Study of House Projects in Scotland

"It's more than just getting a house"

"Allows the worker to be the worker they've always wanted to be"

staf

life changes trust
Creating better lives.

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Staf would like to thank everyone that took part in this evaluation; all the care leavers, staff from local house projects and stakeholders who contributed their time, experiences, and learning.

1. Introduction

Background

Local House Projects, (LHPs) support young people leaving the care system and adults with care experience to access quality housing and live independently. The approach was introduced by the National House Project (NHP), which provides expertise to local authorities to set up and manage Local House Projects in England.

The NHP initiative began by asking young people: 'what makes a house a home?' The approach embeds cooperative and co-design processes for people with care experience to work together to refurbish properties that become their homes and build a long-term community of support.

In 2020 LHPs came to Scotland:

- The Life Changes Trust (LCT) forged a partnership with the NHP to trial and fund three Local House Projects in Scotland: in East Dunbartonshire, Fife and Midlothian.

- The Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare Forum (Staf), who have expertise in supporting young people with care experience, were funded by the LCT to report on the learning from the Local House Projects.

- Braw Talent, specialists in participatory arts-based approaches with young people, were commissioned by Staf to use creative ways to capture young people's stories and reflections.

- Graphic maps created from focus groups by Sarah Ahmed @ https://www.floatingdesigner.com/

[1] Front cover images on the theme 'home' were designed by young people who took part in the local house projects

Local House Projects

Through Local House Projects (LHPs), care-experienced young people between the ages of 16-21 are provided with the support and experience to develop the skills, knowledge and confidence to live independently. They are supported to access, decorate, and furnish their own home in a way that meets their preferences and requirements and once they have moved into their own homes, support is provided for as long as they need it.

LHPs are staffed by a project lead and two facilitators. All staff involved in the LHPs have years of experience in children and family services, throughcare, education and youth settings and foster care backgrounds. The project leads manage the project, staff, and relationships with partners and the NHP. Facilitators work directly with young people on a one-to-one basis and in groups; each cohort includes around 10 young people. LHPs involve different services, including housing teams, with representation ranging from senior management to housing support workers. Each LHP has a steering group which includes corporate parents and different services responsible for meeting the needs of care leavers. For example, one steering group includes representatives from local authority housing and education departments, a local authority grants team and Scottish Police.

Each project has at least two young people who represent their LHP in the Care Leavers National Movement (CLNM) – made up of care leavers from LHPs across the UK. CLNM[2] was launched at the NHP conference in 2019 to provide the platform and support for the voice of care experienced young people to be at the heart of the charity.

Each LHP in Scotland aimed to support 30 young people in the funded period. There was scope for flexibility in the approach and delivery of each LHP, based on local context, individual needs of participating young people, the skills and experiences of staff and involvement of different stakeholders.

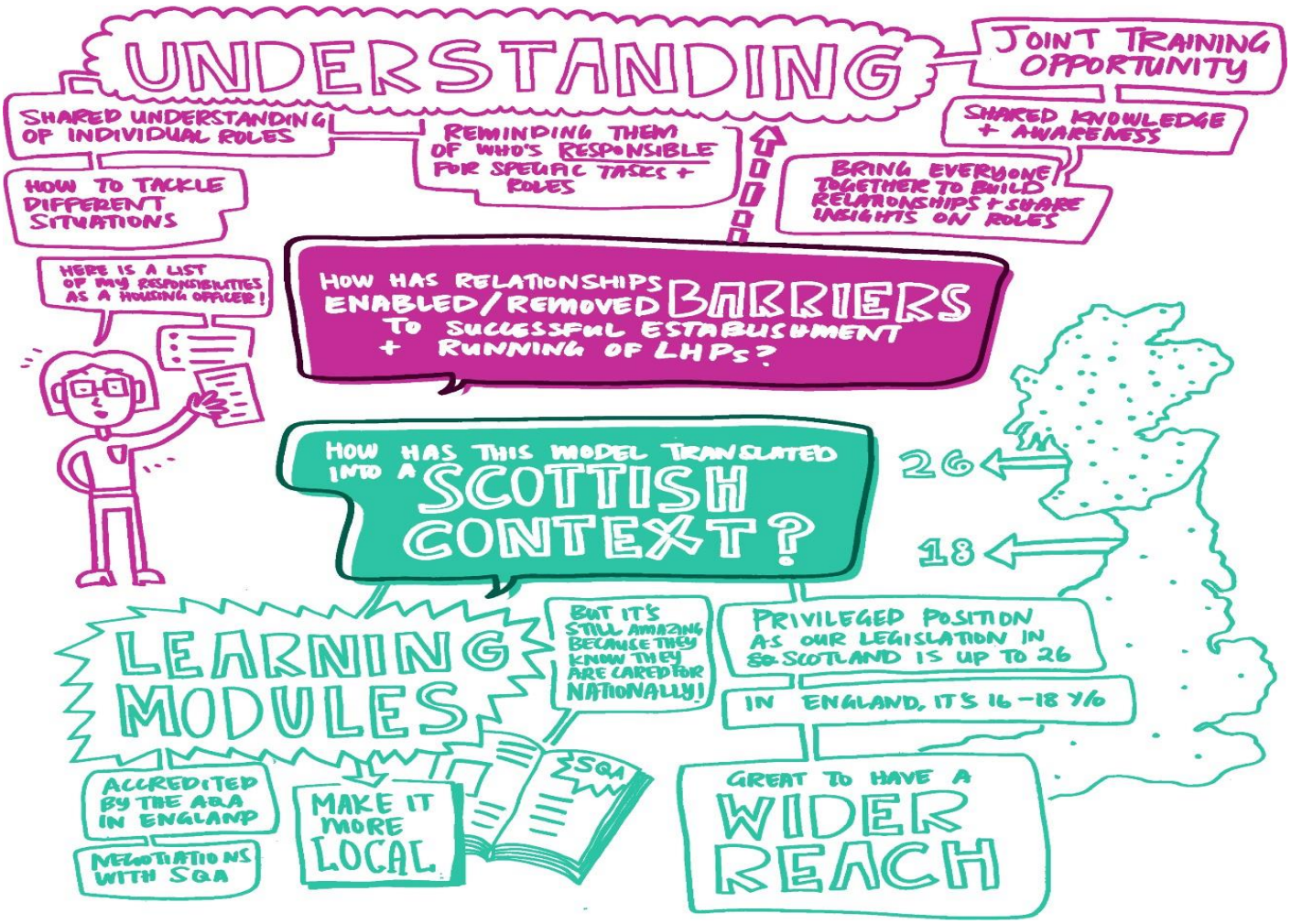
A practice framework underpinning the House Project approach is described by the acronym ORCHIDS, which covers:

- Ownership
- Responsibility
- Community
- Home
- Interdependence
- Direction
- Sense of well-being

ORCHIDS provides a clear practice framework for staff and young people. Within this framework, the LHPs were supported by the NHP to adapt to the specific needs of their young people and the geographical area.

[2] https://clnm.co.uk/

Context



Graphic maps created by the floating designer from focus groups with East Dunbartonshire LHP.

A full desk review is provided in Appendix 1, some key contextual information is described here to help frame the findings put forward in chapters 2 and 3.

In recent years, there has been a clear drive in Scotland to improve outcomes for young people with care experience. The Life Trust, in funding LHPs, hoped the learning derived by NHP[3] could benefit Scotland and add to the momentum generated by important developments such as The Promise, UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill[4] and the introduction of Corporate Parenting.

The Housing Options Protocol for Care Leavers in Scotland[5] notes *"The importance of providing appropriate accommodation to care leavers cannot be underestimated. Finding these young people, the right accommodation option, at the right time, is critical to helping them build sustainable and successful futures in our communities".* The report explains that while the national average age in Scotland for leaving home is approximately 25 years old, the average age at which young people leave their care placements is 16-18 years old.

