

# Kensington and Chelsea's Local Offer for Care Leavers

**Support  
information  
booklet**



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF  
KENSINGTON  
AND CHELSEA

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# Introduction

Moving out of care and living independently is a big step. This document tells you all about the support available in Kensington and Chelsea for you as a care leaver.

Just because you are leaving care, or have already left care, doesn't mean we have stopped caring about you. We want to make sure that you feel safe and supported and know where and who to go to for advice and help.

As part of this, in April 2024, the Council agreed that 'Care Leaver' should be considered as a local protected characteristic by Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. This will ensure that all departments within the Council work together as your corporate parents to develop opportunities and consider your best interests.



To be able to get the support laid out here, you must have been in care for at least 13 weeks between the ages of 14 and 16 (including your 16 birthday) or for 13 weeks after your 16 birthday. Eligibility for a care leavers service can be explained by a social worker, personal advisor or the children's advocate who can help you understand whether or not you qualify for support and what level of support you're entitled to.

Local care leavers have helped make this leaflet and we will continue to listen to your views to make sure the services we offer are what you need. We have written this information with the Future Union (Children in Care Council) and the Youth Ken Group (Care Leavers' Forum).



## More info

This information is available online at **[www.rbkc.gov.uk/children-and-education/looked-after-children-and-leaving-care](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/children-and-education/looked-after-children-and-leaving-care)**, or you can email **[AdvocacyandParticipation@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:AdvocacyandParticipation@rbkc.gov.uk)** if you would prefer a printed copy. Your social worker or personal assistant will be able to talk you through the document.



# What you should expect

So that you understand your rights, the law states that;



**For care leavers aged 16 to 17**

**16 to 17**

the local authority is under an absolute duty to accommodate you as well as providing you with a social worker.



**For care leavers aged 18 to 20**

**18 to 20**

there is a proactive duty on LA's to assess your needs, and together develop a pathway plan which is kept under review.



**For care leavers aged 21 to 25**

**21 to 25**

there is a duty on local authorities to keep in touch with care leavers and provide help and support if requested. This could be for a short or longer period of time depending on your assessed needs.



We will try to let you keep the same social worker or personal advisor where possible. As a young adult, we're here to support you with the move into adulthood and independence, so the relationship may seem different to the one you had with your social worker when you were looked after.

Social workers and personal advisors want to be involved in discussions about your needs and your pathway plan after talking with you and the important people in your life. The pathway plan sets out your needs, views and future goals, and exactly what support you will receive from us. We review your pathway plan every six months with you so that it is kept up-to-date and reflects the level of support you want and need.

**Your social worker or personal advisor will consider with you what extra support you may need. You might, for example, need extra support because:**



**You have special educational needs or a disability**



**You are an Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child (UASC) and your immigration status is unclear**



**You are in or leaving custody or you have had contact with the criminal justice system**



**You are a young parent**



**You are going through a difficult time in your personal life**

## What's next?

Your Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) will work with you and your social worker **from your 16 birthday** to ensure that your pathway plan meets your needs and that you have a say in how that plan looks. Your IRO will also talk with you about whether you and they might think it would be helpful to you for them to carry on chairing your pathway planning reviews once you are 18.

# Successfully managing your finances

We will try to help you financially, in a similar way that parents might support their own children. When you turn 18, you are no longer 'looked after' and are expected to support yourself financially through claiming benefits, paid work or if in further education, claim grants and loans that you may be entitled to.

However, at certain times, there will be additional financial support available to you. For example, when you move or if you are in further education. We will discuss with you what your financial needs will be to help you achieve your goals and any financial support packages will be clearly laid out in your pathway plan.





Our help includes:

### For 16 and 17 year olds:

If you are 16 or 17 you may already be living in semi-independent accommodation. Since you will not be entitled to claim benefits your social worker or personal advisor will provide you with subsistence to cover your day to day living costs. This does not apply if you are living with foster carers or in residential school or accommodation.

- ▶ All accommodation costs are met by the local authority
- ▶ The subsistence rate as of April 2024 is **£71.93 per week** (£311.68 monthly) (equivalent to the current rate of universal credit)
- ▶ You will receive a clothing allowance of **£150 twice a year** to coincide with the start of the summer and winter

If you are in a Young Offenders Institution or in prison, you will be supported with living expenses up to £5 per week.

### Turning 18

When you turn 18 you will be supported to apply for benefits as soon as possible. There is a specialist benefits advisor that your worker can call on to ensure that you claim everything you are entitled to. If you want more detailed information, please go to [www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators](https://www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators) or speak to your social worker or personal advisor.

