



South
Gloucestershire's
**Local Offer for
Care Leavers**



Delivering for you

Welcome

In South Gloucestershire (which we also call South Glos) we prioritise care leavers and our focus, in all the work we do, is to build positive relationships where care, love, understanding, and support are the foundations to build upon. Our vision and ambition for children is that

“Every child and young person in South Gloucestershire will have the best start in life, thrive and be prepared for a successful adult life.”

It is important you know what to expect as a care leaver and this latest Local Offer is written for you, following consultation with other care leavers. This offer is designed so you know what is available to you.

Introduction

We understand that leaving care can be hard, but just because you are leaving or have left care does not mean our support stops.

We will consider with you any extra support you may need, for example because you have special educational needs or a disability; you are an Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child (UASC) and your immigration status is unclear; you are in or leaving custody or you have had contact with the criminal justice system; you are a young parent; you are going through a difficult time in your personal life, or you live out of area.

This Local Offer is designed to provide you with important information about your entitlements as a South Glos care leaver. Your Social Worker or Personal Advisor (PA) will talk to you about your entitlements and make sure you have a copy of this Local Offer to refer to when you need to.

On occasion we may agree with you to support and help you differently to what is described in this offer. If that is the case, it will be recorded in your Pathway Plan.

For all online information and web addresses that are mentioned throughout the Care Leavers Local Offer, visit www.southglos.gov.uk/LeavingCare

OUR LOCAL OFFER PRIORITIES

We will...

- 1 focus on preparation and planning with you
- 2 help you understand your legal and financial entitlements
- 3 pay attention to your identity and history
- 4 hear you and your voice and learn with you
- 5 encourage your feedback, participation and engagement
- 6 support your education, employment and training goals
- 7 promote good mental and physical health and wellbeing with you
- 8 ensure accommodation and housing options are suitable for you
- 9 help you develop skills that you may need when you need them
- 10 make sure you have important documents that you need.

Preparation, planning and entitlements

Why focus on preparation and planning?

Some care leavers have previously said that when they leave care they have felt unprepared and like they are having to figure things out on their own.

We commit to the transition from care being understood and treated as a process and not a single event because we know that the 'transition' from childhood to adulthood is one of the most important times in a care leaver's life.

The Pathway Plan

The purpose of the Pathway Plan is to produce a written document that records what you need.

It will focus on your future and what support will be provided to you to make a successful transition beyond care into adulthood.

A Pathway Plan should be written at least every 6 months or whenever something significant happens that changes the plan.

The Pathway Plan should be written in collaboration between you and your Social Worker or Personal Advisor.

You will be provided with a copy of your plan in your preferred language.

Who is involved?

The whole of South Gloucestershire Council has shared responsibility to act as your 'Corporate Parent'.

Within the Children's Services 'division' of the 'People' department is Corporate Parenting, and within this is the Leaving Care Team.

In preparation for leaving care, you will be introduced to your Personal Advisor who works in the Leaving Care Team.

A Personal Advisor's role is to ensure you are provided with the correct level of support across different areas of your life. They will see you at least every eight weeks.

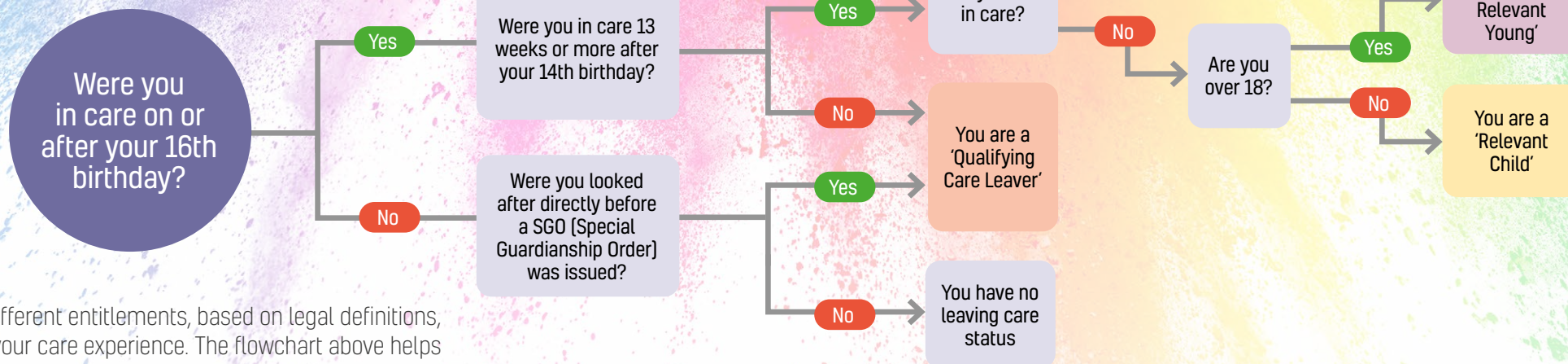
You will have a Personal Advisor up to the age of 21 and if you need a service between the ages of 21 and 25 you can 'opt in' for support with specific issues (this could be for a week or for several months).

