

CABINET

14 APRIL 2015

SUFFICIENCY REPORT 2015-2016

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Mike O'Brien, Children's Services (Lead Member)

Report from: Barbara Peacock, Director of Children and Adults Services

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Summary

The Medway Sufficiency Report sets out how Medway Council will meet the placement needs of our current and future Children in Care and Care Leavers and improve their outcomes in light of our understanding of their needs and current provision. This is an updated version of the 2014-2015 report.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1 Local Authorities are required to take steps to secure, so far as is reasonably practicable, sufficient accommodation for Children in Care within their local area. In 2010 the Statutory Guidance for the sufficiency duty was issued. This guidance is explicit in placing a duty on Local Authorities to act strategically to address gaps in provision by ensuring they include, in relevant commissioning strategies, their plans for meeting the sufficiency duty.
- 1.2 In exercising the sufficiency duty, Local Authorities should be mindful that under section 10 of the Children Act ('the 2004 Act') there is a duty upon Local Authorities to make arrangements to promote co-operation with its relevant partners with a view to improving the well being of children in the authority's area. Each of the statutory 'relevant partners' in section 10 is also required to co-operate with the local authority in making those arrangements. The duty on local authorities to secure sufficient accommodation should therefore be undertaken within the context of the planning and co-operation duties which the 2004 Act places on partners in order to improve the wellbeing of the child in the area.
- 1.3 The sufficiency duty is a measure, which is part of a broad suite of guidance, and legislative provisions introduced to improve outcomes for looked after children. Local Authorities should consider the sufficiency duty in tandem with their duties towards children within their area under ss17(1), 20, 21 22C and 23 of the 1989 Act.

- 1.4 The Medway Sufficiency Report is attached at Appendix A to this report. This will be reviewed and updated annually but the key datasets will be reviewed and reported on quarterly to support its use in monitoring trends and planning use of placement resources.
- 1.5 This report is consistent with national policy, legislation and guidance. It is linked to key local planning documents, in particular the Medway Council Looked After Children Strategy and the Council Plan priority that 'Children and Young People have the best start in life in Medway Council'. Therefore, approval of the Strategy is a matter for Cabinet.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Statutory Guidance states that: "securing sufficient accommodation requires a whole-system approach which includes early intervention and preventive services to support children in their families, as well as better services for children if they do become looked after".¹ Local Authorities and their Children's Trust partners should therefore seek to secure a number of providers and a range of services, with the aim of meeting the wide-ranging needs of looked after children and young people within their local area.
- 2.2 However, the scope is not restricted to just making good quality placements; the intention is to co-ordinate the range of activity across Children's Services, including a clear focus on supporting families to stay together, wherever it is safe to do so, thus minimising the need for children to come into care, or supporting their timely return to their families.
- 2.3 The reduction in the level of funding for Local Authorities means that the focus on efficiency and value for money will be stronger than before. The challenge for Local Authority Children's Services will be to sustain or improve on service quality and good outcomes for service users.
- 2.4 This report addresses the needs of children and young people from birth to the age of 21, (or 25 where children's services continue to have statutory responsibility) including children and young people with disabilities who are, or who may be, accommodated by Medway Council. It meets the requirements of the sufficiency duty by collating needs and resource information and market analysis but should be read alongside the Looked After Children Strategy which describes what needs to happen in relation to work with children in care or children at risk of coming into care.

3. Commissioning Priorities

- 3.1 The Sufficiency report identifies a number of Commissioning priorities:-
- Secure sufficiency of provision for 16+ Homeless and Care Leavers
 - Drive up quality standards of supported accommodation
 - Address the gaps in provision around emotional well-being and behavioural support for 18+ young people
 - Drive forward improvements in performance in respect of Initial Health Assessments and Health Histories

¹ Statutory guidance on securing sufficient accommodation for looked after children 2010 p11

- Drive forward improvements in the number of care leavers in education, employment and training
- Secure more cost effective provision for LAC
- Improve process for assessing and monitoring placements

4. Advice and Analysis

4.1 In adopting the Sufficiency Report, the Council is exercising a public function and must therefore comply with the duties in section 149 Equality Act 2010 to have 'due regard' to the matters set out in relation to equalities. Accordingly due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality, and foster good relations between those with a protected characteristic (pregnancy and maternity, age discrimination, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it must form an integral part of the decision making process in relation to the formulation and adoption of the Strategy. A Diversity Impact Assessment screening was undertaken (attached at Appendix B) and this indicated that a fuller Diversity Impact Assessment on the strategy is not necessary.

5. Risk Management

5.1 The Sufficiency Report in itself is not a Risk but failure to implement key actions could present a risk to the Council.

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
Insufficient suitable accommodation	There is a risk that there is insufficient accommodation to ensure right child, right place, right time, right cost. This could result in expensive accommodation out of borough	Establishing an Access to Resource Team and strengthening the placement process. Reviewing in-house recruitment.	C2

6. Consultation

6.1 The Children in Care Council has raised a number of issues relating to the choice and quality of placements, transition, personal safety and preparation for independence.

7. Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

7.1 The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered this report on 25 March 2015.

7.2 The Assistant Director, Partnership Commissioning introduced the report, which had been updated from the previous year's report. She added that a replacement copy of page 153 of the agenda had been tabled owing to a printing error on the agenda, which had not displayed a graph. She added that the Council had entered a tendering process in relation to supported accommodation for young people aged 16+ which was focussed on improving standards and there had been good interest from the market in this.

7.3 Following a question from a Member it was confirmed that on page 171 of the agenda, the age range for homeless should read 16-25, not 65 which was a typographical error.

7.4 The committee recommended the sufficiency report 2015-16, as attached at Appendix A, to the Cabinet for approval, subject to the typographical error being corrected.

8. Financial and legal implications

8.1 Section 22G Children Act 1989 imposes a duty on local authorities to take steps that secure, so far as reasonably practicable, that the local authority is able to provide looked after children with accommodation within the authority's area that meets the needs of those children, where circumstances are such that it would be consistent with the children's welfare for them to be provided with accommodation.

8.2 In taking steps to secure the provision of accommodation, the local authority must have regard to the benefit of having a sufficient number of accommodation providers in their area and a sufficient range of accommodation in their area capable of meeting different needs.

8.3 A failure to meet the general sufficiency duty could result in judicial review proceedings, and/or damages claims for breach of the Human Rights Act 1998, proceedings against the Council which could have huge costs implications.

9. Recommendation

9.1 The Cabinet is requested to:

- (i) Consider the comments of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as set out in paragraph 7 of the report and;
- (ii) Approve the Medway Sufficiency Report as set out in Appendix A to the report.

10. Suggested reasons for decision

10.1 The Medway Sufficiency Report is set within the context of national policy, legislation and guidance. The purpose of this document is to set out how Medway Council will meet the placement needs of current and future children in care and care leavers, and improve their outcomes, in light of the council's understanding of their needs and current provision.

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Background papers

Sufficiency Report 2013/2014 - Cabinet 8 April 2014 – report and decisions:
<http://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=12020>



Medway Council Children's Services

Sufficiency Report 2015-16

Version	Date	Type	Author
1.0	December 2013	Final	Sue-Brunton-Reed
2.0	December 2014	Refreshed	Brian Atkins

Date Agreed by DMT	Date Agreed by Cabinet/MSCB/Improvement Board (if appropriate)	Date of Review	Person Responsible
9 December 2014	December 2013		

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to set out how Medway Council working, with all its partner agencies will meet the placement needs of current and future Children in Care and Care Leavers, and improve their outcomes, in light of our understanding of their needs and current provision.

This report is set within the context of national policy, legislation and guidance. It is linked to key local planning documents, in particular to the Medway Council Looked After Children Strategy (2013 – 2016) and the Looked After Children Commissioning Strategy and 16+ Homeless and Care Leavers Commissioning Action Plan (2014 – 2017).

Local Authorities are required to take steps to secure, so far as is reasonably practicable, sufficient accommodation for children in care within their local area. In 2010, the Statutory Guidance for the Sufficiency Duty was issued. This guidance is explicit in placing a duty on Local Authorities to act strategically to address gaps in provision by ensuring that they include, in relevant commissioning strategies, their plans for meeting the sufficiency duty.

The Children Act 2008 defines Sufficiency as “a whole system approach which delivers early intervention and preventative work to help support children and their families where possible, as well as providing better services for children if they do become looked after. For those who are looked after, Local Authorities and their partners should seek to secure a number of providers and a range of services, with the aim of meeting the wide-ranging needs of looked after children and young people within their local area.”

