Introduction

Why change the narrative?

Mark Warr

CEO – The National House Project

Katie Martinez-Thompson

Joint Chair – Care Leavers National Movement

Our story so far

NHP		CLNM
LA	2011	Young peoples voice
DfE Social Care Innovation Funding	2015	HP 10
Independent Evaluation	2017	
Charity	2018	YPNSG
	2019	CLNM
Independent Evaluation - scaling	2020	CLNM Lead
	2021	Peer Evaluation

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Our Community

NHP

16 House Projects

41 LHP Staff

380 young people

230 have moved in

Businesses – Valpak, Reconomy, Donald Insall, Madlug

Stakeholders – LA's, Housing Providers, Evaluation teams

CLNM

18 reps

Lots of meetings

180 events!!

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What have we done so far?

NHP

Practice Framework

House Project Programme

Outcomes & Learning Framework

Psychology Services

CLSP

Fundraising Strategy

CLNM

Peer Evaluators

Digital Poverty Campaign

Improve services

Expert Advisors at Board

Develop House Projects

Consultation Service

A Learning Organisation

An organisation skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and at modifying its behaviour to reflect new knowledge and insights.

Harvard Business Review Garvin 1993

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A learning organisation

- York University – Making a House a Home 2017
- York University -The House Project for Young People Leaving Care 2020
- Cambridge University – 2020/22
- CLNM Peer Evaluation – 2021
- Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare Forum – 2021/22
- EXploring Innovation in Transition (EXIT) Study – 2021/23

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EXploring Innovations in Transition to Adulthood Research Study
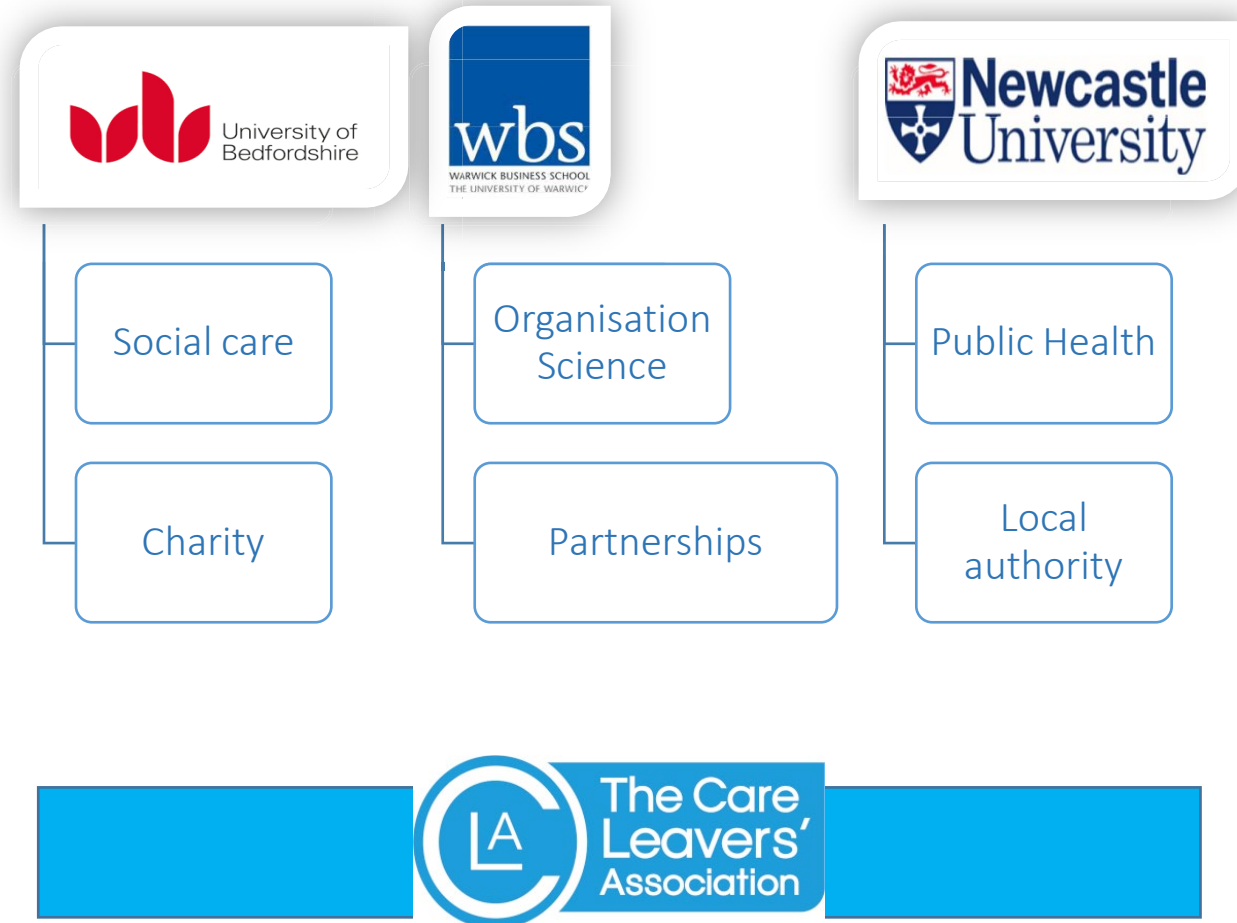
THE NATIONAL HOUSE PROJECT

Overview, early findings, next steps

Amy Lynch and Jibril Mohamoud

March 2022

'EXIT' Research Study Aims and Focus

- Aims to improve understanding of how innovation for care leavers' transition can best be supported to scale-up and become part of widespread practice

- Approach brings multi-disciplinary perspectives and focus on UK innovations developed to support care leavers' transitions

- National House Project is one of 6 innovation case studies

University of Bedfordshire
- Social care
- Charity

wbs WARWICK BUSINESS SCHOOL THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK
- Organisation Science
- Partnerships

Newcastle University
- Public Health
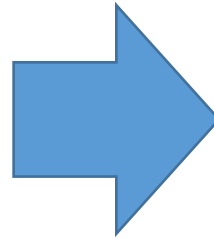- Local authority

The Care Leavers' Association

Focus of 'EXIT' study with the National House Project

- Explore how the National House Project has developed and grown since its initial design

- Understand the enablers and barriers to spread, scale up and sustainability

- Discover how to unblock barriers and build on strengths
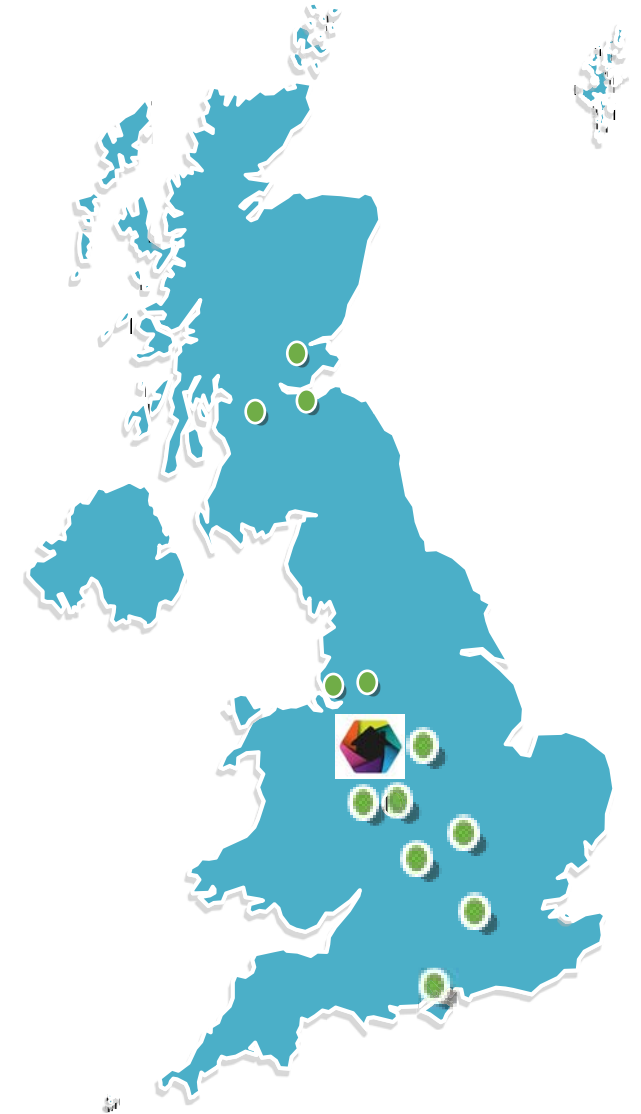
Initial phase of research – 10 NHP interviews

