

LONDON BOROUGH OF EALING

LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND CARE LEAVER PLACEMENTS

SUFFICIENCY STRATEGY

2018 – 2021



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Introduction to the 2018 to 2021 Sufficiency Strategy

This strategy sets out how Ealing Council plans to meet the Local Authority sufficiency duty as set out in the Children Act 1989 and the Children and Young Person's Act 2008.

The commissioning strategy focusses on:

- Looked after children
- Care leavers and
- Family assessments.

The priorities of this strategy are to:

- Make sure that we have access to sufficient accommodation – including foster care, kinship care, residential care, semi independence provision and housing, within Ealing or relatively close to Ealing, in order to meet the needs of the diverse range of children in our care
- Make sure that there is sufficient accommodation and services in London to provide family assessments, both residential and community based
- Ensure that services represent value for money, keep children safe, help to improve the life chances of children and young people and help to reduce inequalities
- Ensure the strategy focuses on addressing the diverse needs of Ealing's LAC and care leaver populations
- Sets this Sufficiency Strategy and action plan within Ealing's wider Brighter Futures Strategy with a focus on improving support and interventions for those families at the edge of care to enable them to safely remain together with effective support that enhances their life chances
- Ensure the strategy is a council wide priority as reflected in the corporate Future Ealing priorities.

Whilst the strategy is Ealing specific, there is also a LAC and Care Leaver commissioning strategy for ten of the boroughs in central, west and east London – including Ealing - that has been produced under the auspices of the West London Alliance children's efficiency programme and is currently being updated. The ten borough collaboration focusses primarily on developing the external market. Underpinning this collaborative work, there is regular and systematic mapping undertaken of LAC numbers and placement patterns. This includes the introduction in 2017/18 of Dynamic Purchasing Vehicles (DPVs) for placements across the WLA to improve quality and strategically manage the market more effectively.

Ealing takes its role as corporate parent as a key priority and is very focussed on improving outcomes for children and young people and listening to their views. At the same time it is also strongly committed to the prevention of care wherever possible and to permanency planning when this is needed.

I hope that you find this updated strategy helpful and informative and feedback and suggestions are very welcome.

Judith Finlay
Executive Director of Adults, Children's and Public Health

2018 update of the strategy

This is the 2018-2021 LAC sufficiency strategy, building on previous strategies and is in three parts:

- An update on the current number of looked after children
- An update on our current priorities
- An action plan 2018-2021 – please see Appendix 1 of this document

Children living in this area

Approximately 81,900 children and young people under the age of 18 years live in Ealing (ONS Mid-Year estimates 2016). This is 23% of the total population in the area¹.

Ealing is highly ethnically diverse - 69% identify as of black and minority ethnic origin compared to 24% nationally. This includes well established Asian, Irish, African and Caribbean communities and more recently arrived Somali, Afghani and East European populations. Ealing has the largest Polish and the largest Somali communities in the UK. Meeting diverse needs underpins this strategy as we plan to ensure placements meet the wide ranging needs of our looked after children and care leaver populations including religious, cultural, disability, sexual orientation, geographical needs and the needs of diverse sibling groups.

Since 2011/12 there has been a planned and significant decrease in the number of looked after children in Ealing:

Table 1:

As at 31st March in each year	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18 (provisional)	% change since 2011/12
Number of LAC	410	400	385	355	371	347	343	-16%
Number of UASC	20	15	20	25	25	43	51	155%
Total LAC excluding UASC	390	385	365	330	346	304	292	-25%

The above figures reflect a significant reduction in LAC numbers despite an increase in unaccompanied children during this period from 20 to 51 (+155%). Therefore, if the unaccompanied children are removed from the total we can see a marked reduction from 390 to 292 (-25%) in this period.

¹ Ealing's mid-year estimate 2016 under 18 population is 343,196 – ONS

This is despite a national rise in LAC numbers and demand and locally a marked rising young population.

This decrease is welcome and reflects the strategic approach Ealing has adopted through its Brighter Futures programme over the past 4 years.

An update on our strategic approach – Brighter Futures

Ealing was successful in a bid to the DfE Innovation Fund in 2014 and used the opportunity provided by this funding to thoroughly review and refresh its approach to children on the edge of care and children in care. The Ealing programme - Brighter Futures focuses on children on the edge of care and in care, and following a successful 2 year pilot, led to a transformation in 2016/17 in the way the whole service works to better support families on the edge of care and reduce the need for children to enter the care system. This is achieved safely by providing more effective support for them and their families and included a thorough review and enhancing of the early intervention and prevention services (SAFE).

The intensive engagement model of intervention and support has already begun to reduce the number of children and young people who become looked after, ensuring that many more young people remain safely at home; and is starting to reduce placement costs that are being reinvested in more effective early help and intervention services. Brighter Futures has the full support of the wider Council who have invested significant additional resources in it and is part of the Council's Medium and Long term financial strategy.

In summary we are seeking to:

- Support families and young people on the edge of care effectively through this approach which is delivered by the creation of edge of care teams targeting families with high needs in intensive engagement multi-disciplinary interventions. The approach is based around an evidence based shared model of intervention.
- Bring back, wherever possible and appropriate, teenagers placed at a distance in residential placements to the local area and to family settings
- Increase the cohort and capacity of in house foster carers and provide greatly enhanced levels of support and training to enable them to look after young people with more challenging behavior (using DDP model of enhanced training)
- Focus early intervention (SAFE) services at those in greatest need
- Support the development of local, community based services to help young people, on the edge of care or in care, to stay local
- Help build capacity in universal and community based services to provide effective Tier 1 support.

New model of working

Ealing's 'Brighter Futures' programme is based around an intensive engagement model (developed with the Tavistock and AMBIT Anna Freud Centre) that has transformed its social care system, moving from a traditional social care model to one that targets and supports young people and their families in and on the edge of

care. As well as improving outcomes for young people and families, this new way of working which allows social workers to have smaller caseloads. This is already having a marked and beneficial impact on staff recruitment and retention. It is anticipated that by September 2018 reliance on Agency social work staff will be reduced to less than 10%.

Foster Carers

Key to this model is foster carers being effectively integrated into the Connect Team model that now incorporates Looked After Children's Social Workers and Supervising Social Workers within an integrated team. In addition, Clinical Psychologists are accessible for consultation with foster carers and to assist in practical strategies to manage childrens' behavior and stabilise placements, preventing breakdown. Foster carers are trained in a DDP (Dyadic Developmental Practice) informed parenting approach, that has resulted in foster carers feeling more supported and placement stability has improved from 13% in 2016/17 to 11% in 2017/18 despite a smaller cohort with complex needs. This is enabling the council to achieve improved outcomes across all indicators (health, attainment, economic well-being, safety and participation) and is also reducing reliance on residential out of borough care.

Enhancing the skills of our staff

The programme builds on an evidence base of emerging national research, and local findings of improved outcomes through the council's pilot programme. The model is focused on enabling the council's workforce to build effective, consistent relationships with young people, families, communities and carers, and use those successful relationships to bring about positive and sustained change. Smaller caseloads facilitate more intensive and effective interventions with families. The theoretical approach is unique to Ealing and combines methodologies from the Tavistock and the Anna Freud Centre – AMBIT – that brings a strong, specialist adolescent focus to the approach.

Placement model

The transformed placement model focuses on delivering increased local placements (as opposed to out of borough), which will help achieve better outcomes for young people and increase overall placement stability. The multi-disciplinary pod teams comprise of a range of core professionals including social workers, teachers, psychologists, youth workers and outreach workers. The teams have smaller caseloads that enable them to build consistent, responsive and positive relationships and to work intensively with the young person and their family/foster carer and remain with them throughout their journey, even if their status changes. This is increasing job satisfaction and improving current social worker recruitment and retention issues.

This, along with the ability to place more children locally, will help in the longer term to reduce the cycle of placement breakdowns for many young people and the perception of a slow and overly bureaucratic and unresponsive system.

Current priorities include:

- Embedding the new multi professional teams for children on the edge of care and children in care. The model has been rolled out right across the service since 2016/17
- Embedding the new approach to recruiting foster carers into the in-house service using word of mouth and local campaigns to attract interest as well as providing higher levels of support and training to support foster carers, in particular those caring for children with more challenging behaviour. This is an ongoing programme.
- Working to bring young people in “at a distance” residential placements back to the local area and where possible placing them in family settings – clearly this is only happening where it is in the best interests of the child and is dependent on the availability of local services
- Working closely with regeneration, housing and independent housing providers to increase local supply of semi-independent and independent accommodation for young people leaving care, including the increased cohort of unaccompanied minors.
- Developing creative approaches to increase existing local foster carer capacity including adaptations and extensions to foster carers homes and options to provide affordable accommodation for their adult children to move on allowing them to take other LAC and increase throughput.
- Developing local resources including a refreshed alternative education approved list and new and more locally based residential provision. We are also working with IFAs to increase levels of recruitment in the West London area. We are also talking to IFAs about extending our in house foster carer support service to carers that they recruit – all with the aim of increasing the level of locally based, skilled and well supported foster carers.
- We have reviewed and enhanced our early intervention and prevention services (SAFE) and made changes to ensure that they target families in need, at risk of escalating without interventions and focus on the overriding priority to reduce the number of children becoming looked after.

