the security of the on-going relationship with your carer and their support to develop your independent living skills. Choosing Staying Put has proved very successful for many young people; improving their employability, social resilience and life chances. Speak to your Social Worker, IRO or LCCW if you have questions about Staying Put.
Leaving Care Supported Lodgings	NYCC Leaving Care Team	Leaving Care Supported Lodgings are bespoke arrangements arranged on a case by case basis. If there is an opportunity for you to benefit from a Supported Lodgings arrangement your LCCW will discuss this with you.

Type of accommodation	Who is responsible for the accommodation?	What support is included, who is eligible and where to get further information
No Wrong Door Supported Lodgings (for young people leaving NWD Residential Care)	NYCC No Wrong Door	One of the placement options available within the NWD hub is 'NWD Supported Accommodation' which will provide accommodation and support as a transition arrangement for young people living within a NWD residential hub who want to try out living more independently. They still get the support of the NWD team to stick with them as they move into adulthood. <b>High Needs Supported Lodgings Host</b> For this role we ask someone to provide a room within their home and be the stepping stone for young people moving towards living independently. Hub placements will provide the support needed to help young people move on in their lives. Placements will be planned and can be on a short term, medium term, or respite basis dependent on the young person's circumstances and their Care Plan. In addition the host can have a sessional contract (subject to interview) and be able to work in other areas of the hub. This allows the host to build relationships with young people who may eventually be placed with them.
Night Stop – For Young People in need of Emergency Accommodation (Young Peoples Pathway 1)	SASH	You will be provided 1 to 14 nights of accommodation in a volunteer host's home, which includes an evening meal, bed, washing facilities and breakfast. During the day you return to the Pathway 1 Hub to work with the Homelessness Support Worker to resolve your housing issues.
SASH Supported Lodgings (Young Peoples Pathway 2)	SASH	Accommodation and support provided in the home of a volunteer approved 'host' for up to 2 years, you have your own room and key. Support is provided by the host and a Support Worker to develop independent living skills and access or maintain employment, education or training. When ready, you are supported to find suitable accommodation and settle in.

Type of accommodation	Who is responsible for the accommodation?	What support is included, who is eligible and where to get further information
Supported Accommodation (Young Peoples Pathway 2)	Providers – Foundation or Broadacres.	A range of 24/7 staffed supported accommodation for single young people with either self-contained or shared facilities for up to 6 to 18 months. You will have a support worker and access to activities to gain independent living skills and education employment & training. From here you might move into the supported move on accommodation or full independent living.
Move on Accommodation (Young Peoples Pathway 2)	Providers – Foundation, Broadacres, Ryedale YMCA, Ripon YMCA	Properties for single young people and young parents located in the community with support to maintain the tenancy and get ready for the next step of full independent living.
General Needs Tenancy (Social Housing) through North Yorkshire Home Choice	Housing Associations (I.E Broadacres, Yorkshire Homes, Yorkshire Coast Homes or Local Authority Housing)	North Yorkshire Home Choice is a Choice Based Lettings (CBL) Scheme that advertises council and housing association properties for rent and shared ownership properties for sale. Available properties are advertised weekly and if you are eligible and qualify to join the North Yorkshire Home Choice housing register you can express an interest (bid) on up to 3 properties each week you would like to be considered for.
Floating Support (Support Only)	Various providers (I.E DISC, Horton Housing)	Practical support to build skills, confidence and knowledge to help you maintain a tenancy and live independently successfully.
Privately Rented	Private Landlord	Renting a property from a private landlord. This means renting from someone who owns a property. Private Landlords usually rent out properties so they can make money. A private landlord can also be a company that owns lots of properties. For more information and support with Private tenancies visit <a href="https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/renting-a-home/renting-from-a-private-landlord/">https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/housing/renting-a-home/renting-from-a-private-landlord/</a>
Bespoke and Specialist High Need Accommodation	Various	If you have additional needs which providers would be unable to meet within the accommodation offered within pathway 2, such as a severe learning disability or difficulty or you are a very high risk offender, you may be referred to a specialist accommodation provider where you can get the right support. Your Leaving Care Case Worker, Adult Social Worker or Probation Officer will talk to you about specialist accommodation options if you need this.