Experiences of Journey with NHP

Successes	Enablers & Barriers	Challenges & Opportunities

Levels of Analysis

The Innovation - House Project	Innovating Organisation - National House Project	Implementing Organisation - Local Authority

Young People & Professionals

Organisational Successes for National House Project

Implemented innovation	Created two inter-dependent functions to support innovation	Diffused and spread	Scale-up	Created strong position in system
Co-designed, developed & implemented House Project	Created National House Project and Care Leavers National Movement	Grown from 1 House Project in 2015 to 13 in England & Scotland in 2022 with more in planning stage	Scaling in two LAs to increase reach beyond 10 young people per cohort	Created a strong position in the social care/care leaver space as a successful innovation

Young People and Local Authorities have positive experiences of House Project

People I've met on my House Project are still extremely close friends of mine... It's amazing how that's happened and it's also made me realise it's not me against the world. It's not 'I'm completely independent' - I've got to look after myself and then I'll talk to others. It's made me realise that there are people out there that are willing to help you and just be there...Yeah, it just sort of helped me a lot because it made me realise the type of adult I wanted to be...it's been quite a powerful thing for me.

Young person

You've got good outcomes, young people make really great tenants... you will ultimately save money... people have seen "Okay, it's worked there and actually it's working in quite a number of places now and actually there's still no tenancy breakdowns."

NHP Core Team

The innovation: 'House Project'
Attention to fidelity to core elements + adaptation to local context at diffusion stages

So there's been a lot of thinking in House about, "At its core, what are the fidelity elements?" And then, "What are the ones on the fringes that we're prepared to flex or adapt?

Trustee, National House Project

Core Element #1

Young people at the heart – for, by and with young people
- Shared understanding
- Co-production as integral
- Care Leavers National Movement
- Focus on empowerment (ORCHIDS)
- Positive outcomes for young people

Now that we've established CLNM I've seen it make a difference....it's not the eco-team, we're all there, we're all doing it. We're not just a name.

Young person,
Care Leavers National Movement

I completely believe that the reason this works is it's because young people said, "This is what would make it better for us"

National House Project Founder

Core Element #2

'Relational cornerstone' as a 'laser focus'
- Underpinning relational/psychological philosophy, practices and processes
- Commitment to social care ethos
- Clinical psychologist input

The senior practitioner and the House Project manager, actually those relationships of the adults are so, so important to maintain because they parent the system, they hold and regulate what happens underneath.

Consultant

Core Element #3

Safe and secure physical environments for young people and professionals
- House Project 'base'
- Young person's home

One of the things they flexed on and now won't flex on is there needs to be a base that's dedicated to House Project, there needs to be somewhere that they can congregate and commune and do some other learning programme but be together. Because if you don't have that, you don't build the community.

Trustee, National House Project

The innovating organisation: 'National House Project'

Organisation
- Flexibility due to charity status
- Access to resources
- Identity

> *Free of the shackles of local authority control...that sense of liberation...they could move at speed...go out and engage with local authorities...flex and adjust*

National House Project Coach

Leadership and core team
- Relational leadership
- Strong partnerships
- NHP core team role
- Team around the leaders
- Commitment to learning & development

> *Each House Project needs the expertise and knowledge base about a House Project that core staff can provide, and the materials and the programmes and the access to accreditation... They need the soft accountability that is provided by the core...to feel part of a community. So there is something significant...the people who ...facilitate from the centre ...they're also pollinators. So they're transferring ideas from one project to another. And then they connect us.*

National House Project Trustee

Contextual factors as enablers and barriers to implementation and sustainability

Policy/system
- Political context
- Austerity
- Funding
- Outcomes focus
- National policy initiatives

Local Authority
- Leadership
- Partnerships
- Stage of practice journey
- OFSTED rating
- Stage of young people's engagement agenda
- Availability of housing
- Cost savings
- Number of children in care/in high-cost residential placements
- Outcomes focus

House Project
- Leadership
- Partnerships
- Staff
- Funding
- Delivery of group work sessions (impact of Covid-19)
- Availability of suitable housing
- House Project Base

Reflecting on challenges and exploring opportunities

Approach to Growth

- Steady vs Speedy
- Depth vs Breadth
- Protecting quality
- National, regional & local
- Maintaining & developing relationships
- Funding & sustainability

Fidelity & Adaptation

- Fidelity
  - ✓ Supporting development of core components
  - ✓ Focus on young people and staff experiences
  - ✓ Developing evidence base
- Adaptation
  - ✓ Flexibility
  - ✓ Ownership
  - ✓ Local contexts

Outcomes Framework & Process

- Framework
  - ✓ Meaningful & Measurable
  - ✓ Young people's experiences & 'Hard outcomes'
- Short term & Long term
- Process
  - ✓ Define
  - ✓ Gather
  - ✓ Analyse
  - ✓ Review

