

Evaluation of *New Hub*: A Leaving Care Service Final Report

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Details of the methodology are contained in the Interim report, a copy of which can be accessed by emailing CLarkins@uclan.ac.uk.

Executive Summary: Evaluation of New Hub

New Hub is an outreach service that aims to deliver a package of support for care leavers including out of hours provision. Developing from a previous outreach team working with young people on the edge of care, New Hub is a new project funded by the Cabinet Office Vulnerable and Disengaged Young People grant fund. This report contains views from young service users and professionals regarding the process and short term outcomes of service delivery.

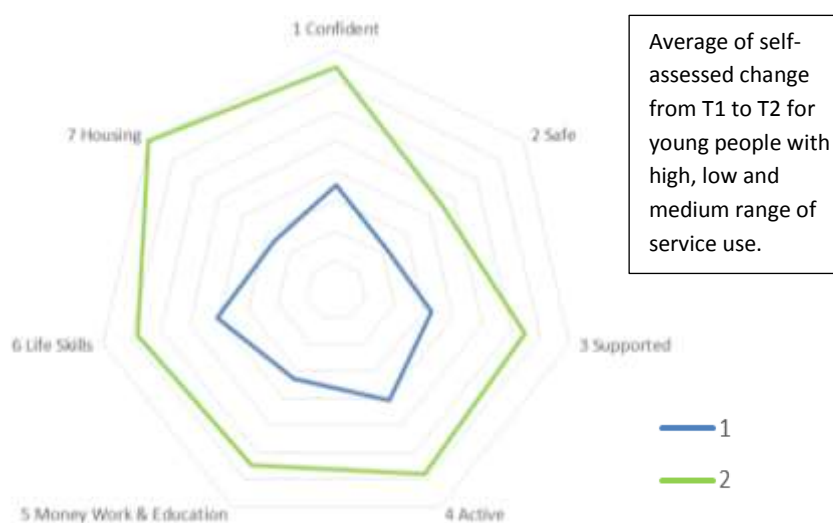
Process

185 young people were referred to New Hub. Of these, 113 are recorded as using the service after referral. Central SMS service recorded 424 contacts. 53 volunteers have been recruited and 48 are still part of the service.

According to monitoring data, young people most commonly accessed a service described as 'mentoring' (64), SMS (64), Attending Hubs (45) or Activities (48). Fewer young people were matched to 'training' (37), community assets (16) or volunteering (8). Only eight young people used six or more elements of the service, however 41 used 4 or 5 elements of the service.

Online service use was very limited, and there were problems with lack of venues making drop-in and informal activities difficult. Young people felt unwelcome in one building used and were meeting in cafés in another area. However the vast majority of young survey respondents agreed 'When I ask workers and volunteers at New Hub for help, they help me quickly'. The service did not deliver mentoring as conventionally understood, but one-to-one support was described as accessible and approachable by young people. The extent to which volunteers provided this service appears limited but the service was rated as very good or excellent by 11 of the 12 professional survey respondents. Rapid response and staff dedication were key elements of the service valued by young people and professionals. Links with Future Horizons and staff's personal networks appear to assist the process of enabling young people to access placements and community opportunities. Other professionals also described New Hub as effective communicators who showed understanding of other services. There was a lack of clear distinction between links to training, community assets and volunteering. Young people tended to volunteer within the service, often as part of their co-produced Re-Use it Scheme which was set up and is run by young people to deliver household goods to other young people.

Outcomes



Young people experienced improvements in all seven themes where the ARG sought to bring about progress: Confidence, Safety, Support and Inclusion, Active, Money Work and Education, Life Skills and Housing. The figure gives a notional average of where interviewees assessed themselves to be before (1) and after (2) New Hub support.

Graphic 1 - Interview based average self-assessment of progress in all seven themes

Variations in and explanations for outcomes

- Engagement in group activities was a significant factor that enabled increased confidence in those young people who accessed this part of the service.
- Young people felt safer because there was someone there in an emergency.

'If it weren't for them I don't think I'd be here.' (Young Person)

- Young people felt more supported or less isolated because services were offered to them consistently, proactively and out of hours. But New Hub also enable young people to maintain their relationships with other significant people and services.
- Taking part in activities was not wanted by all young people interviewed, but those who participated valued opportunities to build peer relationships, maintain contact with workers, have fun and support each other.
- Young people interviewed, echoed by professional survey respondents, reported help with finance, budgeting, work placement, education funding, payment for one-off training to get vocational licence and work based placements. Feeling 'career options are open to me' increased, except for those with the highest range of service use.

'I got kicked out of college once and ...New Hub helped me get back in ...[they] came to a meeting and spoke to them and like explained stuff and why I was acting like that and helped me get back in and stuff like that. So I'm in education now. Otherwise I probably wouldn't have been.' (Young Person)

- Life skills increase overall, but those using the wider range of services agreed less with statements about solving problems, staying calm and coping. An increase in self-care skills were noted however.
- Young people experienced a lot of change in their housing status during their use of New Hub. Those who were interviewed tended to report improvements although some young people were still waiting for adequate housing.

An additional outcome which the ARG did not foresee is that New Hub appeared to ease demand on other services.

'working together to share the load which has impacted on my service very much for the better.' (Professional)

The positive overall evaluation results are based on those people interviewed and who completed the surveys. They are therefore an indication of outcomes for those who were engaged with the service. Many young people were referred who were not able to benefit from this level of service. It is therefore essential that the New Hub is resourced at levels that ensure all young people referred can receive the levels of support they wish for.

Headline Recommendations

- 1 New Hub needs its own premises
- 2 Redefine the elements of 6 delivery
- 3 A van and storage for the Re-Use it Centre
- 4 Replicating Service with young people not yet supported
- 5 Awareness raising
- 6 Ring-Fenced Funding for Activities, Crisis and Training
- 7 Sustainable future for New Hub

1. Background

New Hub is an outreach service that aims to deliver a package of support for care leavers including out of hours provision. Developing from a previous outreach team working with young people on the edge of care, New Hub is a new project funded by the Cabinet Office Vulnerable and Disengaged Young People grant fund that is providing local bases in two hubs in Lancashire. Services are also delivered through recruitment of volunteers and linking young people to 'assets' (services and businesses) within local communities, a website and a text service. The service matches young people with workers or volunteers who act as befrienders and practical assistants providing practical support with access to education, training, housing or health services; linking young people with activities and services (e.g. work experience or sports clubs); and providing information and informal contact through telephone and texting services.

This evaluation explores the process of service delivery and change for the young people during their engagement with the service. Details of the service provision and evaluation were decided through dialogue with young people through action research groups. Young people also contributed ideas for service improvements through informal suggestions and their direct action in delivering new elements of the service as it evolved.

2. Evaluation Methodology

We held five Action Research Group (ARG) meetings attended by between 6 (2 young people, 2 volunteers, 2 staff) and 12 (5 young people, 5 volunteers, 2 staff) participants. The group met twice to define the theory of change and to produce the evaluation tools. The third meeting considered progress, revised plans for the evaluation and service development and reviewed case studies for this interim report. The fourth meeting reviewed online survey data and monitoring information and developed an interview schedule for young people. The fifth meeting reviewed the final data and approved the evaluation report. They made recommendations for service improvement that were fed back to the service in sessions 1, 3, 4 & 5.

They identified seven themes in which they aimed for the service to bring about change.

1. Confident
2. Safe
3. Supported and Included
4. Active
5. Financially secure (Money, Work and Education)
6. Life Skills
7. Housed

Outcome measures were mapped against these themes. In Session 4 the mapping was adjusted, so that Education and Work were included alongside the theme concerned with financial security instead of within the Active theme (Appendix A).

2.2 Monitoring Forms

Data collection was built into the referral, recording, review and monitoring system for the face to face service. Paper forms were completed where this fitted with service delivery but records were entered centrally by New Hub staff. Data was collected on age, gender, ethnicity and impairment, housing, education, employment and training status at three time points. The anonymised data was provided to the research team roughly at three-monthly intervals. Each young person and volunteer has been given a unique ID number to enable triangulation of the outcome findings. Monitoring forms were completed with or for 153 of the 185 young people referred to the service (Table 1).

2.3 On-Line Questionnaires

An online questionnaire asked about outcomes and process. All young people/volunteers in contact with the service were asked to complete these on-line surveys at their first point of contact (or as soon as possible thereafter, if young people are in crisis). However, there were ongoing difficulties in ensuring completion of this survey. To address this, following advice from the third ARG meeting, the survey design was improved to ease completion for young people who are dyslexic. IPads were donated to the project to enable access to the survey in the community. A student on placement with New Hub tried to increase completion rates by phoning service users and asking them to complete the survey or offering to do it while on the telephone. However, despite this work and perhaps because many young people were presenting in crisis or had only short term assistance, surveys were completed by only 71 young people (Table 1). Of these, 45 young people provided perspectives on quality of service delivery, and we use the most recent data given by each young person. Follow up surveys were only completed by 9 young people; 5 at an interval months of around 3 months and 4 at 6 months.

Table 1 – Evaluation Data Sources - Young People

Data Sources (No Young People)		Monitoring Forms – All Referrals (n=153)	Pre Intervention Survey (n=71)	Post Intervention Survey (n=9)	Interviews (n=20)	Group Interviews (n=8)
Gender	Female	78	22	4	12	5
	Male	75	21	3	8	3
	Not Known		28	2	0	
Age Range (years)	15-16	20	3	0	1	
	17-18	58	11	1	3	
	19-21	56	19	4	12	
	22-25	15	10	2	6	
	Not Known	2	28	2	0	8
Ethnicity	White British	139	42	7	20	
	Dual Heritage	4	1	0	0	
	SE Asian	6	0	0	0	
	Afro/Caribbean	2	0	0	0	
	Not Known	2	28	2	0	8
Disabled	Yes	14	5	5	2	
	No	137	36	2	14	
	Not Known	22	28	2	4	8
Location	Burnley	77	36	8	8	4
	Preston	54	29	1	7	4
	Lancaster	22	6	0	5	0

2.4 Interviews with Young People

Interview schedules addressed both outcomes and processes. Interviewees used a 10 point scale to compare the seven targeted themes prior to and while using New Hub then reflected on the causes of any progress and barriers encountered, the process and quality of service provision. To protect anonymity we use the term ‘young person’ against all quotes from this data and do not give young people’s ages, genders and which hub they used. As completion rates for the survey were so low we increased the number of one to one and pair interviews to 20 (18% of the known service users at the time of conducting the interviews). Half of these were young people from our sampling frame; half were substitutes suggested by New Hub to meet our sampling criteria. In addition, two

group interviews were held with a total of 8 young people. Interviews with these young people (Table 1) took place in April and May 2015.