Beyond 25 we still want to hear from you about significant life events and celebrations or to offer advice about tricky situations you are experiencing.



ENTITLEMENTS

ENTITLEMENTS



There are different entitlements, based on legal definitions, relating to your care experience. The flowchart above helps you understand which legal definition you fit under.

ELIGIBLE

- Age 16 or 17.
- Are still in care.
- Have been in care for at least 13 weeks after 14th birthday.

ENTITLEMENT

- A Personal Advisor
- A Needs Assessment
- A Pathway Plan
- The duty is to continue caring for and supporting these young people up to age 18, wherever they are living, until they leave care.

RELEVANT

- Age 16 or 17.
- No longer in care.
- Was 'Eligible' (in care for 13 weeks between 14th and 16th birthdays) or in care for a period of time after 16th Birthday.
- If returned home successfully for at least 6 months – then no longer 'Relevant'.
- Also 'Relevant' if a young person is detained after their 16th Birthday in custody, remanded or secure hospital.

ENTITLEMENT

- A Personal Advisor
- A Needs Assessment
- A Pathway Plan
- The duty is to support accommodation and maintenance, and provide financial support to meet education, training and employment needs.

FORMER RELEVANT

- Age 18 – 25.
- Left care but was previously 'Eligible' or 'Relevant'.

ENTITLEMENT

- A Personal Advisor
- A Pathway Plan, kept under regular review
- The duty is to provide assistance with employment, education and training and accommodation and living costs.

QUALIFYING

- Age 16 – 21.
- Was in care on or after 16th Birthday and no longer looked after.
- Or spent less than 13 weeks in care since 14th birthday, for example, not meeting the criteria for 'Eligible' or 'Relevant'.
- Was subject to SGO or in care at any point after age 16 (in care refers to local authority, voluntary or private care, hospital care and private fostering).

ENTITLEMENT

- Entitled to advice and assistance from Children's Services.
- In exceptional cases help could include financial assistance (with housing and education).

Identity, participation, and your voice and feedback

[Corporate Parenting Priority 1, 2 & 3]

YOUR CARE EXPERIENCE IS A SIGNIFICANT PART OF WHO YOU ARE AND YOUR IDENTITY, AND WE WILL ALWAYS PROMOTE **EQUALITY FOR YOU.**

- Your care experience and your story matter and we will always explore this with you if that is what you would like.
- You have the right of **Access to Files**. If you wish, we will support you with this process (applying for the records, reading the records, and making sense of the records) and any aftercare.
- Having a voice is important, as is making decisions about your plan and future. Similarly knowing your rights as a care leaver is important too, visit: **My rights when I am leaving care - Coram Voice***
- Our **Participation Team** supports the **Experienced Panel in Care (EPIC)** who focus on listening to your experiences, challenging stigma and improving things for other young people. These groups will also support care leavers to have access to their corporate parents.
- We also provide opportunities to get involved with how Corporate Parenting services are designed, delivered and developed. This could be acting as Care-Experienced Consultants,

In South Glos we manage all complaints that are received as well as Subject Access Requests (SARs) – which is any request for your records. We take both of these roles, and our other work very seriously. We always work with the Leaving Care Team and consider your wellbeing as part of the process. We pledge to work carefully and sensitively. **(Information Governance Team)**

The South Glos Participation Team facilitate the care leaver EPIC group meetings. We commit to prioritise the voices and experiences of care leavers and support you to influence how services work for you. **(South Glos Participation Team)**

being Young Recruiters or being a Care Experienced Trainer. You will be provided a voucher of £10, £15 or £20.