Child sexual exploitation/Contextual Safeguarding

We have also reviewed and developed our approach to child sexual exploitation, evolving this into our multi-agency Contextual Safeguarding strategy and have in place:

- A multi-agency strategy that has been agreed by the Safeguarding Children Board
- A contract with an external provider that means young people are offered specialist support and counselling
- A new approach to placing young people – no longer placing them at a distance in the majority of cases but developing local support plans to enable them to stay in the local area with more effective local support and supervision.

We are also working with St Christopher's which has received Innovation funding to set up two residential homes for young women, one in this area and another in north London. These homes are delivering a new approach to supporting young women at

risk of CSE or at risk of other forms of significant harm. In addition, from September 2018 Ealing has been successful at becoming a Trusted Relationship pilot authority in partnership with St Christopher's, receiving £1.5m DfE funding over 3 years to develop intensive mentoring and intervention services for the most vulnerable cohort of adolescents in the borough which includes LAC and Care Leavers.

2. National and local context

2.1 National context

In assessing the number and the type of placements needed over the next 3-5 years, we have considered the impact of current demand trends and a number of government initiatives. It should be noted that several of these align with existing practice within Ealing, such as Staying Put and Staying Close. Our aim is to embrace change and develop systems that are examples of best practice within children's social care and enhance the life chances of Ealing's looked after children and care leavers.

Below are some of the current developments at national level that informed the development of our strategy for the next few years.

- The Family Justice Review – the focus on time limits for care proceedings and on permanency planning means that having an adequate supply of appropriate, quality family placements is of critical importance
- The focus on adoption and regionalisation
- Staying Put – which imposed a new legal duty on councils to provide financial support to young people up to the age of 21 who want to stay with their foster family.
- The focus in policy and best practice to reduce the use of out of borough placements and residential care
- The impact of changes in the care status of young people in the youth justice system – these changes are in place already and, in addition to the financial impact on councils, there is a need (which is currently being met) for appropriate placements for these young people. Given the recent national and London wide increase in gangs and knife crime demand in this area is rising.
- Recent changes such as the introduction of the residential Staying Close programme – Ealing is part of an innovation funded DfE pilot project testing out new approaches with St Christopher's and Mac UK.
- Welcome changes in extending support for care leavers – increasing responsibilities up to the age of 25 from 2018/19 and consulting and formalising the Ealing Leaving Care Offer – publishing this by December 2018.

As a result of national policy direction and our local strategic approach – **Brighter Futures** our placement commissioning activity over the next three years will have a strong focus on:

- Increasing the percentage of looked after children placed within local family settings. This will be further achieved by:-
 1. Building on our effective fostering and adoption service to ensure that it can meet the needs of sibling groups and children with complex needs by increasing the number and diversity of local placements.
 2. Developing the in house fostering service to enhance its ability to recruit more foster carers and to support carers to keep foster children until they are 21, if that is the young person's wish. Also maximising capacity within the existing fostering cohort.
 3. Developing the most able foster carers in the in-house service to become Fostering Plus carers with enhanced training and rewards packages to keep more children with complex needs, including contextual safeguarding issues to be placed locally.
 4. Working with independent foster agencies to enhance their ability to recruit and retain more local foster carers and to support carers to keep foster children until they are 21, if that is the young person's wish.
 5. Using kinship care and Special Guardianship Orders as appropriate to meet the needs of looked after children.
 6. Providing in house foster carers and other family carers with the additional support needed to care for children with complex needs.
- Working with the independent sector residential care market to encourage the development of more and higher quality, provision in the north and west London areas.
- Managing demand through the Brighter Futures programme to ensure children only enter the care system when this is the most appropriate option and are reunified with their families wherever appropriate and in a timely fashion.
- Developing respite services and shared placements with kinship and other foster carers.
- Working with the independent sector semi-independent market to increase supply and to ensure quality of provision.
- Working with the local housing market to identify additional sources of accommodation for young people and foster carers including adaptations to properties to increase capacity.

- Developing the role of the West London Alliance to increase placement supply and cost effectiveness through the introduction of a range of DPVs.
- Making sure that we are compliant with the EU directives relating to procurement and the UK government's decisions re application of these in the UK.

2.2 Local context

Our approach in Ealing

The commissioning strategy should be read in the broader context of Ealing Council's Looked after Children Strategy.

The focus in Ealing is on:

- Preventing children becoming looked after, where that is possible and desirable, through the timely provision of a range of intensive interventions and through the skills based training of all relevant staff in the Family Partnership model of working with families (all social care staff and staff in Ealing's early intervention service (called SAFE) are trained in this model of working).
- Providing ongoing funding of early help services such as SAFE and the development of a new multi-disciplinary approach to working with under-fives, providing support at the early stages of a child's life
- Developing Edge of Care Teams that identify and target interventions with families most in need
- Working with families, when children do become LAC, to help them to return home if that is possible and if it is in the child's best interests – using the NSPCC Reunification model
- Undertaking extensive foster carer recruitment campaigns and maximising existing capacity
- Making sure that we comply with the requirements of the Family Justice Review
- Enabling services to be provided effectively within a reduced council budget that will further reduce over coming years through effective local market management and reduction in LAC numbers.
- Building partnerships with the council's Housing and Regeneration to increase supply of local, affordable housing for care leavers, including Unaccompanied Minors
- Exploring creative ways of freeing up Foster carers to take on more children by arrangements such as extensions and adaptations and providing affordable independent accommodation for their own adult children
- Having a very detailed understanding of the local population of children and young people, including the looked after and care leaver population.
- Implementing a Regional Adoption Agency model for west London and exploring work on a Regional Fostering Agency

Given the climate of austerity, Ealing's rising population and significant reduction in resources, the authority undertook a detailed external evaluation and review with Impower Management Consultancy on managing demand moving forward in 2014/15. This includes re shaping provision to meet the underlying drivers of demand more effectively such as domestic violence, substance misuse and mental health at an earlier stage. It also includes detailed review of current initiatives to get a clearer evidence base of effectiveness and undertaking benchmarking comparisons with other local authorities. This work on demand management will continue to reduce the impact of significant budget reductions over the next 3 years and is key to the supporting Action Plan. Linked to managing demand is increasing local quality and cost effective supply and productive work is taking place with the Council's Regeneration and Housing service to increase local supply through a range of initiatives, including new build options.

Number of children in the general population and number of LAC

Despite a very significant increase in the birth rate and a growth in the 0 to 18 population (particularly marked in the 0 to 4 age range), the number of LAC in Ealing has fallen from 410 in 2011/12 to 343 in 2017/18 against a marked increase in the general population and an increase in unaccompanied minors. This indicates that the Brighter Futures approach is working and a focus on early help and intensive intervention is having a positive impact. In addition, audits that we have undertaken locally confirm that the threshold for children becoming looked after in Ealing is sound.

The number, variety and type of placements that we are planning for is detailed in the action plan. But in summary, we are assuming that the number of LAC will continue to reduce further as it already has done from approx. 410 to 343 to date with a reduction to 250 by March 2022² but with some changes in the age distribution due to demographic changes. In addition following global unrest it is not possible to accurately predict the number of unaccompanied minors in coming years as these have approximately doubled in Ealing in recent years from 20 in 2011/12 to 51 in 2017/18 with a marked increase in demand for largely male adolescent placements for this group.

We know that there is also an identified need for short term respite, and occasionally longer term, placements to support families with children who have additional needs. These children and young people are not considered as looked after if the respite nights within a year are below a pre-determined number. Irrespective of legal status, we are mindful of the need to provide sufficient, local quality resources to support families and plan for future potential demand.

Ealing holds monthly joint funding panels that involve staff from social care and special educational needs, the Clinical Commissioning Group and local NHS provider trusts. These ensure that appropriate placements are agreed and funded by relevant organisations. The panel takes a holistic approach with the aim to achieve the best possible outcomes for each individual young person.

² LAC reduction targets from the Troubled Families Programme Feb 2018: Earned Autonomy

Mixed economy

Our approach in Ealing is to have a mixed economy of provision with an in house fostering service providing nearly 50 % of placements at any one time. Ealing Council has recently taken the decision to no longer directly provide in house residential care itself and has therefore closed its in house unit for children with additional needs in 2016 (Heller House) and its 6 bedded medium stay Children's home in 2018 (Florence Rd).