Exploring next steps with the National House Project: EXIT research themes

Business model

Learning journey

Co-production

Fidelity and adaptation
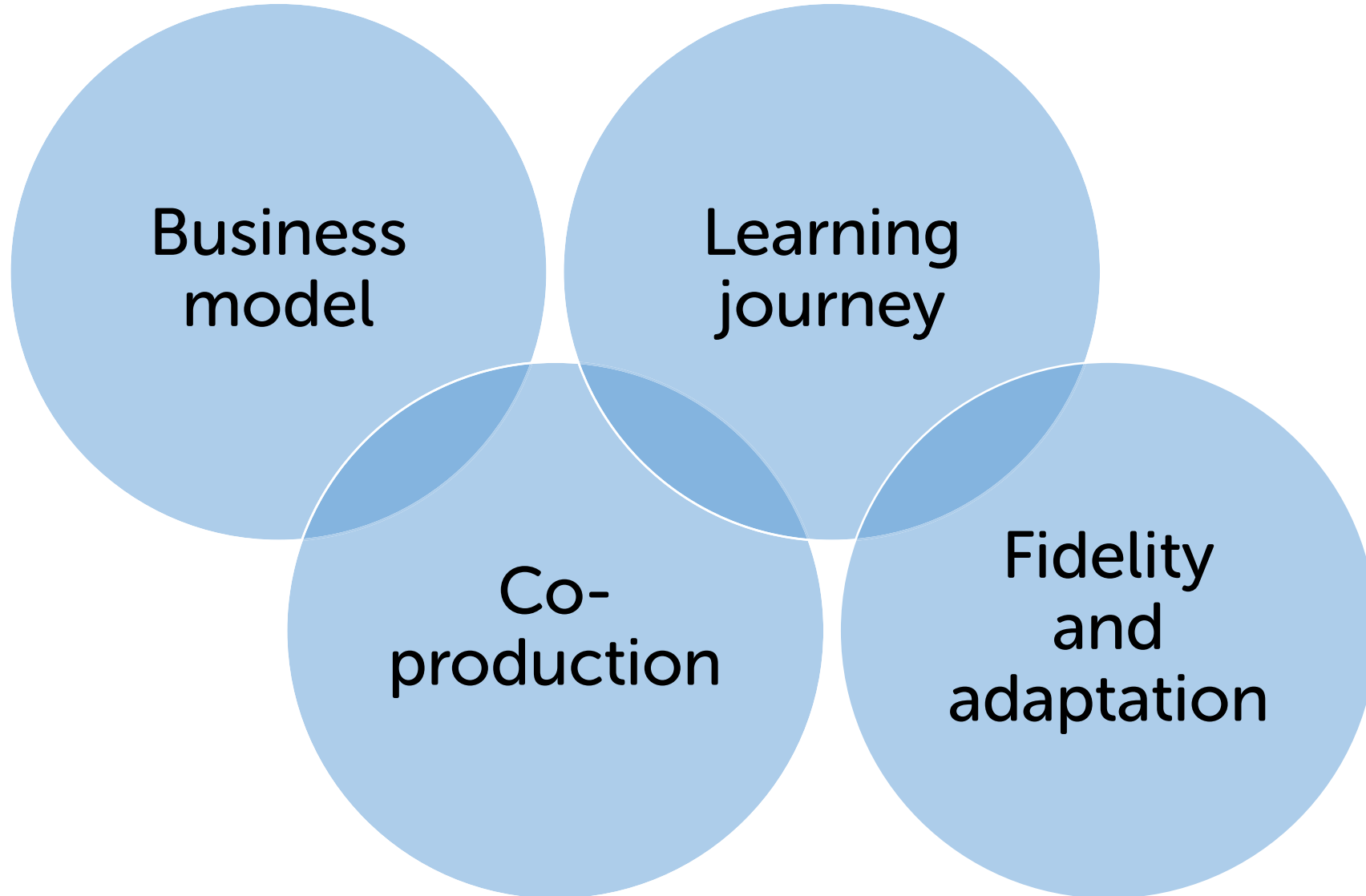
Thank you!

Please contact us....

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Professor - Social Care: emily.munro@beds.ac.uk

Professor - Organisation Science: graeme.currie@wbs.ac.uk

To find out more....

EXIT study website: https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/wbs/research/exit-study/

The House Project: An Evaluation of the Psychological Framework

Joel Harvey, Caroline Lanskey and Hannah Marshall

Our work with the House Project: Research Focus

- Improving understanding of the psychological framework that underpins the work of the House Project

- How is the psychological framework working to support young people and staff?

- How might it be further developed?

The ORCHIDS Framework

Ownership
Responsibility
Community
Home
Independence
Developmental
Direction
Sense of Well Being

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Overview of Psychological Support

- Understanding young people's stories (e.g. through formulation meetings).

- Working with young people in a way that explores and recognises how our past experiences can impact on our lives in the present.

- Providing additional support to staff (e.g. through communities of practice and supervision).

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Exploring the psychological framework through relationships
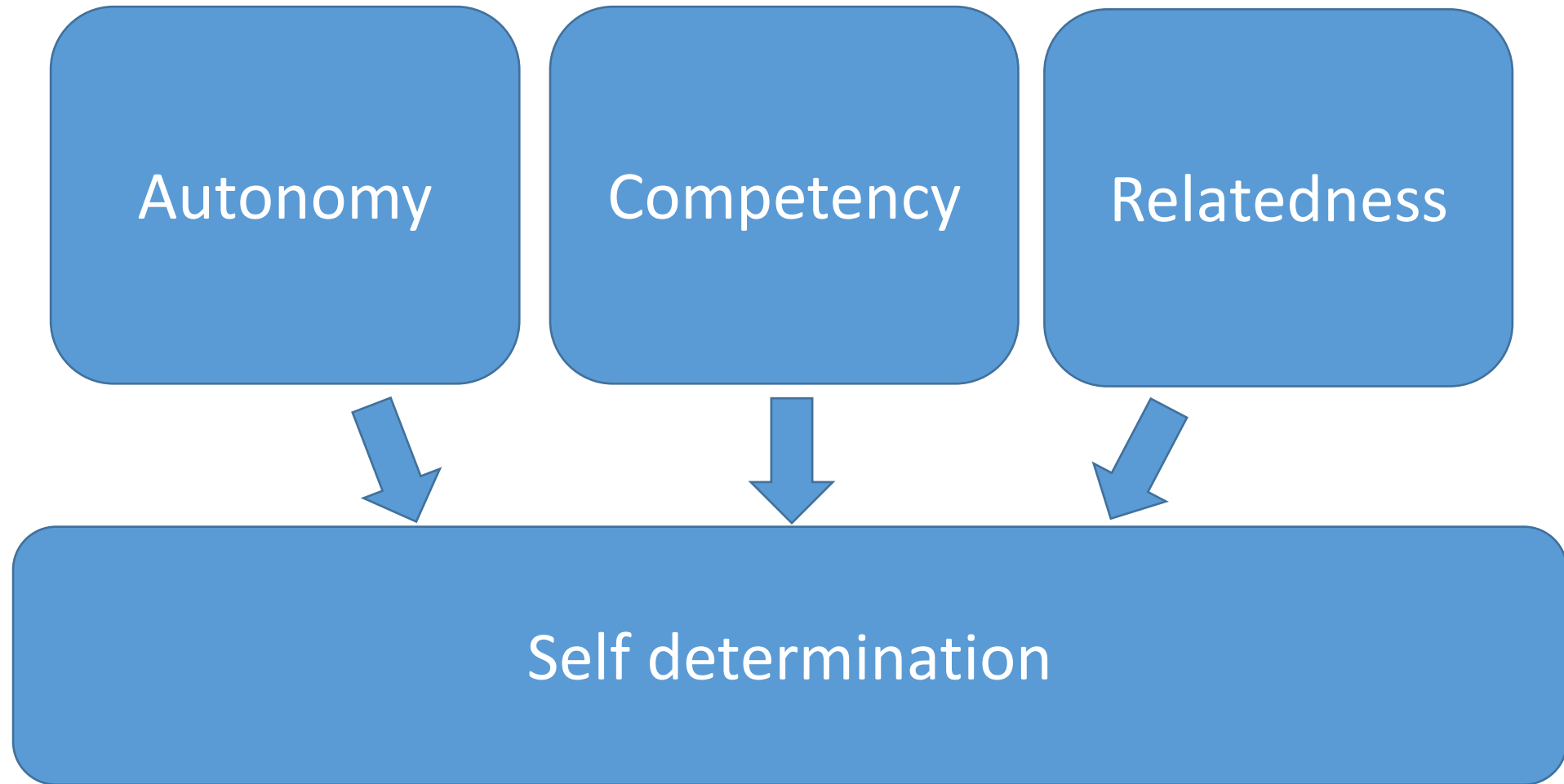
Our work with the House Project: Methods

We have worked with the National House Project & 5 Local Projects to carry out:

Observations
- Local project activities (group sessions and trips, shadowing staff, formulations)
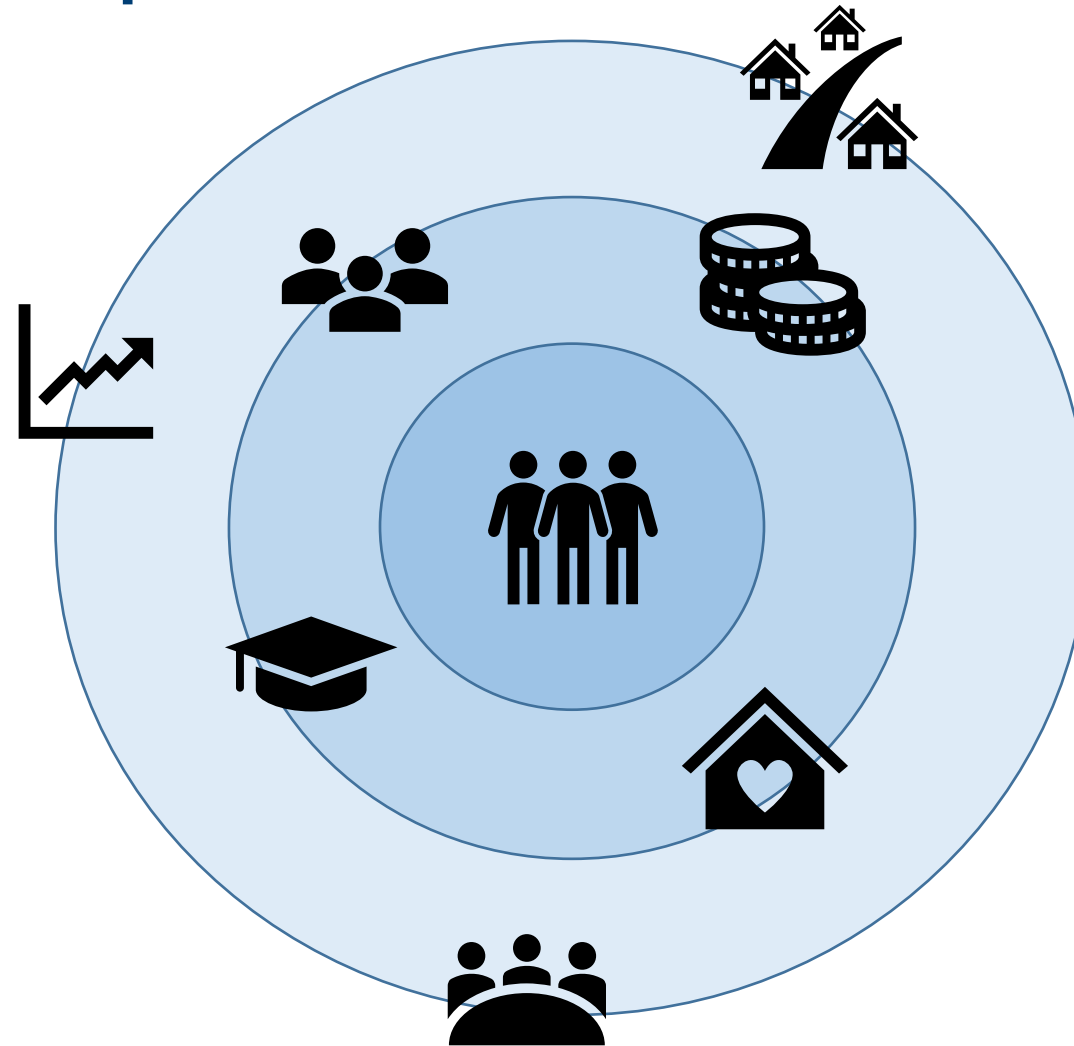- National project activities (conferences, communities of practice)

Focus groups
- Focus groups with staff and with young people at each of the 5 local projects (a total of 30 participants)

Interviews
- With 33 staff and 12 stakeholders and
- 36 young people (so far!)

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Putting the relationship in context

Changing the narrative: achieving stability through connectivity

Relationships are key, so they're with the young people throughout the good, the not so good, the really wobbly, and they're consistently available and consistently able to come back and say right: we've got this. (Psychologist)

We're never going to give up on you. So, no matter how many times you tell me to f*** off or how many times you don't answer your door to us, or answer your calls, we're always going to be here for you. (Facilitator)

Me, I'll keep coming back. And respecting what young people are asking for, but also a lot of young people will say when I'm at this point, I just want to be left on my own, and then, to an extent you respect that. But then there comes a point where you think right, how long do we do that for, though, before you need me to come back, just so you know that I'm thinking about you, that I'm not going to leave you. It's that balance, isn't it, about the relationship. (Facilitator)

They don't leave you. So, when you finish your cohort you can still go and talk to them. They're still gonna be there. They're never going anywhere 'cause you're part of it. (Young person)

Changing the narrative: there's no one way to "connect"

I've never met two project facilitators that are the same. It's different for every young person. So, the young person that I was referring to beforehand, the best way to have them conversations with him was if he was distracted. So, what I ended up doing was I ended up bringing my Xbox down, sat and had a game on Xbox and had a chat at the same time. Just did it that way. With another young person, it was a case of he was very much a reader. So, what I ended up doing was I ended up creating almost, like, a bit of a storybook, about some of the scenarios that we'd seen from him. (Facilitator)

I've never done a meter reading before, so I say to [my facilitator] how do I do a meter reading?...and then she taught me how to do meter readings. She encourages you to do it on your own, and then if you're out of your depth she'll step in an help. (Young person)

They rock up, they get you your favourite coffee [My facilitator] knows my favourite coffee. She doesn't have to ask me. (Young person)

I think, with me, it's, like, being quite patient with me 'cause I'm, like, can be quite awkward at first. I'm quite quiet, but having that balance of being patient for me to talk but don't leave me an awkward silence. Like, kind of, chat to me, try and get to know me, 'cause when people, like that, try and talk to me a bit more I feel like okay. (Young person)

What's next?

- Completing data collection
- Data analysis
- Report write-up
- Sharing the findings

Staf evaluation of Local House Projects in Scotland

Context

Scotland Throughcare and Aftercare Forum (Staf) is a national membership organisation for those involved in the lives of young people leaving care.

Funded by Life Changes Trust to create case studies of the three Local House Projects in Scotland – Midlothian, Fife and East Dunbartonshire.

- To understand the process and impact of relational (as opposed to transactional) ways of working
- To support reflection and adaptation
- To highlight positive impact and outcomes for young people
- To capture and disseminate key learning

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Approach (mixed methods)

| Focus groups with staff | Focus groups with young people | Graphic mapping of key themes from focus groups | Telephone interviews with corporate parents | Storytelling & video creation with young people | Three in-depth case studies |

Findings

A collective understanding of relationship based practice

In LHPs we found:

- a common understanding of Relationship Based Practice and the impact that this is having

- consistency, unconditional trust and persistency

- an intrinsic understanding of the groundwork that needs to be done when working with young people

What young people say

"Got to know us before we started our journeys"

"If I was on my own, I'd be stuck"

"People should know it's more than just getting a house"

"Not forced, no pressure and just knowing we have the support available really helps"

"We were informed of the local house project by our social worker"

"Treat us like equals"

"We have somewhere to go, even if it's just for a coffee"

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Relationships at the heart of practice

The strength of previous relationships can contribute to engagement in LHP

Relationships with staff are overwhelmingly positive

Young people feel cared for and supported

"They genuinely want to help"

Good relationships increase confidence and agency

"I feel like someone's got my back"

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Importance of Peer Relationships

"If you make friends you're more likely to come back"

"We help each other with things like how to pay bills"

"Young people feel that they have their own wee community, their own family that sense of connectedness that's what really works"

"We share some of the same experiences and not just being in care but being young people trying to figure stuff out and we can support each other"

"No judgements"

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Corporate Parents

Put simply, the term 'Corporate Parent' means **the collective responsibility of the council, elected members, employees, and partner agencies**, for providing the best possible care and safeguarding for the children who are looked after by us.

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Corporate Parents

Sharing a vision which is not process driven is key

LHP and housing working as one system

Importance of steering groups and membership
- External eg involvement of Police
- Internal eg finance departments and colleagues.