- In South Glos we have our own **mentoring** service called Breakthrough Mentoring which you can access via your Social Worker or Personal Advisor.
- **Reconstruct** provide advocacy (and mentoring) for care leavers in South Glos. They can also support you if you wish to submit formal feedback (compliments, comments, and complaints) contact details are in the 'Useful contacts' section.
- If you arrived in the UK as an **Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Child** and are under 18, we will look after and support you.
- Your Personal Advisor will talk to you about, and help you understand, your immigration status before you turn 18.
- We will ensure your Pathway Plan considers different possible immigration outcomes.
- If you are ARE (Appeal Rights Exhausted) we will complete a Human Rights Assessment and plan for your safe return home, with you.
- We will help to trace your family via British Red Cross: **Find missing family | British Red Cross***
- A priority for us is to support you to maintain and establish **relationships** that are reliable, trusting and important to you.

Reconstruct have been working with South Glos children in care and care leavers for over 20 years. As a passionate ally of care-experienced children and young people, we prioritise protecting their rights and providing essential advocacy services. We are deeply committed to supporting care leavers to share their important experiences, feelings and voice, and we strive to empower them to reach their full potential. **(Reconstruct)**

South Glos have a dedicated team for children and young people seeking asylum. We know that navigating the care system as well as the immigration system can be confusing and we are committed to ensuring you have the right support that meets your individual needs and situation. **(UASC Hub)**

- If you are a young parent, you will receive a 'New Baby Hamper' which contains some of the things you may need as a new parent.
- You can attend our Stay and Play sessions with your child - a chance to connect with other young parents every Wednesday @ Kingswood Centre.
- You will also be entitled to access the swim and soft play passes with our Active Lifestyle Centres (see Health section).

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Education, employment and training

[Corporate Parenting Priority 4]

WE WILL ALWAYS PROMOTE AND ENCOURAGE EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND TRAINING, BECAUSE **WE ARE AMBITIOUS FOR YOU.**

- Our **Virtual School** are always available to explore options, support applications and think about the adjustment to further and higher education/university.
- If you have an Education and Health Care Plan (**EHCP**) this will stop if you go to university/higher education. In further education, like college, the EHCP can continue to be reviewed up to the age of 25.
- Our **Bridges SG App** (Download details below) contains local apprenticeship opportunities - and our own apprenticeship team are committed to promoting our internal apprenticeship opportunities to care leavers, visit: **Apprenticeships - Careers***
- If you are unemployed the **DWP** have developed a protocol for working with our Leaving Care team to support you into work.
- If you are in employment, you can receive career coaching via West of England **Future Bright** program.

At the Virtual School we explore education and employment and training options with you at review points throughout your time in care. We will support and monitor your education and post-education plans up to the end of Year 13. In Year 13, when you are 16/17 years old, we will ensure you continue to receive post-18 education, employment and training transition support that is right for you. (South Glos Virtual School Head Teacher)

Apprenticeships represent a good opportunity for many young people to train in the working environment and earn a real salary! The South Gloucestershire Council Apprenticeship Team pledges to our care leavers to offer effective support if on an apprenticeship and support them to achieve their full potential. We want to provide the very best apprenticeship experience throughout their journey. (South Glos Apprenticeship Team)

- In South Glos we are committed to offering **taster days** and **work experience** to care leavers across the whole council. Our Works4Youth service also supports job readiness and employability skills such as CV writing and interview practice.
- Alternative or **job specific training** may be needed for your chosen career path, and this is something we can discuss with you.
- The **Care Leaver Covenant: Home - Care Leaver Covenant*** host pledges from local and national businesses providing mentoring, job opportunities (like work experience, internships, and apprenticeships), discounts and activities dedicated to care leavers (ages 16 – 25).