You should already have a bank account but if you don't your social worker or personal advisor will help you to set one up. This will be important so that if you are receiving benefits or subsistence or are working your money can go straight into this account.



## I.D documents

Once you turn 16, you will need formal documents to access things like benefits and employment. Your social worker or personal advisor will help you to obtain proof of identity such as a passport or driving license, birth certificate and national insurance card as soon as possible. We will cover the costs of these.



## Savings

When you become looked after, your social worker or personal advisor will have made arrangements so that money can be saved for you.

**You will be able to access these savings when your reach 18.**

Any savings you have accrued will be discussed as part of the pathway planning process so when you turn 18 you will have thought about how you might wish to spend it.

## Discounted travel 18 to 25

If you live in a London borough and receive no other free or discounted travel, you may be eligible for 50 per cent off Transport for London bus and tram fares. You can apply whether you are actively working with us or not. You don't need to have a social worker, just get in touch. You can find more information on this in Section 12 (useful contacts), last page.

## Accommodation cost

Whatever type of accommodation that you are living in or move into at 18, you will be expected to claim benefits to help with accommodation costs. This includes if the plan is for you to stay put in your foster placement (see section on accommodation). You will be responsible for your rent and accommodation costs. The decision about what type of accommodation you move into will have been discussed with you earlier on in the pathway planning process, but definitely by the time you are 17 and will be laid out clearly in your pathway plan.


Whether or not you are working, in education or on benefits you will need to pay a **service charge** on your accommodation of **up £10 per week** from your income.

## Moving costs


When you move into other accommodation, whether it is a temporary one, such as a semi-independent hostel or to your final stage accommodation your social worker or personal advisor will help you with the costs of hiring a van for example.

## Setting up Home Grant ( SUHG)


When you move into your long-term accommodation you may receive a setting up home grant (SUHG). The amount is discretionary and will vary depending on what type of tenancy you get, the standard of the property and what essential furniture items you may need. The available grant may be up to £3000 or equivalent in goods already received. Your social worker or personal advisor will assess with you what you need.



If you obtain a tenancy from Housing Management (the Council) you will receive an Enhanced Offer which includes full decoration, flooring , fridge/freezer and cooker. As you will have received some essential items and decoration already you will receive a grant less that the maximum for remaining essential furniture items.



If you receive a tenancy via a Housing association, you will not receive an Enhanced offer so may receive a grant **up to a maximum of £3000**. However, please note this is subject to assessment of need.



If you are moving into semi-independent accommodation, which is temporary and you need some items to furnish it, you may be able to access small amounts from the setting up grant earlier. You are able to access **up to £300** for necessary items, but this will come out of your total allowance. You will only be able to buy items once out of this allowance and requests for the same item, cutlery, for example, cannot be covered when you move from one accommodation to another.

## Council tax

When you move into your final stage accommodation you will become responsible for **all the utility bills** such as electricity and gas. Prior to this you may have been living in semi-independent accommodation and paid a small service charge towards the general cost of utilities (approx. £10). From April 2024, it was agreed that RBKC care leavers who are liable to pay their own council tax directly (rather than as part of a service charge), or cannot access other available discounts, **can apply to receive a care leavers' discount from the Council up until they are 25**. The discount does not extend beyond a care leaver's 25th birthday. Council tax discount will start once a care leaver moves into their final stage accommodation (social housing or privately rented) rather than when they are living in hostel accommodation, unless they are personally liable for the Tax.

This scheme replaces the previous scheme so speak to your social worker or PA if you have any questions.

## Discretionary payments and loans

From time to time there may be problems that arise where you are still struggling financially. In these cases, you can ask for Discretionary Leaving Care Payment or loan from your social worker or personal advisor. If a loan is agreed, you will be expected to pay this back and you must sign an agreement that sets out the repayment arrangements. Whether it is a loan or a discretionary payment the team manager will need to approve it.

Depending on your circumstances you may be able to claim the following so please ask your social worker or personal advisor:

		
Discretionary housing payments	Discretionary leaving care payment	Loan

We do not hold cash in any of the offices, so for emergencies if you run short and need help with food your social worker or personal advisor may be able to give you supermarket vouchers.

