



TRAFFORD
COUNCIL



Trafford's Local Care Leavers Offer

"Working
with you to
provide the
best support
possible"



What is the Local Care Leaver Offer?

Just because you are leaving care, or have already left care, we haven't stopped caring about you.

Local authorities have a legal duty to support young people making the transition from care to adulthood and make sure care leavers know what services are available to them.

In this Local Care Leaver Offer is information about all the support and services that we have in Trafford available to you as a care leaver.

We know that it is a big step moving into adulthood, and we want to make sure that you feel safe and supported and know where and who to go to for advice and help.

We have worked with experienced care leavers to put together this offer. We will continue to listen to your views to make sure the services we provide are what you need.

This leaflet may not include all the support available to you. If you have complex additional needs you may be entitled to an assessment under the Care Act 2016. To get more information about this, or if you're not sure what level of support you are entitled to, contact your personal advisor who will be able to help.

Leaving Care Service: In Trafford this is called the Transitions Team.

Based at: Trafford Town Hall and can be contacted on **0161 912 5050** between 8.30am and 4.30pm

The team is currently made up of

- Fiona Mackenzie (Service Manager)
- Denis Owen (Transitions Team Leader)
- 10 personal advisors
- One social worker and a mental health and wellbeing worker

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During out of hours, in an emergency, you can contact the Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on 0161 912 2020

Who is a care leaver?

You are an **Eligible** Care Leaver if:

- you are currently looked after; and
- aged 16 or 17; and
- you have been looked after for a period of 13 weeks (or periods amounting to 13 weeks) which began after you reached 14 and ended after you reached 16

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You are a **Relevant** Care Leaver if:

- you are no longer looked after by the Local Authority but you have been 'Eligible'; and
- aged 16 or 17 years old;
- immediately before being detained or in hospital you were 'Eligible'; or
- lived for continuous period of 6 months or more with a parent, someone with parental responsibility and where those arrangements break down.

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You are a **Former Relevant** Care Leaver if:

- if you are aged 18 years or above, and either have been a Relevant or Eligible child when under 18
- if at the age of 21 or before reaching the age of 25 you are in education or training, then you will remain a former relevant child until the end of the agreed programme.
- if after 21 years you inform us that you want to pursue or are pursuing a programme of education or training.

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You are a **Qualifying** Care Leaver if:

- you are at least 16 but under 21; and
- you were looked after immediately prior to the making of a special guardianship order which was in force when you reached 18; or
- if at any time after reaching the age of 16, but before reaching the age of 18 you have been a looked after child, accommodated by or on behalf of a voluntary organisation, registered children's home, or by a health authority or privately fostered.
- as a Qualifying Care Leaver you are able to access advice and assistance based on a needs assessment completed by the Leaving Care Team. But you will not be entitled to the full care leaver offer.

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Your social worker or PA can help you to understand which of these categories applies to you.

Personal advisor

Trafford Council will provide you with a personal advisor until you are 21. However, you can choose to keep seeing them until you're 25 if you wish. If you're in education, employment or training your personal advisor will automatically continue to support you until you are 25.

You will be allocated a personal advisor at the age of 16 in Trafford so that you can get to know them before they become your main point of contact at age 18. Up until you turn 18, you will continue to have a social worker. Your personal advisor will help you transition into adulthood. Your personal advisor will help you with moving on to independence.

- Training and employment opportunities
- Developing your independence skills
- Finding somewhere suitable to live
- Managing your finances and claiming benefits.



My Pathway Plan

We will work with you to prepare and agree a Pathway Plan. This is your own individual plan about your needs, views and future goals and how we can help you in your successful move on to adult life. Once you turn 16 your Pathway Plan will replace your Care Plan.

We will review your Pathway Plan with you at least every 6 months.

With your agreement we will seek the views of partner agencies. This may include housing, education, training, health services and any other services or people that are important to you. This is to ensure we all work together to provide you with clear and consistent advice and support.

The Transitions Team will also consider what extra support you may need. You may need extra support because:

- You have a disability
- You are an unaccompanied asylum seeking child (UASC) and your immigration status is unclear
- You are leaving custody or you have contact with the criminal justice system
- You are a young parent.

Your personal advisor will assess any additional support needs with you.

Accommodation

We will always support you to find a home within Trafford if it safe to do so. If you've left the area and wish to return we will try and help you to do this, provided it's a safe option. Sometimes this may not be possible or you may not wish to stay in Trafford so we may work with you to find a place to live outside of Trafford.

