



Housing and CYPS Joint Protocol Care leavers

April 2019

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Document Control

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Approvals

The signatories below approved, this joint housing and CYPS protocol

Name	Role	Signature	Date	Version
Bev Hendricks	Assistant Director – Safeguarding		03.09.19	VO3

Version	Date	Author(s)	Summary of Changes
V0.1	05/02/2019	YD	First draft of protocol
V0.2	23/04/2019	YD	Full process write-up added & information on governance, escalation procedures and key contacts
V0.3	01/05/2019	EC, AN, YD	Amendments to wording to clarify processes. Additional information added to reviewing and monitoring section

Protocol Review Dates

Date Due	Review Completed
03.09.2020	

Introduction

Care leavers are one of the most vulnerable groups in Haringey who often face challenges adapting to independent living. In recognition of this, both the Council and Homes for Haringey are united in their Corporate Parenting commitment to deliver person-centred support and ensure the best outcomes for all care leavers up to the age of 25.

Both agencies will aim to prevent homelessness and ensure care leavers are provided with support and safe accommodation and support to assist them in transitioning to adulthood. their independent life skills.

To achieve this, both Homes for Haringey (HfH) and Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) have adopted a 'no wrong front door' approach, whereby care leavers can receive clear and consistent information from either agency about their housing options and the procedures which will be followed when presenting as homeless.

Both HfH and CYPS will work in a transparent manner, sharing information in line with statutory guidance, to ensure that care leavers get the right support at the right time.

This protocol is underpinned by a foundation of both housing and children's services legislature. The national policies which govern the stages, assessments and duties within this protocol are cited on page 4.

Aims of the protocol

- To ensure an effective and coordinated response across Housing and CYPS services to prevent and quickly relieve homelessness amongst care leavers
- To ensure the housing process is fair and transparent for all care leavers and staff
- To ensure all staff are aware of the different housing options available to care leavers
- To assist CYPS and Housing staff in understanding the local and national policies which determine how care leavers are to be supported

Principles of the protocol

- All services will work in a person-centred manner, focusing on achieving the best outcomes for each care leaver
- Both HfH and CYPS will communicate openly with each other and when required, will provide updates on relevant cases to the other service
- Both agencies will listen to and accommodate care leavers wishes and feelings and ensure consistency in approach when managing all care leavers cases

- Both services will ensure appropriate support is given to care leavers who have additional vulnerabilities including their sexuality or LGBTQ+ status, their religious choices and young people who may have experienced domestic violence
- Both agencies will ensure all care leavers reside in suitable accommodation which meets their needs and helps them to progress towards independent living

National legislative framework for working collaboratively to support care leavers

Links are included below to the legislation which underpins this protocol:

- [Children Act 1989](#)
- [Children and Social Work Act \(2017\)](#)
- [The Homelessness Reduction Act \(2017\)](#)
- [Housing Act 1996](#)
- [Children \(Leaving Care\) Act 2000](#)
- [Homelessness Code of Guidance for Local Authorities](#)

Local policy framework for working together to support Care leavers

- Homes for Haringey Corporate Parenting Pledge 2017
- Haringey Council Homelessness Strategy 2018
- Haringey Youth at Risk Strategy (2019-2029)
- Housing Allocations Policy 2015 as amended 14 March 2018
- Haringey Borough Plan (2019-2023)

Joint process for care leavers under 18 years transitioning from Looked After status

Stage 1: All eligible children and relevant children (as determined by the Children's Act 1989) upon reaching 17 and a half years of age, will have their case presented at the fortnightly transitions panel.

The transitions panel is formed of officers from the CYPS brokerage team, senior Housing Needs Officers and CYPS staff from both the Young Adults Service (YAS) and the Looked After Children's Team. During the transitions panel, the housing plans for all young people who will become care leavers upon their 18th birthday are confirmed.

The transitions panel will collaboratively decide which of the following housing options are most appropriate for each care leaver based on their individual needs. Possible housing options for all care leavers include:

- The Young People's Supported Housing Pathway (containing a mix of self-contained flats for females, shared mixed gender and same gender houses/flats and hostel provision, which is managed by the HfH Pathway team)
- The HfH social housing quota for care leavers. This quota comprises 66 social housing lets annually for care leavers.

For some care leavers, the following housing options will be explored dependent on their situation:

- The transition-houses – A joint project between HfH and YAS, whereby YAS rents two large shared houses from HfH. YAS utilises the property to accommodate care leavers requiring a period of transition
- Staying Put – An arrangement whereby the looked after child continues to live with their foster carer beyond the age of 18
- Semi-independent accommodation funded by YAS
- Homefinder UK – Social housing for care leavers who would like to relocate outside of London.

