

# **Barnet placements sufficiency & commissioning strategy 2019 – 2023**

## Our corporate outcome priorities

### A pleasant, well maintained borough that we protect and invest

- Getting Barnet clean through efficient street cleaning services, minimising and recycling waste, and weekly bin collections.
- Keeping the borough moving, including improvements to roads and pavements.
- Getting the best out of our parks and improving air quality by looking after and investing in our greenspaces.
- Ensuring decent quality housing that buyers and renters can afford, prioritising Barnet residents.
- Investing in community facilities to support a growing population, such as schools and leisure centres.
- Responsible delivery of our major regeneration schemes to create better places to live and work, whilst protecting and enhancing the borough.

### Our residents live happy, healthy, independent with the most vulnerable protected

- Improving services for children and young people and ensuring the needs of children are considered in everything we do.
- Integrating health and social care and providing support for those with mental health problems and complex needs.
- Supporting our residents who are older, vulnerable or who have disabilities, to remain independent and have a good quality of life.
- Helping people into work and better paid employment.
- Encouraging residents to lead active and healthy lifestyles and maintain their mental wellbeing.
- Ensuring we have good schools and enough school places so all children have access to a great education.

### Safe and strong communities where people get along well

- Keeping Barnet safe.
- Tackling anti-social behaviour and environmental crime.
- Celebrating our diverse and strong communities and taking a zero-tolerance approach to hate crime.
- Ensuring we are a family friendly borough.
- Focusing on the strengths of the community and what they can do to help themselves and each other.
- Supporting local businesses to thrive.



### Children & young people's plan Outcomes

**Family & Belonging** Families and children can be together and be part of a community that encourages resilience.

**Safe & Secure** Children and young people are safe and protected from harm.

**Education & Learning** Children and young people can learn about the world around them.

**Culture** Our attitudes and behaviours enhance the way we work with and for children and young people.

**Cooperation & Leadership** We include children and young people in decision making.

**Communication** Information is shared effectively to children, young people and families across the borough.

**Health & Wellbeing** Children are supported to achieve a healthy start in life, enjoy a healthy lifestyle and to build resilience.

## Our Corporate Parenting Pledge

**In 2016, Barnet's Full Council heard and agreed Corporate Parenting and the Pledge for Children in Care & Care Leavers.**

**The motion outlined that councillors are Corporate Parents to all children and young people in care in the London Borough of Barnet, both individually and collectively. Council noted its special responsibility for those in care and that it takes most seriously its role in championing their needs and protecting them from harm.**

**Council affirmed its belief that the safeguarding of children and young people to be among the primary functions of the council and a key part of its duties as councillors. Council, therefore, reaffirmed its commitment to improving the lives of children in care and care leavers in the borough, by working across the council, with partners and with the young people themselves.**



- We will acknowledge your differences through your individual care plans and reflect your nationality, religion, ethnicity, sexuality, gender and disabilities and strive to ensure that you are able to remain in contact with your cultural background.
- We will celebrate your achievements every year through events, newsletters and social media.
- We will help develop your Life Story through photo albums and creativity to help you develop good memories for the future.
- Will provide opportunities for you to have your voice heard through our children in care council and lots of other youth voice forums such as Barnet Youth Board or Youth Parliament.
- We will include and consider the needs of children in care and care leavers within all of our future commissioning, policies and strategic development.

- We will ensure that you see your social worker a minimum of once within the first week of your placement and then a minimum of every 6 weeks thereafter.
- We will only change your social worker if it is absolutely necessary and we will inform you as soon as possible if this happens and outline the reasons.
- We will allocate you an Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) who you will review your Care Plan with and you will be given the opportunity to meet with your IRO separately prior to your reviews to talk about how you feel.
- We will put in place a variety of different ways in which you can communicate with us your thoughts, feelings and views. If this isn't with your social worker or personal adviser, this could be through an advocate, digital media or online surveys.
- We will ensure that we will educate you and raise awareness of current and emerging issues that place children and young people at risk of harm in the community. We will do this through identifying the right interventions at the right time. If we feel that you are not staying safe, we will speak to you and together we will support you and make decisions

- From 5 years old you will receive health assessment every 6 months.
- We will ensure that if you are aged 5-18 years old you will receive a health assessment once a year if you consent to have one.
- We will ensure that you have regular eye and dental examinations.
- We will help you access leisure, recreational and cultural opportunities through reduced rate gym membership, free swimming and school holiday/weekend activities and trips.
- We will see that you have a named nurse who can provide support on physical and emotional health issues. If you need more specialist support, such as that through Child Adolescent Mental Health Services, then we will ensure that you are referred for the right interventions at the right time.

- Our virtual school will support you and your school to ensure you can achieve the best results.
- We will make sure that you have access to good quality early years education between the ages of two and four.
- We will make sure that you have stability in your education and that you only attend a school that is right for your needs.
- We will make sure that you will go to a school rated OFSTED 'good' or 'outstanding' and if not ensure that the virtual school supports you more
- We will ensure that you have access to independent Information, Advice and Guidance in order to help you plan your future career. We will put in place volunteering and work experience opportunities for you.
- We will make sure that you have access to Apprenticeships offered by us, or our partner organisations.
- We will support you post 16 into further education, University or employment.
- We will provide a laptop where it is an essential part of your learning.

- We will try our best to ensure that you will be as near to your family and friends as possible where that is in your best interests.
- We will ensure that you are placed in safe and welcoming accommodation.
- We will ensure that your voice and wishes will be at the forefront of any decisions taken on where you live
- We will make sure you are able to 'Stay Put' with your existing foster carers, if you wish, up to the age of 21.
- We will make sure that when you transition to Leaving Care a housing nomination form is undertaken to help you move in to independent living if you wish.
- We will ensure that you have a passport, NI number and all other forms of identification at the times you are legally allowed to have them.

## Executive summary

Our ambition is to work towards the vision of creating a Family Friendly Barnet, enabling opportunities for our children and young people to achieve their best. Barnet's Family Services is improving with significant change being made to ensure that practice is of a high standard and the needs of children are well served.

Since 2017 Barnet has cemented its strengths, and has made improvements in the areas where it has needed to improve. At the heart of the journey has been building of resilience in children and their families enabling them to bounce back from adversity.

The role that Barnet Council and its partners play in the life of children and their families provides a unique opportunity to promote and embed resilience. Resilience based practice sits at the heart of improving outcomes for children and young people; an approach that is based on looking for strengths and opportunities to build on, rather than for issues or problems to treat. We therefore seek to enable children to remain at home with their families through building family resilience, however we know this is not always possible, with some children needing to be placed in short term or permanent care. In these circumstances, our focus has been on long term planning for children in care and achieving permanence by providing wrap around care and support that meets their needs and prepares them for adulthood.

Our Corporate Vision and Corporate Parenting Pledge for Children in Care & Care Leavers by full Council in 2016, takes most seriously its corporate parenting role in championing the needs of children in care and care leavers. One such element of this is ensuring that the borough has sufficient high-quality placements, accommodation and support to meet the needs of all our children in care and leaving care. We will also focus on hearing their voice, safeguarding them from harm, supporting them to achieve positive outcomes and enabling them to achieve their aspirations and make a positive contribution.

We have a statutory duty to ensure, as far as it is practical, that there is sufficient accommodation for children in care within the local area and address gaps in provision through robust plans and commissioning strategies (Statutory Guidance on securing sufficient accommodation for Looked After Children 2010). This duty is set within the context of significant financial pressures on public sector funding and complex and rapid changes in policy and benefits reform. Cost variations based on market forces in the supply and demand of placements and the accommodation landscape for children and young people has also played a contributing factor on increasing budgets.

This strategy will set out how we will meet this duty, and the steps we are taking to secure sufficient accommodation for children in care and leaving care which is the right place, made at the right time, of high quality, that provides appropriate care and support to their needs. All of which are fundamental to achieving best outcomes for children and enabling them to return home where possible.

**Chris Munday**

Strategic Director – Children and Young people

**Councillor Longstaff**

Lead Member of Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee

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## 1. Introduction and Vision

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Our aim is to make Barnet the most Family Friendly Borough by 2023. The approach to achieve this is to focus on developing families' resilience, which evidence tells us is pivotal to delivering the best outcomes for children and young people. Resilience is defined as 'the ability to bounce back from stress and adversity and take on new challenges, leading to better outcomes'.

In Barnet we believe that for most children and young people the best place to live is with their family of origin, however there will be some children and young people who need to live either short term or permanently with substitute carers. We have high aspirations for, and expectations of the children in our corporate care and want them to be able to confidently say "I have, I can, I am". Historically, outcomes for children who have been in care have been poor compared to their peers. Research has shown that as adults they do less well educationally, they are over represented in the criminal justice system, have poorer health outcomes including an increased risk of suffering from mental health difficulties, have an increased likelihood of becoming homeless and experience economic and relationship difficulties in their own families.