However, the scope is not restricted to just making good quality placements; the intention is to co-ordinate the range of activity across Children’s Services, including a clear focus on supporting families to stay together, wherever it is safe to do so, thus minimising the need for children to come into care, or supporting their timely return to their families.

This approach is consistent with Moving on Medway - Getting it Right for Every Child 2014, which is centred on improving the quality of services provided to children in need, those in need of safeguarding and those in care. It also takes into account the Vision for Children’s Services in Medway outlined in the Looked After Children Strategy 2013 – 2016.

The reduction in the level of funding for Local Authorities means that the focus on efficiency and value for money will be stronger than before. The challenge for Local

Authority Children's Services as well as partner agencies will be to sustain or improve on service quality and good outcomes for service users.

This report addresses the needs of children and young people from birth to the age of 21, (or 25 where children's services continue to have statutory responsibility) including children and young people with disabilities who are, or who may be, accommodated by Medway Council. It meets the requirements of the sufficiency duty by collating needs and resource information and market analysis but should be read alongside the Looked After Children Strategy 2013-2016 which describes what needs to happen in relation to work with children in care or children at risk of coming into care.

The objectives of Medway Council's Looked After Children Strategy 2013-16 are to:

- Ensure that permanency is at the heart of all our planning and that we will work in partnership with colleagues across Children's Social Care to secure positive outcomes for children involved in care proceedings within the required timescales
- Ensure that young people in care achieve their potential academically and they have access to a range of opportunities for employment, training or further education
- Ensure young people leaving care make a successful transition to adulthood
- Ensure that children looked after and care leavers' views and experiences inform current and future service delivery
- Improve the health and well-being of looked after young people and care leavers
- Provide timely and high quality interventions with parent agencies to help children remain living or return to their families
- Ensure all looked after young people and care leavers are safeguarded through the provision of trained, supported and motivated staff who understand and are alert to the potential for exploitation and abuse of young people and who take the right action at the right time

We will ensure that the Sufficiency Strategy is consistent with these objectives, but also ensure it has a focus on reducing the numbers of children in our care where safe to do so, and using our resources in the most efficient and cost effective way Commissioning Strategies which include impact measures which will be monitored to evidence progress on delivery.

2. Demographics of Medway

The 2011 Census showed that there were 65,000 children and young people aged from 0-19 representing 24.5% of the population. The proportion of young people is higher in Medway than the South East and England.

The population of under 18s is expected to grow between 2013 and 2021 by 6.1%, with the largest growth (18.2%) anticipated in the four to eight year old age band, and a projected drop of 7.9% in the fourteen to eighteen year old population.

Medway has a higher percentage of children and young people belonging to a white ethnic group than England (86.2% compared to 79.9%), although this is lower than at the previous census when it was 91.9%. The White Other population has increased from 0.9% to 2.6%, the Asian/Asian British population has increased from 3.8% to 5.3% and the Black/African/Caribbean/Black British population has increased the most from 0.6% to 3.6%. 11.5% of primary school pupils and 7.7% of secondary school pupils have English as an additional language.

Medway has more cohabiting couples (16.6%) and lone parents (24.5%) than the South East and England average.

3. Children in Care Population

At the end of September 2014, Medway had 387 Looked After Children, representing a 14% decrease from 2011/12, but a 3% increase since September 2013. As of March 2014, the national average had increased slightly to 60 children per 10,000. Medway currently has a rate of 63.6, above the national average but below its Statistical Neighbours (64.7).

Due to pressures in the system with large numbers of children subject to Care Proceedings or Pre-Proceedings, numbers of Looked After Children in Medway are forecast to rise to 406 in 2014/15, and to 430 in 2015/16, before reducing to 388 in 2019/20 due to the forecasted impact of a range of new approaches, from changes to the 'front door' CADS service, Edge of Care preventative programmes, and the further development of Early Help and intensive prevention services.

3.1 New entrants

Q1 & Q2 of 2014/15 has seen the highest intake of Looked After Children since Q2 of 2012/13, with 46 young people entering care in Q1, and 54 in Q2 (total 100), reflecting the trends projected above. Comparisons between new entrants in 2013-14 and 2014-15 are shown in the table below. This shows a significant increase in overall numbers throughout the age range, with major increases in the 1-4 and 5-9 age groups, reflecting increases in Care Proceedings activity.

Age range	April - September 2013	April - September 2014	% change
Under 1	16	29	+81%
1-4	10	20	+100%
5-9	7	19	+170%
10-15	20	27	+35%
16+	15	5	-66%
Total	68	100	+47%

3.2 Diversity of Looked After Children

Age range	September 2012	Percentage September 2012	September 2013	Percentage September 2013	September 2014	Percentage September 2014
Asian or Asian British	2	0.5%	2	0.5%	2	0.5%
Black or Black British	14	3.2%	8	2.2%	9	2.3%
Mixed	28	6.5%	25	6.8%	22	5.7%
Other Ethnic Groups	1	0.2%	2	0.5%	5	1.3%
White	387	89.6%	333	90.0%	348	90.0%

3.3 Age range of Looked After Children

Age range	September 2012	Percentage September 2012	September 2013	Percentage September 2013	September 2014	Percentage September 2014
0 – 2 years	103	24%	69	18%	80	21%
3 – 4 years	37	9%	28	8%	20	5%
5 – 10 years	114	26%	100	27%	108	28%
11 – 15 years	96	22%	114	30%	121	31%
16+ years	82	19%	65	17%	58	15%
Total	432		376		387	

The only cohort which has increased in number and proportion is the 11-15 age group; this reflects the figures above on new entrants into care. This will impact on leaving care services, and the need for supported accommodation over the next five years. The development of an Edge of Care Programme will seek to address this issue by reducing the number of new entrants and the duration of placement.

3.4 Legal status of Looked After Children

Legal Status	September 2012	September 2013	September 2014
S 20	155	139	181
Care Order	113	123	125
Interim Care Order	82	27	18
Emergency Protection Order	-	1	1
Placement Order	82	86	61
On Remand	-	-	-
PACE	-	-	1

There has been a large increase in the number of children accommodated under S20.

3.4.1 Legal status by age band - September 2014 (figures in brackets compare within September 2013)

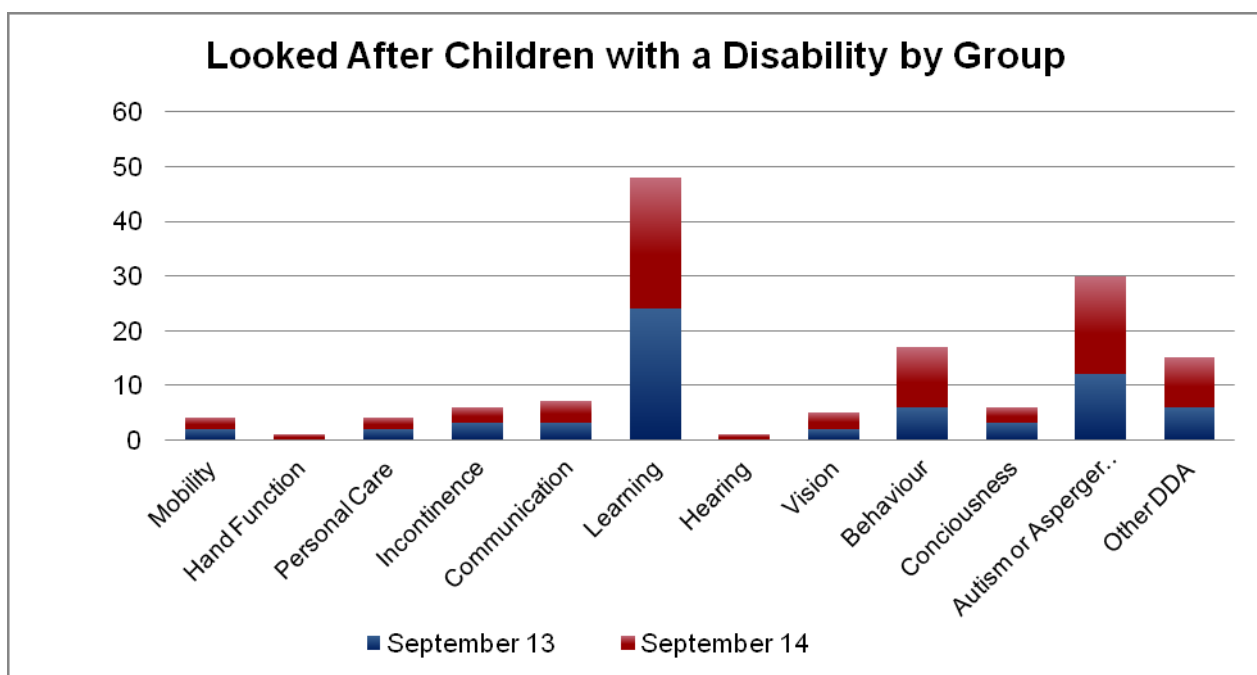
Age range	Section 20	Care Order	Interim Care Order	Emergency Protection Order	Placement Order	On Remand	PACE
0 – 2 years	(18) 40	(2) 0	(10) 9	(1) 1	(38) 30		
3 – 4 years	(3) 11	(3) 2	(6) 0		(16) 7		
5 – 10 years	(20) 30	(43) 51	(9) 6		(28) 21		
11 – 15 years	(59) 62	(49) 52	(2) 3		(4) 3		1
16+ years	(39) 38	(26) 20					
Total	(139) 181	(123) 125	(27) 18	(1) 1	(86) 61		1

