



Report sponsor: Suanne Lim, Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care
Report author: Steven Stockley, Registered Service Manager, Early Help

Supported Accommodation Staying Close Programme update January 2024

Purpose

- 1.1 This report provides an update to the Corporate Parenting Board of progress and registration of the Staying Close Programme within Supported Accommodation to date and outlines the current position and priorities and emerging themes.
- 1.2 Staying Close feeds into the Leaving Care Service for the Local Authority as a statutory obligation to source and maintain a suitable range of supported accommodation.
- 1.3 The Staying Close programme provides a package of continued support and guidance to young people leaving care. This includes ensuring they have accommodation, resources, practical and emotional help provided by a member of staff, to help them thrive as independent adults.

Recommendations

- 2.1 To ensure Corporate Parenting Board are aware of the enhanced offer to young people that have experienced residential care in line with care experienced young people in foster care and the Staying Put model via the Staying Put offer.

Reasons

- 3.1 To provide an opportunity for Corporate Parenting Board to comment on the programme development and delivery to date and are abreast and can help inform future developments.

Supporting information

- 4.1 Staying Close is a model which provides an enhanced support package for young people leaving care from children's homes and is designed to be a comparable offer to the option to Stay Put, which supports young people in foster care to remain with their former foster carers until age 21. Staying Close provides an offer of move-on accommodation, alongside a package of practical and emotional support, provided by members of Derby City Council (DCC) staff within the Children in Care and Leaving Care Services.

- 4.2 The review of Inhouse residential services recognised that the 6 transition properties would contribute to the success of the Staying Close project using these properties for residential care experienced young people to reside in. The Staying Close initiative, implemented on a national scale, aims to assist children with a history of residing in residential care in acquiring essential life and social skills necessary for managing their own tenancy. The primary goal is to mitigate the risks of eviction after turning 18.
- 4.3 DCC submitted a funding bid to the Department for Education in 2023, which proved successful. Consequently, funding has been secured for the Staying Close project, spanning from April 2023 to March 2025. It has been confirmed that any underspend within the 2 years can be carried over post March 2025. The question of continued grant funding beyond March 2025 has been raised with the DfE and it has been recognised by the DfE that this funding would be advantageous to continue but cannot confirm further funding given the political climate.
- 4.4 The Registered Service Manager has been in place since September 2023 and has been responsible for the registration of the 6 current transition homes as Supported Accommodation properties within the Staying Close programme. Derby City ensured all relevant information was submitted to the government portal by the deadline date of 28th October.
- 4.5 All properties are registered as solo accommodation and any future properties or change of identification will be notified to Ofsted as required.
- 4.6 Since registration on the portal, 3 further properties have been identified.
Property 7 – purchased, a young person began living there 25th January 2024
Property 8 – purchased and is under refurbishment.
Property 9 – under conveyancing.
A partnership is in place with Derby Homes to identify and refurbish appropriate properties for supported accommodation under this programme up to a total of 10 properties.
- 4.7 Trix have provided generic policies to cover the governance of the Staying Close programme under the Supported Accommodation Regulations 2023 (England) and have been amended to reflect Derby City's specific position and requirements. These are available on a unique dashboard open to the Staying Close and Leaving Care teams.
- 4.8 The staffing structure to support delivery of the programme will involve employing 2 Transitional Workers to support our young people alongside their Personal Advisors and the appointment of a part-time trauma practice informed Social Worker.
- 4.9 Funding for these posts has been obtained through the grant award for Staying Close Funding from the Department for Education. This funding has been provided to enable the roll out and enhancement of our Staying Close offer. Derby will progress the Staying Close programme to bolster the current in-house provision that already exists within the Leaving Care support. Grant funding has been agreed for the financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25.