## Section 2 – Your education, training and employment

We take your education seriously and want you to achieve at the highest level you can. That is why we will work hard to support you through whatever education or training you decide to take on. Whether this is supporting you through an apprenticeship, helping you to gain work related qualifications or supporting you for up to 4 years through university, we will help you achieve your goals. We can also provide the support of our opportunity brokers to search out specific opportunities that interest you. This may be attending taster days, supporting you into voluntary work, helping you create a high-quality CV or even speaking to your dream employer to see if we can set up a work trial. We don't believe in ambitions that are too big, so speak us about yours and we will do our best to help you achieve them.

We will ensure if you have any additional or learning needs we help you to get support from the relevant services.

## 2.1 Higher education

We provide a comprehensive package of support for those accessing Higher Education. A copy of the Higher Education policy is available from your Leaving Care Case Worker. Full financial support will only be given Care Leavers accessing a full-time course. Whilst at university, you will be expected to claim your maximum entitlement to the maintenance/special support loan and grant from the Student Loans Company. In addition to this you will be provided with a HE bursary of £3,100 per year for up to a maximum of 4 years (up to £12,400 in total). An additional £2,000 will be paid to you upon graduation, to further assist with the cost of post graduate studies or to pay off some of your student loan. An additional £650 (over the whole of your course) is available to you for help towards the cost of books and high cost, one off items or ICT equipment. You may also be entitled to additional support from the university who often have additional funds and grants for care leavers.

If you need alternative accommodation during holiday periods, we will help you find something and assist you with the cost up to a limit of £1800.00 per year.

## 2.2 University support for asylum seeking young people

You may be able to study at university if you are an asylum seeking young person, however your nationality, where you live and how long you have lived there will affect the amount of tuition fees you have to pay and whether you are eligible for support from student finance. As we are not in control of the rules around tuition fees and eligibility criteria for student finance, your leaving care case worker will advise you of your individual circumstances. If we do agree to provide you with support this will be recorded clearly in your pathway plan.

## 2.3 Further education

We will support you to engage in further education if this is what you want to do. Your Leaving Care Case Worker will discuss your ambitions within your Pathway Plan and set out clear targets for you to aim for. They may also ask one of our Opportunity Brokers to help you apply for certain opportunities or find work placements in an industry area which you want to work in.

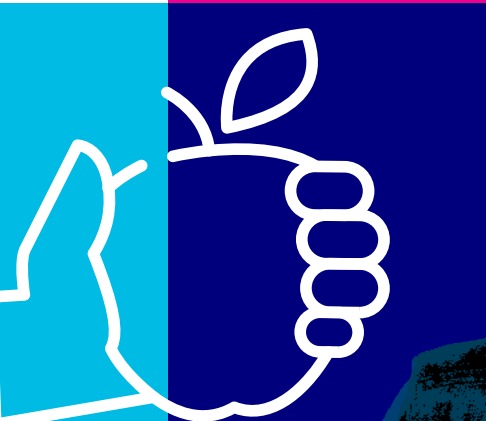
You could receive up to £10 per week if your income is lower than £80 per week and you have engaged in some form of education, training or employment that week. This can include voluntary work or training courses. You do not get this money if you are in Higher Education.

You can ask for help from the Leaving Care Team with child care costs to enable you to go to some education, training or employment. Before we agree to help your income will be assessed and universal services will be accessed first.

If you wish to access further education or training after you are 21 years and you are ineligible to claim benefit, the Leaving Care team will support you with rent and living costs for up to 2 years. If you are required to pay course costs we will support up to £2,000 for up to 2 years. We call this support second chance learning and we will try to help you access other sources of funding before we consider agreeing to this support. We would expect you to engage in this process before we agree to help in other ways.







## Section 3 – Your health and development

Your health and wellbeing matter to us. When we talk about your health, we don't just mean exercising and eating vegetables (although this is an important part of staying healthy!). Health also covers things like how you feel about yourself, how you manage your emotions, whether you have good sexual health and whether you know where to go for support with your health if you are struggling. There are different services available to Care Leavers in North Yorkshire, some are provided by Leaving Care and others are accessed through your GP but either way, your Leaving Care Case Worker will be able to signpost you to the right support.