Those young people involved in individual and group interviews tended to receive a wider range of service types from New Hub than the monitored cohort as a whole (Table 2). This may be due to the difficulty in contacting young people who have a low level of engagement with the service.

Table 2 – Service elements used by interviewees compared to cohort monitored

Number of service types accessed	Interviewees N=20	Cohort n=113
1	11%	29%
2	11%	13%
3	0%	2%
4	21%	14%
5	42%	33%
6	11%	3%
7	5%	6%

In our analysis we therefore pay particular attention to the significance of range of service use.

2.5 On-Line Survey with Stakeholders

A link to an online survey focused on outcomes and process was sent by New Hub to individuals and organisations who had been in contact with the service. The survey was open for ten days from 27th May 2015. A total of 15 responses were received but only 12 respondents completed the survey. Respondents' ages ranged from 32 to 61 years. Six are female, five are male and one respondent did not specify. Ten are managers, assistant managers or coordinators; others are outreach/support workers. The survey responses included a range of respondents from a variety of organisations and areas (Table 3 and 4).

Table 3 Number of professional survey responses by type of organisation

Type of organisation	Number of responses
Residential Care	3
Outreach Service	3
Local Authority	2
Other	4
Total	12

Table 4 Number of professional survey responses by Area

Local Authority Area	Number of responses
Area 1	6
Area 2	2
Area 3	4
Total	12

Respondents had supported a young person to access the service (n=4); referring care leavers (n=3) and knew a young person who was in contact with New Hub (n=3); had contact with New Hub volunteers (n=2); have been asked by New Hub to enable young people to use their service (n=2) and had worked closely with the New Hub manager of the Area 1 (n=1). None of the respondents had donated things or been asked by New Hub to provide employment/work experience/training opportunities.

3. Outputs and Process of Service Delivery

3.1 Referrals of Young People

185 young people were referred to New Hub. Of these, 113 are recorded as using the service after referral (Table 5). Details of 81 young people are recorded on the monitoring database and 41 of these completed the online survey. A further 32 completed the survey but we do not have full monitoring information available.

Table 5- Service Users for whom monitoring and or survey data is known

Data Sources (No Young People)		All Contacts (185)	Known Service Users (113)
Gender	Female	82	48
	Male	75	37
	Not Known	28	28
Age Range (years)	15-16	20	9
	17-18	58	25
	19-21	60	37
	22-25	15	12
	Not Known	32	29
Ethnicity	White British	143	82
	Dual Heritage	4	2
	SE Asian	6	1
	Afro/Caribbean	2	0
	Not Known	30	28
Disabled	Yes	14	12
	No	137	69
	Not Known	34	32
Location	Burnley	90	52
	Preston	69	46
	Lancaster	26	15

Referral routes were a combination of professional referral, peer recommendation and proactive recruitment through existing networks: being referred directly by a social worker, leaving care worker or children's home staff member; New Hub staff visiting residential provision (e.g. supported housing); current service users recommending it to their friends with care experience. Around a third of the young people who received a service may have had an existing relationship with staff (usually through staff members' previous work in children's homes) as staff contacted young people directly to offer a service. For 72 referrals young people could not be contacted by the New Hub staff.

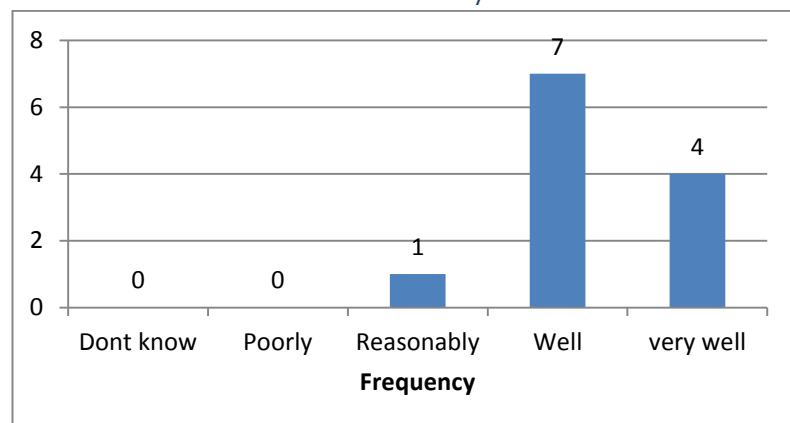
Young people interviewed all felt they had chosen when and whether to access the service, based on different needs and interests at different times:

'I've appeared today and access the service a bit more 'cause obviously everything was fine before and now it's getting to the scary part' (Young Person)

'I'm one of them, I'm not come back all the time and stuff like that, ...if I'm doing my own things at home and stuff and I'm in a good place, I'm fine ...And then they'll just get a random phone call one day and I'll be upset and they'll just come and get me and talk to me.' (Young Person)

Professional survey asked respondents about publicity and most respondents considered it well or very well publicised (Figure 1).

FIGURE 1 How well do New Hub staff/volunteers: Publicise their service to your organisation



Some concerns were raised however in the free text comments:

'New Hub was launched well however ...written information was not available at the time ...there are staff still not aware of the service.' (Professional)

Professional respondents most frequently knew about the service from someone at New Hub speaking to a member of their own organisation (n=7); by knowing New Hub staff previously (n=7); through publicity for the service (n=5); or, being contacted by staff they already knew (n=5). Only two respondents reported to have heard about the service through contact by New Hub staff who were previously unknown to them. One respondent heard about the service after being contacted by New Hub staff for accommodation and another had heard about it through a young adult who had sought support from the service themselves.

3.2 Forms of service provision offered

The monitoring form shows a spread in the range of services delivered (Table 6) and variations in the number of services used by each young person (Table 7).

Table 6 – Forms of service delivery recorded on the monitoring database

Service Delivered	Young People n81
Mentoring	64
SMS	64
Attend Hub	55
Activities	48
Training	37
Matched to community asset	10
Volunteering	8

Table 7 – Spread in numbers of services delivered recorded on the monitoring database

Number of service types received	Young People n81
1	21
2	9
3	2
4	12
5	29
6	3
7	5

Those 21 who received only one form of service might be mentored, receive SMS or telephone support, attend activities, or be matched to a community asset; only eight young people received six or seven forms of service. However, interviews reveal higher levels of service provision or confusion about the distinction between these services. In the sections below, therefore, the interview data is used to give greater details of these interventions.

3.4 Hubs and Drop-In

Two hub sites were set up and a third hub site was planned however difficulties were encountered with venues. By the time we were conducting interviews young people from New Hub no longer felt welcome in the building

It was good [before] cause we could use this building but now we can't ... when nobody knows what to do the same topic comes around, 'well only if we had an actual place...but basically they've said that New Hub shouldn't be mixing with other groups. ...Everyone just meets here but we know we can't really use the facilities. ... So the way I see it, the buildings being wasted. The building is being one hundred percent wasted'

In Area 1, problems with the building had not always been clearly explained to young people using the service. In Area 2, young people reported that no permanent premises had been established and young people were meeting with workers in cafés and restaurants. This had an impact on young people's perceptions of the service:

'I think sometimes they do activities and stuff like that [in New Hub] and on a Tuesday they do it here [in Area 2] but at [Area 1] ... they've actually got a place whereas here I don't think they have and I think that ... it's good to have the service but it's a bit ad hoc not having somewhere to go on a regular basis' (Young Person)

A lack of venue also had a negative impact on accessibility:

'I think a lot of people would use it, like I remember talking to them all about joining and I was like 'Where is it?' and they said they usually meet at like a café. Which, if it's a twenty four hour service, it's alright having a number but some people struggle to get [phone] credit so if it was based somewhere it would be easier wouldn't it' (Young Person)

Other services were sometimes seen as more accessible:

'It's not very welcoming in a way, ...you've to ring to try and get in and they've got all the key cards, ...It's one of them you book an appointment in a way. ... there's one [leaving care service] in TOWN and you can just literally walk in.' (Young Person)

A professionals' survey respondent also suggested the service would benefit from having its own base in Area 3 but acknowledged a decision about the location *'would be a difficult decision given geographical spread'*

Staff members had however been very flexible in trying to make place and ways of meeting

'Telephone, arrange to meet up in town, ... They've arranged to get the train tickets, they've left them here at County Hall and I've popped up on the train. [Worker 3] has come down and met me in the town centre' (Young Person)

Some young people did not want to use a drop in service:

'I'd rather them come and see me cause then you know it's just you and them and you're not in a place where loads of people are walking around. If they come to your house it's just you and your family and them cause your family's going to know about stuff anyway' (Young Person)

3.5 Activities

Of the 55 young people who are recorded as attending hubs, 47 took part in activities. The sorts of activities they engaged in included meals out, shopping, football, lazerquest, nail painting and bowling. The activities were a means of providing peer support:

'It's not just the staff, it's the young people who are here as well ... if I wanted to talk to someone about something, I know that they'd listen, cause they understand that a tiny bit,..., cause they're going through a tough time as well, do you know what I mean? So they understand that little bit more.' (Young Person)

In the online survey (n=45), young people tended to strongly agree that the group meals suggested by the ARG were a positive experience; 11 were not sure but none disagreed. It may be that these eleven young people did not access the shared meal opportunities as the qualitative data suggests that only a relatively small number of young people may access the drop/activities on a regular basis:

'It's usually just a little small group of us five of us and it's nice like that because we all have a laugh' (Young Person)

3.6 Digital service use

Access to the service through the central SMS service recorded 424 contacts. Although there is a website, an active web presence was not set up due to internal procedures within the local authority.

There were variations in young people's familiarity with the SMS service ranging from *'I don't know how it works'* to *'It goes to a system and then they say if it's like can you get Worker 2 to ring me then they'll send a message to Worker 2'*

This could be because the service was not needed *'I haven't had SMS slash web support cause I haven't needed it'*. But some explained its value in organising delivery of furniture and accessing 24 hour support.

No young people mentioned using the website. However the service remained digitally accessible as most young people reported just texting their known workers:

'We can just text Worker 3 or Worker 2' ' (Young Person)

'I've been having chats over text constantly with Worker 1 if I need anything and he'd quick reply' ' (Young Person)

Five young people also describing phone contact as a specific form of support:

'If there's ever anything I need to speak about or whatever or ask for advice or support or help I just pick up the phone'' (Young Person)

'New Hub are on 'til ten o'clock at night so if it's an emergency I can just speak to them, it's quite good'' (Young Person)

Texting, therefore, tended to be seen as a way of making direct contact with a designated worker in order to access other forms of support, rather than a specific form of service provision in itself. The accessibility of the service was underlined in interviews and 36 of the 45 young online survey respondents strongly agreed that 'When I ask workers and volunteers at New Hub for help, they help me quickly'. None disagreed.