Instead the authority works closely with other authorities in the WLA to commission and spot purchase placements across west London and has entered into partnership arrangements with local providers such as St Christopher's and West London YMCA to provide specialist and more generic quality placements for looked after children and care leavers.

Planning and identifying placements

We have a well-established LAC and care leaver commissioning team that is called the Access to Resources Team (ART). This team works very closely with social work teams, the children with a disability service and the Youth Justice Service (YJS). It provides a brokerage service for individual placements as well as a strategic commissioning function.

Commissioners and operational managers meet regularly to:

- To identify any risk of drift in placement planning
- To identify opportunities for moving children into step down accommodation
- To plan for 16 and 17 years olds presenting as potentially homeless (these meetings include housing colleagues)
- To identify existing placements that are not meeting the needs of the children and young people placed eg ETE, maintaining family links where appropriate
- To identify placements that would benefit from additional services such as CAMHS and specialist educational input
- To identify and address any gaps in provision
- To ensure a holistic, child centred approach underpins all our placement planning and review.

In addition, children's services staff regularly meet with legal services to plan for individual children.

From September 2018 the Children's Commissioning Team (ART) will integrate with the Adults brokerage service to provide an integrated all-age commissioning unit that will enhance knowledge, skills and capacity across all age groups.

Financial context

Given the marked rise in birth rate (30% over the past decade) there is an inevitable steady rise in demand at the same time as a downward pressure on budgets. Key to this strategy is the need to influence and safely manage demand whilst at the same

time ensuring that all interventions commissioned internally and externally are effective, safe and evidence based.

The net budget for children's services is £52.8m. The bulk of the services expenditure is spent on staffing and children's placements. The latter includes both looked after children, care leavers and SEN placements.

Working in partnership with neighbouring boroughs

The local LAC sufficiency strategy, our involvement in London Care Placements and our work with the West London Alliance all help to deliver our strategic aims.

In relation to the West London Alliance, Ealing Council is a very active player in a cross borough children's efficiency programme, working with nine other boroughs (Brent, Barnet, Hillingdon, Harrow, Hounslow, Kensington and Chelsea, Hammersmith and Fulham, Westminster and Redbridge). The children's efficiency programme focusses on LAC and care leavers and on SEN.

Actions that have already been taken within the LAC part of the programme include:

- Tendering for a framework contract for Independent Fostering Agencies and using our combined purchasing power to encourage IFAs on the framework to take a very pro-active approach to recruitment of carers.
- Working with residential care providers to encourage them to set up services in the north and west London area
- An ongoing programme of price negotiations using collective purchasing power to try to achieve better prices
- Tendering for an approved list of semi-independent providers with a focus on quality assessment given the lack of statutory registration and inspection in the market
- Introducing an e-brokerage system (CarePlace) to comply with EU Procurement regulations and ensure enhanced market oversight
- From 2018 setting up formal Dynamic Purchasing Vehicles (DPVs) to provide more effective management of the local placements market across the 10 boroughs.

Actions still to come include:

- Re tendering to expand the approved list of semi-independent providers in July 2018
- Working with quality providers of residential care encouraging them to set up local specialist services tailored to the boroughs requirements. Potentially block booking 25 residential places.
- Exploring introducing DPVs into other markets including therapy, parent and baby residential assessments, transport services etc
- Development of the CarePlace offer to enable enhanced market management and implementation of e-contracting to drive efficiencies and contract compliance.

3. Placement aims

For looked after children our aims are to:-

- To ensure sufficient supply of quality, safe, local placements that can meet a range of needs including sibling groups, all age groups and appropriate religious, ethnicity and cultural factors.
- Ensure placement stability through effective matching and support where required
- Use placements in or near to Ealing, unless that would be counter to the best interests of the child, or the court has directed otherwise, or kinship care is available but not locally
- Commission good quality placements, internally and externally, that provide value for money and that focus on good outcomes for children and young people
- Prevent placement breakdown and prevent unplanned placement moves
- Ensure the availability of the right volume and type of placement at the time that they are needed
- Commission services from providers with a minimum Ofsted rating of Good
- Use family placements wherever possible
- Use residential placements only where there are very clear reasons for doing so such as preparing children for family life or meeting the very specific needs of young people that can only be met in a residential setting.
- Focus on placement outcomes and improving children and young people's life chances e.g. education, health needs and leisure opportunities to develop their talents
- Ensure that effective care planning and a range of quality provision is in place in terms of suitable placements and multi-agency support services for those that do need to enter the care system.
- Ensure that the care experience is safe and improves outcomes and life chances for the child and young person and that their care journey is a positive one.
- Ensure that the care experience raises aspirations and provides effective education, training and employment support for children through from early years to leaving care.
- Ensure that effective health support is in place including specialist support for looked after children with a disability.
- Ensure that the care system reflects the diversity of the borough's children and families' population and addresses their religious, racial and cultural and other needs.
- Ensure that children and young people's views and voices are heard on an individual basis to influence their care plan and on a strategic basis to influence the range of provision available to support them, keep them safe and be successful.

- Ensure that children and young people are supported to make an effective transition either to permanency, returning home or semi-independent or independent living. To ensure that they are able to receive ongoing practical and emotional support as they transition out of the care system.

4. Needs assessment for looked after children and care leavers:

4.1 Ealing had 343 looked after children at end of March 2018. Between the period 2011/12 and 2017/18³ Ealing has reduced its looked after children population by 25% (if we exclude unaccompanied minors) and by 16% if we include them in the total. The year on year numbers are shown in figure 1 below.

Ealing have the third highest 0-17 population in the statistical neighbour group and 5th highest in London. Compared to our neighbours, Ealing is ranked joint third highest out of eleven local authority areas in the looked after children rate per 10,000. See figure 2 below. The mid-year population estimate, published by the Office of National Statistics (ONS 2016), estimated that Ealing had 81,900 people aged 0 to 17. Despite having a high rate, we are comparatively low compared to our peers who have higher rates but with a lower population than Ealing. Slough with the highest rate but a low population of 41,400.

Figure 1:

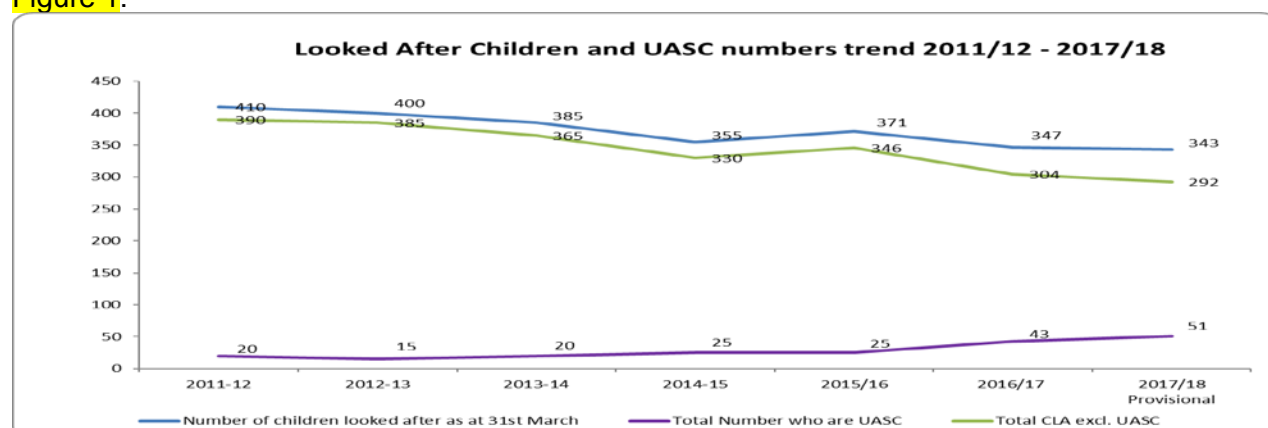
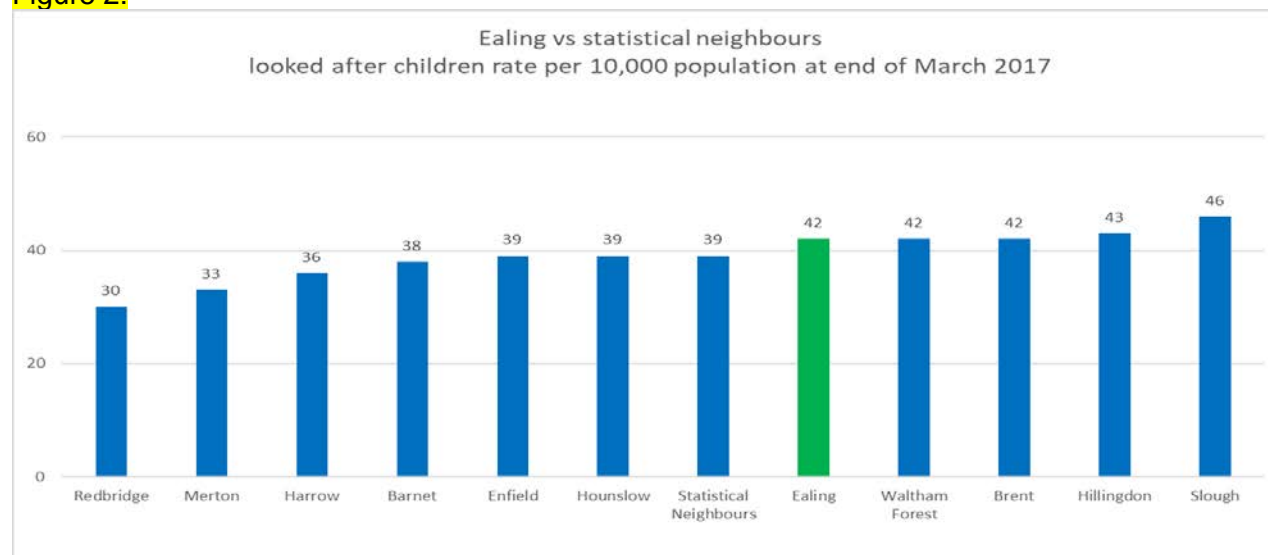