### 3.1 What Leaving Care can offer you directly

Within your Leaving Care Team, we have specialist workers who can support you. The different specialist roles we have are:

**Life Coach** – Our Life Coaches are qualified Clinical Psychologists who can support you if you were to experience difficulties with your mental health. They may also work with your Leaving Care Case Worker to help them understand the difficulties you are having. This is to ensure the support they provide to you is done in an informed way and considers any extra support you might need.

**Communication Worker** – Our Communication Workers are qualified in Speech and Language Therapy. Many people have underlying speech and language difficulties and our communication workers can work with you to identify and help overcome these difficulties. They may also work with your Leaving Care Case Worker or your employer (with your consent) to make sure the language they use and any materials they give you are clear and easy to understand.

**Family Group Conference (FGC) Worker (incorporating lifelong links)** – you may be asked to engage with an FGC worker if you need help to identify people to support you, or if you need help from your support network to overcome a particular issue. You can view more information on FGC and Life Long Links by following this link: [www.northyorks.gov.uk/\[INSERT-LINK\]](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/[INSERT-LINK])

**Leaving Care Case Worker** – Your Leaving Care Case Worker will coordinate the support you receive from us and discuss your needs with you at least once every 6 months at your Pathway Plan Review. You can also ask them questions and they will offer general advice and suggestions on how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Your Leaving Care Case Worker will also take a lead role when considering your safety and will plan with you to manage any risks you may face.

You will be given a 'Blue Book' health record which will be given when you leave care. Health information like your blood type, dates of your immunisations and the name of your GP will be in this book. This will be useful to you when you access other health services as an adult.

We understand how frustrating it can be when you are unable to register with an NHS dentist. That is why we will support you to travel to a neighbouring NHS dentist if the one closest to you has no vacancies. If there isn't a neighbouring NHS dentist available in what we would consider a reasonable distance we will ensure you receive essential treatment as soon as possible and support you with getting there.

We want you to be as active and healthy as possible so we will talk to you about this when we review your pathway plan and might be able to help in some circumstances along with your local district council.

Eye Care and Opticians – your eyesight is really important to you, and us, and we will help you book regular eye tests.



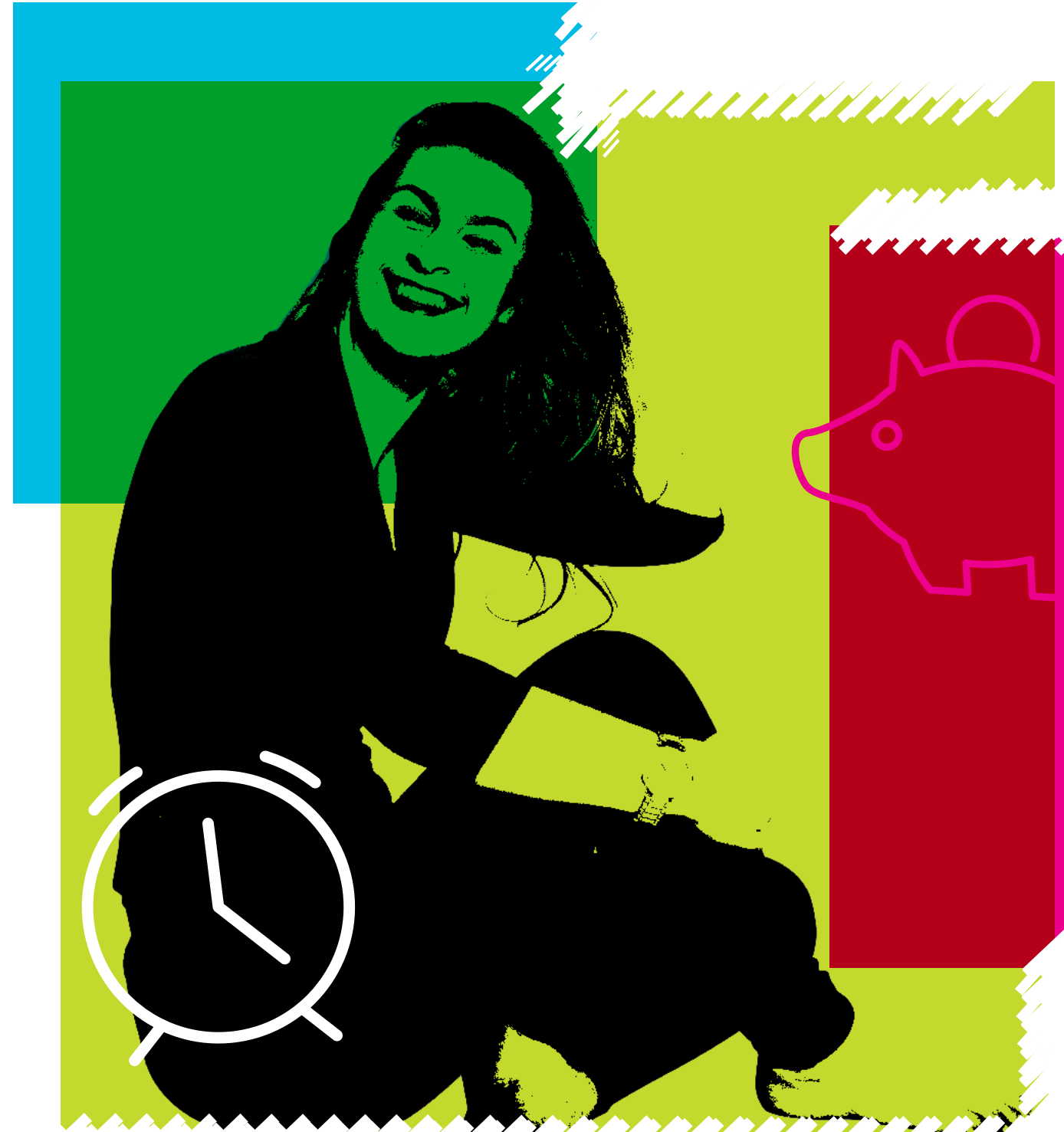
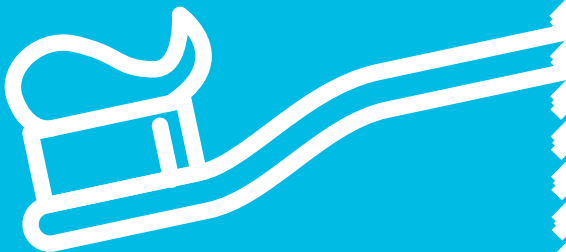
### 3.2 Other services in North Yorkshire