3.6 Mentoring

The monitoring database records 64 young people as having received mentoring and this is the most consistently recorded form of service delivery. Some of the young people interviewed described mentoring in this way:

'It's where someone helps you to like get into education or helps you with buying your stuff like food and stuff'' (Young Person)

'It's just talking about anything you want to talk about'' (Young Person)

'they've just helped me along the way really....Just everything, like arguing with Social Workers... Just keeping me busy, providing emotional support when I've needed it.' ' (Young Person)

However for other young people interviewed, the meaning of mentoring was unclear *'I have one to one support when I go shopping but I don't know if that's mentoring'.*

One young person described mentoring that did not continue due to lack of contact:

'It only happened twice and I didn't hear from the person anymore. I don't know if she's still here to be honest. We had a one to one ... They said about coming back another week and then I think I ended up cancelling cause I was busy and then after that I didn't hear anything. I've had a new number since'' (Young Person)

In contrast, another young person described the importance of a 'mentor' maintaining regular contact:

'I regularly get phone calls off them just to say can we help you and it's 'no not this time maybe next time you can though'. I very rarely need help off people but it's nice to have that safety net there when you do. ... I use the SMS service and sometimes it can be I'm feeling really low and just need a friendly chat and it's quite good. '' (Young Person)

Those young online survey respondents who had been matched with a volunteer tended to agree strongly (26) or agree (6) that 'New Hub has matched me with a good volunteer'. However 13 young people were unsure or disagreed with this statement. This may be because they were not matched with a volunteer, a reflection on the

quality of the volunteer or because the meaning of the terms volunteer and matching are blurred within the service. Volunteers tended to work with young people in group settings due to concerns about ensuring high standard safety delivery and adequate support for people taking on volunteering roles. This may evolve as the project progresses.

Almost all (39/45) young people surveyed strongly agreed that 'I think workers and volunteers at New Hub are approachable'. The young people interviewed explained that workers were approachable because they were 'bubbly', 'friendly', 'welcoming', able to have a joke, proactive in offering help and that worker's gender was sometimes important:

'Fun because you have a laugh with them and you can, not bully them but have a joke with them' (Young Person)

'they do say if there's anything like if you need support or anything or whatever then they can help me. Like 'I'm always there for you'. They're really nice.' (Young Person)

'Well I'd give all of them respect it's just that I get on with the females better than the males, that's because of my past situation as well' (Young Person)

Professionals survey respondents stated their views of the quality of New Hub's work with young people leaving care on a scale ranging from 'poor' to 'excellent'. Five reported the quality of work was 'very good' and six said it was 'excellent'. An open question asked respondents to give details about their views of the quality of New Hub's work. The prevailing view was the ability of the service to respond quickly to the needs of care leavers:

'New Hub are responsive to requests from support from workers and young people and when contacted for help are able to do something to help' (Professional)

'Offers a bespoke response to the needs of the young people, seems relatively free from red tape (in their ability to respond to emergency situations and access funding) and offers a quick intervention' (Professional)

Praise for individual members of staff is prominent and their apparent commitment to young people viewed as an essential quality for the service to succeed:

'Whenever I have requested a service from New Hub the manager and Area 3 staff have always been receptive and willing and had a very much 'can do' and working together attitude and approach.' (Professional)

'I was impressed with the level of enthusiasm and quick responses by the New Hub team' (Professional)

'Worker 4's dedication and commitment to the role is outstanding. She should get an award for the effort she puts in and the energy she gives to making a difference to improving young people's lives.' (Professional)

'the workers from New Hub have always kept in contact with people they have placed here. We shall be referring young care leavers on to them in the near future.' (Professional)

The ability of the staff to form positive relationships with young people was also viewed as key to their engagement.

3.7 Matching to Community Assets

The monitoring database states that 11 young people have been matched to a community asset, including placement opportunities, drug and alcohol support services and food banks. The interviews suggest links to community assets may be even higher, depending on how this term is interpreted. Six young people interviewed described New Hub as succeeding in linking them to 'community assets'. They spoke of 'doing footy', 'linking to the college' and New Hub workers used existing links within their own networks and the local authority to provide young people with work and employment opportunities:

'they were opening a new [children's] home and I was helping them decorate and take photos' (Young Person)

'I'm looking at an apprenticeship ...the manager of New Hub ...has a friend who has a yard who I'm going to get an apprenticeship with ... It'll be horse care and riding' (Young Person)

'They've helped me really in my education 'cause they've got me a placement and I was struggling with a placement' (Young Person)

In interviews, four other young people also described currently receiving support with trying to access apprenticeships, placements or employment and showed their determination to gain employment:

'Every day I'm out really looking for work but if I'm not out, I'm online or I have to write on my CV.' (Young Person)

Monitoring database updates after the interviews suggest that the combination of young people's efforts and New Hub support had succeeded in helping these young people achieve work experiences or placements.

Through interviews and the monitoring database 16 young people who had more intensive engagement with New Hub are recorded as having been linked to community assets, through engagement with business, colleges and services providers. Links with Future Horizons and staff's personal networks appear to be beneficial.

Professionals' survey responses to how well New Hub relate to other organisations in terms of understanding, working and communicating with them reveal that in each area most respondents reported that New Hub fared either 'Well' or 'Very Well' (Figure 2-4)

FIGURE 2 How well do New Hub staff/volunteers: Understand your organisation/team/service

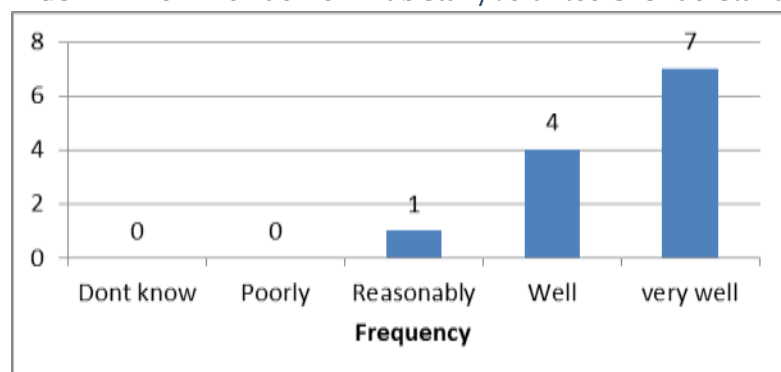


FIGURE 3 How well do New Hub staff/volunteers: Work with your organisation/team/service

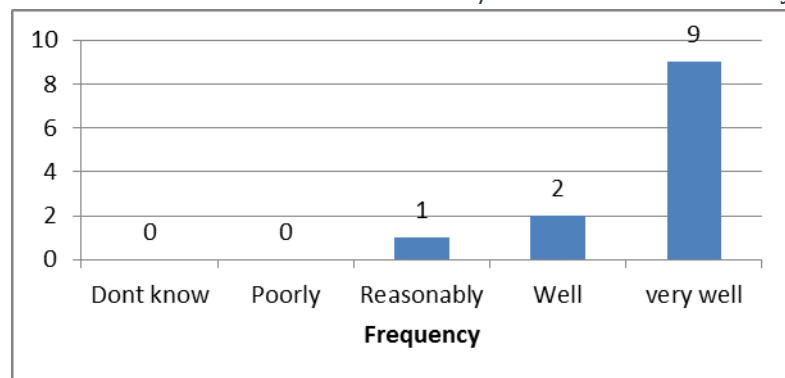
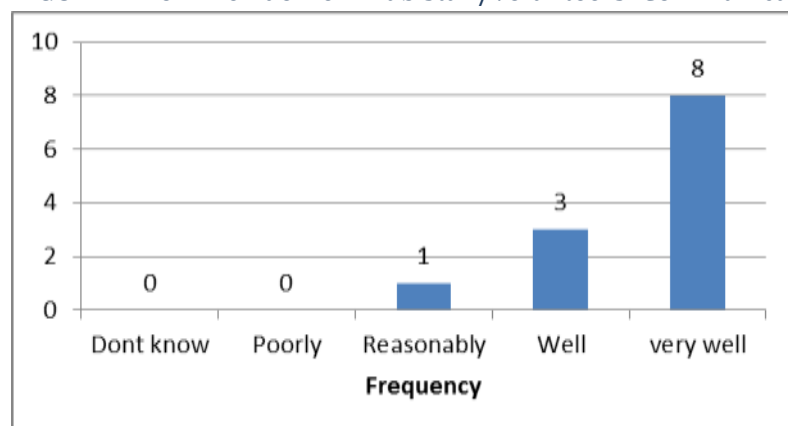


FIGURE 4 How well do New Hub staff/volunteers: Communicate with your organisation/team/service



An open question allowed respondents to explain their answers: three respondents reported that having previous experience in the field meant that New Hub staff had a good understanding of their organisations and the challenges they face:

'the service consists of people who have an understanding and experience in this field of work of the problems care leavers come up against' (Professional)

'New Hub staff and manager understand fully the needs of CLA and care leavers living independently, the difficulties they experience and also the pressures and difficulties experienced by CSC staff supporting them.' (Professional)

One respondent described New Hub staff as being accessible and responsive:

'I have had no problems in contacting the Manager for New Hub ...who has attended meetings and given presentations to our team and our partner agencies ... is always available to provide us with information as and when we ask for it and nothing appears to be too much trouble.' (Professional)

However another respondent suggested that communication between agencies could be improved:

'More communication from New Hub to provider, work in conjunction with provider, rather than doing what they think is best (this isn't a major issue, and is dependent on individual and complexities of the person).'

3.8 Training

Lancashire local authority training was to be delivered to volunteers and offered to some young people. However most young people interviewed did not report receiving any of this training and even those who were currently volunteering did not seem to have received any training. One young person received support with driving lessons, another is waiting to receive PAT training, so Re-Use It (see 3.9 below for details) can distribute second hand electrical goods.

As 9 of the 37 young people who are recorded in the monitoring database as having received training have also been linked to external community assets this may be how they are receiving training. It is also possible then that some young people have received more informal training, which they do not see as 'training'.

There is not enough clarity around this type of service to distinguish whether it always overlaps with either volunteering or matching to community assets. Clarity about the use of these terms would therefore be useful.

3.9 Volunteering and Coproduction

53 volunteers have been recruited and 48 are still part of the service. There are three ways in which young people could contribute to co-producing services within New Hub: as a 'mentor'; in the Re-Use it project and through the evaluation.

The monitoring database reports that eight young people have become involved in volunteering. Four young people interviewed also described having volunteered with New Hub. Another 2 young people planned to start in this role soon. In total, 10 young people are recorded as involved in volunteering.