## Life chances/Pledge Funding

As part of Our Pledge to looked after children and care leavers we will support you to access essential equipment you might need to pursue your education, such as a laptop. We can also help you join a gym. However, we know that sometimes you may need financial support to enable you to take up activities you enjoy. Some support maybe accessed from the Life Chances Fund, like taking lessons in something you enjoy or which supports your education and training, and overall wellbeing.

## Birthday and special day allowances:

To mark your birthday, a **small allowance of £35** for gifts or contribution towards your celebrations will be given to you up until the age of 21. If you are 16 to 18 this allowance only applies if you are living in semi-independent accommodation. If you are living with foster carers your carer will buy you a present instead.

We will also **contribute £35 towards one annual religious celebration such as Christmas, Eid or Diwali** until you are 21.



# Education, employment and training

We want you to succeed in your education, training and employment.

We will ask you how you are doing and be ready to celebrate your achievements with you.

We will offer you:



▶ Support to meet your transport costs when travelling to training, school/college, apprenticeships or job interviews

▶ Support to buy tools, equipment, essential clothing, and books

▶ The chance to attend and help organise celebration events when young people achieve education, training and employment milestones (not including Post 21)

▶ Lunch money, up to the value of £4 per day (£20 per week) subject to the number of full days you are attending an apprenticeship, college or training<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> All of the above is offered subject to a needs assessment, which will determine access to local libraries, online reading, support from college, utilising the Virtual School's Wednesday evening classes and subject to the arrangements put in place by either the training facilitator or job centre.

## Finances for study

All young people aged 16 to 19 who are 'Looked After' and study full time are entitled to a bursary, which will be paid to you by your college, 6th form or training centre into your bank account. Please visit the link below for more information about the bursary. If you are to continue to studying at college from age 19, then there is advice available about Student Finance options to meet the costs of some courses which are no longer offered free after the age of 19. All colleges and 6th forms have a Designated Person who supports young people in care, and care leavers and they will be able to advise you about support available.



### Learn more

Bursaries of up to £1,200 are available for students in further education, training or unpaid apprenticeships. Visit the website to see what's available, eligibility and how to apply.



**[www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund](http://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund)**

**We want  
you to  
succeed**



## University

Should you choose to go to University, Kensington and Chelsea will support you through the application process via your virtual school worker, social worker, personal assistant or college tutor/student support. In addition, we will:

▶ **Support if you choose to go to university, such as helping you obtain tuition fees and maintenance loans, care leavers grants and access to the hardship fund from university (not all universities provide this).**

▶ **We will support you with the UCAS fee.**

▶ **We will help you choose the right course and university that matches your talents and interests.**

▶ **We will provide you with a Higher Education (HE) bursary/‘Parental Contribution’ of up to £6,000 each year for the duration of your studies (up to a maximum of four years), which is a contribution towards 52 weeks’ accommodation.<sup>2</sup> This is subject to completion of a Section 24 Finance request, relevant evidence and agreement with the terms and conditions of the funding.<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>2</sup> If a young person has decided to stay in a ‘Staying Put Arrangement’ an adjustment will be made in order to create greater equity with other care leavers in Higher Education. The maximum that can therefore be paid is £3,000.

<sup>3</sup> Conditions of receiving parental contribution include the following: that you provide full details of your course and that they remain correct throughout the academic year; that you provide full details of student financing and any additional grants you have been awarded; that you provide a ‘letter or acceptance’ from the university or proof of movement from Year 1 to Year 2 or Year 3; that you provide evidence of enrolment before finances start; that attendance and academic monitoring will take place each term; consent to contact the university or higher education institute; that you are expected to have a minimum of 90 per cent attendance and complete all coursework; that you will inform the service of any ‘change in your circumstances’; that you provide a copy of your rent agreement and rent statements as part of the termly monitoring.

## Employment and training

In addition to your social worker or personal advisor, Kensington and Chelsea have a team of staff who can support you with your employment and training needs, including The Virtual School, which is available to provide information, advice, and guidance on routes into employment, education, and training through their Inclusion Team.

They will provide you with:



**Careers information and advice.**



**Opportunities for work experience, apprenticeships and employment within the council and with local employers.**



**Help with CV writing or job applications.**



**Help with interview preparation, which could include a one-off payment towards suitable clothing (up to £60).**





# Housing and accommodation

As you get closer to 18, we will talk to you about the different types of housing and accommodation that are available to best meet your needs.