- 4.10 Nominated individual and Registered Service Manager have submitted personal information and engaged with the initial interview processes with Ofsted and Property Penaltion has been identified as the property to be inspected by Ofsted in February 2024.
- 4.11 The Registered Service Manager and Leaving Care Manager attend the regional meetings and roundtable discussions with Ofsted and Break Charity (pilot for Staying Close).
- 4.12 The Registered Service Manager has worked with the Deputy Head of Service to identify and produce a pipeline of prospective young people that will benefit from the Staying Close programme. These young people are highlighted and discussed with the Children in Care Service managers, Leaving Care managers, Social Workers and Personal Advisors.
- 4.13 Potential risk to the programme is for young people who have passed their independent living assessments but are not fully ready for independence to take their own tenancy. Local authorities cannot enforce Staying Close on young adults and they have the right to make decisions for themselves and the right to make mistakes. Some young adults may be enticed by the offer of their own tenancy without recognising they continue to need support. By choosing to leave the programme early young people risk adverse outcomes such as: -
- **Housing Instability:** Leaving a supported accommodation programme may expose young people to housing instability, including the risk of homelessness. Without a stable and secure housing arrangement, individuals may struggle to meet their basic needs.
 - **Financial Challenges:** Young people leaving a supported programme might face financial difficulties. They may lack the necessary skills to manage finances effectively or struggle to secure stable employment, putting them at risk of economic hardship.
 - **Social Isolation:** Supported accommodation often provides a supportive community, and leaving such a setting may lead to social isolation. Without a network of peers and mentors, young individuals may experience loneliness and a lack of emotional support.
 - **Mental Health Concerns:** The transition from a structured and supported environment to independent living can be challenging, and young people may face mental health issues such as anxiety and depression. They may lack the coping mechanisms to navigate these challenges effectively.
 - **Lack of Education or Employment Opportunities:** Leaving a supportive programme might impact access to education and employment opportunities. Without guidance and resources, young people may struggle to pursue further education or find suitable employment.
 - **Vulnerability to Exploitation:** Individuals leaving supported accommodation may be more vulnerable to exploitation, including involvement in risky behaviours or relationships. They may lack the skills to identify and protect themselves from potential harm.
 - **Substance Abuse:** The lack of a supportive environment could contribute to an increased risk of substance abuse. Without the structure and supervision provided by a programme, individuals may turn to unhealthy coping mechanisms.

4.14 Conversely the expected positive outcomes for young people engaging in Staying Close guidance, are as follows: -

Stability and Continuity:

- Staying Close guidance can provide stability and continuity, reducing the likelihood of disruptions, positively impacting educational attainment, employment prospects, and overall well-being.

Education and Employment Opportunities:

- Staying Close to support networks facilitates better access to educational and vocational opportunities.

Mental Health and Well-being:

- Remaining connected to familiar environments and relationships can positively influence mental health and well-being.
- Social support networks play a crucial role in mitigating the potential negative effects of past experiences in care.

Community Integration:

- Opportunities for social engagement and participation in local activities can enhance a sense of belonging.

Financial Stability:

- Stable accommodation and support systems contribute to financial stability.
- Access to employment and educational opportunities can contribute to economic independence and self-sufficiency.

Health and Healthcare Access:

- Staying Close to support networks can positively impact the health outcomes by ensuring consistent access to healthcare services.
- Regular engagement with healthcare providers facilitated by stable living arrangements.

Reduced Risk of Homelessness:

- Staying close reduces the risk of homelessness by providing a supportive environment.

Local authority Expenditure:

- If staying close guidance contributes to positive outcomes, it may result in cost savings for the DCC in terms of reduced reliance on social services, emergency housing, and other support measures.

Transition to Adulthood:

- The staying close approach aids a smoother transition to adulthood by providing a stable foundation for independence.
- Transitioning into adulthood with a supportive network can impact long-term socio-economic trajectories.

- 4.15 Staying Close Supported Accommodation Service in Derby City has made significant progress towards its objectives. The milestones achieved, such as the appointment of a Registered Service Manager, development of policies, and successful registration on the government portal, indicate a dedicated effort to establish a robust support system for young people transitioning to independence bolstering existing provision.

