



Wales Centre for Public Policy
Canolfan Polisi Cyhoeddus Cymru

Youth homelessness and care leavers:

Mapping interventions in Wales

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Summary

- Initial maps of youth homelessness interventions across Wales are provided, drawing on published information and telephone interviews with key individuals in local authority housing options teams.
- The maps should be treated as a first step in developing more detailed knowledge of youth homelessness interventions.
- They show significant differences between local authorities - both in working arrangements, and in the services provided/available to young people faced with homelessness.
- In a small number of local authorities, the basic requirements of joint working (e.g. information sharing, joint protocols) are not in place. This is to the detriment of young people needing assistance with housing.
- Guidance on working with care leavers and young people at risk of homelessness has been provided to local authorities in the form of two documents: *Preventing Homelessness and Promoting Independence: A Positive Pathway to Adulthood* (Welsh Government 2016a) and the *Care Leaver Accommodation and Support Framework* (Barnardo's 2016) Some authorities have used these extensively to inform their approaches, but this is not the case in all. Some innovation is also evident.
- Gaps in housing provision for young single people include sufficient appropriate emergency accommodation, services for young people with complex needs, and a shortage of affordable general-needs accommodation.
- There are short, medium, and long term opportunities to strengthen youth homelessness prevention services, and to further integrate this priority into housing and wider policy developments, including:
 - Allocation of additional funding for youth homelessness in 2019-20;
 - Integration into local authorities' 2018 homelessness strategies
 - Integration into the Welsh Government's Affordable Housing Supply Independent Review.

Introduction

Alongside the international evidence review, *Preventing Youth Homelessness*, undertaken by Schwan et al. (2018), Tamsin Stirling was commissioned by the Wales Centre for Public Policy to undertake a mapping exercise of youth homelessness interventions across Wales, with a focus on care leavers as a specific sub-group.

The aim of this supplementary outline study was to survey the youth homelessness interventions in place in Wales, and to locate these in the context of the international evidence review. The mapping exercise did not review whether the individual interventions used by local authorities had been evaluated, by the local authorities themselves or independently. The mapping considers interventions specifically for young people from the age of 16 up to 25 (although a minority of interventions include young people from the age of 14). Services/interventions provided for all people facing homelessness which can be accessed by young people were not included unless there is a specific element targeted to young people.

The mapping exercise and accompanying narrative is informed by:

- Identification and interrogation of source information such as homelessness strategies, local housing strategies, directories of *Supporting People* funded services and relevant statistics and publications;
- Review of information about services available online;
- Stakeholder interviews with a small number of key informants within and beyond Welsh Government;
- Telephone interviews with a member of the homelessness/housing options team in 19 of the 22 local authorities.

Context

In 2017, Carwyn Jones, the First Minister of Wales, made a commitment to end youth homelessness by 2027 in support of the aim of the End Youth Homelessness Cymru coalition. He also announced additional funding of £10million for youth homelessness for 2019-20. More recently, the establishment of a task and finish group, chaired by the Minister for Housing and Regeneration, Rebecca Evans, has been announced. Youth homelessness is one of two areas of work that will form the initial focus of the group, the other being Housing First.

Improving life outcomes for care leavers is a Welsh Government priority; Prosperity for All, the government's strategy, recognises that young care leavers may need intensive support in the transition to adulthood. A Ministerial Advisory Group is now overseeing work on improving outcomes, which has three priority areas:

- Safely reducing the numbers of children in care;
- Improving outcomes for children already in the care system;
- Supporting care leavers to adulthood and successful futures.

In parallel, the National Assembly for Wales' Public Accounts Committee is undertaking an inquiry into public services for care experienced children and young people (NAWPAC 2018). The experience of young people leaving care has also received attention from the Children's Commissioner for Wales which has resulted in the February 2017 report *Hidden Ambitions* (Welsh Government 2017) and a follow up report published around a year later in March 2018 (Welsh Government 2018)

This report's focus on young people/care leavers who might be at risk of becoming homeless has been informed by a 2015 report for the Public Policy Institute for Wales by Anna Whalen which found that the effectiveness of joint working between Housing and Children's Services and Supporting People provision for care leavers varied considerably across Wales.

Legislative and policy changes

The last two years have seen significant changes in the Welsh legislative and policy landscape relating to care leavers and to young people at risk of homelessness. These include the:

- Commencement of Part 2 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and Part 6 of the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act;
- Publication of *Preventing Homelessness and Promoting Independence: A Positive Pathway to Adulthood* (Welsh Government 2016a) and the *Care Leaver Accommodation and Support Framework*, (Barnardo's 2016) to support effective planning and provision of housing and support for young people and care leavers;

- Development of the *When I'm Ready* (Welsh Government 2016b) programme enabling young people in foster care to stay with their foster carers for longer;
- Introduction of the *Youth Engagement and Progression Framework* (Welsh Government 2014) which aims to reduce the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training;
- Establishment of the End Youth Homelessness Cymru (Llamau 2018) campaign, which is currently focusing its work on four areas: ending youth homelessness within the LGBT+ community; understanding and reducing the links between educational disengagement and youth homelessness; understanding and reducing the links between the care system and youth homelessness; and support for those with mental health issues experiencing youth homelessness in Wales.

Funding changes

Changes have taken place to the way that funding is provided to local authorities for both the prevention of homelessness, and for responding to it when it arises. Here, I summarise these changes as well as some key recent one-off funding allocations.

The budget originally allocated to support the implementation of Part 2 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 now forms part of the general Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and has been increased to £6million a year. A further £6million per year that previously funded the management of temporary accommodation now also goes into the RSG. In addition, the Welsh Government has a homelessness prevention grant which is allocated to a range of projects; in 2018/19, just under £1million was awarded to projects specifically working with young people to prevent and tackle homelessness. These projects operate in 15 of the 22 local authority areas, with one Wales-wide project.