In September 2014, 205 (53%) of all looked after children were subject to Interim or Care Orders, EPO or to Placement Orders showing a significant reduction from 236 (63%) at the end of September 2013. This is likely to change due to the large numbers of children currently in pre-proceedings or Care Proceedings. These children will require permanent alternative family placements, including fostering, adoption or Special Guardianship.

3.5 Disabled children and young people

40 children who are LAC have a disability representing just over 10% of LAC. This compares to 29 (8%) in September 2013. This represents a 38% increase. The most significant needs groups are:-

Disability Type	September 2013	September 2014
Learning Disability	17	24
Autism or Asperger Syndrome	12	18
Behaviour Disorder – Including ADHD	5	11
Communication	4	4



(Please note a child may have more than one disability)

Additional support or placements will be needed for children with challenging behaviour associated with autistic spectrum disorders which lead to family breakdown, as well as for younger disabled children who have experienced neglect and abuse.

68 disabled children had a plan in place for overnight short break provision on a regular basis compared to 51 in September 2013 and 59 in September 2012.

3.6 Parent and child placements

As at the 30th October 2014, Medway had a total of 12 Parent and Child placements in Independent Fostering at an average cost of £1560 per week. This is in comparison to the overall average for IFA placements at £948. Parent and Child assessment placements, under the IFA Framework, should not be longer than 12 weeks (3 months), however, the average length of stay for the 12 families currently placed is 21 weeks. The longest length of stay is 33 weeks, 3 families are over 30 weeks.

In addition to Independent Fostering, parent and child provision has been commissioned from Elizabeth Court. A total of 11 beds are provided through a Social Housing provider and a separate floating support package is purchased. The unit operates at a 90 - 100% occupancy rate.

3.7 Children subject to court proceedings

Medway is working closely with Legal Services to meet the requirements of the Family Justice Review and achieve more speedy resolution of court proceedings, aiming for 26 weeks.

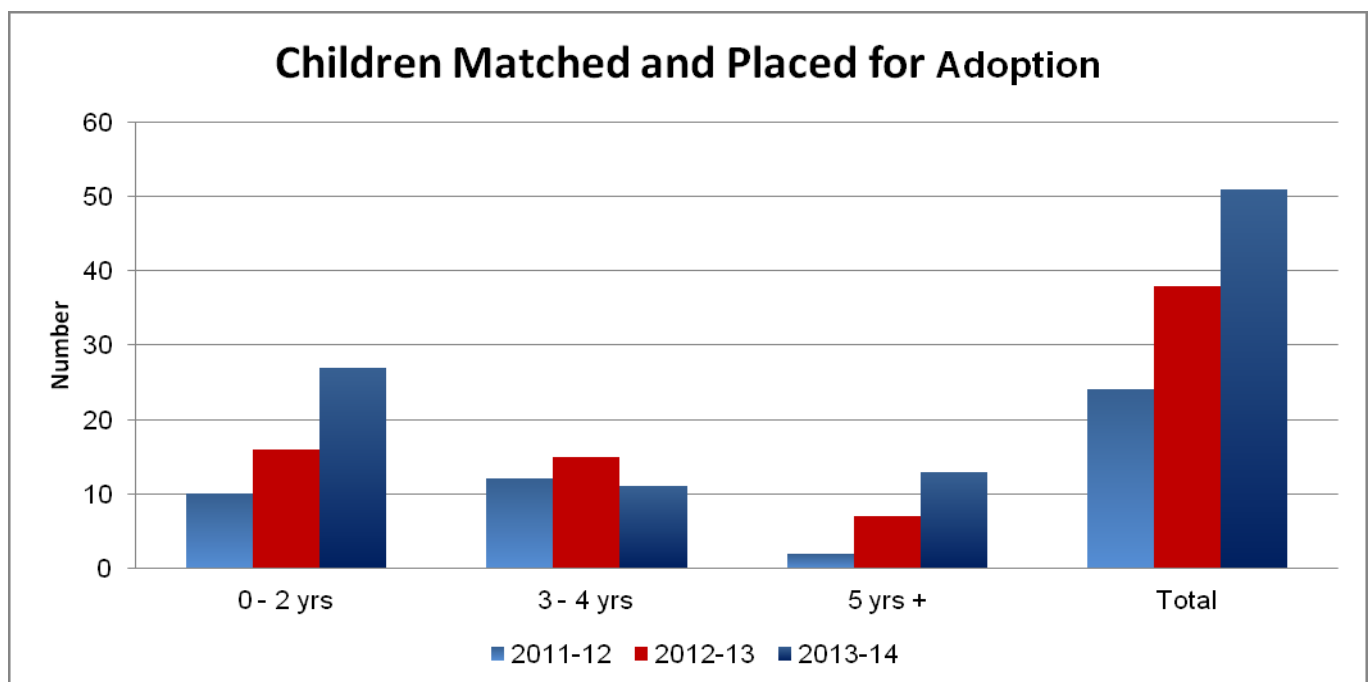
The 3 year average length of care proceedings for the 2010-13 was 55 weeks against the England average of 51 weeks. During 2011-14 this reduced to 54 weeks in Medway, compared to a national average.

3.8 Adoption and SGO

A total of 52 children were placed for adoption during 2013-14, compared with 36 in the previous year and 23 in 2011-12, showing significant performance improvements in this area.

The age breakdown of children placed is shown below.

Age at placement date	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
0 – 2 years	9	15	27
2 - 4 years	12	14	15
5 years and over	2	7	10
Total	23	36	52



Between 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013, 26 adoptions were completed. This increased to 43 Adoption between 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2014, equating to 24% of children leaving care in the period. This exceeds the national average of 17%, and the statistical neighbours at 18.3%.

During 2012-13 58 children had their plan for adoption approved – a 41% increase on the previous year and a 108% increase on the long term (8 year) average. 41 children were approved for adoption in 2013/14. 10 (24%) of these children were part of sibling groups, including two groups of three, compared with 16 (27%) in 2012-13. There were 20 boys and 21 girls in this population.

There were 13 children with a placement order awaiting an appropriate match in September 2014, compared with 20 in September 2012 and 25 in September 2013.

11 Special Guardianship Orders were granted between April and September 2013, compared with 25 between April 2012 and March 2013. This reduced in 2013/14 with 14 SGOs granted.

14 adoptive families were approved between during 2012-13, compared with 22 for the previous 12 months. 30 adoptive families were approved in 2013-14 and 11 up till 30th September 2014, demonstrating continued improvement.

With the current large number of young children entering care on statutory orders, the focus on adoption as a means to meet children's need for permanency must be sustained.

3.9 Siblings

From October 2012 until the end of September 2012, there were 12 referrals for placements for sibling groups. All of these were groups of two siblings; four of them were able to be placed together with in house carers, one pair was placed with an Independent Foster Agency carer, four pairs were placed separately and the remainder were no longer required.

In September 2013 there were 14 sibling groups placed with Independent Fostering Agency foster carers, comprising:

Number of sibling groups	Group composition
10 groups of	2 siblings
3 groups of	3 siblings
1 group of	4 siblings

These are placed as follows:

Number of sibling groups	Group Composition	Placement details
6 group of	2 siblings	Placed together
4 group of	2 siblings	All split – solo placements
2 group of	3 siblings	All split - solo placements
1 group of	3 siblings	1 solo placement and 2 placed together
1 group of	4 siblings	2 in solo placements, 2 placed together

Recruiting more carers able to keep siblings together where that is in their interests is a priority.