The project's commitment to transparency and communication is evident through the sharing of information with stakeholders and including young people in the programme. The engagement with various teams, regular meetings, and partnerships with Derby Homes showcase a holistic approach to addressing the needs of the young people in supported accommodation.

However, challenges have surfaced, such as delays in registration confirmation, payment processing, and unexpected funding issues impacting the timeline for staffing appointments. These challenges have required resourceful solutions, including collaboration with external providers, highlighting the resilience and adaptability of the project team.

Looking ahead, the team is focused on upcoming milestones, including staff appointments, learning and training plans, and the assessment model for young people's independent living skills. The financial overview indicates careful planning for the allocation of grant funding, with ongoing efforts to influence the DfE and secure the programme's sustainability post-2025.

It is essential to acknowledge the lessons learned, particularly the strengths-based approach derived from current philosophy of care within Derby city and engaging with Break Charity. The emphasis on recognising individual progress and the need for a flexible model highlights a commitment to tailored support for each young person.

As the project moves forward, it is crucial to address potential risks associated with young people choosing to leave the program prematurely. Mitigation strategies emphasise the importance of building trust, co-producing goals with the young person, and maintaining a supportive team environment.

The Staying Close programme is making strides in creating a secure and empowering environment for young people, with a clear focus on adaptability, collaboration, and individualised support to facilitate a successful transition to independent living.

Key Milestones Achieved:

[Milestone 1]: Appoint a Registered Service Manager to oversee the registration and compliance of Staying Close under the Supported Accommodation Regulations 2023 (England)

[Milestone 2]: Produce specific policy to cover the compliance of Staying Close (Trix)

[Milestone 3]: Create Statement of Purpose

[Milestone 4]: Create Welcome Guides for young people

[Milestone 5]: Register Staying Close Supported Accommodation on the Government portal

[Milestone 6]: Develop staffing structure

[Milestone 7]: Create job specifications and advertise positions

[Milestone 8]: Identify pipeline of young people that would be eligible for Staying Close

[Milestone 9]: First young people enter Staying Close programme

[Milestone 10]: Interview and appoint staff to the roles of transition worker and social worker.

Key Milestones to be Achieved:

[Milestone 11]: Confirm and approve the learning and training plan for Staying Close workers. Work is being carried out with Derby City's Workforce Learning and Development Team.

[Milestone 12]: Confirm the assessment model from baseline benchmarking to the development of a young person's independent living skills. Learning from the Brake Charity engagement events has helped to develop Derby City's thinking and informing our co-production.

[Milestone 13]: Identify further opportunities for additional partnership working to reduce naturally occurring silo working across the council's departments due to competing pressures. Increase cross learning into additional projects for example Derby Homes Shap bid.

Public/stakeholder engagement

- 5.1 The Registered Service Manager attends Children in Care Service Team Manager meetings, Staying Close project meetings, Regional Care Leaving Managers meetings and chairs Enhanced Pathway Planning Meetings for young people accessing the Staying Close programme.
- 5.2 The Registered Service Manager has met with the Family Hub, Youth Alliance and presented to Independent Reviewing Officers team meeting and Preparing for Adulthood Team.
- 5.3 The Registered Service Manager has provided contact details to all young people within the Staying Close programme. Each individual has been provided with a welcome booklet containing a guide and statement of purpose. Within this, on the initial page is the Service Managers contact details. All young people have the confidence to contact the Registered Service Manager and regularly do so.
- 5.4 Coproduction with the young people jointly develops the goals tailored to each young person and closely collaborates with them to foster independence, ensuring sustained involvement in the program.

Other Options:

- 6.1 It is now a legal requirement to register properties that are to be used for supported accommodation for those aged 16-17 under the Supported Accommodation Regulations 2023 (England) and this has been progressed by the Registered Service manager who also needs to register for that role with OFSTED. As highlighted earlier in this report, all properties have been registered as solo properties in line with the vision of the programme.

