Children in Care Placement
Sufficiency Strategy 2017-21

"Providing Sufficient Accommodation For Children in Care and Care Leavers"

This document sets out how Derbyshire County Council will meet its 'Sufficiency Duty' as laid down in Section 22G of the Children Act 1989.

For Derbyshire, in Derbyshire, by Derbyshire

Children's Services Department

Children in Care Placement
Sufficiency Strategy 2017-2021

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1. INTRODUCTION

This sufficiency strategy sets out our approach to providing secure, safe and appropriate accommodation to children in care and care leavers over the next 3 years. The quality, range, location and stability of the homes where children in care and care leavers live are fundamental to enable them to make the most of the opportunities available to them and thus to be 'the best they can be'.

This document should be read alongside the relevant 'Statements of Purpose' for associated Teams and Services. The strategy document sets out how Derbyshire intends to meet the Sufficiency Duty as laid down in Section 22G of the Children Act 1989. In preparing this document consideration has been given to the Statutory Guidance 'Securing Sufficient Accommodation for Looked After Children' (2009); 'National Audit Report on Children in Care', (November 2014); 'The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations' (Volume 2: Care Planning, Placement and Case Review June 2015); the report on 'Residential Care In England' by Sir Martin Narey (July 2016); 'Keep on Caring', supporting young people from care to independence Cabinet Office (July 2016), the Derbyshire Children's Services' Service Plan 2017- 21, Derbyshire's Placement Sufficiency Review dated August 2016 and the participation of children in care, care leavers, foster carers and other stakeholders. Feedback from Ofsted has also informed the strategy.

Throughout the life of this document we will continue to work with our children in care, care leavers and key partners to develop and refine our plans and priorities. There are regular reviews and oversight from the Corporate Parenting Committee, and Children in Care Strategic Governance Group to ensure the strategy remains as relevant until 2021 as it does now.

Derbyshire established a Children in Care Sufficiency Project Board to provide strategic leadership to the work. It undertook a comprehensive review of placement trends and costs published as Derbyshire's Placement Sufficiency Review dated August 2016. The analysis contributes to informing the future evolution of and re-design of some placement services, and also re-commissioning activity over the next 3 to 5 years.

Consequently, the timeline for this strategy is 2017 - 2021, and this document will be revised as re commissioning and re design work progresses.

Key Information about Derbyshire
Derbyshire is home to a growing population of 782,365 people (ONS Mid 2015 estimates). There are 153,377 children who live in the county of whom 41,629 are aged 4 and under. For current contextual data, see Joint Strategic Needs Assessment link:

(https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/images/Derbyshire%20Joint%20Strategic%20Needs%20Assessment%20-The%20State%20of%20Derbyshire_tcm44-260790.pdf

Derbyshire's over-riding objective is to use evidence based practice and interventions that enable and empower Derbyshire's population to live safely in their

communities, and to ‘Look After the right children in care for the right length of time’. Implementing best practice across preventative services; social care practice, family and friends care; adoption and supporting children to return home from care means that Derbyshire anticipates maintaining safe thresholds, a child-focussed approach and a child in care population of around 600.

As of March 2017, Derbyshire had 630 children in care. This is in the context that Derbyshire has a lower number of children in care (41 per 10k 0-17 year olds) than both the England average (60 in 2015/16) and our statistical neighbours (59 in 2015/16).

To enable matching to suitable placements and for carers to have a break from caring, the goal is to offer at least 650 internal quality placements.

Demographic Context Related to Fostering

The overall measure of deprivation calculated is based on seven domain indices; income, employment, health and disability, education and skills, barriers to housing and services and the living environment. Wealth and deprivation present two distinct obstructions to recruiting and retaining foster carers. The widespread nature of deprivation within the county, to the east especially, does impact on the way Derbyshire County Council can deliver services, as these areas contain some of the highest populations of “Looked After Children” (LAC). Whilst they are very strong areas in recruiting foster carers, this trend may affect recruitment of potential carers who may be tenants living in accommodation that is too small and/or unsuitable for the fostering role. More importantly, research suggests that potential carers who are living in deprivation may find it harder to gain access to resources necessary to achieve educational and employment aspirations, improve health awareness and lifestyle choices and meet the longer term outcomes for our Looked After children and therefore Derbyshire, as Corporate Parent, needs to ensure focussed support where necessary.

Of those wealthier areas, many are rural communities, and so carers and potential carers may have to travel long distances for key services.

The latest national census (2011) shows the key features of Derbyshire’s population are;

- The population rate is growing at a slower rate than both the East Midlands and the national average (4.8% against 8.7% East Midlands and 7.9% England). This is consistent with the ONS report ‘Small area population estimates in England and Wales: mid-2015’. This shows the percentage change in Derbyshire’s population (by Westminster parliamentary constituency) between mid-2014 to mid-2015 to range between under-0.5 % to 0.4 %.

  (https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/bulletins/annualsmallareapopulationestimates/mid2015#westminster-parliamentary-constituency-population-estimates-experimental-statistics)

- From a small base of around 20,000 as recorded in the 2001 census, Derbyshire’s BAME (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic population) has

increased significantly. Between 2001 and 2006 Derbyshire's BAME population grew by 75%, in contrast to an increase of only 5% in the white British population. In 2006, Derbyshire's BAME population stood at 36,200 forming 4.8% of the total population.

- Children aged 0-14 are represented at a lower rate than both the East Midlands and the national average (16.4% against 17.3% East Midlands and 17.7% England).
- People aged 30 and under are represented at a lower rate than both the East Midlands and the national average (38.5% against 43.2 East Midlands and 44.0 England).
- People aged 65+ are represented at a higher rate than both the East Midlands and the national average (18.6% against 17.1% East Midlands and 16.3% England). This is consistent with the ONS report 'Small area population estimates in England and Wales: mid-2015'. This shows the percentage of Derbyshire population (by CCG constituency) aged 65 or over in mid-2015 to be between 17.42% to 19.05%. This sector of the population has grown as has the number of people aged 85+, who now represent 2.4% of the population against 2.2% regionally and nationally. Our foster carer population is also older than the national average, and so requires a robust recruitment strategy to ensure sufficiency.

1.1 Vision

Derbyshire's vision is to enable children and young people to remain safely in their communities, and to reunify children in care with their family where it is appropriate and safe to do so. To achieve this Derbyshire aspires to only have the right children in care for the right length of time and to be creative in its care and support planning.

Derbyshire's vision for its child in care population is to provide sufficient high quality placements for children, young people and care leavers, which enable them to achieve their potential. More broadly, Derbyshire is committed to delivering excellence in its approaches to supporting and delivering services for and to children and young people in its care with the intention that the outcomes for every child in care are at least as good as their non-Looked After peers.

In real terms this means placing as many children as possible within the Authority, with Derbyshire carers and supported by Derbyshire staff, and lessening the reliance we place on external providers, both within fostering and residential placements. For Care leavers, the objective is to ensure sufficient quality homes, provided or commissioned by Derbyshire or other suitable provision.

The Service Plan 2017-2021 articulates Derbyshire's placement intentions as:

During 2017-18 we will:

- be creative and examine shared care options with family members;
- reassess to examine the appropriateness of rehabilitation to family care;
- improve the quality of our care planning to promote stability and timely permanence planning for our children in care;
- improve quality and choice within adoption, fostering and residential care placements;

- improve the wellbeing of children leaving care by increasing suitable accommodation, providing access to work experience and opportunities and developing young people's financial skills,
- make available the offer of support for children in our care up to the age of 25.

Service Activities

Improve the quality of our care planning to promote stability and timely permanence planning for our children in care. In order to achieve this we will:

- continue the innovative work with Dartington Social Research Unit to explore how we can best meet the needs of children in care and also keep more children living at home safely;
- improve timely permanence planning whilst continuing to have adoption as an aspiration for harder-to-place children through the establishment of a new Permanence Team,
- further reduce the number of unplanned placements.

Improve the quality and choice of adoption, fostering and residential care placements. In order to achieve this we will:

- always consider 'Family First', and consider shared care options;
- explore the Boarding School Partnership 'offer' to increase the number of families able to offer a shared care arrangement;
- deliver our sufficiency projects to ensure we have the right support and range of placements/services to meet the individual needs of our children and young people so we are able to care for them in Derbyshire by Derbyshire;
- complete a robust review of provision in all areas identifying any gaps or opportunities for provision development such as therapeutic and disability specialist provision;
- monitor and evaluate the impact of regionalisation of adoption;
- further explore the quality and placement availability for complex young people in care with mental health needs,
- continue to improve the quality of our Local Authority children's homes.

Improve the wellbeing of children leaving care by increasing suitable accommodation, to act as a foundation to accessing work experience, opportunities supported and financial literacy. In order to achieve this we will:

- reduce the number of Care leavers that become homeless in their early adulthood ensuring that those at risk of homelessness are identified early and that preventative action is taken,
- continue to develop a range of commissioned housing provision for care leavers including lodgings for 16 and 17 year olds.

1.2 Key Statements

1. The decision about where a child is best placed is made according to the assessed needs of the child or young person.
2. Derbyshire aspires to place children within Derbyshire in order to maintain family relationships when it is in the best interests of the child to do so.
3. The views and meaningful participation of children and young people to be sought wherever possible and that placement decisions commit to the principles in the Children in Care Charter.
4. The views and meaningful participation of adopters, foster carers and their families to be sought wherever possible.
5. Derbyshire County Council has implemented an intervention strategy to reduce inappropriate admissions to care and facilitate and maintain earlier discharge. The operating model is 'Stronger Families, Safer Children', of which a key element is Systemic Practice and includes a county wide Preventing Family Breakdown team, established in 2015.
6. This is resulting in more effective working with families and maintaining Derbyshire's Looked After population at a rate which is lower than the national average.
7. Effective work with families will also enable more children to return home, when it is in their best interests to do so.
8. Derbyshire County Council to remain the main provider of fostering and residential placements for children in care in Derbyshire. To meet this aspiration our fostering service needs to continue to recruit more carers than it sees resign.
9. All our internal residential services will work towards obtaining, or remaining, "Good" to "Outstanding", as judged by Ofsted.
10. Derbyshire County Council will work towards finding the widest possible range of placement choice, from within its own resources, to meet the needs of all children in care and care leavers within the county.
11. Partnership working will be further developed, amongst and across teams, to centrally coordinate specialist and intensive placements, both within residential care and fostering, through Contract Care, and commissioned After care accommodation services.
12. The Derbyshire Children's Placement Service (residential, fostering, After care and adoption services) to work closely together to maximise best use of available resources for all children. As part of this approach, Derbyshire continues to reshape the balance of residential to family based provision.
13. Derbyshire will develop more placements able to meet the full range of needs including crisis response; assessment; long term care and permanency.
14. Derbyshire will continuously review its response and commissioning approach to meet complex health and therapeutic needs.
15. All placements to aspire to a no disruption principle.
16. We will commission placements from the independent and voluntary sectors, both fostering and residential, only when internal capacity has been reached or when the specific needs of a child are such that their placement could not be made within Derbyshire provision and/or borders.
17. Derbyshire County Council will commission placements with independent providers as part of a larger East Midlands regional commissioning group so as to assure Best Value, and aim for Outstanding provision.

18. Permanence placements will be achieved through adoption, Special Guardianship and Child Arrangement Orders with financial and other support as appropriate and applicable.
19. Foster placements which can meet the needs and wishes of children on a long-term basis to continue to be developed and supported.
20. Young people leaving care will be offered the opportunity to remain in their foster home or children's home until they reach 18 and, in the case of children in foster care beyond 18, if that is their wish through the Staying Put policy.
21. Derbyshire residential services will develop a 'Staying Close' policy.
22. Young people to remain in their children's home beyond their 18th birthday if, for example, that supports them to complete their education.
23. A range of other semi -independent living arrangements such as supported lodgings and semi-independent supported housing are and will be commissioned where young people choose not to, or are unable to remain in their foster home or residential unit until and beyond age 18.
24. We will widen placement choice and encourage permanent placements as relevant through home adaptations and extensions to existing foster carers homes.
25. This strategy will be reviewed each year to examine trends and act upon them accordingly.