Many youth homelessness interventions are also funded via the Supporting People programme. Both Supporting People and the homelessness prevention grant are part of the Flexible Funding Programme from 2018-19 which looks at bringing a range of grant streams together.

In the autumn of 2017, a further £2.6million in-year funding was made available for projects in four areas; tackling rough sleeping, mental health, the private rented sector and youth homelessness. A small proportion of this funding went to youth homelessness projects.

As part of the cross-government work on improving outcomes for looked after children, additional resources were made available during 2017-18 for work to support care leavers. £625,000 was allocated to local authorities to develop or improve work placement/traineeship schemes for care leavers. And the St David's Day fund for care leavers was established in 2017 which comprises £1million for direct financial support to care leavers to help them transition to independent living.

Most significantly in terms of scale is the additional £10million announced by the First Minister for 2019-20 that is to be targeted specifically on youth homelessness. It is my view that the potential

impact of such a significant injection of funding would be substantially increased should the funding be spread over more than one financial year. This would provide the opportunity for evaluation, scaling and plans for mainstreaming successful approaches.

How many young people are affected?

In this section, I draw from official statistics and the interviews undertaken to outline the scale of youth homelessness, and the numbers of young people leaving care, each year in Wales.

A profile of youth homelessness

The most recent year for which pan-Wales homelessness statistics are available is 2017-18. Tables 1 and 2 below show the numbers and proportions of those recorded as approaching local authorities for assistance with housing who were aged 16-17 and 18-24 compared to the total number of households in the two years 2016-17 and 2017-18. Although the percentages are the same across the two years, the number of young people in both age groups for whom assistance was provided by local authorities decreased slightly between 2016-17 and 2017-18, while the total number of households provided with assistance by local authorities increased slightly between the two years.

Table 1: Households for which assistance with housing has been provided by age, 2016-18

	2016-2017			2017-2018		
	16-17 year olds	18-24 year olds	Total households	16-17 year olds	18-24 year olds	Total households
Number	810	6963	28731	780	6804	28881
% of total households assisted	3	24	100	3	24	100

Source: Statistics for Wales (2017b, 2018)

Some young people facing homelessness may not approach local authorities for assistance or may receive help from other organisations. While there is no formal estimate of the extent of hidden homelessness amongst young people in Wales, the numbers in Tables 1 and 2 are likely to be under-recording the number of young people experiencing or threatened with homelessness each year in Wales.

Local authority representatives were asked during the telephone interviews whether there had been any changes in the numbers of young people approaching them for assistance since the commencement of the new homelessness and social services legislation in April 2015 and 2016.

Responses were variable, with most authorities not identifying any change or trend, a minority of authorities identifying a decrease (put down to effective joint working and prevention interventions) and a small number reporting an increase. One authority specifically noted an increase in the number of young people aged 21-25 now owed duties under the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2015 who required help with sustaining or securing accommodation.

Table 3 looks at the proportion of those approaching local authorities for assistance that had positive and negative outcomes in terms of the legislation during 2017-18. It is interesting to note that prevention rates are significantly higher for 16 and 17 year olds than for 18-24 year olds and all age groups.

Table 2: Percentage of positive outcomes of the homelessness legislation during 2017-18 by age group

	16-17 year olds	18-24 year olds	All age groups ¹
Successful prevention for those to whom prevention assistance provided	79%	63%	66%
Homelessness successfully relieved for those provided with help to secure accommodation	59%	41%	41%
Duty positively discharged for those eligible unintentionally homeless and in priority need	67%	79%	78%
Duties ended due to non-co-operation	2%	4%	3.5%
Application withdrawn due to loss of contact	3%	7%	6.5%
Assistance refused	0%	2%	2%

Source: (Statistics for Wales 2018)

Since April 2016, statistics have been gathered regarding the placement of young people placed in temporary bed and breakfast accommodation under homelessness or social services legislation. The statistical release for 2016-17 (Statistics for Wales 2017b) notes that the figures provided are likely to be an undercount as some local authorities were unable to provide full information. During 2016-17, 16 and 17 year olds were placed in temporary bed and breakfast accommodation on 72 occasions under the homelessness legislation, and on a further 150 occasions under children’s social services legislation. During the same year, care leavers aged 18 to 21 were placed in temporary bed and breakfast accommodation under the homelessness legislation on 72 occasions. Published information about use of bed and breakfast accommodation broken down to local authority area was not available at the time of writing.

¹ Young people and adults from 16 upwards

Data for 2017-18 (Statistics for Wales 2018) (again an undercount due to incomplete information from some local authorities) shows an overall decrease in the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for 16 and 17 year olds and care leavers aged 18 to 24:

- 16 to 17 year olds were placed in temporary bed and breakfast accommodation under the homelessness legislation on 75 occasions and on a further 114 occasions under children's social services legislation;
- Care leavers aged 18 to 21 years old were placed in temporary bed and breakfast accommodation under the homelessness legislation on 60 occasions.

A profile of care leavers

An annual report is produced by the Welsh Government on children looked after by local authorities (Statistics for Wales 2017a). During 2016-17, 677 young people aged 16 and over left care, with 509 of these aged 18 or over, 116 aged 17 and 52 aged 16. 193 of these moved into independent living arrangements and were no longer looked after, 141 returned home to live with parents, relatives or other person with parental responsibility, and 80 continued to live with former foster parents under When I am Ready Living Together Agreements. 203 young people were identified as having left care for 'other reasons', 32 were transferred to the care of adult social services and 28 were sentenced to custody.

At the date of leaving care, 613 (91 per cent) of these young people were deemed to be in suitable accommodation. Such accommodation is defined as community settings (such as residential homes), supported accommodation, independent living, lodgings, supported lodgings and living with parents/relatives. It is interesting that the definition of suitable accommodation also extends to suitable transitional accommodation and suitable custody; in my view neither of these is a positive option for a young person leaving care. 64 young people (9 per cent) were deemed to be living in unsuitable accommodation at the date they left care; such accommodation includes unsuitable bed and breakfast, unsuitable custody, unsuitable emergency accommodation and 'other unsuitable accommodation'.