The aim is for care leavers to demonstrate their ability to live independently to be eligible for nomination to the social housing quota.

At the transitions panel, if it is identified that the care leaver would be best suited to a placement in supported housing, then CYPS must complete the supported housing referral form prior to their 18th birthday, to ensure a smooth transition into their new accommodation.

Stage 2: To help prepare care leavers for independent living and their eligibility for the social housing quota, care leavers will attend pre-tenancy workshops delivered jointly by HfH, YAS and external partners. Care leavers will also complete modules within the newly developed independent life skills programme to increase their readiness for their own tenancy and attend a home maintenance and DIY course delivered by HfH.

Stage 3: YAS will complete the care leavers' applications to the social housing register and HfH will immediately place care leavers in Band A. Following this, the care leaver will be able to bid for social housing properties. Where there is no active participation from the care leaver in the process, HfH and YAS may choose to give a direct let to the care leaver.

Stage 4: When a care leaver bids successfully and is invited to view a HfH property (not a housing association), they will be offered a separate viewing slot and an additional 10 minutes viewing time. The notification of the care leaver's viewing appointment will be sent to the care leaver, the allocated Personal Adviser (PA) and the YAS duty team.

Stage 5: The care leaver will sign an 'introductory' tenancy with HfH if they successfully bid and accept a property. Homes for Haringey will ensure that a flag is added to their tenant case management system to highlight that the tenant is a care leaver. This will ensure that all teams in HfH are aware of the additional provisions that should be made and the support that should be provided to care leavers.

Stage 6: HfH will conduct a joint introductory visit with the YAS PA in the first month of tenancy, to ensure the wellbeing of the care leaver and to proactively manage any issues which may pose a threat to the tenancy. Joint visits will also be conducted at month 3 and month 6.

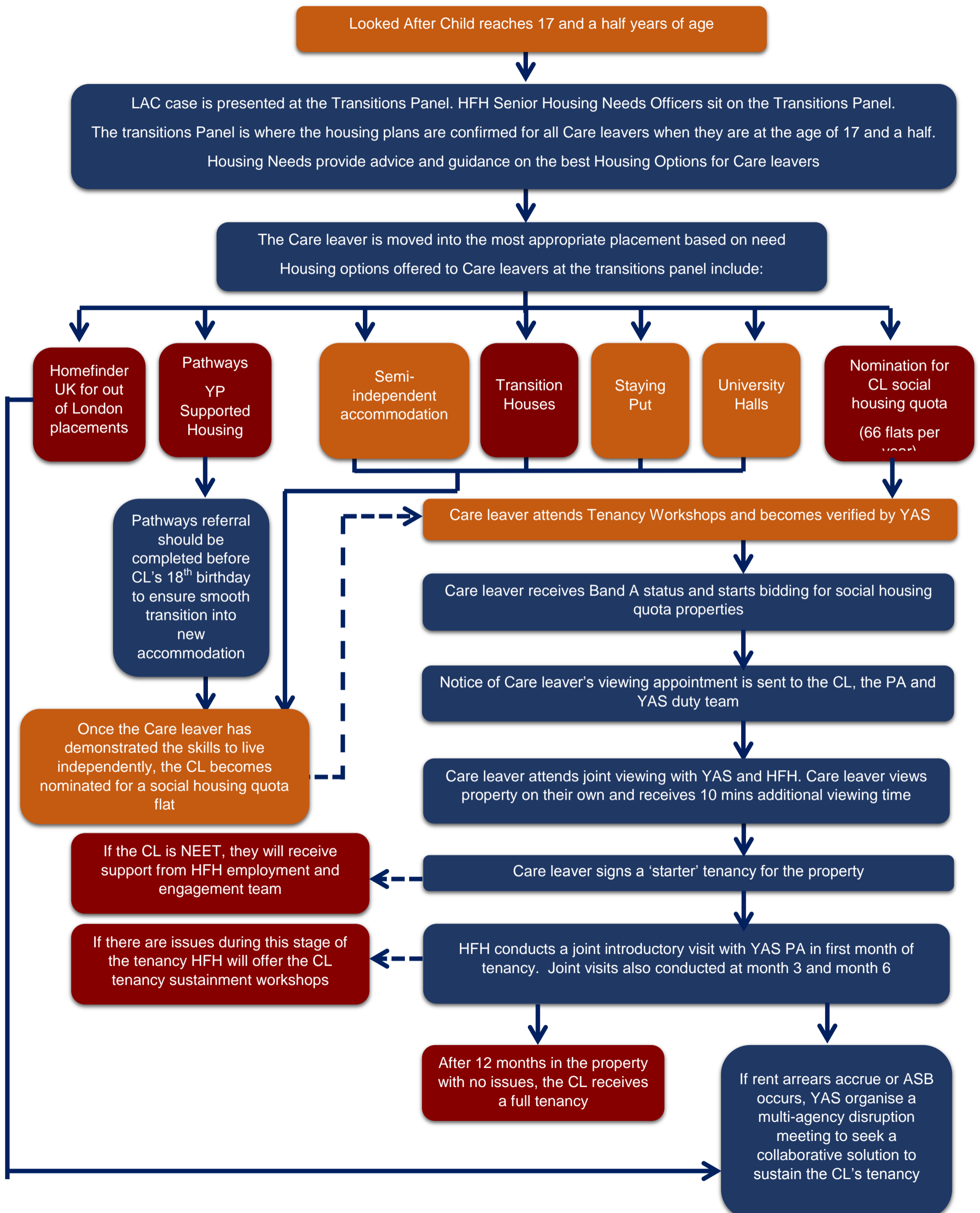
HfH will offer the care leaver tenants employment support if required, by providing access to the HfH Jobs Club.