In the Housing Options Protocol, research is presented which makes the case that many young people with care experiences are not sufficiently prepared for independent living. This leads to poor outcomes including unstable accommodation including tenancy failures which are disruptive and affects engagement with education, employment and training. The report also highlights that *"the stress of unstable, unsuitable accommodation (such as B&Bs*

and homeless hostels) can also impact on their physical and mental health, creating, exacerbating and compounding pre-existing vulnerability and disadvantage".
Within this national picture, the local context in which LHPs were established also had implications for how projects were delivered, and which partners engaged. A summary of the common and unique features of LHPs is shown on the next page:

NHP provides a framework that Local authorities use to develop their own LHP while taking account of the local context. Adhering to the NHP fidelity all LHPs have common features but the flexibility of the approach enables LHPs to flex accordingly not only the local context but also the needs of young people.

Unique features of local house projects

Midlothian

- A focus on transport and safety
- Incorporation of health and well-being
- Involvement of family and friends
- Flexibility to allow for shared living
- Scope for project facilitators to take on a wider co-ordinator role of the professionals involved i n young peoples lives.

East Dunbartonshire

- Project 101- Housing support service for 14-25 year olds.
- Work club - working with job centre to offer opportunities and employment to young people
- Youth housing multi-agency forum
- Leading community events
- Leaving care offer as standard practice

Fife

- Modular programme of peer support
- Support packages – before and after tenancy
- Ownership of the project
- Working with police/fire service
- Wider community support – providing essentials/trades people.

Common features of local house projects

Each aimed to support 20 young people over the course of the pilot, and was staffed by one project lead and two facilitators

Received between £150,000 - £202,000 for the first 2 years of the projects

Each has 2 young people acting as reps for the house project and care leavers' national movement

[3] See evaluation of the NHP in England 'Making a House a Home': https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/600678/Making_a_house_a_home_the_house_project_evaluation.pdf

[4] https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/united-nations-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child-incorporation-Scotland-bill

[5] https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2013/10/housing-options-protocol-care-leavers-guidance-corporate-parents-improving-housing/documents/00435939-pdf/00435939-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/00435939.pdf

Research purpose and approach

Staf was asked to:

- Explore how support can be underpinned by good relationships with young people (a relational rather than transactional approach).
- Capture learning to help other Scottish local authorities interested in either the NHP framework or further developing their Housing Options for care leavers.
- Provide examples of early positive outcomes and impact for young people.
- Help the LHPs reflect on progress and adapt their processes if needed.

This report is based on evidence gathered by Staf. To capture learning from the LHPs, the following research activities were carried out:

- desk based research to explore the local and national context.
- Interviews with staff from NHP
- fieldwork with young people, staff and stakeholders in each LHP

A summary of the activity and number of research participants in each LHP is shown below. More detail is provided in Appendix 1.

House project	Midlothian	East Dunbartonshire	Fife
Staff	3	3	3
Young people	6	12	4
Stakeholders	1 corporate parent - Housing	1 corporate parent - Housing	1 corporate parent - Fife council

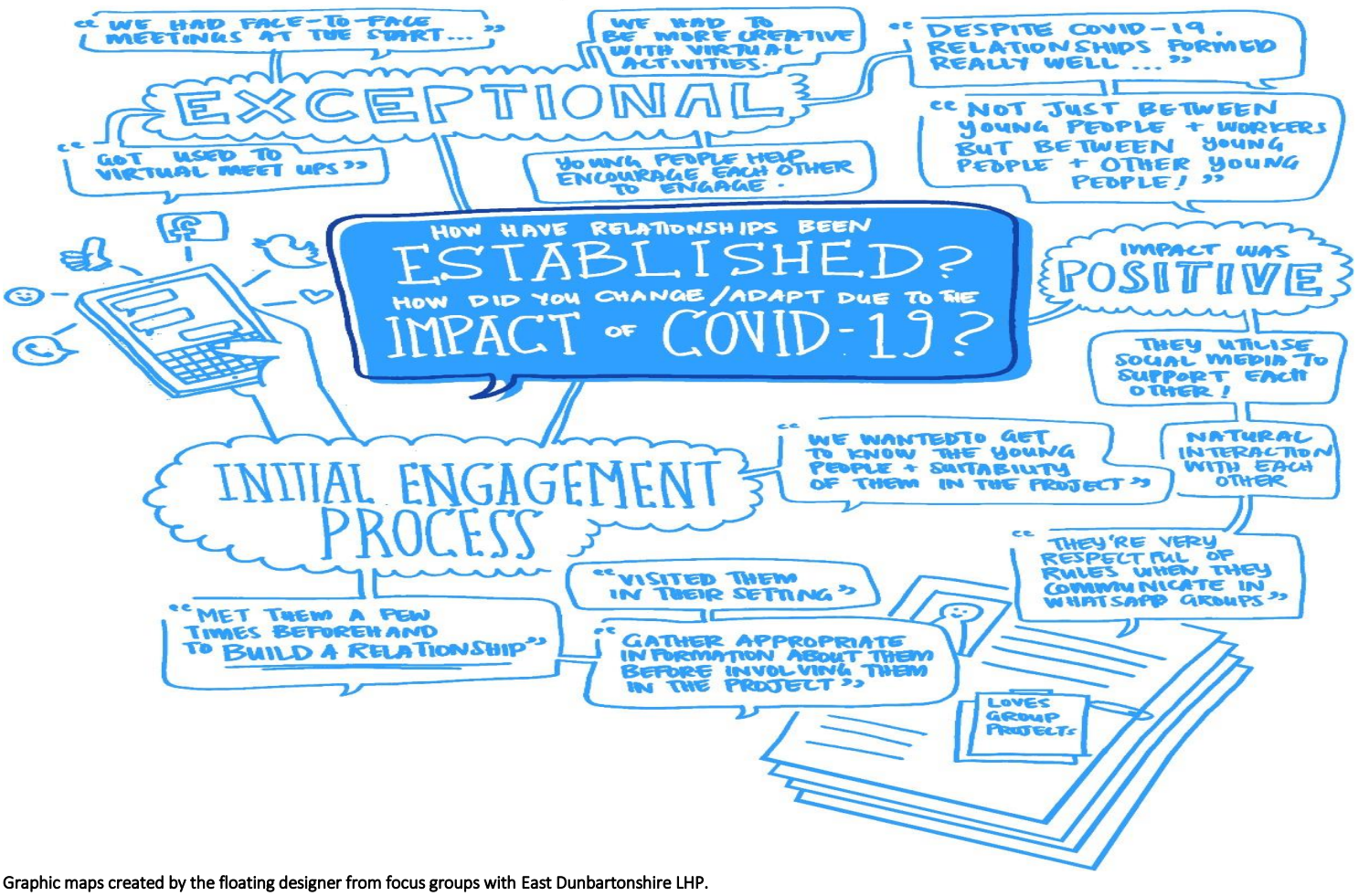
Report Structure

The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- Chapter 2 sets out key findings from the research, based on an analysis of evidence drawn across the three LHPs.
- Chapter 3 describes the impact of the House Project approach on young people.
- Chapter 4 presents a case study for each LHP.
- Chapter 5 summarises key learnings from the projects.

2. Good relationships with young people

This chapter presents findings about how the LHPs developed good relationships with young people, exploring both challenges and key successes, including how COVID-19 affected; - the project, the value of relationship-placed approach and the importance of putting young people in leadership roles.



Graphic maps created by the floating designer from focus groups with East Dunbartonshire LHP.