Evidence from the Welsh Local Government Association to the Public Accounts Committee inquiry (NAWPAC 2018) noted that the number of looked after children has increased by 25 per cent over the past decade. It also highlighted increasing pressures on families due to cuts in welfare and services. Both factors are likely to result in further increases in the numbers of children being looked after, and therefore care leavers, in coming years.

Homelessness and leaving care

There are clearly-evidenced interconnections between care leaver status and homelessness. In July 2017, Crisis produced a report on homelessness prevention for care leavers, prison leavers and people experiencing domestic abuse for the UK All-Party Parliamentary Group for Ending Homelessness, which noted that one third of care leavers (33 per cent) become homeless in the first two years after leaving care, and 25 per cent of all single homeless people have been in care at some point in their lives (All-Party Parliamentary Group for Ending Homelessness 2017).

Research undertaken for the Public Policy Institute for Wales in 2015 identified that, despite a social housing tenancy being widely seen as the preferable option, the main cause of homelessness amongst care leavers is tenancy failure – with the young age of care leavers, lack of preparation and experience in managing alone being key contributory factors (Whalen 2015). At the same time, the statistics quoted earlier in this report indicate that use of bed and breakfast continues, both for 16 and 17 year olds and care leavers aged 18 to 21. The issue of vulnerable young people being placed in bed and breakfast is of ongoing concern to care leavers' advocacy and support organisations.

Mapping interventions

My mapping of youth homelessness interventions in place across Wales draws upon primary interviews and information available online, including Supporting People directories of services and third sector organisation websites. It is structured using the typology of homelessness prevention used by Schwan et al (2018), dividing interventions into the following categories:

- **Structural prevention.** This means working upstream to address structural and systemic factors that contribute to housing precarity and expose individuals and families to the risk of homelessness (Gaetz and Dej, 2017). E.g., universal prevention (supply of affordable housing, legislation, income supports), selected prevention (school programmes for young people at risk of homelessness), indicated prevention (services/support for people facing multiple disadvantages);
- **Systems prevention.** This means addressing institutional and systems failures that either indirectly or directly contribute to the risk of homelessness (Gaetz and Dej, 2017). E.g., removing policy and procedural barriers, enhancing access to systems, services and support, reintegration support for young people experiencing transitions;
- **Early intervention.** This means policies, practices, and interventions that help individuals who are at extreme risk of, or who have recently experienced, homelessness, obtain the support needed to retain their current housing or rapidly access new and appropriate housing (Gaetz and Dej, 2017) E.g., provision of information, advice and access to support, and targeted intervention such as family mediation;
- **Eviction prevention.** This means programmes and strategies designed to keep individuals and families at risk of eviction in their home and that helps them avoid entering into homelessness (Gaetz and Dej, 2017) E.g., rent support/supplements, crisis support, landlord/tenant mediation;
- **Housing stability.** This means initiatives and supports for people who have experienced homelessness so that they can exit homelessness in a timely way and never experience it again (Gaetz and Dej, 2017). E.g., supported housing, floating support, supporting access to income, education and social inclusion.

Annex 1 compares the above structure for prevention with the components of *Preventing Homelessness and Promoting Independence: A Positive Pathway to Adulthood* and the *Care Leaver Accommodation and Support Framework*, (Welsh Government 2016a, Barnardo's 2016).

The draft maps - Tables A.1 and A.2 – are provided in Annex 3. They come with some cautionary notes. They should be seen as a first step in developing more sophisticated knowledge of the interventions in place across Wales. They are certainly not definitive; rather they are presented as a starting point for discussion and further development. Second, the maps have been drawn up predominantly from a housing perspective and has not involved detailed consideration of interventions from a youth justice, youth service, mental health or education perspective. In regard to education interventions, at the time of writing, Shelter Cymru are undertaking a mapping of education-based prevention in each of the 22 local authorities. The results were not available in

time to include in this report but could usefully be considered alongside it². Lastly, certain interventions could be categorised under more than one of the five categories noted above; for ease of reference, each intervention has only been placed in one category.

Some observations on the mapping exercise

The information to develop this mapping exercise proved more disparate than was anticipated. Up-to-date directories of Supporting People services are not available online for all local authority areas and the information on local authority websites about services for young people facing homelessness is highly variable. Some authorities provide basic generic information relevant to anyone needing assistance with housing; others provide detailed, legally based information, while some provide young person specific information or signposting. Online information provided by young people's specialist organisations also varies in quality; it is not always possible to find out what projects/services are provided for young people in which areas. If it was difficult for me, as a researcher, to navigate accessing information: we might imagine how difficult it can be for a young person or their parent/carer to do so.

It has been useful to consider the range of youth homelessness interventions at both national and local levels using the typology of prevention. The typology reinforces that, to effectively tackle and end youth homelessness, there is a need to consider structural and systemic issues that reach beyond housing. The international evidence review concludes that to be most effective, youth homelessness prevention should involve all five strands of prevention and sets out the areas of each for which there is evidence of effectiveness. It also concludes that research indicates that youth homelessness prevention requires targeted interventions and approaches that account for the distinct challenges that young people face. Some local authorities in Wales are recognising this in the way that they provide services to young people with housing issues, while others take a much more generic approach, expecting young people to access services and projects that are provided for all age groups.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, most local interventions in Wales fall into the systems prevention, early intervention and housing stabilisation categories in the prevention of homelessness typology. Eviction prevention work is undertaken by local authorities and their partner agencies, e.g. landlord liaison/mediation, but few examples are young person specific. There are some examples of pre-tenancy work and training settings, which seek to reduce the likelihood of young people losing a tenancy. However, given the evidence that tenancy failure is a key cause of homelessness for care leavers and the point raised above about targeted interventions and approaches for young people, one might expect to see these initiatives being more widespread.