Figure 2:

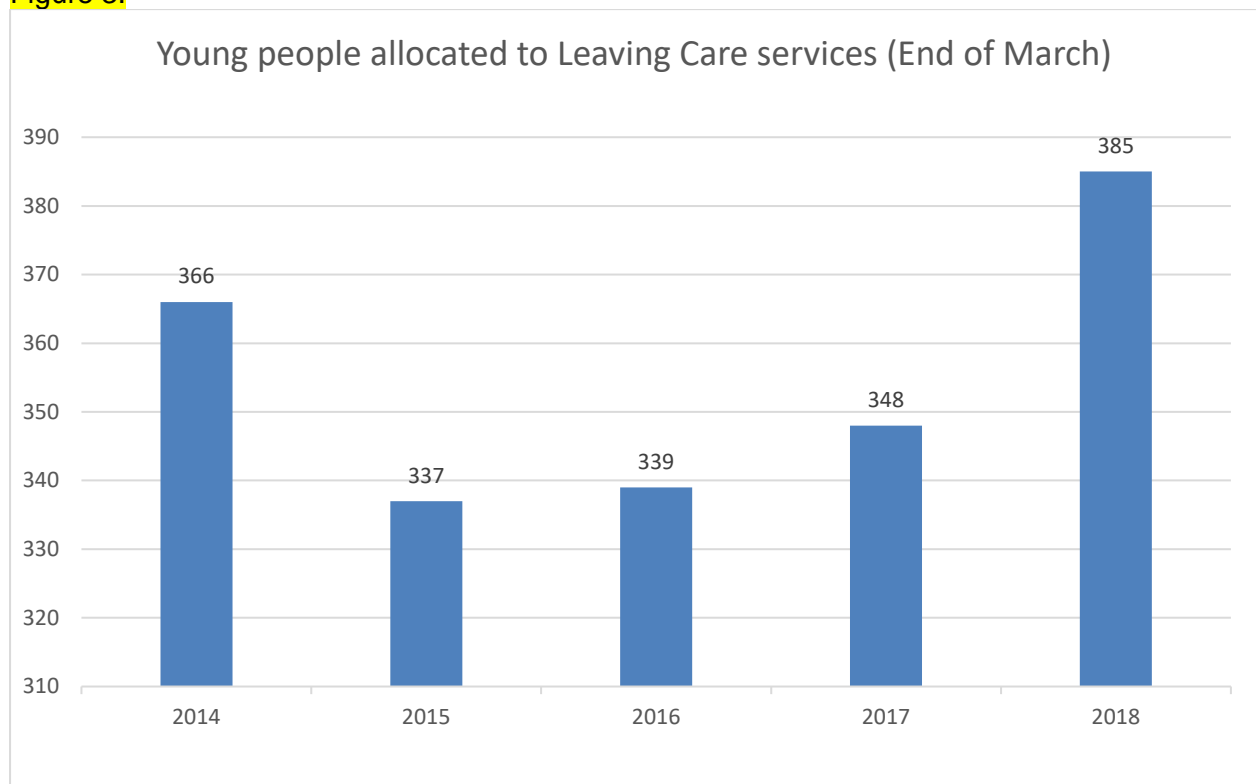


³ As at 31st March – DfE looked after children publications up to 2016/17

4.2 Leaving Care

Figure 3 below shows the number of young people allocated to Ealing's Leaving Care Service as of the 1st April 2010 through to 1st April 2018. There has been a significant increase related to ageing through of the cohort and markedly increased numbers of unaccompanied minors and the wider recognition of young people at risk of sexual exploitation and wider contextual safeguarding issues. Given our relatively stable LAC numbers over the last few years we do not expect this trend to continue to rise and that it will start to fall. Although the impact of the recent change in leaving care responsibilities up to age 25 is not yet clear.

Figure 3:



Note: based on allocations report - all children allocated in leaving care teams, which includes under 18 looked after children

Appropriate placement choice for care leavers is dictated by identified individual needs. Therefore care leaver placements cross all markets, fostering, residential, semi-independent etc.

For example, some 18 years olds are ready, and wish, to live semi-autonomously. Whereas others still need, and often want, a more inclusive placement such as previous foster carers, supported lodging carers etc.

We therefore need to plan for a variety of placement options for individual young people from the age of 18 and also acknowledge that their diverse needs will vary as they progress towards adulthood and independence for many, but not for all. Some vulnerable care leavers will need transition to adult's services and therefore joint planning with adult social care forms part of this strategy.

4.3 The majority of Ealing's looked after children and care leaver population have their assessed needs best met locally and in family settings. This guides our decisions about placement choice. However, there are some exceptions to this which are as follows:-

- A small proportion of children will require residential or family placements located at some distance from the Ealing area. This is most likely to be relevant where the child/young person is at risk from staying in the local area.
- Residential care is sometimes used as a positive choice to help prepare children for family placements or because young people have very particular needs that cannot be accommodated in a family setting.
- Sometimes there are court directions for the child to be placed out of area.
- Sometimes kinship care is available but not locally.
- Sometimes placements for siblings are not available locally.
- Sometimes for young people with additional needs the specific requirements are not available in local placements on an unplanned basis.

In addition, there can be local supply issues relating to both foster care and residential care that mean that placements are used that are not in or near to Ealing. This is clearly a key area of focus in relation to commissioning activity and creative ways of increasing local supply.

The Brighter Futures Strategy we have introduced over the past 3 years is however successfully helping Ealing retain more children locally with complex needs, reduce overall LAC numbers significantly and focus on reunifying children where appropriate with their families in a timely fashion. This strategy integrates with our approach to permanency and the focus on increasing the availability of quality, local family based care and where necessary specialist residential provision for those children who need it. Given Ealing's small geographical base (the authority is just 9 miles wide) dense population with a rising young, diverse population and very high house prices, finding suitable local placements remains a huge challenge but the authority continues to explore a range of innovative approaches to improve its performance and the life chances of Ealing's children.

5. Gap analysis and plans to ensure sufficiency of placements

5.1 Market sectors

Ealing Children's Services commissions services for looked after children and care leavers across several distinct markets. Each of these markets is unique and present different challenges and opportunities when it comes to ensuring Ealing has access to sufficient services of the right type in the right location. Given the differences between markets, each one is looked at separately below.

In addition, Ealing Children's Services utilises a mixed economy of provision – internally provided and externally provided – with the in house fostering service and independent sector fostering services providing significant levels of provision. Kinship care is also provided through the internal fostering and family placements service. We have an in house adoption service which meets most of our needs but where that is not possible then we use the services of other adoption agencies. In terms of residential care our needs for residential care are now met through the external market.

It should be noted that some groups of young people, such as those with additional needs or those remanded into local authority care, require placements across multiple markets. Increased awareness in recent years of the risks for children who go missing, are at risk of sexual exploitation, involved in Gangs, drugs networks or exposure to radicalisation highlights the vulnerabilities of the LAC and the Leaving Care population and the importance of securing the right placement, at the right time in the right place.

5.2 Fostering and adoption placements - What we need

As of 31st of March 2018 Ealing had 239 children in foster placements. This represents 69.6% of our LAC population of 343.

Of the 239 children in foster placements, 129 were placed with in house foster carers or in kinship fostering placements.

The remaining 30.4 % were in a range of other settings – for example in other family settings or in residential care. Our plan is to increase the percentage of our LAC population living in foster settings to 78% by 2021. This plan includes a commitment to supporting more foster carers to look after children with complex needs, sibling groups and older children. This will also include further exploration within the Council, into the possibility of extending foster carers homes to increase capacity, particularly for those carers willing to take larger, sibling groups.