Stage 7: If any issues arise with the tenancy, YAS will work collaboratively with HfH to ensure that problems are addressed swiftly. The care leaver will also have access to support from the YAS DWP liaison officer, their PAs and the Homes for Haringey Income Management Team who will provide advice and support with financial responsibilities. At any point within the first 12 months, the care leaver may hand back the tenancy and return to supported housing, with the opportunity to be placed back on the housing register at a later date.

Stage 8: If, after 12 months the care leaver has sustained the HfH tenancy with no cause for concern, the tenancy will be converted to a 'full' tenancy.

If the care leaver's tenancy is in jeopardy (due to the accrual of rent arrears or ASB), YAS and HfH will jointly organise a multi-agency disruption meeting to seek a collaborative solution to sustain the care leaver's tenancy.

Protocol Flowchart – Process for care leavers under 18 years transitioning from LAC status



Joint Process for Care leavers who are homeless/at risk of homelessness

If a care leaver presents at the Young Adults Service at *risk* of homelessness:

Stage 1: YAS will complete the supported housing referral form on behalf of the care leaver and will send this to HfH Housing Needs (Housing.Needs@HomesforHaringey.org) under the HRA Duty to Refer.

Stage 2: HfH Housing Needs will arrange an appointment to assess the care leaver and will notify the allocated PA, the care leaver and the YAS duty team of the appointment time. The housing needs assessment is conducted jointly with staff from YAS.

Stage 3: Following the housing needs assessment, the care leaver will be referred to the appropriate supported housing provision. Accommodation will be offered where there is a suitable void available that meets their needs. Where the Young People's Supported Housing Pathway is not appropriate, a discussion will be had with YAS around temporarily accommodating the care leaver in a semi-independent placement.

Stage 4: Supported Housing placements will be reviewed by YAS under the Pathway Plan, which is conducted every 6 months. These reviews will assess the continued suitability of the placement and the levels of independence developed by the care leaver. The HfH pathway team, along with the commissioner for young people's services, will also review care leavers' placements in supported housing on a quarterly basis.

If a care leaver presents at the Young Adults Service and is *immediately* homeless:

Stage 1: YAS will contact the Pathways team to identify if there is an emergency supported housing void, or a void in the 7-day young people's emergency crash-pad. At the same time, YAS will complete the supported housing referral form and will send this to HfH Housing Needs (under the Duty to Refer), for an assessment to be arranged with the care leaver.

Stage 2: If there is an emergency crash-pad bed space or an emergency void available, the care leaver will be immediately accommodated. However, if no emergency voids are available, discussions will need to be had with YAS to temporarily accommodate the care leaver in semi-independent accommodation.

The pathways team will manage the Young People's Supported Housing Pathway waiting list and will inform the care leaver and PA, when a void becomes available for the care leaver to move into.

Stage 3: If accommodated in emergency provision, the care leaver will be required to attend a Housing Needs assessment within 2 days of being accommodated. The Housing Needs assessment will need to take place jointly with a YAS team member.

Stage 4: Following the housing needs assessment, the care leaver will be referred to the appropriate supported housing provision and accommodation will be offered. Where the Young People's Supported Housing Pathway is unable to meet the needs of the care leaver, professionals will need to jointly discuss alternative accommodation options. The care leaver will be kept on the Young People's Supported Housing Pathway waiting list until a void that meets their needs becomes available.