Works4Youth is a Youth Employment Service for 16–25-year-olds who are not in any education or employment. We pledge to care leavers to support their ambition and achieving success. We provide mentoring, workshops, and drop-ins, and run a Virtual Employment Hub. We can work with you towards your goals by providing education and training skills opportunities. We have good connections with local employers too. (South Glos Works4Youth Service)

Financial assistance:

- If you are 16 – 19 years old you can access the universal college bursary of £1,200 per year – this requires 95% attendance and good behavior. The apprentice bursary of £1,000 for care leavers age 16 – 24 is also available via the Government.
- University allowance – we will assist with accommodation costs (this is discretionary based on your needs out of term-time) up to £1,000 per academic year (unless you are Staying Put), living costs, travel and some course materials (£2,600 per academic year – for a max. of 4 years) – you will need to confirm enrolment with your PA to process payments, which will be paid per term/semester.
- To celebrate the completion of your course with you, you will be provided a Graduation Payment of £500.
- **Equipment needed for work set-up** (for those who choose alternative career routes to university) can be discussed with your PA.
- **Grants** – for uni students Government grants can be applied for via Student Finance: **Student finance login - Gov.uk***
- **Settling in** – you can access your **Leaving Care Grant (setting up home grant)** for some items at uni and we can help transporting your belongings.
- **Travel** – we can support with travel to interviews, going to and returning from university and support travel for an apprentice until first salary payment.
- **Interview clothes** – you will be entitled to a one-off payment of £50 (for employment interviews not college interviews).

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Health and wellbeing [Corporate Parenting Priority 5]

YOUR HEALTH IS SO IMPORTANT, AND WE PRIORITISE YOUR ENTIRE HEALTH: PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND SEXUAL HEALTH.

- Knowing your health history is important and as you become a care leaver you will receive your **'Health Passport'** at your final health medical.
- If you have a learning disability/**SEND** (special educational needs and disability) then you would have been entitled to have free annual health checks with your GP from the age of 14.
- If you are not registered with your local Doctor (GP) surgery already, we will support you to do so.
- If you also require support registering with an **Optician and Dentist**, your PA can help with this.
- You will be entitled to free dental and optical care if you are in receipt of benefits, you will require a HC2 certificate **HC2 certificates - NHSBSA***, which you will also need for the cost of your **prescriptions**.

South Gloucestershire Council's Adult Social Care service understands the experiences of care leavers and are committed to provide a 'care aware' service to you. There is a single referral route to Adult Social Care, if services and interventions are required in relation to additional health needs, via the First Contact desk, where all referrals are screened for priority. Your PA can also refer, with your consent (**South Glos Adult Social Care**)

The ICB (Integrated Care Board), which covers Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire is committed to improving the quality of health for care experienced young people. We will support you to access what you need and consider the most appropriate health service for you. (**Children in Care and Care Leaver Designated Nurse**)

- AWP provide primary and secondary **mental health services** across South Glos Your PA can support you with thinking about what service is most appropriate for you.
- **VitaMinds** (NHS) offer a range of free and confidential short-term Talking Therapies (known as IAPT) to anyone who is 16-years and over, which can be accessed through a self-referral.
- **Social Prescribing** via Southern Brooks in South Glos is another way to seek 'treatment' (usually activities) to enhance your wellbeing.
- If you live outside of South Gloucestershire or are having difficulty accessing mental health support you can access 1-2-1 therapy via 'Ask Jan' – which is in the form of an Ask Jan membership providing 24 hour counselling, 6 x 1-2-1 counselling sessions and other personal development opportunities (discuss access with your PA).
- South Glos provides **Mental Health First Aider and Wellbeing First Aider training** to care leavers and those working with care leavers.
- Further health and wellbeing links are in the 'Useful contacts' section including services relating to **Sexual Health and Drugs and Alcohol services**.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your mental health and emotional wellbeing, we would always suggest that first you should seek care and guidance from your GP – they provide the gateway to other services. If you need support doing this your PA can help to make calls or go to the GP with you – as long as you agree/provide consent. (**CAMHS Transition Nurse**)

At Southern Brooks we want to reach South Glos care leavers to support better mental health and wellbeing. We offer short-term support, either on the phone or in person and focus on access to the community to empower and reduce isolation and loneliness. We can also support with other areas of life, like housing, finance, employment issues. (**Southern Brooks**)

Leisure:

If you are a young parent you can access Active Lifestyle Centre passes which cover swimming and soft play for 12 weeks (also pregnant women can access free swimming).

- If you are age 18 – 21 years old – you can discuss accessing our Leaving Care Team Active Centre passes. If you are age 21 – 25 years old – you are entitled to purchase an annual pass under Active Centre's concession offer.