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Corporate Parents

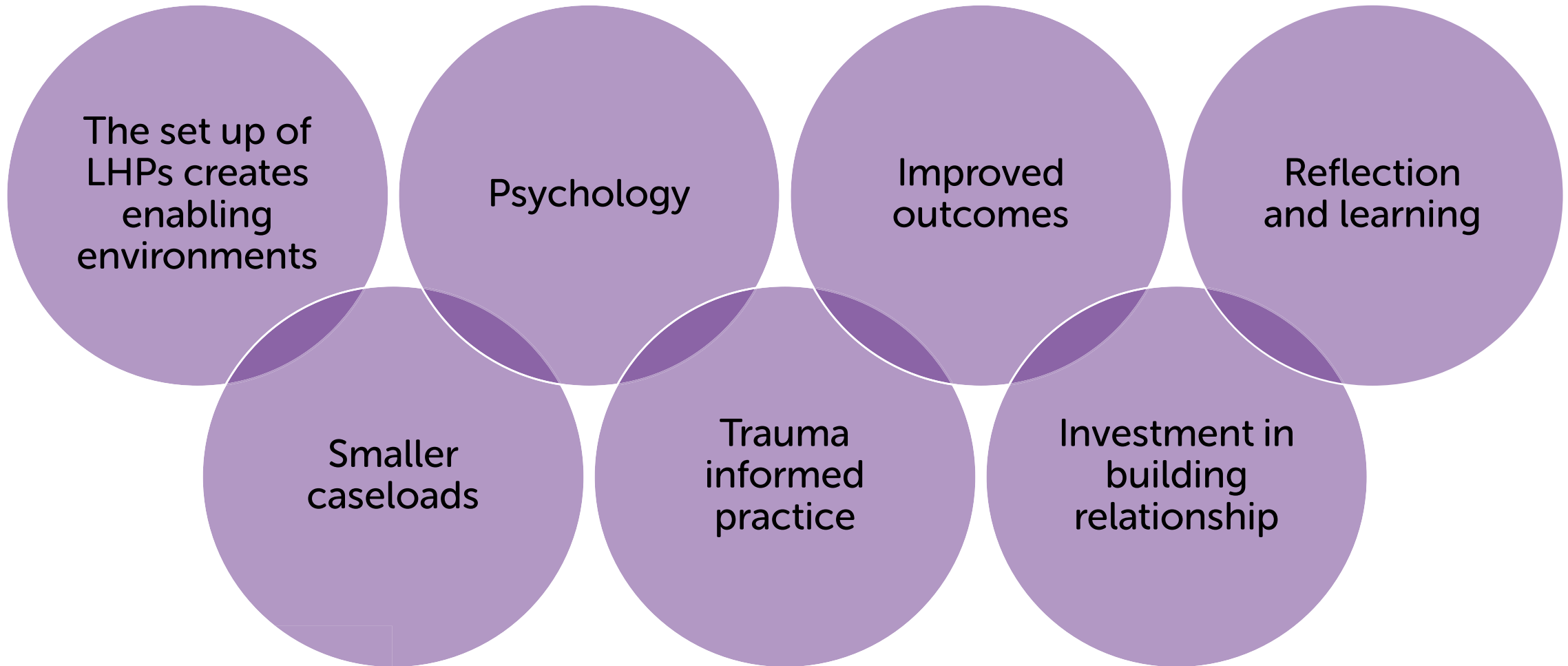**Education colleagues have regular meetings with staff**

Involvement of young people in Corporate Parenting Strategy groups

Communication and the impact of young people's voice across LA settings raises awareness and changes the narrative

Importance of wider community

A localised approached breaks down barriers and reduce the stigmas that people with care experience often face.

Enablers

The set up of LHPs creates enabling environments

Psychology

Improved outcomes

Reflection and learning

Smaller caseloads

Trauma informed practice

Investment in building relationship

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Importance of the base

"I go to have a coffee, see the other young people or just to chill or get some help with stuff"

"A place that's always constant"

"A place that belongs to us and we belong to it, we are a bit protective of it, cause it's our space for all of us not just staff but us all"

"Feels like its ours"

"I can talk honestly there"

"Staff are always available"

"Can go to just have a chat and not feel so lonely"

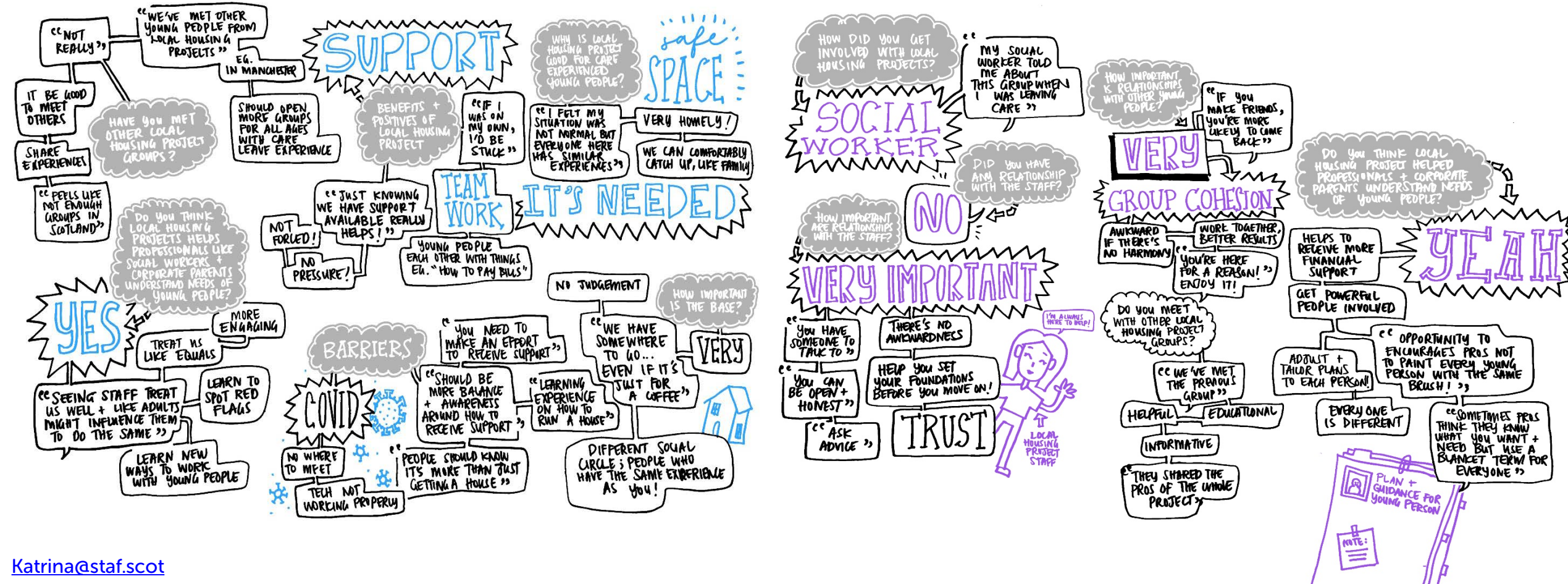"Doesn't need to be for any reason, I'm always popping in to say hi or talk about nothing really"

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What the Local House Project means for the young people of East Dunbartonshire

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Thank you to staff and young people from Fife, Midlothian and East Dunbartonshire, Darren from Braw talent and the NHP

Our Community: A peer evaluation

- The project was completed between March 2021- October 2021

- 15 representatives from CLNM

- Examined The National House Projects practice framework (ORCHIDS)

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Partnership for Young London

- Regional youth unit for London, set up in 1997.

- Specialise in peer research with young people, and runs the London Peer Research Network, and London Children in Care Council.

- Supports the sector with toolkits, briefings, and research.