There is a link person in the Housing Options Service Trafford (HOST) who specialises in work with care leavers, who sits with the leaving care team once a week to offer support.

Aged 16-17

The Council will ensure that you have a suitable place to live such as with a foster carer, in a children's home, or a semi-independent provision.

We will start working with you on your Pathway Plan when you are 16 so there is lots of time to decide what you will need when you live independently. You can look at all the options available, with the support of your social worker and personal advisor, to make sure that you can find somewhere suitable and affordable when you are an adult.

Staying Put (18-21)

If you are living with foster carers, there may be the option to remain there after you are 18, up until you are ready to move on or you reach 21.

Your carer will help you to develop skills that will be useful when you move to independent living.

You will pay rent and you will need to claim housing benefit; your personal advisor will help you organise this. For more information visit <http://www.trafford.gov.uk/about-your-council/children-families-and-wellbeing/docs/staying-put-information-leaflet.pdf>

Supported Lodgings (16-21)

If you are leaving foster care or a children's home, supported lodgings can provide a 'bridge' between being in care and independence. Young people are usually between the ages of 16-18 when they move into supported lodgings. The aim of the scheme is to place older teenagers in a home where they can settle and be happy and at the same time receive guidance and encouragement to learn life skills. You will live with an adult, or family, who can support you to develop skills for adulthood.

Supported Housing or Semi Independent Living (16+)

This is your own room/studio flat, sometimes with shared kitchen and living space.



In Trafford we have: Elstree Court (Ages 16-21), Forrest Court (Ages 16-21), Greenbank (Ages 16-25), Pomona Gardens (Ages 18+), Meadow Lodge (Ages 18+), Daban House (16+)

You will have a key worker at each place who will work with you to agree a plan that sets out what support you need to work towards having your own independence.

There are 2 flats for care leavers offered by St. Vincent's. These are allocated via an interview process.

There is emergency accommodation at Greenbank; 2 emergency beds which can be used for care leavers in an emergency housing crisis. These can be used for up to 7 days and can be accessed through HOST or the Transitions Team.

Independent Living

This could be a Council or housing association property or accommodation that is offered by a private landlord. Support to live in this way may be offered by your personal advisor.

If you are living independently, you can receive help from Housing Options Service Trafford (HOST) to manage your tenancy well. Your personal advisor can give you more information about this.

Independent living might include university halls or other student accommodation if you are in higher education.

Living with Friends and Family

Once you have turned 18, you may decide to live with your birth family or friends. If this is an option you wish to consider then your personal advisor can help you to achieve it. If you live back at home with your family, this can affect how long you get a leaving care service support for. We will offer you a family group conference to ensure that you get the support you need to achieve this successfully. This is a way of helping everyone who is important to you to work together to support you.

Additional Support (18-25)

The Transitions Team can help you to find somewhere to live which may include helping you to get a bond and your first month's rent on your first property (subject to the property being satisfactory).

Council Tax

If you live in Trafford and are liable to pay Council Tax you will be asked to complete a claim form. Depending on the answers you provide to the questions on the form you may not be asked to pay Council Tax. If you live outside of Trafford, a claim has to be made to the local authority you live in to assess if you need to pay Council Tax.

Education, Employment and Training

Trafford's Virtual School can help you to succeed in your learning. If you are aged 16-17, the Virtual School, alongside your social worker and personal advisor will help you with your Personal Education Plan (PEP).



Your personal advisor can also support you to secure work experience.

All care leavers in further education can receive a bursary of up to £1,200, which can be claimed through college between the ages of 16 and 19.

Trafford College have a support offer for all care leavers. Visit www.trafford.ac.uk to find out more. Trafford Council will guarantee to offer an interview to any Trafford care leaver who applies for a job with the Council as long as they meet the person specification for the post.

We have an Education, Employment and Training (EET) specialist on the Transitions Team who can advise and support young people with their education and careers. Your Personal Advisor can also support you to access EET opportunities and we regularly update our Facebook page with opportunities.

There are also volunteering opportunities with Step Together. Your Personal Advisor can support you with this. Visit <https://www.step-together.org.uk/> for more details

The Trafford Pledge matches jobseekers with local businesses, benefitting both the local community and the wider economy. Visit <http://www.trafford.gov.uk/business/trafford-pledge/the-trafford-pledge.aspx>

Further Education 16-19

You may be able to get financial support of £1,200 a year direct from your school, further education college, or learning provider.

19+

You can apply for a discretionary learner bursary as an older learner, direct from your education provider.