3.10 Young People Known to Youth Offending Service

The ‘*Legal Aid, Sentencing & Punishment of Offenders (LASPO) Act 2012*’ introduces changes to the remand powers of Courts with a view to achieving a reduction in the numbers of children and young people who are remanded into custody. It also brings about the change of Children in Care status for all remanded young people and leaving care status for those who remain in custody for 13 weeks or more as well as the transfer of financial responsibility to local authorities. The policy direction is to manage all young people on remand in the community unless there is a serious concern for public safety.

Between October 2013 and January 2014 there was one young person remanded and placed in a Youth Offending Institute. From January to September 2014 there have been no remands. This is a considerable improvement since the previous period in 2012-13 when there were 5 custodial remands.

3.11 Young People Leaving Care - 16+

In September 2014, there were 58 young people aged 16+ in care and 198 eligible for leaving care services.

Duties and responsibilities for young people leaving are outlined in the statutory guidance and regulations associated with the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. The level of support to which they are entitled depends on their status.

Status	Responsibilities
Eligible – a child aged 16 or 17 who has been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and is still looked after	Same responsibilities for all other LAC Pathway plan Personal adviser from 16 th birthday
Relevant – a child aged 16 or 17 who has been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and has left care	Take reasonable steps to keep in touch Assessment of need re advice and assistance required Pathway plan Personal adviser Safeguard and promote welfare by maintaining them in suitable accommodation in order to meet needs re education, training and employment Access to advocacy
Former relevant – young person aged 18-21 (24 if in education) who was previously eligible or relevant	Take reasonable steps to keep in touch Review of Pathway plan Personal adviser If welfare requires it, provide financial assistance by contributing to living expenses to enable them to live near job or training Pay for higher education bursary Access to advocacy
Qualifying - any young person under 21 (or 24 if in education or training) who ceases to be looked after or accommodated in a variety of other settings, or privately fostered, after the age of 16. This also includes a young people who is under a special guardianship order	Consider whether the young person needs help of a kind that the local authority can give in relation to advice and assistance, including financial assistance

The Southwark Judgement 2009 clarified the responsibility of Local Authorities to assess the needs of a young person who presents as homeless and to provide accommodation under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 if that young person is assessed as a 'Child in Need'. In all but the most exceptional cases, 16 and 17 year olds who present as homeless are, by nature of their homeless status, Children in Need. An assessment must determine whether they need to be accommodated under S20 of the Children Act 1989. Where this is not appropriate or the young person refuses, they will be considered a child in need and offered services and support as required.

Numbers of young people presenting as homeless

Jan-Sept 2014	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep
Total No. 22	2	3	4	2	2	2	1	4	2

Numbers entering Care at age of 16

2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013 – 14 (as at September 2014)
56	28	23	4

The number of young people entering care aged 16 continues to reduce as evidenced above.

3.11.1 Needs of Young People Leaving Care

As part of Medway's Staying Put Policy, a number of young people will stay on with their foster carers after the age of 18. Some young people who are placed with Independent Fostering Agencies or in Residential Care will make the transition into Supported Accommodation or adult services as defined by their needs.

The needs information below details the groups of young people leaving care and the presenting needs, with the aim of informing the support packages that will be required.

The Institute of Public Care (IPC) carried out an analysis of LAC and Leaving Care needs in January 2013¹, which projected the number of young people eligible for leaving care services up to 2020.

	2013	2014	2015	2015	2017	2018	2019	2020
Eligible LAC aged 16 and 17	56	55	55	54	52	51	51	52
Care leavers aged 18-24	190	188	186	181	175	173	170	169
Total	246	244	241	235	227	224	221	221

The report highlighted that approximately 11% of this number will have high level needs including emotional and mental health problems, criminal behaviours and substance misuse, which will impact on the ability to find appropriate accommodation for them.

¹ LAC and Leaving Care Needs Analysis Report January 2013 IPC

Snap shot of the needs of young people age 15+ who are currently in care at September 2014. Data extract was taken from Frameworki in August 2014.

No. in care	Age	(M)	(F)	Ethnicity	Numbers children who came into care due to reasons of:	Estimated numbers of young people who will need an enhanced/or intensive support package (Based on SDQ score above 18+)
33	15	15	18	29 (white) 2 (Black) 2 (not known)	19 Abuse & Neglect 3 Disability 2 Family in Acute Stress 7 Family dysfunction 2 Other	Estimate of 5 young people.
28	16	14	14	25 (White) 2 (mixed race) 1 (other)	13 Abuse & Neglect 3 Disability 2 Family in Acute distress 9 Family dysfunction 1 Other	Estimate of 11 young people Young people reported to have drug abuse/risk taking behaviours, self harming behaviours and severe emotional & behaviour difficulties and vulnerable to child sexual exploitation.
34 (2 left care)	17	15	19	32 (White) 1 (Black) 1 (other)	15 Abuse & Neglect 2 Disability 1 Parental Illness/ Disability 1 Family in Acute distress 11 Family dysfunction 2 Socially unacceptable behaviour 2 Other	Estimate of 8 young people with self-harming behaviours, drug abuse and emotional & behavioural difficulties.
2	18		2	2 (white)	1 Family dysfunction 1 Abuse & Neglect	One young person.
95		44	53			25

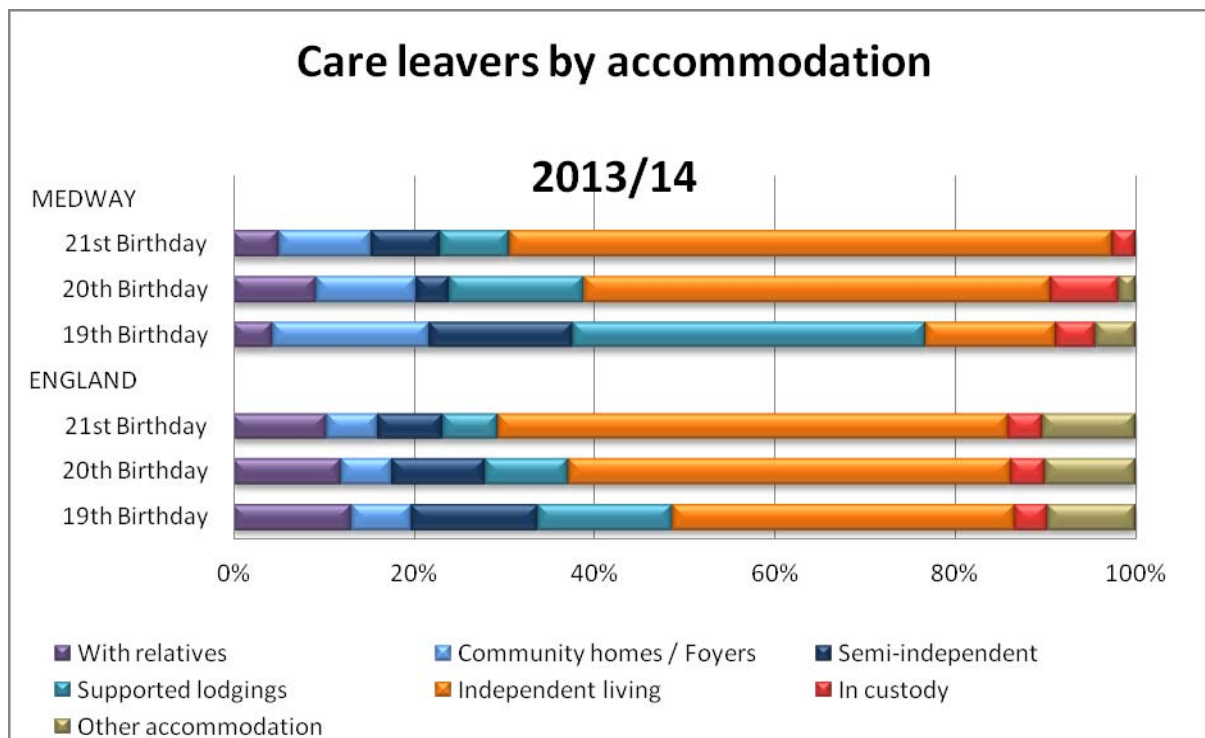
From the desk based needs analysis undertaken of young people aged 15-18 years who are currently in care, it is anticipated that 26% percent will require an enhanced or intensive level of support package when moving into more 'semi independent provision'.

Of the 25 young people identified requiring an enhanced and intensive support service, there are a growing number of young women who are identified as being at risk to child sexual exploitation.

The table below gives an estimated % of the likely demand of placements against a criteria of need.