We have developed a more detailed booklet about accommodation pathways – read the **Housing Guide for Care Leavers**:



[www.rbkc.gov.uk/children-and-education/looked-after-children-and-leaving-care/housing-guide-care-leavers](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/children-and-education/looked-after-children-and-leaving-care/housing-guide-care-leavers)

## Skills4Life

This is a group programme you will need to attend in order for us to nominate you to eventually move into your accommodation. You should ask your social worker or Personal Adviser to nominate you onto the programme. Areas covered include: MyBank (where you learn all about budgeting and finances), housing, health, personal safety, advocacy and participation, employment/training opportunities.

## Staying put

For those young people who have been living in a foster placement there may be the opportunity to continue living with their foster carer beyond their 18th birthday. If you are continuing to stay with your foster carer it will be because you still need quite a lot of support for a variety of reasons; a semi independent living place has been recommended or identified but is not quite ready for you; or you're continuing in education. This will no longer be a foster placement but a "Staying Put" arrangement. If you stay with your carer you will be expected to contribute to the costs of your room in the same way that you would if you were living in a hostel or your own accommodation.



**Explore  
your  
options**

## **Semi independent accommodation**

**Semi-independent accommodation is generally provided through hostels either managed by us (Kensington and Chelsea) or a housing association. To access these, you will have been referred to the Semi Independent Accommodation Review Group (SIARG) by your social worker or Personal Adviser. Members of SIARG will interview you and your social worker in order to decide what type of accommodation you need. The majority of places offered by SIARG are within Kensington and Chelsea. However, for some young people remaining in the borough will not be possible for a variety of reasons. In such circumstances you will be offered another hostel outside of the borough.**

**When you live in semi-independent accommodation, we will support you to develop your independence skills, preparing you for independent living. This kind of accommodation is only available to those who are aged 16+. When you live in semi-independent accommodation you will have your own, lockable room but may have to share other facilities such as kitchen and bathroom. There will be key-workers at the accommodation who are there to work with you to achieve your independence goals.**

## Independent living

When you are ready, we will support you to secure independent accommodation. Usually, this will be a studio whereby you have signed a tenancy or license agreement meaning that you are responsible for paying rent, being a good neighbour and keeping the accommodation clean, tidy and in a good condition.



When this decision is made you can apply to be included on the borough's housing register, after which you can bid for properties included on the register.



Care leavers in Kensington and Chelsea are afforded a priority status for social housing and you can expect that you will be able to move into your own home within 12 months of being nominated onto the register.



**We are  
here to  
help**

# Making friends and developing relationships

As well as support from a social worker or personal advisor, we may be able to offer you additional practical and emotional support, such as:

- Providing you with a mentor/peer mentor.
- Where appropriate, continuing to support contact with the 'Independent Visitor' you had while you were in care.
- Help to maintain or regain contact with people special to you or who cared for you in the past, like former foster carers or social workers.
- Providing you with information about regular groups that take place within the service, where you can meet and interact with other care leavers (please see participation for further details).
- Lifelong Links – is a service that supports you to find out more information and reconnect with people in your life that you have lost contact with or in some cases have never met. This could be anyone from family members, friends or professionals who worked with you such as your previous teachers, social workers or foster carers.
- Alumni (CLAN) – if you are no longer working directly with a social worker or Personal Advisor why not join our Care Leavers Alumni Network.



# Health and emotional wellbeing



Your social worker or personal advisor can:

- Give information on healthy living
- Give information on getting help to pay for prescriptions
- Give information on intimacy and healthy relationships
- Give information about health drop-in centres
- Support you to register with a GP
- Support you to register with a dentist
- Support you to move from CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) to adult services
- Give information about counselling services that are available locally
- If you are a young parent, we will take an interest in your child/ren and support you to access appropriate services and do the best for them
- If you want support with drug or alcohol use, your social worker or personal advisor can provide you with advice, guidance or support in accessing services that are available in your area

## The LAC nurse will:



Your nurse will ensure you have a rising 18 health assessment the month before you turn 18, this will include you receiving a summary of your health while in care (for example, any birth information we may have) and information on accessing the health records held about you.



Your nurse will contact you/your social worker for an update of your health post 18, just before you turn 19.



Your nurse is always available to support you with any health queries. Call **020 7266 8774** or **020 7266 8862** for more information or to find out the number for your nurse.



You can use NHS Choices to locate services local to you; your nurse, social worker or personal advisor can offer support with this too.



We can support you to access adult mental health services including counselling; attend hospital and community clinic appointments including sexual health services.



We can help you maintain a healthy lifestyle through advice and support on a range of topics and can support you to attend the local leisure facilities via gym membership.