It is clear that working arrangements and services for young people facing homelessness vary significantly between authorities. Some authorities have multi-agency co-located teams, close

² The contact for this work is Darren Jones at Shelter Cymru

working relationships between housing and children's services and a range of prevention, housing and support options in place for young people up to the age of 25. In other authorities, it is apparent that even working practices required by legislation - e.g., joint assessments for 16 and 17 year olds, and pathway planning for care leavers - are not consistently undertaken. Likewise, the components set out in the *Positive Pathway* and *Care Leavers Accommodation and Support Framework* documents are well used in some local authorities - and little used in others.

This variation in practice is consistent with the findings of the Children's Commissioner's *Hidden Ambitions* follow up report (Children's Commissioner for Wales 2018) and raises an issue of equity in the treatment of young people. Where services and provision are lacking, or fail to join up adequately, this is clearly to the detriment of young people needing assistance to access and sustain housing.

The international evidence review highlights significant gaps in evidence about the effectiveness of youth homelessness interventions; this mapping exercise did not attempt to gather such information. However, the words of one local authority representative stick in my mind: '*we have provision but we have too much failure – there is turnover because the schemes are not offering what the young people need*'. This begs a question for the Welsh Government. If local authorities are expected to implement a certain approach to preventing youth homelessness, what could or should the Welsh Government do to support/encourage them to do so and overcome the implementation gap? The resources available to authorities vary, both in terms of money (Welsh Government and other sources of funding), but also how staff teams are structured, how teams work together, their partner agencies, and whether one or more is a specialist in young people's housing issues. Where the Government has given freedom to local authorities to make changes (or not), e.g. not applying intentionality to 16 and 17 year olds and care leavers aged 18-21, and exempting care leavers up to age 25 from the requirement to pay Council Tax, some authorities have taken action and others not - again raising issues of fairness and equity from the young person's perspective.

From a housing perspective, there is a relatively small number of interventions specifically targeting care leavers. However, in some authorities, housing options teams have detailed discussions with children's services about provision for care leavers and what new services might be put in place. And in some others, case conference type joint working arrangements are in place between housing options and children's services to aid planning and provision for care leavers.

From the telephone interviews with local authorities, it is clear that many authorities are developing their approach to working with, and services for, young people. A number of authorities have recently appointed specialist posts dedicated to preventing and tackling youth homelessness and many have plans for improved joint working with children's services and external agencies. Some authorities are planning to retender Supporting People funded services for young people, while others are developing or enhancing multi-disciplinary teams or hubs. This area of work is developing at a pace.

This dynamism extends to areas of unmet need and how they might be addressed. There are some interesting examples of innovative thinking being applied to accommodation and support options for young people. For example, Newport has recently established a project with a private sector landlord for care leavers who were previously in more costly and less effective placements, and is considering a respite model for young people in care to provide a break for both the young person and the existing setting, to help sustain placements longer-term. In another example, Swansea Council has spot-purchased intensive support for young people with complex needs, in order to sustain their accommodation; a number of other authorities are also working with landlords (both social and private sector) to develop or increase shared accommodation options. It remains to be seen whether such innovation will spread to other areas or whether these practices remain in the local authority in which they are developed.

During the telephone interviews, interviewees were asked about gaps in provision. The most commonly mentioned gaps were (i) an overall shortage of affordable accommodation options for young people, and (ii) provision for young people with complex needs; (iii) securing appropriate and accessible emergency accommodation for young people was also noted as sometimes problematic.

So what does this mean for the Welsh Government and how the additional resources for youth homelessness in 2019-20 might best be spent? Drawing on this mapping exercise and the international evidence review, I have a number of reflections:

- The typology is a useful framework within which prevention of youth homelessness interventions can be mapped/considered;
- There are a number of national preventative agendas in Wales which could have a major future positive effect on the prevention of youth homelessness, e.g. working to reduce adverse childhood experiences and their impact;
- There is an opportunity for the Welsh Government's Affordable Housing Supply Independent Review to robustly take account of young people's housing needs and ensure that its conclusions support the delivery of a range of affordable accommodation options for young people in order to strengthen structural prevention of youth homelessness;
- Currently, there are untenable differences between authorities when it comes to their approach to, and provision for, young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, including care leavers. There is a potential role for the National Homelessness Network to help reduce such differences;
- It is important that there is clarity about the expectations relating to the allocation of additional Welsh Government money for youth homelessness in 2019-20. A set of requirements for receipt of youth homelessness funding in 2019-20 might include:
 - A commitment to the delivery of targeted/tailored services and provision for young people;
 - The extent of joint working between housing and children's services being (at the minimum) what is required by law;

- A clear assessment of what service/provision is already in place and what gaps additional funding will help to fill;
- How the proposed service/provision will prevent youth homelessness (i.e. where it sits in the typology of prevention);
- How the contribution of the service/provision to the prevention of youth homelessness will be measured/assessed;
- Identifying the evidence base for what service/provision is being proposed;
- How the service/provision will continue beyond 2019-20.