Needs of young people	2015-17
<p>Standard level of support/ low level needs Young people may not have complex and challenging behaviours but require ongoing support and further preparation for independence.</p>	60%
<p>Enhanced Level of Support Needs. Be transitioning from Fostering / Residential Care into Supported Accommodation. Continuous abscond, have risk taking behaviours both to themselves and others, have attachment difficulties as well as substance misuse issues, or have offending and self harming behaviours. Be exposed to poor parenting in their younger years, have had a number of placement breakdowns since coming into care and have difficulties in forming positive and healthy attachments. Be exposed to domestic violence and parents suffering from substance misuse. Have physical and learning difficulties; have Autism and/or ADHD and who may be susceptible and vulnerable to negative influences due to not having the emotional intelligence to assess dangers. Aggressive and violent behaviours and battle to sustain their emotional outbursts. Have difficulties in engaging or sustaining their attendance in education, employment and training.</p>	30%
<p>Intensive Young People who require more intensive support either due to: Multiple or profound disabilities and require a high level of medical appointments. Be in crisis, displaying significantly challenging behaviours e.g. highly sexualised behaviour, significant self harming, absconding and risk taking behaviours requiring support from live in carers 24 hours for a day. Prolific offending & who may also be struggling with drug addiction. Being discharged from a mental health unit under S136 and require accommodation and intensive and specialist support. Being released from a secure centre and require intensive support Will not be in education, training or employment and be very difficult to engage.</p>	10%

3.12 Care Leaver accommodation



Nationally, 59% of 20 year olds are still living at home, with the care and support that this provides. With Care Leavers, the figure is significantly lower. Of the 54 Care Leavers in Medway turning 20 in 2013/14, only 21 (39%) were living in accommodation that provided support. Nationally, the figure was lower at 37%.

Medway performance was much better on the young person's 19th birthday with 53 out of the 69 young people (77%) in accommodation with support, against 48% nationally.

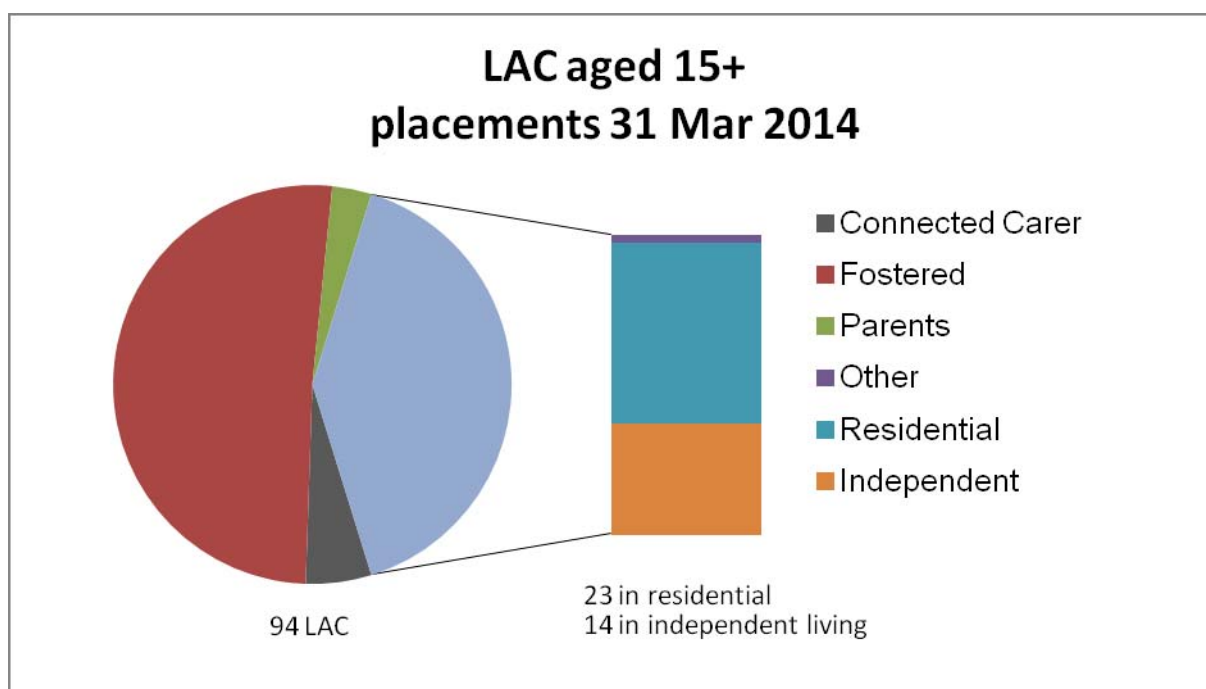
3.13 Future Care Leaver accommodation needs

In December 2013, the Children and Families Minister Edward Timpson announced a new legal duty on local authorities to provide financial support for every young person who wants to stay with their foster parents until their 21st birthday. At the end of March 2014, 30 young people were being supported by Medway under the "Staying Put" policy.

Staying Put can only provide care leaver support to those who were in fostering and connected carer placements, and primarily to those in Medway Council provision. Of those supported, only 1 was from a placement provided by an independent fostering agency.

Young people accommodated in Children’s Homes and other residential placements also have the need for post accommodation support, but the option of staying on in a placement past their 18th birthday is rarely available and requires specific dispensation from Ofsted. The use of residential accommodation for young people aged 18 and under in Medway has increased from 29 on the 31 March 2013 to 38 on the 31 March 2014.

This increase in use reflects the growing complexity of need of our looked after young people. Providing appropriate accommodation as a follow on to residential accommodation is a specific area of concern as supported accommodation is not inspected, either by Ofsted or the Care Quality Commission. In Medway we do not directly provide ‘in-house’ move on accommodation, relying instead on independent providers. We need to procure a range of provision with a range of support attached. This support should range from 24 hour on site support to floating support for a set number of hours per week. This will include building two semi independent units at the Old Vicarage Children’s Home site in Medway.



4. Views of Children and Young People about Choice and Sufficiency of Placement

Medway has a strong history of appropriate and effective engagement with its Looked After Children.

The Children in Care Council (CICC) provides the platform for young people in care to bring collective issues and concerns to the Council via the Corporate Parenting Group. Through this forum, the Children in Care Council aims to hold the Council and its partners to account for the services each provide. Other participative structures such as Medway Youth Parliament, Young Commissioners and Young Inspectors enable further consideration and evaluation of some of the issues raised by the CICC.

The Children's Care Monitor 2013/14² provides a national level perspective on children's and young peoples' views of their placements. Of these:

- 9% of children surveyed said that the placement was not right for them (a slight reduction from 10% the previous year)
- 5% of care leaver surveyed rated their accommodation as bad or very bad (a significant improvement from 11% the previous year)
- 24% thought they were living in accommodation that was wrong for them (a slight deterioration from 21% the previous year)

Looked after children within the CICC have raised a number of issues relating to the choice and quality of placements, transition, personal safety and preparation for independence. In particular young people felt that they were offered a limited choice of options of a similar nature. They suggested that there needed to be more 'supported lodgings' placements in Medway.

With regard to independent housing, they felt that they were given only two choices. They suggested that more options and styles of accommodation should be offered to cater for different needs and levels of competence; that a choice of where the placement is can be helpful as young people are likely to feel more comfortable in an area they are familiar with and where they have an existing support network.

Young people felt that the standard of some of the supported placements was poor. They suggested that all housing for young people should meet approved standards and should be more regularly monitored, similar to the ways foster carers and some semi-independent accommodation are inspected.

They reported that support offered to young people following a move to new accommodation was not adequate. They required more intensive support, sometimes daily, whilst adjusting to semi-independence or independence. A key message was that support should be offered consistently and should be long term by somebody trusted and known to the young person, rather than short term and reactive to when there are issues.

² Children's Care Monitor 2013/2014 Ofstead

Many young people have suggested they would find it helpful to have more opportunities to prepare for independence whilst in their foster placement and to be offered 'trial' sessions to go and live independently for a period of time *"to see how it feels, but if it does not work out your foster placement is still open for you...like a natural family would be"*.

A survey has recently (2014) been conducted with 16 young people living in supported accommodation.

Young people were asked how happy or unhappy were they in terms of their accommodation:

- 11 respondents said they were either very happy or happy
- 5 said it was ok.

Respondents were also asked if they had a choice about where they lived:

- 10 said yes
- 3 said no and
- 3 said they didn't remember.

When asked did they feel listened to in terms of the help they needed to become more independent:

- 14 said yes they were listened to
- 2 felt they were not listened to.