- 6.2 Young people leaving supported accommodation may face legal challenges, especially if they lack proper guidance and resources. This could include issues related to housing contracts, employment rights, or other legal matters. To mitigate these risks, we work closely as the team around the young person to gain their trust, support and engagement with the programme so they are armed to face these challenges
- 6.3 Before committing to Staying Close a review of Inhouse residential services was carried out. The transition properties that were supporting young people leaving care would require registration with Ofsted. We could attract additional funding to support this through Staying Close grant funding.
- 6.4 We would have been solely reliant on external supported accommodation provision which comes at a higher cost to the council. We would have fewer opportunities to retain our young people within the local area and there would be a higher risk of young people either residing outside the local area or being forced into taking their own tenancies before that are fully independent and capable of sustaining a tenancy.
- 6.5 DCC would have less control over tenancy agreements and potentially vulnerable to external providers serving notice resulting in additional moves and tenancy breakdowns.
- 6.6 The external provision was unable to satisfy the true definition of wrap around support. Any issues or gaps in support would heighten the risk of breaching agreements and notice being served. Providing Staying Close gives DCC the opportunity to provide a more robust programme of support with greater tolerance. This is cemented by incorporating the transition properties into the Staying Close programme

Financial and value for money issues

- 7.1 A funding bid was submitted by DCC to the Department for Education and was successful and has provided funding from April 2023 until March 2025 for the Staying Close project.
- 7.2 Current spend within Q2 has been zero as we are continuing to progress Staying Close staff recruitment. The underspend in Q2 will carry across into Q3.
- 7.3 Q3 three will create costs for Staying Close registration and additional therapeutic support for young people. Staff will be inducted to provide Staying Close from February 2024, as the recruitment process has made offers to Transitional Workers and a Therapeutic Social Worker.

7.4 There will be an expected underspend in 2023/24 and the level of the underspend will mainly depend on the start dates of the 2.6 Full Time Equivalent posts shown below.

Breakdown of costs

Please set out a detailed breakdown of your proposed costs. These costings should provide reasonable assurance that your delivery proposal and delivery of your proposed Staying Close model can be provided within the funding allocation.

Area of spend	Details	2023/24	2024/25	Total
Staffing	2 transitions workers (2.0 FTE)	£78,814	£82,747	£161,561
	1 social worker (0.6FTE)	£36,897	£38,004	£74,901
Accommodation	Utilities/related costs repairs/ decoration, replacements etc. Costs estimated at £2,000 per property per year	£10,000	£10,000	£20,000
Activities budget	Funding to support activities to the project to develop sound networks. Costs estimated at £400 per young person per year	£2,000	£2,000	£4,000
Additional therapeutic support outside of the existing commissioned services	Accessing bespoke sessions, creative arts therapy, for example. Each young person will have access to 12 sessions of therapeutic support per year	£5,000	£5,000	£10,000
TOTAL		£132,711	£137,751	£270,462

7.5 The identified pipeline and future planning will present opportunities for additional savings as the programme progresses. Current placements have been made for young people close/post 18 years of age, young people entering the programme closer to 16 years of age will provide great opportunities to move away from higher cost external placements.

Legal implications

8.1 Under the Children (leaving Care) Act 2000 The Local Authority has a duty to help young people who have been looked after by a Local Authority move from care into living independently in as stable a fashion as possible. To do this it amends the Children Act (c.41) to place a duty on Local Authorities to assess and meet need. The responsible Local Authority is to be under a duty to assess and meet the care and support needs of eligible and relevant children and young people and to assist former relevant children, in particular in respect of their employment, education and training. The Staying Close programme helps the Local Authority improve its response to these duties.