Dental health is important however even with NHS dentists it can still be expensive. You can get help if you are pregnant or have had a baby in the last 12 months or are still in full time education between the ages of 16 to 18. The NHS dental health charges change each year, these costs are available on [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)



You are eligible for free eye tests and vouchers towards glasses/contact lenses if you are still in full time education between the ages of 16-18.



You can get help paying for prescriptions if you are still in full time education between the ages of 16-18.



You can also get help over 18 if you are on a low income [www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/help-with-health-costs/nhs-low-income-scheme-lis/](http://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/help-with-health-costs/nhs-low-income-scheme-lis/) or you can call **0300 330 1343** to apply for help with NHS charges such as prescriptions, dental treatment, vision tests and more.

## Additional help

If you feel that you are struggling with your mental health or are looking for support with your emotional wellbeing there is also the option to discuss your needs with a therapist who works with your social worker or personal advisor. Should it be something that you want, it may be that you can then meet with a therapist for continued support, or they may refer you to a more suitable service (such as NHS adult mental health or a local counselling service). If you think something like this would be useful, please discuss it with your social worker/personal advisor.

If you are on a low income or in receipt of Income Support, Income Based Employment and Support, Job Seekers Allowance or Universal Credit you can apply for a Health Credit Certificate [HC2 or HC3] to support free dental care, eye care and prescriptions.



## Dental care



**You may be eligible for some financial support towards dental checks/treatment if you are:**

- Aged 16 to 18 years in full time education.
- Pregnant or have had a baby in the last 12 months.
- Having treatment as an in-patient or out-patient at an NHS hospital.
- Receiving Income Support, Income Based Employment and Support, or Job Seekers Allowance.
- On a low income and have a Health Credit Certificate (known as HC2 or HC3 certificate).

## Eye care



**You may also be eligible for free eye tests and vouchers towards glasses/contact lenses if you are:**

- Aged 16 to 18 years in full time education.
- Receiving Income Support, Income Based Employment and Support, or Job Seekers Allowance.
- On a low income and have a Health Credit Certificate (known as HC2 or HC3 certificate).



## Prescriptions

We can give you advice and support about paying for prescriptions but we are not able to pay for the costs of prescriptions for you to get medication.



### **You are eligible for free prescriptions if you are:**

- Aged 16 to 18 years in full time education.
- Receiving Income Support, Income Based Employment and Support, or Job Seekers Allowance.
- Pregnant or have had a baby in the last 12 months (you will need an exemption certificate from your GP).
- Receiving treatment in hospital.

## Support for people on a low income

### **If you are on a low income you can apply for a Health Credit Certificate known as HC2 or HC3.**



This will give you reduced cost, or free dental and eye checks/treatment as well as prescription charges.

This is dependent on your income and needs at the time you apply for support. A certificate can last from 6 months to 5 years depending on your circumstances.



**To find out more, ask your GP, dentist or optician, or ask your social worker to help you apply.**

# Leaving care before turning 18

We will encourage you to stay in care until you are 18.  
Most young people still live at home with their families at this age.



## When leaving early

If you choose to leave care before age 18, including living with family members, the law says **we must continue** to ensure that you have the **appropriate level of support** in place and this will be reviewed in your pathway plan.



# Being a new parent

Being a new parent can be both a very happy experience and a very scary experience. Often all at the same time!

As with all new parents you will have access to a full range of services from the NHS. This includes your GP, a midwifery service and health visiting service who will support you while you're pregnant and after your baby is born. Alongside this there are additional services that we can offer through our **Early Help and Family Hubs services** which can include groups where you meet other young mothers and fathers, crèche facilities where you can have short breaks to do some shopping for instance and parenting groups where you can learn more about being a parent. Young fathers can feel left out and our services are geared up to support them as much as we support young mothers.

If you do become a parent, we will prioritise our support to you with accessing children centres and networks of support so you don't feel isolated. We will also help you to access 15 hours of free child care when your child reaches two and 30 hours when they turn three years old. We can offer you a named worker in the children's centre to offer you and your child the best start in life.



**For more information, please speak with your doctor, midwife, health visitor, personal advisor or social worker.**

# 21 to 25 year olds

It is hoped that you will have confidently developed the necessary independence skills and to have secured final stage accommodation by the time you reach 21. At this point many young people will feel that they no longer need support.

Unless you are undertaking a significant further education course such as a university degree, it is unlikely that there will be any ongoing financial support available.