Suggested actions

The mapping exercise has begun to reveal some inconsistencies in practice, and some interesting innovations, to prevent / respond to youth homelessness. With this emerging evidence in mind, the following suggestions are made, that:

- The Welsh Government and local authorities (e.g. through the National Homelessness Network) use this mapping exercise as a starting point for discussion about interventions to prevent youth homelessness. It would be helpful to consider the mapping alongside housing outcomes achieved within each local authority for young people and care leavers;
- When considering the prevention of youth homelessness at national policy and local delivery levels, focus is given to all five strands of the prevention typology – structural prevention, systems prevention, early intervention, eviction prevention and housing stability;
- Practical support is provided to local authorities for more consistent application and use of the *Positive Pathway* and *Care Leavers Accommodation and Support Framework*. This could take the form of peer support through the National Homelessness Network;
- Those local authorities where robust joint working is not in place are encouraged to improve arrangements between housing and children’s services in particular;
- The National Homelessness Network be considered as the vehicle for active sharing of practice and experience and, in doing so, makes links with other relevant networks which have interests in common, e.g. the Leaving Care Forum. An additional role for the Network to address untenable differences in delivery/provision might be a constructive challenge function for its members;
- Local authorities (either singly or in regional groupings) ensure they fully consider the needs of young people who are homeless or who are at risk of homelessness, including care leavers, and the range of interventions in place to prevent and respond to youth homelessness when developing their homelessness strategies during 2018;
- Local authorities and young persons’ specialist organisations review the online information they provide about their services, and how they can be accessed, to ensure that it is up to date and accessible to young people, their families/carers, and advocacy organisations;
- The Welsh Government develops a set of requirements relating to the additional funding for youth homelessness in 2019-20 that draws on the conclusions of the international evidence review and this mapping exercise;
- The Welsh Government’s Affordable Housing Supply Independent Review takes account of the housing needs of young people, including care leavers, revealed here. This initial mapping suggests there is both a shortage of one-bed properties and shared housing options in the social rented sector, as well as a barrier to accessing accommodation in the private rented sector created by a limit on the amount of rent paid through the benefit system. These findings suggest that identifying sustainable housing options, and

associated funding mechanisms, for young people over coming years is crucial. The Review could look at evidence-based youth-specific housing models in order to increase available housing stock for this age group.

Reflecting on both the mapping exercise and the conclusions of the international evidence review, below are suggestions for interventions that could be put in place/enhanced in the short, medium and long-term. The second row in the table contains interventions that need to be developed, tested and refined over time where action is required in the short, medium and long-term.

Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
Up to date and accessible online information (online and other) and advice for young people, families/carers and advocacy organisations – to include information and advice on legal and human rights		
Robust/effective family mediation	Multi-agency (housing, children’s services, youth justice, mental health, health), work to develop and deliver ‘no discharge into homelessness’ approach	Prevent adverse childhood experiences
Young person-focused eviction prevention		
Nightstop/supported lodgings combined with family mediation as appropriate. (Watts and Blenkinsopp 2018 and Shelter Scotland 2018, which were published just as this report was being edited, make a strong case for supported lodgings as a significant element of a Scottish response to youth homelessness.)	Housing First for Youth	Plus row below
Identify and deliver social/affordable housing options for young people Reduce/end poverty amongst families and young people Support delivery of psychologically informed approach within all services Ensure programmes/interventions for young people support their wellbeing, social inclusion, connection with community and engagement with education/employment/training		

Alongside specific programmes and interventions, support will be needed to sustain the culture change needed for an increased focus on prevention (as has been evident from the implementation of Part 2 of the Housing (Wales) Act 2014). Some of this can be enabled by the work of networks such as the National Homelessness Network. However, it is likely to also require the deployment of consultancy/expertise that can work within individual or groups of local authorities to bring people together, challenge existing practice and facilitate change.

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Annex 1: A comparison of Schwan et al (2018) and key Welsh Government policy frameworks

The table below compares the typology of homelessness prevention applied in this report with two good practice documents recently issued in Wales on youth homelessness and care leavers (Welsh Government 2016a, Barnardo’s 2016). It shows that the components outlined in the two Welsh documents do not include types of prevention across the typology: neither document overtly addresses structural prevention; the care leavers’ framework does not address systems prevention; and the positive pathway does not address eviction prevention. The international review of evidence concluded that, to be most effective, prevention of youth homelessness should involve all five strands of prevention.

Typology of prevention	Positive Pathway - components	Care leavers accommodation and support framework – stages
Structural prevention		
Systems prevention	Integrated prevention hub	
Early intervention	Information and advice Targeted early prevention	Prepare for reality of housing options Plan young people’s accommodation and support options with them
Eviction prevention		Reduce housing crisis
Housing stability	Commissioned accommodation and support Range of housing options	Access housing and support as needed Access and successfully manage longer-term move-on and support options

Annex 2: Stakeholder organisations interviewed

- Cymorth Cymru
- End Youth Homelessness Cymru
- Leaving Care Forum
- National Youth Advocacy Service Cymru
- Shelter Cymru
- Welsh Government: improving outcomes for looked after children and homelessness branches

Annex 3: National and local intervention maps

Table A.1: Preventing youth homelessness in Wales: national interventions

Interventions specifically aimed at care leavers are in **bold**.

	Structural prevention	Systems prevention	Early intervention	Eviction prevention	Housing stability
National initiatives/frameworks	Part 2 Housing (Wales) Act 2014: - prevention duty - priority need for 16 and 17 year olds and 18-21 year olds who have been in care - ability for local authorities not to apply intentionality to 16 and 17 year olds and/or to care leavers aged 18-21 Part 6 Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 - development and regular review of	Part 2 Housing (Wales) Act 2014 requirement on local authorities to prepare homelessness strategies by end of 2018 Development of pathways and frameworks: - Preventing Homelessness and Promoting Independence: A Positive Pathway to Adulthood (Welsh Government 2016a) - Care Leaver Accommodation and	Families First (universal) Flying Start (targeted to certain postcodes) Integrated Family Support Services Financial support for Adverse Childhood Experiences Support Hub Youth Engagement and Progression Framework	Access to Discretionary Assistance Fund (not specific to young people) Access to Discretionary Housing Payments (not specific to young people)	Proportion of Supporting People programme that goes to young persons' projects Ability for local authorities to exempt care leavers up to age 25 from Council Tax £1million St David's Day Fund - direct financial support to care leavers to access opportunities to help them