1.3 Key Objectives

1. That Derbyshire Children in care realise their full potential.
2. That we continuously improve outcomes by building our understanding of the needs of Derbyshire's Children in care population through the maintenance and extension of ongoing activity that researches need to inform placement developments.
3. That we respond to learning elicited from the Derbyshire Sufficiency Review (August 2016); Care leaver accommodation consultation (summer 2016); Care leaver service challenge day (autumn 2016); needs analysis of young people placed in secure and private residential provision, and ongoing dialogue with Children in care through the work of the Participation Team.
4. That specialist therapeutic informed practices are introduced to selected services in Derbyshire, and that we learn about the emotional and mental wellbeing of new entrants to care from the 10 month project to assess and meet immediate emotional well-being and mental health needs with all new entrants to care between 1 June 2017 and 31 March 2018.
5. The ongoing implementation of re-designed residential provision which enables children and young people in care who require specialist, therapeutic provision to receive this in Derbyshire.
6. To divert young people from out of county residential through the provision of a 2 bedded intensive and therapeutically informed children's home.
7. To provide a prompt and flexible emergency response.
8. To achieve and maintain an Ofsted rating of Good or Outstanding for all mainstream and disabled children's in house residential service provision.
9. To improve placement services for disabled children through the delivery of a 'new build' Spire Lodge, and an increase in the delivery of short breaks for disabled children.
10. To increase the number of Derbyshire foster homes by 60.
11. To maintain the increased foster placement bed occupancy rate.

12. To decrease the time approved adopters wait for engagement in the matching process.
13. To support pro-active discharge from care, where appropriate. This is informed by current research such as the Department for Education report December 2015, 'Improving Practice in Respect of Children Who Return Home From Care'.
14. To engage in improving reunification practice through support delivered via the Dynamic System Modelling contract (June 2017 to June 2018).
15. Increase opportunities to make family and friends placements through increased 'Connected Persons' activity.
16. To engage in the Boarding School Partnership offer to develop alternatives to mainstream placements for some children in care and also at the Edge of Care.
17. To encourage young people to remain in placement until they are ready to leave by maintaining 17 as the earliest age at which alternatives will actively be sought, and provide the necessary support, including financial support, to encourage carers to maintain these placements.
18. To recommission the Care Leaver Accommodation Service and to include active contribution to the delivery of the 5 'Keep on Caring' outcomes.
19. To implement a Derbyshire Youth Accommodation Positive Pathway that reduces homeless presentations by teenagers and care leavers to age 21.
20. To ensure transition planning for children with complex needs takes place at 16 or before in line with the Transition Pathway and best practice so that timely referrals to adult services to enable complex needs to be met after age 18.

1.4 Key Targets

1. To understand the customer experience by learning from families that have experienced 'Care' and the sharing of Parental Responsibility.
2. To locate the right services and interventions at the Edge of Care to reduce admissions, thereby increasing sufficiency options.
3. To place the right children in the right placement for the right length of time.
4. To be continuously aware of 'Step Down' options, inclusive of re-assessing exit from care options.
5. To reduce the number of specialist fostering and external residential placements purchased for older children in direct proportion to the increased availability of Derbyshire Contract Care placements.
6. To reduce the number of independent specialist fostering and external residential placements utilised, especially where they exceed six months duration.
7. To implement a revised fostering recruitment and communication strategy that will between July 2017 and April 2018 increase the net number of approved Derbyshire foster carer households by 60.
8. To maintain the increase by recruiting a greater number of new carers than the number of carers that cease to foster in any 12 month period.
9. To reach, and then exceed, an internal fostering placement utilisation ratio of 75%.
10. To particularly focus foster carer recruitment activity on: the county geographical areas of High Peak and South Derbyshire; on carers able to meet the needs of complex teenagers; children with disabilities; sibling groups, and teenagers.
11. To continue developing internal fostering capacity to meet the needs of UASC.

12. To embed the new payment scheme that incentivises and rewards carers that maintain continuous professional development and high placement occupancy.
13. To increase the number of Contract Carer households from 50 at 31 March 2017 to 60 by March 2018, and to maintain growth thereafter informed by relevant service need.
14. To accelerate the number of 'Connected Persons' placements.
15. To place all UASC under age 18 within Derbyshire county borders where their meets are best met.
16. To increase our stock of adopters and continue to decrease the number of placements purchased externally.
17. To reduce the time children wait for a placement.
18. To ensure that adoption score card targets are met, wherever possible, whilst fulfilling the obligation of our adoption and related services to provide a quality service to children and adopters.
19. To maintain the proportion of care leavers in suitable accommodation at over 95%.
20. To increase our supply of care leaver accommodation from 30 units in 2016/17, 73 in 2017/18 to 75 by 1 October 2018, and to ensure sufficient accommodation to meet need in all areas of the county.
21. To commission a variety of accommodation including staffed shared houses and individual supported flats, and to commission support that can flex to meet more complex needs as required.
22. To accelerate the supported lodgings scheme for young people aged 16 plus.
23. To ensure that no young people in care or care leavers are placed in Bed and Breakfast accommodation.

NB- relevant targets can be sourced in the DCS Service Plan 2017- 2021 pages 11-13

2. ANALYSIS

2.1 The Needs and Numbers of Children in Care

The Children in Care Sufficiency Board identified the need to examine 'therapeutic input' further, and a possible gap or ambiguity between mainstream and disability services. An audit of 19 files of children placed in external residential provision (excluding specialist complex cases funded placements) confirmed that emotional well-being, attachment and attendant challenging behaviour issues are the primary presenting needs at placement in the private and independent residential sector. A review of the disability service criteria ascertained the need to include children with high functioning autistic spectrum disorders and challenging behaviour.

Young People Requiring Secure Accommodation

In 2016 the Independent Reviewing Officer team undertook a practice review of Derbyshire young people in Secure Accommodation. Learning from the review informed that needs fall into three primary categories:

- Young people where the primary concern related to mental health issues.
- Young people vulnerable to child sexual exploitation.
- Young people where primary concerns related to behavioural risks and emotional well-being.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children
Over 2016/17 Derbyshire Looked After 28 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children, and supported a further 8 through a Staying Put arrangement or in semi-independent after care accommodation. Derbyshire developed a specialist UASC social work team to respond to an anticipated 100 UASC to be placed through the National Transfer Scheme. Although the anticipated number of UASC transferred to Derbyshire has not occurred, the number of UASC Derbyshire cares for is increasing. Derbyshire retains its UASC specialist team, a watching brief on government policy, and a commitment to respond to the needs of UASC.

Derbyshire policy is to:

- care for all UASC under Section 20 of the Children's Act 1989 unless specific exceptional circumstances require otherwise;
- aspire for all UASC to be placed within Derbyshire's borders;
- actively recruit carers seeking to offer a home to UASC;
- assist all UASC as care leavers unless a confirmed legal status denies the application of leaving care status;
- retain a dedicated UASC social work team that develops specialist knowledge and attracts resources supportive of both Derbyshire's UASC population and their carers',
- retain social work case work responsibility throughout the UASC care leaver journey.

Emotional Wellbeing Project for new entrants
A project with health colleagues is underway to assess and respond to the needs of all new entrants to care over a 10 month period to 31 March 2018. The data will support our developing carer training offer, and complement the service delivered by mental health professionals supporting carers within Derbyshire's commissioned Horizons contract.

Youth Accommodation Positive Pathway
A comprehensive consultation with young people and Care leavers was undertaken over the summer of 2016. The findings for both Care leavers and young homeless people correspond to the findings articulated in 'Keep on Caring'. Derbyshire is pro-actively responding to 'Keep on Caring' through the developing Care leaver accommodation service specification 2018 onwards, contract management of the leaving care support service currently delivered through Barnardo's, and the implementation of a Derbyshire Youth Accommodation Positive Pathway.

Children in Care with a Life Limiting Medical Condition or Disability
A review of eligibility criteria identified services to high functioning autistic children who display challenging behaviour should be located within the remit of specialist services for disabled children to ensure specialist knowledge is retained and built upon.

Current work is occurring on residential short break sufficiency within Derbyshire. There is recognition that the needs of those who present the most challenging behaviour are best met within in-house services. Development plans are underway to increase the volume of residential short break availability for the cohort. The short

breaks are intended to support families thereby reducing flow into full time admissions to care

The Disabled Children's team follow the Care Placement and Planning Guidance and Regulations (March 2010) on legal status determination for children with high in receipt of high levels short break care. Children receiving over 75 nights are classed as voluntarily accommodated and have a care plan that is regularly reviewed.

102 out of 630 Children in Care at the end of Q4 2016 had disabilities recorded on their Frameworki record. 43 out of 102 Children in care with recorded disabilities were allocated to Disabled Children's teams.

Numbers of Children in Care by Ethnicity

Proportionally, the largest changes in the ethnicity of Children in care between March 2013 and March 2017 have been in African (500% increase), Asian (325% increase) and Any Other White background (150% increase), although the numbers associated with each category are small. Conversely White British has decreased to 88% of what it was in March 2013, from 616 to 545. This is consistent with the larger population in Derbyshire. According to the 2011 census, between 2001 and 2006 Derbyshire's BME population grew by 75%, in contrast to an increase of only 5% in the white British population.

Numbers of Children in care by ethnicity					
Ethnicity	**Mar-13**	**Mar-14**	**Mar-15**	**Mar-16**	**Mar-17**
Unrecorded	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
African	<10	<10	<10	<10	13
Any other Asian background	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
Any other Black background	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
Any Other Ethnic Group	<10	<10	<10	<10	15
Any other Mixed background	11	11	11	<10	13
Any other White background	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
Caribbean	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
Gypsy/Roma	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
Indian	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
Information not yet obtained	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
Pakistani	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
Traveller of Irish Heritage	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
White and Asian	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
White and Black African	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10

White and Black Caribbean	13	15	12	14	18
White British	616	574	560	530	545
Total	**664**	**624**	**608**	**588**	**631**

Data taken as of 07/09/17

2.2 Placement Information

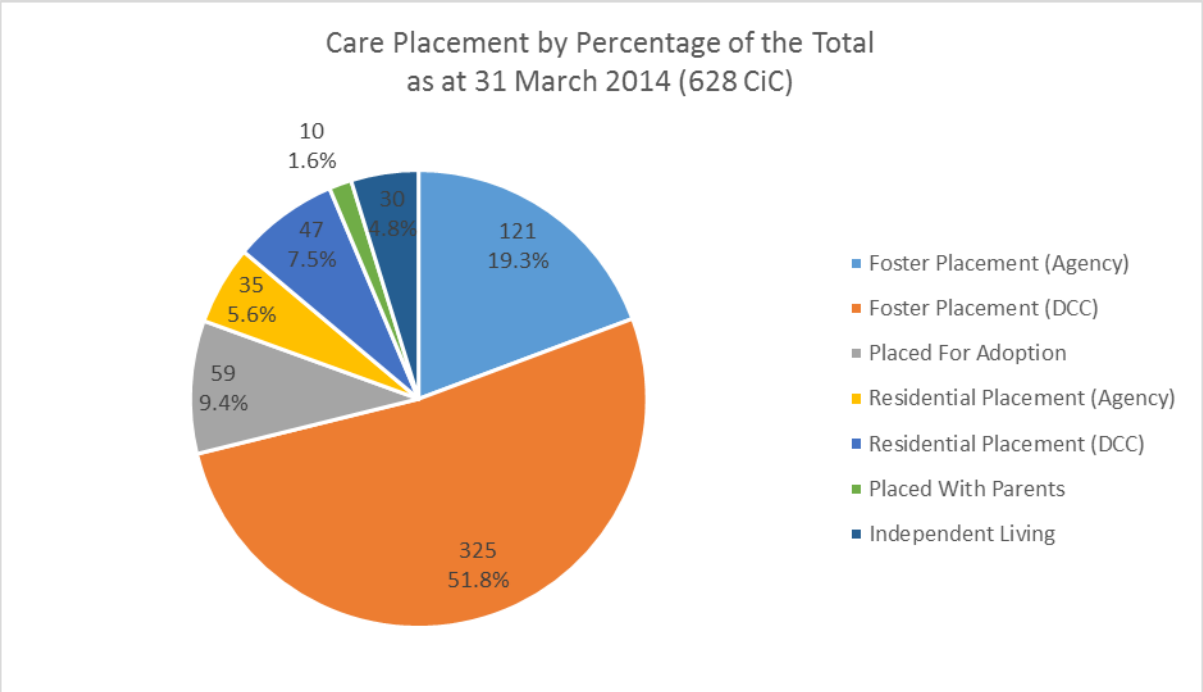
Analysis of Numbers and Placements of Children in care

At 31 March 2013 Derbyshire had a child in care population of 664 children. At 31 March 2016 the child in care population had fallen to 585. At 31 March 2017 Derbyshire's child in care population was on a rising trajectory and stood at 630. To enable better matching practice the volume of placements Derbyshire requires continues to grow alongside its growing child in care population.