Independent living skills

[Corporate Parenting Priority 2 & 3]

OUR INDEPENDENCE WORK IS GROUNDED IN THE IDEA OF **INTERDEPENDENCE** AND THAT SUCCESSFUL TRANSITIONS AND LEARNING SKILLS SHOULD BE GRADUAL.

- **Passport to Independence** is a planning and preparation tool, which helps discussion and understanding of independent living skills. This can be used to develop tenancy readiness skills.
- Our **13-25 Preparing for Adulthood Team** which is part of the Young Person Disability Service offer information, guidance, and short-term assistance to help young people reach their ambitions. A focus is on supporting young people to achieve and sustain greater personal independence. The team support across different pathways to adulthood covering different areas of life.
- **Important documents** – we will ensure you have the documents you need relating to your identity and will keep copies safe for you. These include:
 - ▶ National Insurance (NI) number
 - ▶ Passport
 - ▶ Provisional Driving License
 - ▶ Birth Certificate
 - ▶ Citizenship – We will support applications up to the age of 18.

One of the top priorities of the Leaving Care Team is to support practicing skills and developing knowledge at a pace that is right for you. We will always encourage you to take a lead and be in control, at the same time as championing you and your future. (Leaving Care Teams)

- ▶ ARC (Biometrics card) for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people
- ▶ We will support asylum-seeking care leavers to obtain a travel document (x1).
- **Money** – the amount of money you are entitled to depends on your care leaver status, age, and the accommodation you are living in.
 - ▶ Universal Credit (UC)
 - You will be supported to complete your first application called an 'Advanced Claim' (max. 1 month before your 18th birthday) in line with our DWP protocol – this can go 'live' on your 18th birthday.

▶ Personal Allowance

- If you are unable to claim for UC we will support you with a personal allowance. This is equivalent to state benefit and will cover rent, food and bills. We will also support you to budget. Personal allowance is available to eligible care leavers who live semi independently and are under 18.
- If you are over 18 it is an expectation that you apply for and claim UC. Your Social Worker or Personal Advisor will support you with this if required. Personal allowance cannot be paid to over 18 year olds unless there is valid reason and exceptional circumstance.

Education: see Education, employment and training section.

Rent/Accommodation deposit: see Accommodation and housing section.

First TV licence will be covered for your first year living independently, up to the age of 21.

JobCentres & the Leaving Care Team provide an enhanced service together, supporting young people leaving care into education, employment, and training. This partnership aims to empower young people to have aspirations and reach their full potential and ensure coordinated individualised support; and quick and accurate payment for those needing to claim benefits. (DWP)

Council Tax: you are exempt up to age 25.

Leaving Care Grant (LCG): money allocated to you to buy essential home items. The total is £3,000. We will support you to purchase quality items and make the most of this allowance (examples in the Accommodation and housing section). It is expected that you will (with support if required) spend the full amount of your LCG before your 25th birthday, even if you no longer receive a service (for example, if you are aged 21+). There may be exceptional circumstances where we can extend this entitlement beyond your 25th birthday - you can discuss this with the Leaving Care Team.

Learning to drive: we will support with the cost of (maximum) five 1 hour lessons. We would first expect other funding options to have been considered and explored.

First driving theory test and first driving practical test or CBT test.

Festival celebrations: (for example, Christmas or Eid) = £30 (one payment per year).

Birthday money: 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st Birthday = £30

Mobile phones: we pledge not to have any young people leave care without a mobile phone. If you require a new phone when you are 18 or older we will help you to get a basic phone and think about budgeting with you. South Glos also work in partnership with the Good Things Foundation and their **Databank and Devicebank**, which means we can access basic devices and data for our care leavers most in need.

Accommodation and housing

[Corporate Parenting Priority 2 & 6]

THERE ARE **VARIOUS HOUSING OPTIONS** AND WHERE YOU LIVE NEEDS TO BE SUITABLE. YOUR VIEWS ARE CENTRAL TO ANY PLANNING.

- Between the ages of 16 – 21 you can access the South Glos **Trainer Flats** for up to three, 2-week stays, where you can practice and develop skills that will support you as you move on to your next housing options. The aim is to promote 'tenancy readiness'.
- Remaining with your foster carer beyond age 18 is an option, which is called '**Staying Put**'.
- **Shared Lives** is a similar option for over 18's who have a disability.
- **Supported Lodgings**, which is where you live with someone who may not be known to you, is a kind of lodger/landlord relationship.
- There are **short-term supported accommodation** options and **high support flats**. Both options can be shared or self-contained. The aim is to help young people develop the skills to manage their own independent accommodation, with support reducing over time.