Structural prevention	Systems prevention	Early intervention	Eviction prevention	Housing stability
<p>pathway plans for looked after children</p> <p>- sets out when local authority duties come to an end for different categories of looked after children – increases age up to 25 for care leavers in education/training</p> <p>- allocation of personal advisors who will keep in touch with the care leaver up until the age of 21 (or 25 if in education/training)</p> <p>Affordable/social housing programmes</p> <p>Review of Affordable Housing</p>	<p>Support Framework (Welsh Government 2016b)</p> <p>- National Pathway for Homeless Services to Children, Young People and Adults in the Secure Estate (Welsh Government 2015)</p> <p>Part 6 SSWBA Code of Practice requires:</p> <p>- joint protocols for the assessment and meeting of care leavers' accommodation needs</p> <p>- professional preparing pathway plan to consult with any prospective future provider of housing and accommodation support</p> <p>- that personal advisors should have knowledge of housing</p>	<p>Proportion of Homelessness Prevention Grant that goes to youth homelessness projects</p> <p>Shelter Cymru education project funded by Welsh Government</p>		<p>successfully transition towards independent living</p> <p>£650,000 for care-leaver traineeship/work placement schemes provided by local authorities</p>

Structural prevention

**Systems prevention
and homelessness
legislation**

Early intervention

Eviction prevention

Housing stability

When I'm Ready (Welsh Government 2016b) - **young people living in foster care can stay living with their foster carers up to the age of 21 (or 25 if in continued education), subject to agreement**³

End Youth Homelessness Cymru work on education and the care system and homelessness

³ This provision is not available to those young people living in residential care

Table A.2: Preventing youth homelessness in Wales: local interventions

Interventions specifically aimed at care leavers are in **bold**; numbers in brackets relate to the age range targeted by the particular intervention where this is known.

Local authority	Structural prevention	Systems prevention	Early intervention	Eviction prevention	Housing stability
Anglesey	Affordable/social housing programme	Policy for homelessness prevention fund is that care leavers and young people have higher priority than other groups	Family mediation provided by young persons' specialist organisation		Supported accommodation for medium/high needs (16-24)
			Schools/college based homelessness prevention workshops		Supported accommodation for lower needs (16-24)
			Information and advice		Move-on accommodation linked to the two above schemes (16-24)
			Nightstop (16-25)		Floating support (16-24)
					Starter packs
					Rent deposit scheme

Local authority	Structural prevention	Systems prevention	Early intervention	Eviction prevention	Housing stability
					Learn4Life accredited programme (16-25)
Blaenau Gwent	Affordable/social housing programme	Young Persons' Accommodation Support Officer within housing options	Family mediation provided by officer within Children's Services 14+ team		2 rooms within hostel for all ages made into shared accommodation and used for under 25s Supported living project (under 25s) Floating support Learning4Life pre-vocational training (16-19)
Bridgend	Affordable/social housing programme	Housing options team includes 2 specialist workers focusing on prevention, one working with 14+ and their families and one with 16+ in supported accommodation Monthly meetings between housing	Family mediation provided by young persons' specialist organisation (14+) Emphasis project		Multi-agency scheme for complex needs 2 supported accommodation schemes (16-18) 2 supported accommodation schemes (18-21)

Local authority	Structural prevention	Systems prevention	Early intervention	Eviction prevention	Housing stability
		options and children's services 16+ team looking at children coming out of care and other needing housing			Step Down project – floating support Supported lodgings Supported lodgings (16-18) Learning4Life pre-vocational training (16-19)
Caerphilly	Affordable/social housing programme	Young Persons' Accommodation Officer works closely with - dedicated social worker spends 1-2 days/week in housing options - mediation worker based in housing options full time Young Persons' Accommodation Officer attends pathway meetings	Family mediation provided by young persons' specialist organisation (14-17) Emphasis project (13-21) (Dewis Wales 2018)		4 long-term supported accommodation projects Assessment/emergency bed in one of these Interim support in project for all ages – zones separated off for young people 2 flats with support for high needs for 18+ care leavers

Local authority	Structural prevention	Systems prevention	Early intervention	Eviction prevention	Housing stability
		when care leavers coming up to 18 Panel with Children's Services, housing options and young persons' specialist organisation looks at access to supported housing schemes			Supported lodgings (16-18) Progress Scheme – work placements within the local authority for care leavers and young people not in education, employment or training – work readiness support provided Learning4Life pre-vocational training (16-19)
Cardiff	Affordable/social housing programme	Youth Gateway – multi-agency centre including careers advisors, youth workers, Action for Children and young persons' mediation and advice workers from Housing Options Project	Family mediation provided by young persons' specialist organisation (16-21) Information and advice Awareness raising sessions in schools	Tenancy rescue service	Supported accommodation (18-25) Supported accommodation (16-17) Floating support

Local authority	Structural prevention	Systems prevention	Early intervention	Eviction prevention	Housing stability
		<p>Housing Options Project – joint working between housing, children’s services and young persons’ specialist organisation</p> <p>No intentionality test for 16 and 17 year olds</p>	<p>Training flats with pre-tenancy support</p>		<p>Supported lodgings (16-18)</p> <p>Looked after children traineeship scheme</p> <p>Learning4Life pre-vocational training (16-19)</p>
Carmarthen-shire	Affordable/social housing programme	<p>Third sector and youth service collocated with housing</p> <p>Meetings every 2 months between housing and children’s services to discuss difficult cases</p> <p>One post currently between social services and housing – going to increase to two posts</p>	<p>Family mediation provided by third sector organisation</p>		<p>Temporary accommodation 24 hour support (16-25)</p> <p>Supported accommodation, includes emergency bed (16-25)</p> <p>Supported accommodation schemes for varying support needs (16-25)</p> <p>Supported lodgings</p>