Our vision to improve these outcomes is to:

- Set out in this strategy how we will provide sufficient accommodation for the children in our care, that is consistent with their needs and welfare requirements, whilst helping to deliver best value of the public purse.
- Set out the post permanence plans of preparing care leavers for independence and adulthood by ensuring local high quality and cost effective supported accommodation and permanent housing options are available for our growing numbers of 16+ care leavers, ensuring our continued commitment to support them to achieve their full potential.
- Growing in house Fostering capacity to support children with additional needs to remain within the Borough to ensure they stay connected to their local networks where appropriate.
- Build and commission specialist residential provision in borough, including reconfiguration of existing homes to meet emerging needs.

This strategy has incorporated information and analysis of children who are in care or leaving care and focuses on assessing the demand and supply of placements for these children. It provides insight into the things that affect local need for placements and the factors that affect sufficiency by placement type. The strategy also draws upon relevant reviews and evidence for change, including Ofsted, changes to statutory duty (e.g. homelessness) and key policies.

Placement requirements change rapidly. In addition, the commissioning landscape is one that includes complex market dynamics - in relation to costs variations based on market forces in the supply and demand of placements and the accommodation landscape. This poses a challenge for forecasting needs and sufficiency. The strategy should be considered within the context of a number of other strategically relevant documents, including:

- Children and young people's plan
- Corporate Parenting Strategy
- CAMHS Transformation Plan

- Ofsted improvement plan
- Housing delivery plan 2024
- Homelessness strategy and youth homelessness action plan
- Early Help Strategy
- SEND sufficiency and commissioning strategy

## 2. Barnet's population

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Barnet is the largest Borough in London by population and is continuing to grow. The highest rates of population growth are forecast to occur around the planned development works in the west of the Borough, with over 121% growth in Golders Green and 115% in Colindale between 2017 and 2032.

The west of the Borough has the highest levels of deprivation, particularly in Burnt Oak, Colindale, Childs Hills and West Hendon.

Christianity is the largest faith community in Barnet accounting for 41% of the total population. 1 in 5 of all Jewish people in England and Wales live in Barnet. 15% of Barnet's population is Jewish, compared to an average of 0.4% of the population in our 7 statistical neighbours.

### The children and young people we work with

There are approximately 99,000 children and young people under the age of 19 years living in Barnet, representing 26% of the Borough's total population of 387,803. The population of children and young people in Barnet is estimated to grow by 3% between 2018 and 2025, when it is projected to reach 101,875.

We know we have a large universal population that is doing well, but a small percentage (2%) need targeted and specialist support to meet their needs and improve their outcomes in line with their peers.

In terms of indicators of deprivation, the proportion of children entitled to free school meals:

- in primary schools is 16.7% (the national average is 14.5%)
- in secondary schools is 13.1% (the national average is 13.2%)

In addition to this, 19% of children under five (5,000 children) live in low income families. Data shows that there is a correlation between the children, young people and families that fall within these cohorts and their locations in the borough. The majority of children in low income families live in the west of the borough where there are higher rates of deprivation.

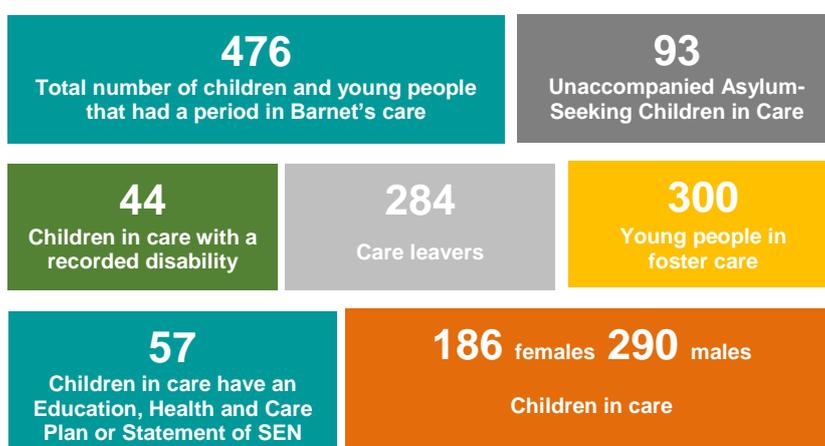
Barnet has a notably higher proportion of children in care aged 16+ compared to the national average (91% more than the national average as at November 2017). Part of this increase is in line with averages across London due to the number of newly arrived Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children.

Children and young people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups account for 52% of all children living in the area compared to 30% nationally. In the 0 – 9 age group there are more children from BAME groups than in any other. The largest minority ethnic groups of children and young people in the area are Indian and Black African. The proportion of children and young people with English as an additional language in primary schools is 48.7% (the national average is 20.1%). In secondary schools, this is 38.8% (the national average is 15.7%).

An in-depth analysis of Barnet’s rates of demand per 10,000 population for social care services highlighted an underrepresentation of Jewish children in Barnet’s social care services.

### 3. Profile of children in Care

The profile of all children in care and care leavers in 2018/19, as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019



Source: *Children’s Service Analysis Tool (April 2018 to March 2019)*

#### Overview

Barnet had 312 children in care 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 (32.1 per 10,000 children). The number and children in care has decreased over the last two years. There were 336 children in care on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 (a rate of 34.7 per 10,000 children) and 342 children in care in on 31 March 2017 (35.3 per 10,000 children). This trend is consistent across most London boroughs.

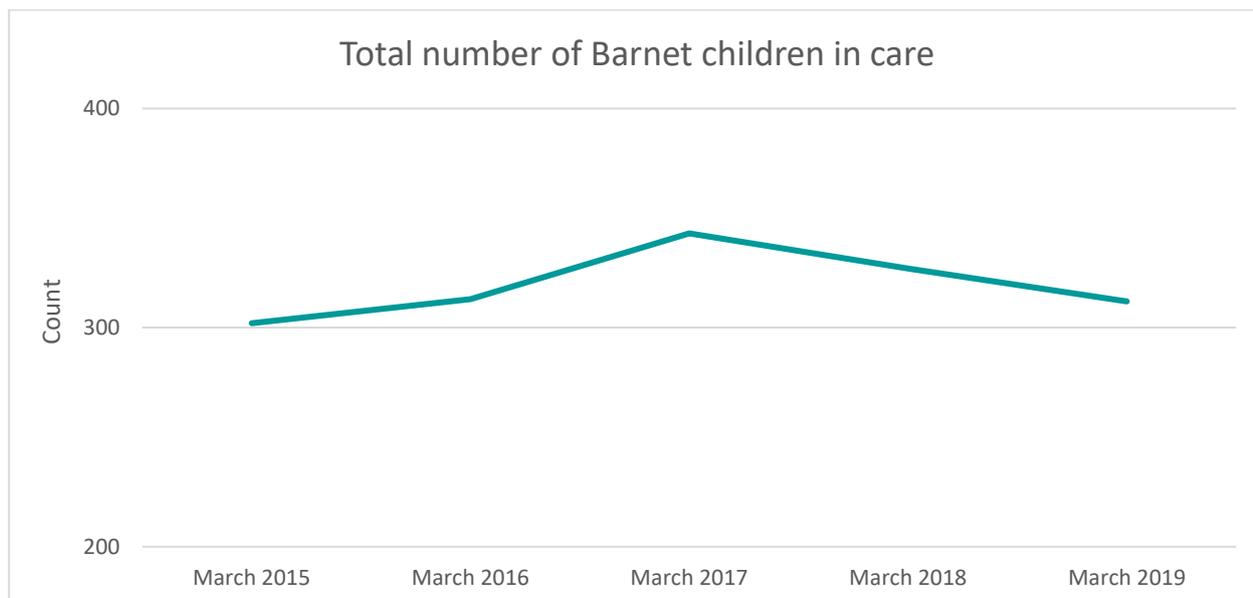
Of the 312 children in care as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019:

- **184** (59%) are male; and
- **59** (19%) are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC)

With regards to placement location:

- **210** (60%) live in foster care, of whom **117** live with Barnet foster carers
- **23** live with connected carers
- **55** live in residential units, of whom 61% are more than 20 miles away from Barnet
- **10** children became subject of special guardianship orders
- **13** children were adopted during this year
- **6** children subject to care orders live with parents under the placement at home regulations

## Children in care



*Figure 1: Children in care 2015 –2019*

Overall, numbers of children in care decreased during 2017/18 and in 2018/19, this trend is continuing. March 2019 figures indicate that the number of children in care have decreased by 7% compared to last year.

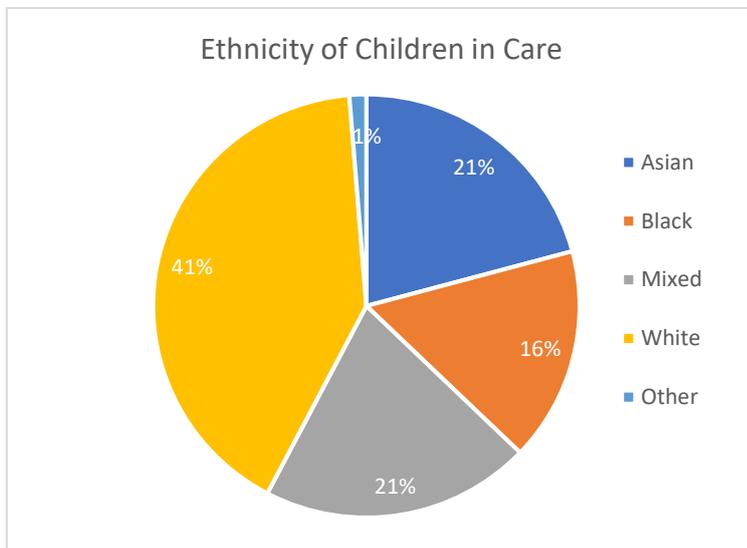
The number of children in care under a care order has declined year on year, however the number of children on an interim care order has increased by 30% (14 children) from March 2017/18 to 2018/19; this represents a change from 14.1% of the children in care to 19.2%. This figure is an indication that more children were subject to care proceedings within the last year than previous years, addressing the concerns of drift and delay in the system identified during the Ofsted Single Inspection Framework inspection in July 2017.