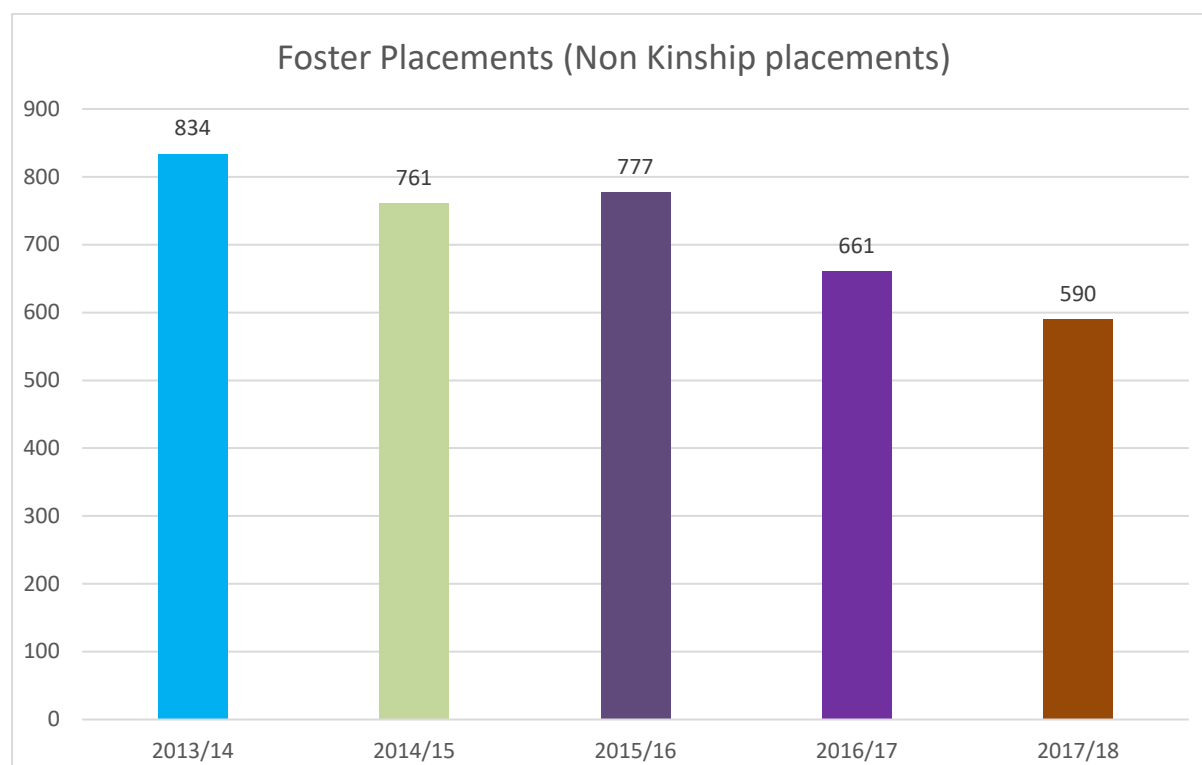
During 2017/18, 644 looked after children episodes were in foster placements, Of these 272 were with external providers and 352 were with internal provision, the remaining are voluntary/third sector provisions, other LA and public provisions.

The variance between foster placements taken up within the year and the number placed in foster care at year end is accounted for by placements moves and by young people coming into care within the year but subsequently returning home.

It should be noted that the number of children and young people placed within a family setting when they first become LAC is much higher at approximately 90%+. However, it would be unrealistic to expect to achieve 95%+ due to the small percentage of young people who become LAC when placed directly into residential educational setting or those who are remanded and who become LAC under the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act (LASPO) 2012.

Figure 4 below shows the placements made within fostering settings (excluding kinship placements) where demand for such placements has been on a downward trajectory since 2013/14 as LAC population falls⁴. A 29% reduction in non-kinship placements over this period compared to a 11% reduction in LAC population in this period

Figure 4: Usage of foster placements over 5 year period



Supply

⁴ Foster placements from looked after children episodes for each financial year

The majority of Ealing's looked after children population require placements within family settings. Where such placements are not identifiable within the child's family and friends network, Ealing will source placements for this cohort of children within its own in house fostering service or with foster families approved by registered fostering agencies. The key issue in terms of supply is the ability of foster agencies, in house or external, to recruit and retain sufficient numbers of good local foster carers.

The supply side may also be impacted by increasing numbers of "staying put" placements for young people aged 18-21 years-of-age, there are currently 31 young people in Staying Put arrangements with their former foster carers across in-house provision and IFA providers. Historically young people within fostering placements have often moved on at 18 years old thereby freeing fostering spaces for the younger cohort coming through. If significant numbers of young people remain within fostering placements up until the age of 21 it can present difficult challenges ahead with the supply of fostering placements, especially for older children. However to date this has not transpired to be as big a challenge as at first envisaged.

Gaps

Historically there has been a shortfall in the supply of local placements which meet all of the child's identified needs, with a number of recurrent issues. For example:

- Identifying foster families of the same ethnicity/religion/culture as the child.
- Identifying foster families with approval to accept large sibling groups.
- Identifying carers who are approved and willing to accept older children, particularly those with challenging behaviour
- Locating foster families that geographically meet the child's needs. For example to enable the child to continue to access their current education/health provision or to maintain family and peer networks.
- Identifying carers with the required skills and/or experience to meet the child's assessed needs.
- Specialist fostering placements that can access a range of additional inputs ranging from therapeutic input for both the young person and carers through to higher levels of support from the agency.

How we plan to fill these gaps

To ensure future sufficiency in this market Ealing is undertaking a number of initiatives.

In our internal fostering and adoption service we have:

- Used the findings and learning from the Impower work referred to earlier in this document, to increase the number of in-house foster carers that we both recruit and retain. However, whilst this has not led to increased

overall capacity despite extensive efforts, it has resulted in a marked increase in utilisation capacity of existing cohort from an average of 76% to 91%

- Developed a therapeutic fostering service “Fostering Plus” to provide local placement options that have historically only been available at some distance from Ealing. Fostering Plus carers undertake specialist training in “Nurturing Attachments” and subsequently in total to date, 81 foster carers have either completed or are currently attending an 18-week DDP informed Parenting Programme “Nurturing Attachments” this approach is integral to the Ealing intervention model.
- Fostering Plus Carers have provided local in-house placements to many children who would otherwise have had to be placed in specialist residential and IFA placements.
- Continued to provide an effective kinship support service
- Developed our plans for implementing “Staying Put” within our cohort of foster carers
- Reviewed the adoption support we provide, in the context of the work of Impower and legislative change, to optimise capacity.

In the external fostering sector we are working as follows:

- As part of the WLA children’s efficiency programme, a tender for independent foster care was completed in the summer of 2013 and expired in March 2018.
- A common approach to “Staying Put” was drawn up across the ten WLA authorities and the IFA’s on the Framework and subsequent DPV. This has been successful in securing a significant number of Staying Put placements in the independent sector.
- The Framework and subsequent DPV includes a clear ongoing quality assurance monitoring process. A key benefit of working collaboratively with a number of other authorities is the pooling of resources to allow in depth monitoring.
- Another potential benefit of the Framework/DPV is the facility it provides to hold “mini” tenders with framework providers. This will be useful if any or all boroughs within the WLA identify specific gaps within local fostering provision that we would like providers to focus on.
- The WLA have implemented a Dynamic Purchasing Vehicle (DPV) for the IFA market from April 2018. This is currently being used by Ealing and other partners to call-off individual foster placements successfully. The DPV is compliant with EU procurement regulations and is flexible in that IFAs can join at any time, unlike the previous framework
- The DPV is also open to other authorities to make their in-house fostering vacancies available to other partners. The DPV will aim to

have every potential fostering vacancy available to all partner authorities.

5.3 Residential Children's Homes

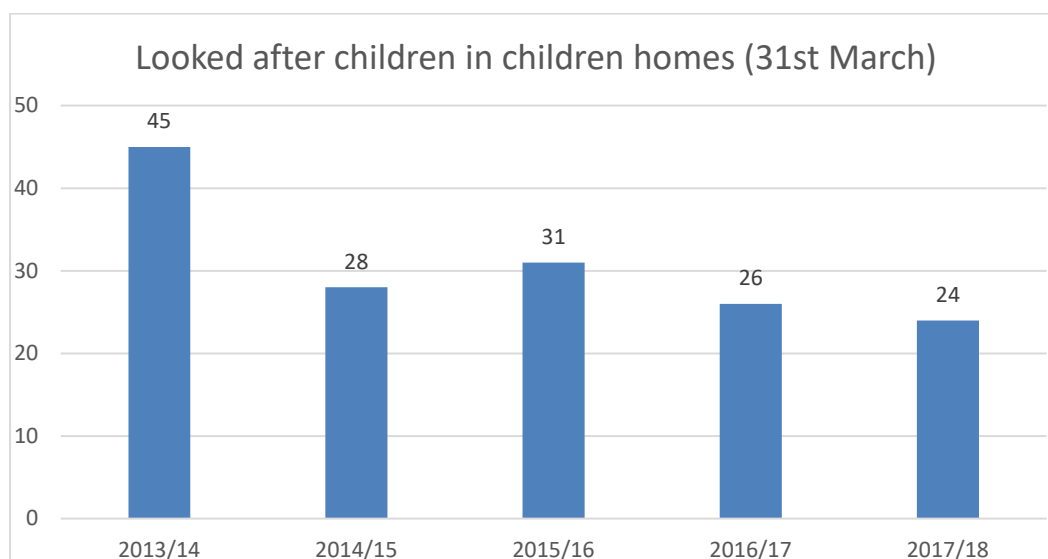
What we need

Ealing currently commissions residential care for a small proportion of our looked after child population. The aim is to reduce this percentage over the 2018 to 2021 period to 4%. As at 31st March 2018, Ealing have 24 children placed in children's homes, which is 7% of the 343 total children looked after at that time. Further planned reduction to 4% will be achieved by supporting local foster carers to care for children and young people with more complex needs and sibling groups.