**Primary Health Needs** – Your GP will continue to be your main contact for your primary health needs and any general health problems. You can find your local GP service by following this link <https://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/GP/LocationSearch/4>.

**Health Emergencies** – For emergency treatment you will need to go to your local Accident and Emergency Department or ring 999 and ask for an Ambulance. Your local A&E services can be found by following this link <https://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Accident-and-emergency-services/LocationSearch/428>. For non-emergencies you can call the NHS 111 service for advice and signposting.

**Addiction support** – Horizons provide drug and alcohol services within the North Yorkshire Area and you can self-refer to the service by following this link <http://www.nyhorizons.org.uk/contact-us/>. Your Leaving Care Case Worker can also complete a full referral with you if you would prefer. Horizons provide 1 to 1 and group therapy support to help people overcome drug and alcohol addiction.

**Sexual Health** – Sexual health is an important part of physical and mental health and wellbeing. In North Yorkshire we have an integrated sexual health service called 'YorSexualHealth'. All sexual health clinics in North Yorkshire offer a full range of sexual health and contraceptive services. You can access advice and book appointments by phoning 01904 721111 or visiting the YorSexualHealth website. You can also speak to your Leaving Care Case Worker, or the Leaving Care Case Worker on Duty in your area, who can provide you with free Condoms and arrange for you to get advice, support or emergency treatment.



## Section 4 – Your independent living skills

We want you to be as prepared as possible when you move to live independently for the first time which is why we will start to assess your skills early, usually shortly after you turn 16, during your first Pathway Plan. We will assess your self-care, personal hygiene and other key skills such as cooking, shopping, laundry and your ability to pay bills and manage a budget. We will then work with you and your residential or foster carers to help you to build your skills in the key areas we feel you need help with. We understand that you won't always get things right first time, so we will also ensure you have a safety net during transitional periods to ensure you have a safe environment to learn and build your skills in. This may be by facilitating a 'Staying Put' arrangement with your foster carers or putting you forward for Supported Accommodation where you will have support provided within your tenancy to help you build all the skills you need to live independently successfully. There are also other forms of practical support available which we can refer you for at any time, even if you have already moved on from staying put or supported accommodation. We call this floating support and your Leaving Care Worker will discuss this with you if they feel you would benefit from this.