### **We need...**

- To have a continued focus on robust assessment and early intervention
- To have the right support to build resilience in families, enabling children to stay at home where possible
- Review the needs of children and young people on the edge of care and continue to strengthen our existing support available

## Ethnicity, age & gender of children in care

As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019, the majority of children in care in Barnet (60%) are from Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds as indicated in figure 2 below.



*Figure 2: Children in care March 2019*

This is an over-representation when compared to Barnet's children and young people population, of whom BAME groups account for 59%. However, these figures reflect the number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children in Barnet's care.

The demographics of children in care are more diverse compared to the make-up of children and young people nationally, where those from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds account for 30% of this population.

There are more boys in Barnet's care, which correlates with previous years. Currently boys make up 59% of the children in care cohort.

There has been a notable increase in babies and young people aged 16+ becoming looked after over the past three years – see figure 3 below.

Data suggests that this trend is associated with a greater focus on robust assessments, intervening earlier and being more decisive for younger children and increased numbers of unaccompanied minors.

### We need...

- To ensure placement provision can meet needs and reflect the rich diversity within Barnet's children in care
- To continue to ensure that children's diversity and identity needs are met
- To have sufficient placements to support the needs of older children, boys and mother and babies in care

## Barnet's Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC)

Compared to national trends and statistical neighbours Barnet has seen a notable growth in unaccompanied young people in recent years, exceeding the growth of all except one statistical neighbour.

**Table 1: Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking-Children comparison**

Local Authority	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Change from 2013/14 - 2017/18 (%)
Redbridge	25	20	15	-40
Hillingdon	95	110	85	-11
Bromley	15	20	15	0
Milton Keynes	25	40	40	12.5
Kingston upon Thames	20	25	25	25
Merton	15	25	20	33
<b>Statistical Neighbours</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>33.5</b>
<b>Barnet</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>49</b>
Hounslow	40	35	45	80
Ealing	25	25	45	80
Sutton	10	15	20	100

Barnet's increase occurred mostly in 2016/17 which correlates with the sharp increase in total numbers of children in care in that year. At March 2018, Barnet's total number of UASC was higher than all except one statistical neighbour; the London Borough of Hillingdon, which is home to Heathrow Airport.

In 2018/19, Barnet has seen slower growth in the number of UASC within the borough, however, the rate of newly arrived young people has remained higher for Barnet than other local authorities in London and across the country. As of March 2019, Barnet has 59 UASC in care.

Our data tells us that the majority of unaccompanied young people that arrive in Barnet are aged 15 and over and are male (93% are male and 72% are male and aged 16-17). A lot of these young people present with specific needs relating to their experiences of separation and loss from their families and in some cases, trauma, as a result of exploitation whilst travelling to the UK.

As we may be supporting and accommodating these young people until they are aged 25 sufficient accommodation is required to support the long term housing needs of UASC and of other young people with no recourse to public funds.

**We need...**

- To continue to plan ahead for the future needs of the growing numbers of UASC in Barnet
- To review existing accommodation and support options to deliver high quality, appropriate housing and support for UASC and other young people with no recourse to public funds
- To continue to secure local, cost effective supported accommodation and independent housing to meet the long-term accommodation needs of UASC and other young people with no recourse to public funds as they transition to adulthood and independent living

**Age of children entering care**

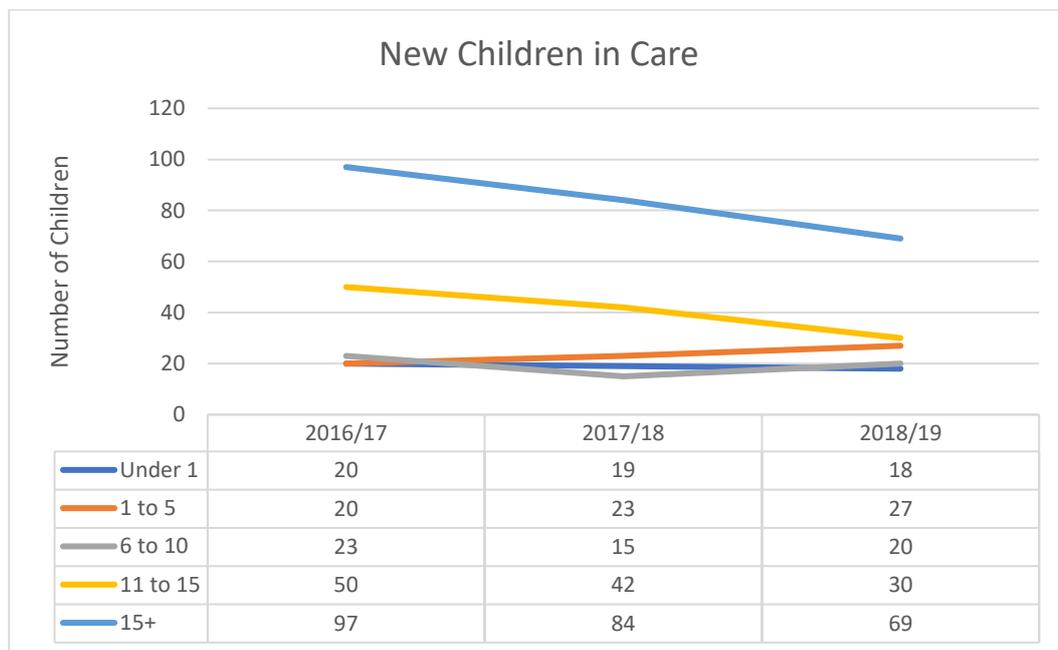


Figure 3: New children in care by age

Compared to national trends, young people in Barnet tend to come into care at an older age. As a result, Barnet has nearly twice as many children in care aged over 16 than the national average. 44% of the current Children in Care cohort are aged 16-17 (147 young people) and 42% of those new to care in 2018/19 were aged 15 or older.

We are seeing an increase in the number of UASC who present directly to authorities in Barnet and an increase in the need to safeguard vulnerable adolescents from gangs and exploitation including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE).

### We need...

- To provide a service for an increased number of older children in care, including UASC and those with potentially more complex needs
- To continue to plan ahead for the needs of our increasing numbers of older children in care, including the need for permanence

### Disability

The number of children in care with a disability has decreased over the past three years, by 2%. As can be seen in the adjacent table, this is a reduction of six young people.

Date	Disabled children	% CiC
March 2016	40	12.8%
March 2017	40	11.7%
March 2018	35	10.7%
March 2019	33	10.6%

### Mental Health

There has been an increase in the number of children in care with additional needs including autism and mental health needs. Based on prevalence estimates for 2018/19, the total number of children who are estimated to have a mental health disorder in Barnet is circa 7,596. A recent survey of children in care and care leavers highlighted that 86% of young people (81% of 8-12 year olds and 89% of 13-25 year olds) said that they had felt emotionally worried. From the survey we also know that children and young people and care leavers do not know about the online support counselling portal (Kooth) that is available to them. There is a need to ensure that all children in care and care leavers have access to timely CAMHS support, including early help services.

### We need...

- To promote awareness of the early help CAMHS resources available to children in care and care leavers, including online counselling, in house and commissioned therapeutic support services
- To review the CAMHS offer available to out of borough children in care and care leavers
- To work in partnership through the CAMHS Transformation Board to ensure all Barnet's children in care and care leavers can access appropriate and timely services to promote their health and wellbeing, including CAMHS

### Care leavers

Barnet's care leaver service at Woodhouse Road incorporates a diverse offer of information, advice and support across mental health, money management, education, employment and benefits. This service utilises personalised approaches to pathway planning, using Life Story work

to help young people to make sense of their past experiences and plan their future. Responsive specialist services are also available to meet to the needs of young people, particularly relating to mental health; this service also has robust partnership arrangements with education, employment and training support services.

In addition, the introduction of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 placed a duty on local authorities to support any care leaver aged 25 upon their request, including past care leavers who may want their case reopened. This, coupled with the older Children in Care cohort in Barnet, has and will continue to lead to a significant number of young people becoming Care Leavers, with young people leaving the service at an older age (and therefore at a slower rate) in future.

Figure 4 shows that the number of care leavers in Barnet has increased significantly over the past eighteen months. From April 2017 to March 2019, Care Leaver numbers have risen by 42.6%; this equates to an additional 84 Care Leavers. Reasons for the increase include the sharp rise in the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children (UASC) in Barnet, and an increase in children over the age of 16 years coming into care for the first time.

