



# THE TRUST TIMES

18+ Care Leavers' Newsletter

November 2022

## LOOK-IN AT THE LIGHTHOUSE

Hi everyone,

As the days grow colder and the nights get darker quicker, we want to keep you warm and bright with a bumper November newsletter.

It is also our great pleasure to announce our new weekly **'Look-in at The Lighthouse'** sessions.

These are weekly, in-person events, where you can come along, meet your friends, have some fun, and pick up some freebies. Find out more on **Page 2**.

In addition, make sure you keep an eye on your email inbox this month, as we will be sending you information about a Community Christmas meal opportunity - on Christmas Day.

We have a number of news items this month to help you with the cost-of-living. Make sure you check them out.

We will leave you on an early Christmas joke:

**Why does Santa have three gardens?**  
**So he can 'ho ho ho'!**



### We love your good news

If you have anything you would like to be considered for next month's edition please email it to Juliette Walton.

Remember, you can have your achievements, however big or small, shared in this newsletter.

**Juliette.Walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk**

Always remember, **you are never alone**, you are a part of the biggest family in Birmingham, and we are here for you!

If you can't get hold of your PA, please call:  
**0121 464 1229.**

**\*\*\*NEED HELP ? CALL OUR DUTY LINE ON 0121 464 1229\*\*\***

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BIRMINGHAM  
CHILDREN'S TRUST

THE **LIGHTHOUSE**  
YOUNG PEOPLE'S CENTRE

# LOOK-IN AT THE **LIGHTHOUSE**



**EVERY  
WEDNESDAY**

**GIVEAWAYS  
EVERY  
WEEK**

Come and join us for free home cooked food, pool and table tennis, board games, books, cards – or just to chill-out, or catch up on college work.

**Free WiFi**

**Day-Savers & Shopping Vouchers available if needed**  
**Children are welcome**

Starting From  
**Wednesday 23 November 2022**  
1.00pm - 5.00pm

**Lighthouse Young People's Centre**  
**B19 2LN**

**No need to book**, just turn up on the day. If you have any questions, contact Juliette Walton  
07825 117 381

[Juliette.Walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk](mailto:Juliette.Walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk)

## Moving On November update

Join Moving On's final block of sessions!

### The Young People's Stage

Moving On is a two-year creative project co-delivered with care-experienced young people, which aims to make changes, break stereotypes, and prepare young people to leave care.

### Moving On Symposium - Thursday 24 November, Midlands Art Centre

To mark the end of Moving On, we are holding a Symposium (like a short conference) where we will invite our partners, funders, stakeholders, friends of the project and young people to join us to celebrate Moving On, discuss, in depth, aspects of the Care Review, and watch our theatre performance, Taking Steps.

### Book your place now!

#### Symposium Tickets include:

- Entrance to performances, presentations and discussions.
- Refreshments throughout the day, including a light dinner.
- A ticket to see Taking Steps at 7.30pm (finish by 9pm).

As a care leaver, you are eligible for a free ticket – please use the following code when booking online: **BCTFREE**

Tickets can be booked via MAC's Box Office **0121 446 3232** or <https://macbirmingham.co.uk/event/moving-on-symposium>

### Contact Us

If you're interested in hearing more or want to sign up, contact Katie on [katiwebster@womenandtheatre.co.uk](mailto:katiwebster@womenandtheatre.co.uk) or **07864 642970**

## REES FOUNDATION November 2022 UPDATE

Rees Foundation run a number of groups called '**Let's Connect**', which allow you to connect with other members of the care experienced community. Rees find that these networks can lead to lifelong and empowering friendships.

Website: [www.reesfoundation.org](http://www.reesfoundation.org)

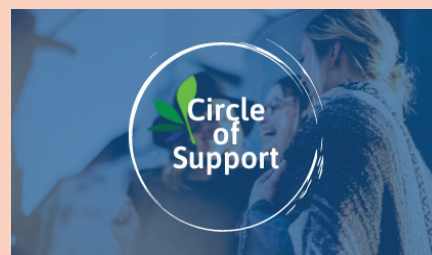
The groups are facilitated using a team whose members may be care experienced or individuals who are experienced by profession, with the ultimate aim of creating a safe place where care experienced people like you can meet to discuss matters of personal interest.