The following direct comments were received as to why they didn't feel listened to:

- "I want a flat - it's been ages"
- "They never let me talk"
- "Was told by Disability Team, not to worry about the Pathway Plan. Wanted to stay with Foster Carer but wasn't allowed. Felt this decision was based on money."

5. Current Placement Provision

5.1 Placement Mix and Cost

In November 2014, 183 children had been placed with Medway in-house carers. This is a reduction from September 2013 (191).

41 children are placed with approved connected persons, and 95 are placed in Independent Foster Agency placements.

However the number of young people placed in external residential provision has increased from 23 to 29 (26% increase). A significant number of these have moved from IFA or in-house fostering placements to residential because of escalating complex behaviours.

The mix of placements is shown below:

Placement type	September 2012	September 2013	November 2014	Direction of travel³
Medway foster carer	222	191	183	↓
Fostered by family or connected person	33	30	41	↑
IFA carer	77	65	95	↑
Placed with parents	13	12	10	↓
Placed for Adoption	28	25	25	↔
In-house Residential	8	8	6	↓
Private and voluntary residential home	12	23	29	↑
Residential school	5	6	1	↓
Secure accommodation	1	0	0	↔
YOI or prison	1	0	0	↔
Supported accommodation	13	18	10	↓
NHS	0	0	1	↑

There are 24 children and young people placed inside Medway boundary in IFA foster placements. 49 children and young people are placed in IFA foster homes outside of Medway.

³ In last year

5.1.1 Placement Cost

Accommodation Type	Average Wee cost	Lowest to highest cost
Supported Accommodation	£ 590	£445 - £900
Supported Lodging (Internal)	£ 222	£175 – £280
IFA (External Placements)	£ 948	£540 - £1,700
In-House Fostering	£ 360	N/A
Residential (Internal based on full occupancy of 6 beds)	£2,330	Dependent on occupancy
Residential (External)	£3,248	£2,800 - £4,000 (Secure)

The current weekly unit cost for the Medway fostering service has been calculated at £360. It is important to note that this is lower than the Fostering Network calculation of national Local Authority fostering services (£425 to cover allowances, fees and respite plus £294 for training, management and support; total £719⁴) and therefore should not be taken as the actual cost of placements.

From January 2014, Medway joined Kent County Council in the use of an IFA Framework contract for external placements, now at an average cost of £940 per week, and parent/child placements at £1600 per week.

The average weekly cost for external residential provision is £3,248. These placements are spot purchased from 13 different providers and are used for children with the most complex needs that require specialist provision, including those with disabilities.

5.2 In-House Fostering

Medway has its own in-house fostering service responsible for the recruitment, assessment and support of foster carers.

As of September 2013, there were a total of 135 standard fostering households (an increase of 5 from the previous year) approved for 287 placements (based on full occupancy).

Between April and September 2014 there were 65 new enquiries, 15 of which proceeded to the statutory check / assessment stage, resulting in 7 new households approved. In this same period, 11 households had their registrations terminated, leaving the overall number of approved households reduced by 4.

From January 2014 to currently, 11 foster carers have resigned. 2 foster carers resigned as they had adopted children who were previously in their care. Two

⁴ Update to **The Cost of Foster Care**, Lisa Holmes and Jean Soper, Centre for Child and Family Research, Loughborough University 2010 for the Fostering Network

returned to employment as the fostering allowances were not meeting the needs of their personal circumstances. Two foster carers where there were standards of care issues subsequently resigned. One carer got married, and one resigned through health reasons and one no longer wished to foster. One gave no specific reason.

From the data, there are no dominant categories why carers resigned. The Fostering Network has indicated that, in the main, there is a national shortage of carers and carers resign when they have reached retirement. However, within the recent period, they have noticed a trend where carers have given financial reasons for ending their fostering roles.

The fostering service has developed a recruitment strategy which will respond to the needs identified in this document and target recruitment at known gaps in localities and needs groups.

5.3 External Fostering – IFA framework

Medway has worked in partnership with Kent County Council (KCC) to establish a framework for the purchase of independent placements, which has been operational in Medway from January 2014. There are 35 providers on the framework, providing for a range of high priority needs including:

- Complex and Challenging Needs
- Young People on remand
- UASC
- Children with disabilities
- Rehabilitation
- Short term/bridging
- Parent and Child
- Residential migration

In accordance with the Framework, the Access to Resources Team are making placements in a more streamlined way, contract compliance and outcomes monitoring is standardised and shared with KCC, and there are greater partnership working with providers to manage the market and stimulate recruitment according to identified needs.

The average unit cost on the IFA Framework is considerably higher than the national average weekly cost for independent fostering provision and as a result both Kent and Medway will be introducing mini competitions as part of the placement process.

The Framework will run until June 2015, with an option of extending for a further two years when there will be an opportunity to influence renegotiation on price and placement type.

5.4 Residential Provision

Medway has a shortage of local Residential provision to accommodate children and young people including young people with special educational needs.

Medway Council owns a six bed residential unit for young people with complex and challenging behaviours. The management of this unit is currently outsourced to an external provider, until June 2015.

There are a further two independent residential providers operating in Medway. One provider offers a therapeutic service for children up to the age of 10. The second providers has an inadequate Ofsted rating. Medway's Commissioning Team has measures in place to track performance improvements with this provider but do not have any young people currently placed.

There are currently an additional 29 children and young people who are in external residential care placements, who are placed out of area.

5.5 16+ Accommodation Provision

Statutory guidance associated with the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 places responsibilities on local authorities to prepare young people for leaving care, and supporting young people who have left care.

It states that: 'It will therefore be good practice for local authorities to commission a range of semi-independent and independent living options with appropriate support.....'

This should include:

- Staying on in foster care
- Supported Lodgings
- Supported Housing
- Specialist Supported Accommodation
- Independent accommodation – with floating support as required

As at September 2014, Medway was supporting 62% of young people in Supported Lodging and 38% in Supported Accommodation. Supported Accommodation services are spot purchased in Medway.

In 2014, Social Care and Housing jointly commissioned a range of Housing Related Support, including accommodation for 16+ Homelessness and Care Leavers. Not all the categories of support were successfully tendered for and hence, Social Care and Housing are commencing a second round of tendering specifically targeted at meeting the needs of 16+ homeless and Care Leavers.

The following table gives a breakdown of the type of provision that is in place in Medway: -

Category of Need/ Level of Support Required.	Provision	Provider	Location	Age Range	No. of beds/ places
STANDARD LEVEL OF SUPPORT	Supported Accommodation (Supported Acc)	Focus	Medway	16-24	
	Supported Acc	Dream Start	Medway	16-24	
	Mother & Baby	Elizabeth Court	Medway		12 beds
	Homeless	Regents House	Medway	16 - 25	
	Homeless	Medway 33	Medway	16 - 17	
	Foyer	Endeavour House	Medway	16 - 25	27 places
	Supported Acc	Bridging the Gap	Medway	16-25	8 bed Supported Accommodation with Parent & Child unit in separate house next door.
	Supported Acc	Forge House	Medway / Maidstone	16-24	7 units, based on 2 people sharing with live in tenant.
	Foyer	Springboard	Medway	16-25	6 places for NEET young people.
	Supported Acc & Mother /baby	Transitions	Medway	16-24	4 bed M& B unit plus another house that accommodates Care Leavers.
ENHANCED LEVEL OF SUPPORT	There is currently only one Provider who has trained and appropriately qualified staff able to offer the level of support required in Medway, however, currently does not have the capacity to meet demand.				
INTENSIVE LEVEL OF SUPPORT	Supported Acc	Acorns	Thanet / Kent	16-24	

There is currently a significant gap in provision of Supported Accommodation for Care Leavers in Medway, especially to support young people requiring a more enhanced and intensive level of support needs.