We want you to have the things you need to live independently so we will talk to you about these and will help you buy you the right things at the right time. We will have a 'Setting Up Home Allowance' set aside for you to buy essential items for your home, things like a washing machine, TV, bed, carpets or cutlery. We will also consider things such as pictures and soft furnishings to make your home feel more like home, as long as you don't need this money for other things.

'Getting Ready for Adult Life' is a resource which includes worksheets and information to help you build on your Independent Living Skills. This is something we or your carers may use together to help you build skills in key areas that you need some help with.

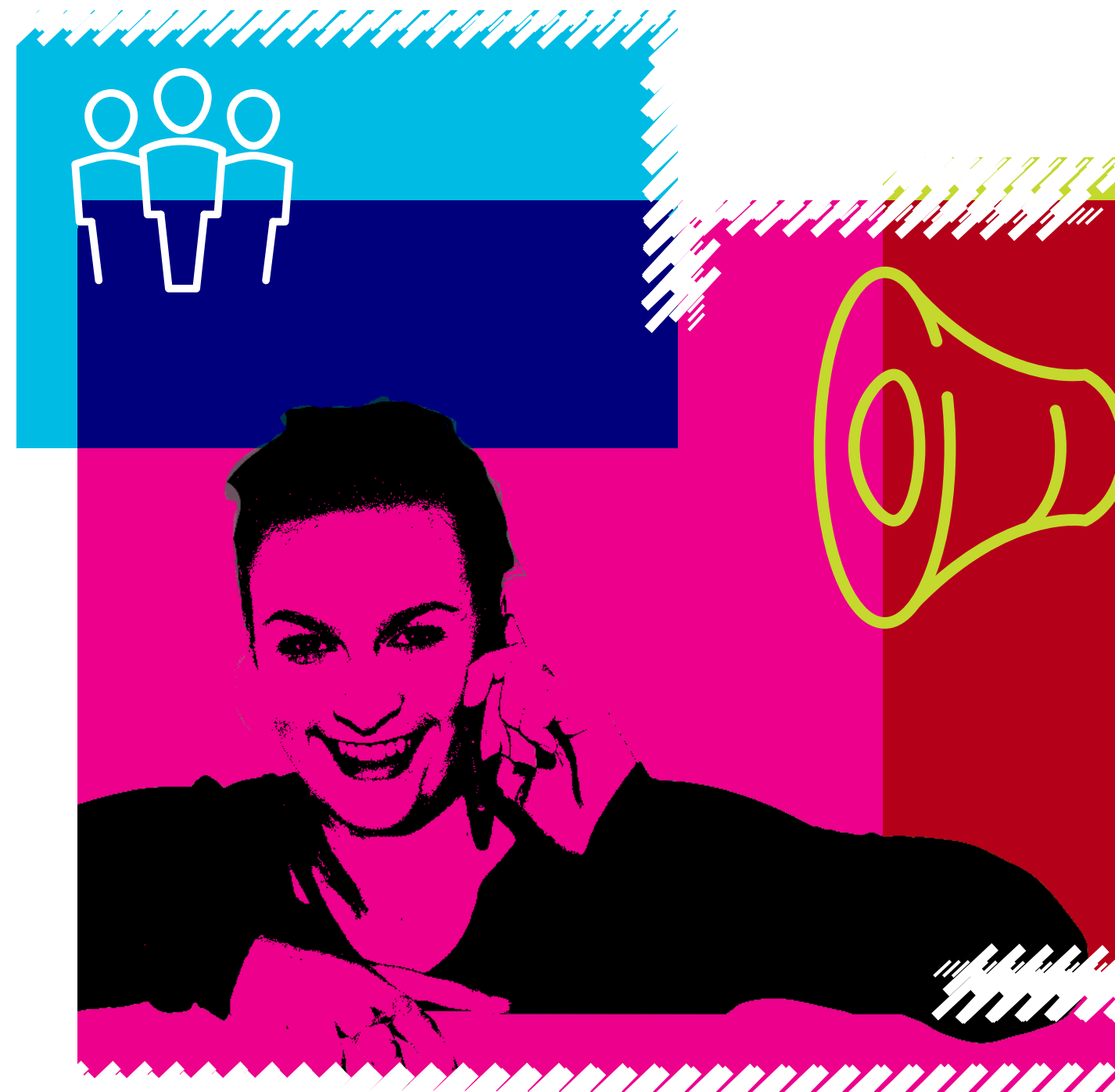


## Section 5 – Your relationships



We want you to have strong and positive relationships with the people who matter to you. That's why we will help you maintain these relationships by providing you with support to reintroduce or maintain contact with family or other people who are important to you, as long as we feel this is in your best interests.