Delivery during a pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic caused some challenges in the set-up of the LHPs. For example, due to restrictions to in-person gatherings, many aspects of the project had to be delivered online. Some young people faced barriers to participating digitally; LCT supported them by providing access to the internet and devices to attend online meetings.

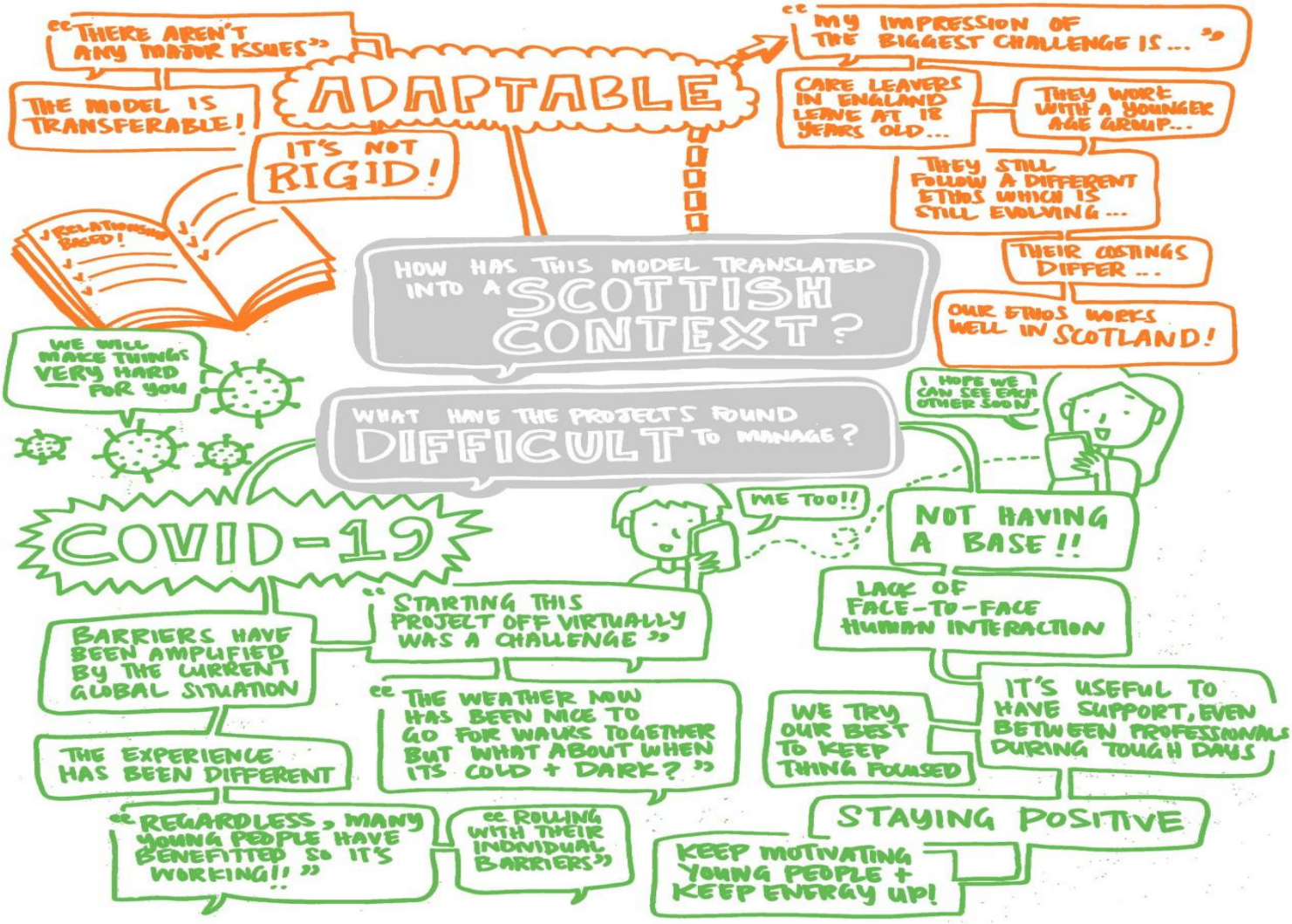
"We had to get creative with working with young people virtually"
Facilitator, Midlothian LHP

Staff observed young people becoming more isolated throughout the pandemic and responded by offering one-to-one work through COVID-safe activities, such as online catchups, socially distant meetings over coffee and outdoor walks.

Several benefits emerged from this approach:

- **Young people had an opportunity to get to know the facilitators on a one-to-one basis and build trusting relationships outwith the group work sessions and LHP modules.**
- **Staff had the time and opportunity to understand more about each young person's background and needs, meaning they could provide more personalised support.**
- **Young people who would not normally engage with group activities (e.g. those with social anxiety) were given the chance to learn more about the project in a comfortable environment, with no commitment or pressure to join.**

In reflection sessions, staff and young people said that that these one-to-one engagements were crucial in establishing trusting relationships; these sessions have now become a core feature of the approach in Scotland.



Graphic maps created by the floating designer from focus groups with Midlothian LHP.

Another consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic was uncertainty with housing stock. Housing allocation processes slowed down during the pandemic, and there were fewer properties available, which meant less choice for LHPs. Despite this challenging context, LHP staff were able to meet their goal of attaining 10 houses for young people by the end of Year 1. Staff established strong relationships with services in the housing sector and were able to successfully advocate for the young people involved.

Although this was a difficult period for everyone, it reinforced the need for distinct planning and support for their young people, some of whom were already isolated and lacked supportive relationships.

Whilst delivering the project during the pandemic was challenging staff identified some upsides: young people were familiar and comfortable with participating in online activities and engaged well as a result, a WhatsApp group was set up due to the remote nature of the group, which provided a platform for young people to remain in contact and support each other throughout the project and beyond.

Staff also reflected that delivering the project under these difficult circumstances was a valuable learning experience in adapting to challenges and learning how best to support young people through a difficult period.

"Experiences vary depending on the young person, being their support can be calming for them, especially during stressful situation, like moving home"
Facilitator, Midlothian LHP

Relationship-based practice

At the outset of the project staff expressed frustration with previous models of working with young people based on a culture of transactional relationships which often involve a formalised process of delivering a service. Transactional approaches typically focus on efficient service delivery within the parameters of defined targets and outcomes in which staff hold most of the power in decision-making.

Staff discussed a desire to work with young people in a more relational way; working alongside young people and responding to their needs, based on trust, and investing time in developing a relationship with a different, more equal, power dynamic. They spoke about wanting to be part of a new way of working and referenced the impact of the Independent Care Review and recent policy changes in the care system in Scotland. For example, The Promise[7] states that '*Scotland must not aim to fix a broken system, but set a higher collective ambition that enables loving, supportive and nurturing relationships as a basis on which to thrive.'* And this was the basis on which the house project approach was established. Facilitators felt the LHP framework encouraged them to be 'more human' and less formal in their approach and engagements with young people throughout the project. They were able to work in a way which aligned with their values; loving, supportive, and nurturing relationships are embedded in the LHP framework and staff reflected that this approach enhanced their practice

.[7] https://thepromise.scot/

"Young people feel that they have their own wee community, their own family. That sense of connectedness – that's what really works."
Facilitator, East Dunbartonshire LHP

In evaluation sessions, comments from young people provided evidence that this way of working was having the intended impact. They described feeling cared for by the LHP team and their peers. They regularly referred to the project as being a place of belonging for them, with a deep sense of community embedded in the LHP.

When asked why this approach was important to them, young people explained that removing some of the barriers between young people and professionals led to feeling treated as a person with individual needs rather than simply another 'case'. The open nature of discussions also helped young people to gain an understanding of some of the pressures and constraints practitioners can face.