The Authors

- Byron O'Toole
- Daniel Teague
- Ibrahim Ali
- Josh Oxley
- Katie Martinez-Thompson
- Liam Sheppard
- Louise Martinez-Thompson

- Marshall Rowlands
- Nathan Taylor
- Nikita Crombie
- Rebecca Grehan
- Sakina Buhari
- Sean Adam
- Shawna Gibbs
- Sophie Green

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The Approach

1. Power sharing

2. Mutual respect for experience/expertise

3. Informed decision making

4. Maximum involvement

Our Community:

A peer evaluation of our local House Projects

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Partnership for Young London

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The Benefits

1. Better research design

2. Accessibility

3. Better data collection

4. Better data analysis

5. Better identification of themes

The Process
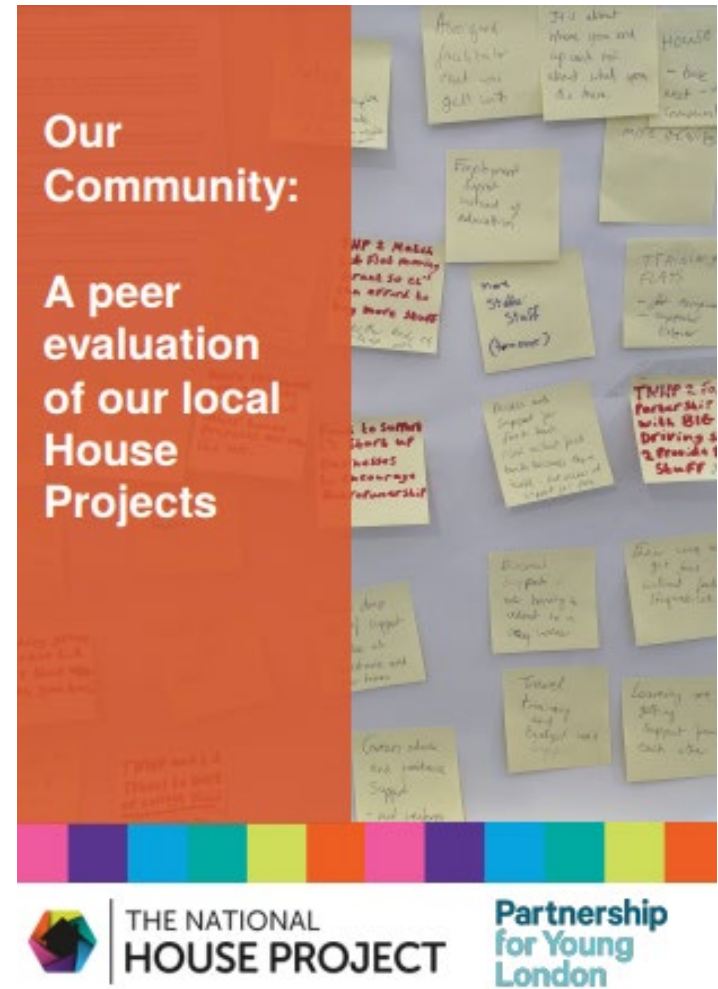
1. Stage 1: Research planning and training

2. Stage 2: Fieldwork stage

3. Stage 3: Analysis stage

Research and Planning

1. Responsibility

2. Community

3. Independence

4. Developmental direction

Ownership
Responsibility
Community
Home
Independence
Developmental Direction
Sense of Well Being

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Responsibility

What new responsibilities have you had to deal with since joining the House Project?

How do you cope with responsibility?

What does responsibility mean to you?

Does the house project explain and help understand your responsibilities with in and out side the project? Explain why/how!

Who do you feel comftorball with talking to about to much responsibility?

Community

What does community mean to you?

Have you gone to others in the House Project for support?

What or who makes up your community?

Do you have a phrase or something to represent your community?

By being a part of the House Project, do you feel a part of a community?

Independence

How could the House Project help you feel more independent?

What does independence mean to you?

Do you feel more independent since joining the House Project? If so, why?

What skills do you need to be independent from the House Project?

When has the House Project helped you feel more independent?

Do you feel capable of living alone? Explain why?

Answer How You Like!

...tions how ever you like. Your incontroll.

General Questions.

Research planning and training

Outcomes for young people

| Category	Outcomes of peer research
Knowledge and skills	Enchanced knowledge of and access to decision making Research Skills Team work Specific knowledge on a topic Leadership, public speaking Technology and design
Educational outcomes	Improved academic/career outcomes Strengthening college applications Improvements in literacy
Personal development	Increase confidence and self-esteem Greater responsibility and independence Positive self-identity and sense of purpose Feeling valued Building new relationships
Collective outcomes	Empowerment and agency Making a positive difference Collective identity Developing an understanding of community and social issues

Adapted from The Centre for Children and Young People's Participation

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Fieldwork stage

Research Sample

- 13 local House Projects.

- 15 in-depth interviews and 3 focus groups.

- 70 young people completed the survey.

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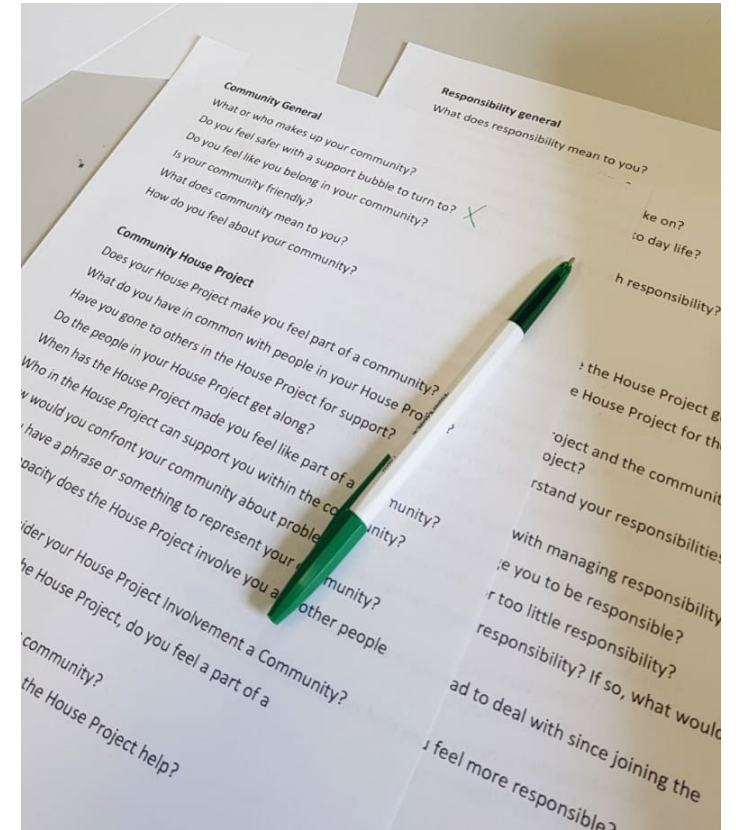
Key Findings

1. Young people feel positive about the House Project, and a sense of ownership of it.

2. The House Project supports the mental health and wellbeing of young people.

3. Young people feel a sense of ownership over their House Project.

4. The House Project is effective at building a sense of community.

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Key Findings

5. The House Project staff are key in supporting young people.

6. The House Project expands young people's goals past the House Project

7. Young people already feel independent, but need support

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Recommendations

A new mental health and wellbeing support offer designed by young

More opportunities for young people to participate in decision making

Every House Project should have a physical base, with more face-to-face activities

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Recommendations

More peer support between House Projects, and cohorts

Create more consistency with staff; and look at how new staff are introduced

Create a stronger careers advice and guidance offer for young people, with work experience opportunities and apprenticeship support

The House Project should provide ways for young people to ask for specific support and help in a discreet way, and provide more unsolicited support

What next?