'Re-Use It' volunteering project enables young people to both get access to and provide household goods. The idea for this service was prompted by one young person who said 'I have a spare bed I'd like to give to someone'. The project responds to the financial difficulties that all young people in contact with the service have reported by providing cost free household items. A local business donated a van to enable goods to be collected and delivered through this new project. Young people using New Hub were very appreciative of this service, although there have been some concerns about delays caused by inadequate storage space and the lack of a van to deliver.

Those young people involved in the action research steering groups (ARGs) have contributed to co-producing the service by designing the evaluation (see 2.1) and by acting on the emerging findings. At the very start young people recommend sharing meals as an important way of ending isolation. At later meetings they recommended clearer processes for deciding on the shared activities and ensuring that contact is maintained with all young people, whether or not they are known to be in crisis. ARG members and staff have also been trying to secure premises as this is part of the ARGs idea that having a dedicated New Hub space will enable young people's access to the project and the range of activities that can be offered.

3.10 Summary of service provision

Of the 55 young people who are recorded as attending hubs. This did not always mean attending a specified venue with its own New Hub identity and the lack hub venues was a significant concern for some young people. Attending the hub was usually linked to taking part in activities. But for 8 young people it was a way of accessing other forms of support. Taking part in activities were seen as a way of having fun, reducing isolation, accessing peer support and a vehicle for maintaining contact with workers. Texting, tended to be seen as a way of making direct contact with a designated worker in order to access other forms of support, rather than a specific form of

service provision in itself.

Mentoring was the most common form of service provision, but this did not seem to be mentoring in a conventional sense as it was not always one to one work with young people. Rather, in order to enable a wider range of people to take on a mentoring type role, volunteers tended to support young people when they were accessing the venue and additional staff provided one to one support, advocacy and signposting on specific issues. In total, 10 young people are recorded as involved in volunteering and 16 have been linked to community assets, through engagement with business, colleges and services providers.

These patterns of service use appear to fall into three types:

Level 1 (**low** range of services): Mentoring and/or drop in and text or phone based support

Level 2 (**medium** range of services): Level 1 plus activities

Level 3 (**high** range of services): Level 1 or 2 plus matching to community asset, training and/ or volunteering

It should be noted that any young person could access just a low range of services, but still receive an intense intervention service in moments of crisis. In the following section we explore whether the range of services accessed may have an impact on short term outcomes.

4. Short Term Outcomes

The data reported in this section is drawn from pre and post intervention self-completion online surveys (n=9), monitoring forms (n=13) and interviews (n=20). This section is organised according to the themes of change identified by the Action Research Group (ARG). The volume of data is insufficient to allow reliable statistical analysis and therefore no measures can be judged to show significant difference. However a relatively high number of interviews have been conducted (18% of the cohort). We therefore provide quantised rather than quantified data, and indicate change that are explored in more detail through qualitative analysis¹. To aid comparison we use a graphic to show notional improvements or deterioration in young people's self-assessment against the various outcome measures and variation according to range of service use (Sandelowski 2001).

Based on the interview data, Graphic 1 shows an average of where young people assessed themselves to be on a scale of 1-10 before New Hub and at the moment when interviewed. The blue line indicates the starting points. The green line shows their assessment of progress once receiving a service. For those interviewed, Graphic 1 indicates, on average, an increased perception of confidence, safety, support (reduction in isolation), activity, financial security (including future security through access to work and education/training), life skills and suitable housing. If the green line had moved inwards, this would indicate a deterioration.

Graphic 1 - Interview based average self-assessment of progress in all seven themes



In the sub sections below we explore the relationships between these changes and levels of service use and we compare them with data from the pre and post intervention survey.

¹ Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Teddlie, C. (2003) A framework for analyzing data in mixed methods research. In A. Tashakkori & C. Teddlie (Eds.), *Handbook of mixed methods in social and behavioral research* (pp. 351-383). Sage: Thousand Oaks, CA.

4.1: Confidence

The interviews indicate that young people tended to feel more confident once they were receiving support from New Hub. Confidence increased most for those who were receiving a medium range of services (that is those who were accessing activities). However, a minority of young people attending the group interviews, who identified as previously having very low confidence, or very limited social opportunities before they accessed New Hub felt that New Hub had significantly developed their confidence. The pre and post intervention surveys tended to indicate young people liking themselves less the second time surveyed, although in a similar pattern as shown by the interviews, those who also engaged in a medium range of services (including activities) showed an increase against this measure.

The qualitative data suggests that when confidence was boosted this occurred in three ways: confidence to communicate;

'By basically coming down and speaking to somebody and having them there as a support network on my behalf ...they helped to boost your confidence to speak to somebody' (Young Person)

Confidence to do things for themselves and others;

'[Before] I wouldn't have been able to go up to his house and help him, I wouldn't have been able to do it' (Young Person)

And, confidence to sort out their problems;

'I didn't have any confidence ...I thought everything was against me ...Now I'd be able to do it with support but before New Hub I wouldn't have been able to do it... They kind of helped build my self-esteem. ...to say I need this done I need that done, to ring this company cause I need to sort things out' (Young Person)

As shown in this last example, this also helped young people build their self-esteem.

The majority of the professionals' survey respondents reported the most beneficial aspects of New Hub are the increased care leavers' confidence and self-esteem (n=11). Improved confidence and self-esteem resulted from the emotional support offered by New Hub staff:

'They gave support and understanding to this person so that he did not feel alone' (Professionals)

'Their flexible and adaptable approach has meant care leavers can develop confidence and aim to thrive with the knowledge that there is someone available for support/ guidance should this be required' (Professional)

'...help to rebuild that confidence back by introducing to other young people like them selves' (Professional)

4.2: Safety

The interviews indicate that young people tended to feel safer once they had accessed New Hub, however levels of safety for young people with high levels of service use tended to remain fairly low. Young people did not attribute their lack of safety to their level of service use. Some young people expected they would feel safer once they moved house *'it's a shame I'm not meeting you in a few months cause that might have changed'*. Another said feeling unsafe was part of a long term pattern:

'I don't feel safe at all. I'm always on the phone to try and distract myself from people but I don't like going out of the house and my boyfriend walks me to the bus stop and back every day' (Young Person)

Survey responses to the statement 'I can bounce back after disappointment or when something goes wrong' shows that young people tended to agree more strongly. Responses to the ARG's questions associated with safety (see Table 7) asked respondents to assess how they felt based on a 5 point scale from (-2 to +2)². Responses suggest that on average young people felt safer.

TABLE 7 Safety

	T1	T2
ARG: There are people I can depend on to help me if I really need it	1	1.67
ARG: If something went wrong, no one would come to my assistance	-0.33	0.22
ARG: There are people I can count on in an emergency	1	1.67

There tended to be more of a shift in feeling supported if help was really needed or in an emergency (Table 5).

The help in staying safe that New Hub provided sometimes showed a delicate balance of allowing young people autonomy and confidentiality whilst ensuring a certain safety line is not crossed:

'I regularly hurt myself cause of depression and I can't tell my after care worker anything like that because he'll just go straight away right I've got to do this, I've got to do that. Whereas New Hub go 'Right we should do this', 'Can you tell us that you are safe?' and 'We can be here to talk to'. I know I can approach them with that cause they'll deal with it professionally so I do feel safety's more in the confidentiality knowing you can trust them. I do think trust is a big part of feeling safe with someone.' (Young Person)

Two professionals' survey respondents also noted that the out of hours service had proved to be crucial:

'I feel that the care leaver would have become at serious risk to himself without their dedication and out of hours support' (Professionals)

This is echoed by young people in the group interviews who were often surprised/impressed how seriously it was taken when they contacted workers out of hours and whilst some initially expected the response to be instant, rather than within a few hours, this was felt to be an important part of the services. It was often described as an indicator of how committed the staff were to supporting them "no matter what time it is, they will always be there for me ". New Hub was felt to be generally faster at responding to requests for help than other services they had encountered, and gave prompt feedback.

4.3: Supported and Included

All young people interviewed, regardless of the range of services they engaged with, reported increased feelings of support and or less isolation. Feeling supported appeared to be related to availability and workers being proactive in maintaining contact:

'I feel a lot less isolated. I feel a lot like I'm not on my own now, I've always got that person that I can ring and just talk to and they understand me and I don't know, it just feels weird saying that.' (Young Person)

² This is a revision of the measure as at T1 we initially asked young people to use a 10 point scale but this was later judged too complicated.

'So it's nice to have someone call me and say do you need anything rather than me having to go you know, 'I kind of need this'. Cause I'll never make that first move and ask for help but if someone asks me I don't mind admitting 'Well yeah I could do with it'. I'd rather sit in struggling than have to text someone and anxiously wait for a reply off them. I don't like that.' (Young Person)

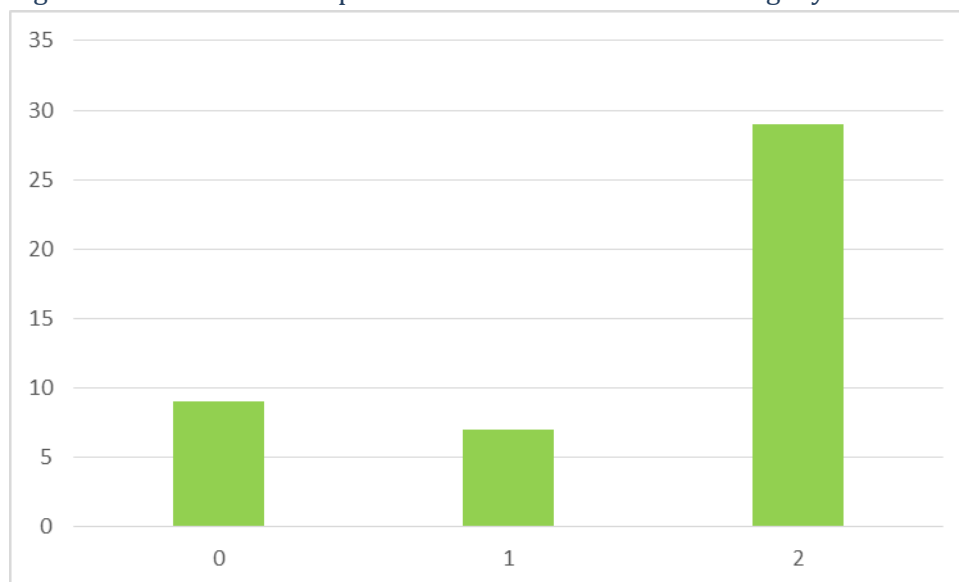
'It was just I never had anybody there to talk to that's probably why I used to feel down all the time but then when New Hub became involved it was like there was constantly someone there' (Young Person)

Support was also on offer in special circumstances:

'We know if we need someone they will be there. Worker 4's already said, ...she normally turns her phone off at night but from now on until [my partner] gives birth she's keeping her phone on overnight cause obviously I'll ring the ambulance then I'll ring Worker 4.... And if we need her she said she'll come. At least we know there's someone there cause I don't speak to my parents. My dad's passed away and my mum is just a muppet so I don't speak to any of them' (Young Person)

Over half of the young people interviewed also described other people they could turn to for support. Given the importance of other sources of support and a concern that any service might encourage dependency, it is encouraging that young people who completed the online survey (n=45) tended to strongly agree that New Hub enabled them to maintain their relationships with other people, although 9 young people neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement (Figure 6).