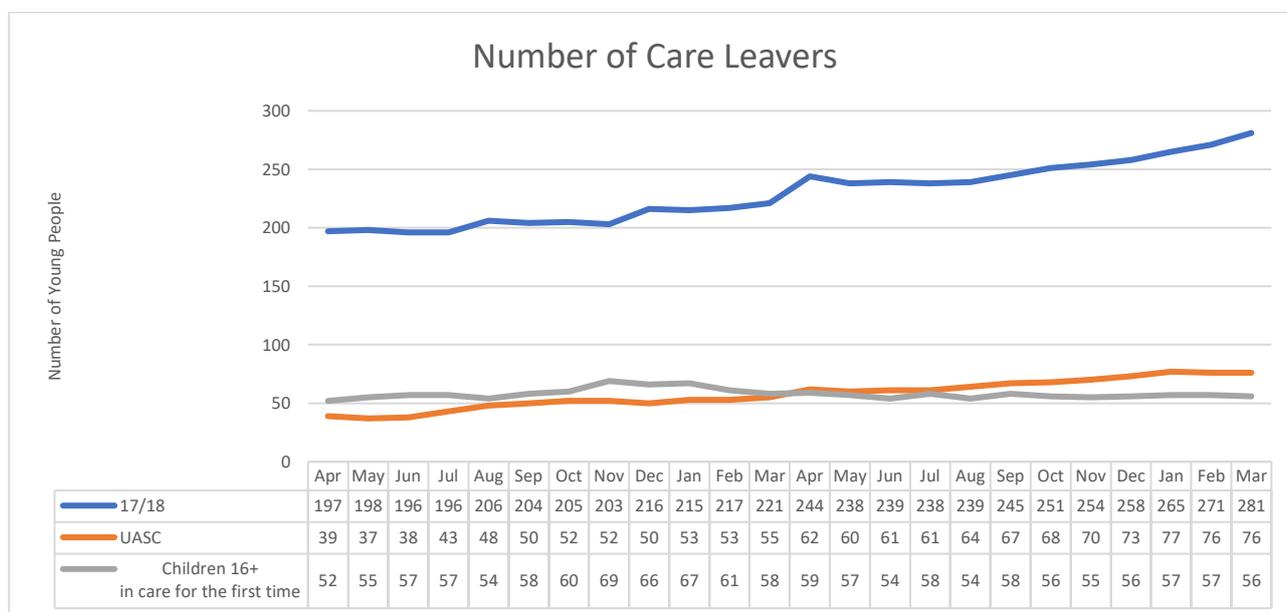


Figure 4: Care leavers 2017-March 2019

Due to the high number of young people becoming looked after at 16 years old over the past two years, the needs presenting within the leaving care service are now more complex and higher risk. The Placements Team are experiencing an increase in the number of vulnerable adolescents presenting with substance misuse issues, mental health needs and risk and/or experience of criminal and sexual exploitation.

The number of 18-25-year-old care leavers is forecast to grow by circa 37% over the next 2 years.

In a recent survey, almost half of care leavers said they were concerned about finding the right accommodation. The survey also highlighted that some care leavers lack awareness of housing support that is available.

**We need...**

- To plan for sufficient accommodation and support to meet the increasing numbers of care leavers and continue to work with housing colleagues to achieve this through our housing delivery plan 2024
- To further enhance our support care leavers to prepare for independence, providing specialist support for those with substance misuse issues, mental health needs and those at risk of exploitation

## 4. Edge of Care

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Barnet's multi-agency Early Help offer ensures young people and families get the right support at an early stage, before needs increase and to ensure services are delivered in a more co-ordinated systemic way.

Early help services that are relevant for children that may be at risk of going into care include family therapy, family mediation, specialist 1:1 mentoring, practical and emotional support, CAMHS services, positive activities for young people, counselling, housing and employment support, therapeutic support to families and young people and family group conferences as well as specialist outreach support for young people exposed to gang activity, CSE or exploitation.

The REACH team provides an intensive multisystemic approach for young people and is an intensive family and community based programme designed to make various changes in social systems (home, school, community, peer relations), to achieve positive outcomes for the young person, reduce risk, divert away from criminal justice system, build resilience and positive support networks.

**We need...**

- To review the needs of children and young people on the edge of care
- To further develop and expand the systemic, multidisciplinary edge of care offer to ensure that the right help is offered first time to families

## 5. Current placement provision

This section describes our current provision including the cost and market position of placements and accommodation based support and our commissioning arrangements. It details the types of provision that meet our sufficiency needs on demand and outlines plans to meet any sufficiency gaps.

### Placements spend by type of placement provision

Figure 5 below details the average weekly cost for each type of placement provision in 2018-19

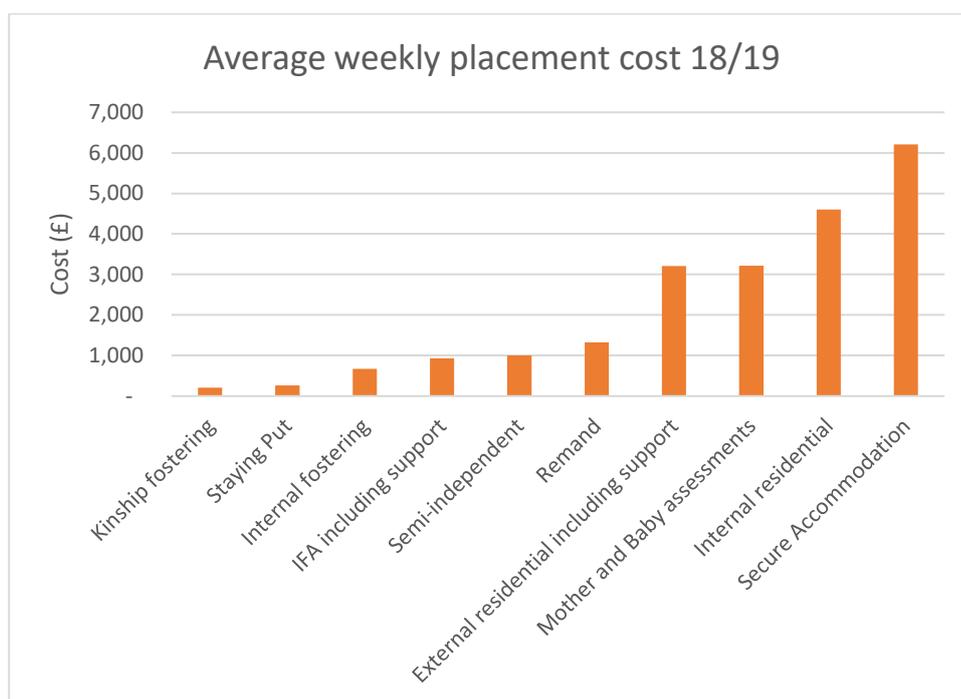


Figure 5: Placement costs

Whilst secure accommodation is the most expensive placement type, Barnet does not have any welfare secure placements at present (March 2019) and numbers of secure placements over the last three years are very low. Welfare secure placements are court directed and out of borough—often at a great distance from the borough. Placements for young people on remand are over £1,300 per week on average. There are two remand placements in borough. Although numbers are small, this represents a cost pressure.

Mother and baby residential placements represent a higher cost placement and cost typically around £3,000 per week. The number of new mother and baby placements has reduced since 2018 so this type of provision does not reflect as much of a pressure as in the past. Going forwards, Barnet is committed to developing mother and baby placements within a nurturing home environment (foster placement), as opposed to residential settings as a more cost-effective approach that is in line with best practise.

External residential is the most expensive type of provision and represents a big cost pressure for Barnet, typically costing over £3000 per week. Our in house residential costs equate to £2,700 per week when the units are at full capacity, however, due to the current vacancies the average weekly costs of internal units is £4,600.

Planning for permanence is of paramount importance for the 55 children in residential placements ensuring a long-term view to where their home will be. Where possible, residential placements will be stepped down to family settings as needs are met better within family and social networks.

Whilst fostering placements cost typically under £1000 per week some specialist solo fostering placements for children with additional needs can cost up to £1500 per week. There were 75 placements with independent Fostering agencies in 2018-19, compared to 115 placed with Barnet's in-house Foster carers. Based on average placement number (FTE) throughout the year. Internal Fostering placements (£675) cost on average £261 less than the average costs of foster placements with external agencies (£936). Staying Put is only available for young people aged 18 and over in fostering arrangements.

Given the high number of children in care age 16+ and care leavers, it is essential to ensure quality and value for money for placements for older children and those approaching adulthood. Barnet has a total of 95 young people in semi-independent and supported accommodation, including 50 young people aged 16 and 17 and 45 care leavers, aged 18-24 in semi-independent supported accommodation. Costs of supported accommodation have increased in recent years from an average of £850 per week in 2016-17 to £1,000 per week in 2018-19, with higher costs for young people that have higher support needs requiring more than 10 hours of keyworker support per week. Barnet has commissioned semi-independent provision close to Barnet and in borough, however, supported accommodation is not available in borough for young people with high needs such as mental health and CSE. Supported Lodgings would represent a more cost-effective accommodation option than that of semi-independent for young people aged 18+ with low levels of support needs.