### Courses in Nov and Dec 2022

**Dr Rachel** delivers a number of courses for care experienced people consisting of Attachment Courses, Trauma & Anxiety, Growth Mindset and Surviving Winter.

#### Our next session is:

Surviving Winter (28 November, 5, 12 and 19 December - all at 1.00pm)



Group for care experienced people of all ages to discuss a range of topics. Each online session focusses on something different.

#### Our next sessions is:

Wednesday 7th December (7-8pm)

To sign up to any of the groups, and to find out when sessions take place, please complete the form in the link below:

<https://form.jotform.com/203141499622353>



# THERAPEUTIC EMOTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICE (TESS)

Come along and join the Trust's monthly TESS afternoon drop-in sessions for Birmingham's 18+ care-experienced young people, aimed at enhancing your emotional wellbeing.

## Where will sessions take place:

TESS  
67 Bournbrook Road  
Selly Oak  
B29 7BX

**Phone to book:** 0121 675 1781

**Dates:** These will take place on the first Wednesday of every month.  
The next session will be on  
**7 December 2022.**

**Time:** 12.00pm – 4.00pm.

## What can I expect:

- A relaxing and welcoming environment with an outside garden and indoor area.
- Connection with the TESS 18+ team, which will give you the opportunity to talk and engage in activities, learn coping skills and strategies, that will help you to improve your emotional wellbeing.

## Staff available on the day:

- Davinia Burrell
- Paul Campbell
- Vibha Jivan
- Sally Burgess
- Emily Kigonya



# YOUR GOOD NEWS 2022

We are continuing to celebrate your good news in this newsletter. Congratulations to every one of you on your achievements in October.

- **CD** was offered the job as a carer in April 2022, and is now working as a carer for Fairway Homes, having waited over five months for her DBS clearance.
- In October 2022 three Birmingham care leavers, **GB, SS and AO**, were offered Jobs with John Lewis Partnership.

The Trust has been working with John Lewis Partnership and Rees Foundation since August as part of their **Building Happier Futures** project.



The **Building Happier Futures** employment programme is an ongoing scheme to identify and recruit talented young people who've experienced care to become Partners in our business. We have developed a supported employment approach in partnership with local authorities and charities, including Drive Forward and the Rees Foundation. Including work experience, guidance on C.V. writing and interview skills, as well as a guaranteed interview, this approach gives young people who are care experienced an opportunity to truly explore our business and start a meaningful career.

If you would like to be part of the next project, contact Juliette.

**Juliette.walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk**  
or text 07825 117 381



- We are so proud of **TG**. He won his first professional boxing match by way of a fifth round knockout of another boxer who had previously won his first four professional fights. **TG** won 'Fight of the night'.
- **TG** channelled his energy into something positive, not only physically but mentally too. He has changed his lifestyle and is excelling. Watch this space for more updates on his success.

## NEWS FROM THE FRONTLINE

### Update from Naim Iqbal, YPP case manager.

**NW** and **AA** have both started a BTEC in customer service. They receive travel and will get a bursary, between £20 and £30 a week, depending on attendance. The course is with Skills Training.

Skills Training is a good provider as they do a lot to help young people, in terms of the courses and support that they offer to help young people to achieve their goals.

Also they are worth mentioning as **AA** completed a traineeship earlier this year so was not eligible for the traineeship. However, they have taken **AA** on the course despite this, at their own cost.

All the Skills Training staff are worth a mention, including Kumarnie the recruitment manager and Manny the English tutor.

# EPIC.

EPIC has seen many young people from across West Midlands who have faced adversity and/or are care experienced who want to start a business and do not know where to start on their journey.

EPIC makes each business journey from a seed through to start up unique to them, utilising a series of workshops, coaching and mentoring.

They offer opportunities and support to progress for their future within personal and professional development.

EPIC is helping to build the businesses of tomorrow

Over 2.5 years, they have supported over 30 young people create businesses from hair and beauty, 3D animation, clothing, app based technology and more.

They will help you gain access to internal and external businesses and individuals who will take your energy, passion, innovation and commitment to develop a future pathway.

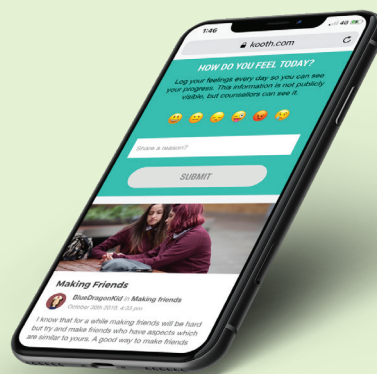
They would love to chat to you, find out more about your idea/spark and share their knowledge with you.