Local authority	Structural prevention	Systems prevention	Early intervention	Eviction prevention	Housing stability
					Foyer (16-24)
Ceredigion	Affordable/social housing programme	Joint protocol with children's services for 16 and 17 year olds	Member of staff within third sector agency trained to undertake family mediation		Supported accommodation (16-25)
		Local authority will act as guarantor for a young person's tenancy	Restorative flat – to provide respite and intense support where young person at risk of losing supported accommodation		Young persons' project (16-21)
		No intentionality test for 16 and 17 year olds			Foyer project
					Landlord incentives for under 35s
					Supported lodgings (16-18)
					Specialist floating support
Conwy	Affordable/social housing programme	Positive pathway project in partnership with NACRO – piloting young persons' positive pathway officer (undertakes assessments, prevention and provides support for	Going it Alone – information and advice, early targeted help to young people at risk and flexible outreach to young people in temporary/ supported accommodation	Renting Ready scheme	Supported housing for young women – 24 hour support
					Supported housing

Local authority	Structural prevention	Systems prevention	Early intervention	Eviction prevention	Housing stability
		<p>move-on from temporary accommodation)</p> <p>Housing solutions officer based in care leavers team 1 day/week</p> <p>Group of housing and children's services officers look at case studies of young people</p> <p>Local authority will act as guarantor for a young person's tenancy</p>	<p>Sessions in schools</p> <p>Family mediation</p> <p>Nightstop (16-21) – mediation included within scope of scheme</p>		<p>Step down provision – flats with floating support</p> <p>Supported lodgings (16-21)</p> <p>Supported lodgings</p> <p>Learning4Life pre-vocational training (16-19)</p>
Denbighshire	Affordable/social housing programme	Jointly commissioned (housing options, children's services, youth offending team) young people's positive pathway – housing options specialists work with	Going it Alone – information and advice, early targeted help to young people at risk and flexible outreach to young people in temporary/		<p>Supported accommodation for complex needs (jointly commissioned) (16-25)</p> <p>Supported accommodation for lower needs (16-25)</p>

Local authority	Structural prevention	Systems prevention	Early intervention	Eviction prevention	Housing stability
		young people carrying out assessments (16-25)	supported accommodation Sessions in schools		Supported accommodation and floating support (16-25)
		CAMHS training for joint team	Family mediation service provided by third sector organisation		Floating support (16-25)
		Local authority will act as guarantor for a young person's tenancy	Nightstop (16-21)		Supported lodgings (16-21)
					Learning4Life pre-vocational training (16-19)
Flintshire	Affordable/social housing programme	Young persons' pathway – integrated team, joint assessments. Housing solutions officer works with 18-24s, children's services assistant with 16 and 17 year olds. Either attends pathway planning meetings	Family mediation – provided informally by children's services assistant and formal mediation service with social services Nightstop (16-21)		Supported housing for complex needs, including care leavers Supported housing (16-20) Supported housing (18-35) Supported housing (18+)

Local authority	Structural prevention	Systems prevention	Early intervention	Eviction prevention	Housing stability
		Dedicated budget for integrated team for 16 and 17s			Supported housing for single females (16+)
					Floating support (16-25)
					Outreach support to tenancies in private rented sector (18+)
					Outreach support to tenancies in private rented sector (18+ for people experiencing domestic abuse)
					Supported lodgings (16-21)
					Learning4Life pre-vocational training (16-19)
					Resilience team work with young people around employment,

Local authority	Structural prevention	Systems prevention	Early intervention	Eviction prevention	Housing stability volunteering, training etc
Gwynedd	Affordable/social housing programme	Joint protocol on homelessness prevention between authority and young persons' specialist organisation (includes mediation) Young Persons Protocol with Social Services 16+ team – joint assessments for 16 and 17 year olds	Education/raising awareness in schools Family mediation provided by young persons' specialist organisation Homelessness prevention officer based in young persons' specialist organisation	Support to set up and maintain new tenancies	Hostels Supported accommodation Floating support (16-25) Shared accommodation in private rented sector with support Self-contained accommodation with support Learning4Life pre-vocational training (16-19) Young persons' specialist organisation has number of social enterprises that

Local authority	Structural prevention	Systems prevention	Early intervention	Eviction prevention	Housing stability
					provide training/ employment opportunities
Merthyr Tydfil	Affordable/social housing programme	Protocol with children's services re 16 and 17 year olds All access to accommodation and support through housing solutions (gateway) including for care leavers Mediation worker works jointly with children's services	Family mediation provided by young persons' specialist organisation (14-25) Emphasis project		Young persons' hostel (16-35) 24 hour supported accommodation Step down accommodation with support Supported lodgings (16-18) Learning4Life pre- vocational training (16- 19)
Monmouth- shire	Affordable/social housing programme	Dedicated officer in housing focused on prevention (18-25) Weekly meetings with children's services	Family mediation provided by young persons' specialist organisation (16+) Emphasis project (14- 21) (Dewis Wales 2018)		2 hostels (16-25) Shared accommodation through private sector leasing with support Floating support

Local authority	Structural prevention	Systems prevention	Early intervention	Eviction prevention	Housing stability
					Tenancy readiness training in hostels
					Transition project for young people in care/leaving care
Neath Port Talbot	Affordable/social housing programme	16+ social worker carries out assessments for young people up to 25 including care leavers Social worker and mediation worker co-located at young persons' hostel No intentionality test for 16 and 17 year olds	Family mediation provided by young persons' specialist organisation (14+) Emphasis project		Crisis house Hostel (16-21) Foyer (16-25) Self-contained studio flats and flats with support Floating support Supported lodgings – priority for care leavers
Newport	Affordable/social housing programme	Specialist worker within children's services for young people's accommodation issues	Family mediation provided by young persons' specialist organisation (14+)	My Pad (16-25) – for young people in supports housing awaiting first tenancy	Supported housing (16-21) Complex needs project

Local authority	Structural prevention	Systems prevention	Early intervention	Eviction prevention	Housing stability
		– links with care leavers personal advisors	Emphasis project (14-19) (Dewis Wales 2018)	or in early stages of first tenancy	Ladder Unit shared accommodation for young people in employment (18-24)
		Move-on pathway from foster placement or supported housing – used to bring young people back into projects as well as move-on	Housing associations piloting package delivered in secondary schools		Flat share pilot
		Young people 16+ still in education, children’s services will provide foster placement rather than accessing supported housing			Floating support – LIFT (life in first tenancy)
					Floating support for care leavers (16-21)
					Private sector leased properties for unaccompanied asylum seekers and care leavers
					Supported lodgings
					Private rented sector 2-bed flats for young looked after people who were in costly placements, some