#### **We need...**

- To review in house residential provision, with a view to reconfiguration, in line with local emerging needs
- To ensure robust permanence planning, including step down between placement types
- To commission sufficient high quality, cost effective provision for young people age 16+, including supported lodging
- Commission floating support for 16+ to compliment placement and housing offer
- Develop a London solution to welfare and justice secure placements

## Current commissioning arrangements

This section details how we meet placement needs through our in house and commissioned provision.

Barnet has in house provision for both fostering and residential care. Barnet is also part of the West London regional Alliance for commissioning. The West London Alliance (WLA) hosts three Dynamic Purchasing Vehicle (DPVs) covering Independent Fostering Agencies, Residential Children's Homes and Special Educational Residential provision. WLA Providers submit a capped rate for placement costs which are negotiated on an individual basis. The WLA are launching a Dynamic Purchasing Vehicle (DPV) and kite mark accreditation scheme for Semi-independent and other types of supported accommodation in 2019-20.

Where the WLA lists cannot meet care requirements for a placement, Barnet commissions placement and support from the London Care Placement Residential and Fostering lists. Spot purchase (direct award contracts) are used in instances where a placement cannot be found via the WLA or LCP lists. Spot purchases can pose a higher risk than framework contacts purchases that are quality assured with clear pricing bands.

The West London Association undertakes market management functions and services are monitored by a regional contract management team. Monitoring includes key performance indicators, quality assurance indicators, safeguarding and financial monitoring.

Barnet has a dedicated placement team for brokering and monitoring placements. WLA Placements are arranged through an e-brokerage platform called Careplace. This platform enables reporting both on a borough and regional basis on placements sought (packages put out on the portal); placements successfully matched; spend and other aspects such as Ofsted rating or safeguarding alerts.

### We need...

- To shape the local and regional market to ensure sufficiency, in accordance with local need

## 6. Arrangements by placement types

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### Fostering

Fostering placements offer children in care that cannot live with family or friends an alternative placement within a family home. These placements are provided by Foster Carers that are recruited and managed by Barnet Family Services (sometimes referred to as in-house foster carers) and foster placements that are provided by Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs).

In house Fostering provision is the first choice for Foster placements as carers tend to be in borough or close to the borough and represent value for money.

As at 31 March 2019, of 312 children in care, 210 (60%) are placed with foster carers. 56% of these are placed in house. A further 23 live with connected carers. Figure 6 below shows the trend from 2017-2019, with an increase in the number of in house Foster placements made over the period.

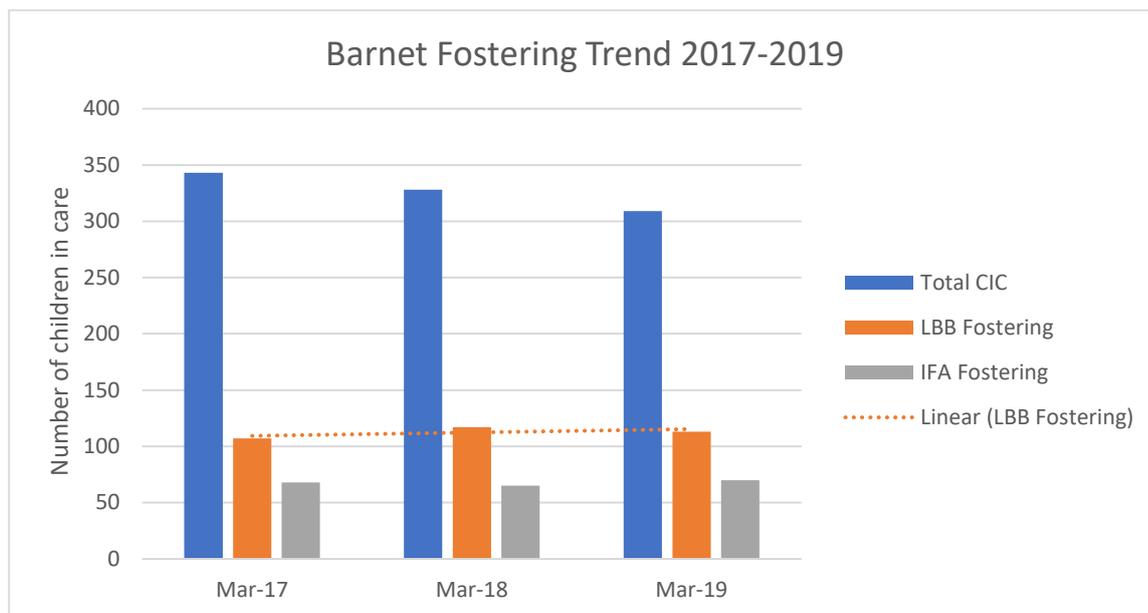


Figure 6: Fostering provision

### In house foster carers

Barnet Family Services has 110 foster carer households and 178 individual carers (as of March 2019). The number of Foster carers has increased by 8% since March 2017 when Barnet had 103 Fostering households and 165 carers. The in house service has capacity for 196 children to be placed, including 68 sibling groups. Barnet's Foster carers are approved to care for children age 0-18.

Given the demographics and needs of children coming into care, Foster carers need to be able to care for teenagers and those with additional needs. To do this, Foster carers would benefit from having therapeutic care training, including Non- Verbal Resistance (NVR) training, and Mental health training.

This type of provision is more costs effective than Independent Fostering Agencies. There are clear advantages to developing and increasing capacity of Barnet's in house fostering service, including increasing the number of placements within the borough, enabling children to be placed in a

nurturing home environment close to school or college and developing services in accordance with local needs such as the needs of adolescents and those with additional needs.

**We need...**

- To have sufficient numbers of local foster carers with the training and expertise to care for children with higher needs, including complex health and behavioural needs, children that go missing, children at risk of exploitation and older children

**Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs)**

Barnet is the lead borough for the West London regional Independent Fostering Dynamic Purchasing Vehicle (DPV). This DPV has been live since April 2018 and has 48 IFAs on an approved list. This includes the provision of Fostering for children aged 0-15 (45 agencies); 16-17 (45 agencies), Parent and child placements (44 agencies) and Specialist placements (43 agencies).

Where a placement match cannot be identified through the West London lists Barnet commissions the London Care Placement List for Independent Fostering provision, which includes 95 providers. 8% of current IFA placements are not part of any regional lists or DPVs and are made through spot purchasing arrangements, indicating that the existing commissioning frameworks and lists are not meeting all of Barnet’s needs for foster placements.

**Special Guardianship Order / kinship placements (family/friends)**

The number of children placed with family under kinship or special guardian arrangements has increased year on year, with an average overall increase of 12% from 2015/16 to 2018/19 (Figure 7 below). The number of SGOs fluctuate throughout the year, depending on the individual circumstance of the child or sibling group. This option has advantages of enabling the child to remain with their family.

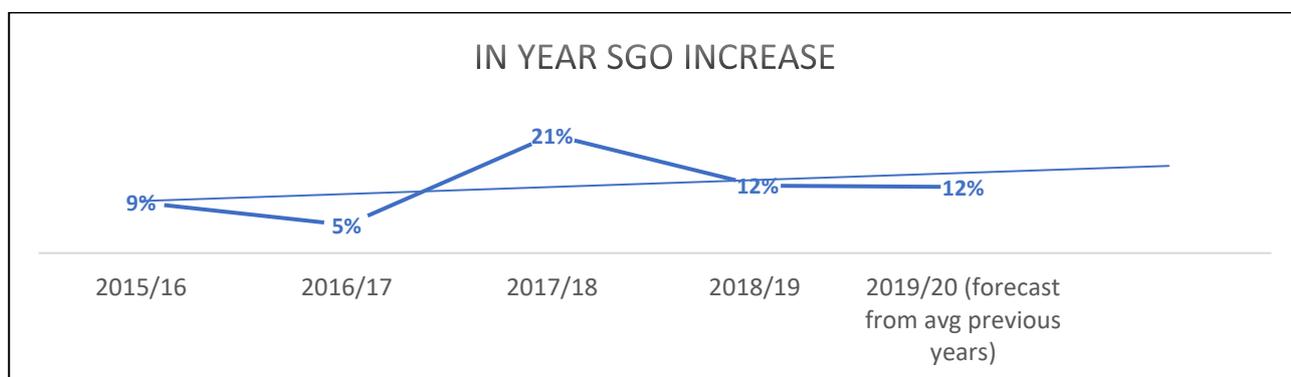


Figure 7: Special Guardianship Orders 2015-16 to 2019-20 forecast

## Mother and baby placements

Barnet had 14 mother and baby placements in 2017/18. Numbers of placements made has decreased in 2018/19 to 5. In most instances, this type of assessment and support is best delivered in a home environment. At present, Barnet has no local provision to provide this type of specialist assessment and support and therefore has used external providers, including high cost residential settings. Specialist mother and baby fostering placements are much more cost effective, averaging £1500 per week, as opposed to £3000 for residential.