Climate implications

9.1 n/a

Socio-Economic implications

- 10.1 The effectiveness of Staying Close depends on the quality and availability of support services, and the nature of the supported accommodation. Regular monitoring and evaluation are crucial to assess the impact of such guidance and make adjustments as needed to better support the well-being of young people engaging with Staying Close.
- 10.2 Staying Close guidance, urging individuals to stay connected, profoundly influences the socio-economic well-being of residential care-experienced young people. Key impacts include enhanced Stability and Continuity, bolstering educational and employment prospects.
- 10.3 Staying Close fosters proximity to support networks, positively affecting mental health and well-being while curbing the risk of homelessness. It sparks Community Integration, promoting social engagement and financial stability, contributing to economic independence.
- 10.4 This guidance is a linchpin for Health and Healthcare Access, ensuring consistent healthcare services. Notably, it aligns with Local Authority Expenditure goals, potentially yielding cost savings.
- 10.5 The Transition to Adulthood is smoother, offering a stable foundation and influencing long-term socio-economic trajectories. Staying Close isn't just a program; it's a compass for brighter futures.

Other significant implications

- 11.1 n/a

This report has been approved by the following people:

Role	Name	Date of sign-off
Legal	Olu Idowu	
Finance	Mark Wylde	
Service Director(s)	Suanne Lim, Director Early Help & Children's Social Care	12/02/2024
Report sponsor	Andrew Kaiser Head of Specialist Services	
Other(s)		