## Get in touch with EPIC

Interested to know more, get in touch with Marc Pearson, EPIC co-ordinator.  
Phone/Whatsapp **07745531416**

EPIC Futures can be found on Instagram or website: **www.epicfutures.co.uk**

## Give Kooth a try



**Kooth** offers free, safe and anonymous online counselling and support, with many different features and sections to offer you support such as:

- **Magazine** - helpful articles, personal experiences and tips from young people and our Kooth team.
- **Discussion Boards** - start or join a conversation with our friendly Kooth community. Lots of topics to choose from!
- **Chat with the team** - chat to our helpful team about anything that's on your mind. Message us or have a live chat.
- **Daily Journal** - write in your own daily journal to track your feelings or emotions and reflect on how you're doing.

Visit the **Kooth** website to see the features listed above and much more!

**www.kooth.com**

## THE TRUST TIMES

### Back issues of the 18+ newsletter

You can find the last two years worth of 18+ newsletters on the Birmingham Children's Trust website. Many of the feature articles, including those providing information and guidance are still valid.

**Visit:** <https://bit.ly/3yliug3>



# CONSTRUCTING A FUTURE

Balfour Beatty VINCI (BBV) are the construction partner building HS2 in the West Midlands.

They are an established joint venture between two global leaders who have been working together for over 30 years, when both companies delivered the Channel Tunnel. They deliver critical infrastructure projects for the rail and transport industries including iconic projects in the UK and beyond.

Their focus stretches beyond delivering a world-class railway. They are also working to deliver a lasting jobs and skills legacy within the communities that surround the HS2 project. In total, BBV expects to support around 7,000 jobs through its programme of work on HS2.

They continue to take an active approach to encouraging new entrants into the industry including trainees, apprentices, placements, paid work trials and opportunities for graduates.

As an apprentice working for BBV on Europe's largest infrastructure project, you will gain the unique opportunity to join our high performing teams, earning while you learn and developing key skills that will be valuable throughout your career.



## GORDON FRANKS TRAINING

Gordon Franks Training has been around since 1984, and specialises in supporting young people from the West Midlands into employment.

Their specialist access programmes support young people from the ages of 16 to 18, or 19 to 24, if they have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), to make that transition from school or college onto an apprenticeship or into employment.

Their 20 week programme is designed to give young people the skills and work experience needed to secure an apprenticeship or employment.

Their small class sizes ensure students also get the support they need from their dedicated staff. We also offer apprenticeships from Level 2 to 5 in administration, customer service, child-care, community sports and management.

Where they differ from many other training providers is that they offer supported apprenticeships that ensure learners with additional needs get the reasonable adjustments and one-to-one support to achieve their apprenticeship.

For more information on GFT specialist programmes get in touch:

**Website:** [www.wearegft.co.uk](http://www.wearegft.co.uk)

**Email:** [enquire@wearegft.co.uk](mailto:enquire@wearegft.co.uk)

**Phone:** 0121 333 3001

## Connecting you to a world of jobs in construction

Office roles  
Site-based jobs  
Work experience  
STEM Careers sessions  
Summer placements  
Pre-employment training  
Graduate roles  
Apprenticeships



To view our current opportunities scan the QR code or use the link below:  
<https://forms.office.com/r/jaBygAyyjKG>

Find out more or to send us your CV:  
[see.team@balfourbeattyvinci.com](mailto:see.team@balfourbeattyvinci.com)

Contact National Careers Service to get help to apply:

Telephone: 0800 100 900

<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/contact-us>



# Grab a cuppa with..



The Rees Foundation is proud to collaborate with a number of cafés across the country, offering a safe social space for care experienced people in the heart of the community.

The cafés offer affordable, high quality food and drinks and supportive staff who are mental health first aiders.



The Rees Guest Card is exclusively available to care experienced people and allows you discounted food and drink at any of our cafés. Please click here to apply for a Rees Café Guest Card

You'll find a full list of where you can use your card below. Rees Foundation website has a huge amount of information, resources and projects that you can get your teeth into.