If you are not able to receive a further education bursary and you are ineligible for benefits we may support you up to the cost of £1,200 per year for up to 2 years. This funding is only available up to your 25th birthday.

Higher Education 18-25

All young people in higher education will receive a £2,000 bursary each year provided in instalments. You will also receive from the Transitions Team £80 per week, this is to support with living cost, equipment and materials. This is a total cost of £6,160 per year and will be for a maximum of 4 years while you are at university.

You will be expected to claim your maximum entitlement from Student Finance for tuition fees and a maintenance loan.

Lots of universities also offer bursaries for care leavers. You can see which universities offer this at www.propel.org.uk

Health and Wellbeing

Whilst you are looked after (16-18), you will continue to be offered an annual health assessment by one of our looked after children (LAC) Nurses.

You will be provided with a 'health passport' when you turn 18 which is a summary of your health information. If you are unsure if you have received this please speak to your personal advisor.

You will be registered with health services, such as a GP, dentist and optician by your carer, in the area you live.

You will have access to specialist substance misuse services in Trafford, called Early Break, who can work with you.

You will have access to Talkshop - a specialist advice and information services for 13 to 25 year olds, based at Sale Waterside. Their youth workers can support with issues including: bullying, family breakdowns, anger and depression.

Visit **www.facebook.com/Talkshoptrafford** for more information.

Online counselling can be found at **<https://kooth.com/>**

Trafford Leisure Pass – we will pay an annual fee for your concessionary

When you reach 18

We can:

- Help you register with health services, such as a GP, dentist and optician when you move home.
- Help you access support to attend hospital or doctor's appointments
- Access to specialist substance misuse services in Trafford.
See **www.trafforddirectory.co.uk/substancemisuse**
- Information and support to access local sexual health services – GPs, pharmacies and sexual health clinics

Relationships

As well as support from your social worker and personal advisor, we may be able to offer you other practical and emotional support, for example:-

- Pure Insight Mentoring - a mentor just for you who can be there to listen and give encouragement and support.
- Providing an independent visitor (up until the age of 18)
- To help you maintain or regain contact with people who were special to you or who cared for you in the past, like former foster carers, children's home staff and social workers
- Helping you to form and keep healthy relationships with your friends and family
- We can arrange meetings with people who are important to you like family members and friends to talk about how everyone can work together to support you in the best way. These meetings are called Family Group Conferences.



Finances

We will try and help you financially and we will support you to manage your money. You can see all the financial support we provide in the areas of Accommodation – Education, Employment and Training and Health in other parts of this Local Offer.

Identification

We will fund all care leavers with their application for your first passport. If for any reason you can't get a passport we will fund and support you to apply for another form of photographic ID e.g. a provisional or full driving licence. We will make sure you are given a copy of your birth certificate.

If you lose your I.D. or birth certificate we will support you with the cost of 1 replacement.

Keeping In Touch

We want to help you to keep in touch with people who are important to you. You could receive up to £100 to help you to do this. This can be by way of phone credit, stationary and stamps.

Clothing – If you are living independently you could receive up to £100 one off grant for clothing for interviews or employment.

Exceptional Circumstances – If you are living independently you could access up to £100 for exceptional circumstances for example, for attending a wedding or funeral of someone close to you.

Storage – We can help you with storage provision for a short period of time in an emergency. Your Personal Advisor can assist with this.

Moving – We can support with up to 1 house move, including the use of a removal van.

Cold Weather Payments – If you are not in receipt of benefits during exceptional long periods of cold weather additional payments towards the cost of heating bills can be provided if you are living in your own home.

Aged 16-17

If you are living independently (not with a foster carer or in a children's home) you will receive an allowance of £57.90. This will be topped up by the local authority to £60 per week in total.

This can be in cash or in another form for example food or vouchers or a mixture of both. Your social worker and personal advisor will:

- Support you to put in your benefit claim 6 weeks before your 18th Birthday to ensure this is processed in time to start when you turn 18.
- Make sure you have the advice you need to learn to manage your money, and that this is detailed in your Pathway Plan.
- Help you open a bank account
- Help you get your National Insurance number
- Celebrate your birthday
- Celebrate special times throughout the year e.g. Eid, Christmas with an allowance of up to £190 per year. (This may be by way of a gift, vouchers, or celebration and will be discussed with you.)

The Transitions Team may also provide an incentive payment each week during term time depending on your college course /training, hours of attendance (full / part-time). You may also be able to claim an educational bursary; your social worker, carer or personal advisor can support you to claim this from your college provider.