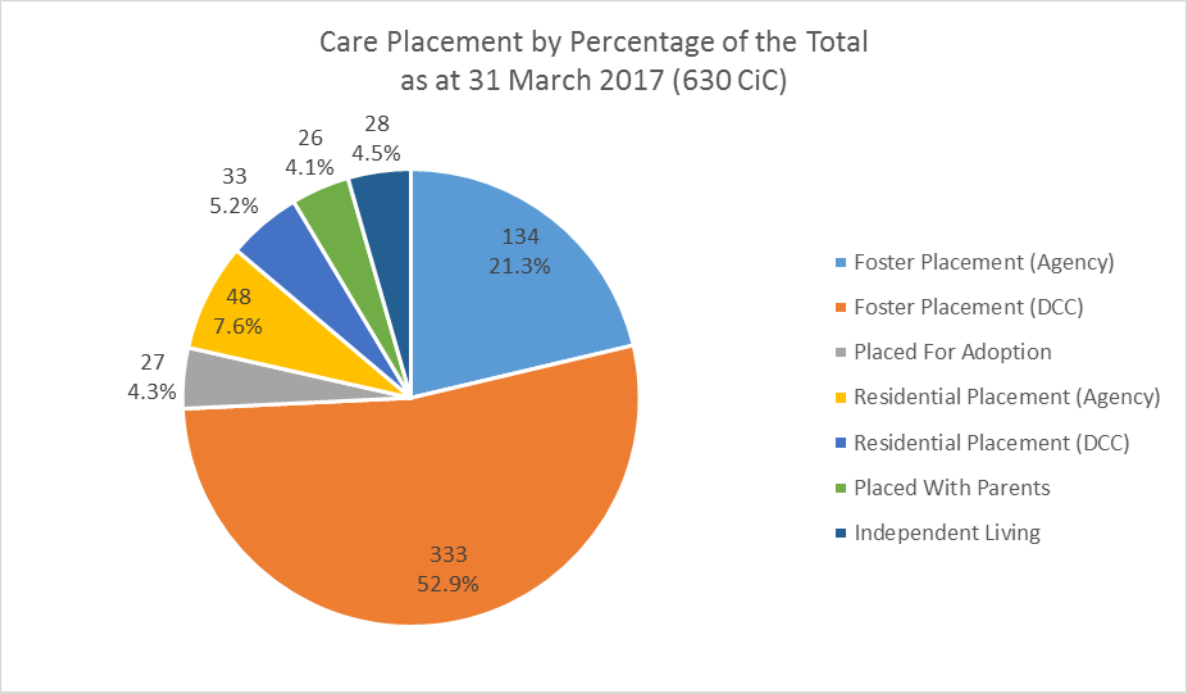
Children in care Placement Trends

Derbyshire's Children in Care Sufficiency Review dated August 2016 identified that a fall of 79 in its child in care population between 2012 and March 2016 did not result in a corresponding fall in spend on placements. The finding is attributed to the increasing percentage of total placements purchased by Derbyshire from higher cost external providers, and most particularly the rise in the use of Independent Fostering Agencies to meet total placement need.

The number of Children in care in an agency foster placement increased by 10.7% when comparing 31 March 2014 (121) with 31 March 2017 (134). This compares with a 2.5% increase in Derbyshire County Council (DCC) foster placements during the same period. The number of children placed in an agency residential placement at 31 March 2017 (48) saw an increase of 37.1% from 35 children at 31 March 2014 whereas during the same period DCC residential placements saw a decrease of 29.8% from 47 at 31 March 2014 to 33 at 31 March 2017. The fall in internal residential placements is in response to reducing internal residential bed capacity from 44 in 2014 to 33 at 31 March 2017. Further planned changes include a further reduction to 30 beds as a 5 bed children's home is closed, and a 2 bed therapeutically informed practice specialist home is opened.



Placement trends illustrated by the pie chart at 2014 and at 2017.



Numbers of Children in care:					
	2012/13 Outcome	**2013/14 Outcome**	**2014/15 Outcome**	**2015/16 Outcome**	**2016/17 Outcome**
Derbyshire	664	628	603	585	630
Neighbour Average	937	953	971	1023	
England	68060	68840	69540	70440	72,670

Numbers of Children in care per 10k population aged under 18:					
	2012/13 Outcome	**2013/14 Outcome**	**2014/15 Outcome**	**2015/16 Outcome**	**2016/17 Outcome**
Derbyshire	42	40	39	38	41
Neighbour Average	54	56	58	59	
England	60	60	60	60	62

As shown above, Derbyshire's children in care population at 31 March 2016 was below both statistical neighbours and England averages, partially attributed to the implementation of a Systemic Practice Model resulting in more effective working with families. From 2016 Derbyshire's child in care population has been on an upwards trajectory, and includes a notable rise in teenage admissions. Nonetheless, at 31 March 2017 Derbyshire was still significantly below the number of Children in care per 10k population aged under 18

2.3 Admissions, Moves/Stability & Discharge Activity

The percentage of children discharged from care as a percentage of the total child in care population is falling. More young people are staying in placement until age18 and also utilising the 'Staying Put' offer beyond their 18th birthday. This would suggest greater stability, especially in fostering placements (both IFA and internal) and this is confirmed by the improvement in the number of children in care with 3 or more placements from 8% in 2014/15 to 5.6% in 2016/17. These three trends contribute to our understanding of the challenge in sourcing teenage placements.

Age of Children and Young People at Admission to Care

Numbers of admissions in year - by age group:					
Age Group	**2012/13**	**2013/14**	**2014/15**	**2015/16**	**2016/17**
Under 1	63	62	60	65	68
1 to 4	60	57	57	46	59
5 to 9	49	51	41	54	46
10 to 15	55	58	66	76	82
16 & Over	51	39	40	41	52
Total	**278**	**267**	**264**	**282**	**307**

Percentage breakdown - by age group:					
Age Group	**2012/13**	**2013/14**	**2014/15**	**2015/16**	**2016/17**
Under 1	22.7%	23.2%	22.7%	23.0%	22.1%
1 to 4	21.6%	21.3%	21.6%	16.3%	19.2%
5 to 9	17.6%	19.1%	15.5%	19.1%	15.0%
10 to 15	19.8%	21.7%	25.0%	27.0%	26.7%
16 & Over	18.3%	14.6%	15.2%	14.5%	16.9%

Derbyshire's Looked After population is getting older, with a higher proportion of children in their late teens.

Numbers of Children in care by age:					
Age Group	**March 2013**	**March 2014**	**March 2015**	**March 2016**	**March 2017**
Under 1	49 (7%)	30 (5%)	36 (6%)	33 (6%)	37 (6%)
1 to 4	128 (19%)	107 (17%)	88 (15%)	79 (14%)	97 (15%)
5 to 9	134 (20%)	146 (23%)	127 (21%)	106 (18%)	98 (16%)
10 to 15	206 (31%)	215 (34%)	213 (35%)	226 (39%)	242 (38%)
16 and over	147 (22%)	130 (21%)	139 (23%)	141 (24%)	156 (25%)
Total	**664**	**628**	**603**	**585**	**630**

Staying Put			
2013 to 2014	**2014 to 2015**	**2015 to 2016**	**2016 to 2017**
Young people aged 18+ who have been supported by former carers over the year – 42	Young people aged 18+ who have been supported by former carers over the year – 34	Young people aged 18+ who have been supported by former carers over the year – 46	Young people aged 18+ who have been supported by former carers over the year – 50

Number and Rate of Children in Care by District

Some localities have seen a reduction in numbers of children in care whilst others have seen an increase. However, as evidenced below, relative to the under 18 population Erewash has shown a year on year decrease whilst South Derbyshire & South Dales has shown a sustained increase, partially related to an increase in the child population.

Numbers of Children in care:					
District	**March 2013**	**March 2014**	**March 2015**	**March 2016**	**March 2017**
Disabled	36	41	40	41	49
High Peak & North Dales	96	90	86	71	71
Chesterfield	127	120	116	106	101
North East & Bolsover	136	115	114	95	109
Amber Valley	79	70	66	79	86
Erewash	130	126	117	111	105
South Derbyshire	60	66	64	82	90
UASC		1	6	16	28
Prevent Family Breakdown					<10
Derbyshire	**664**	**628**	**603**	**585**	**630**

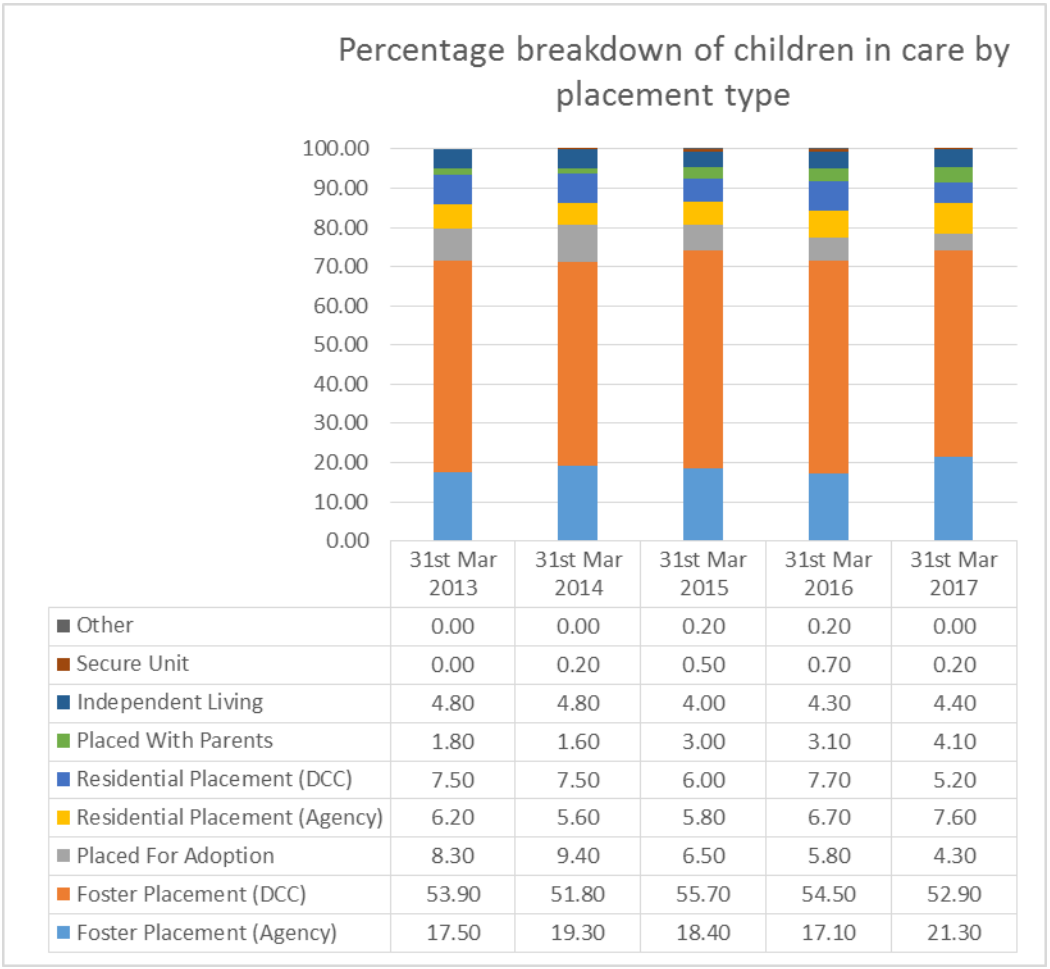
Numbers of Children in care (per 10k population aged under 18):					
District	**March 2013**	**March 2014**	**March 2015**	**March 2016**	**March 2017**
Disabled	102	125	123	140	76
High Peak & North Dales	37	34	31	26	27
Chesterfield	59	57	59	54	52
North East & Bolsover	40	34	34	29	34
Amber Valley	34	30	28	34	38
Erewash	59	56	53	49	47
South Derbyshire	24	26	26	33	37
Derbyshire	**42**	**40**	**39**	**38**	**41**

Children in Care with a Disability

Figures show that the numbers of children with a medical condition or disability coming into care, remains proportionate with the numbers of children in care over the last three years (average 18.5%).

Indicator	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Q1 2016/17	Q2 2016/17	Q3 2016/17	Q4 2016/17	Notes on 2016/17 (Q4) Outcome
Children in Care with disabilities recorded	111 (17.7%)	138 (23.0%)	100 (17.0%)	99 (16.3%)	99 (16.2%)	97 (15.4%)	102 (16.2%)	102 out of 630 CIC at the end of Q4 had disabilities recorded on their Frameworki record
Children in Care with disabilities recorded who were allocated to specialist teams	39 (35.1%)	40 (30.0%)	43 (43.0%)	41 (41.4%)	46 (46.5%)	46 (47.4%)	43 (42.2%)	43 out of 102 CIC with disabilities recorded were allocated to Disabled Children's teams

Percentage Breakdown of Children in Care by Placement Type:



	31st Mar 2013	31st Mar 2014	31st Mar 2015	31st Mar 2016	31st Mar 2017
Other	0.00	0.00	0.20	0.20	0.00
Secure Unit	0.00	0.20	0.50	0.70	0.20
Independent Living	4.80	4.80	4.00	4.30	4.40
Placed With Parents	1.80	1.60	3.00	3.10	4.10
Residential Placement (DCC)	7.50	7.50	6.00	7.70	5.20
Residential Placement (Agency)	6.20	5.60	5.80	6.70	7.60
Placed For Adoption	8.30	9.40	6.50	5.80	4.30
Foster Placement (DCC)	53.90	51.80	55.70	54.50	52.90
Foster Placement (Agency)	17.50	19.30	18.40	17.10	21.30

The IFA market share as a percentage of total placements continues to grow. Derbyshire has halted the progressive fall in the number of internal fostering placements provided at any one time. However, its total percentage share as a foster placement provider for Derbyshire children continues to fall whilst the IFA and also external residential placement market share continues to grow. Rising use of private residential can partly be explained by an intentional reduction of 11 internal residential beds between 2014 and 2017 in order to reinvest in capital refurbishments of retained children homes, and a reinvestment into the Time Out Team. There has also been an increase in Derbyshire fostering Contract Care capacity.