However, there may be a one off financial crisis that we can help you with and whether you have ended your formal involvement with us or not, you are able to come back and ask for assistance anytime up until you are 25, and we, where possible, will always try and link you back up with your previous social worker or personal advisor. If we aren't working with you in a formal way then we will contact you every year usually on or around your birthday.

**We will also invite you to join our Care Leavers Alumni Network (CLAN).**



# Care Leavers Alumni Network (CLAN)

Sometimes you won't want to see a social worker formally every couple of months or to complete a pathway plan twice a year.

That's okay because if you do need help after we have "closed your case" just contact UMIST on their duty line and we can look to see how we can offer you support.

## A way to keep in contact

However, for those of you who would like to keep in touch (and we hope you will) we have set up a group for all young people who have ended their formal involvement with us called the Care Leavers Alumni Network (CLAN). This group is a way to keep in contact, let you know about useful information and about new offers, services and opportunities.

We will also invite you to one or two events a year which we will arrange. These events will be structured around giving advice and guidance and linking you in with local organisations. They are also an opportunity to meet with old staff and each other to get help or just to catch up on news and have some food!

## Useful information

We have also created a SharePoint with useful information, which you can access via your phone or laptop. So, when we close "your case" you will be given information about how to access this and the Alumni. You will also be asked to give your consent for us to let you know if we are planning events which you might want to attend. Contact details are in the useful contact section.



# Your right to be heard and taken seriously

We do understand as a young adult, you will have your own opinions and views which might differ to our own.

While we may not always agree, we will listen to you and try to resolve any differences so we can move forward in a mutually respectful way. We will also help you when you feel you have been treated unfairly and support you to challenge this.

You have a right to see the information we keep about you, including the files and records written about you when you were in care. We make an effort to share this information with you at an appropriate time and help you to make sense of your individual experiences. We will make sure that a discussion takes place fully explaining this process before you access your records. We recognise that sometimes you may want someone else to support you with this and you have a right to support from an independent advocate if you are thinking about challenging decisions or making a complaint about the care we give you.

## Advocacy Service:

The Advocacy service is there to support you to speak-up and take part in decisions that affect your life. We are here to tell you about your rights and entitlements and help you understand things clearly.

We are an independent service from your social worker or personal advisor and will keep our conversations confidential as long as it does not put yourself or others in harm.

Please see below some of the ways we can help you:

- If you are confused by why certain decisions have been made about you.
- If you would like a Children's Rights Advocate to come with you to important meetings such as your 'looked after children' (LAC) reviews or pathway planning meetings.
- If you need help to write a wishes and feelings statement to help you say what you want to say and make sure people listen to you.
- If you need information or advice about your rights.
- If you are unhappy about the way you are being treated by Children's Services and you are worried about plans being made.
- If you need support in making a formal complaint.



## Our location

We are based at Kensington Town Hall, however, we are happy to come and meet with you wherever you feel comfortable.



You can contact us directly at

**AdvocacyandParticipation@rbkc.gov.uk**

## Complaints:

Family Services is part of the Children's Services directorate. We accept that things can go wrong but we want to get them right. If you are not happy about the way you have been treated, we encourage you to speak to the team/worker who are supporting you to see if they can work with you to sort things out.

If you are still unhappy, you have a right to complain and your complaint may help improve services for everyone. We will ensure to put you in contact with a Children's Rights Advocate who will support you with the complaints process.

## Contact us at:

Customer Relationship Team  
Bi-Borough Family Services  
Kensington Town Hall  
Hornton Street  
London W8 7NX

We want to  
improve

? ! ?



**0207 745 6501**



**[FCSresponseservice@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:FCSresponseservice@rbkc.gov.uk)**






# Participation in society

In Kensington and Chelsea we want our care leavers to be active members of society and to have all the chances in life that other young adults have.


Your opinions matter to us; they help influence how services are delivered to you and how Kensington and Chelsea's Children's Services can further develop their practice.

We can help you participate in society in the following ways:



 Youth Ken Group – also known as the Care Leavers forum for 16+ Children and Young People – as well as Future Union for 8 to 15 year olds (Children in Care Council) gives you the opportunity to have your voice heard and make suggestions on the services you receive. You can meet Council Leaders and Director and speak to them about how to improve things for children and young people who are 'looked after' or care leavers.

The participation and advocacy service also produces a newsletter every six weeks which will tell you about:

 A range of groups to help you get involved in fun activities and give access to training and work experience opportunities.

