



TRAFFORD
COUNCIL



TRAFFORD'S CARE LEAVER OFFER



"Working
with you to
provide the
best support
possible"

What is Trafford's Care Leaver Offer?



Just because you are leaving care, or have already left care, we haven't stopped caring about you. We want to help and support you, to enable you to attain your goals and aspirations.

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

In this Care Leaver Offer is information about many of the services and support in Trafford that are available to you as a care experienced young person.

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 care experienced young people 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. To get more information or if you're not sure what level of support you are entitled to, contact your Aftercare Worker who will be able to help.

Aftercare Service

In Trafford this is called the Care Experienced Service. The team is based at Trafford Town Hall and can be contacted on 0161 912 5050 between 8.30am and 4.30pm.

The team is made up of a Head of Service, Practice Managers and Aftercare Workers who provide day-to-day support for care experienced young people

You can email the service on [**aftercare@trafford.gov.uk**](mailto:aftercare@trafford.gov.uk)

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

Who is a care leaver?

The Children Leaving Care Act 2000 outlines the criteria of what being a care leaver means, using four descriptions.

Eligible

You are aged between 16 and 17. You have been looked after by Children's Services for at least 13 weeks, since the age of 14 (the period of 13 weeks does not need to be all in one go). You have been looked after for at least one day after your 16th birthday.

Relevant

Relevant children are those aged 16 and 17 who meet the criteria for eligible children but who leave care before their 18th birthday.

Former Relevant

You are a Former Relevant child if you are 18+ and were previously 'Eligible' or 'Relevant'.

Qualifying

You will be a Qualifying care leaver if you are aged between 16-25 or you were looked after by Children's Services for a period of time between your 16th and 18th birthday.



Aftercare Worker

The Trafford Care Experienced Service acknowledges what a huge step it is for you when leaving care and beginning to live on your own for the first time. Although you might have left care, we still care about you and want to see you succeed and do well.

We are still here for you up to the age of 25 to offer our support in getting you through the next stages of living independently.

We want to make sure that you know where and who to go to for advice and help. This Local Offer sets out what we offer and was created with advice and support from other care experienced young people in Trafford, who understand what might be most important to you at this stage in your life.

Your Aftercare Worker will discuss with you the information in this leaflet and we will listen to your views as we continue to improve our services.

To qualify for the support set out in this leaflet, you must have been cared for by Trafford for a period of at least 13 weeks (or periods amounting to 13 weeks) beginning after your 14th birthday and including some time after your 16th birthday.

You will be allocated a Aftercare Worker at the age of 16 so that you can get to know your advisor 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 Aftercare Worker will help you transition into adulthood. Your Aftercare Worker will help you with moving on to independence, in particular the following areas:

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

My Pathway Plan

You are now entitled to support from your Aftercare Worker until you reach 25, whether you are in education or training or not. Your Aftercare Worker is there to help you get ready to live independently and to offer advice and support after you leave care. Your Aftercare Worker should talk to you about what support you need and record this information in your Pathway Plan.

Your Pathway Plan is written with you by your Aftercare Worker. It sets out your needs, views and future goals, and identifies exactly what support you will receive from us. The plan will be reviewed regularly.

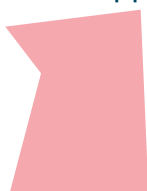
With your agreement we will seek the views of partner agencies. This may include housing, education, training, health services and any other services or people that are important to you. This is to ensure we all work together to provide you with clear and consistent advice and support.

The amount of support that you receive from your Aftercare Worker will depend on what you need at that stage in your independence and your individual circumstances.

The Care Experienced Service will also consider what extra support you may need. We will offer what you need based on how life is going for you at that time.

We want you to be successful in whatever you decide to do in life.

When or if you choose to become a parent, we will continue to support you. This may include support with additional monies when setting up your home for you and your child, assisting you with finding childcare arrangements if you are in work or study, as well as ensuring you are signposted to all available assistance provided locally by health and social care.



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 to help you 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.

If you are over 18, your Aftercare Worker will help you to find suitable accommodation. We know it can be very hard having your own place for the first time so we will do whatever we can to ease the pressures on you.

This might involve working alongside supported accommodation providers if you are not quite ready, or do not want to have your own tenancy immediately.

We will provide you with advice about being a good tenant including budgeting, paying rent, bills, and not getting into debt.

We will support you with moving into your accommodation and can also offer support storing furniture, for short periods. Please speak to your Aftercare Worker if this is needed.