### We need...

- To recruit and train local foster carers to take mother and baby placements
- To deliver mother and baby assessments in foster carer settings

## Permanence and adoption

Planning for permanence is required to seek to ensure that children have a secure, stable and loving family to support them through childhood and transition to adulthood. Permanence is important to ensure children's developing sense of identity and belonging. Taking a longer-term view to permanence planning is a priority for Barnet and is paramount to consider when assessing placement sufficiency. Since 2017, Family Services have made changes to ensure timely decision-making for children who need permanence, including the assessment and support for connected carers. As a result, needs for permanence and stability are being mostly met (SEF, Oct 2018).

Since 2017 the numbers of children requiring adoptive placements has increased, with 13 adoptions confirmed in 2018-19. The pool of available adopters was insufficient in the beginning of 2017 so an active recruitment campaign - in conjunction with two other boroughs within the North London Adoption Consortium - was undertaken aimed at BAME adopters and those willing to consider foster to adopt and sibling groups.

The work with the North London Adoption and Fostering Consortium has provided positive opportunities for family finding for adoption and fostering. Since April 2018, thirteen adoptions have been completed.

## Residential placements

Barnet Family Services needs to be able to provide specialist placements for children that are unable to live at home or with foster carers. Children in residential placements tend to be older, male, have complex needs such as mental health, trauma and / or be children that have been subject to child sexual exploitation. They require very high levels of support and specialist intervention and tend to display more challenging behaviour.

Less than 17% of children in care in Barnet are in residential care. External residential weekly costs are high, averaging £3,211 per week and can be further inflated through additional costs associated with 1:1 support; therapeutic interventions and other additional costs. There are currently 233 individual homes on the WLA list and the LCP Residential list has 68 providers and 228 homes.

Although the number and proportion of residential placements has remained relatively stable since 2017, costs for individual residential placements have increased year on year. Costs for external residential provision have shown a 12% average increase since 2016. Highest residential costs relate to special education need placements and specialist therapeutic placements, for example, for children that have experienced child sexual exploitation. These specialist placements are not available in borough.

Barnet has two in house Residential children's homes at present. New Park House looks after young people between the ages of 11 and 18 and is a medium to long stay setting. Meadow Close looks after young people aged between 15 and 18, who are unable to live with their family or carers. Both homes have been underutilised and are under review on whether they continue to meet sufficiency needs for the borough. The two homes may be reconfigured in line with the emerging needs of Barnet's children and young people.

There remains very limited usage of welfare secure residential accommodation with no welfare secure placements to date in 2019. This type of accommodation is only used where the child is at a very high level of risk, for example from sexual exploitation, or poses a danger to themselves or others.

Around 10 children and young people are placed in specialist (previously known as Tier 4) CAMHS provision (March 2018-2019). Barnet has seen an increase in the number of young people accessing Specialist CAMHS provision over time.

### **Children with disability**

Our data shows that there is a lack of specialist placement provision locally to meet the needs of disabled children and children with special educational needs. Some children with profound disabilities and highly complex health and social care needs are currently in high cost residential or residential based respite provision out of borough.

At present, much of the overnight respite provision for children with disabilities that have highly complex needs and for children with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) is commissioned through residential children's homes. This service is high cost and placements are often very far from Barnet. There is a need to increase the local capacity for specialist local overnight respite to support parent carers of disabled children including children with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC). This form of respite is important also to provide Foster carers of disabled children a break

from their caring role to support placement stability. There is also potential to utilise foster carers to deliver some respite provision for disabled children.

The West London Alliance DPV for Special Educational Needs went live in 2018 and includes residential provision for children in care and respite. This DPV requires market development to build capacity and enable Barnet to source and match placements closer to the borough. Barnet’s Short Breaks offer for disabled children includes specialist overnight respite services to support children with highly complex needs. We are also looking to develop Shared Lives options for care leavers with disabilities, to stability within a family environment as they transition to adulthood.

### Distance placed

Figure 8 below shows placement distance from Barnet. Overall, 81% of children in care are placed in Barnet or within 20 miles of the borough and 19% are placed over 20 miles from Barnet. The majority of fostering and semi-independent placements are within or near to Barnet, however 61% of external residential placements are more than 20 miles away, indicating a lack of local sufficiency of local residential provision that can meet the needs of Barnet’s children and young people in care. It should be noted that 36 of Barnet’s in-house foster carers are out of borough.

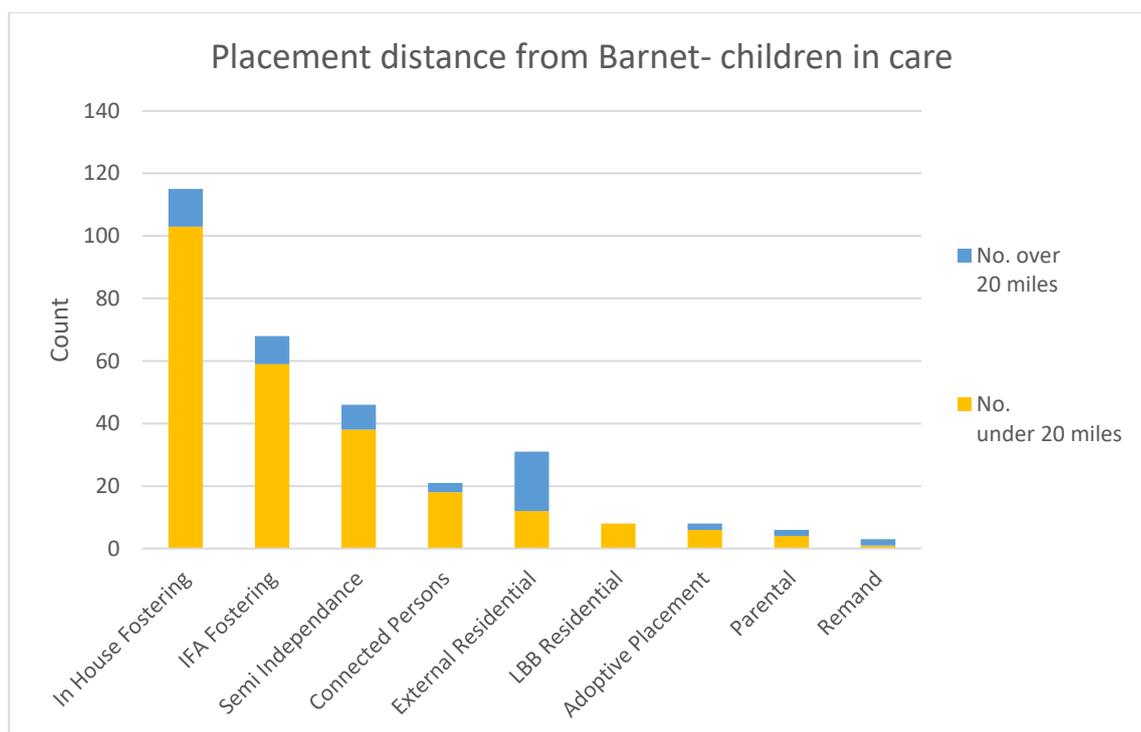


Figure 8: Distance placed by placement type: February 2019

**We need...**

- To influence the market to expand the number of specialist placements, including placements for children with complex disability, Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) and challenging behaviour that are closer to Barnet
- To reconfigure and develop a local specialist residential unit and intervention centre for children subject to exploitation, including CSE

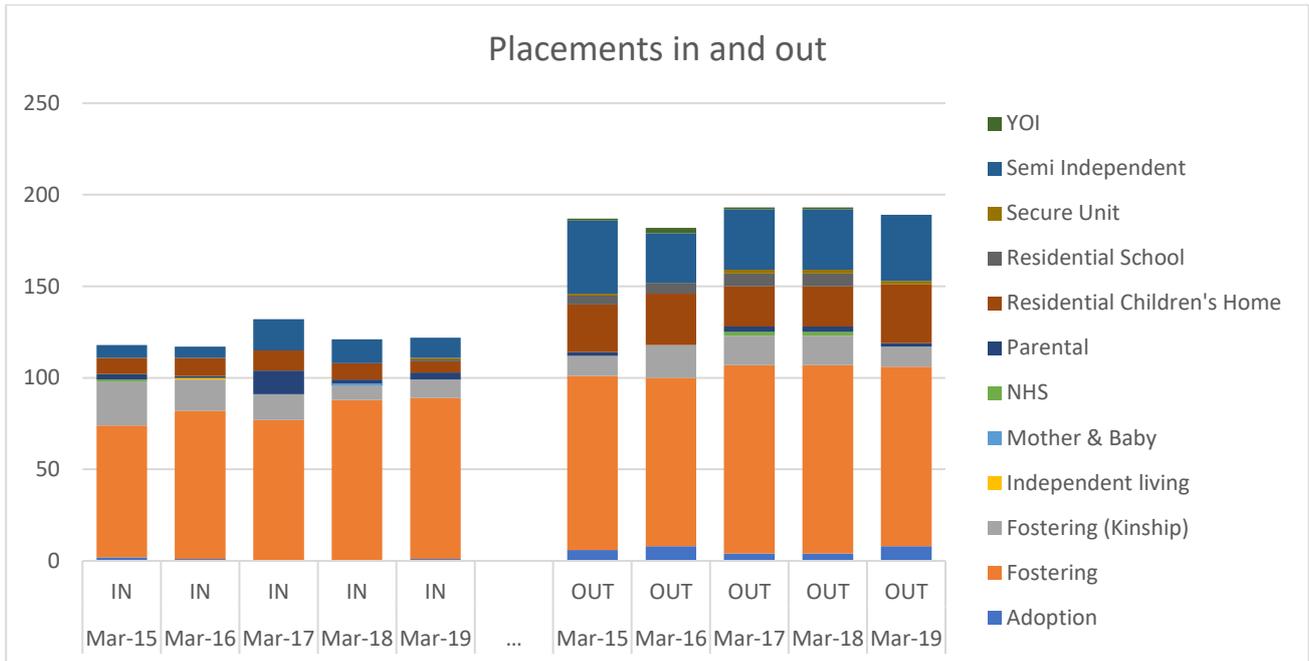


Figure 9: Number of new placements made and moves out by placement type: March 2015 to February 2019

Figure 9 shows that there are more young people leaving semi independent provision than moving in. This correlates with the high numbers of adolescents in care and leaving care and also reflects moves between placements within this group, due to placement breakdown or the need to move a young person due to safeguarding. This demonstrates a need for supported accommodation for 18+ for young people to have timely housing options with ongoing support, where needed.