- **Floating support** is an option to provide extra advice and guidance throughout these tenancies.

In South Glos our Fostering service is a proud ally of care experienced people and understands the challenges they have to overcome, across different areas of their life. In South Glos around 10% of our care leaver population continue to live with their carer and 'Stay Put', which we know can provide greater stability and smoother transitions to adulthood, where positive relationships are central. We will always plan for Staying Put with you and your carer, if this is the right plan for you. (South Glos Fostering Service)

- In South Glos we ensure all care leavers, when they are ready, receive **priority banding (Band A) for South Glos social housing through HomeChoice**.
- If **private renting** is the preferred option, support and assistance is available through the Leaving Care Team. We will support your move into independence and cover up to 6 weeks rent in advance and deposit. We will act as a **guarantor** once.
- If you have been accepted onto a university course your PA will consider your **university accommodation options** with you.
- Accommodation for students during holidays can be arranged as short-term accommodation and should be discussed with your Social Worker/ Personal Advisor.
- The **Leaving Care Grant** can be spent on items such as: white goods, carpet, curtains, bedroom furniture, sofas, cooking equipment, soft furnishings, TV or other similar tech items and decoration costs. We will support you to make the most out of the Leaving Care Grant. If you are unsure about a certain item you feel you need then discuss with your Social Worker or Personal Advisor.

HomeChoice understands the challenges relating to leaving care and moving into independence. We work together with the social work and leaving care teams to ensure you have priority banding at the right time for you. We run special courses dedicated to care leavers to enhance skills related to housing and accommodation and we have knowledge of the various housing options available to you. (HomeChoice)

Useful contacts

<p>Leaving Care Team (main Local Offer contact)</p>	<p>The South Glos Council team responsible for working with our care leavers.</p> <p>Tel: 01454 864522 (Mon – Fri 08:30 – 17:00).</p> <p>Out of Hours (Fri from 16:30 to Mon at 08:30) if you need to speak with someone urgently contact the Emergency Duty Team: 01454 615165.</p> <p>Weekly drop-in for care leavers @ The Kingswood Centre, New Cheltenham Road, Kingswood, BS15 4FS: Wednesdays between 16:30 and 18:30.</p>
<p>Participation Team</p>	<p>Participation work with the CiCC (Children in Care Council) and EPIC (Care Leavers Group)*. Tel: 01454 862349 / 07824 081087 or email: youthparticipation@southglos.gov.uk</p>
<p>Preparing for Adulthood</p>	<p>The team helps facilitate and support young people/young adults with disability to find solutions that enable them to continue to live at home or independently within their community.</p> <p>Telephone: 01454 866259</p> <p>Email: 0-25businesssupport@southglos.gov.uk</p>
<p>Subject Access Requests (your records) and Compliments and complaints</p>	<p>Requests will go to South Gloucestershire Council Compliments, Complaints and FOI Team who can be contacted by phone: 01454 865924 or email: CAHDataProtection@southglos.gov.uk</p>

<p>Advocacy</p>	<p>Reconstruct* support South Glos care leavers and will connect you with an independent advocate to support you.</p> <p>Tel: 0800 389 1571 (Freephone) or email: yourvoice@reconstruct.co.uk</p>
<p>Identity, participation, and your voice and feedback</p>	<p>LGBTQ+: Off The Record runs a service for young people aged 14 to 25 called 'Freedom.' Contact lgbtq@otrbristol.org.uk or call 07814 250751.</p> <p>Refugee council*: Helping people seeking asylum. Several projects including Youth Development, Age Dispute; Refugee Cricket, Children's Advice and Mental health services for unaccompanied children.</p> <p>British Red Cross: advice and support for family tracing and reunion.</p> <p>Migrant Help: free asylum helpline tel: 0808 8000 630. Asylum guide translated into 15 languages.</p> <p>Young People's Services - The Diversity Trust* provides mentoring support for LGBTQ+ young people.</p> <p>Black Families Education support group mentoring programme*: support for BAME children and young people in relation to ethnicity and racism.</p> <p>Stand Against Racism and Inequality (SARI)*: mentoring support for young people who have been targeted by hate crime or hate incidents.</p> <p>FFLAG Bristol - FFLAG* – support organisation for families or friends of LGBTQ+ young people.</p>

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Education, employment and training

Works4Youth* is a South Glos project which provides tools and training for entering the world of work.