In our experience, young people in residential care typically require additional inputs to effect change to current presenting needs and behaviours. Historically young people placed in residential settings have not returned to family settings. This has been identified as an area that requires additional focus. As such Ealing has been working with providers over the last few years to identify models of care that have a proven track record of success. Unfortunately such specialist services are not currently based locally to Ealing.

In terms of numbers of placements made within residential settings over the last five years the graph below shows that demand has fallen nearly 50% since 2013/14. However demand can fluctuate by up to 20% year on year and gangs issues and wider contextual safeguarding risks do mean that we need to ensure an ongoing supply of quality residential provision, locally and further afield is available when required and this is currently in short supply nationally and regionally.

Figure 5: Residential



Supply

Historically residential provision in the Ealing area and indeed London as a whole, have not provided additional inputs such as education or therapy. Additionally, Ealing has a standard requirement that residential provision should have had either a good or outstanding rating at their last full OFSTED inspection. As a result Ealing has sourced significant residential provision with additional inputs outside of the London area in the past.

Gaps

As highlighted above, the major gap within the residential market has been the location of high quality services and services that work to proven models of care, especially for younger children and increasingly for adolescents with complex needs. Professionals within Ealing have identified a small proportion of younger children who have had number of placement disruptions within family settings, including with specialist fostering services. Although small in number, this cohort of children require a disproportionately high level of resources. Through intensive intervention over a period of time this group of children will be enabled to be placed within a family setting as well as accessing mainstream educational services. When such outcomes are achieved not only do the young people make better progress but also the level of resources can be reduced and refocused on other young people.

For older children, usually aged 14 years and above when first placed within a residential care setting, returning to a fostering placement may not always be possible for a variety of reasons. For such young people the aim will be to address any presenting needs and prepare them for independent living in the future. Ideally this would be through consistently good care and effective planning, involving the young person. We work with several residential providers who also provide semi-independent services thereby allowing key workers to continue to work with them once they leave residential settings. However, once again, these services historically have not been available locally to Ealing.

How we plan to meet these gaps

As part of the WLA, Ealing is committed to stimulating the development of high quality residential provision within the West London area. We are currently working in partnership with a number of private and voluntary agencies to support the development of residential provision in West London. Ealing, as part of the WLA, are also considering the viability of tendering for a block purchase contract for residential care. Partnership working with the residential sector has already resulted, over the past 4 years, in the following new developments:

- Warwick Road children's home – this is a 6 bedded unit (with an additional 2 emergency beds), run by St Christopher's, that provides services to WLA boroughs

- Garrick Road – a three bedded single gender (female) unit
- Pelham House – a four bedded single gender (female) unit.

The above projects are examples of services that have been designed following extensive consultation between boroughs and providers which has proved invaluable to both parties. The services were set up to meet identified needs of particular cohorts of young people which in turn meant that the services were fully utilised within short periods of time after opening.

Developments that are at planning stage include:

- Working with some local providers who have recently opened services but not as part of the consultation mentioned above. Some of these services are currently under-utilised. It is hoped that retrospective partnership working with these providers can align the provision to the needs of WLA local authorities, including Ealing.
- Working with three providers with a view to them developing local, good quality residential services that meet the needs of specific groups of children. This has the potential to benefit all parties, the LAC young people, their families and all professionals involved. This project is also potentially an exemplar in partnership working between local authorities and the private and voluntary sector to design services from the bottom up.
- Participating in a WLA tender for residential care in the local area, subject to agreement on the specification and financial risk sharing.

Recent developments:

- The WLA implemented a Dynamic Purchasing Vehicle for Ofsted registered children's homes in 2018. DPV complies with EU procurement regulations and is flexible in that any provider can join or leave at any time. This includes private and voluntary providers as well as being available for WLA authorities to sell spare capacity in any homes they run.
- In late 2018 the WLA will be scoping opportunities for partner authorities to work together with independent and voluntary sector providers to increase capacity in west London through block booking. This approach will mitigate the financial risk of a single authority undertaking block booking.

5.4 Semi-independent accommodation and support

What we need

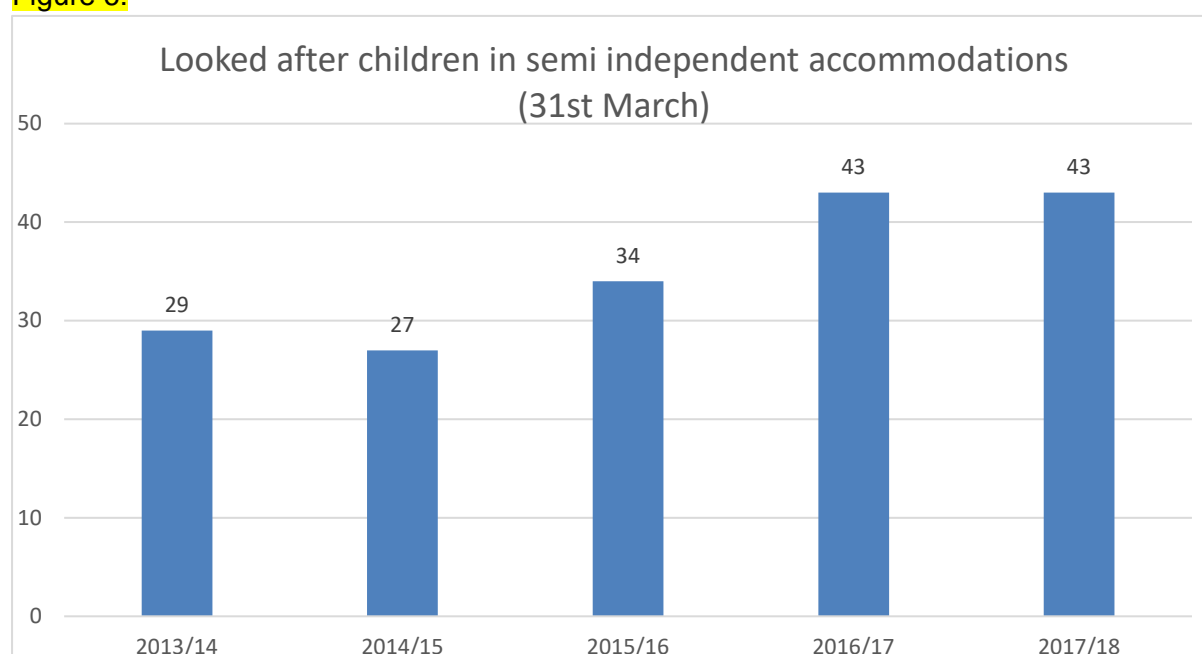
Ealing has a large and diverse population of care leavers who require tailored packages of support. These range from young people who are EET and require and want minimal levels of support through to young people who may require high levels

of supervision and support due to vulnerabilities and behaviours. The accommodation elements of such services are usually required within the West London area but are sometimes needed further afield due to contextual safeguarding local issues.

There is also a need for support services that are not necessarily linked to accommodation. Such services have traditionally been called floating support.

In terms of actual placements requiring accommodation plus support, the graph below shows an increase of demand over the last 4 years of over 20% for such placements. We believe this upward trend will be short lived as it is likely a result of increased LAC numbers several years ago. The LAC numbers have stabilised over the last three years which should be reflected in leaving care placement requirements over the lifetime of this strategy.

Figure 6:



Supply

Ealing currently commissions several different types of semi-independent provision ranging from services that provide high levels of key work support and access to staff at all times, through to services that have minimal levels of key work support in independent accommodation. We have worked locally with both private and voluntary sectors over a number of years to ensure we have a sufficient supply of these services. Local providers include the West London YMCA, Centrepoin within the voluntary sector and Higher Level Care, Holmdene, Inclusive Care and London Care Solutions.