We have a team of Family Group Conference (FGC) workers who can help you reconnect with people who you want to support you in future. This may be teachers who have made a real effort to help you as a child, previous foster carers who you have fallen out of touch with or family members you would like to be back in touch with or want additional support from, basically any appropriate person who you would like support from and who is willing to provide support. Our FGC workers will contact the people you identify on your behalf and see if they are willing to be part of a support plan for you. We call these processes Life Long Links and Family Group Conferencing. You can find out more about Leaving Care FGC workers by following this link: <Update with FGC Leaflet link>



## Section 6 – You, your community and society

We want you to have all the chances in life that other young adults have and throughout your time with Leaving Care, we will encourage you to develop your interests and get involved in positive activities which we think you will enjoy. People can participate in their community or in society in different ways and some people want to participate more than others. We will do our best to get you opportunities to participate in something that interests you or opportunities to develop your interests which you can then pursue independently.

We will do this by providing information on groups and clubs you may wish to join, putting you forward for awards within Leaving Care, informing you of schemes and competitions you can enter which are in line with your talents and interests, encouraging and helping you to enrol on the Electoral Register so you can vote in elections, setting up work experience placements in business areas which interest you, informing you about voluntary work that we think you may be interested in and setting up bespoke opportunities with employers and organisations in line with your aspirations. We will also advise and help you to challenge any discrimination should you ever have to face this.

We also want you to participate in our service and we will provide opportunities and events throughout the year specifically for you and other North Yorkshire Care Leavers. During these events you will have opportunities to feedback your thoughts on the service we provide as well as opportunities to socialise with other Care Leavers. You can keep up to date with what events are coming up by speaking to your Leaving Care Case Worker or finding us on Facebook, searching @NYLeavingCare or following this link: [www.facebook.com/NYLeavingCare](http://www.facebook.com/NYLeavingCare).

We have a Young People's Council (YPC) in North Yorkshire. The YPC is a youth voice group for care experienced young people. The council meets on the first Wednesday of every month from 6pm to 8pm in York to discuss what improvements need to be made to the support you and others receive. The YPC meets directly with decision makers so they can hear what young people are saying. They also organise consultation days for looked after young people and care leavers. If you want to get involved in the young people's council, please contact [ypc@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:ypc@northyorks.gov.uk). You can also keep up to date with everything the YPC are doing on their Facebook page or Twitter profile.



## Section 7 – Your finances and important documents



We will try to help you stay on top of your finances by helping you to budget and letting you know about opportunities to build on your budgeting skills. We may also give you access to certain allowances for things like your living costs if you are ineligible to claim benefit, a gift for special occasions such as a birthday or religious celebration, staying in touch with people who are important to you, buying essential items for your home, buying necessary equipment for education, training or work and helping you with the cost of going to university. In some circumstances we may also help you with the costs of childcare if this will enable you to access employment, education or training and this support is unavailable elsewhere. We may also agree to help you with things which we would consider as exceptional circumstances if we feel it is appropriate to do so. Before you receive this support we will consider your circumstances and the assistance available to you already. If we do agree to financially assist you this will be based on your needs and recorded clearly within your pathway plan.