The flexibility of the project and an emphasis on relationship-based practice gave staff freedom to respond to the needs of young people, rather than funders or deadlines. Through this work staff explored why some young people struggled to maintain a tenancy before they were supported by the LHP. These issues are summarised below:

Loneliness was a key factor that underpinned some tenancy failures. As a result, some young people:

- **became vulnerable to approaches from people who did not have their best interests at heart. They lost control of their accommodation; feeling unable or lacking the confidence to say no to unwelcome guests who damaged property or contributed to it deteriorating into an uninhabitable state.**
- **risk of poor physical and mental health increased**
- **a cycle of isolation was instigated, where young people did not have the confidence or knowledge to access essential services including health, welfare and employability support**

A lack of life skills including planning, budgeting, cooking and cleaning rendered some young people unable to live alone

Some young people faced the prospect of going through extremely challenging life experiences such as teenage parenthood without any support networks

Working in depth with young people took time and meant that some aspects of the project took longer to deliver than initially anticipated. For example, if one young person unexpectedly needed support, staff would need to accommodate this within their schedule at short notice, meaning other priorities were set aside for the day. Different types of support provided by staff included accompanying young people to appointments, helping them to access financial support, or being there to listen and offer advice when needed. The young

people described feeling like the staff 'had their backs', not only in securing housing but through wider support.

Adopting a relationship-based approach to working with young people was effective in building strong and lasting relationships. Many participants from the first cohort remain in contact with the LHP network, attend sessions and have expressed interest in mentoring and providing support to future cohorts.

Experienced staff

The commitment and expertise of LHP staff emerged as critical to the success of the project. All the staff involved had years of experience of working with young people in a range of settings including social work, youth work, education and throughcare and foster care. This meant that staff came into the LHP with an insight into some of the challenges, barriers, and priorities for young people with care experience. Some young people had pre-existing relationships with staff through prior engagement with social work, local services or professionals associated with the LHPs. These pre-existing relationships were beneficial for several reasons:

- Staff had an insight into the experiences and needs of the young person and their suitability for the project.
- Staff at LHP were able to build on and cement the pre-existing relationships that they had with young people.
- Young people felt more comfortable in joining the project due to the trust they had with the person.

"Staff at the house project speak to me like an adult, they don't speak down to you" –

Young Person, East Dunbartonshire LHP

Small caseloads

Working intensely with a smaller number of young people at any one time.
emerged as an important factor in the success of the LHPs. Young people were able to form trusting relationships with one dedicated worker prior to joining the project, which saved them the distress and frustration of having to repeat information about their past experiences to different workers. This also allowed staff to dedicate more time to understanding a young person's history and specific needs by engaging with other professionals such as social workers, through care workers and education services.
Staff described this as a more effective approach than other delivery models, highlighting the limitations they encountered in previous roles where working was large number of young people was a barrier to building strong relationships.

"It allows us to really dig deep and take the time to get to know them"

Facilitator, Fife LHP

Young people in leadership roles

The NHP framework promotes a co-production approach, and this was embedded into the delivery of LHPs. Young people's skills and talents were nurtured with staff supporting them to develop their personal skills and abilities through different activities and opportunities for leadership, such as:

- Representing the LHP at Care Leavers' National Movement (CLNM)
- Leading networking events with corporate parents and wider stakeholders
- Presenting their experiences of the LHPs to different audiences
- Being active in their community by helping at local events, volunteering, and supporting neighbours
- Advocacy work e.g., securing support for a digital poverty campaign by CLNM
- Delivering training sessions to share knowledge and awareness and help reduce stigma faced by those with care-experience
- Attending local authority-wide meetings to promote the work of the LHPs

Young people described a more equal balance of power between themselves, and facilitators compared with past projects. They reported feeling frustrated in the past when decisions were made for them rather than with them, and how the LHPs were a welcome change from this dynamic. Young people were actively involved in leading and making decisions at every stage of the project, and this led to them feeling listened to, valued and respected.

"I'm a rep for our house project, so I get to meet other reps to share what we've done and our experiences"

Young Person, Midlothian LHP

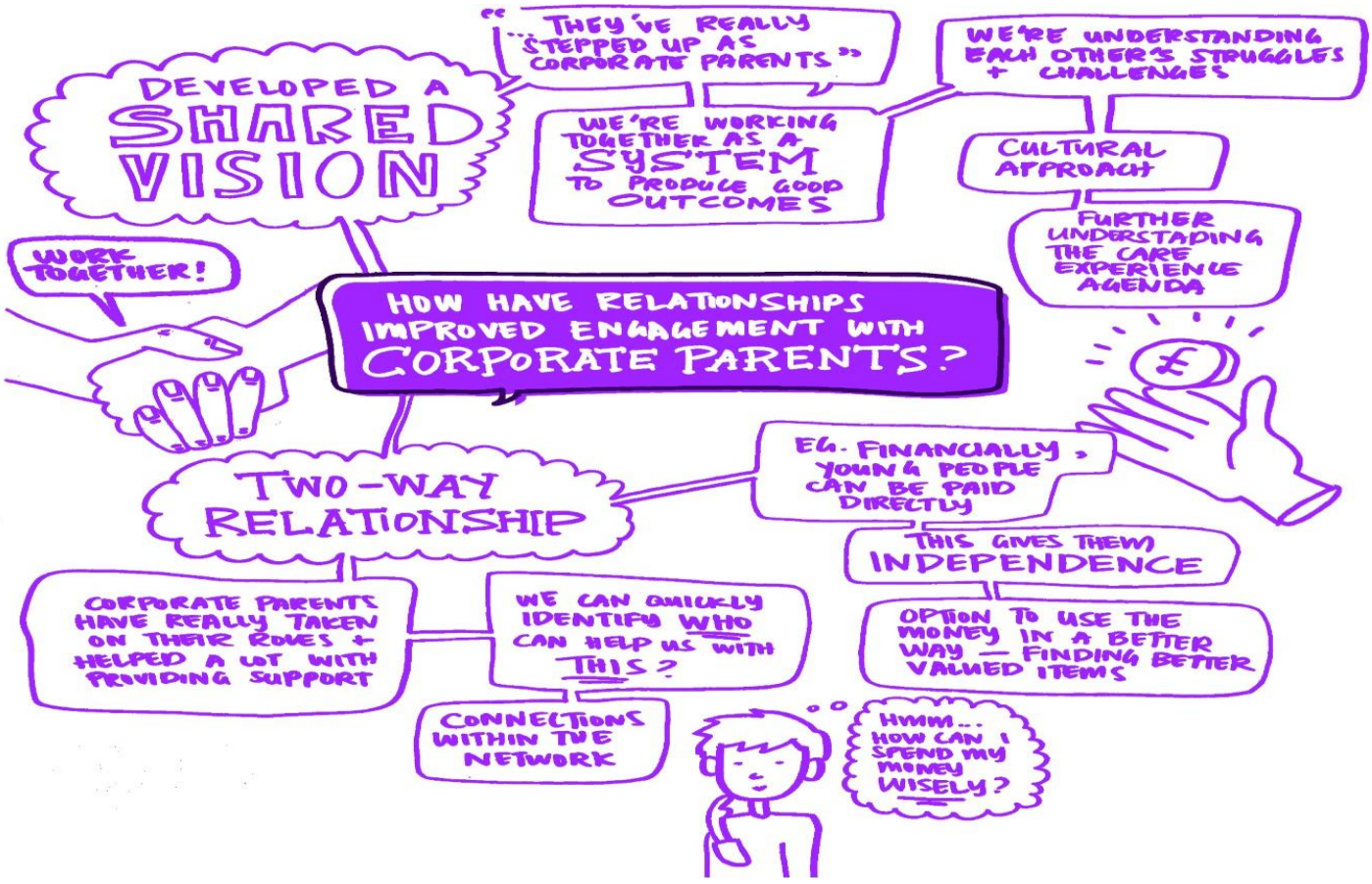
Contributions from Corporate Parents

Projects told us of the benefit of having Corporate Parents involved in the steering groups of the LHP. Information and support available to care experienced people can be confusing and can differ depending on local authority provisions. Working closely with corporate parents and acting as advocates on the behalf of their young people and encouraging advocacy from the young people themselves help staff and young people be more informed, better able to access support and more likely to challenge decisions and champion their rights and the rights of care experienced people.