# Useful contacts





# Who can help?

## Key contact numbers

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### Unaccompanied Minors and Independence Support Team (UMIST)

☎ **Duty number:** 020 7854 5888

☎ 020 7373 2227 (Emergency Duty Team for out of hours emergencies)

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**FCS IST Duty Team** ☒ **(RBKC)** FCSISTDutyTeam@rbkc.gov.uk

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**Social Services line** ☎ 020 7361 3013

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**LAC Nurse** ☒ lachealthreferrals@rbkc.gov.uk

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**RBKC Virtual School Team** ☒ virtual.school@rbkc.gov.uk

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**Emergency Duty Team for out of hours emergencies** ☎ 020 7373 2227

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## Care Leavers Alumni Network (CLAN)

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☒ CareLeaversAlumni@rbkc.gov.uk

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## RBKC Advocacy and Participation Team for children in care

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📍 We are based at Kensington Town Hall, however, we are happy to come and meet with you wherever you feel comfortable.

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☒ AdvocacyandParticipation@rbkc.gov.uk

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# Health and wellbeing

## Emotional wellbeing and mental health

### Kensington and Chelsea Mind

- ☎ 020 8964 1333
- ✉ enquiries@kcmind.org.uk
- 🌐 [www.kcmind.org.uk](http://www.kcmind.org.uk)

### Samaritans

- ☎ 116 123
- ✉ jo@samaritans.org
- 🌐 [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)

### Calm

- ☎ 0800 58 58 58
- 🌐 [www.thecalmzone.net](http://www.thecalmzone.net)

### Switchboard

- ☎ 0300 330 0630
- ✉ chris@switchboard.lgbt (LGBTQ+, all-age)
- 🌐 [www.switchboard.lgbt](http://www.switchboard.lgbt)


### Shout

- ☎ Text: 85258 (all-age)
- 🌐 [www.giveusashout.org/get-help](http://www.giveusashout.org/get-help)



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## The Mix


 Freephone: 0808 808 4994 / email / online chat (under 25s)


 [www.themix.org.uk](http://www.themix.org.uk)

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## Talk to Frank

Information on drug and alcohol support.

 0300 123 6600

 Text: 82111

 [www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

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## Brook

Provides information and advice on sexual health or relationships, including sex, contraception, STI's, pregnancy or abuse.

 [www.brook.org.uk](http://www.brook.org.uk)

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## Young Stonewall


Supports and empowers young LGBTQIA+ people to live free from discrimination and fulfil their potential.

 [www.stonewall.org.uk/young-stonewall](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/young-stonewall)

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## elop: LGBT Mental Health & Wellbeing


 020 8509 3898

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

 [www.elop.org](http://www.elop.org)

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## Medical advice

 NHS 111 by dialling 111 (England and Wales, all-age)

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# Money and finance

## Citizens Advice Kensington and Chelsea


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 **Chelsea Old Town Hall, Kings Road, SW3 5EB**

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 [www.citizensadvicekc.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvicekc.org.uk)

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**Advice line**  Freephone: 0808 278 7982 (9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday)

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**Reception**  020 8962 3485

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## Financial advice

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### Step Change

Free debt advice and solutions.

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 [www.stepchange.org](http://www.stepchange.org)

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### Turn2us

Helps people access the money available to them through welfare benefits, grants and other help.

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 Freephone: 0808 802 2000 (9am – 8pm, Monday to Friday)

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 [www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk)

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### Money Saving Expert

Offers advice on how to save money, including help with banking, savings, utilities, bills, travel, motoring, and insurance.

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 [www.moneysavingexpert.com](http://www.moneysavingexpert.com)

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### Rees Crisis Fund

Offers financial support for care leavers in emergency situations involving food, gas/electricity, transport.


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 [www.reesfoundation.org/crisis-payments.html](http://www.reesfoundation.org/crisis-payments.html)

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# Employment and training

## The Families and Communities Employment Service (Faces)

 07971 026709


 [FACES@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:FACES@rbkc.gov.uk)

## Kids on the Green

 020 3581 9132

 [www.kidsonthegreen.com](http://www.kidsonthegreen.com)

## Care Leaver Covenant


 Freephone: 0800 077 3557


 <https://mycovenant.org.uk>

## LancWestWorks

 [www.wearew11.org/en/lancwestworks](http://www.wearew11.org/en/lancwestworks)

## SPEAR Programme

 020 3475 0431

 [info@resurgo.org.uk](mailto:info@resurgo.org.uk)

 <https://resurgo.org.uk>





## PSEV

 <https://psev.org/contact-us-2>

# Asylum seekers

## Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

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<b>Refugee Council (Children's Service)</b>	 020 7346 1134
<b>Website</b>	 <a href="http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk">www.refugeecouncil.org.uk</a>
<b>General enquiries</b>	 020 7346 6700
<b>Refuge Council Infoline</b> England-wide signposting service	 Freephone: 0808 196 7272

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## Asylum Aid

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Assists refugees on their applications for asylum in the UK and offers advice on related areas such as appeal refusal, welfare rights and housing.