The Transitions Team may also provide an incentive payment each week dependant on your employment, hours of work and salary/wage.

An incentive payment may also be provided if you are attending voluntary work dependant on hours of work.

Incentive payments are assessed on an individual basis.

Aged 18-21

From the age of 18 you are entitled to claim benefits. Your personal advisor can support you to claim benefits; however it is important that you take responsibility for this. During the claim period – which is up to 4 weeks (post 18) - the Transitions Team can support this payment, providing you are maintaining your claim requirements.

The Transitions Team may also provide an incentive payment each week during term time depending on your college course /training and hours of attendance (full / part-time) up to your 20th birthday. You may also be able to claim an educational bursary; your social worker, carer or personal advisor can support you to claim this from your college provider.

The Transitions Team may also provide an incentive payment each week dependant on your employment, hours of work and salary/wage.

An incentive payment may also be provided if you are attending voluntary work dependant on hours of work.

Make sure you have the advice you need to learn to manage your money and that this is detailed in your Pathway Plan.

We will help you celebrate your 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st birthday. (This will be by way of a gift, vouchers, or celebration and will be discussed with you.)

We will support you to celebrate special times through the year. For example, you may want to attend the care leavers Christmas dinner. Your personal advisor is available to provide further advice.

Aged 22-25

Your personal advisor can support you to access any benefits you are entitled to claim.

Leaving Care / Setting Up Home Allowance

From the age of 16 you are entitled to support for setting up your own home (up to £2,000). Your personal advisor will be able to support you to purchase items that you may need to live independently. For example: TV licence, toaster, pots and pans, carpets. You can discuss your ideas with your personal advisor.

Emergency Assistance

The Transitions Team can support you to access universal emergency assistance, from Trafford Assist, HOST and other relevant agencies.

You will be expected to contact the Transitions Team and arrange to come into the office for this assistance. If you are not eligible for emergency assistance you could receive up to a £100 over the course of a single year subject to a Needs Assessment and if you have no other means to sustain yourself. This will be at the discretion of the Transitions Team and will be used as the last resort. It is likely this will be used to buy food or pay utility bills for you.

Identity

- You have the right to see information that we keep about you, including your files and records written about you when you were in care.
- For more information on accessing your social care files please speak to your personal advisor
- We will help you gain important identification documents, such as a birth certificate, passport and / or a driving licence
- We will provide support around any issues important to your identity such as religion, sexuality, gender or culture

Contribution to Society

We want to work with you to help you to be an active member of society

We can help you by:

- Helping you to register to vote.
- Giving you information on groups and clubs you may wish to join
- Sharing information about voluntary work
- Listening and taking account of your views about how we support you. You could join the Children in Care Council (up to 18) and Aftercare Forum (18-25)

- Asking you about your views in our annual survey and taking account of what you say.
- Asking you to be on an interview panel when we recruit new social care staff.
- Recognising and celebrating your achievements in the Trafford Children in Care and annual Care Leavers Awards ceremony
- Celebrating your achievements with the Greater Manchester Care Leavers Awards
- Having a member of the Aftercare Forum on the Corporate Parenting Board so that senior leaders can hear feedback about the service directly from a care leaver.



Other places you can go for help and advice

Trafford College – www.trafford.ac.uk/ 0161 886 7070

Government website student financial support – www.gov.uk/browse/educations/student-finance

Job Centre Plus – www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus

Citizens Advice – www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Trafford HOST – www.trafforddirectory.co.uk and search for HOST

SHELTER – www.shelter.org.uk

FRANK – www.talktofrank.com 0300 123 6600

Early Break – www.earlybreak.co.uk

ACHIEVE – www.trafforddirectory.co.uk and search for Achieve 0161 358 0991

CORAM VOICE – www.coram.org.uk 0808 800 5792

National Youth Advisory Service (NYAS) – www.nyas.net 0151 649 8700

Trafford Complaints – 0161 912 1137

UCAS – www.ucas.com

Pure Insight – Trafford – www.pure-insight.org.uk 0161 804 4410

Prince's Trust – www.princes-trust.org.uk

Asylum Aid – www.asylumaid.org.uk

Asylum Support Tribunal – www.gov.uk/appeal-first-tier-asylum-support-tribunal

Refugee Council – www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

The Albert Kennedy Trust – www.akt.org.uk



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Transitions team **0161 912 5050**

Emergency duty team **0161 912 5050**

Transitions team email
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