For example, one LHP has the Area Commander of Police on their steering group. This relationship has had many benefits, for example:

- Providing young people with advice and information about local areas to inform decisions about where they take up a tenancy and enhance their safety.

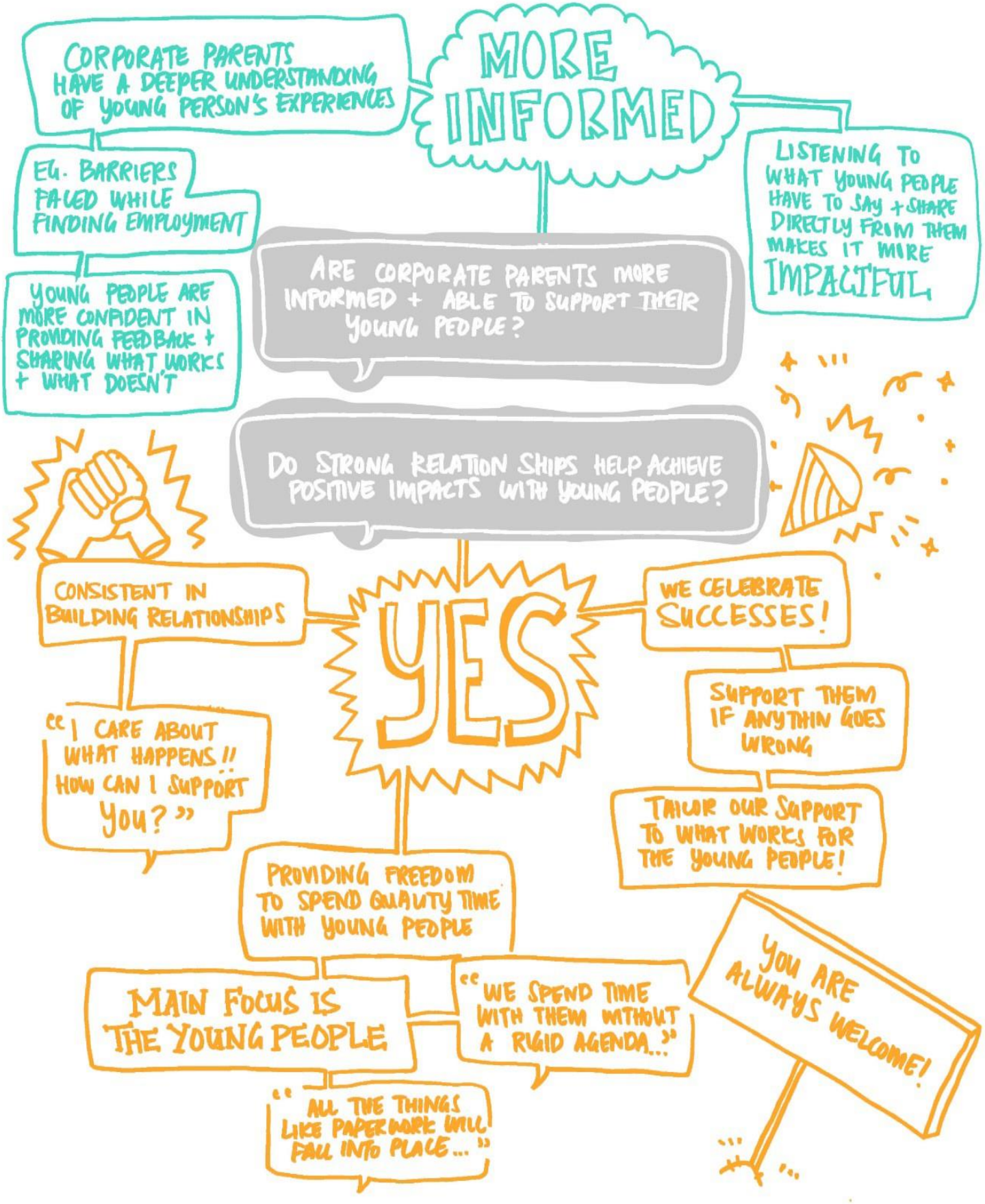
- In one case, the police were called when a young person from an LHP had loud parties. Instead of escalating this and instigating an end to the tenancy, police worked with the young person and the LHP to address this behaviour. The parties stopped and the young person maintained their tenancy.



Graphic maps created by the floating designer from focus groups with Staff at Midlothian house project

Further evidence of small pockets of system change have been that young people from an LHP have been invited to local Corporate Parenting Strategy groups and have led presentations about their experiences and the benefits for them of being involved with their LHP. They have also gone with clear 'asks' for their Corporate Parents. Young people in LHPs have presented the issues faced by them and other care experienced people to police, politicians, lord provosts, education services and other services. They are encouraged to co-produce these sessions, plan content and are supported in creative expression to showcase their experiences, journey, and success on the LHP.

Education teams also engaged with LHPs through regular meetings with staff. Some small but important changes stemming from this contact include using the corporate parent role to provide support that young people might ordinarily expect from family members, for example, help with applying for courses, planning journeys and timetables, assisting them to develop revision schedules and ensuring young people submit assignments on time. These can make the difference between successful applications to entering further and higher educations and support positive, successful experiences in those systems.



Graphic maps created by the floating designer from focus groups with Staff at Midlothian house project

3. Impact

In this chapter, we describe the impact that the LHPs have had on young people, such as improved confidence and independent living skills, greater stability, and access to new peer support networks.

Increased confidence

Young people said that the support they received from LHP staff and the relationships they established with peers helped them to be more confident. They were encouraged to express themselves in one-to-one sessions, group work and other LHP settings, and felt it became easier to do so as the project went on. Staff reflected on the differences they witnessed in young people, noting that at the start, those who were anxious and apprehensive became able to lead sessions, talk openly about their experiences and support new cohorts.

Staff observed that the newfound confidence was present in other areas of their lives too, with some young people showing more agency and resilience when engaging with other professionals and services. Staff said that young people were now more likely to seek out support and challenge decisions made on their behalf.

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

Young person, Fife LHP

Improved communication skills

The young people who took part in evaluation sessions were overwhelmingly positive about the LHP's contribution to their communication skills and the important impact this had on many areas of their lives. Some reported that prior to their involvement with LHP, they were not engaging with any services at all and found it difficult to make phone calls or schedule appointments due to anxiety and discomfort when speaking with new people. However, throughout the project, young people were able to develop their communication and presentation skills through participation in group sessions, community events, conferences, and networking meetings. Staff supported young people to put forward their ideas and opinions, helped them learn how to deal with conflict and not shy away from tough conversations.

"We get to learn so many life skills, form our own community and be part of a team"

Young person, Midlothian LHP

Access to Peer Support

Young people in LHPs support each other through group sessions, team activities and in everyday interactions, for example, young people established a WhatsApp group where they share advice about their new homes, like recipes and cooking ideas, how to store food safely and how to navigate the initial period of moving into their homes.

Young people who successfully moved into their own home often became mentors for newer cohorts. Young people told us how important this peer support was for them; they said it was great to have access to support from other young people who have been in similar positions, noting they felt understood and didn't feel judged when asking for help. The relationships formed in the LHP between peers has created a safe community where a sense of belonging and trust is apparent. This can often be particularly important for young people with experience of the care system, who may not have access to wider support networks.