Protocol Flowchart – Process for Care leavers who are homeless/ at risk of homelessness



Accommodation and shared resources

Homes for Haringey has access to a range of accommodation options which may be used to accommodate care leavers. These include:

- The Young People's Supported Housing Pathway – containing a mix of self-contained flats for females, shared mixed gender and same gender houses/flats, and hostel provision
- The 7-day stay Young People's Crash-Pad
- Homefinder UK – Social housing for care leavers who would like to relocate outside of London
- The transition-houses – A joint project between HfH and YAS, whereby YAS rent two large shared houses to YAS
- The care leavers 66 bed housing quota – containing 6 two-bedroom flats and 60 one-bedroom flats

Alternatively, YAS may utilise other housing options.

Governance arrangements – review and monitoring

This protocol will be monitored on a quarterly basis by the commissioning service, in conjunction with management from both Homes for Haringey and Children's Services.

At the quarterly commissioning reviews, cases of care leavers with housing related issues will be randomly selected and jointly reviewed to ensure the protocol is being adhered to. This process will serve to highlight any barriers there may be in implementing the protocols.

This protocol will be reviewed formally in 9 months to assess its impact on the joint working arrangement between all partners.

The reviews will use quantitative and qualitative measurements to establish impact including:

- the number of care leavers moved into supported housing in the review period,
- the number of care leavers moved into social housing quota placements in the review period,
- the average number of days taken from the point of referral to the care leavers move into supported housing,
- number of cases escalated to senior management,
- feedback from care leavers, YAS staff and/or HfH staff.

Once this protocol is agreed, joint training will be provided for CYPS and Housing staff. Any change in legislations will be updated in the protocol as required and this will be a living document which reflects the changes in government guidance and national best practice.

Escalation process

Legislation, Case Law and Government guidance emphasise the importance of joint housing protocols as a means by which statutory services will be held account to homeless and vulnerable young people for the services they provide.

This protocol is designed to improve the way we work together to accommodate care leavers. As evident from this policy, there are several strategies and policies alongside which this protocol must work, and it is important to recognise that there may be clashes between different departments' duties, policies and practices.

Where conflicts occur and there is no clear priority, staff will be expected to arrange a multi-agency meeting with all the relevant parties to identify a way forward and ensure the young person's needs remain the central focus. Minutes should be taken at the meeting which state the solutions proposed and the barriers to implementing them.

Where a solution cannot be reached through a multi-agency meeting, the staff members involved should jointly refer the case to the appropriate senior managers (details listed overleaf) in Homes for Haringey and Children and Young People's Services.

Key contacts for the care leavers joint working protocol

Homes for Haringey				
Name	Role	Email Address	Contact Number	Location
Beverley Faulkner	Head of Housing Needs	Beverley.faulkner@homesforharingey.org	Ext: 4362	1st floor, 48 Station Road
Tom Wilde	Housing Needs Manager	Tom.wild@homesforharingey.org	Ext: 2160 Mob: 0797 075 8305	1st floor, 48 Station Road
Amma Antwi-Yeboah	Housing Needs Manager	Amma.Antwi-Yeboah@HomesforHaringey.org	Ext: 2224	1st floor, 48 Station Road
Vicky Pinkett	Housing Needs Manager	Victoria.Pinkett@homesforharingey.org	Ext: 4778	1st floor, 48 Station Road
Anthea Bennett	Lettings Manager	Anthea.Bennett@homesforharingey.org	Ext: 4708	48 Station Road
Children and Young People's Services				
Name	Role	Email Address	Contact Number	Location
Colette Elliott-Cooper	Head of Service Children in Care and Fostering & Adoption	Colette.Elliott-Cooper@haringey.gov.uk	Ext: 4965	3rd Floor, River Park House
Emma Cummergen	Deputy Head of Service, Young Adults Service	Emma.cummergen@haringey.gov.uk	Ext: 5845 Mob: 07814979687	40 Cumberland Road, Ground Floor
Angela Neita	Team Manager 18 plus, Young Adults Service	Angela.neita@haringey.gov.uk	Ext: 5823	40 Cumberland Road, Ground Floor
Novine Noel	Placement Verification Officer, Young Adults Service	Novine.noel@haringey.gov.uk	Ext: 1357	40 Cumberland Road, Ground Floor
YAS Duty Team	Duty Practitioner		0208 489 5800	40 Cumberland

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