<https://www.reesfoundation.org/rees-cafes.html>

## Evolve Café in Birmingham

Evolve Café is based in Birmingham.

**Evolve Café**  
**201 Bradford Street**  
**Birmingham, B12 0JD**

[evolve@aquarius.org.uk](mailto:evolve@aquarius.org.uk)

**01212 6228181**



# Suicide and self-harm prevention

If you, or anyone you know, is feeling suicidal, or wanting to harm themselves, there is always help available.

However bad you are feeling right now, there is help that you can get.

Lots of people have felt like this and - with help - managed to get through it.

Here are some numbers and links to supportive professionals and organisations who offer help to those feeling suicidal.

These links will be included in all future newsletters so they will always be here for you to access



- Papyrus has a lot of useful advice and also a suicide prevention helpline.

<https://papyrus-uk.org/>

- Samaritans helpline **116 123**
- SANE helpline **0300 304 7000**



- Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) (for men) **0800 58 58 58**

- Help Guide suicide prevention

[www.helpguide.org/home-pages/suicide-prevention.html](http://www.helpguide.org/home-pages/suicide-prevention.html)

Also please see the **TESS offer** on **page 4**.



## HELP WITH THE COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS



Birmingham City Council and partners are working hard to support and guide residents through the cost-of-living crisis.

A great, comprehensive, new Help in Brum leaflet, is just out that covers everything from warm welcome spaces, to benefits and money advice, energy efficiency and food.

<http://bit.ly/3EE1H0v>

Hours are also being extended at two council Neighbourhood Advice and Information Centres, in Erdington and Northfield, to help support people.

<http://bit.ly/3XcKpik>

Find out about goods and services to help you in Birmingham by visiting:

<https://birmingham.connecttosupport.org>

## Birmingham Warm Welcome Spaces

The city council is working with the local community and a partnership of voluntary and community sector organisations to expand a network of warm spaces.

These spaces will be available for people to use and visit during the winter period and beyond.

**Find out more:** <http://bit.ly/3EjpbGO>

## FOOD VOUCHERS GOING UNCLAIMED

Healthy Start Food Vouchers for families are going unclaimed, according to Birmingham City Council's Public Health Team.

Despite being eligible, many people in Birmingham are not registering for their Healthy Start food vouchers, entitling them to £4.25 of free food per week.

This means thousands of pounds each week worth of free food is not reaching families who need it.

To qualify for Healthy Start vouchers, applicants must be 10+ weeks pregnant and/or have at least one child under four, and be in receipt of benefits such as Child Tax Credit or Universal Credit.



Healthy Start food vouchers can be exchanged for milk, infant formula, fruit, vegetables, and pulses.

For more information - Healthy Start Website  
<https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk>

To find your local Healthy Start Vitamin collection site please use the postcode finder:  
<http://bit.ly/3EEzZkj>

If you have any questions, please contact Kathy Lee in the Public Health team.  
[Kathy.Lee@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:Kathy.Lee@birmingham.gov.uk)

## BECOME A MENTOR

### Do you want to be a mentor for care leavers?

Birmingham Children's Trust work with a company called CGL. They help lots of our young people to find training and employment.

They are recruiting mentors and particularly want care experienced young people.



### This is from the job description:

- As a Volunteer Peer Mentor, you can encourage and motivate young people to make positive changes and support them to develop skills and appropriate attitudes to education, employment, and training.
- We treat everyone as an individual and no two days are the same so being flexible, courteous and being a good listener are key attributes we look for in a volunteer mentor.
- It is voluntary, but you get training and a L1 mentoring qualification plus expenses.
- A lot of the staff at CGL started out as volunteers. It's a good route into interesting work and really worthwhile because you are helping others.

**Apply here:** <http://bit.ly/3UGfJo2>

If you want more information or some help to apply, you can contact Amy at CGL:

**Amy.hall@cgl.org.uk 07584 333547**

or contact Juliette at the Trust:

**Juliette.walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk  
07825 117 381**

## CONFERENCE FEEDBACK

It was great to see so many of you at the conference on 26 October.

Here is some of the feedback. We also have a photo below of Trust staff members - **Terri, Christine and Colette** - who were running the pre-loved area.

The next conference will be in February 2023. We'll confirm the exact date in an upcoming newsletter as soon as we have it.