"We are all in the same boat"

Young person, East Dunbartonshire LHP

Building independent living skills

During the first one-to-one meeting between staff and young people, an individual development plan is created for each young person. The plan reflects their needs, considering their situation, experience, and readiness for living independently. Individual plans are established to ensure that support needs are identified, and appropriate guidance is provided for young people to successfully maintain a tenancy and ensure a smooth transition to independent living.

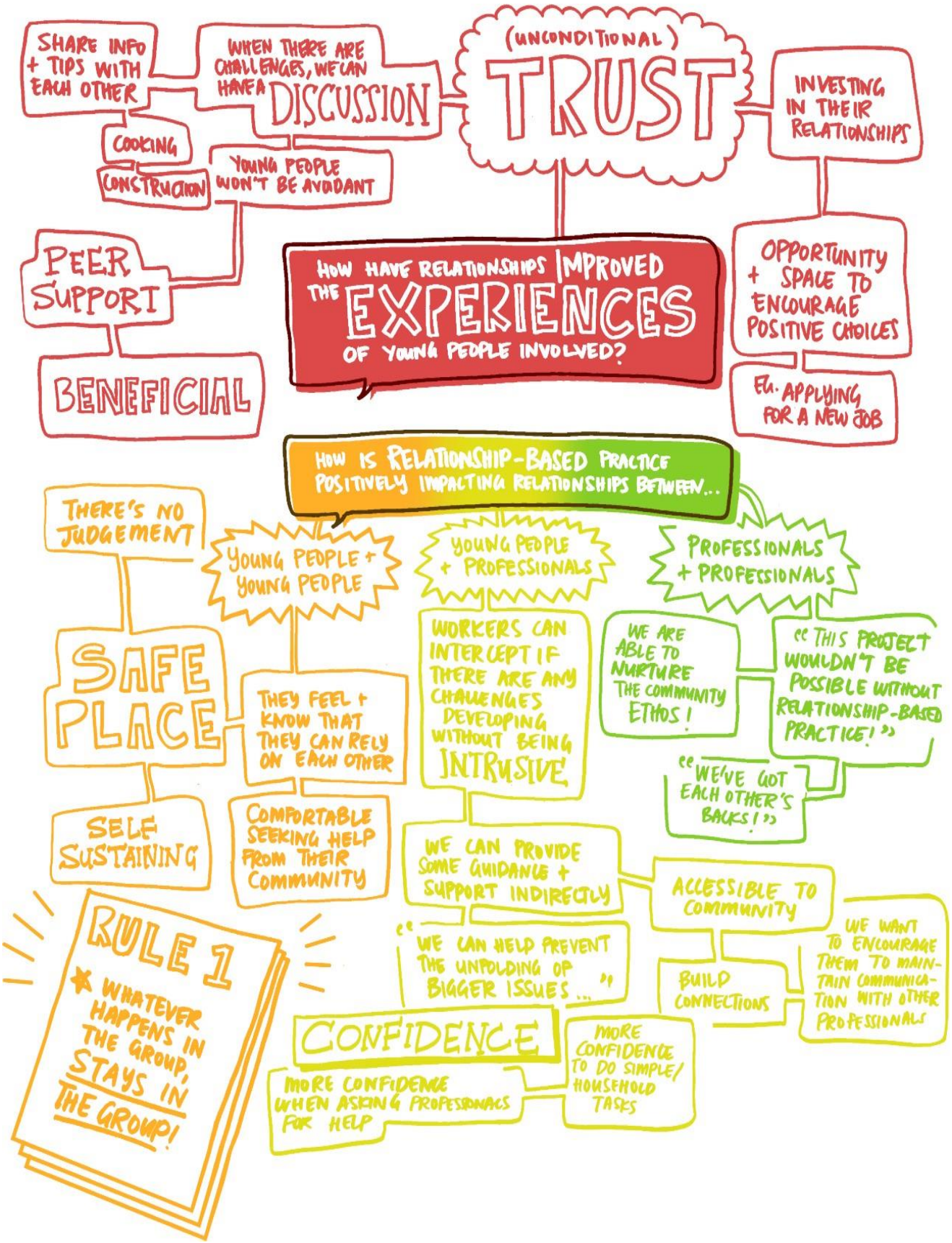
Alongside this young people meet on a weekly basis and together complete the House Project Programme (HPP). It supports young people to build skills, knowledge, and confidence they need to move in to and maintain their first home, enter the world of work and live connected and fulfilling lives.

When young people are ready to move, they are not just left with the keys to their new home and expected to figure it out; they have a network of people around them to look out for them and help them with practical support including budgeting, cooking, decorating, and maintaining their home. Ongoing LHP support was described as striking an appropriate balance between the young people being treated like adults who can make their own decisions, while still having a safety net of support when they require. Young people reported feeling more responsible and learning "how to adult" throughout the process.

An important element of the HP approach is that there is no time limit to a young person's involvement. Once they are a part of LHP they are a part of it forever and whilst young people do not become dependent on staff, they know the door is always open to them. Young people from Cohort 1 have continued to engage with the support available, receiving financial advice and support to secure employment and pursue training and further education opportunities.

"This project wouldn't be possible without relationship-based practice"

Facilitator, East Dunbartonshire LHP



Graphic maps created by the floating designer from focus groups with staff at East Dunbartonshire house project

Improved creative skills

When establishing an LHP, young people are given opportunities to work with a number of professionals, including -graphic designers, filmmakers, podcast producers and artists. They are encouraged to work creatively through the HPP, where they can upload pictures, documents, videos, notes and reflections. This enables them to record their achievements and capture their journey, as well as providing the opportunity to explore new creative interests and build upon existing skills.

For this study Staf partnered with Brawtalent to support young people in LHPs to produce a creative output to showcase what LHPs are, and why they are needed for young people with care experience. They created promotional videos and booklets to educate other young people who may be interested in LHPs on what the project entails and the benefits of being involved. One young person is now on a work experience placement with a film making company after working with them to produce creative outputs for the LHP – something he did not know he was passionate about until he was given the opportunity to try.

"It builds confidence in yourself to be more independent"

Young person, East Dunbartonshire LHP

More choice over their living situation

Young people with care experience in Scotland do not often have choices over where they live. Many of them were removed from their family during their childhood and placed somewhere new and unfamiliar, being moved away from their school, friends, and community. Young people can be moved repeatedly which can contribute to them feeling like they don't belong and have no stable foundation. In addition, care experienced young people often have little say in their home surroundings, with choices limited to basic decorations in their room.

LHPs allow these young people to have a choice and agency in decisions over where they live and what their home looks and feels like. Staff support young people to make their house a home – they can decorate, furnish, and personalise their home. Young people reflected that the homes they have secured through LHP have felt like their first "proper" home. It became clear during the project that young people are more likely to maintain tenancies and have pride in their homes when they have choices over where they live and how their home looks.

"It's more than a home, it's about never giving up on them – that's our policy"

Facilitator, Midlothian LHP

Stability

LHP staff work with housing services to provide quality accommodation that is stable, safe and suitable for young people. Young people are also supported to work towards their own individual goals, whether this is to secure a tenancy, start or complete education courses, secure employment or connect with family. The support embedded in LHP provides the safety and security for young people to work towards a positive, stable future.

LHP staff understand that young people make mistakes and when they do, they are supported to overcome their situation. Staff highlighted the importance of consistency, stability, and not giving up on young people when they make mistakes.

"We celebrate success and support them when things go wrong, giving them the tools to deal with any issues"

Facilitator, Fife LHP

Changes to practices and policy

Before the LHP pilot project, a young person's leaving care grant was a transactional and bureaucratic process, with little agency and control given to young people. LHP staff negotiated with finance colleagues to enable the leaving care grant to be paid directly to young people, allowing them more control on how and when to spend this. This small but significant change has had a ripple effect into other areas of practice, and now local authority throughcare and aftercare workers are able to do this for their young people.