Number of Children in care by placement type					
Placement Type	**31st Mar 2013**	**31st Mar 2014**	**31st Mar 2015**	**31st Mar 2016**	**31st Mar 2017**
Foster Placement (Agency)	116	121	111	100	134
Foster Placement (DCC)	358	325	336	319	333
Placed For Adoption	55	59	39	34	27
Residential Placement (Agency)	41	35	35	39	48
Residential Placement (DCC)	50	47	36	45	33
Placed With Parents	12	10	18	18	26
Independent Living	32	30	24	25	28
Secure Unit	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
Other	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10

The majority of new placements are being made in house, many of which are sibling groups kept together. At March 31st 2016, there were 59 sibling groups where the children had to be placed separately. At March 31st 2017, there were 52 sibling groups where the children had to be placed separately.

Location of Placements

Wherever possible and in the best interests of the child, Derbyshire seeks to place children in care close to their family, friends and school. Where this is not viable, the relevant placement and planning regulations are followed regarding decision-making, and the children concerned receive close support and scrutiny.

IFA use over 2015/16

- The average age of a child placed in an IFA was 12.5 years old
- 29% of Derbyshire County Council's current IFA population lives within the county boundaries.

The small numbers of children in care placed in other authorities preclude publication of their location.

Percentage placed 20 + miles from home (regardless of whether inside or outside LA)					
District	**2012/13 Outcome**	**2013/14 Outcome**	**2014/15 Outcome**	**2015/16 Outcome**	**2016/17 Outcome**
Disabled Children	27.80	22.00	17.50	19.50	24.50
High Peak & N Dales	31.30	30.00	29.10	29.60	31.00
Chesterfield	10.20	11.70	11.20	12.30	16.80
NE Derbyshire & Bolsover	14.70	20.90	14.90	15.80	16.50
Amber Valley	19.00	14.30	15.20	15.20	22.10
Erewash	14.60	21.40	18.80	13.50	12.40
S Derbyshire & S Dales	26.70	19.70	23.40	25.60	35.60
Derbyshire	**18.50**	**19.70**	**18.10**	**17.90**	**21.10**
Stat Neighbour Average	21.10	23.90	23.30		
England	16.00	17.40	18.00		

Percentage placed outside the LA boundary (regardless of distance from home)					
District	**2012/13 Outcome**	**2013/14 Outcome**	**2014/15 Outcome**	**2015/16 Outcome**	**2016/17 Outcome**
Disabled Children	22.20	17.10	17.50	17.10	28.60
High Peak & N Dales	20.80	20.00	18.60	23.90	21.10
Chesterfield	15.70	18.30	16.40	18.90	20.80
NE Derbyshire & Bolsover	27.90	30.40	19.30	26.30	24.80
Amber Valley	29.10	34.30	22.70	34.20	33.70
Erewash	38.50	46.00	35.00	33.30	37.10
S Derbyshire & S Dales	33.30	28.80	32.80	41.50	30.00
UASC					42.90
Preventing Family Breakdown Team					80.00
Derbyshire	**27.00**	**29.10**	**23.40**	**28.50**	**28.90**
Stat Neighbour Average	20.30	21.40			
England	34.40	36.40			

Derbyshire is a large rural and semi-rural county. The largest share of Derbyshire's population lives along its east border and along the M1 corridor. Derbyshire borders Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Cheshire, Staffordshire, Yorkshire, and Derby City.

Derbyshire recruits carers from neighbouring counties close to its border. For this reason a larger share live outside of the county borders than are placed at a distance of more than 20 miles from home, in which category Derbyshire performs well when compared to its statistical neighbours.

Average distance (in miles) Children in care (all) were placed from home by responsible district						
District	March 2012	March 2013	March 2014	March 2015	March 2016	March 2017
Disabled Children's Team	17	15	12	12	17	14
High Peak & North Dales	20	20	19	19	20	20
Chesterfield	11	10	7	8	10	11
North East & Bolsover	14	15	16	14	15	16
Amber Valley	14	15	12	13	13	16
Erewash	13	14	16	13	12	12
South Derbyshire	15	15	16	18	20	21
Derbyshire	14	14	14	14	14	15

Numbers of admissions in year - by age group					
Age Group	**2012/13**	**2013/14**	**2014/15**	**2015/16**	**2016/17**
Under 1	63	62	60	65	68
1 to 4	60	57	57	46	59
5 to 9	49	51	41	54	46
10 to 15	55	58	66	76	82
16 & Over	51	39	40	41	52
Total	**278**	**267**	**264**	**282**	**307**

Numbers of children discharged from care by reason of ceased					
Reason Ceased	**2012/13**	**2013/14**	**2014/15**	**2015/16**	**2016/17**
Adopted	75	82	79	59	44
Special Guardianship	11	13	22	23	20
Residence order granted	22	21	11	21	13
Returned home to live with parents, relatives, or other person with PR	85	82	70	85	63
Accommodation on remand ended	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
Age assessment determined child is aged 18 or over and E5, E6 and E7 do not apply	<10	<10	<10	10	<10
Care taken over by another LA in the UK	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
Died	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10

Left care to live with parents, relatives or other person with NO parental responsibility	<10	<10	16	24	19
Moved into independent living arrangement	63	46	33	30	29
Sentenced to custody	11	<10	<10	<10	<10
Transferred to care of adult social services	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
Moved abroad (Including deportation)	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
Period of being looked after ceased for any other reason	42	43	46	41	66
Total	**312**	**303**	**287**	**306**	**263**

Numbers of children discharged from care by duration of stay					
Duration	**2012/13**	**2013/14**	**2014/15**	**2015/16**	**2016/17**
Under 3 Months	46	58	45	73	72
3 Months To 6 Months	31	38	49	46	31
6 Months To 1 Year	55	41	40	39	30
1 Year To 3 Years	109	95	83	86	74
3 Years To 5 Years	32	32	34	27	24
5 Years & Over	39	39	36	35	32
Total	**312**	**303**	**287**	**306**	**263**

Percentage of children discharged from care by duration of stay					
Duration	**2012/13**	**2013/14**	**2014/15**	**2015/16**	**2016/17**
Under 3 Months	14.7%	19.1%	15.7%	23.9%	27.4%
3 Months To 6 Months	9.9%	12.5%	17.1%	15.0%	11.8%
6 Months To 1 Year	17.6%	13.5%	13.9%	12.7%	11.4%
1 Year To 3 Years	34.9%	31.4%	28.9%	28.1%	28.1%
3 Years To 5 Years	10.3%	10.6%	11.8%	8.8%	9.1%
5 Years & Over	12.5%	12.9%	12.5%	11.4%	12.2%

Between 2014/15 and 2016/17, the numbers of children in care increased from 603 to 630. This appears to have been influenced by a decrease in the number of discharges (from 287 to 263), an increase in the number of admissions (from 264 to 307), and an increase in length of stay. From 2014 there is a greater percentage of discharges occurring under 3 months (15.7% to 27.4%), and a discharge decrease in every other time period category.

	2012/13	**2013/14**	**2014/15**	**2015/16**	**2016/17**
Admissions to Care	278	267	264	282	307
Discharges from Care	312	303	287	306	263
Number in Care (March 31st)	**664**	**628**	**603**	**585**	**630**

The number of children placed by Derbyshire County Council for adoption has also been progressively falling within a context of fewer children aged 1 to 4 admitted to care to 31 March 2016, and a rise in Special Guardianship Orders.

Between 2014 and 2017 the number of Special Guardianship Orders saw a 100% increase from 186 to 370. Between March 2015 and March 2017, there was a 35% increase in the total number of children aged 0 to 8 incl. subject to a SGO, increasing from 154 as of 31/3/15 to 208 as of 31/03/17. In comparison, the number of LAC remained stable over the same time period, being 628 in March 2014 and 630 in March 2017.

In 2012/13 a total of 75 Adoption Orders were made, falling to 44 in 2016/17. Whilst this pattern is consistent with the national picture, a number of strategies are underway in Derbyshire to improve adoption practice.

The number of young people placed in Independent Living has remained fairly static over the last two years, despite a slightly rising leaving care population. This is attributable to the growth in Staying Put placements, and more young people remaining in placement to age 18.

Placement Stability

The Who Cares Trust states that more than 1 in 10 children in care can experience three or more placements throughout the year. The DfES Datapack 'Improving Permanence for Looked After Children – September 2013' reflects these findings, '11% - a small but substantial number of children - experienced three or more placements in the year ending 31 March 2012' .

Percentage of Children in care who had 3 or more placements during the year					
District	**2012/13 Outcome**	**2013/14 Outcome**	**2014/15 Outcome**	**2015/16 Outcome**	**2016/17 Outcome**
Disabled Children	0.00	0.00	4.90	4.90	2.00
High Peak & N Dales	14.40	4.40	11.30	14.10	9.50
Chesterfield	10.80	5.00	1.60	5.70	3.00
NE Derbyshire & Bolsover	7.00	9.90	9.70	11.60	3.70
Amber Valley	8.20	5.60	7.50	8.90	8.10
Erewash	10.70	5.90	9.70	10.80	8.60
S Derbyshire & S Dales	10.70	4.00	5.60	3.70	4.40
Derbyshire	**9.60**	**5.70**	**8.00**	**8.70**	**5.60**

The data underpinning the three or more placements per year performance indicator changed in 2015 to exclude missing from care episodes. National and statistical comparator information is not available to date. Derbyshire's performance improved from 8.70 of the child in care population experiencing 3 or more moves in 2015/16, to 5.60 in 2016/17. This improvement is in the context of a rising child in care population and is a positive indication of the quality of placements and support provided.

3. CURRENT PROVISION

3.1. Emergency Response

Established in 2015, the Time out Team provides emergency and short term interventions at times of crisis (with core objectives – prevent admission into care when safe/appropriate to do so, prevent placement breakdown and support emergency placements with foster carers; minimise risk and vulnerability until planned interventions can be made). Resources are therefore targeted where they are needed most and prioritisation and re-prioritisation is an essential activity which takes place continuously. The team works closely with the residential homes including linking staff to specific homes through secondment; enabling communication and working together to enable planned admissions when required. This practice ensures a cohesive approach across the residential service and sharing of best practice, including systemic approaches to working with families. There is also support for foster carers offering emergency placements. In the future, the team will also link with the post 16 years of age crash pad development to be operational from October 2018. The team also works closely with the Preventing Family Breakdown team.

Emergency foster carer placements are also part of the range of options. Derbyshire has a small number of carers willing to take emergency placements and are enacting a range of approaches to increase this number.

3.2. Central Placement Team

This team was established in January 2015. It comprises one part time senior practitioner and three community care workers and has enabled a reduction in the number of fostering workers on duty at any one time. It maintains good working relationships with Derbyshire foster carers and a centralised knowledge of all internal placements and vacancies to maximise fostering placement choice, utilisation and minimise the number of IFA placements purchased. The greater transparency of placement availability has increased placement utilisation rate; increased understanding of the reasons behind 'held' vacancies, and improved matching possibilities. The team undertakes agency residential and IFA placement searches as required, and seeks to return children to an internal placement as soon as is appropriate informed by each child's assessed needs. Evaluation of the team has demonstrated its positive impact.

3.3 Internal Fostering

For further information, please refer to the current Derbyshire County Council annual Fostering Service plan. Derbyshire County Council's Fostering Service is the largest single provider of placements to the Authority's Looked After Children; over half (53%) the children in care (excluding IFA placements) lived with local authority foster carers at March 2017. The Derbyshire County Council Fostering Service comprises of;

- The Fostering Recruitment Team, centrally based who undertake the recruitment, assessment and pre approval training of all foster carers, including Regulation 24 carers.