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 Aftercare Worker, to make sure that you can find somewhere suitable and affordable when you are an adult.

Staying Put (18-21)

Staying Put is an arrangement which offers the opportunity to remain living with your foster carers after the age of 18.

If this is what you and your foster carer(s) want, we will support you to remain living there under what is known as a 'Staying Put' arrangement.

This can last until you are 21, or longer if you are in Higher Education. Ask your Aftercare Worker for more information.

This would be ideal for you if you are not yet wanting to live independently, enjoy the security of living with people you know and have formed relationships with, and provides you more time before deciding on your next step into independence.

You will be expected to pay a contribution towards the rent and if entitled to claim benefits, you will be expected to claim housing benefit/Universal Credit. Your Aftercare Worker will help you to organise this.

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 support you whilst at the same time receiving 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
- Forrest Court
- Greenbank
- Pomona Gardens
- Meadow Lodge
- House Project

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

There is emergency accommodation at Greenbank; two emergency beds, that can be used for care experienced young people in an emergency housing crisis. These can be used for up to 7 days and can be accessed through HOST (Housing Options Service Trafford).

Independent Living

This will be a registered provider property or accommodation that is offered by a private landlord. Support to live in this way may be offered by your Aftercare Worker.

Where possible we will seek additional support for you through a tenancy support worker. Your Aftercare Worker 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 Aftercare Worker can help you to achieve it.

Should you to choose to return to live with family, we will remain in contact with you and keep checking on what support you may need.

Additional Support (18-25)

The Care Experienced service, alongside HOST (Housing Options Service Trafford), 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)..

If you have additional needs or vulnerabilities, we will look to work alongside colleagues in Adult Services to ensure that those needs can be supported.

We would want to keep working alongside you up to the age of 25, unless you decide that after 21 you do not want to continue with an allocated Aftercare Worker. If you choose this at 21, we will be clear about the route back into the service and support on offer. We will still want to keep in touch, whether by regular text messages or occasional phone calls, to know how you are doing and if there is anything we can help you with. As Corporate Parents we will want to know you are well.

Council Tax

Care experienced young people are not required to pay council tax until after the age of 25; this applies both in Trafford and Greater Manchester. Should you be living outside of Greater Manchester, please speak with your Aftercare Worker.



Education, Employment and Training

We want to make sure every care experienced young person in Trafford has support to achieve their goals in life.

If you have an interest in a particular area of work, education or training, please speak to your Aftercare Worker, who can advise and link you in with colleagues in the Virtual School, Connexions and Job Centres.

We will provide you with assistance for expenses linked with employment, education 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 Aftercare Worker will help you with your Personal Education Plan (PEP).

Your Aftercare Worker can also support you in seeking work experience.

We work closely alongside colleges to ensure that any bursaries that are available are used to support you during your course. Where the access to bursaries is not available, we offer a daily and weekly incentive, depending on whether you are a full time or part time student.

Trafford Council guarantees to offer an interview to any Trafford care experienced young person who applies for a job with the Council as long as you meet the person specification for the post.

We work closely with the Connexions service, and they will offer advice and support with your education and career goals.

If you are interested in volunteer work, we can support you with this and again we will offer an incentive so that this can help you on your path to future work.

Further Education 16-19

As a care experienced young person, you will get priority for the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund, which offers support to young people in education. Where this does not apply, we will provide you with additional finance, linked to your attendance.

If you require additional equipment, books, tools, or transport, we can assist you with these.

Higher Education 18-25

We will help you to choose the right university and course for you, alongside our colleagues in the Virtual School, Connexions and colleges and help you to apply for student finance to cover your tuition fees. We will also ensure you have accommodation 52 weeks a year during your studies.

As a care experienced young person, you will be entitled to receive a £2,000 bursary each year, provided in instalments, towards your accommodation costs.

In addition, you will also be entitled to receive a weekly allowance from the Care Experienced service to support with living costs. You may also be entitled to a computer and internet access if you do not already have these. We will support you financially for a maximum of four years whilst you are at university.

Lots of universities also offer bursaries for care leavers. You can see which universities offer this at Propel - Become (becomecharity.org.uk)

Health and Wellbeing

Emotional health and wellbeing are really important and we want to support you in any areas where you may feel you are struggling. Your Aftercare Worker will help you access available support for all aspects of your health needs including your mental as well as physical health. We recognise that this can be very individual, but here are a few things we can offer:

- Give you free access to Trafford Leisure facilities.
- Support you and provide information on healthy living and how to pay for prescriptions.
- Help you registering with a GP, dentist, and optician and give you a health passport with important information from your childhood (such as vaccinations) and your current needs at 18.
- If you are a young parent, we will help you do the best for your children, such as arranging childcare, if this is what you want.