There are numerous challenges in obtaining sufficient social housing for care leavers to assist them step down and move on to independence in Medway. Some are outlined below:

- Medway only has 13% of social housing stock and hence is reliant on private landlord accommodation.
- The Welfare Reforms, requiring a subsidy for under occupancy has increased the demand of one bedroom flats however there is insufficient supply to meet demand. This makes single care leavers one of the hardest groups to find accommodation for.
- Social housing can now charge rent up to 80% of the market rate which is increasing the cost of social housing. Social housing under the 'Allocations guidance 2012 and 2013' has the ability of offer more flexible and responsive tenancies to a wider population e.g. low earners and key workers which is impacting on the availability of social housing for care leavers nationally.
- The bidding process for housing can take time and young people are all bidding against one another in an increasing limited pool of provision.
- In some cases private landlord accommodation is of poor quality and does not always provide long term stability for young people, as most tenancies are for a period of 12 months. This presents a particular pressure in finding suitable accommodation for young people 18+ who have Autism/ADHD and other disabilities that do require long term social housing.
- As of

February 2015, Universal Credit for under 35 year olds will be paid directly to the young person. This represents a significant risk for private landlords who fear rent arrears and who may choose not to accept tenants using Universal Credit.
- Young people

who have been evicted due to rent arrears, anti-social behaviour and other reasons which housing may deem deliberate, result in young people being considered 'intentionally homeless' and hence are no longer eligible to for housing. In these cases they become the responsibility of Social Care to fund temporary accommodation and to provide support to secure alternative accommodation. If alternative privately rented accommodation is found, a guarantor is required but it is not Medway Council's policy to act in this capacity. Often the rental of these properties exceeds Housing benefit and hence here is often an expectation that Social Care services will pay the top up amount of rent not covered by housing benefit.

5.6 Other Support Services

Medway Children's Services have invested in a range of services to support children, and these services will be available to all LAC in order to support placements and improve placement stability.

These services include:

- Community CAMHS which are contractually required to prioritise LAC, and who provide Tier 3 and 4 services
- Tier 2 CAMHS provided by an in-house service but managed by Tier 3 CAMHS provider
- Virtual School – a service to work with LAC and support them to achieve the best possible educational outcomes
- Outreach service

5.6.1. Emotional Well-being and Mental Health Support Needs of Young People:

Children often enter the care system with a poorer level of physical and mental health than their peers, and their longer-term outcomes remain worse. Two thirds of looked after children have at least one physical health complaint, and nearly half have a mental health disorder.

According to the HM Young Carer strategy (Oct 2013), Care Leavers face difficulties around the transition from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to adult services.

To support smooth transition pathways between children and adult services, a Medway Mental Health Young Person's Transition Forum has been established between Children Social Care managers and Adults Mental Health services to review the needs of young people where there is a likelihood that they will need to transition to the latter. This forum is chaired by a Mental Health Commissioner, and as a result young people the transition across to KMPT is a carried out in a smoother and more planned way.

Emotional well-being and behavioural support service are not currently commissioned as part of Medway's CAMHS or AMHS. There is an acute gap in provision for young people with complex and challenging behaviours, ADHD and ASD age 11 years+. 15-20% of young people with ADHD / ASD experiencing co morbid conduct disorder require some level of therapeutic and behavioural support. The number of people diagnosed with ASD and ADHD has increased significantly, with prevalence approximately 15% of the population. According to referral data produced by our Tier 3 CAMHS provider, in September 2014, of the 173 children on the treatment waitlist, 20 were awaiting an ADHD assessment and a further 14 were needed an ASD assessment.

The second most prominent gap in provision is for LAC and Care Leavers requiring behavioural support and flexible/ adaptable counselling services, in particular those in the age group of 15-21 years.

5.6.2 Not in education, training and employment:

At the end of June 2014, there were 7.9% of 16-17 year old Looked After Children that were NEET and 53.3% of Care leavers not in Education, Employment or Training. At the end of September 2014, 8% of 16-17 year olds Looked After were NEET & 51% Care Leavers were NEET (8 young people).

6 Commissioning Priorities

6.1 16+ Homeless Young People and Care Leavers

Partnership Commissioning, working with Social Care, Housing, Youth Services, Health and Education, has prioritised the following six objectives for homeless young people aged 16+ and Care Leavers aged 16 to 25 years:

- To embed an integrated pathway to support the smooth transition for young people moving into independence, when they are ready and are prepared to do so.
- Secure a sufficient range of good quality Supportive Accommodation that is tailored to meet the individual needs of young people.
- Support young people to access the best possible health, education, training and employment opportunities so that they can achieve their potential, and for these services to be delivered in a more joined up way.
- Ensure funding is spent efficiently and effectively in securing sufficient provision.
- Involve young people at every aspect to inform and implement this action plan.
- Improve communication, information sharing and more joined up working across partner agencies to achieve better outcomes for Care Leavers.

We will achieve the following objectives by:

- Introducing and embedding an integrated pathway to independence that combines the need to ensure that effective interventions are in place to prevent young people entering care, and that Care Leavers and those 16+ homeless who are accommodated, follow a clear pathway into independence and are supported by all partner agencies to do so.

6.1.1 Secure Sufficiency of Provision:

- Jointly commission appropriate and more cost effective Supported Accommodation and Floating Support, including emergency accommodation for 16+ homeless young people, using a Dynamic Purchasing System. The tender process will commence at the end of November 2014 and contracts will be awarded by end of March 2015. As part of this procurement process, commissioned providers will be expected to deliver an outcomes focused independent support programme for young people in accordance with the objectives outlined in their Pathway Plan. Access to education, employment and training will be one of the key performance indicators.
- Develop the In-House Fostering business plan (by January 2018) in support of developing an enhanced /intensive Supported Lodging Scheme and a ring fenced number of Supported Lodging carers able to offer emergency accommodation and support for 16+ homeless young people.
- Extend the Staying Put scheme to certain IFAs who are currently caring for some of our young people with complex and challenging behaviours. Put in place revised Individual Placement Agreements including updated Pathway Plans as to expectations and outcomes to be achieved for the young person, including strong focus on educational attainment, by early January 2015.
- Build two semi independent units on the site of the Medway Councils Old Vicarage Residential Children's Home – build to be completed by the end of June 2015.

6.1.2 Drive up quality standards of existing Support Accommodation Providers:

- Roll out the quality assurance and performance framework to all existing Supported Accommodation providers in Medway. The Framework clearly outlines Medway's quality standards, and the outcomes to be achieved – all providers are to be signed up by end of December 2014.
- Put in place performance improvement plans where necessary and regularly review provider's progress in achieving performance targets – This work has already commenced but all existing providers are to have been inspected by March 2015 under the new framework.
- Host CSE provider forum in January 2015 to share information, knowledge and training to providers working with young people with CSE. Continue to

host regular provider forums to deliver ongoing training and promote increased opportunities for shared learning.

- Incentivise providers to meet the performance criteria e.g. those providers that are not successful in the first round of tendering to be on Medway's Dynamic Purchasing System will obtain further opportunities to re-apply.

6.1.3 Address the gaps in provision around emotional well-being and behavioural support for 18+ young people:

- Implement an all age Emotional Well-Being Strategy working jointly with Kent County Council and Kent's Clinical Commissioning Groups – commissioned services to be in place from September 2015.
- Implement an all age ADHD / ASD (neuro—developmental) pathway working with Kent Council and Kent CCGs that will deliver transformational change to the way in which services across the statutory agencies have been traditionally structured and commissioned. Develop a business case that will seek to commission integrated services and the view to re-commissioning services from April 2016 onwards.
- Take forward the recommendations of the LAC / Leaving Care CAMHS review around finding innovative ways to engage hard to reach young people with complex and challenging behaviours including those who are at risk of sexual exploitation as part of CAMHS service redesign, enabling re-commissioned services to be in place by end of September 2016.

6.1.4 Drive forward improvements in performance in respect of Initial Health Assessments & Health Histories:

- Increase capacity within the nursing team to drive up performance standards to achieve a 100% success rate in health histories being in place for young people. Support and monitor all partner agencies ability to ensure that improvements are met, achieving the target of Initial Health Assessments being carried out within the 26 week timescale.

6.1.5 Drive forward improvements in number of Care Leavers in Education, Employment and Training:

- Commissioners will work across all partner agencies and providers to ensure a joined up approach is taken to supporting Care Leavers enter education, training and employment. The objective across all agencies will be to achieve the annual performance measure of improving EET numbers by 5-10% each year. Support provided will include, increased sharing of information and where possible, preventing placement breakdown and finding innovative ways to overcome barriers and obstacles, preventing young people access EET.