Figure 6: New Hub has helped me be confident in maintaining my relationships

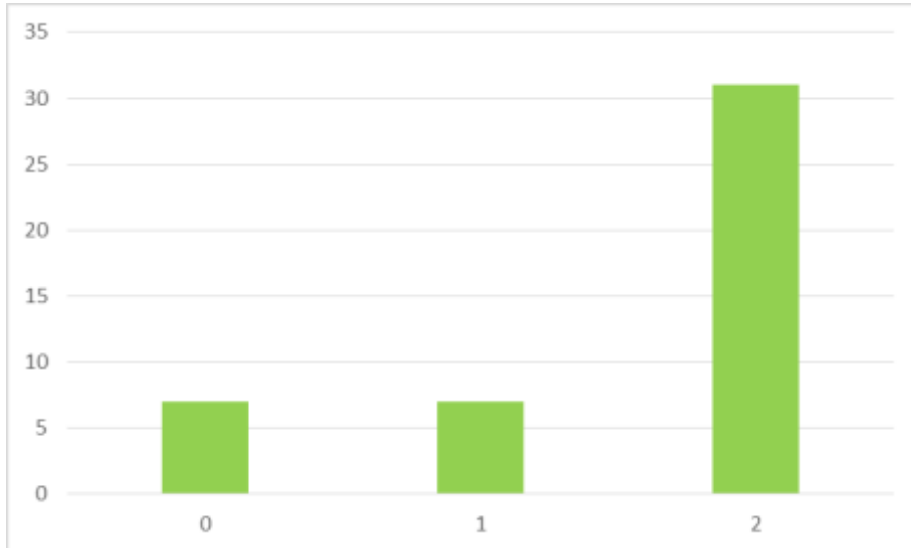


However, for some young people New Hub were also able to address the gap in provision when other services ceased to be available:

'The welfare at college used to help me but I'm over eighteen now so they can't really do a lot anymore'
(Young Person)

New Hub have also worked to access support for young people with other agencies, as survey data (Figure 7) indicate that 38/45 young people agreed or strongly agreed that they had been put in touch with agencies and organisations that can help if needed.

Figure 7: New Hub has put me in touch with agencies and organisations that can help me if I need it



There were some examples of this joint working in interviews:

'Well they [New Hub] mentioned something about it and my old placement sorted it as well so it's kind of like mixed... it joined them together' (Young Person)

However there were also some examples of New Hub challenging existing service on behalf of the young people they were supporting:

'I've tried all the other solutions on my own but by them helping me makes other services jump through hoops a bit more to get things done' (Young Person)

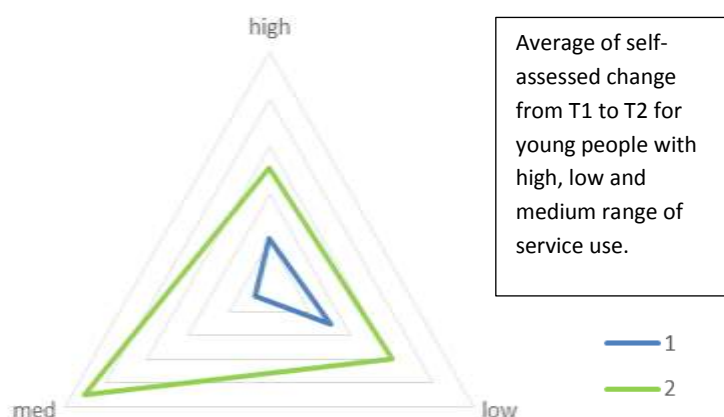
The majority of professional survey respondents also reported the most beneficial aspects of New Hub are the increased amount of support received by care leavers (n=11)

'...allowing their move to independence be less stressful than it may have been.' (Professional)

4.4: Active

On average, activity levels increased for 16 of the interviewed young people (Graphic 2) and particularly for those accessing a medium range of New Hub's interventions (Mentoring and/or SMS and drop in support PLUS activities) who started from very low levels of activity.

Graphic 2: Interview based average self-assessment of Activity Levels (n17)



A small increase in survey respondents agreeing *'I am able to access leisure opportunities'* was also observed.

Those young people for whom taking part in activities was a big change in their lives described how this decreased their isolation:

'I became very isolated because I don't know many people round here, I don't go out and don't see anybody, I just sleep the day away basically. So coming down here just opens me up just to get out of the house and staring at four walls' (Young Person)

Of those young people who did not report any increase in their activity levels one was already very active and New Hub helped them maintain this or another was too busy with work.

"cause I still go on activities, like I'm just not in care anymore but we still go places' (Young Person)

'haven't done the activities with them at the moment, ...been asked about them but obviously with ...having jobs it's been difficult. Now that I'm out of work I might be able to' (Young Person)

Another did not feel ready to participate in groups.

'I just no [I'll not come to activities], I'm not a people person, I don't like being around people. I don't like being in a crowd bigger than four anyway.' (Young Person)

For those who took part, being involved in group activities helped young people have fun, feel OK about having problems and enabled them to support each other:

'they all put a smile on my face, it's just one of those things, we go out and we have a laugh. It's that different group of people that you probably don't have around you...you can be yourself around them...We've all got problems... sometime I get that vibe off YP1 that he's not having a good day or YP2's not having a good day, or any of them really, do you know what I mean? And I feel like it's my job to go over and make them smile and stuff and just to cheer them up for that little bit.' (Young Person)

Young people also reported choosing which of the activities they would take part in:

'I don't like going out to activities like bowling and pictures, ... But I do like going out and having something to eat with them and all sitting round and having a laugh and that and talking and what they've done in New Hub and stuff like that.' (Young Person)

The cost of transport to attend activities was covered for some young people however different interviewees had differing perspectives on whether this made it appropriate to travel, with some young people being hesitant to travel from Area 2 to Area 1, even if costs were covered.

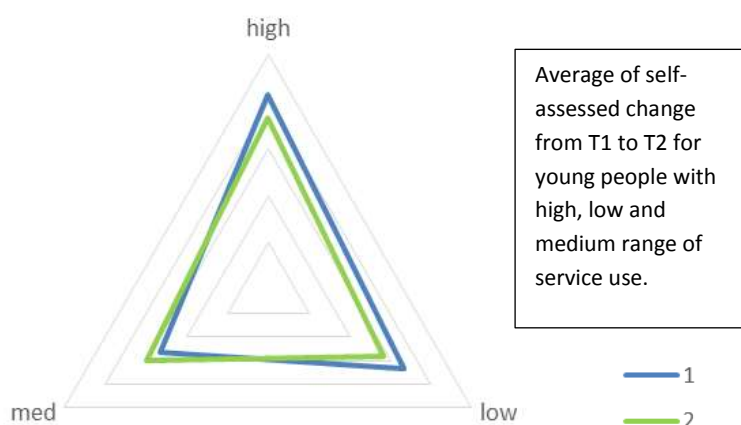
One professional's survey respondent noted:

'One of our young people got work experience and goes out socially (which they didn't used to do as much)' (Professional)

However, four young people raised the need for 'A lot more activities'.

The survey revealed no change in how satisfied young people felt with their lives on average (Graphic 3) and range of service use did not seem to be a variable, as slight changes in the extent to which people agreed with this statement were observed for those with high, low and medium levels of service use.

Graphic 3: Survey based average self- assessment of: Overall, how satisfied are you with your life?



4.5: Money, Work and Education

At T2, monitoring form data on main activity/activities shows young people's status in education, employment and training for only 42 young people (Table 6) and there is not sufficient data to map change consistently.

Table 6 – Main activity at T2

NEET?	Total
A	11
B	5
C	5
D	3
E	13
F	2
N/A	3

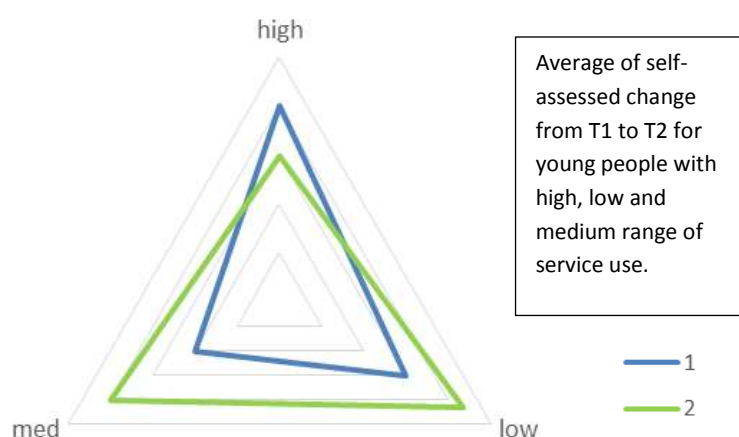
However, all young people interviewed reported positive change in relation to education, work and /or money and range of service use did not appear to be a significant factor in the extent of improvement they reported. For young people receiving medium and low ranges of service provision, these improvements tended to be related to help with finance or household goods in unexpected or difficult situations including bus passes to get to work or training, money to pay bills, food parcels.

