**Supported Accommodation 2018**

**Consultation and Engagement**

In addition to the online supported accommodation survey, separate consultation and engagement activity has taken place with young people in a variety of settings and with young people residing in a range of accommodation.

Young people were consulted at the following events;

* LINX Focus Group- 8 YP (LINX is our Children in Care Council). LINX, supported by Barnardos, brought together young people from across Lancashire.
* East Lancashire Care Leaver Drop In- 5
* Care Leaver Apprentice Focus Group- 6
* Corporate Parenting/ Local Offer Event at Lancaster University- 30

Discussions were based on the questions outlined in the online survey but were more discussion focused and personalised. A different approach had to be taken in order to make the young people feel more comfortable and to ensure that they had ample opportunity to share their views and opinions.

In relation to the accommodation, including their room, young people gave the following feedback.

\*Please note, due to the discursive nature of the focus groups, it has not been possible to include the numbers of young people feeding back on specific points.

**Accommodation**

**When you think of the building you live in?**

**What do you like about it?**

* Young people appreciate when the accommodation is furnished and well decorated
* Modern buildings
* Good sized flat
* Close to town centre and amenities
* Safe and spacious
* Majority of people are happy with their accommodation and wouldn't change much/ anything

**Negative**

* 1 respondent did not like the building
* 1 respondent found their accommodation isolating
* 2 respondents didn't like the use of CCTV as part of a 'warning' system

**Thinking about the building you live in, including your room. What are the best things about the accommodation you live in?**

**Positive**

* Nothing needs improving, I am very happy with everything
* My room is small but I like it
* I'm happy with the accommodation
* Communal space is good
* I like having access to a garden
* I like having access to a washer and drier on a regular basis
* I have a decent curfew and can sleep out

**Improvements required**

* Re-plastering/ re- decorating
* Bathrooms improved
* Tidying up outside
* Better quality microwaves/ beds
* Smoking area
* Make it smell better
* Having an oven in my kitchen
* Improved communal areas
* Improved security and communal areas
* New blinds
* Better storage in kitchen- cupboard doors are broken/ missing
* More frequent access to a washer/ drier

**What are the best things about the support you receive in this accommodation?**

**Staff**

* Always someone to speak to
* Help me to understand what is going on
* Support worker is approachable and good to talk to
* Always do what they can to help
* Are around for a brew and a chat

**Preparation for Independence**

Young people at the LINX focus group were keen to distinguish between general 'support' and 'preparation for independence' support.

* Help me on a 1:1 basis to get a flat and to help me sustain a tenancy
* Very helpful to help me be ready for life outside my accommodation
* My confidence has increased
* I have learnt skills that will help me live on my own successfully
* I get support when I can
* I know what I should look for in a private tenancy
* I have been helped to think about a budget

Young people were also keen to provide some ideas for improvements to accommodation.

Young people suggested that support workers could;

* be a bit friendlier
* smile more
* don't sit in their office- come and see young people more frequently
* be more accessible
* More interesting house meetings
* House rules should be explained more
* Come to PA meetings with me

Young people were engaged, helpful and honest. We will continue to consult with young people during the process and once the commissioning process has been completed.

As part of the new Corporate Parenting Strategy 2018-2022, priorities have been established in the action plan to ensure that young people are part of ongoing monitoring processes, which will include seeking their views and ideas on supported accommodation.

Finally, with the publication of the Care Leaver Local Offer in October, young people will be able to seek wide ranging information regarding accommodation, support and other opportunities in their local areas.