Background papers:	N/A
List of appendices:	Project Gant Chart

Staying Close Supported Accommodation

SIMPLE GANTT CHART by Vertex42.com

<https://www.vertex42.com/ExcelTemplates/simple-gantt-chart.html>

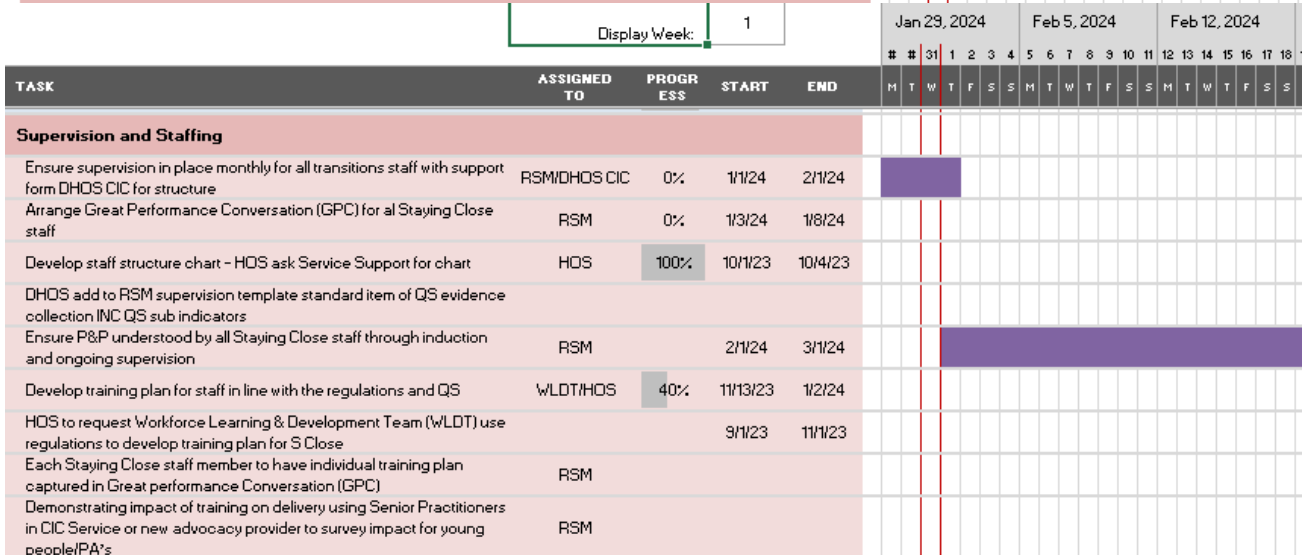
Derby City Council
Steven Stockley

Project Start: Wed, 1/31/2024

Display Week: 1



Display Week: 1



Display Week: 1

Jan 29, 2024 Feb 5, 2024 Feb 12, 2024

TASK	ASSIGNED TO	PROGR ESS	START	END	Jan 29, 2024							Feb 5, 2024							Feb 12, 2024								
					#	#	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		
					M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S		
Quality Standards																											
Ensure evidence collected against 4 Quality Standards	RSM/DHOS		28.10.23	1.12.23																							
Devise action plan against 4 Quality Standards regarding how we deliver & evidence these	RSM	0%	10/28/23	11/1/23																							
Create space in LCS (Open text) to save Staying Close documents, develop case note for EPPM & transitions direct work.	HOS		1/2/24	2/1/24																							
RSM meet w/LDT 1/4/y to review training plan and devise annual plan with W/LDT	RSM/WLDT		1/2/24	1/6/24																							
Agree regular KPI's to measure success of Staying Close using QS'	HOS/DHOC CIC	0%	11/1/23	12/1/23																							
Ensure providers of wrap around support clearly evidence interventions to drive the PPI/benchmarking assessment	RSM		2/21/24	12/31/24																							
6 monthly review report similar to (Reg 45) against 1 section of QS per time, agree with NI and HOS?DHOS focus and send to OFSTED within	RSM		2/28/24	4/28/24																							
Ensure absence of RSM and other changes (Regulations 33 and 34) - written into contingency plan & OFSTED informed where appropriate	RSM		12/1/23	1/2/24																							
Policies & Procedures																											
Agree Policies & Procedures from Tri X	HOS/DHOS CIC	100%	9/1/23	10/1/23																							
DHOS CIC and HOS meeting Tri X - 31.8.23	HOS/DHOS CIC		8/31/23	10/1/23																							
Ensure understanding of inspection framework once published. *Ofsted will publish further guidance on inspection, compliance and enforcement in summer 2023.	RSM/DHOS/HOS	30%	9/4/23	2/1/24																							
Develop Statement Of Purpose (SOP) for each provision & ensure all transitions staff understand this and overarching principals	RSM	50%	9/11/23	12/1/23																							
HOS to ask QA lead in Residential Services MDT for copies of SOP to date	HOS	100%	9/1/23	9/10/23																							
Utilise Staying Close bid for key information on principals and approach to Staying Close in Derby		100%	9/1/23	10/1/23																							
Write up contingency plan for staff shortages - could INC commissioned service, use of PA etc.	RSM	50%	12/1/23	1/2/24																							
Have written lone working risk assessment/procedure I place linked to Specialist Services procedures	RSM		11/1/23	12/1/23																							

Display Week: 1

Jan 29, 2024 Feb 5, 2024 Feb 12, 2024

TASK	ASSIGNED TO	PROGR ESS	START	END	Jan 29, 2024							Feb 5, 2024							Feb 12, 2024								
					#	#	31	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		
					M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S		
Pathway Planning & YP																											
Ensure YP Pathway Plan (PP) is informed by Benchmarking assessment	{SMLCS/ITM's/PA	10%	1/2/24	12/31/24																							
Arrange and chair 8 weekly Enhanced Pathway Planning (EPPM) Meeting's using benchmarking assessment to drive actions	PA/ITW	10%	12/1/23	12/31/24																							
Develop a young person guide for properties	RSM	50%	2/1/24	4/1/24																							
Young person guide to INC how to contact Office of Children's Commissioner, for advice and assistance about rights and entitlements *See regulatory guidance	RSM/ITSW	50%	2/1/24	4/1/24																							
Develop young persons induction process	RSM	50%	11/1/23	12/1/23																							
Review support levels for young people & outline out of hours (OOH) support required through review in EPPM's - ensure clarity on risk mitigations for OOH	RSM	1%	12/1/23	12/31/24																							