6.2 Looked After Children

6.2.1 Secure more cost effective provision in Medway

In order to support this we will:

- Undertake an In-House Fostering Review to consider options as to how Children's Social Care Services can effectively increase the number of in-house foster carers in Medway with the ability to meet the following needs of young people:
 - Manage challenging and risk taking behaviour
 - Provide care to sibling groups, long term care, parent & child and disabled children placements
- The review will explore the viability of extending the in-house specialist foster carer scheme, Fostering Plus, to meet the more complex needs of children, most of whom are currently being placed with IFA carers. The needs will include challenging and risk taking behaviour, young people on the Autistic Spectrum, young people at risk of sexual exploitation, and young people who have been abused and require therapeutic input. This will mean investing resources in the training, support and remuneration of a specially trained group of carers, working closely with our CAMHS service providers to support this initiative. We aim to develop a scheme with providing single placements to young people with challenging and complex behaviour and a different payment structure.
- Work in partnership with Independent Fostering Agencies, to introduce 'mini competitions' under the IFA framework by the end of December 2014. The objective is to reduce the average unit cost being paid, bringing this more in line with the national average unit cost for IFA provision.
- Develop a business case to explore the viability of redeveloping Medway Council's Parklands Centre into a Residential unit for disabled young people, to reduce the number of young people being placed in costly Non Maintained Residential Special Schools, out of area.
- Undertake a competitive tendering process to increase the number of small residential providers operating in Medway, or just out of area. Commissioned providers are to deliver services to a targeted need group.

6.2.2 Improve our processes for accessing and monitoring placements to achieve maximum efficiency and effectiveness

- Develop the Access to Resources Team to streamline placement commissioning (in-house and external), monitor placements and outcomes for children, and collate needs data to inform future commissioning and fostering recruitment arrangements.
- Monitor requests for and use of placements and outcomes achieved through the Children's Access to Resources Panel. In 2014, the Access to Resources Panel was re-formulated to ensure that all new placements, whether planned or emergency, are presented to the next available meeting. The panel will produce monthly reports on placement trends, placement drift, and themes in relation to looked after young people and placement needs.
- Thematic panel reviews have been set up to identify cases suitable for Residential migration placements and to support proactive commissioning of semi independent provision (e.g. looking at the needs of looked after children 15 years+ who are due to move into Semi Independent provision).
- Promote joint agency approaches to provision of services for children with the most complex needs through the Continuing Health Care (CHC) Panel.

7 Monitoring progress on the Looked After Children strategy and Sufficiency Report

Detailed commissioning action plans have been developed to support the implementation of the Looked After Children Strategy and the Sufficiency Strategy over the next three years. Progress on achieving the LAC Strategy performance targets will be reported to the Children in Care Council and the Corporate Parenting Board to ensure it continues to reflect changing needs and priorities of our children.

As part of the ongoing Performance Monitoring function, the Improvement Board, Children's Services Management team and CADMT regularly receive performance reports which include indicators for LAC.

The Sufficiency report will be updated on an annual basis to reflect changes in needs or supply information, and respond to emerging policy initiatives.

All partners should be encouraged to recognise their role in implementation, through leadership, communication, supervision to promote good care planning practice, and clear accountability frameworks.

Key Impact Measures for LAC, Care Leavers and 16+ Homeless:

The following impact measures have been identified as the key indicators of the success of the strategy and will be closely monitored and reported on formally for the duration of the strategy.

Activity	Quality
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Overall Number of CIC• Increase in numbers of CIC placed for adoption and made subject of SGO• Increase in the level of capacity, referrals to and actual placements made in in-house foster service• Net gain of in-house foster placements by locality and placement type• Reduction in 16 - 24 year olds presenting as homeless.• Reduction in homeless acceptances of 16-24 year olds.• Reduction in number of young people aged 16+ becoming looked after.• Reduction of babies becoming looked after through use of mother and baby placements where appropriate.• % of 16-17 years who left care• Increase in number of LAC 16+ with pathway plans.• Reduction in the number and % of LAC over 16 NEET.• Increase in % of young people looked after 19 years in EET.• Increase in % of care leavers in suitable accommodation.• Increase in the number of LAC in higher education.• Increase in % ALC aged 19 in higher education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduction in out of authority placements.• Increase in the maintenance of tenancies.• Satisfaction of service users including those living in supported accommodation (qualitative indicator).• Young people agree accommodation is suitable and meets needs.• Young people are satisfied with the accommodation process and outcome of intervention.• Children in Care and Care Leaver's success in EET in line with their peers.

Diversity Impact Assessment: Screening Form

Directorate	Name of Function		
C&A services	Sufficiency Strategy		
Officer responsible for assessment Helen Jones Assistant Director – Partnership Commissioning	Date of assessment March 2015	New or existing? Existing	
Defining what is being assessed			
1. Briefly describe the purpose and objectives	<p>This Diversity Impact Assessment addresses the implications of the Sufficiency Report for Medway Council.</p> <p>The report sets out how Medway Council will meet the placement needs of current and future children in care and care leavers, and improve outcomes for them, in light of our understanding of their needs and current provision. The report discusses how Medway Council will meet the requirement on the Local Authority to take steps to secure sufficient accommodation for children in care within their local area in accordance with the Statutory Guidance for the Sufficiency Duty issued in 2010. Taking account of this duty is a requirement of local authorities and their partners, and will be one of the key documents under review in any future Ofsted Inspection.</p>		
2. Who is intended to benefit, and in what way?	<p>Children and young people who are looked after by Medway Council, or whose circumstances and well-being require them to be provided with accommodation, or who are leaving care.</p> <p>They will benefit by having an appropriate range and choice of placements able to meet their identified needs.</p>		
3. What outcomes are wanted?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placements for children in care are provided and commissioned to meet identified needs • Processes for accessing and monitoring placements achieve maximum efficiency and effectiveness 		
4. What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?	<p>Contribute</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear strategy and action plan to support recruitment of foster and adoptive placements • Use of Framework Contract for Independent Fostering Agency placements <p>Improved monitoring and reporting on the needs of children and young people coming in to care</p>	<p>Detract</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing complexity of needs of children coming in to care • Shortage of appropriate placements in the market • Budgetary pressures with priority placed on meeting high levels of need at the most cost effective price 	
5. Who are the main stakeholders?	Children and young people in care, parents, foster carers, social workers, IFA providers, residential care providers		
6. Who implements this and who is responsible?	Director of Children and Adults		

Assessing impact		
7. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>racial groups</i>?	YES	
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	Placement services will continue with better targeted outcomes for the children, young people and families involved. No changes are being made to the existing accessibility of placements.	
8. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>disability</i>?	YES	
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	Placement services will continue with better targeted outcomes for the children, young people and families involved. No changes are being made to the existing accessibility of placements.	
9. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>gender</i>?	YES	
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	Placement services will continue with better targeted outcomes for the children, young people and families involved. No changes are being made to the existing accessibility of placements.	
10. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to <i>sexual orientation</i>?	YES	
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	Placement services will continue with better targeted outcomes for the children, young people and families involved. No changes are being made to the existing accessibility of placements.	
11. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> be a have a differential impact due to <i>religion or belief</i>?	YES	
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	Placement services will continue with better targeted outcomes for the children, young people and families involved. No changes are being made to the existing accessibility of placements.	
12. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due to people's <i>age</i>?	Yes	
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	Placement services will continue with better targeted outcomes for the children, young people and families involved. No changes are being made to the existing accessibility of placements.	
13. Are there concerns that there <u>could</u> be a differential impact due	YES	

to being trans-gendered or transsexual?	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	Placement services will continue with better targeted outcomes for the children, young people and families involved. No changes are being made to the existing accessibility of placements.	
14. Are there any <i>other</i> groups that would find it difficult to access/make use of the function (e.g. young parents, commuters, people with caring responsibilities or dependants, young carers, or people living in rural areas)?	YES	
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	Placement services will continue with better targeted outcomes for the children, young people and families involved. No changes are being made to the existing accessibility of placements.	
15. Are there concerns there <u>could</u> have a differential impact due to <i>multiple discriminations</i> (e.g. disability <u>and</u> age)?	YES	
	NO	
What evidence exists for this?	Placement services will continue with better targeted outcomes for the children, young people and families involved. No changes are being made to the existing accessibility of placements.	

Conclusions & recommendation		
16. Could the differential impacts identified in questions 7-15 amount to there being the potential for adverse impact?	YES	
	NO	
17. Can the adverse impact be justified on the grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group? Or another reason?	YES	n/a
	NO	
Recommendation to proceed to a full impact assessment?		
NO		
NO	What is required to ensure this complies with the requirements of the legislation? (see DIA Guidance Notes)?	

YES	Give details of key person responsible and target date for carrying out full impact assessment (see DIA Guidance Notes)	
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Action plan to make Minor modifications		
Outcome	Actions (with date of completion)	Officer responsible

Planning ahead: Reminders for the next review		
Date of next review	1 April 2016	
Areas to check at next review (e.g. new census information, new legislation due)		
Is there <i>another</i> group (e.g. new communities) that is relevant and ought to be considered next time?		
Signed (completing officer/service manager)	Date	
Signed (service manager/Assistant Director)	Date	