As well as foyers and hostels West London YMCA also operate a supported lodgings scheme which enable us to place care leavers within family settings on a private

rental basis. This type of service works very well for some of our more vulnerable young people.

We work collaboratively with the Supporting People team in Ealing and through this we have access to 40+ spaces where the support element is funded by Supporting People. A major benefit of these services is that the young person can stay put when their cases are closed to children's services.

One of the main challenges we face in the semi-independent sector, both now and on-going, is ensuring these services are fit for purpose. This market is unregulated by OFSTED therefore all monitoring and inspection is conducted by the commissioning authority.

We also have an annual quota of approx. 20 council tenancies pa council for care leavers. This is most likely to comprise studio accommodation or 1 beds. In addition Care leavers who are parents or other vulnerabilities may be assessed in their own right, outside of the quota system for Council or housing association accommodation.

Ealing has developed its own floating support service based at our Horizons Centre, the service is call the Semi-independent Outreach Team (SOT). This service can be used to supply intensive short term inputs to care leavers at times when they require additional support, such as transitions or periods of crisis. This service is also used to assess the needs of young people entering care aged 15+, these assessments are then considered by the At Risk Of Homelessness (AROH) panel. This allows resources to be directed in an appropriate and timely manner.

Although we acknowledge that successful staying put policies will reduce demand for semi-independent placements other pressures, such as LASPO and the raising of care leavers age for support up to 25 will likely negate any potential demand reduction.

Gaps

How we plan to meet these gaps

- Ealing, as part of the WLA, in partnership with the other WLA authorities has been using the WLA semi-independent approved provider list. This list will be reopened in Summer 2018 to increase the number of available providers. It will also enable cost effective monitoring processes to be put in place that will be shared between all commissioning boroughs.
- Ealing is also working with the closely with West London YMCA which is redeveloping one of its local hostels, situated in central Ealing and near to good transport links. Ealing have advised them as to the type of accommodation and support we require for our young people and once

completed will have the opportunity to purchase a block of spaces if such a contract is of benefit at that time.

- Ealing's Access to Resources Team has built excellent working relationships with a number of providers that will enable us to react to any future change in demand. An example of how this has worked previously is the setting up of services by partner providers to accommodate young people remanded into local authority care under the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012. The services were available from the date the act came into force in December 2012.
- Ealing will explore new potential partners such as BTL (Buy To Let) property portfolio holders, university accommodation owners and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs).
- We will also consult on the re-branding of the Host Family services that we commission as we think that some young people find the description off putting.

5.5 Parental assessment services

What we need

It is very difficult to project the numbers of placements required within this sector, this is mainly due to the small numbers that are commissioned within any one year. For example in 2010-2011 and 2012-2013 Ealing commissioned 7 residential parental assessment placements each year. However, during 2011-2012 Ealing commissioned 14 such placements but this dropped back to 9 in 2017/18. Ealing also commissions parenting assessments within the community but once again the numbers are small and therefore difficult to use to project future need.

Supply

There has been a consistent demand for services that can assess a parent's ability to provide appropriate care to their child. In the past such services have been commissioned within residential settings. However, in the last few years a proportion of such services have been commissioned by Ealing to be conducted within the community. This provides a number of benefits such as continued access to local services for all the family members. Ealing have developed an innovative service in partnership with the West London YMCA to provide accommodation to enable community assessments within Ealing's boundaries.

In some cases a local assessment is not viable due to requirements for specialist knowledge/input such as parental learning difficulties or substance misuse issues etc. Ealing continues to commission such services in the location they are provided rather than locally. Given the small market this sector consists of as well as the unpredictability of demand we expect to continue to follow previous commissioning patterns whilst encouraging growth of local specialist services from the private and voluntary sectors.

Gaps

Due to the success of the work we have already done to develop this market and the range of options that are available, no further commissioning activity is required at this stage.

How we plan to meet these gaps

Given the current market and low demand levels no additional commissioning activities have been identified.

6. Market management and working with providers

In Ealing we have a good track record of working with providers which has enabled us to secure commercial deals with a number of providers as well as to encourage new services to be developed in the local area.

Examples of these successes are cost and volume discounts with two IFAs and working with the YMCA to secure exclusive use of a semi- independent provision for care leavers and residential assessment provision for young parents in the Borough.

There is a long history of organising provider forums and sharing with providers information about our placement needs.

Ealing staff have also been actively involved in the work of London Care Placements and have, for example, helped to develop new standard contracts.

The preferred method in Ealing, until recently, has been one built on partnership working and relationship building with the market.

Whilst the approach described above is still very much in place, the collaborative work with nine other boroughs has taken Ealing in some new directions with a greater emphasis on tendering for services.

There are still regular provider forums – but these are now taking place on a much wider scale with more providers and more commissioners on a sub-regional basis.

There has been more tendering activity, as illustrated by the WLA IFA tender that has resulted in a new framework contract being put into place in 2013 and the DPVs introduced in 2018.

Tenders for other services are being actively considered under the auspices of the WLA (residential care and semi -independent provision, for example) but another approach to developing the market that we are actively engaged in is what we are calling “organic growth” – encouraging providers to set up services accessible to the ten boroughs that belong to the WLA efficiency programme.

This approach is already bearing results with new residential services being developed in west and north-west London in consultation with commissioners.

Appendices

Appendix one – Ealing LAC and Care Leaver Commissioning Strategy Action Plan
2018 to 2021

Appendix one – Ealing LAC and Care Leavers Commissioning Strategy 2018 – 2021
Action Plan

1. Foster care			
<u>What we are trying to achieve</u>	<u>Key actions</u>	<u>Lead</u>	<u>Timescale and update</u>
Increase capacity of in house fostering and adoption service	To increase number of in house foster carers by at least 15 in 18/19 and 19/20	HOS Children's Placements	By 31 March 2019 By March 2020
	To further explore opportunities and develop a proposal for a regional approach to Fostering in West London.	HOS Children's Placements	By 31 st March 2019
Further develop the capacity by 15 carers for Fostering Plus Foster Carers	By implementing a robust career development scheme for Foster carers based on the Ealing model for therapeutic foster placements.	Head of Service Children's Placements	31 st December 2020
Develop a Regional Adoption Agency for West London	Ealing are to host "Adopt London West"	Director Children and Families Head of Service Children's Placements	April 2019
To increase the supply and improve the quality of provision of foster carers by IFAs	To utilise the WLA framework contract, calling off the framework as needed	Head of Service Children's Placements	Ongoing to March 2021
	Set up stakeholder forums for those IFAs outside of the WLA to brief them on the Ealing model to enable providers to meet the complex needs of adolescents	TM ART and Heads of Service Children's Placements and CIC and LC	Dec 2018 and ongoing 2021
	Utilise the Dynamic Purchasing Vehicle to call off placements as and when required	TM ART	April 2018 through to 31/03/21 with options to extend
	The WLA to develop an options appraisal for Ealing's and partner LA's consideration. This	WLA	Options paper to be distributed to Ealing and other partner LA's summer/autumn 2018

	will provide opportunities to partner other LA's in calling off blocks/other deals from the WLA IFA DPV.		Potential implementation of any chosen opportunities late 2018/early 2019
To continue to Improve quality of provision	To use intelligence from IROs to monitor outcomes and to assess ability of providers to deliver these	Head of Service – LAC and Care Leavers AIDHOUR TM ART	Ongoing - 2021
Establish practice guidance for young people aged 16+ to support them to “stay close” when leaving residential care and move on in due course to suitable semi independent and independent accommodation	Currently active partners in DfE innovation project for “Staying close”.	Move from planning to implementation phase	Autumn 2018
	Review, consolidate and utilise the learning from the pilot to inform practice change Implement the Trusted Relationships programme which Ealing is a national pilot in partnership with St Christopher's	HOS Children's placements TM LCT HOS Adoption and Fostering and HOS Children's Placements	September 18 for review and ongoing implementation to 2021 Year 1 from Sept 2018 through to April 2020
2.Kinship care			
<u>What we are trying to achieve</u>	<u>Key action</u>	<u>Lead</u>	<u>Timescale</u>
To proactively prioritise and promote the use of family and friend's placements.	Identify potential kinship placements. To further integrate kinship carers into the Ealing model and practice in the CONNECT teams.	HOS - LAC & Leaving Care, Children's Placements	Ongoing - 2021
3.Residential care			
<u>What we are trying to achieve</u>	<u>Key actions</u>	<u>Lead</u>	<u>Timescale</u>
Increase supply of residential provision in west and north-west London areas	Effectively engage with the private and voluntary sector. Work in partnership with providers and other LA's to develop local bespoke provision that meets local needs	Senior Integrated Commissioning manager	Ongoing – 2021 Partnerships already underway, with two homes (9 units) recently opened. The two P&V homes opened in the last 2-3