One professionals' survey respondent also stated that the Re-use it service where donated furniture is passed onto young people helps to provide essential items to young people which otherwise would be difficult to provide with limited funding:

The stock of furniture etc from house clearances and other sources assists in stretching finite resources of the LA and Setting up Home allowances. (Professional)

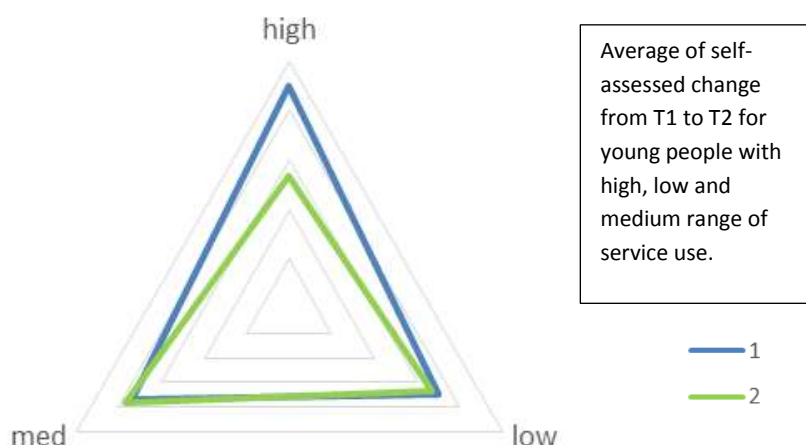
Rather than facilitating dependency, the survey data suggests that these forms of financial and practical support were accompanied by support with budgeting which increased the extent to which the statement 'I am able to prioritise my money to meet my basic needs' was agreed with by those who received medium or low ranges of service interventions (Graphic 4).

Graphic 4: Survey based average self-assessment of 'I am able to prioritise my money to meet my basic needs'



It is of concern that budgeting skills appeared to fall for those young people who received the highest range of services, (including matching with community assets, training of volunteering). Further, agreement with 'A range of different career options are open to me' also falls for these high range of service users (Graphic 5). ARG members suggested an explanation for this may be that over time, people become more aware of the difficulties they will face.

Graphic 5: Survey based average self-assessment of 'A range of different career options are open to me'



New Hub appears to be flexible in responding to the financial needs young people presented with. One young person explained that when in education they may need help with budgeting.

'I've always been in education, ... but money is a problem for me, I'm in a lot of debt and I'm quite dangerous with money. ... But New Hub have recommended me to the money advice service and they have said we understand you live with depression and a side effect of that is being very erratic with your money and they have said that's not the biggest mistake in the world. ...we can be here to help you recover from that and things like food hampers ... I know they're there.' (Young Person)

Whereas those in work or education also received help to maintain it.

'I got kicked out of college once and ...New Hub helped me get back in ...[they] came to a meeting and spoke to them and like explained stuff and why I was acting like that and helped me get back in and stuff like that. So I'm in education now. Otherwise I probably wouldn't have been.' (Young Person)

'They pulled my funding for my tuition fees rightly or wrongly but I went to University under the impression that they would pay for me. Then they pulled it and then I tried to get in contact ... couldn't get hold of anyone.' (Young Person)

'[New Hub are] funding my renewal licence for my door badge' (Young Person)

For those not in employment, help was given with work placement experience and advice on budgeting:

'he's got me my placement for college. He's also got other people on my course placements.' (Young Person)

'when I first moved in they were like try twenty pounds worth of electric and see how long that lasts you ... ways of cutting down and stuff like that like getting a halogen heater or whatever ..., really simple stuff like that' (Young Person)

Some also received emergency help with money:

'there's been a few times where job centres not paid me and they've refused to pay me and I've had to go three weeks without any money and New Hub have helped provide me with food and one-off gas and electric ...they can't afford to do that all time....before I had New Hub I always try and ask family or friends first and if they can't help me then that's when I turn to New Hub. But obviously before New Hub came along if my family and friends didn't help me I had to do without' (Young Person)

This was in contrast to a lack of flexibility and responsiveness from social services leaving care support:

'I said to my [leaving care worker] is there any way I could lend money or anything like that for food I said I can bring receipts back for you ...And they'd be like no or don't get back to you ...with these like they get back to you straight away'. (Young Person)

Other young people had been offered help with education or training but felt the timing was not right to take this up:

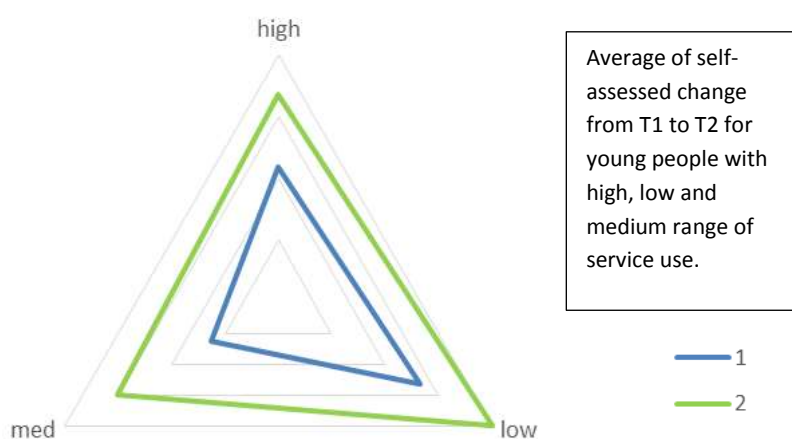
'They've offered to help me with like to try and get training and maybe volunteer ... at the moment it's not something I'm really concentrating on at the moment.' (Young Person)

Six professionals' survey respondents also reported an increase in the work experience/skills of care leavers. The types of support described as being provided by New Hub included help with access to education and employment, advice on receiving appropriate benefits, managing accommodation and accruing furniture.

4.6: Life Skills

Regardless of the range of services received, on average the young people interviewed indicated that they had improved their life skills during the time they had received New Hub support (Graphic 6)

Graphic 6: Interview based self-assessment of life skills

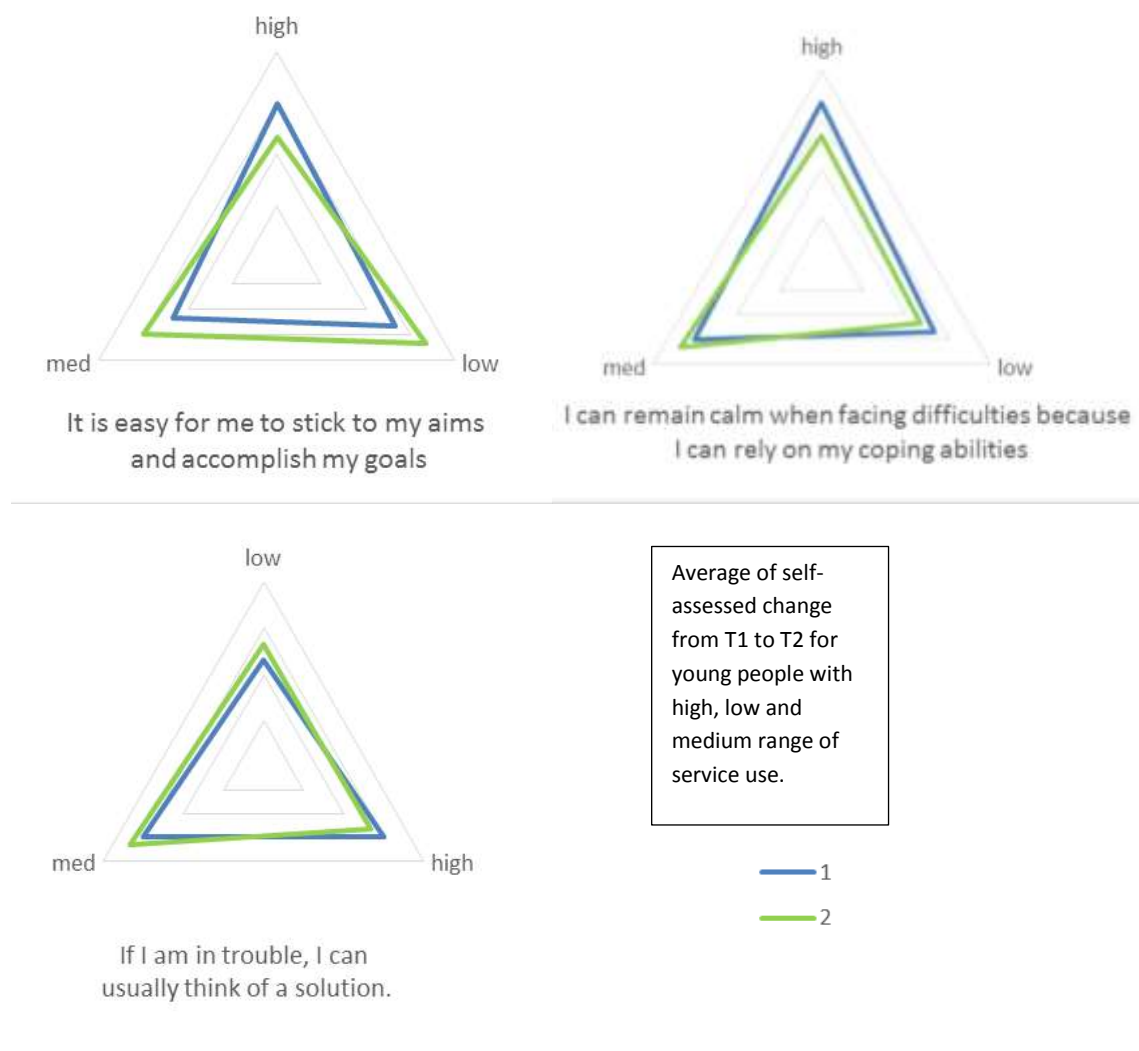


Being able more able to cook a meal was mentioned by 6 young people interviewed, and of those who completed the survey twice, 8/9 agreed more that 'I can cook and prepare a meal'. Some young people said they developed these skills on their own. Others indicated that New Hub had given them some instruction on how to cook.

However survey data indicates that only 1/8 respondents agreed more that 'I have the skills I need to do well in the workplace'. Indeed four young people indicated they agreed less with this statement. This is perhaps unsurprising as the ARG focus for change within New Hub is geared towards life skills applicable inside and

outside of work. Survey data (Graphic 7) shows that there tended to be only small changes in these skills, but that changes were greater in relation to sticking to goals and achieving aims than against other measures. Again, those with the highest level of service use reported agreeing less with these statements.

Graphic 7: Survey based average self-assessment of coping and problem solving skills



Other skills were noted however. Five young people interviewed reported increases in their ability to look after themselves. This ranged from having a shower and eating properly to reducing drug and alcohol use and recognising the need to access services.

'New Hub they noticed that I was thinking a lot about my past like my mum and dad and I kept on asking questions like why? And why me? ... like my social worker's put it towards me and I've always gone 'fucking counselling?' do you know what I mean, I don't want to do that!...But actually sitting down and thinking about it as I was asking Worker 2 questions, Worker 2 were answering back to me and I was thinking well yeah it does make sense ..., so when Worker 2 put it like that, I though well yeah I might as well just give it a go cause I need to get rid of my demons (Laugh).' (Young Person)

4.7: Housed

New Hub staff struggled to maintain consistent records for three reasons. There were changes in administrative support; young people in crisis took precedent over completing monitoring data and young people did not always wish to participate in form filling. We therefore do not have Monitoring Form data which staff had intended to complete at three monthly intervals or when the intervention ceased. Table 7 nonetheless shows the general changing profile of the housing status of all young people recorded as in contact with the service at the six month intervals - T1 (October 2014) and T2 (May 2015). At T2 proportionately fewer young people (39%: 50 %) were living in residential care and in Independent living (41%: 25%). There were proportionately more young people living in semi-independent living, lodgings, foyers, with former foster carers but also more young people in emergency accommodation and Bed and Breakfast.