- Whilst you are cared for (16-18), you will continue to be offered an annual health assessment by one of our looked after children (LAC) nurses.
- You will have access to specialist substance misuse services in Trafford, called Early Break, who can work with you.
- Your personal advisor will help you access available support for all aspects of your health needs including your mental as well as physical health.

You will also have access to Trafford Youth Engagement Service which is a specialist advice and information service for 13 to 25-year-olds, based at Sale Waterside. Their youth workers can support with a range of issues. Visit Trafford Youth Engagement Service for more information.



If You Are Parent or Parent to be

We can help you to access Early Help services to give you the range of support you may need as a new parent.

This is to help you learn what it means to be a parent, support you in developing routines and learning about how to be a good parent.

Early Help services such as children's centres and parenting classes are available for you to attend, giving you advice and support as you develop as a parent, and the opportunity to meet other parents.

Your Aftercare Worker can also provide you with reassurance, practical support and information about local groups and services that can help you. There are lots of parenting support services and parenting programmes running in Trafford.

We can also help you to attend doctor, initial midwife, and health visitor appointments and parenting classes, attending with you or waiting outside if this will help you feel more confident.

Protected Characteristic

Trafford Council recognises its duty as a Corporate Parent and is committed to putting the needs of care experienced young people at the heart of decision-making through co-production and collaboration.

When making any decisions in relation to its policies or formulating corporate plans, the Council recognises that care experienced young people are a vulnerable group who face discrimination. This means that now and in the future, being cared for or care experienced is recognised as a 'protected characteristic'.

As part of our support, we may be able to offer you work experience, training, and employment opportunities within Trafford Council or more widely across partner agencies. Please ask your Aftercare Worker for more information.

We are working to develop how this might look for you at different stages of your life, whether that is a school leaver, a college leaver, or even after completing a university degree.

Relationships

We know relationships matter, so as well as the support from your Aftercare Worker, we may be able to offer extra help such as:

- Providing you with a mentor or peer mentor.
- Helping you maintain or regain contact with people who are special to you or who cared for you in the past, like former foster carers, Independent Visitors, or social workers.
- Helping you reconnect with your birth family if it's safe to do so.
- Helping you to form and keep healthy relationships with your friends and family.

Unaccompanied Children

If you are a former unaccompanied child, your housing offer will be different while you wait for a decision from the Home Office about your 'Leave to Remain'. The Care Experienced service will make sure you have suitable accommodation during this process.

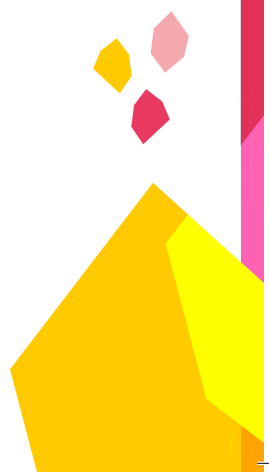
If Leave to Remain is granted to you, all housing options in our Local Offer will be available to you. If you do not have Leave to Remain, we will support you to link in with the relevant services; this will also be available in your Pathway Plan.

We will be with you through this journey and make sure that you have the representation and support that you need. We will ensure you have access to interpreters and immigration advice if you need this. We can also support you to connect with specialist services and charities like the Refugee Council and Red Cross tracing service.

We will help you to settle in the community and adjust to life in the UK. We can also connect you with community groups in your area if you need this, and help you to have opportunities to meet with other people with similar interests and backgrounds to you.

If you wish to attend university and you do not have Indefinite Leave to Remain, you might not be able to apply for a student loan. It's important to discuss this with your Social Worker or Aftercare Worker so we can discuss options with you and help you to access advice and support.

We can provide you with a copy of the Local Offer in your first language if you need this.



Finances

We are here to help you manage your money. We will help you with the important things like opening a bank account, getting your National Insurance number, applying for a passport and/or provisional driving licence.

We can also provide or let you know about money management courses and help you access money in your Junior ISA or Child Trust Fund. There is ongoing financial support, and we may be able to help in emergencies.

We have a financial policy covering all aspects of what we can support and assist with, which will apply to you at different stages of your independence.