"We can tell corporate parents exactly what young people need"

- Facilitator, East Dunbartonshire LHP

Feeling more connected to local communities

Young people are supported to interact more with and have a presence in their community. Some examples of this include:

- Taking part in community projects and events
- Contributing positively to their community by raising awareness of the stigma related to those with care experience
- One young person told us of the friendships she had made with an older neighbour, by putting a card through her door when she moved into her home. She felt this was something she would not have done prior to taking part in the LHP

"Just knowing we have support available really helps"

- Young person, East Dunbartonshire LHP-

The need for a Local House Project in East Dunbartonshire

East Dunbartonshire's LHP was established in February 2021, -Following consultations with young people by existing youth housing information services such as Project 101 and other partners. This research highlighted the gap in support and preparations for young people leaving care which often led to young people being isolated or struggling to maintain their tenancy. As one young person explained:

"I was given all my belongings in a black bin bag, -and left to get on with it".

Through joint working with East Dunbartonshire Council, the LHP works to secure homes for young people. Young people are given a choice on where they live and are encouraged to engage with other services to receive the best support available to them.

The house project approach is about more than just a home. They provide supportive environments for young people with care experience to feel safe and secure, come together and build their own communities. Young people access advice and support around independent living skills, cooking, work clubs and outreach services. This support is available to all young people with care experience in East Dunbartonshire, whether they join the local house project or not.

"It's about consistency, always being there for them and never giving up on them"
Facilitator, East Dunbartonshire LHP

By July 22, twenty young people were supported into their own home

Impacts for young people

East Dunbartonshire's LHP allows young people leaving care to plan and prepare in a structured way. During the evaluation, young people told us this planning and preparation process made them feel valued and reduced their feelings of uncertainty and gave them more control over their future. We found that opportunities to engage with different services and work with peers helped young people to build a community of support and establish connections in the local area reducing feelings of loneliness and isolation.

Young people lead group activities, sessions, and campaigns. They are encouraged to input into the decisions that directly impact them and other care experienced people by;- their participation in the steering group with corporate parents, being representatives for their LHP at CLMN and doing community work. They advocate for themselves and for the wider care experienced population.

Learning from the LHP in East Dunbartonshire demonstrates the importance of creating communities of support for young people and the role that positive relationships play in supporting young people to maintain their tenancies and, crucially, equipping them with the confidence and lifelong skills to thrive.

Taking time to build relationships

> *"They treat us like equals"*
> Young person, East Dunbartonshire LHP

Young people described some barriers to initial engagement in the LHP, including fear of the unknown, anxiety and their mental health. They told us the initial engagement process was crucial – young people had the time and space to develop relationships with facilitators on their terms, with no pressure or expectancy to commit to the project. This allowed young people to gain knowledge about the LHP, and build trust in the process, facilitators, and other young people. Time to build relationships with facilitators, the project lead and other young people created connections for young people and a sense of belonging.

> *"I'm not a case here, I'm a person with a voice that is listened to"*
> Young person, East

A life-changing experience

Young people were overwhelmingly positive about their experiences with the LHP. Some reflected on the changes in themselves and others: – gaining confidence, communication skills, life skills, knowledge of their rights

and willingness to engage with other services. One young person told us that she could not make appointments over the phone due to anxiety but that her time in the LHP improved her confidence to the extent that she can not only make an appointment but will seek support and advice from other services.

Ownership and a safe space

> *"We have somewhere to go, even if it's just for a coffee"*
> Young person, East Dunbartonshire LHP

One of the most critical aspects of the project for young people is the base – a space for young people and facilitators to come together. Young people can pop in for a chat, group session, or for help and advice. Young people described their enthusiasm about the base and felt a sense of ownership over it. It is a place for them to have peer support and build their relationships.

Co-production and creative expression of experience

Our evaluation partner Brawtalent worked with the young people to make a powerful animation about the local house project. The video they created, 'Cinderella: In Our Words', is an excellent insight into their experiences and the impact on them of being in a LHP[8]. Co-production is at the heart of LHPs, and this creative project initiated further opportunities for one participant who showed incredible enthusiasm throughout the process. They recently joined Brawtalent for work experience on another animation project and are developing advanced animation skills.

Corporate parents and other partners

> *"We understand each other's struggles and challenges"*
> Facilitator,
> East Dunbartonshire LHP

The project lead and facilitators at the LHP spoke about the crucial role of corporate parent 'buy-in' and interagency working. The LHP has a network of corporate parents who they can go to for advice or support for their young people and work with them for the interest of the young people.

They reflected on developing a shared vision for young people and the importance of corporate parents engaging in the project. East Dunbartonshire LHP engages with housing services, police, welfare rights, education, mental health services, and others through steering groups, conferences, and networking events. Young people participate in every stage.

[8] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjzZFX3fuD8

One corporate parent (a housing officer) described the knowledge she gained from engaging with the LHP. Her enhanced understanding of her role as a corporate parent and the needs of care experienced people has benefited young people. One example is East Dunbartonshire advocating on behalf of their young people to receive their payments for furniture/moving home directly so they could make better use of the finances – buying higher- valued items and having a choice in where to spend them. Young people themselves said this gives them independence and demonstrates trust in them and their decisions.

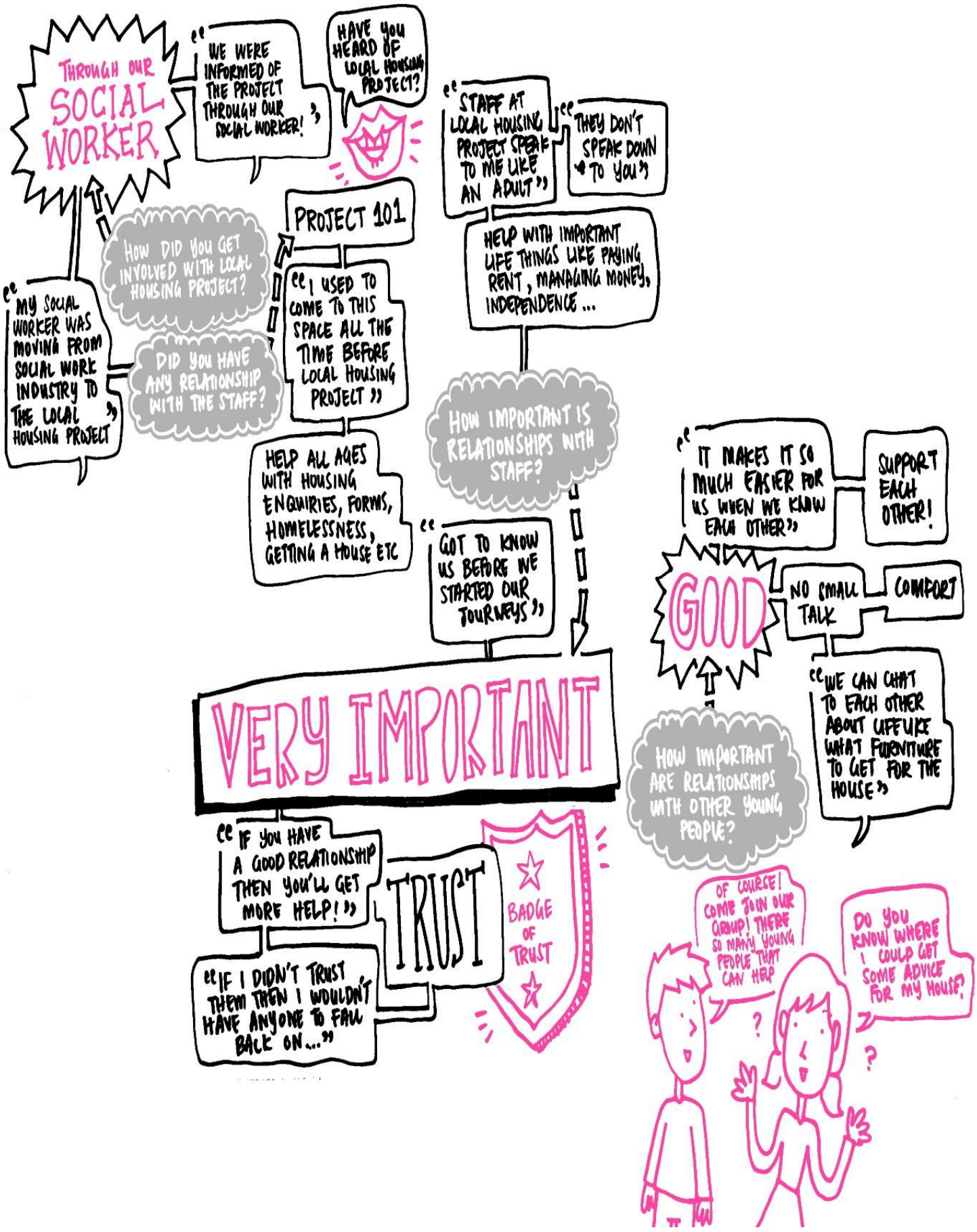
Shifts in power dynamics with corporate parents

