

Preparing for Adulthood

By [Birmingham City Council](#)

The Transitions and Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) Service is designed to provide **personalised, early support for young people transitioning into adulthood**. By engaging with individuals earlier in their journey, the service ensures smoother transitions and better outcomes tailored to their unique needs and aspirations.

The service offers customised support plans to meet the specific needs of each young person. **Support is delivered through:**

- 1:1 sessions: Providing focused, individualised guidance.
- Group sessions: Fostering peer support and shared learning experiences.

Each young person is actively involved in shaping their own support plan, giving them a voice and control over

their goals and the direction of their journey. This collaborative approach empowers young people to feel confident and invested in their future.

To enhance the quality of support, the service has integrated the Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) and Statutory Transitions teams into a single, cohesive unit. This alignment allows professionals to work collaboratively, ensuring a more seamless and consistent experience for the young people they support.

While the organisational structure has evolved, **the purpose and focus of the teams remain the same:**

- To support young adults aged 18 to 25 with learning disabilities, autism, or other eligible needs.
- To help individuals access funded services from Adult Social Care, as determined by the Care Act eligibility criteria.
- To empower young people to set and achieve their own goals, fostering

independence and positive decision-making.

In addition to statutory support, the service provides non-statutory support for young people and young adults aged 14 to 25.

The service aims to create a strong foundation for each individual, equipping them with the tools and confidence to achieve their aspirations.

The Transitions and Preparation for Adulthood service exemplifies the importance of early intervention, collaboration, and personalised support for young people with learning disabilities, autism, or other eligible needs. By aligning teams and focusing on the individual, the service ensures that each young person has the opportunity to thrive and reach their full potential as they navigate the transition to adulthood.

See more: [Preparation for Adulthood Service \(Adults PfA\)](#)

Next Venture Fund for Care Leavers

By [Durham County Council](#)

At Durham County Council, the voices of care-experienced young people are at the heart of decision-making. To support this, the council's Chief Executive awarded **a £10,000 funding pot specifically for projects designed to benefit care leavers**. Named the Next Venture Fund, this initiative not only provides vital opportunities for care leavers but also empowers them to take the lead in shaping its direction.

What makes the Next Venture Fund exceptional is that care leavers themselves play a central role in managing the programme. Young people are encouraged to submit funding applications for projects that promote positive emotional well-being, build social connections, and create opportunities for participation.

These applications are reviewed by a panel of care leavers, who guide the fund's direction and oversee its financial administration. This peer-led approach ensures the initiative is aligned with the needs and aspirations of care leavers, while also providing participants with valuable skills in leadership, financial management, and decision-making.

The Next Venture Fund aims to:

- Promote emotional health and well-being by reducing isolation and fostering social networks.
- Provide new opportunities for care leavers to participate in meaningful activities.
- Equip care leavers with skills for future careers, both through applying for funding and participating in the panels.

Since its launch in March 2024, the fund has awarded nearly £7,000, supporting ten diverse projects that directly benefit care leavers.

The Next Venture Fund has supported a wide range of initiatives, including:

- **Day activities for care leavers and Young People Advisors (YPAs):** These activities help build stronger relationships, enabling professionals to take on a more supportive, friendship-based role.
- **Equipment for baby and toddler groups:** Providing resources for groups hosted at the care leavers' hub to support young parents.
- **University start-up packs:** Helping young people transition into higher education with essential items.
- **Training opportunities:** Offering

training for care leavers to develop skills in applying for their own funding through initiatives like the Key Fund.

- **Cinema passes:** Encouraging care leavers to engage in social activities and reduce isolation.

Each of these projects reflects the programme's commitment to fostering independence, emotional well-being, and community engagement for care leavers.

The Next Venture Fund offers more than just financial support; it provides care leavers with the opportunity to develop essential life and career skills. **Through participating on the funding panel, young people gain experience in areas such as:**

- Decision-making and teamwork.
- Financial administration and budgeting.
- Project evaluation and impact assessment.

These experiences not only enhance their personal development but also prepare them for future challenges in their careers and daily lives.

See more: ['Great stories from our children and families social work teams'](#)