- The creation of a peer mentoring programme

- Programme to be co-designed with CLMN

- Trial run in 2022, evaluated by the end of the year

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An overview of learning

So what are we doing with this information?

- Taking on what evaluators are telling us

- Doing things differently

- Not just one narrative – taking different viewpoints – young people/academics/practitioners/social workers/youth workers etc.

- It's the mix of views that helps us to do it differently

- Changing the narrative together

How do we support House Projects
to implement learning?

"Learning organisations are not just environments where individuals learn, but also have systems and structures in place for generating new learning by seeking out new sources of knowledge and experience and by listening and responding to the learning that emerges from those conversations"

Godar, 2020

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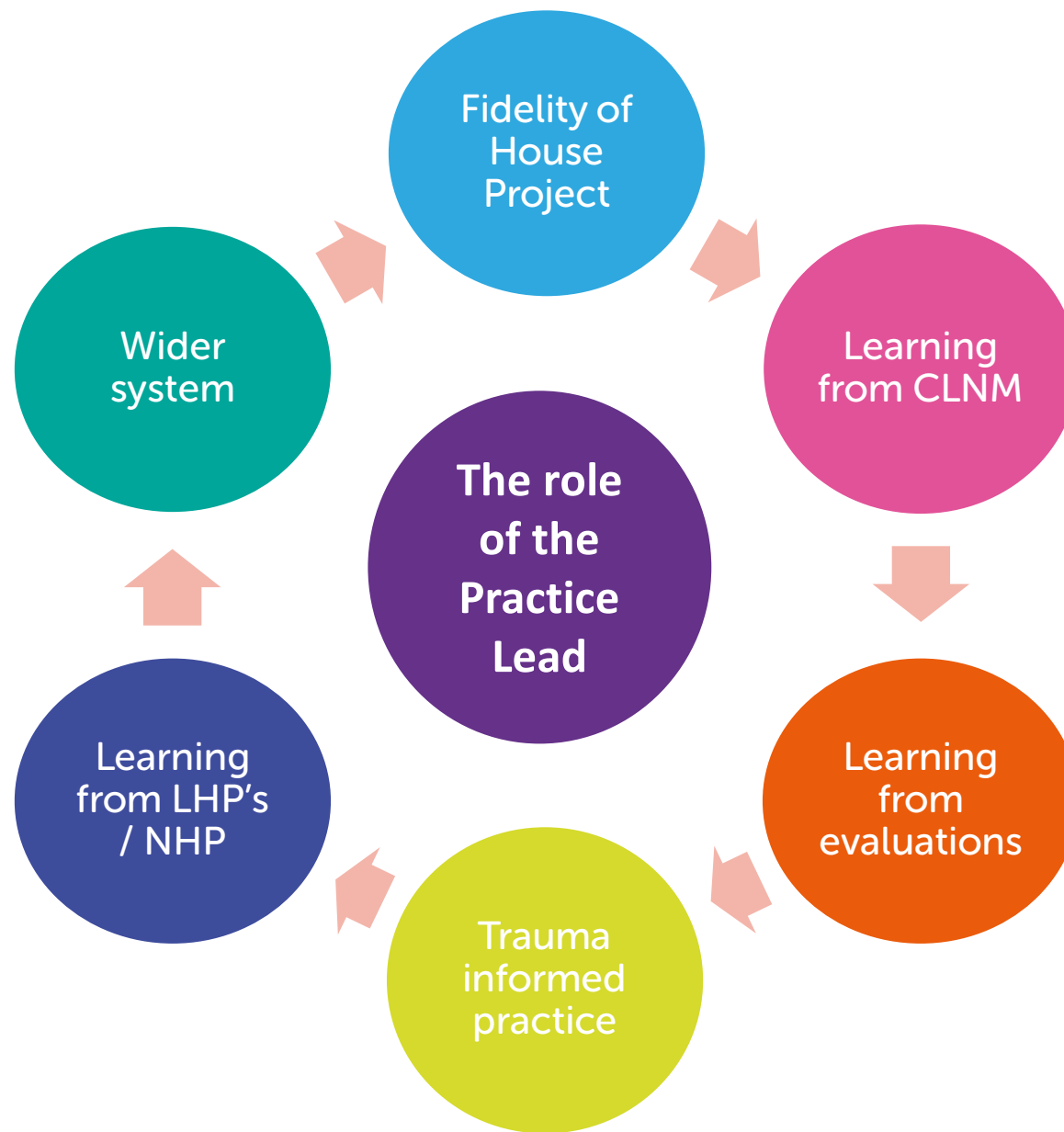
CLNM at the heart of the National House Project

Community of Practice

Etienne Wenger (1991) summarises Communities of Practice (CoP) as
"groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly"

Opportunity to share successes and challenges and learn together

Diversity and Inclusivity

Shared values and purpose

Monthly meetings on a regional basis

Virtual and Face-to-Face Meetings

Agreed thematic agenda

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Supporting the wider system

Steering Groups	Annual Reviews	Strategic Leads	Service / Team Events	Virtual School
Key stakeholders providing support, challenge and solutions	An appreciative approach	Bi annual meetings to share learning at a strategic level	Attendance at events to celebrate successes and learn together	Annual meetings, network events and House Project Programme

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The training offer

- Introduction to Attachment and Therapeutic Relationships
- Understanding and developing resilience
- Reflective Practice Sessions
- Social Pedagogy
- Thinking psychologically about risk and safety
- Understanding Boundaries
- Induction Training
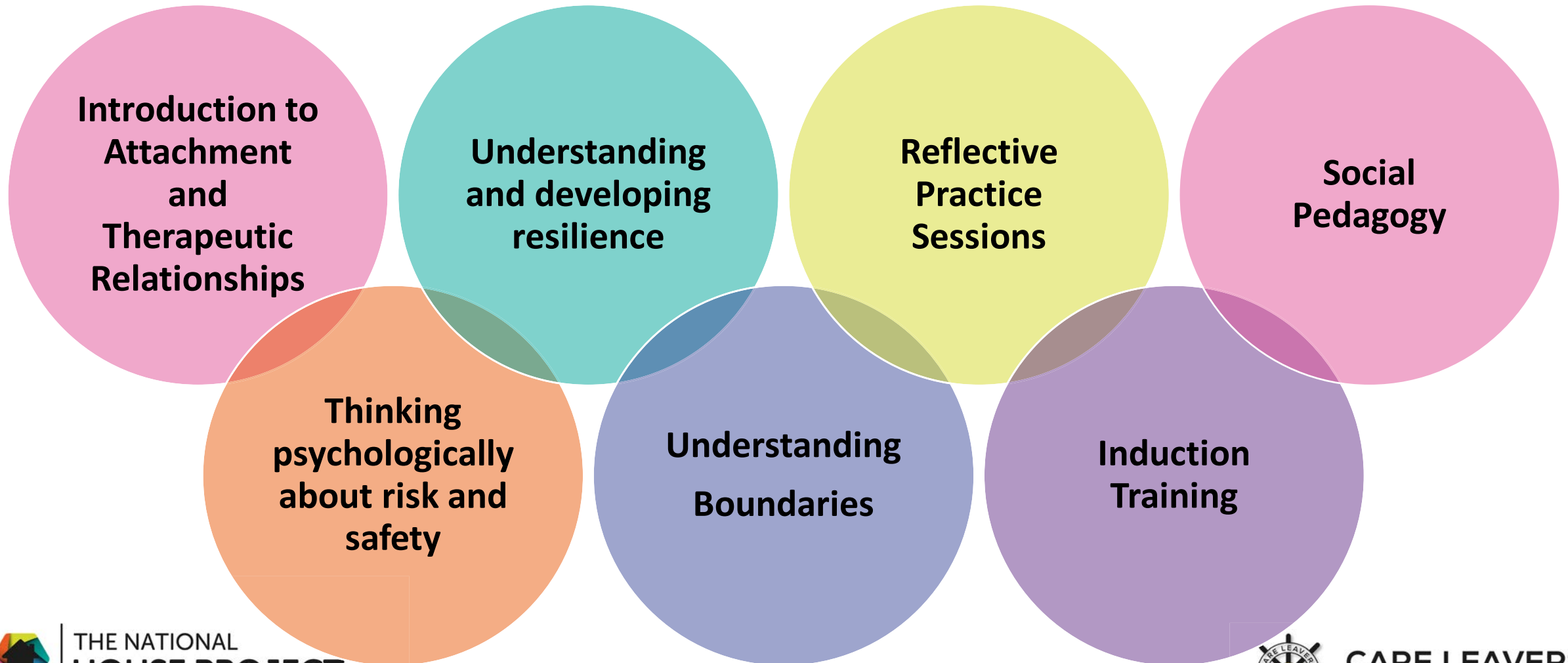
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Learning from, with and on behalf of one another

Questions...

