

Six months with the Storyteller app

After Cloud, Coram-i and Telford and Wrekin Council

Developed in partnership with Coram-i and After Cloud, Storyteller is a place where digital content can be collected, collated, curated for, with, and by children in care.

Storyteller empowers trusted adults around the child to easily capture meaningful day-to-day moments. Storyteller gives children a genuine voice in their care. Through photos, videos, voice notes and personal reflections, children become active co-authors of their story, with their views meaningfully heard and reflected in care planning. It's already making a significant impact, and we want you to see how.

The app benefits children in care by:

- supporting therapeutic life story work
- capturing moments from their life for their care record
- helping the child or young person to convey their wishes and feelings
- preparing them during transitions, such as moving to a new home
- helping them, and the adult they become, to claim their own story and narrative.

Hear from Telford and Wrekin, who have recently completed a six-month pilot of Storyteller, on their experience with onboarding, uptake and feedback from users below.

Courtney Horne, Project Officer at Telford and Wrekin Council

"To be honest, initial take up in the local authority was quite slow. When you go to social workers with a new technology, sometimes there is a little bit of reluctance in using that. I think a lot of our social workers were overwhelmed by the idea of uploading past life story work and past memories and experiences. So, we reframed it as: this is something that you start from now, and you move forwards, capturing day-to-day memories and moments from now. And since then, we've had really great uptake. We've presented at staff briefings, foster carer forums, and we've had lots of foster carers coming forwards and saying that this is really great and they'd like to use it with their child. And from there, we've got lots of social workers involved.

Currently, we have almost 30 stories for our young children and our young people and we're using them in lots of different ways. We're using Storyteller with almost 30 children now and slowly picking up momentum. We are still in the pilot phase and we are hoping that moving forwards, we're able to implement and embed it permanently and that this will

become a tool that most, if not all social workers are going to use to give every child the opportunity to have an account on Storyteller, and that really is our vision.

Nowadays, not every single child wants to sit down and do that kind of practical hands-on life story work where they collage and create and scrapbook. This app can be more appealing to a lot of children and engage them in ways that we might struggle to engage them currently.

We're holding practice working groups to see how we can embed Storyteller as part of life story practice at Telford and Wrekin Council. We are quite an innovative, forward-thinking council, so we're always looking for ideas and new things to try and keep children's stories safe, so they don't get lost or put at the back of a cupboard and they don't get water damaged, stuff like that. So far, we're having really great feedback on it.

Our Principal Social Worker believes that every child should have Storyteller in Telford and Wrekin. Since we've been using the app, we've had a few reports from Coram and After Cloud about the usage, and we can already see that some of our young people are engaging really well with the platform. We've got a young person that has their own account and she is the number one creator on Storyteller for our local authority. It's plain to see that she enjoys going on there and uploading her content, which is great to see.

Moving forwards, it's about progressing that and embedding Storyteller as standard practice. We're asking: How can we be using storyteller every day? How can we implement that into the council in a way that means practitioners are putting this forward as an option to every single child?"

Current use cases in Telford and Wrekin Council

- One social worker uses it for their child who has been supported into special guardianship order. They sat together with the parent to collate lots of memories, pictures and audio, so that when the child reaches an appropriate age, the carer can share that with them.
- One social worker works with a family where the father and the mother can't have contact any more. And so, for the child, they are able to maintain contact with their father via Storyteller and keep each other updated on their lives. So that's really great for them, not just for the father to remain in contact with the child, but so the child also has an understanding of who their father is, with oversight from the social worker.
- Storyteller is being used with four unaccompanied asylum-seeking children to help them understand their journey to

the UK and what their experience has been in the UK since coming here. This helps to build the relationship with their social worker and allows for that social worker to input into their story.

Feedback from practitioners includes:

- "It creates and strengthens positive links with people that are special to the young person."
- "A more familiar medium for children and young people to access their own experiences."
- "It takes the pressure off children and young people to talk about their journey, which they can find very hard."

Liam Bradley, Lived Experience Apprentice at Telford and Wrekin Council

Liam is one of Telford and Wrekin's lived-experience apprentices. He's had the Storyteller app downloaded to his phone for his own work and personal use. Below, he shares some insights into his use and views on Storyteller since the council began their pilot in October 2025.

"I'm going to bring my lived experience into why I wanted Storyteller. Back when I was 15, I actually went through therapeutic life story work. I did it for two years and we did it on this massive roll of paper and we did it like a time mat. I've lost that now. You know, being 16, moving houses; it's going to get lost. And the worst part is my actual life story worker has now retired. I have no way of getting that work that I did with her back. I think Storyteller is one of these apps where it's just permanent. It is a permanent placement and it's always going to be there for you, which is what I would have wanted back when I was that young, instead of sitting face to face, talking about what was going on. I'd much rather have a visual representation and a memory bank. So that's my whole lived experience of life stories.

The way I've been using it recently has kind of been pretty cool in my way. I kind of separated it in my work life and my home life. Everything that I get up to at work, I will put into here just as a little memory bank for myself to say, well done, you've done this. And then I put on my home life for, you know, people to see, people to add on for me as well. You know, because I will be honest, my memory is not the best. It is kind of good for people like me to put stuff on there and have that self-achievement, to look back on what I've accomplished and what I've done and feel that sense of pride for myself."

[Learn more about Storyteller here.](#)