- The Disabled Children's Fostering Team who support carers for all disabled children - both short breaks and those who are Looked After, and oversee the specialist, intensive Contract Care scheme for disabled children.
- The Contract Care Team, which recruits, assesses and supports carers to provide intensive, one on one care packages for teenage Looked After children that present with challenging behaviours.
- Three Mainstream Fostering teams, covering the High Peak and Dales, North East and Chesterfield and Amber Valley, Erewash and South Derbyshire areas.
- The Central Placement Team.

The service provides;

- Short term, task focussed placements providing support to children in need or other foster carers who require short breaks.
- Intermediate, task focussed placements providing medium to longer term placements for children in care.
- Permanent and long term carers – a fostering alternative where adoption or special guardianship is not appropriate.
- Kinship carers – family members or friends of a specific, Looked After child who are assessed and approved under fostering standards.
- Contract Carers – to provide care for children aged 13 and over, with severe challenging behaviours.
- Link carers – to provide short break care schemes, for disabled children, providing support to children in need.
- Disability Contract Carers – to provide family based care for children of any age, with complex disabilities.

Placement utilisation			
2013 to 2014	**2014 to 2015**	**2015 to 2016**	**2016 to 2017**
795 approved placement spaces of which 458 were filled 57.6%	783 approved placement spaces of which 457 were filled 58.4%	784 approved placement spaces of which 433 were filled 55.2%	753 approved placement spaces of which 443 were filled 58.8%

There has been a gradual decline in the maximum number of 'potential' placements offered by Derbyshire County Council's foster carers – however, the actual number of children placed has remained relatively stable. This indicates a more pragmatic approach to the way new carers are registered, with households being approved for one or two children at most rather than a possibly misleading approval category of three.

Derbyshire fostering placements					
	2011/12	**2012/13**	**2013/14**	**2015/16**	**2016/17**
Number of Carer Homes	430	426	410	421	407
Carers Approved	49	49	42	53	39
Carers Resigned	43	43	48	54	56
Placements Used	530	475	458	433	443

Staying Put		
2014 to 2015	**2015 to 2016**	**2016 to 2017**
Young people aged 18+ who have been supported by former carers over the year – 34	Young people aged 18+ who have been supported by former carers over the year – 46	Young people aged 18+ who have been supported by former carers over the year – 50

Of the current tranche of young people choosing to 'Stay Put', 27% are aged 20 years or older, with more young people entering higher education or university.

Foster Carers Leaving the Service

Until March 2016 Derbyshire had a stable or falling child in care population. Over the course of the last five years, the Authority has seen a gradual fall in the number of internal foster carer homes. Over the last two years Derbyshire County Council has seen its highest level of recorded carer resignations which have, for the first time, taken the authority ahead of the Fostering Network's national average resignation rate of 12%. However, an audit of the resignations shows Derbyshire County Council's carer population to be atypical of the national average. The Fostering Network benchmark of the U.K. fostering population shows the current age range of foster carers as 11 percent aged between 18 and 39, 68 percent are aged between 40 and 59, and 20 percent 60 to 70 plus.

68% of Derbyshire's carers are also aged between 40 and 59. However, 24% of our carers are aged over 60 and 8% are aged under 39 years of age. The Authority has more older, established carer households and has fewer, younger households than its peers. From 2011 Census, Derbyshire has a higher proportion of pensioner households than both its peers in the East Midlands, and England in general – (9.6%

compared to 9.0% compared to 8.1%). This would indicate a carer population that, looking at the cessation figures, was more likely to retire because of their age than resign. Furthermore, a significant percentage of resignations are where the carers are continuing to look after the children or young people under a different legal arrangement. For instance, the last five years have seen a rise in the number of carers ceasing their approval as a foster carer for children when a young person in their care wishes to Stay Put.

The Strategic Aims for the Fostering Service:

Marketing and Recruitment: we will:

- generate up to 40 good quality universal enquiries a month (i.e. all types of fostering – including disability and UASC);
- generate up to 10 disability fostering enquiries a month;
- generate up to 10 supported lodgings enquiries a month;
- generate up to 10 enquiries about sibling groups and teenagers a month;
- generate up to five UASC enquiries a month;
- recruit 60 new foster placements a year,
- achieve 85% of fostered children being placed with in-house carers.

Strategic Intentions. We will:

1. be active in promoting the advantages of fostering for Derbyshire;
2. be active in continuously addressing the identified barriers to fostering;
3. utilise the full range of communication mediums such as Facebook, Twitter, internal and partner newsletters, case studies etc. alongside more established mediums such as local radio and 'Talk Fostering' events;
4. continue to review the on-going recruitment campaign strategy which includes encouraging and supporting Derbyshire County Council staff to consider fostering;
5. maintain a focus in recruitment activity in seeking new carers for sibling groups and teenagers. These two population groups are most likely to be placed in an IFA;
6. increase the supply of Contract Carers, and particularly amongst experienced carers best able to meet the needs of more complex young people;
7. at the earliest opportunity step down into mainstream provision children placed in an IFA or residential care that could have their needs appropriately met by the Derbyshire Fostering Service;
8. grow the pool of carers with experience of caring for disabled children and young people, and that also have pre-existing home adaptations to support disabled children and the caring role;
9. continue to develop our internal carer capacity to meet the needs of UASC, who are most likely to be male and older;
10. intentionally seek to recruit an increasing percentage of younger carers;
11. ensure the quality of the assessment to foster, social work and other support to foster carers is maintained as the total number of fostering households increases. This is especially pertinent to newly approved carers, to avoid any possible premature 'drop out' from fostering;
12. embed the relaunched Foster Carer Charter to improve retention;
13. embed the revised fostering allowance and payment scheme linked to occupancy and foster carer engagement in continual professional development;

14. maintain and further develop the Derbyshire Foster Care Council;
15. undertake exit questionnaires and utilise feedback mechanisms such as the annual questionnaire to improve practice and thus retention;
16. continually learn from external sources, such as feedback from the Independent Review Mechanism, Ofsted, Fostering Network and other fostering providers, as well as national research,
17. maintain as a minimum the average foster carer service at or above the current level of 9.4 years each year (national figure of 84 months (7 years).

Fostering Service Targets
As part of the greater Children's Services Sufficiency Strategy, each year Derbyshire County Council's Fostering Service updates its Service Plan. These provide targets as both a goal and also an indicator of annual performance.

The Service Plan was updated in 2017:

Description	Current Performance	Target 2017/18	Target 2018/19	Target 2019/20	Target 2020/21
Improve balance between DCC and IFA placements	69%	80%	82%	85%	85%
Improve conversion rate from enquiry to approval	7%	10%	12%	14%	15%
Increase the number of foster homes/placements	405	460	470	480	500
Increase utilisation of current vacancies	57%	60%	70%	80%	80%
Increase the number of Contract Carers	54	54	58	59	60

3.4 Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA)

When required, Derbyshire County Council seeks to commission placements with Independent Fostering Agencies as part of a larger regional commissioning group so as to assure Best Value.

In 2011 the Authority first joined the East Midlands Regional Children's Framework (EMCF), working alongside other East Midlands region local authorities to offset the costs generated by IFA placements. The East Midlands Children's Framework (EMCF) was recommissioned in 2016. The EMCF now enables a number of commissioning options:

- ‘Call Off’ for individual placements;
- further competition for individual placements;
- further competition for Block Contracts with sub categories of need to determine placement requirement and associated cost.

The EMCF also opens each year to enable new providers to join and existing providers to expand and develop their services in order that they can bid for additional service level categories and respond to placement demand in the market. A current national issue is rising Children in care numbers, resulting in placement demand outweighing placement capacity. The independent sector could usefully develop and expand to address placement pressures within local authorities.

The 2016 EMCF intends to achieve projected savings of approximately £500,000 per annum for each participating authority. During the 2016 – 2017 financial year, the framework, and the Derbyshire Commissioning and Contracts Team achieved savings of £800,000 across IFA and private sector residential placements. It is intended that these savings levels are maintained or improved upon each year until the re-commissioning of the EMCF in 2020. However, the savings challenges following the implementation of the 2016 EMCF are:

- providers increased their placements costs. Placement costs had been fixed for the four year period of the previous 2011 EMRCF;
- providers removed a number of discounts that had been made available under the 2011 EMRCF,
- impact on Provider costs in response to the introduction of the National Living Wage.

2016/17 IFA placement costs outturn was £5,187,726.
Projected expenditure for 2017/18 based on current costs is £6,556,683.

No of placements			
2017-18 - forecast	**17-18 Budget £**	**17-18 Forecast £**	**Sep-17**
Amber Valley	809,107	1,002,143	27
NE & Bolsover	1,002,189	859,392	20
Chesterfield	928,634	952,317	23
Erewash	965,412	1,246,673	30
High Peak	652,802	500,286,	11
South Derbyshire	891,856	1,293,028	36
Disability	72,930	117,588	2
Total	**5,322,930**	**5,971,427**	**149**
Asylum Seeker Children		585,256	15
Total placements including UASC		**6,556,683**	**164**

Between March 2013 and March 2017, the number of children placed with an IFA saw a 16% increase from 116 to 134. Conversely, over the same time period the number of children in care decreased by 5% from 664 to 630. Within the 206/17financial year, the number of external placements rose from 109, peaking at 124 (October 2015) and finishing the year at 113. The average monthly total of IFA placements, in the financial year 2016/17was 105.

A trend noticeable in 2016 is of placing Derbyshire sibling groups (for the most part, two children) and also teenagers in IFA's. 'Hard to place' children, or groups of children, are more likely to be placed with Independent Fostering Agency placements. At March 31st 2016, there were 59 sibling groups where the children had to be placed separately, at March 31st 2017, there were 52 sibling groups where the children had to be placed separately. Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children have also formed a significant cohort of children placed with an agency though since March 2017 more have been placed with Derbyshire foster carers or semi-supported accommodation. For the most part, they are older and predominantly male.

The rise in IFA numbers is an indication of a number of children remaining in placement, once they move to agency carers, and a gradual rise in the number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children needing homes. As placements become established, and children remain, in some cases as care leavers, the IFA population increases against the number of new placements.

It is noticeable that the average duration of time spent with an agency has dropped from 2.9 years in 2015/16, to 1.4 years in 2016/17. This indicates that children placed are becoming care leavers not long after being initially placed, and also that new processes have been established whereby children placed in an emergency in a IFA are quickly reviewed with the aim of moving them, where possible, to internal provision.

3.5 Adoption and Performance

Derbyshire County Council's Adoption Service currently consists of 1 full-time and 2 part-time service managers, 12 WTE social workers and 2.5 family resource workers. All staff members are expected to complete assessments of prospective adopters, with additional responsibility for non-agency (including step parent) adoptions and inter-country adoption assessments. The Adoption Service is formed of two teams; one dedicated to support, the other to assessment and placement.

The National Adoption Scorecard has highlighted Derbyshire's relative strength and strong performance in many aspects of adoption practice. In October 2015 the Adoption Service received confirmation from the Chief Executive and Lead Member of the definition of what Derbyshire's good performance looks like.

In the past two years, the number of Placement Orders being made by the courts has dropped by 25% and, as a result, a significant decrease in children with a plan for adoption. The two trends have resulted in more adopters being available for fewer children. Adopters are increasingly aware of this and the length of time adopters wait for a match is resulting in fewer inquiries. The Adoption Leadership Board notes that local authorities have made 21% fewer adoptions in 2015/16 than the previous financial year. In Derbyshire, there were 27% fewer adoptions in 2015/16 and 26% fewer as of year-end 2016/17. This is reflected in the national picture (Department of Education report SFR 50/2017) showing the number of children looked after who were adopted has fallen to 4,350 from a peak of 5,360 in 2015.

Special Guardianship Orders
SGO's are also increasingly utilised as an alternative to care. Between March 2015 and March 2017, there was a 35% increase in the total number of children aged 0 to 8 inclusive subject to a SGO, an increase from 154 as of 31/3/15 to 208 as of 31/03/17.