- 
-  020 7354 9631
  -  [advice@asylumaid.org.uk](mailto:advice@asylumaid.org.uk)
  -  [www.asylumaid.org.uk](http://www.asylumaid.org.uk)
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## Asylum Support Advice Network

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Provides free legal advice and representation to asylum seekers at the Asylum Support Tribunal, run an advice line for advice agencies, and engage in policy work to improve asylum support law.


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-  Advice line: 020 3716 0283 (2pm – 4pm, Monday, Wednesday, Friday)
  -  [www.asaproject.org](http://www.asaproject.org)
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# UASC and refugees


## Helen Bamber Foundation

 020 3058 2020 (10am to 4pm, Monday to Friday)

 [reception@helenbamber.org](mailto:reception@helenbamber.org)

## CARAS

 020 8767 5378


 [info@caras.org.uk](mailto:info@caras.org.uk)


 <https://caras.org.uk>

## The British Red Cross


 [www.redcross.org.uk/get-help/get-help-as-a-refugee/contact-local-refugee-service](http://www.redcross.org.uk/get-help/get-help-as-a-refugee/contact-local-refugee-service)


### London

 020 7704 5670


 [LondonRU@redcross.org.uk](mailto:LondonRU@redcross.org.uk)

### London – International Family Tracing

 020 8109 5029

 [LondonIFT@redcross.org.uk](mailto:LondonIFT@redcross.org.uk)

### London – Young Refugee Service

 020 7704 3367

 [Londonyrs@redcross.org.uk](mailto:Londonyrs@redcross.org.uk)

## Refugee Action

Help and advice services for asylum seekers.

 [www.refugee-action.org.uk/about/contact](http://www.refugee-action.org.uk/about/contact)

# Housing and accommodation

## National Homeless Advice Service


Offers advice about homelessness, including the provisions of emergency housing for care leavers.

 [www.nhas.org.uk](http://www.nhas.org.uk)



## Shelter

Offers advice and guidance on housing matter, including advice specific to care leavers.


 Freephone: 0808 800 4444

 [www.england.shelter.org.uk](http://www.england.shelter.org.uk)



## The Albert Kennedy Trust

Helps young people up to the age of 25 years old who are LGBTQIA+ and are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

 020 7831 6562

 [www.akt.org.uk](http://www.akt.org.uk)



## Additional contacts

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### **Become Charity**

Advice, coaching and support for those in care.

 [www.becomecharity.org.uk/care-advice-line](http://www.becomecharity.org.uk/care-advice-line)

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### **Law Stuff**

It provides free legal information to children and young people. LawStuff is run by Coram Children's Legal Centre, which provides more detailed information both over the phone and online.

 [www.lawstuff.org.uk](http://www.lawstuff.org.uk)

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### **National Care Advisory Service (NCAS)**


The latest news and information on all issues relating to transitions from care and care leavers are available on the NCAS website.

 [www.leavingcare.org](http://www.leavingcare.org)


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### **The Rugby Portobello Trust**

Opening times: 9am – 10pm, Monday to Friday (office hours: 9am – 5pm)

 020 7229 2928

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 [info@rpt.org.uk](mailto:info@rpt.org.uk)

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## Benefits information

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 [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

The latest news and information on benefits will be available on this national website. You can search for individual benefits and use the '**benefits calculator**' interactive tool that can help you find out what benefits you may be entitled to.

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# Transport

If you are an apprentice or a student other concessions may be more beneficial – so do check this link to make sure this new concession will work best for you as you can only have one at a time.

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More information on these concessions can be found here:



<https://tfl.gov.uk/fares/find-fares/bus-and-tram-fares>


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**Contact number if you can't reach your  
social worker/personal advisor:**



020 7854 5888

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**Out of hours:**  020 7373 2227 (available daily: 5pm to 9am)

Available 24 hours on Bank Holidays and weekends.

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**Kensington Town Hall  
Hornton Street  
London W8 7NX**