If you're on a low income or claiming certain benefits we realise that money is tight. We will help you to maximise your income ensuring you're aware of everything you are entitled to, including Council Tax Reductions, Child Benefit and Universal Credit. If you are struggling to manage whilst waiting for a first payment of Universal Credit we can do one of three things to help:

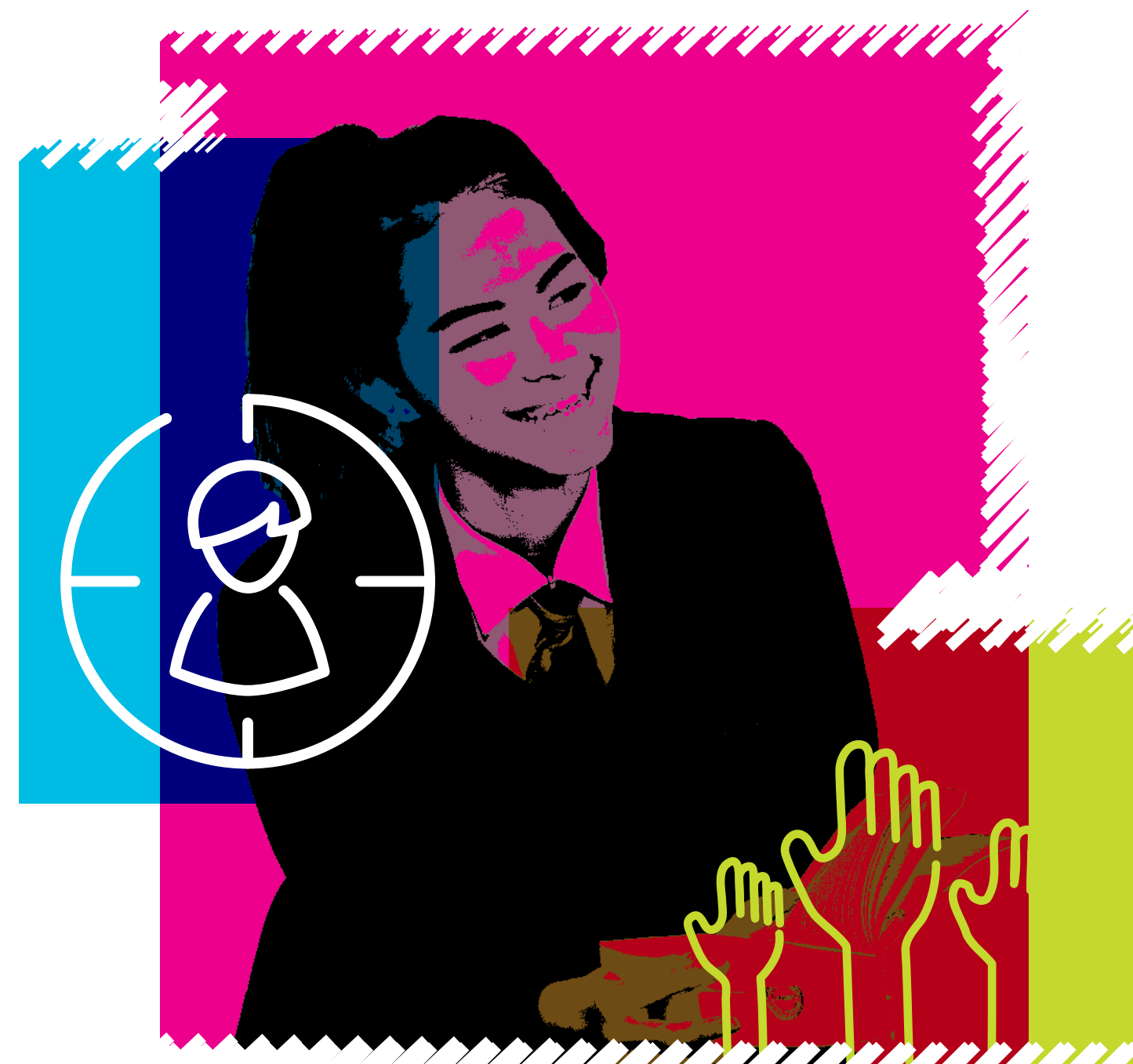
- Provide you with a weekly living allowance which we will deduct from your setting up home allowance.
- Provide you with a weekly living allowance which you pay back to us, once your payments come through.
- If you are eligible, help you to apply for an advance payment which will be deducted from your Universal Credit.

## 7.1 Your important documents

You will need various documents and forms of identification to do things like applying for housing, applying to college, claiming benefits and opening a bank account. To make sure you have everything you need we will support you with obtaining the following (if you have not already received these whilst you were looked after):

- Your national insurance number
- Your first passport
- Your birth certificate
- A provisional driving licence if you need this for Employment, Education or Training.