SGO's in age group 0 to 18		
2014 to 2015	**2015 to 2016**	**2016 to 2017**
238 SGOs 22 from care	300 SGOs 23 from care	370 SGO's 20 from care

Adoption Enquiries, Applications and Approvals:

Adoption recruitment			
2013 to 2014	**2014 to 2015**	**2015 to 2016**	**2016 to 2017**
Enquiries – 226 Applications to adopt – 62 Adopters approved – 56 (24%)	Enquiries – 218 Applications to adopt – 40 Adopters approved – 45 (22%)	Enquiries – 242 Applications to adopt – 69 Adopters approved – 61 (35%)	Enquiries – 164 Applications to adopt – 52 Adopters approved –67 (31%)

Adoptive families			
2013 to 2014	**2014 to 2015**	**2015 to 2016**	**2016 to 2017**
57 families as of year end 29 waiting to be matched	55 families as of year end 37 waiting to be matched	89 families as of year end 36 waiting to be matched	55 families as of year end 31 waiting to be matched

Adoption time scales			
2013 to 2014	**2014 to 2015**	**2015 to 2016**	**2016 to 2017**
Adoptive families in the matching process; 18 – Less than 3 months 18 - 3 to 6 months 3 – 6 to 9 months 1 – 9 months to 1 year 40 families in total	Adoptive families in the matching process; 8 – Less than 3 months 9 – 3 to 6 months 5 – 6 to 9 months 2 – 9 months to 1 year 24 families in total	Adoptive families in the matching process; 2 – Less than 3 months 11– 3 to 6 months 11 – 6 to 9 months 12 – 9 months to 1 year 36 families in total	Adoptive families in the matching process; 0 – Less than 3 months 7– 3 to 6 months 12 – 6 to 9 months 1– 9 months to 1 year 2 - over a year 22 families in total

Children adopted			
2013 to 2014	**2014 to 2015**	**2015 to 2016**	**2016 to 2017**
74 children placed 82 children adopted	63 children placed 79 children adopted	50 children placed 58 children adopted	43 children placed 43 children adopted

Derbyshire has seen a significant, and sustained, fall in the number of children adopted in Derbyshire. Information for the 12 months ending March 2017 (44) shows a decrease of 38 children discharged from care as a result of an adoption when compared with 2013/14 (82).

Where families are approved, the numbers of those in the matching process has begun to decline; 37 in the financial year 2014/15 dropping to 36 in 2015/16 dropping to 31 waiting to be matched in 2016/17. This matches the initial drop in the number of Looked After children in Derbyshire over the years and is consistent with the national picture.

The number of younger Children in care in Derbyshire is rising. Derbyshire intends to see matching performance timescales decrease. In 2017 Derbyshire established a Permanence and Adoption Team, as part of the work under the Regionalised Adoption Agency development. The development, practice and performance of the team, including activities relating to the recruitment of adopters and length of time adopters are waiting for a child to be placed in their care, will be the main focus of the newly formed Derbyshire Adoption Improvement Board. Furthermore, the service is increasingly active in promoting Fostering to Adopt opportunities.

Admissions

Numbers of admissions to care in year - by age group			
Age Group	**2014/15**	**2015/16**	**2016/17**
Under 1	60	65	68
1 to 4	57	46	59
5 to 9	41	54	46

Children Adopted by Locality:

Numbers of adoptions of children in care by locality					
District	**2012/13 Outcome**	**2013/14 Outcome**	**2014/15 Outcome**	**2015/16 Outcome**	**2016/17 Outcome**
Disabled Children	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
High Peak & N Dales	10	<10	19	<10	<10
Chesterfield	17	15	<10	18	<10
NE Derbyshire & Bolsover	17	32	21	18	10
Amber Valley	10	<10	13	<10	<10
Erewash	19	11	10	<10	10
S Derbyshire & S Dales	<10	<10	<10	<10	<10
Derbyshire	**75**	**82**	**79**	**59**	**44**

Derbyshire is performing well in placing 'harder to place' children in adoptive families. The disabled children's team saw an increase for the 12 months ending March 2017 when comparing with the 2013/14 outcomes.

The number of children who were placed for adoption at the end of March 2017 (27) was a decrease of 32 when compared with the number placed at 31st March 2014 (59). However, there has been a noticeable increase in the age of the children with Derbyshire performing well for those adopted from care aged 5 and over. In the year 2013 to 2014, the average age of a child adopted 3.3 years with 24 children aged 4+ years. The average age of the 79 children adopted in the financial year 2014 to 2015 was 3.8 years with 34 children aged 4 + years. In the year following, the average age of a child adopted was also 3.8 years, with 27 aged 4+ years. For the first six months of financial year 2016 – 17, the average age of a child being was adopted was 2.7 years, with 7 children aged 4 + years. However, as of year-end 2016 to 17, the average age of children being adopted had risen to 3.2 years with 15 children aged 4+ years. This is despite an increase in the number of children aged 0-4 being admitted into care, and indicative of Derbyshire's strategy to continue finding adoptive homes for older and harder to place children.

In the year 2012 to 2013, 39 children were placed with 32 households who were 'Out of County (OOC)' i.e. adopters approved by another Adoption agency. This fell to 28 children being placed with 24 OOC households in 2013 to 2014 and fell again, in the financial year 2014 to 2015, to 25 children placed with 17 OOC households, falling once more, in 2015 to 2016, with 34 placements made with Derbyshire County Council adopters and 24 with OOC households. In the last twelve months, from April 1st to March 31st 2017, 35 children were placed with Derbyshire County Council households and only 10 were OOC adopters. Of the Out of County placements, the majority (over 80%) are still based within either the county boundary, through living in Derby City or in, and around, the county border, enabling Derbyshire to continue to provide continuity of support.

Children with an adoption plan			
2013 to 2014	**2014 to 2015**	**2015 to 2016**	**2016 to 2017**
Number of children subject to Adoption Plan – 135 LAC with Placement Order but not matched – 69 LAC placed but no Adoption Order – 65	Number of children subject to Adoption Plan – 99 LAC with Placement Order but not matched – 38 LAC placed but no Adoption Order – 42	Number of children subject to Adoption Plan – 96 LAC with Placement Order but not matched – 37 LAC placed but no Adoption Order – 46	Number of children subject to Adoption Plan – 102 LAC with Placement Order but not matched – 57 LAC placed but no Adoption Order – 31

The strategic aims of the Adoption Service are to:

1. respond to the trajectory of a rising Derbyshire child in care population by increasing the number of adoptive placements available;
2. continue to grow the number of Fostering for Adoption placements when it is in the best interest of a child to do so;
3. remain focussed on providing permanent homes, through adoption or through Fostering for Adoption, for children who may be considered 'hard to place' , and especially older children;
4. continue to identify potential adoptive parents within our own carer population; fast tracking prospective adoptive parents, especially where a possible link with a child awaiting placement can be made and developing Foster to Adopt placements;
5. maintain the gains made in the percentage of adoption inquiries that convert into approved adoption placements;
6. embed the new Adoption and Permanence Team tasked with delivering timely adoptions;
7. work with the developing East Midlands Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) project;
8. continue to proportionately reduce the number of externally purchased placements;

9. achieve a financial surplus by purchasing fewer OOC placements than Derbyshire makes available;
10. address the 'gap' between post adoption support expectations and the adoption support funding (ASF) and other resources available;
11. respond to the growth in access to record requests made by birth family and adopted adults;
12. seek to meet and exceed the expectations of the service as laid out in the Adoption Scorecard,
13. continue to develop best practice in line with Government initiatives, consultancy advice and feedback from adopters.

Fuller details are to be found in the Adoption Annual report 2016/17.

Primary adoption performance measures					
Measures of Performance		**Target**			
Description	**Baseline**	**2017-18**	**2018-19**	**2019-20**	**2020-21**
Reduce the average number of days between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family (A1) 3 year average	611	605	580	555	530
Reduce the average number of days between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family (A1) Rolling 12 months	554	522	490	458	426 (DfE target)
Reduce the average number of days between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family (A2) 3 year average	349	330	287	244	200
Reduce the average number of days between a local authority receiving court authority to place a child and the local authority deciding on a match to an adoptive family (A2) Rolling 12 months	287	245	203	161	121 (DfE target)

3.6 Internal Residential

Derbyshire has a total of 11 Registered Children's Homes. Further details are available in the Annual Residential Service's Plan and individual Statements of Purpose.

Provision for Severely Disabled Children and Young People

The Getaway, and Spire Lodge provide specialist short break and shared care for disabled children and young people. The Willows and Hill View share a site known as Peak Lodge. Each unit provides up to 6 beds for both short breaks and permanent placements for disabled children and young people in care. The units are located across the county.

An architect is working with Derbyshire County Council on the design of a new Spire Lodge. Building land in Chesterfield is 'earmarked', pending the acquisition of sufficient capital.

The residential service for disabled children aspires to consistently achieve an Ofsted overall judgement of 'Outstanding' across all provision.

Provision for Children and Young People without Severe Disabilities

32 medium to long term beds are available to care for children aged 11–17 at 31 March 2017:

- 6 beds at Solomon House
- 4 beds at Three Gables
- 3 beds at Old Post House
- 4 beds at Fairview
- 5 beds at Evergreen
- 5 beds at Glenholme
- 5 beds at Linden House.

There is also capacity for holiday accommodation for one child at a cottage based in the countryside under Annex H of the Children's Homes Regulations.

The current level of provision provides sufficient geographical spread to maintain children's links within their local community where this is appropriate.

Demand for residential and Contract Care (specialist teenage fostering) beds exceeds vacancies and demand has to be tightly managed to achieve matching. This is usually achieved via the Placement Matching Panel held fortnightly where recommendations for placements are made, to be confirmed following more detailed individual matching considerations.

The strategic aims for the Residential Service (related to sufficiency) are to:

- review the overall type and level of residential provision, in conjunction with Contract Care, in line with the changing population and analysis of needs, outcomes and young person's views;
- reduce overall bed capacity by three and reinvest in a:
  I. two bedded unit staffed by residential workers skilled in utilising therapeutically informed practice;

II. the Time Out Team staffing complement by an increase of 2

- improve standards of care, in and around each home, so that all homes receive at least a 'Good' Ofsted rating with the aim being that all homes are judged Outstanding by 18-19;
- continue to improve the resilience and skills of children's homes in supporting young people with complex needs, thus supporting increased placement stability, by supporting and developing different approaches including Reflective Practice and Social Pedagogy.
- apply as appropriate to Derbyshire's configuration of services 'No Wrong Door' approaches.
- develop Step Down placement from residential care into Contract Care or IFA's
- regularly review the specific role and function of each home to ensure best fit with the changing care population;
- carefully balance placement matching with minimising vacancy levels and thus also unit costs;
- improve the physical quality of children's homes with an on-going programme of capital refurbishment;
- rebuild Linden House,
- articulate what Derbyshire's 'Staying Close Offer' consists of.

Some of these aims can be evidenced by progress against the targets of:

- reduced unplanned admissions;
- increased overall occupancy from 74.25% in 2016/17,
- increase the percentage of children homes (including homes serving children with disabilities) with an Outstanding Ofsted rating

The ongoing Sufficiency Review analysis of trends and costs alongside the 10 month Emotional well-being pilot to March 2018 will support Derbyshire's understanding of flow through the placement system and also the needs of new entrants to care. The data will inform future design and delivery over the next 5 years.

From 2016 Derbyshire's Child in care population has been rising. To reduce the volume of young people placed in crisis into external residential provision Derbyshire will in 2017 explore a reduction of 3 mainstream residential beds to reinvest into a 2 bedded intensive and therapeutically informed children's home that will undertake a comprehensive assessment prior to placing in onward provision or achieving a sustainable return home.

3.7 Private Sector Residential

Externally purchased residential placements are commissioned when all other in-house solutions have been explored or exhausted, or when the child's needs are complex and require specialist provision. A 'Complex Cases Protocol' is used to ensure multi-agency contribution to assessment and decision making, and, where appropriate, placement and support package funding from a pooled budget (Social Care, Education, Health and Adult Care).
An increasingly robust approach to commissioning is being undertaken, through the use of the East Midlands Children's Framework, 1 February 2016 until 31 January 2020. The EMCF now enables a number of commissioning options:

- 'Call Off' for individual placements;
- Further competition for individual placements,

- Further competition for Block Contracts.

Service level categories of need determine placement requirement and associated cost.

The EMCF also opens each year to enable new providers to join and existing providers to expand and develop their services in order that they can bid for additional service level categories. A national issue currently is a rise in Children in care numbers, meaning that placement demand outweighs placement capacity. The independent sector has an opportunity to develop and expand in order to address the placement pressures facing local authorities.

As with Independent Fostering Agencies, the 2016 EMCF intends to achieve projected savings of approximately £500,000 per annum for each participating local authority. During the 2016 – 2017 financial year, the Framework, and Derbyshire commissioning and contracts team achieved savings of £800,000, combined savings in respect of IFA and private sector residential placements. It is intended that these savings levels are maintained or improved upon each year until the re-commissioning of the EMCF in 2020. However, the savings challenges following the implementation of the 2016 EMCF are:

- providers increased their placements costs. Placement costs had been fixed for the four year period of the previous 2011 EMRCF;
- providers removed a number of discounts that had been made available under the 2011 EMRCF,
- impact on provider costs in response to the introduction of the National Living Wage.