If you are under 18 and living in independent or supported accommodation you will:

- Receive a weekly living allowance, (this might be adjusted depending on any other income you have or bills you must pay, such as service charges for your accommodation).
- You will receive a birthday allowance and a Christmas/festival allowance.
- If you are still in foster care or residential care, your carer will apply for these. If you are undertaking educational and training activities that do not include a bursary, you may qualify for a discretionary incentive payment. Please ask your Aftercare Worker about this.

Once you turn 18:

You will receive an annual birthday allowance and again we will offer you a financial incentive if you are actively involved in education, training, or employment.

Supporting You

Identification

We will fund all care experienced young people with a passport application. 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 have a copy of your birth certificate.

If you lose your ID or birth certificate, we will support you with the cost of an initial replacement.

Clothing

If you require clothing for interviews, we can support you with this.

Storage

We can help you with storage provision for a short period of time in an emergency. Your Aftercare Worker can assist with this.

Moving

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

Leaving Care / Setting Up Home Allowance

You are entitled to financial support with setting up your own home (up to £3,000). Your Aftercare Worker will be able to support you to purchase essential items.

Emergency Assistance

The Care Experienced service can support you to access universal emergency assistance, from Trafford Assist, HOST, and other relevant agencies.

You have the right to see information that we keep about you, including your files and records written about you when you were cared for.

Identity

For more information on accessing your social care files please speak to your Aftercare Worker.

We will provide support around any issues important to your identity such as religion, sexuality, gender or culture.



Contribution to Society

Part of being a young adult is trying out new things, exploring your local area, joining new groups, meeting new people, travelling and even voting for the first time. We want you to have fun and be able to experience as many opportunities as possible, so we'll help you by:

- Signposting you to local groups, clubs and leisure activities in your area.
- Sharing with you any opportunities to undertake voluntary work you might be interested in. We might also be able to help with the cost of some activities.
- Helping you to register to vote in elections.
- Offering work experience at the Council in an area of specific interest to you.



You have the right to be heard

You have the right to be involved in all decisions about your plans for leaving care and have a say in how we do things in Trafford.

- You have the right to support from an independent advocate if you want to challenge decisions about the support we give you.
- Independent advocates can inform you about your rights and help you to be heard in meetings. For more information, please phone 0161 912 5094.
- You have the right to see the information we keep about you, including the files and records written about you when you were in care. Please ask your Aftercare Worker about how to see your files.
- 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 annual Trafford Children in Care and Care Leavers Awards ceremonies.
- Celebrating your achievements with the Greater Manchester Care Leavers Awards
- Having members of the Aftercare Forum on the Corporate Parenting Board so that senior leaders can hear feedback about the service directly from care experienced young people.



Independence/Turning 25

There is no age limit to when you might need support or a familiar face to call upon.

After the age of 25 you won't have a Pathway Plan but we will have an open door for you to get in touch and let us know how life is going. This might be a special event like a wedding or starting a family. It might be for something trickier like coming out of custody or struggling with money.

As your corporate parent we are still here to help you and will offer advice and guidance to help you find your way.



Useful Contacts

It is always useful to store important numbers and below are a few that might be useful to you in your mobile phone contacts.

- Care Experienced Service
0161 912 5050
- Out of Hours Duty Team
0161 912 2020
- Trafford Housing Options
0161 912 5513/2230
- Cared For Children nursing
0161 912 3518
- Connexions 0161 911 8600
- Children in Care Council
0161 912 5094
- Citizen's Advice
08448269695/0300 456 2554
- 42nd Street 0161 228 7321
- Gorse Hill Studios
0161 866 8356

Trafford College

www.trafford.tscg.ac.uk

0161 886 7070

Government website student financial support

www.gov.uk/get-undergraduate-student-loan

Job Centre Plus

www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus

Citizens Advice

[Citizens Advice](#)

Trafford HOST

www.trafforddirectory.co.uk

FRANK

www.talktofrank.com

0300 123 6600

Early Break

www.earlybreak.co.uk

ACHIEVE

[Trafford Directory](#)

0161 358 0991

CORAM VOICE

www.coramvoice.org.uk

0808 800 5792

National Youth Advisory Service (NYAS)

www.nyas.net

Trafford Complaints

0161 912 1137

UCAS

www.ucas.com/discover

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

Support Tribunal

[Appeal an asylum support decision](#)

Refugee Council

www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

The Albert Kennedy Trust

[The Albert Kennedy Trust](#)





Care Experienced Service: 0161 912 5050

Emergency Duty Team: 0161 912 2020

Leaving Care team email:
aftercare@trafford.gov.uk
www.trafford.gov.uk



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