TABLE 7: Where are you currently living?

Monitoring form data on Accommodation status at T1 ad T2	T1 n=44	T2 n=102
With parents or relatives	1	3
Community home or other form of residential care such as an NHS establishment	22	40
Semi-independent, transitional accommodation (e.g. supported hostel, trainer flats); self-contained accommodation with specialist personal assistance support (e.g. for young people with disabilities, pregnant young women and single parents); and self-contained accommodation with floating support	1	5
Supported lodgings (accommodation, usually in a family home, where adults in the “host family” provide formal advice and support)		1
Ordinary lodgings, without formal support		4
No fixed abode/homeless		3
Foyers and similar supported accommodation which combines the accommodation with opportunities for education, training or employment		6
Independent living, e.g. independent tenancy of flat, house or bedsit, including local authority or housing association tenancy, or accommodation provided by a college or university. Includes flat sharing	18	25
Emergency accommodation (e.g. night shelter, direct access, emergency hostel)		5
Bed and breakfast		2
In custody		1
Other accommodation – including in armed forces	1	2
With former foster carers - where the young person has been fostered and on turning 18 continues to remain with the same carer who had fostered them immediately prior to their reaching legal adulthood, and where the plan for their care involves their remaining with this former foster family for the future	1	5

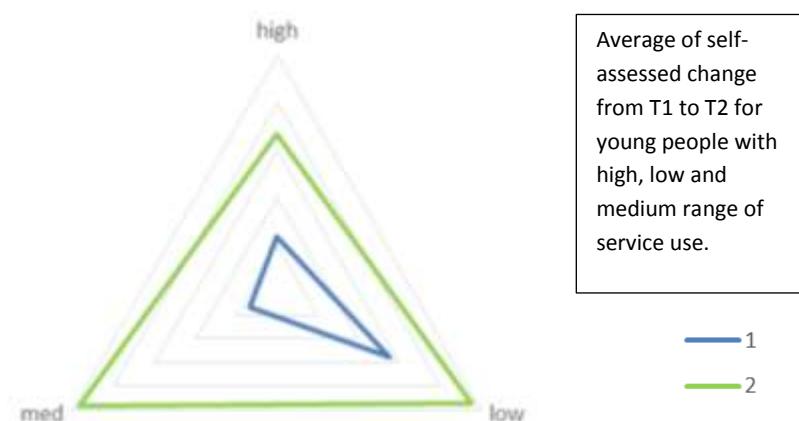
Tracing the changing status of the 18 young people for who we have data at both time points shows only seven of remained in the same accommodation at both time points.

8 young people were living in residential care at the first time point and 6 of these continued to be living in residential care at T2. The other two were living independently.

7 Young people lived independently at T1 and of these, one remained living independently at T2. Two had moved back into residential care. Two had moved into semi-independent living. Two were in emergency accommodation.

Young people interviewed tended to report improvements in their housing status during their time with New Hub and those who used a medium range of services reported the greatest increase in satisfaction with their housing (Graphic 8).

Graphic 8 - Interview based average self-assessment of housing



New Hub provided help resolving rent arrears and housing benefit disputes.

‘helping me with money problems with rent arrears due to no fault of my own, social services were paying half of it and didn’t pay the half so I got into quite a bit of debt. ... rent was ringing me up saying no you’re not paying and I said I’ve rung them up and they said that they are. There were loads of complications and that and I spoke to Worker 1 and we sorted it out.’ (Young Person)

They also provided support in being rated as in priority housing need although some young people were still waiting for adequate housing.

Through the Re-Use It scheme, young people were also provided with household items to improve their comfort in the accommodation they had secured.

‘they rang me and said do you need anything from us and I was like well my couch has broken, the frames broken...and Worker 2 said we’ll ring you back in an hour and if you’re free next week we’ll drop off two couches for you.’ (Young Person)

‘the Re-Use It centre that they’ve made up ... that’s a good thing’ (Young Person)

One professionals’ survey respondent pointed out, however, that donations to the service such as furniture could not be kept long term due to the lack of storage space.

4.8 Summary of short term outcomes

There is mixed evidence on the extent to which the service raised confidence; those interviewed generally indicated a positive shift but this was not replicated for young people in focus groups and those responding to the survey. Some young people had increased feelings of safety but others indicated continuing problems, this may be indicative of underlying issues that New Hub was working to address, like unsuitable housing. However young

people consistently described feeling emergency support was available. Proactive and crisis support from New Hub and links with other agencies were effective in making interviewed young people feel less isolated. Young people tended to be more active, but some felt less able to access leisure opportunities than at the beginning of their time with New Hub and some people were less satisfied with their lives. All young people interviewed reported positive outcomes in relation to money, work and education; however some young people accessing a high range of service indicated a fall in the extent to which they could budget to meet their needs. The Action research group suggests that this may be due to 'reality hitting' and the increased difficulties that young people experience once they are living more independently. Young people interviewed had however increased their life skills, but once again, those accessing a high range of services found it less easy to stick to their goals and rely on their own abilities to deal with difficulties. This may be an indication that New Hub has been directing the intense forms of service engagement towards those who most needed this level of intervention. There was an increase in the proportion of young people in inappropriate housing between the two time points monitored however young people interviewed indicated an improvement in their housing situations. This difference may be explained by leaving care being a time of transition from residential care towards less secure housing or trying out independent living before moving towards more supported or semi-independent housing solutions.

5. If it weren't for New Hub

This evaluation was primarily concerned with measuring outcomes against the themes identified by young people and volunteers in the Action Research Group. However, through the interviews, the focus groups and the professional survey evaluation participants were asked to comment freely about the contribution. 'If it weren't for New Hub' became a recurrent phrase in the interviews. They highlighted the contribution of New Hub in ensuring young people's safety and speaking up.

Safety

'If New Hub weren't here I think I'd be in a bigger ditch than I already am, kind of thing.' (Young Person)

'I'd probably end up a druggie now or an alcoholic if it weren't for New Hub I'd say.' (Young Person)

'If it weren't for them I don't think I'd be here.' (Young Person)

'there were one person who got kicked out on a day, literally they had no notice it was just out that day... and [New Hub] managed to get them somewhere safe to live that day. Someone needs to do that, they can't just leave a young person out on the street but there's no other support to do that or other services that I know of and I've been in the care system quite a long time' (Young Person)

Speaking up

'I got kicked out of college once and ... New Hub helped me get back in ... like explained stuff and why I was acting like that a.... So I'm in education now. Otherwise I probably wouldn't have been cause I don't like speaking to people I don't know' (Young Person)

'Leaving Care classic example, they won't listen to me... when I went to a meeting they shot me down and basically called me a liar and all sorts, so if I didn't have Worker 1 I'd probably be in a mess now.' (Young Person)

Easing Demand on other Services

These themes were echoed in the professionals' survey and respondents were appreciative of the additional support that New Hub provided. All twelve respondents reported that the introduction of the service in their area had impacted on their work. Two of the respondents, both of whom worked for outreach services, reported that the service helped to ease their own workloads:

'It has helped provide additional support to the families of the young people I work with this in itself has benefitted the young people and our service by applying a multi-agency approach and working together to share the load which has impacted on my service very much for the better.' (Professional)

Two other workers suggested that the vital out of hours service provided by New Hub helps to ease the load on the EDT (emergency duty team) and also provides assurance for workers knowing young people have someone to contact in case of an emergency:

'I know that New Hub will support families outside of office hours and at weekends.' (Professional)
'they provide support out of hours and I know that the young person has someone to contact in an emergency' (Professional)

The survey asked respondents to add any further comments about the service. From the concluding comments it is apparent that support for the service is strong and the effect the service has had on the lives of the young people it has served so far has been indispensable:

'I believe the service does an amazing job with care leavers and offers them the best chance possible to thrive and become independent adults' (Professional)

'I feel that without this service many of the young people - Care Leavers would be experiencing further and more complex difficulties had they not received the support from New Hub.' (Professional)

6. Recommendations

6.1 New Hub needs its own premises

Throughout the evaluation young people consistently stressed the importance of a venue

'Just get a base...Cause it's an identity thing as well then'. (Young Person)

'just be able to get in with ID card's (Young Person)

'a set place for people to meet because it's good to have the service but it's a bit ad hoc not having somewhere to go on a regular basis' (Young Person)

'A Preston base as well' (Young Person)

'It'd be a lot easier for people who are in Preston to get a lot of help cause other people, not myself but they'll think 'I don't want to go all the way to Burnley' (Young Person)

6.2 Redefining the 6 Services

Young people interviewed and in the ARG were unclear about the SMS service and a Web service had not been promoted. Many were also unclear about what mentoring and matching with community assets means. Through the evaluation co-production process and in response to the final evaluation report we recommend that the six services become:

1. One-to-one support (maintaining contact, signposting, advocacy and emotional support; sometimes carried out by a volunteer, but more frequently by workers).
2. Drop In at Hubs
3. Leisure Activities
4. Access to Training, Education and Placements
5. Volunteering for peer support, Re Use It or the Steering Group
6. Crisis Help

With a clearer definition of these services, information for young people should be developed so that every young person is given a full briefing on the full range of services, as they enter the service and through regular reminders. This in part would enable New Hub to move from being seen as a crisis response service to achieve longer term positive outcomes for young people, through engaging young people in the more proactive elements of the service that help with longer term development.

6.3 A van and storage for the Re-Use it Centre

The Action Research Group strongly recommend that a van and storage space should be secured in order to enable the ReUse It service to work effectively. The Re-Use It enables young people to develop skills and confidence as volunteers. It also provides other young people with the household items they require. It links young people to their communities as there appears to be a continual stream of people wanting to give to New Hub. It thereby appears to enable young people and their communities to contribute to others in a form of 'thick reciprocity', that is giving to others without receiving a direct return.

6.4 Replicating Service with young people not yet supported

A significant proportion of young people referred did not take up a service. This may be because the young person chose to not do so or that there was a delay between referral and contact being made. Some of the referred young people may, however, have used the SMS-based services as this may not be linked to the monitoring forms.