Placement Activity and Cost Data
2013 to 2014:

Total placements at start of year; 20
Total placements at end of year; 16
Total annual commitment; £2,462,231.00

Throughout the year; x were residential with education
25 were solely residential
x were Secure Remand
x were Secure Welfare
Average age of child in placement - 16

2014 to 2015:

Total placements at start of year; 16
Total placements at end of year; 26
Total annual commitment; £3,900,149.00

Throughout the year; x were residential with education
34 were solely residential
x were Secure Remand
x were Secure Welfare
Average age of child in placement - 16

2015 to 2016:

Total placements at start of year; 26
Total placements at end of year; 32
Total annual commitment; £4,953,000

Throughout the year; 11 were residential with education
47 were solely residential
x were Secure Remand
x were Secure Welfare
Average age of child in placement - 15

2016 to 2017:	
Total placements at start of year	32
Total placements at end of year	33
16-17 total spend £	5,243,000
Throughout the year: -	(All places incl those ending during year)
Residential with Education	14
Residential	47
Secure Remand	0
Secure Welfare	<
Average age of child in placement	15

NB at 31 March 2017 there were in addition 26 placements funded through the 'Pooled Budget'

Breakdown of placing localities for agency residential placements		
	No of YP at 31/3/17	**16-17 spend (approx split) £**
High Peak	<10	801,500
Chesterfield	<10	773,500
NED and Bolsover	<10	809,500
Amber Valley	<10	722,500
Erewash	<10	754,500
South Derbyshire	<10	817,500
Disability	<10	564,000
Total	**33**	**5,243,000**

The strategic aims for the commissioning of placements within the private residential sector are to:

- ensure placements are only commissioned after extensive multi agency assessment and it is agreed that no suitable, cost effective internal provision is available;
- commission such placements using the East Midlands children's regional framework whenever possible and with good or outstanding provision;
- maintain an overview of the level and range of needs of children requiring placements, and examine whether these needs can be more effectively met by decommissioning existing provisions or developing new provision to meet these specific needs. The current trend and activity with regard to externally purchased residential placements has changed from one of relative stability to rapid expansion. This is linked to a reduction in Derbyshire County Council residential beds and an increasing teenage child in care population;
- respond to the perception that many new teenage entrants to care present with care needs beyond the remit of mainstream fostering,
- supplement the rapid expansion of Derbyshire's internal contract carer scheme from 41 in 12/13 to 50 in at 31 March 2017 when it is not keeping pace with demand.

3.8 Leaving Care Provision

Derbyshire anticipates in the region of 88 new Care leavers in a 12 month period, inclusive of the rate of UASC flow to Derbyshire to date. Derbyshire has made good progress in increasing the range and volume of its commissioned supported and semi supported leaving care accommodation offer from 30 units at 31 March 2017 to 73 units by 01 October 2017. Personal one to one Care leaver support can be increased and flexed within the new 43 accommodation units.

More Care leavers are progressively taking advantage of Staying Put or supported lodging placements into their early twenties. In line with the concept of 'Staying Close' internal mainstream residential units have commenced sourcing accommodation close to the children's home in response to individual need and request. The increase in commissioned supported accommodation units intends to reduce reliance on both independent private and council accommodation as a first tenancy at age 18.

In the spring of 2015, 39% of Derbyshire's circa 330 Care leavers lived in independent accommodation. At Qtr. 4 2017 38% or 121 out of Derbyshire's 331 Care leavers Derbyshire lived in independent accommodation. Derbyshire continues to monitor changes to Housing Benefit through the Derbyshire Youth Accommodation Positive Pathway steering group, and notes the intention to exempt Care leavers from many of the proposed changes to age 25 years of age. The commissioning manager responsible for contracted After care services will continue to monitor changes as national housing and benefit policy evolves.

Projected numbers of care leavers to age 25						
Age	**31/03/16**	**31/03/17**	**31/03/18**	**31/03/19**	**31/13/20**	**31/03/21**
19	92	84	92	87	85	88
20	94	92	84	92	87	85
21	110	94	92	84	92	87
22	80	110	94	92	84	92
23	74	80	110	94	92	84
24	74	74	80	110	94	92
25	57	74	74	80	110	94
Total	**581**	**608**	**626**	**639**	**644**	**622**

(31/03/16 and 31/03/17 figures are actual numbers)

Scope

Accommodation for care leavers covers those:

- Aged 16/17 in regulated placements.
- Those aged 16/17 who have chosen to move into more independent accommodation arrangements and who are relevant.
- Those who are over 18 and who were relevant upon attaining 18 years of age.
- Those who are aged 16 or 17 and who present as homeless and need accommodation but for whom a children's home or foster home placement is not available or is not appropriate.

Needs Assessment

A comprehensive needs assessment was completed over summer 2016 to inform the re-commissioning of Care leaver accommodation from October 2108 and the Youth Accommodation Positive Pathway, scheduled for full implementation January 2018. An immediate response to the needs assessment was to increase the total volume of commissioned Care leaver units and range to include self-contained flats with flexible floating support in addition to the pre-existing 35 units in 7 shared houses staffed 24/7.

16 and 17 years olds make up a large percentage of total admissions to care. In 2016/17 they numbered 52 out of 307 admissions and made up 17% of total admissions.

Care Leaver Projections

Current projections for Derbyshire children in care trends anticipate that each 12 month period will see approximately 88 young people reach age 18 to acquire care leaver status. The exact numbers will vary informed by an increasing range of opportunities to exit the system at an earlier point in the care journey, and the evolving national UASC policy.

Derbyshire recognises that the application of 'Keep on Caring' aspirations will increase the total cohort. It is working to develop policy and services in line with Keep on Caring aspirations, but anticipates that older care leavers will primarily live in the independent accommodation sector and will not require formal placement provision, but may require tenancy support.

Accommodation Profile at 1 April 2017
Derbyshire to 1 October 2018 has commissioned access to:

- 6x5 bedroomed shared houses staffed 24/7.
- 43 self-contained flats, some of which are in purpose build five bedded blocks.
- Floating support to the self-contained flats.
- Floating support to young people into 'move on' accommodation.

During 2016-17, spot purchased After care supported accommodation usage totalled 5,889 bed nights. A total of 46 young people were supported, of whom 40 were under 18 years of age at the start of the placement. More Care leavers will be supported in 2017/18, as the total number of commissioned Care leaver units have increased by 43 at 1st October 2017.

Derbyshire does not commission Care leaver accommodation in neighbouring authorities, in which consistently at any one time around 29% of Derbyshire's total care leaver population lives. This is often because a Care leaver childhood placement was out of county and they choose to stay in the area they know, or they have moved for education or work. The After Care Support Service assists those care leavers to acquire suitable accommodation.

The table below indicates through a 'snap shot' at a point in time the accommodation types lived in by Derbyshire's current care leavers at March 2017. 97% of the total care leaver population were in suitable accommodation.

CODE	TYPE OF ACCOMMODATION MARCH 2017	TOTAL	% of total
B	With parents or relatives	**45**	14.3%
	With foster carers	**13**	4.1%
C	Community home or other form of residential care such as an NHS establishment	**16**	5.1%
D	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	**56**	17.8%
E	Supported lodgings (accommodation, usually in a family home, where adults in the "host family" provide formal advice and support)	**0**	0.0%
G	Gone abroad	**0**	0.0%
H	Deported	**0**	0.0%
K	Ordinary lodgings, without formal support	**0**	0.0%
R	Residence not known	**1**	0.3%
S1	No fixed abode/homeless	**8**	2.5%
T	Foyers & similar supported accommodation which combines the accommodation with opportunities for education, training or employment	**0**	0.0%
U	Independent living, e.g. independent tenancy of flat,	**121**	38.4%

	house or bedsit, including local authority or housing association tenancy, or accommodation provided by a college or university, includes flat sharing		
V	Emergency accommodation (e.g. night shelter, direct access, emergency hostel)	**3**	1.0%
W	Bed and breakfast	**4**	1.3%
X	In custody	**8**	2.5%
Y1	Other accommodation – Shared Lives	**3**	1.0%
Y2	Staying with friends	**12**	3.8%
Z	Staying Put with former foster carers aged 18+	**25**	7.9%
	Total	**315**	**100%**

An analysis of the pattern of placements at March 2017 shows that:

- 7% in other accommodation.
- 9% were aged 18+ and in Staying Put/Supported Lodgings placements.
- 11%.were in “regulated placements” (incl community homes, hospital and custody).
- 18% were in some form of supervised “independent living” accommodation.
- 18% were placed with family or friends.
- 38%.were in fully independent accommodation.
- 97% were in suitable accommodation at 31 March 2017.

Percentage of Care leavers living in suitable accommodation by locality					
District	**2012/13 Outcome**	**2013/14 Outcome**	**2014/15 Outcome**	**2015/16 Outcome**	**2016/17 Outcome**
Disabled Children	n/a	94.70	83.30	100.00	100.00
High Peak & N Dales	n/a	83.30	80.00	100.00	90.90
Chesterfield	n/a	93.50	84.00	93.20	94.50
NE Derbyshire & Bolsover	n/a	87.10	89.30	89.60	84.20
Amber Valley	n/a	90.90	80.40	91.70	95.50
Erewash	n/a	83.80	91.50	96.30	86.10
S Derbyshire & S Dales	n/a	88.90	78.60	100.00	100.00
Derbyshire	n/a	**88.70**	**84.60**	**95.40**	**92.20**
Stat Neighbour Average	n/a	75.40	77.40	***81.2****	
England	n/a	77.60	81.00		

Figures for 2015/16 Outcome - March 2016 onwards - refer to 17, 18,19, 20, 21 year olds however the 2015/16 stat neighbour and national data is for 19,20 and 21 year olds.

Derbyshire responded to a falling ratio of care leavers in suitable accommodation by commissioning an additional 43 units of care leaver accommodation between 1 April 2017 and 1st October 2017.

Number and percentage of 16 and 17 year olds living within the county border as of March 31st 2017			
Current Children in care aged 16 & 17 living outside the LA boundary aged 16 and 17	Number of Cic	Number living outside the LA boundary	Percentage living outside the LA boundary
16	76	31	40.7%
17	81	34	41.9%
Total	157	65	41.4%

Current Cic aged 16 & 17 living outside the LA boundary by duration in care (March 31st 2017)				
Duration in care	Number of Derbyshire Cic (Aged 16 & 17)	Number of Cic (Aged 16 & 17) Living Outside The LA Boundary	Cic (aged 16 & 17) living outside the LA boundary as a percentage of all Derbyshire Cic (Aged 16 & 17)	Cic (Aged 16 & 17) living outside the LA boundary as a Percentage of total Cic (Aged 16 & 17) living outside the LA boundary
Less than 3 months	16	x	x	x
3 months to 5 months	15	x	x	x
6 months to 1 year	21	x	x	x
1 year to 2 years	25	13	52%	20%
2 years to 3 years	14	x	x	x
3 years +	66	26	39.3%	40%
Total	157	65	41.4%	100%

Current Care leavers living outside the LA boundary (March 31st 2017)			
Age	**Number of Care leavers**	**Number living outside the LA boundary**	**Percentage living outside the LA boundary**
18	92	25	27.1%
19	84	21	25%
20	92	27	29.3%
21	94	32	34%
Total	**362**	**105**	**29%**

Cic aged 16 & 17 at 31st March 2017 – by placement type at 31st March 2017						
Placement Type	No. who were admitted at age 16 or 17	%	No. who were admitted at age 0 to 15	%	Total Cic aged 16 & 17	%
Foster Placement (Agency)	12	26%	18	16.2%	30	19.1%
Foster Placement (DCC)	12	26%	40	36%	52	33.1%
Independent Living	15	32.6%	16	14.4%	31	19.7%
Other	0		x	x	x	x
Placed With Parents	0		x	x	x	x
Residential Placement (Agency)	x	x	17	15.3%	18	11.4%
Residential Placement (DCC)	x	x	14	12.6%	20	12.7%
Total	46	29.2%	111	70.7%	157	

Transitions to Adult Social Care
In 2016/17 46 young people transitioned into Adult Social Care (ASC) from the Children's Services Disabled Social Work teams. Derbyshire works closely with ASC to ensure timely transition planning occurs.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Care Leavers
Derbyshire is experiencing an anticipated rise in the number of UASC entering the care system. As UASC tend to be older they correspondingly more quickly progress to Care leaver status. Derbyshire's dedicated UASC social work team is actively engaged in supporting their appropriate access to legal advice and accommodation. Derbyshire is best placed to meet UASC care leaver needs within its borders, but acknowledges a percentage will chose to live in larger multi-cultural conurbations.

UASC		
	Placed within LA	**Placed outside LA**
LAC UASC under 16 years	2	5
LAC UASC 16 & 17 years	9	12
Former UASC, now supported by Leaving care team, all status	1	7

Strategic Plan for Care Leaver Accommodation 2017 to 2021:
Service reviews, commissioning cycles, and spot purchases continue to be informed by the views of Care leavers. These were most recently expressed in work related to the March 2015 Care Leaver Pledge, and the needs assessment undertaken in the summer of 2016 to inform both the Derbyshire Youth Positive Accommodation Pathway and the service specification for Care leaver accommodation from October 2018.