- How can we learn from the best of practice in each Local House Project so that everyone in the House Project community benefits?

- How can we develop the role of Facilitator and Project Leads in ways that enhance the lives of Young People and the wider community?

- How do we make learning visible across House Projects?

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Next questions...

- What strategies have LOCAL HOUSE PROJECTS developed which enable their project to develop into an AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY?

- What are the KEY ASPECTS of the role of Project Lead and how do they impact upon practice and provision in each locality?

- How is the role of NHP PRACTICE LEAD evolving and developing as the House Project grows?

ALWAYS CO-ENQUIRING, ALWAYS TAKING AN APPRECIATIVE STANCE

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"I have found the protected element of having the NHP has allowed me to focus on relationships with the young people …. The training offered is a good way to allow for reflection on my practice and ensure that my approach is vibrant and appropriate." HP Facilitator

"Appreciative enquiry gives the opportunity to learn about different aspects of another project and take ideas and learning back to your own role"

"Having the regular input from a Psychologist has allowed me to continually adapt my approach and thinking to ensure that our community of young people are getting a trauma informed service."

"Community of practice allows us to share good practice and gives us the space to reflect on successes and challenges in each of our projects. We have been able to learn from each other and talk through any difficulties faced in our LHP to see if others have had similar experiences. Community of practice offers a wider support network from other projects." HP Lead

"The Peer evaluation is so important for Local House Projects. It has provided some realistic recommendations that all projects should aspire to work towards. By making these small but meaningful changes the Local House Projects are really embracing the ethos of what the National Project sets out to be... An Innovative youth led project, adaptive to a changing landscape and putting young people at the heart of driving positive change for all Care Leavers." HP Lead

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CARE LEAVERS SUPPORT PORTAL

- The Care Leavers Support Portal (CLSP) was launched in 2021 to support young people to remain connected to their community

- It provides a personalised platform for each local authority who add young people.

- Once added, Young People can:

  - access info and communicate more easily with services
  - have a local voice
  - access support when they need it
  - be connected to other young people

- The CLSP is available free of charge for the first year and NHP hope to raise enough funds to cover subsequent costs after this.

THE NATIONAL
HOUSE PROJECT

CARE LEAVERS
NATIONAL MOVEMENT

"I'd compare the House Project to a tree, we've planted it and we're growing up, we're all together and we're all going up"

Stoke Young Person

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Go to menti.com
Enter 4151 2037

Answer the question

What changes would you like to see that would change the narrative for young people leaving care?

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Now its over to you….

On your tables, take some time to think about what you've heard today.

What actions are you going to take in your House Project or Local Authority based on what you've learnt today?

Nominate one person to feedback

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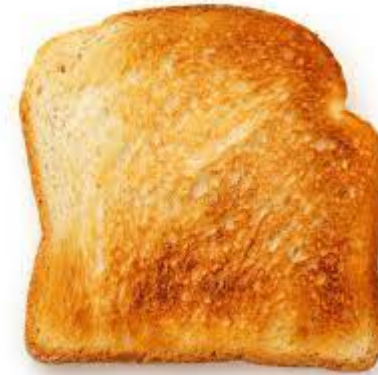# Finding a sense of home and belonging

Heather Coady

Heather@coady.org.uk

A lost t-shirt and the smell of toast...

Scotland's Independent Care Review

VOICE   TRUST   HOPE

Voice

Trust

- In young people

- In each other

- As an important vehicle towards change

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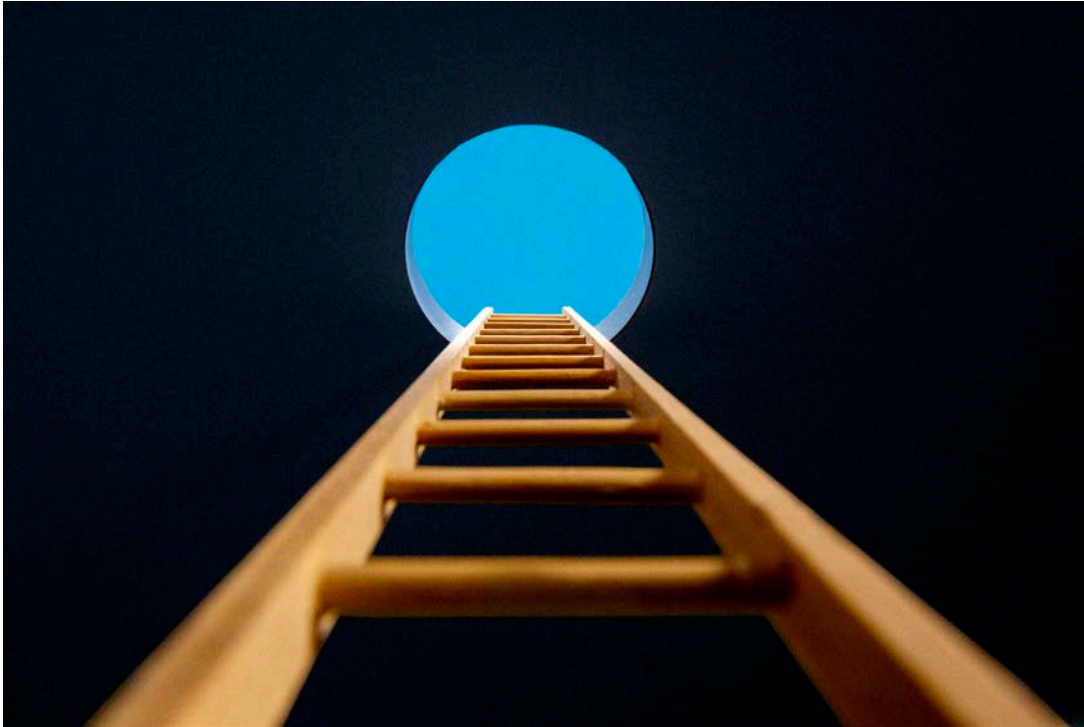
Hope

*"Hope is the **belief** that your future will be better than today, and **you** have the power to make it so."*

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What our future holds for NHP and CLNM

Respond to Evaluations
- Interdependence , Peer Mentoring , Mental Health and Wellbeing offer
- Careers & job opportunities, Aspirational Awards

Scaling
- Projects, Community, Regional working

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What our future holds for NHP and CLNM

Improve the offer

- Staff training & social pedagogy
- Quality and breadth of offer – opportunities

Catalyst for change

- Digital poverty
- Corporate parents – narrative and system change
- Expert user voice, valued in the leaving care sector

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www.thehouseproject.org   @TheNationalHP   @TheNationalHouseProject