	Confirm arrangements for block contract with charity community partner and provider of children's residential care to secure 4 residential beds for Ealing		<p>years continue to operate successfully at near capacity. Encouraging further growth has proved challenging given the high local capital costs.</p> <p>Specialist residential provision for young women at risk of sexual exploitation is now well established in Ealing operated by St Christopher's Fellowship.</p>
	<p>Act as lead authority in the establishment of a Dynamic Purchasing Vehicle. The DPV will be open to any LA in England to join and currently has 10 partners.</p> <p>The DPV will provide a transparent marketplace called off through CarePlace. This will also provide invaluable reporting opportunities to inform both LA's and providers.</p>	WLA Ealing – Commissioning	The DPV went live in June 2018 and will expire in March 2021 with the option to extend for a further 3 years (1+1+1)
	The WLA to develop an options appraisal for Ealing's and partner LA's consideration. This will provide opportunities to partner other LA's in calling off blocks from the WLA Residential Children's Home DPV.	WLA	<p>Options paper to be distributed by WLA to Ealing and other partner LA's summer/autumn 2018</p> <p>Potential implementation of any chosen opportunities late 2018/early 2019</p>
Develop alternative education provision in local area as needed	Tender for a new approved list of EOTAS providers with a revised specification that includes LAC and	Contract and procurement manager, Head of Children's Commissioning and EOTAS strategy	<p>Ongoing - 2021</p> <p>The new approved list for the commissioning of EOTAS placements has been operative</p>

	enables local residential placements to be made with access to local EOTAS provision if needed	manager	since early 2015.
Improve quality of provision	<p>To use intelligence from IROs to monitor outcomes and to assess ability of providers to deliver these</p> <p>Establish clear lines of reporting to alert commissioners. This is to ensure issues are dealt with promptly, to avoid escalation and prevent potential placement breakdown.</p> <p>Develop an integrated all-age Adults and Children's Commissioning service to more effectively and efficiently meet needs across all age groups</p>	<p>Operations Manager – LAC and Care Leavers</p> <p>AIDHOUR</p> <p>Contract and Commissioning Manager</p> <p>Senior Integrated Commissioning Manager</p> <p>Asst Directors Adults and Children's services to re-structure</p>	<p>Ongoing Senior Integrated Commissioning Manager is now attending regular meetings with Aidhour. Further work required to ensure feedback from IRO's is properly utilised.</p> <p>Commissioning Officers will be more involved in the ongoing placements within their portfolio. See above re IRO intelligence</p> <p>Implement autumn 2018 and ongoing to 2021</p>
<u>5. Semi-independent and independent accommodation</u>			
<u>What we are trying to achieve</u>	<u>Key actions</u>	<u>Lead</u>	<u>Timescale</u>
Increase supply of local provision that can work with vulnerable adolescents	<p>Work with foster carers and host families to enable them to feel equipped to manage risks presented by vulnerable adolescents via training and the Brighter Futures programme</p> <p>Build and implement creative partnerships with Housing and Regeneration to</p>	<p>HOS Placements</p> <p>HOS CIC and LAC</p> <p>Asst Director – Planning and</p>	<p>April 2019</p> <p>Sept 2018 – Sept</p>

	<p>increase supply for care leavers through new build initiatives across the borough</p> <p>Implement the Trusted Relationships DfE pilot to target intensive interventions at the most vulnerable adolescent cohort in the borough including LAC and Care Leavers</p>	<p>Partnerships and HOS Children's Placements</p> <p>Head of Children's Placements and Head of Children's Safeguarding</p>	<p>2021</p> <p>Sept 2018 – April 2021</p>
Expand availability of semi-independent and independent accommodation	Rebrand and relaunch Host Families services and expand capacity	<p>HOS CIC and care leavers</p> <p>Tm ART</p>	Ongoing 2021
Increase supply of local provision	Negotiate with YMCA for additional units within St Mary's Road and other settings at affordable costs	Commissioning and Contact Manager (ART)	Ongoing - 2021
Improve quality, value for money and capacity of local provision	<p>Utilise the WLA Semi-Independent Framework to call off single and block placements.</p> <p>Support the evaluation of new applicants to the Framework when framework is re-opened in Summer 2018. This will potentially double the number of accredited suppliers available from 30 to 60.</p>	<p>LB of Hounslow to lead for contract.</p> <p>TM ART to lead for Ealing.</p>	Framework will expire in 2020
	WLA to develop a semi-independent DPV to replace the current framework. This will include the development of a standardised quality assurance methodology. This is deemed necessary in	<p>WLA</p> <p>Ealing - TBC</p>	April 2020 to replace the current framework

	this unregulated market		
Expand availability of semi-independent and independent accommodation	Re-brand and re-launch Host Families services and expand capacity	Senior Integrated Commissioning Manager and Contracts and Commissioning Manager and Operations Manager – LAC and Care Leavers	Ongoing - 2021
	Utilise council housing quota effectively – 20 places currently - to meet the needs of the most vulnerable young people who are ready for independent living. Target these limited places at those with the most vulnerable needs. However, as part of the FE programme work with Housing to remove quota but focus on a whole Council approach to address the holistic housing needs of care leavers in partnership, through in house, housing association and private sector suppliers.		A new partnership right across the Council to address the accommodation needs of care leavers is in place from Sept 2018 onwards as part of the Future Ealing programme and workstream to identify creative solutions to Council wide priorities and challenges which include care leavers accommodation. This includes increasing local supply through new build and other initiatives.
	Work with Buy to Let management agencies and with local universities to identify opportunities for accessing rented accommodation and excess capacity student accommodation for care leavers		Ongoing

<u>6. Market management</u>			
<u>What we are trying to achieve</u>	<u>Key actions</u>	<u>Lead</u>	<u>Timescale</u>
Inform market about our needs	Regular provider forums (with separate ones for residential, foster and semi-independent provision)	Process to be managed under auspices of WLA	Ongoing but on a sub-regional basis linked to DPVs – Ongoing - 2021
Regular analysis of data and trends	Implementation of Careplace to facilitate needs analysis, to help manage discounts, to help identify vacancies and to provide a service directory for internal and external usage	Senior Integrated Commissioning Manager and Head of Children's Commissioning Process to be developed and managed under auspices of WLA	Introduced in 2015 and ongoing - 2021
Support the market – internal and external to work together and to achieve value for money and to share intelligence	Regular meetings of West London residential providers to take place Care providers to be offered opportunity to work together to realise benefits of collective approach to the supply chain	Process to be developed and managed under auspices of WLA. Process to be developed and managed under auspices of WLA	Ongoing This has been implemented since early 2014 and has proven a valuable intelligence source regarding C.S.E. and gang activity Introduction of DPVs 2018 - Ongoing - 2021
<u>What we are trying to achieve</u>	<u>Key actions</u>	<u>Lead</u>	<u>Timescale</u>
Introduction of CarePlace e-brokerage system to manage referral across all WLA boroughs. This will aid market analysis	Commissioning officers are fully trained	WLA and partner LA's	Introduced in 2015 and ongoing - 2021

regarding location and type of provision currently under supplied.			
Introduction of the CarePlace e-contracting module to aid monitoring of contract compliance.	Commissioning Officers are fully trained. TM ART to use contracting monitoring report to support staff	WLA TM ART	April 2018 - ongoing
Contract Management for the WLA DPV's	WLA - provider visits. Identifying individual provider and market wide issues through the use of KPI's and intelligence. Ensure providers adhere to contractual terms. Applying Suspension & Barring policies to ensure provision is fit for purpose.	WLA	IFA went live April 2018 Children's Residential went live June 2018 SEN due to go live Aug/Sep 2018
	WLA to develop an options paper for assuming contract management responsibility for the WLA Semi-Independent Framework	WLA LA representatives at a task and finish group	Ealing to consider opportunities presented to WLA DSC Group in September 2-18 Potential implementation autumn 2018.
Agree payment of Council tax for Care Leavers not eligible for benefits both in and out of borough to support transition to independence	Council tax to be paid for care leavers aged 18-21 not eligible for exemption. Approved by Leader of Council and Children's portfolio holders through Corporate Parenting consultations.	Head of Service CIC and LC	April 2018
	Council Tax to be paid for care leavers aged 21 – 25 years placed	Head of Service CIC and LC	April 2019

	within Ealing		
Identify resources to provide specialist support to young women at risk of sexual exploitation.	Set up a contract with the Women and Girls Network	Head of Children's Commissioning	Achieved 2017 and ongoing - 2021
<p>Reunification</p> <p>Continue to develop the NSPCC reunification programme identifying children who may be able to return to the care of their parents</p>	Identify 10 children's cases to review per year as possible reunification plans	<p>Head of Service CIC and LC</p> <p>TM Manager CONNECT</p>	<p>10 in 2018/19</p> <p>10 in 2019/20</p> <p>10 in 2020/21</p>

Updated 05/09/18