### Your feedback

#### What was your favourite thing about the day?

- Having as much support with the housing and finances.
- Learning about the help I can get.
- Doing the cup challenge and talking to staff.
- Seeing old friends!
- Meeting new people.
- The different range of info and activities to do, and the mac and cheese.
- Talking to companies.
- The food and the people.
- Food !!!
- Terri helping me with the pre-loved clothes I got.

#### Was there anything about the day you didn't like?

- No mac and cheese left!



## ADVOCACY SERVICE

The aim of **Rights and Participation (RAP) Advocacy** service is to ensure that Birmingham children in care, care leavers and children on child protection plans (wherever they may live), are provided an advocacy service. You are entitled to have the support of an advocate and access to children's rights.

**RAP Advocacy** is the representation of your wishes and feelings, your views, and your voice, to professionals and services. This could be at meetings, through the complaints process, or wherever you wish us to do so.

**RAP Advocacy** is **ALWAYS** led by you the young person - our **BOSS**. Your advocate will work on your instructions alone.

**RAP Advocacy** is issue based, so it is provided for a particular purpose, and is there until there is an outcome for the complaint, or concern.

Advocacy referrals are normally allocated to an advocate within three working days of receipt. The advocate will then contact you and support you with your issue/s.

You can make a referral for yourself or anyone else can make a referral on your behalf.

To make a referral or if you have any questions about RAP Advocacy service please email **advocacy@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk**

### Testimonials about the RAP Advocacy service

*"Thanks so much my advocate - everything went the way I wanted."*

*"Thank you for helping me learn and grow as a young mum you stood up for me and believed in me. It's all paid off, you're truly amazing and I hope we can always stay in contact."*

*"My advocate helped me to have housing officials listen to my housing needs. Without her they would not have listened to me and fobbed me off."*

## TRY SOME £1.00 MEALS

The BBC Food website contains £1.00 meal recipes and a shopping list planner which can easily be printed. That's £1 per person.

<https://bit.ly/3tFvgZs>



There's also a range of oven-top meals on Jack Monroe's website, where you can find similar budget meals.

<https://bit.ly/3TLQPIL>

## DEVELOP ME LAUNCH

Earlier this month Birmingham Children's Trust launched a brand new mentoring programme - called **Develop Me**.

The programme supports children in care and those with care experience, aged 16 to 25, to reach their potential by matching them with mentors who share similar experiences, interests, or career goals.



**Pictured above:** Trust staff Dave, Andy and Dion, serving at the Develop Me launch event.

# Child Trust Funds



If you were born in the UK and turned 18 after 1 September 2020 and don't have details of your Child Trust Fund (CTF), please use the online form below to find your details and take control of your CTF (usually worth £250 or more): <https://findctf.sharefound.org>

## Junior Individual Savings Accounts

If you turned 18 before 1 September 2020 (born since 3rd January 1994) you may have a Junior Individual Savings Account (JISA) set up with £200. To be eligible you must have been in care in the UK, continuously for 12 months or more, since 2 January 2012. Please use the online form below to find your details so you can take control of your JISA:

<https://myjisa.sharefound.org>

If you need to contact the Share Foundation regarding the online forms please email:

[info@sharefound.org](mailto:info@sharefound.org)

Or call

**01296 310400**

For further enquiries please contact:  
[Tracey.Britton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk](mailto:Tracey.Britton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk)

## Trust Website Care Leavers' opportunities

The Trust care leavers' opportunities page contains opportunities for you to get your hands on! It is regularly updated, so be sure to favourite the page to keep an eye out for updated opportunities.

<https://www.birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk/opportunitiesCL>

## The Local Offer

The 18+ Care Leavers Service is here to help young people make the move from living in care to enjoying independent life as an adult.

We support young people from ages 18 to 21, and this can continue up to the age of 25 if you wish.

We understand that leaving care is a time of big changes in your life.

You will have lots of questions about the support you can get and the services available to you.

These sorts of questions are so important that the government asked every local authority to produce its own Local Offer, to include all of the services and information that care leavers would need.

The Local Offer was produced with the support of the Birmingham Care Leavers' Forum.

You will find the Birmingham Local offer via the following link:

[www.birminghamchildrenstrustco.uk/birminghamcareleaversoffer](http://www.birminghamchildrenstrustco.uk/birminghamcareleaversoffer)



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CHILDREN'S TRUST**