Local authority	Structural prevention	Systems prevention	Early intervention	Eviction prevention	Housing stability out of county, or who have exhausted other options
					Learning4Life pre- vocational training (16-19)
Pembrokeshire	Affordable/social housing programme	Referral arrangements with youth services	Housing officers provide family mediation Development of homelessness awareness pack for secondary schools and youth groups	Training flat	Supported housing (women 16-25) Supported housing (men 16-25) Floating support (16-25) Shared accommodation in council housing with support
Powys	Affordable/social housing programme	2 detached youth workers working with, and advocating for, young people at risk of homelessness and	Family mediation provided by officers in children's services Nightstop		Supported lodgings Supported lodgings (16-18)

Local authority	Structural prevention	Systems prevention	Early intervention	Eviction prevention	Housing stability
		<p>care leavers – use team around the young person approach – providing a constant adult through different forms of accommodation</p> <p>No intentionality test for 16 and 17 year olds</p>			<p>2 foyers</p> <p>Pilot with housing association aiming to get the right option at the right time for young people</p>
Rhondda Cynon Taf	Affordable/social housing programme	<p>Multi-agency approach involving housing, children’s services and young persons’ specialist organisation</p> <p>Task and finish group housing and children’s services looking at care leavers</p> <p>Multi-agency move-on panel in place</p>	<p>Family mediation provided by young persons’ specialist organisation (14+)</p> <p>Emphasis project</p> <p>Training flats</p>	GRAMO (Get Ready and Move On) course – includes specific programme for care leavers	<p>Hostel (16-24)</p> <p>Supported housing – one project includes an emergency room</p> <p>Step down accommodation with support</p> <p>Dispersed accommodation with floating support</p> <p>Step by Step Project – key worker support for</p>

Local authority	Structural prevention	Systems prevention	Early intervention	Eviction prevention	Housing stability
					<p>young people who don't go into a supported housing project</p> <p>Supported lodgings (16-18)</p> <p>Learning4Life pre-vocational training (16-19)</p> <p>Step in the Right Direction scheme provides work placements within the council for care leavers</p>
Swansea	Affordable/social housing programme	Youth homelessness service - multi-agency team (housing, children's services and young persons' specialist organisation) located in youth hub – provides services for	Family mediation provided by young persons' specialist organisation Advice – drop-in service available	Spot purchase of support for young people with most complex needs living either in private rented sector or supported accommodation	<p>Foyer – includes 4 emergency beds</p> <p>Emergency supported lodgings</p> <p>Complex needs project – core and cluster</p>

Local authority	Structural prevention	Systems prevention	Early intervention	Eviction prevention	Housing stability
		all young people 16-21 including care leavers			Supported accommodation
		Swansea Accommodation Pathway (16-21) – meet weekly to discuss referrals, move-on and cases where tenancies/placements are at risk			Floating support
					Supported accommodation for care leavers
					Supported lodgings
					Accredited qualification – Skills for Independence
					Encouragement for young people to pursue training and education opportunities
					Learning4Life pre-vocational training (16-19)
Torfaen	Affordable/social housing programme	Dedicated officer within housing for young people up to 21	Family mediation provided by young	Own 2 Feet pre-tenancy programme	24 hour supported accommodation/hostel (16-25)

Local authority	Structural prevention	Systems prevention	Early intervention	Eviction prevention	Housing stability
		(25 if care leavers) – manages referrals for supported accommodation	person’s specialist organisation (14+)		Self-contained temporary accommodation with support (16-25)
		Torfaen Young People’s Support Service – multi-agency/disciplinary hub (16-21) including looked after children (16+) – includes housing, children’s services, young persons’ specialist organisation, citizens advice and young persons’ advisor on mental health	Emphasis project (14-19) (Dewis Wales 2018)	Advice – drop-in service available	Supported self-contained flats (16-24)
		Case conference approach with multi-agency panel taken to young offenders at risk of homelessness	Officers from housing go into secondary schools to talk about housing options		Pre-tenancy and floating support for care leavers Learning4Life pre-vocational training (16-19)

Local authority	Structural prevention	Systems prevention	Early intervention	Eviction prevention	Housing stability
Vale of Glamorgan	Affordable/social housing programme	One stop shop for young people (16-25) provided by young person's specialist organisation - provides mediation, joint assessment, support, referrals and planning for permanent accommodation Developed pathway and increased resources for young people Monthly multi-agency move-on panel meeting held to discuss all young people in projects – enables moves between projects as well as move-on No intentionality test for 16 and 17 year	Family mediation provided by young person's specialist organisation (16-25) Emphasis project – targeted all secondary schools		Number of spaces in hostel specifically for young people Supported accommodation (16-17) Supported accommodation (18+) Housing First-type project with 24 hour support for complex needs Step down project in private rented sector for social services clients including care leavers Supported lodgings Tenancy/floating support

Local authority	Structural prevention	Systems prevention	Early intervention	Eviction prevention	Housing stability
		olds or care leavers aged 18-21			Learning4Life pre-vocational training (16-19)
Wrexham	Affordable/social housing programme	Supporting People Young Persons' Accommodation Needs Group in place	Outreach advice service provided by young person's specialist organisation (16-25)		<p>Short-term supported accommodation with 1 emergency bed for those in priority need (16-25)</p> <p>Supported accommodation (16-25)</p> <p>Foyer (16-25)</p> <p>Floating support</p> <p>Bond scheme (16-25)</p> <p>Supported lodgings (16-18)</p> <p>Learning4Life pre-vocational training (16-19)</p>

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