Fostering figures are fairly stable, whereas residential numbers reflect more young people leaving care homes and we know that our in-house care homes are not full capacity.

Placement stability is important to for positive outcomes for children in care. Barnet’s data on placement stability show that 67% of children in care experience placement stability. This figure is in line with national figures and Barnet’s statistical neighbours. We know that placements for children with behaviours that challenge, for children that go missing very frequently and for children with high needs are at a higher risk of placement break down. Appropriate early intervention and support is essential to reduce the risk of breakdown and enable stability.

Planning for permanence for all children in care and across all placements types is a priority for Barnet, including supporting children and young people to step down between placement types, where appropriate.

**We need...**

- To ensure robust permanence planning, including step downs, where possible
- To intervene early and provide the right support to prevent unnecessary placement moves

**Placements for young people age 16+**

As of March 2019, there were 220 Barnet young people in independent living arrangements, including 97 that include an element of on-site key worker support. In addition to this, all young care leavers have a dedicated Social Worker or Personal Adviser help them to develop the skills to get (back) into employment, education or training and to live independently. Typically, young people in supported accommodation include unaccompanied asylum seeker children; young people that were at risk of being homeless that need accommodation with support and older children in care. Getting the support right for this cohort is really important as young people cannot progress and sustain independent living without the right preparation, skill development and support.

Planning to help care leavers to move towards independence was identified as a key priority by Ofsted in 2017.

To meet the needs of young people at risk of homelessness and care leavers with additional support needs locally, housing management and support is commissioned within a 24 room Foyer. This placement is for young people aged 16 to 21 and includes 24-hour security on site and concierge and key worker support during the day. This provision includes support for young people with mental health needs, substance misuse or those at risk of exploitation. This provision includes follow up key worker support for 6 months post move on to support with the transition to independent living and permanence.

Following a sharp increase in the number of unaccompanied asylum seeker children aged 16+ requiring accommodation and specialist support in 2016, Family Services commissioned an 8 bedroom supported accommodation. This unit includes 10 hours of keyworkers support per week and has support on site 24 hours, including waking night support. This provision provides high quality accommodation within the borough.

Barnet is part of the West London Alliance framework for Semi-independent provision, however, due to a lack of provision under this framework within 20 miles of Barnet, a number of spot

contracts for semi-independent provision are used to meet demand. This is especially for higher needs provision and specialist provision, such as that for young people with specialist mental health needs, substance misuse and those at risk of exploitation.

### Supported Lodgings

Supported Lodgings enable single people aged sixteen and above to be offered accommodation in a home environment when leaving foster care or residential care. Barnet has in the past used a lead tenant model for supported lodgings which has been successful. The young person has a room of their own in a private home where they are a member of the household, but are not expected to become a member of the family. The householder, or host, provides a safe and supportive environment, working alongside a range of multidisciplinary services to help and support the young person in gaining skills for independent adult life. It offers a cost effective, appropriate accommodation and support model for care leavers. This type of accommodation has the benefits of a home-based environment and “someone being there”. There have been three providers approved in this financial year, and young people are being identified to be placed.

### Transitioning to independence

Barnet has a vibrant and diverse support offer for care leavers hosted at Woodhouse Road. Support includes money management, education, employment, health and mental health and benefits. The Onwards and Upwards team undertake personalised approaches to Pathway Planning, using Life Story work to help young people to make sense of their past experiences, and plan their future. Responsive specialist services are available, particularly relating to mental health. Benefits support is available through the provision of a dedicated Job Centre Plus Work Coach. In addition, support from a specialist Personal Adviser is also available for unaccompanied asylum seeking children to assist them with regards to their status. Continued support is accessible for former unaccompanied asylum seeking young people.

In Barnet, the allocated Social Worker and a personal assistant (PA) will work together with young people from the age of 15 ½ as they approach their transition from care, to support them to find suitable accommodation when they turn 18. Options are developed with the young person with a view to moving them towards independence at the right pace for them. We have increased take up of different types of housing options which can give young people stability and independence. Barnet has a good partnership with Barnet Homes, which has created innovative opportunities to ensure housing capacity for Care Leavers is a joint priority. Care leavers can experience delays to permanent housing offers and in these instances, interim solutions have been required whilst housing options are sourced.

Barnet also has a training flat to help young people develop independent living skills in a safe environment. This provision is helpful when assessing suitability for move on to more independent living or as a step down from residential care.

Children in care that turn 18 can remain with their fostering family as part of new Staying Put policies. Staying Put offers a valuable approach to enabling young adults to have security and

#### **We need...**

- To ensure all young people and Foster carers know about options for Staying Put
- To use the resources available through Woodhouse Road to provide wraparound support for our growing numbers of care leavers
- To develop a range of accommodation options for young people aged 16+, including supported lodgings, exploring opportunities with housing for new builds and use of existing accommodation.

stability of home environment whilst they progress in education or employment and work towards independence. As of January 2019, 19 Care Leavers are living in a Staying Put arrangement.

## **7. Quality Assurance and Governance**

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The minimum level of expected service delivery of all residential children's homes is set out in the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015.

Barnet's Placement Team have a clear process for evaluating and monitoring residential placements. Prior to making a placement checks include Ofsted status and a review of the homes safeguarding policies and obtaining references. Placements are visited to evaluate suitability and once placements are made and agreements are in place, residential homes receive an annual monitoring check which includes safeguarding. Monitoring also takes account of statutory regulations that relate to independent assessments of care, as well as any changes in relation Ofsted, safeguarding alerts or investigations.

As part of good care and placement planning practice Barnet Family Services during the normal course of discharging its statutory duties, will undertake the following:

- Regular reporting to the child's social worker to provide updates on the welfare of the child and progress against the child's plan and outcomes.
- Evaluation and monitoring visits
- Statutory reviews of the placement are made by the child's Social Worker or other allocated workers. The child's Independent Reviewing Officers' ensures that a placement is meeting the needs of the child and delivering the outcomes detailed in the child's plan.
- Placement Disruption Meetings take place to discuss and agree the factors that led to a placement disruption, review the needs of the child or carers and seek to identify any learning or policy changes required going forwards.
- Transition reviews to plan for a young person's transition into adulthood
- SEN Annual Review/Review of EHC Plans with the Contracting Body normally targeting its attendance at these, dependant on individual young people

- Other visits as required to support the child/young person or if there are concerns about the placement or Provider.

#### **We need...**

- To join up insight and quality assurance mechanisms for placements to better understand if outcomes are being achieved for young people and to inform future planning and contract management.
- To develop kite marking (quality framework) for semi-independent provision

## **8. Conclusion of gaps and identified needs**

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Based on the data, analysis and our assessment of current provision presented above, we have identified the emerging trends in demand, needs of our children in care and care leavers and sufficiency gaps in provision.

The data tells us that we are beginning to see a steady reduction of children in care most likely due to our resilience building approach and targeting wrap round support to those on the edge of care through early help and targeted intervention to seek to enable children to remain at home with their families where possible.

The data also tells us that our sufficiency plans need to address gaps in provisions for more cost effective, appropriate placements for the following groups:

- Mothers and babies
- Males of an older age, 15+
- UASC
- Vulnerable adolescents
- Increasing number of Care leavers, some with complex needs
- Young people with additional needs, including those with Autistic Spectrum Condition, those experiencing negative mental health and those at risk of exploitation.

Table 1 of our action plan outlines what our plans are to address these gaps and set out how we will continue to meet our sufficiency duty and contribute to achieving positive outcomes for our children in care.

## 9. Cross-cutting themes and potential limitations

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### Joint working with housing

Accommodation initiatives for children and young people play an important role within the overarching strategies for housing developments within the borough as a key component of the range of living opportunities that we offer. Family services commissioners, service leads and housing colleagues will continue to work with each other to ensure expansion of initiatives reflect the emerging needs of children and young people. That we also use our collective resources creatively to develop and commission for high quality models of support and engage specialist providers market so that opportunities for new developments are also explored.