We will keep copies of these documents and keep these safe for you, however, at certain times you will need the original documents, for example, when you set up a bank account. Once we have given you your documents, it is your responsibility to keep them safe and if you lose them, you will have to pay for replacements. If you don't have a safe place to store your documents speak to your Leaving Care Case Worker and we will look after them for you.



## Section 8 – Your culture, identity and your right to be taken seriously

If you have religious beliefs we will respect them and work with you to create a plan which meets your religious and cultural needs. We will also celebrate your religious festivals with you, this will include ensuring you have opportunities to practice your religion and support with travel to get there if you need it.

As stated in section 5, we will help you to maintain contact with family members and significant people in your life. We will also give you access to our Family Group Conference workers if you need help to build these links. We hope this will contribute to your sense of identity and build your resilience.

We will listen to your views and take them seriously. We will ensure we do this within the work we complete directly with you and by consulting with you on the service that we provide. You will have opportunities to record your wishes and feelings within your pathway plan reviews and by speaking to your Leaving Care Case Worker.

If you should ever be unhappy with the service you have received from us, the first port of call would be to speak to your Leaving Care Case Worker's line manager. You can ask your Leaving Care Case Worker for their details or email [leavingcare@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:leavingcare@northyorks.gov.uk). If you are not happy with the response you may wish to make a complaint. You can make a complaint in the following ways:

**Online:** <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/childrens-social-care-complaints>  
 Email: [cyps.contactus@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:cyps.contactus@northyorks.gov.uk)  
 Telephone: 01609 534193

**Write to:**

CYPS Complaints Team  
 North Yorkshire County Council  
 Children and Young People's Services  
 County Hall  
 Northallerton  
 North Yorkshire DL7 8AD

You can also access the support of a NYAS advocate if you feel you need help to get your views across or you feel like you're not being listened to. Advocacy is about supporting you to make sure that your rights are respected and your views and wishes are heard.

An advocate can provide support by:

- giving you an opportunity to speak confidentially to someone who is independent
- being with you when you have appointments or meetings
- speaking up for you, if you want them to
- giving you information about the different ways that you can raise your concerns
- helping you to think about what you would like to achieve or want to change

You can request an advocate from your Leaving Care Case Worker or by calling the NYAS helpline on 0808 808 1001. You can also access lots of information about advocacy support by following this link <https://youngpeople.nyas.net/>.

## 8.1 Accessing your social care records

You have the right to access your social care records by law. If you want to access your records or you have a question about your time as a looked after child we recommend that you speak to your Leaving Care Case Worker first who should be able to answer your questions or arrange for you to speak to someone who can. If you still want to access your records they will be able to support you to do this. We recommend going through your Leaving Care Case Worker as they will be able to provide you with any support that you may need whilst going through this process as some people can find this experience difficult and emotionally challenging.

If you would like to request access to your records independent of your Leaving Care Case Worker, you can do so in several different ways. Follow this link or visit <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/general-enquiries> for information on the different ways you can raise an enquiry with North Yorkshire County Council.





Each of our 4 teams operate their own duty service. A Leaving Care Case Worker will be on duty in each of the teams to deal with emergencies and provide advice. The duty services operates between 13:00 – 17:00 Monday – Thursday and 13:00 – 16:30 on a Friday. You can contact a duty worker by using one of the following numbers:

Northallerton Team (North): 01609 533796

Scarborough Team (East): 01609 536193

Selby Team (South): 01609 535633

Knaresborough Team (West): 01609 533865

If you need to speak to someone outside of office hours you can contact the Emergency Duty Team on: **01609 780780**. If you need to speak to someone because you or someone else is in immediate danger call the appropriate emergency service on **999**.

If you want to get more involved in how we run our service or you have an idea for a project you can call Jack Lindsay, Senior Leaving Care Case Worker, on **01609 536375** or email [jack.lindsay@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:jack.lindsay@northyorks.gov.uk). You can also get in touch on **Jack's Facebook**.

To stay up to date with upcoming events within Leaving Care you can follow '**North Yorkshire Leaving Care Team**' on Facebook by clicking the link, searching @NYLeavingCare on Facebook. You can also scan the QR code located within the footers of this document on your smartphone.

## Section 9 - Where to get further information and support