The Care Leaver Needs Assessment 2016 informed Derbyshire:

- A greater range of provision is required as many young people with experience of residential care regard staffed shared houses as either similar to or the same as residential care.
- Shared housing group dynamics can be beneficial and combat loneliness, but also challenge young people leading to inter personal conflict.
- Group dynamics contribute to providers operating vacancies, and also eviction rates.
- A large percentage of care leavers want “my own place” at age 18.
- Care leavers need preparation for Leaving care. There is a financial cliff edge in which they suddenly move from disposable income in the form of pocket money and clothing allowance to total self-reliance on a low fixed income.
- Care leavers need to be prepared manage a tenancy and independent living.
- Care leavers are vulnerable to losing their tenancy though a combination of ignorance, and a failure to acknowledge consequences.
- Children in care social workers are ‘behind the curve’ on welfare reform and access to affordable accommodation.
- Care leavers have an unrealistic expectation of young adult life, and find living in materially reduced circumstances very challenging.
- Young people are primarily inducted into young adult life through words, but have not understood the application of self-management, self-reliance, and self-motivation.
- To be enabling, support needs to be provided at an early stage and by staff with current knowledge.
- There is an oversupply of council single person’s accommodation in some areas, and a shortage in others which inhibits timely flow through some of the commissioned accommodation.
- Landlords prefer older young people, but would be positively disposed towards offering tenancies to young people that had successfully completed a ‘tenancy ready’ certificated course.
- Young people require a flexible package of support, informed by their fluctuating emotional wellbeing and the variable demands of adulthood.

Care Leaver Strategic Aims:

1. Re - commission a new Care leaver and 16 and 17 year old homeless accommodation service to be available from October 2018.
2. Commission floating support responsive to the needs of complex young people, including substance misuse in order to maximise the likelihood of tenancy retention.
3. Increase Derbyshire’s staff and carers’ understanding of legislation, guidance, best practice and funding streams to support Asylum Seeking Care Leavers.
4. Be constantly mindful of prospective Housing Benefit changes.

5. Work with district councils on exempting care leavers from Council Tax.
6. Increase understanding of the leaving care support needs of disabled Care leavers.
7. Respond to youth homelessness through the Youth Positive Accommodation Pathway Project (entering at 16 to 18 years only).
8. Stock take our services against the five Keep Caring Outcomes.
9. Encourage young people placed within Derbyshire to remain in their placement at least until age 17 and until they are ready to move on.
10. Maintain the commitment for young people to remain with their existing foster carers beyond age 18 through “Staying Put” arrangements.
11. Continue efforts to recruit more supported lodgings to provide choice.
12. Promote preparation for independence within all regulated placements.
13. From 2017 to work with Financial Advice and Action Derbyshire (FAAD) in the delivery of a ‘Money House’ project.
14. Provide off the shelf education packages on welfare benefit rules, managing finances, being a responsible tenant, and relationship skills.
15. To maintain occupancy levels of over 85% in contracted accommodation.

Progress against some of these strategic aims will be evidenced by these targets:

1. 75 units of supported commissioned accommodation are available at 1 October 2018.
2. An ongoing annual increase in the number of Care leavers in a Staying Put/Shared Lives arrangements.
3. To maintain the proportion of care leavers in suitable accommodation at 95% or above.
4. Occupancy rates within the commissioned care leaver accommodation are 85% or above.
5. Evictions are diverted or delayed through the employment of managed moves between commissioned properties.
6. District councils are notified early of young people on the ladder to eviction from the commissioned supported accommodation.
7. There is an annual percentage rise in the number of Care leavers that complete a tenancy ready course.
8. Council tax emption for care leavers is progressed to approval.
9. A new pocket money and clothing allowance policy is approved to reduce the financial cliff edge experienced by care leavers on leaving a placement
10. No young people in care or care leavers are placed in B&B accommodation.

4. COSTS AND VALUE

The Authority will always place, wherever possible, Looked After children with Derbyshire County Council Fostering Service foster carers or within Derbyshire County Council residential homes unless there is a specific reason to place them elsewhere.

It is our aim to keep children within the county, wherever appropriate and applicable; it not only helps maintain links with family and friends and people significant to them, keeps them within their school, but also often delivers the best value care for children and young people.

Average annual costs by placement type and age of child				Prices are per placement bed inclusive of all on costs			
Internal fostering rates							
Age	Weekly allowance £	Allowance p. a. £	Birthday/ festivity/ holiday / clothing	Approx average addition al p.a. £	Total allowances p.a. £	Staffing fixed cost element £	**Total cost p.a. incl fixed costs £**
0-1	139.76	7,268	714.72	2,210	10,192	8,833	**19,025**
2-4	142.53	7,412	729.00	2,210	10,351	8,833	**19,184**
5-10	157.93	8,212	807.60	2,210	11,230	8,833	**20,063**
11-15	180.29	9,375	921.90	2,210	12,507	8,833	**21,340**
16+	211.04	10,974	1,079.28	2,210	14,263	8,833	**23,096**

Contract Care fostering costs inclusive of age related allowances to the child.			
Contract care weekly placement fee	Per annum	Total placement fee & fost allowances	**With element of fixed staffing cost**
483.48	25,141	35,333	**41,607**
483.48	25,141	35,492	**41,766**
483.48	25,141	36,371	**42,645**
483.48	25,141	37,648	**43,922**
483.48	25,141	39,404	**45,678**

Summary of all non-foster care placement costs

Average placement cost per child 2016/17

- Complex Case average - £220, 000 per annum (incl 33%health contribution).
- DCC children's home - £172,000 per annum (incl of 25% vacancy rate).
- Agency residential - £190,000 per annum.
- Agency fostering - £44,000 per annum.
- DCC residential short break disability provision - £4,746 per week.
- Disability Link Care - £385 per week.
- Staying Put - £9,360 per annum.
- After care housing costs:
  a. Spot Purchase – primarily under age 18 - £56,000 per annum
  b. Block contracted Hubs shared houses - £39,420 per annum
  c. Block contract SAFE flats under age 18 - £24,913 per annum
  d. Block contact SAFE flats over age -18 £10,834.

- Exit from care placement costs apply to Residence, Special Guardianship, Child Arrangement and Adoption Orders. The average allowance cost range across the different orders is £4,000 to £7,000 per annum. Allowances generally apply to age 18

The above residential unit costs show aggregate costs regardless of complexity and age, held DCC residential beds to accommodate capital refurbishment programmes, and also resident matching considerations.

Placements in residential are almost invariably teenagers, and this is often the case for IFA's also. Whilst we always work in the best interests of the child, it is our aim to reduce the number of agency placements made and retained. We continue to scrutinise the capacity and usage of our foster carers with an emphasis on enhanced recruitment, retention and placement utilisation. Derbyshire believes that placing Derbyshire's children in internal placements enables greater control over both the location and also the quality of placements, and that mainstream fostering offer the authority the best value for money. Our aim now is, that whilst we will place and maintain agency placements where the child or children are thriving, where it is in their best interest and there is no acceptable alternative. For the majority of Children in care, we will provide high quality placements with Derbyshire carers. The table 'Placement usage estimate based on current ratio' shows where Derbyshire's Children in care are expected to be living if the population reaches 700, and strategic intentions deliver limited impact. The profile will alter if Derbyshire is successful in recruiting 60 new carers, and numbers in care discontinue their upward trajectory to 31 March 2017.

Summary of all Placement Use

Placement usage estimate based on current ratio		
	Est at 700 CIC at 31.3.18	As % of total
IFAs	170	24%
Internal Fostering	278	40%
Contract Care	41	6%
Agency Residential	40	6%
DCC Childrens Homes	24	3%
Pooled Budget	21	3%
Supp Acc - SAFE	14	2%
Supp Acc - Adullam / Trident	14	2%
Supp Acc - Spot Purchase	14	2%
Placed for Adoption	33	5%
Living with family / friends	42	6%
Other	8	1%
Total	700	100%

5. CONCLUSION

Key Themes:

1. The number of children in care is increasing. Derbyshire anticipates improving its management of this trajectory by aspiring to only have the right children in care for the right length of time, as opposed to focusing on numbers.
2. The numbers of children on a child protection plan is rising, which is indicative of a potential rise in the Children in care population.
3. The previous strategy to 2017 did not expect that placements within Independent and private agencies would increase, as at the time children in care numbers were falling.
4. From 2012/13 the percentage of new entrants to care aged 10 to 15 has risen from 20% to 27% at 31st March 2017.
5. Sibling groups, teenagers and UASC are largely fuelling the rise in IFA use.
6. The use of adoption as an exit from care has been decreasing.
7. The use of SGO's as an exit from care to 2015/16 was increasing year on year.
8. The numbers of children in care is on a rising trajectory. Derbyshire has insufficient internal placements to meet need.
9. The use of independent residential provision has increased partly in response to Derbyshire's closure of internal residential beds.
10. Placement unit costs.
    - Mainstream fostering placements are the best value for money.
    - Internal and independent residential provision is a similar unit price.
    - Contract Care and IFA's are a similar unit price.
    - The unit cost of Contract Care is reduced in placements approved to care for a second child.
    - Derbyshire is performing well in reducing the percentage of other agency adoptive placements purchased.
11. Placement budget - Expenditure on placements is rising in response to both the overall increasing number of Children in care, and the increase in teenage admissions who tend to be placed in higher cost provision such as IFA's, Contract Care, internal and agency residential.
12. The volume of internal placements and utilisation rate has fell at a faster rate than the fall in the number of children in care to March 2016. Since 2016 the volume of children in care has been rising, and both internal capacity and the range of provision has not kept pace with demand and age trends.
13. Derbyshire is increasing its foster care utilisation rate.
14. There is a year on year increase in Staying Put placements. This impacts on placement availability and expenditure.
15. The rising UASC population is primarily placed in IFA's. Funding from Central Government does not cover the full cost of caring for a UASC population.
16. The placement market place is competitive. Insufficient teenage placements across the East Midlands is driving up agency prices.

Key Strategic Responses:

1. Reduce placement demand. Children services is submitting an internal growth bid to increase social work capacity, reduce average caseloads and increase the ratio of reflective practice supervisors to front line practitioners thereby improving practice and the likelihood of maintaining more children safely in their community.

2. Audit services will in 2017 commence a review of the impact of the increased numbers of Children in care on the placement budget and wider social care costs.
3. Commence a focussed reunification work stream. Over 2016/17 the number of children entering care was higher than the number of children leaving care. This is influencing the upwards trajectory of numbers of Children in care.
4. Re launch the Graded Care Profile to reduce admissions to care neglect.
5. Re launch the CSE strategy to enable more children to be identified and afforded protection in the community.
6. Utilise Dynamic System Modelling, with the intention of understanding each day what is occurring within the wider social care system, the placement market, the child in care population, and also the impact of strategies to make best use of available placements and manage flow throughout the social care and placement system.
7. Offer good quality support and training to foster carers.
8. Incentivise foster carers to increase occupancy rates.
9. Increase foster carer payments by the rate of inflation.
10. Actively recruit to increase the total volume of foster placements by a further 60, and increase Contract Care by a further 10 by 31 March 2018.
11. In 2017 form an Adoption and Permanence Team to increase the rate and timeliness of adoptions.
12. Increase the range and quality of internal residential provision, including the development of a 2 bedded therapeutically informed residential unit.
13. Aspire for all services to be rated by Ofsted as Good, and for all residential provision to be rated as Outstanding.
14. Introduce learning from No Wrong Doors with the intention of reducing the length of stay in internal residential.
15. Maximise the use of available budget by commissioning 'Step Down' fostering provision from residential provision.
16. Increase and improve the range of Care leaver accommodation.
17. Explore the Boarding Schools Partnership offer as an alternative to care and also as a placement option.
18. Commission Care leaver accommodation for complex young people.

WHAT WILL SUCCESS LOOK LIKE?

1. We know who our children in care and Care leavers are, how many of them there are, their needs and how best to meet them.
2. For Derbyshire, in Derbyshire, by Derbyshire – that we have a flexible choice of internal local provision to meet their individual need, including children with disabilities.
3. At the point of making placements we are able to undertake careful placement matching, thus enabling more successful placements.
4. That we provide a range of effective support and interventions to both children and their carers – to achieve a reduction in placement moves and for children and young people to 'Be the best they can be'.
5. That children are enabled to exit care, as directed by their care plan.
6. That we receive positive feedback from Children in care, Care leavers, foster carers, adopters and residential staff– and the broader 'team around the child'.
7. That the right children are in care in the right place for the right amount of time.

Appendix One – Further documents

- Derbyshire Children in Care and Care Leavers Participation Strategy – 2017
- Derbyshire Children in Care – Pledge – 2017
- Foster Carer Charter
- Virtual School Plan–2017
- Relevant performance indicator outcomes and trends