### Health funding

Colleagues from the CCG have a key role to play in supporting and commissioning appropriate placements for children and young people with a primary health need. Health colleagues also have a duty to ensure appropriate housing needs are met under the Transformation Care Programme, and working together to develop innovative solutions for children with ASC. We look forward to further developing joint commitments to ensuring children, young people and families get the support they need from all partners. We need to ensure that continuing care funding is accessed where relevant and ensure joint planning, evaluation and review across all joint funded placements.

### Financial challenges

Significant financial pressures on public sector funding and complex and rapid changes in policy and benefits reform has contributed to increasing budgets. Cost variations based on market forces in the supply and demand of placements and the accommodation landscape for children and young people has also played a contributing factor. Price rates for placements have increased year on year due to market forces coupled with inflationary pressures from commissioned services, this impacts budgetary pressures within Family Services.

### Regional commissioning arrangements

The existing regional Dynamic Purchasing Vehicles (DPVs) and frameworks are not currently serving Barnet well in terms of geography. Semi-independent placements are typically too far from Barnet to enable our young people to attend local college or work. Many residential providers have not yet taken up opportunities to join regional markets, resulting in the continued need for spot purchasing arrangements although it is an improving picture for IFAs.

### National issues

There is a national issue of Fostering recruitment and a capacity issue for specialist fostering providers. Policy changes and legislative changes also affect sufficiency and capacity, for example recent changes to the homelessness duty upon local authorities and our Home office

responsibilities to support UASC and families with no Recourse to Public Funds have an impact on our sufficiency needs.

## 10. Conclusion

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Table 1 below, is our placements sufficiency and commissioning action plan. It details our strategic, operational and infrastructural plans to ensure we meet our sufficiency duty and that placements and accommodation for children in our care are consistent with their needs and welfare requirements, improve their outcomes, whilst helping to deliver best value for the public purse.

<b>Table 1. Placement Sufficiency and Commissioning Action Plan</b>		
<b>Priorities</b>	<b>Action Plan</b>	<b>Measure of success or outcome</b>
<b>1</b>	<p><b>Further develop our edge of care offer</b></p> <p><b>Strategic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the needs of children and young people on the edge of care</li> <li>• Further develop and expand the holistic multidisciplinary edge of care offer, ensuring a holistic and targeted support offer at the right time.</li> <li>• Remodel family group conference service</li> <li>• Design and commission a specialist intervention centre for children subject to exploitation</li> <li>• Review CAMHS offer for CiC and care leavers</li> <li>• Work in partnership to ensure CiC and care leavers can access appropriate and timely CAMHS and health and wellbeing services</li> </ul> <p><b>Operational</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train and support social workers to deliver family group conferences</li> <li>• Ensure timely and targeted use of family therapy; parenting support, counselling, wellbeing hubs and other early intervention services</li> <li>• Pathway development of early help, clinical services and targeted early intervention</li> <li>• Promote awareness of CAMHS resources</li> </ul> <p><b>Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of Intervention Centre facility</li> </ul>	<p>Fewer children entering care or Tier 4 CAMHS</p> <p>Cases stepped down from Residential to stable and long-term family settings</p> <p>Edge of care cases to step down to Early Help or no further action</p>

2	Grow in house Fostering capacity	<p><b>Strategic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted recruitment campaign to recruit additional carers, especially for teenagers, and mother and baby placements</li> <li>Recruit carers with specialist expertise to support disabled children and children with complex needs such as autism (respite and full time)</li> <li>Commission training and therapeutic support for in house Foster Carers</li> </ul>	<p>Increased proportion of children in in house fostering as opposed to other placement types</p> <p>Mother and baby placements and assessments are in house and to a high-quality standard</p> <p>Increase in the no. young people in staying put arrangements and achieving permanence</p>
		<p><b>Operational</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit mother and baby assessors</li> <li>Offer competitive rates for Foster carers and specialist carers from April 2019-20</li> <li>Implement Staying Put arrangements as part of permanence (Implement Barnet's staying put policy and negotiate staying put arrangements with IFAs)</li> <li>Continue to intervene early and provide appropriate support to prevent placement breakdown</li> </ul>	
		<p><b>Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with housing to identify larger properties to accommodate sibling groups</li> <li>Streamline brokerage and financial monitoring systems across all fostering provision types to enable streamlined and efficient systems</li> </ul>	

3	<p><b>Build and commission specialist residential provision in borough.</b></p>	<p><b>Strategic:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review in house residential provision, with a view to reconfiguration, in line with local needs</li> <li>• Commission residential provision and respite for disabled children, including children with Autism, additional needs that display behaviours that challenge</li> <li>• Influence the market to expand the number of specialist residential placements (for PMLD and highly complex needs), closer to Barnet</li> <li>• Develop a local residential unit and specialist intervention centre for children that have been subject to exploitation, including child sexual exploitation</li> <li>• Develop the local market for high quality specialist overnight respite provision for children with disabilities and complex additional needs and behaviour that challenges</li> <li>• Work with ALDCS to develop a London solution to secure placements</li> </ul>	<p>Increased local specialist homes to meet the needs of our most vulnerable young people</p> <p>Young people and professionals report step down are streamlined and well planned with the child at the centre</p> <p>Enable more children with complex needs to remain at home</p>
		<p><b>Operational:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment and training of specialist staff to facilitate residential intervention centre</li> <li>• Robust permanence planning, including step downs between placement types, where possible</li> </ul>	
		<p><b>Infrastructure:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capital project for reconfiguration of children’s homes to provide therapeutic placements for children and respite services</li> </ul>	

4	<b>Accommodation and support offer for 16+ and care leavers</b>	<b>Strategic</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan ahead to meet and secure the long term permanent accommodation and support needs of UASC, CiC and care leavers</li> <li>• Review existing options for supported accommodation for UASC and young people with NRPF</li> <li>• Develop supporting lodgings offer for young people aged 18+</li> <li>• Ensuring timely access to specialist support for care leavers, such as mental health services</li> <li>• Commission low to medium and higher needs supported accommodation for young people aged 16+ to deliver high quality, cost effective housing management and support</li> <li>• Commission floating support for 16+ and 18+ to complement placement and housing offer</li> <li>• Ensure that the housing offer for young people is optimized for care leavers</li> <li>• Develop long term, high quality and cost-effective housing offer for UASC and young people with no recourse to public funds once they turn 18</li> </ul>	<p>Reduction in average cost for 16+ accommodation</p> <p>A range of high quality, local provision, including flexible support is available for 16+ and care leavers</p> <p>16+ accommodation placements are based on need and outcomes, not availability</p> <p>Reduce proportion of semi/ increase no. accommodation with support</p> <p>Care leavers report high quality wraparound support</p> <p>Care leavers achieve timely access to permanent housing options</p> <p>More care leavers have opportunities for staying put</p>
		<b>Operational</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all young people and Foster carers know about the options for staying put as a permanence option</li> <li>• Use all wraparound support available at Woodhouse Road for increasing numbers of care leavers</li> <li>• Implement Barnet’s Staying Put policy</li> </ul>	

		<p><b>Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review options for repurpose of Barnet’s assets for supported accommodation and supported lodgings</li> <li>• Develop additional quality assurance mechanisms for non-regulated provision on a regional basis (kite mark), building regulations, health and safety checks.</li> <li>• Explore capital programmes to build specialist accommodation under HRA</li> </ul>	
5.	<p><b>Commissioning intentions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enter into direct contacts with ‘spot’ purchase arrangements to ensure robust terms and conditions and negotiate costs. Encourage spot providers to join DPV or frameworks.</li> <li>• Local and regional market development across placement types to ensure sufficiency in areas where growth is required</li> <li>• Influence regional commissioning arrangements, such as the WLA (West London Alliance), to secure placement provision that meets the needs for Barnet’s children and young people, promotes efficiencies and delivers value for money.</li> <li>• Develop service delivery models for in house provision that requires repurposing into semi-independent provision and respite.</li> <li>• Develop service delivery model and performance framework for outsourcing in house provision, such as the contact centre.</li> <li>• Join up insight and quality assurance mechanisms for placements to better understand if outcomes are being achieved for young people and to inform forward planning.</li> <li>• Ensure placement provision meets the cultural and diverse needs of Barnet’s CiC and care leavers</li> <li>• Explore capital programmes to build specialist accommodation and new builds for care leavers</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<p>A balanced placements budget by 2023</p> <p>Robust contracting arrangements across all placement types</p> <p>Accommodation and placements are safe and assessed to be high quality and achieving outcomes</p> <p>Regional commissioning arrangements deliver placements that match the needs of Barnet’s children in care</p> <p>Housing options and new builds secure sufficient accommodation options in areas where growth is required</p>

## Document control

**Classification:** restricted

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**Owner:** Chris Munday, Strategic Director – Children and Young people

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**Author:** Jo Rider, Senior Commissioning Manager  
Taslima Qureshi, Head of Service for Strategy, Insight and Commissioning

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**Data and analysis:** Matt Boxall, Data and Performance Manager  
Laurelle Brown, Strategy and Insight Officer

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