UCAS* is the admissions service for higher education applications.

Propel* is a website for care leavers to find out about year-round accommodation, bursaries/grants, and key contacts.

Health and wellbeing (physical and emotional)

Find a GP - NHS* You can find your nearest GP here by typing in your postcode.

Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust*

Next Link* If you are experiencing physical or emotional abuse from a partner contact Next Link: Telephone: 0117 925 0680.

Additional support for care leavers who have special educational needs and disabilities through the **SEND Local Offer***.

Off The Record* offer free and fun workshops to teach young people how to take care of themselves properly – call free on 0808 808 9120.

Drug and Alcohol Services* – Young People’s Drug and Alcohol Service helpline: Tel 01454 866000 (weekdays 9.00-17.00) to find out how they can help you. Email: ypservice@southglos.gov.uk

Sexual Health* – You can access free support and advice from Unity Sexual Health (free STI testing and treatment, contraception and pregnancy advice) – call 0117 342 6900.

Teens in Crisis* – A South Gloucestershire charity which supports young people with issues such as depression, anxiety, bereavement, bullying and anger. They provide counselling, 1-2-1 support and advice Tel: 01594 372777.

Kooth* is an online counselling and emotional wellbeing platform for children and young people between 11 and 18. It is free to use and can be accessed by mobile phone, tablet or a desktop PC.

Independent living skills

Employability Skills | Young People Job Skills| Life Skills* Are you ready to think about the areas you might like to develop in? Spin the ‘wheel of strengths’ and reflect on not only your skills, but your interests and personality traits, and how to develop them further to support your future.

Below you’ll find just a few of the interactive tools, films and activities available for you to use from age 14+, right now, on your own, with family, or other support.

LifeLabs* is an online hub for young people in or leaving care, to connect, share and learn together. Created in collaboration with care experienced young people, the site features a range of informative and helpful videos, that put advice and support at your fingertips. Whether you’re looking for inspiration or practical help, LifeLabs has you covered! Everything about LifeLabs has been shaped by care experienced young people, so the content is relevant and useful.

Accommodation and housing

Homechoice South Gloucestershire* provides advice about:

Homelessness:

Help if you are a care leaver and homeless.

Help and housing for care leavers.

1625 Independent People: for housing advice and support: call 0117 969 5763 or email: s.glos@1625ip.co.uk

BECOME

Become* supports and campaigns for children in care and care leavers. Useful tools on the website:

- 'The Care Dictionary'
- **Propel*** provides nfo on support available at specific universities and colleges for care leavers.
- Advice line: 0800 023 2033 (Freephone) / advice@becomecharity.org.uk

CoramVoice

CoramVoice* provides advocacy and support for children in care and care leavers. Useful tools on the website:

- My Rights
- 'Always Heard Helpline': 0808 800 5792
- Easy quiz to find out if you are a care leaver and what support you should get.

WE SIGN UP TO THE FOLLOWING CHARTERS WHICH INFORM HOW WE WORK:

- **The Care Leavers Charter*** (Department for Education).
- **Care Leaver Friendly Employer Charter*** (Care Leaver Covenant).
- **The Black Care Experience Charter — The Black Care Experience***
- **Supporting Parents in and Leaving Care Charter*** (CASCADE).
- **Care Experienced Conference 10 key messages***



Bridges - The South Gloucestershire Care Leavers App

Bridges includes information, advice and guidance for South Gloucestershire care experienced young people. It was co-produced by some of our care leavers.

The Bridges content is South Gloucestershire's Local Offer to Care Leavers. It covers a range of important areas such as housing and accommodation, money and financial entitlements, employment and education support, health and relationships.

You can find the App by searching on either of the stores for "Bridges SG" or using the QR codes below:

Apple App store



BRIDGES SG - iOS

Google Play App store



BRIDGES SG - Android

Or follow this link:

Bridges SG on the App Store:

<https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/bridges-sg/id1509029378>

Or follow this link:

Bridges SG - Apps on Google Play:

[play.google.com search 'Bridges SG'](https://play.google.com/search?q=Bridges+SG)