Around 40% of the young people for whom we have data had only received mentoring or used the drop in. The proportion receiving only these forms of support may however be even greater, as monitoring and evaluation data usually records those service users who have the greatest engagement with a service. It is therefore likely that only a small proportion of service users accessed opportunities like the activities, training and volunteering.

Young people who had accessed activities with peer valued these, and this contributed significantly to raising confidence and although not all young people wished to attend these, there were recurrent requests for:

'A lot more activities'. (Young Person)

Others who were not in work education or training asked for

'more help with training and apprenticeships.' (Young Person)

'I think they should do more activities with work placements, getting people on to actually, like say an apprenticeship' (Young Person)

In order for more young people to experience the kinds of improvements described in this report, there is a need for the high range of service use to be replicated more widely. This will not be appropriate for all young people, as some have clearly benefitted significantly from just one to one support, but this intense level of service should be made available to all those who need it.

6.5 Awareness raising

Although the professional survey respondents indicated high levels of awareness of the service, this is based on a relatively small sample and there were some concerns and recommendations for:

'maybe some more publicising on social media could help publicise' (Professional)

'Perhaps re-advertising the service with written information that staff can give to young people and have with them on every visit would be useful - post cards / booklets'(Professional)

The Action Research Group are therefore keen to ensure that awareness is raised further, and directly with young people. One way they advise that this should be achieved is through the creation of a dedicated website, with regularly updated and correct information – in contrast to the current website which directs young people to a drop-in base that is no longer used.

6.6 Ring-Fenced Funding for Activities, Crisis and Training

Some young people had accessed additional financial support in order to gain or renew professional qualifications. In order to provide these and the opportunities to engage in activities that young people have requested, there is need for dedicated budgets allocated to training, activities and crisis.

6.7 Sustainable future for New Hub

Half of the professional survey respondents identified some limitations for the service in its current format. Two respondents suggested that the service would benefit from an increase in staff to meet demands, although one respondent credited the service for its current capacity to support a large number of care leavers:

'They are a small service but somehow seem to be able to manage and support a large number of Care Leavers - maybe it would benefit them if they had greater staff numbers to enable them to support more young people.' (Professional)

Reference was also made to the sustainability of the service specifically in terms of funding and the benefits of involving young care leavers in shaping the future of the service:

'I am aware of the funding sources for New Hub - it is important for care leavers that funding for this service continues and in the North area an increase in capacity would benefit young people.' (Professional)
'I feel we could have a very good resource for CLA who are approaching leaving care and could have support from young people who have been there recently and have done it. They know the pitfalls and the reasons why we sometime get it wrong.' (Professional)

In order to make this service sustainable there appear to be a substantial number of young people who have care experience who would like to continue to be part of the service as volunteers, once they no longer access it as users. To support this co-produced delivery however, it is essential that there are adequate staffing levels. On-

going action research and more systematic evaluation recording would also help monitor the quality of service provision and provide valuable data for future service improvements so that the service remains responsive to young people's recommendations.

Appendix A. Outcome and initial process measures

After identifying the problems we seek to redress, and developing our theory of change, we mapped the ARG themes onto the outcome measures provided by the Cabinet Office. The sub-sections below show how our theory of change maps on to the proposed measures (3.1); the additional measures we are proposing for young people (3.2); the initial process measures (3.3) and the additional outcome measures for volunteers (3.4).

3.1 Cabinet Office Outcomes

ARG Themes	Cabinet Office Outcomes	Question/statement	Data Source
ARG 4 & 5	1. Career aspirations	A range of different career options are open to me	Online survey
ARG 6	2. Skills	I have the skills needed to do well in the workplace	Online survey
ARG 4	3. Current activity	What is/are your main activity/activities at present?	Monitoring Form
ARG1	4. Self-perception/self-esteem	I like myself the way I am	Online survey
ARG 2	5. Resilience	I can bounce back after disappointment or when something goes wrong	Online survey
	6. Anti-social behaviour	I want to stay out of trouble	
ARG 3	7. Positive and supportive relationships	If I need help, I feel there are people there for me	Online survey
ARG 4	8. Wellbeing	Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?	Online survey
ARG 7	9. Accommodation	Where are you currently living? Is this accommodation considered suitable?	Monitoring Form

The ARG really do not want to include the measure on anti-social behaviour. This theme did not emerge from their Theory of Change. When we piloted this question with young people at the Action Research Group meeting we were told: *'It makes you feel like a criminal even before you have done anything. Looked after young people are stereotyped as being in trouble and this just reinforces that stereotyping.'*

3.2 New Hub ARG outcome measures and data sources

ARG Themes	C Office Criteria	Monitoring Questions	Survey Questions	Interview Themes
1. Confident	CO 5		CO: <i>I like myself the way I am</i>	ARG: <i>I am confident in maintaining my relationships</i> Feels Prepared Confident
2. Safe	CO 4		CO: <i>I can bounce back after disappointment or when something goes wrong</i> ARG: <i>There are people I can depend on to help me if I really need it</i> ARG: <i>If something went wrong, no one would come to my assistance</i> ARG: <i>There are people I can count on in an emergency</i>	Feels Safer Lower Stress levels
3. Supported and Included	CO 7	ARG: <i>Rate your current relationships with others from 1-3.</i>	CO: <i>If I need help, I feel there are people there for me</i> ARG: <i>Who would help you if you needed help?</i> ARG: <i>There is a special person in my life who cares about my feelings</i>	Feels supported Feels less isolated
4. Active	CO 3 & 8	CO: <i>What is your main activity/activities at present?</i> ARG: <i>Rate your current social life from 1-3.</i>	CO: <i>Overall, how satisfied are you with your life?</i> ARG: <i>I am able to access to leisure opportunities</i>	Has Social Skills New Experiences
5. Financially secure	CO 1	ARG: <i>Rate your current level of Training/Education from 1-3.</i> ARG: <i>Rate your current work experience from 1-3.</i> ARG: <i>Rate your current financial security from 1-3.</i>	CO: <i>A range of different career options are open to me</i> ARG: <i>I am able to prioritise my money to meet my basic needs</i>	Has enough money, can budget, access to assistance.
6. Life Skills	CO 2	ARG: <i>What is your goal...(followed at review by) how far you achieved it?</i>	CO: <i>I have the skills needed to do well in the workplace</i> ARG: <i>It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals</i>	Has /can get knowledge and skills

		<i>(Data not yet available)</i> <i>ARG: Rate your current practical skills from 1-3.</i> <i>ARG: Rate your current other skills from 1-3.</i>	<i>ARG: I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities</i> <i>ARG: If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution.</i> <i>ARG: I can cook and prepare a meal</i>	relevant to ambitions and needs
7. Housed	CO 9	<i>CO: Where are you currently living? – Housed 1</i> <i>CO: Is accommodation considered suitable?</i> <i>ARG: Rate your current accommodation from 1-3.</i>		

The additional questions are taken from standardised measures and the ARG's own wording as shown.

ARG Themes	ARG Survey Questions	Source of Questions
2. Safe	<i>There are people I can depend on to help me if I really need it</i>	Items from the <i>Presence of Caring</i> sub- scale derived from individual protective factors index Phillips J, Springer F. (1992)
	<i>If something went wrong, no one would come to my assistance</i>	
	<i>There are people I can count on in an emergency</i>	
3. Supported and Included	<i>Who would help you if you needed help?</i>	ARG own wording
	<i>There is a special person in my life who cares about my feelings</i>	<i>Presence of caring</i>
4. Active	<i>I am able to access to leisure opportunities</i>	ARG own wording
5. Financially secure	I am able to prioritise my money to meet my basic needs	ARG own wording
6. I can / I know	It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals	Items from <i>Generalised self-efficacy</i> Schwarzer & Jerusalem (1995)
	I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities	

	If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution.	
	ARG: I can cook and prepare a meal	ARG own wording

3.3 Process Questions for Young People to month 6

In addition to these measures, which are repeated pre, post intervention and every 3 months during on-going contact with the service, the online survey will contain some questions about process to aid the formative evaluation process. In the first six months these are as follows.

- *The shared meals at New Hub were a positive experience*
- *I think workers and volunteers at New Hub are approachable*
- *New Hub has matched me with a good volunteer*
- *The shared meals at New Hub were a positive experience*
- *When I ask workers and volunteers at New Hub for help, they help me quickly*

Additional process measures will be developed as we identify new ways in which the project should be working to achieve change.

ARG Theme				ARG 1	ARG 2	ARG 3	ARG 4	ARG 5	ARG 6	ARG 7
Evaluation Tools	Interview	EVALUATION MEASURES	OUTCOMES	Feels Prepared Confident	Feels Safer Lower Stress levels	Feels supported Feels less isolated	Has Social Skills New Experiences	Has enough money, can budget, access to assistance.	Has /can get knowledge relevant to ambitions and needs	
			Process	Shared meals are enjoyed	Got a quick enough response	Staff/Volunteers are approachable Effective links with other agencies		Effective links with the community/ businesses	Cooking skills provision is appropriate	
	Form		OUTCOMES	Can Thrive (esteem) 'like myself'	Can Survive (resilience) 'bounce back'	Have People 'are people there for me'	'How satisfied with life'	'range of different career options are open'	Can Achieve - Self efficacy	
						Relationships	Opportunities / Training Accessed EET status		Achievement of self-identified goals	Housing Status
				300 young people						
	OUT- PUTS		How many: SMS/ Webchat responses / mentors / activities / matched assets / trainings Drop in open in two places until 6pm at weekends, 10pm during 5 days a week							
Plans for New Hub				Drop In Service, Emergency Response and Text Advice, Mentoring Eating food together around a table - cheap recipes			Connections with local businesses			Respond as needed
							Activities Bus pass to attend		Access to training: Living skills, first aid, hygiene,	
What does our experience show helps?				Reassuring chats	Actually seeing workers Workers available out of hours Being approachable		Being given things Getting more money (getting a job) Activities you can do for free		Independent living skills	
EXTRA barriers for young people leaving care				Maybe not so much support from staff Maybe not so much support from family Leaving care workers are 'allocated' and not always suitable/ available/ consistent Lots of moving			Difficulties in staying engaged in education because of things like moving	Leaving care grant is small & have to buy new/ from certain places	Suddenly have to make all the decisions for yourself	
The Problems				1.Confidence 2.Safety 3. Isolation 4. Activities 5. Money 6. Basic Skills 7. Housing						
				1. Lack of confidence 2. Not feeling safe and secure 3. Loneliness - Having no-one to ask - Having no-one available at night 4. Not enough things to do - 5. Lack of employment- Not enough money - Not enough money for travel - Not enough money to socialise 6. Not used to doing things for yourself- Not always getting independent living training-Difficulties budgeting 7.Poor Housing						