> *"Seeing staff treat us well and like adults, might influence them to do the same"*
> *"They are learning new ways to work with young people"*
> Young people,
> East Dunbartonshire LHP

Young people reflected on their experiences with and views of corporate parents, saying these have changed since joining the LHP. Involving corporate parents at various stages has allowed young people and corporate parents to work together in new ways.

One example is sessions/network events led by young people who set the agenda and present issues, ideas, and discussion points. One young person commented that she felt "seen" by corporate parents in a new way and feels treated differently compared to previous experiences. The young person felt that the project lead and facilitators have modelled how to engage with young people and that this has influenced how corporate parents engage.

The stigma that comes with being care experienced was described by young people as impacting on their relationships with corporate parents. Working together and developing connections between people, has helped to address that stigma. Encouragement to work in new ways and take different approaches strengthened the relationships and dialogue between LHP staff, young people and other professionals.



Graphic maps created by the floating designer from focus groups with young people at East Dunbartonshire house project

Fife - Scotland's first Local House Project

Fife's LHP was established in August 2020, following research by Fife Council's housing services, corporate parenting group and the young people's team. The research identified a lack of planning and support for young people with care experience to maintain their tenancies. Young people leaving care were struggling with the process and lacked support, guidance, and time to build relationships with professionals. A need for well-thought-out support packages for young people before and after a move into their homes was identified. Building on this, Fife became the first local authority in Scotland to introduce the House Project approach.

Twenty young people have joined the LHP Fife since 2020 – with two cohorts graduating.

Lessons from the early stages of setting up an LHP

Fife's LHP focused on a group of young people with care experience who needed more extended support, structure, and guidance through relationship-based practice. Some of these were young adults who had returned to residential care after their tenancies had failed.

Being the first LHP in Scotland had its challenges. Facilitators described uncertainty and fear of the unknown - linked to the newness of the project itself, - and the fact that it was being developed in the context of the pandemic. Due to the pandemic Fife did not have a base at the start which meant facilitators and young people had to be creative in their engagement. Facilitators spent time face to face individually with young people and group session were initially held virtually.

The starting point for facilitators was to begin building relationships with young people while assessing their situation, to ensure each received the right support, and that a plan was developed with and for each young person.

> *"I feel like it's my big brother"*
> Young person, Fife LHP

Young people from Fife spoke about their initial worries when joining the project – they were anxious about engaging in group sessions and the potential for conflict between young people. Some young people already knew each other as the care experienced population is small in Fife. However, young people were encouraged to manage conflict, repair relationships and were given the space to talk about any issues with each other. Young people told us that everyone gets along in the project, but when issues do arise, they communicate and work to resolve problems together. "We're adults, and we are treated like adults."

Building communities of support

Fife LHP strengthens relationships between young people by encouraging group work and project work with peers. Young people are supported to build and maintain good relationships with each other, and there is an emphasis on the importance of peer support. In evaluation sessions, young people described the benefits of peer support – having people around you that can understand some of the things you are going through. They said that the LHP had given them a support system and that that they felt their LHP 'has their back'. As a result, young people from cohort one are now taking on a support role for new cohorts. It is hoped this will ensure young people have many positive relationships within the HP community and beyond.

The LHP supports young people to work with other stakeholders and organisations to secure resources and build local relationships. Recently, young people supported a successful application for a £7,000 grant from The Learning foundation to kit out their games room within their base. Young people are encouraged to engage in their communities through events and to advocate for themselves and other care experienced people.

Young people also have opportunities to get involved in efforts to bring about better outcomes for the wider community of young people with care experience and each LHP has two representatives who attend CLNM. Relationships and connections with other LHPs are encouraged, and young people in Fife spoke positively about having young people from English LHPs visit their base – after the meet-up, they reflected that it made them more appreciative of the safe space they had created.

Impacts for young people

> *"They help us get on with our lives"*
> Young person,
> Fife LHP

Young people reflected on the positive impact on their lives from being a part of Fife's LHP's. One spoke about gaining trust and confidence the more he engaged with the process. Others described learning new skills such as cooking, decorating, managing their money, participation and communication. For some, just having a safe environment has had a positive impact on their lives.

Young people spoke passionately about their base – they see it as a second home and somewhere that belongs to them. They feel like they have ownership of it, and through the pilot, it emerged that the base plays a core role in helping young people to engage and get the most out of the HP approach. It provides young people and facilitators with the space to come together, have group sessions and have company or more specific support.

> *"We just need someone in our corner or else it feels like fighting a losing battle"*
> Young person,
> Fife LHP

Support from corporate parents

Fife LHP facilitators and young people spoke at length about the positive impact of corporate parent buy-in. Young people were supported to advocate for themselves and the LHP. They met with corporate parents, stakeholders, and organisations to bring awareness of their LHP and the House Project approach and to encourage better working relationships to meet the needs of the care experienced population in Fife.

> *"We can now ask, who do we contact for specific support? We know who we can go to"*
> Facilitator, Fife LHP

Facilitators highlighted that this direct work with young people helped corporate parents to understand the challenges they faced by learning more about their experiences within the sector and what contributed to tenancy breakdowns.

> *" The more voices, the better"*
> Young people, Fife LHP

During evaluation sessions, facilitators reflected those relationships with corporate parents were strongly positive – corporate parents stepped up to the challenges, and facilitators felt

able to challenge decisions and advocate for the needs of their young people. As a result, they felt better equipped to respond to issues and felt they had established a supportive network of corporate parents to advocate for the best available support and resources for young people.

Shared knowledge and experiences and an understanding of everyone's role and specific challenges has created a support system for young people and LHP facilitators. Corporate parents have worked in different ways with young people through the LHP– with young people leading sessions, conferences and networking events. Facilitators identified benefits stemming from this for young people, including the development of confidence and communication skills.

Young people told us their positive experiences had fuelled a desire for more engagement with corporate parents and an openness to building new relationships. Some compared this with previous engagements with corporate parents which they felt were one-sided and, - where they were made to feel that their opinions or needs did not matter. In Fife LHP, young people told us they are now listened to and participate in the decisions that impact their lives.

Graphic maps created by the floating designer from focus groups with staff at Fife house project

Co-creation in the Midlothian Local House Project

The Midlothian Local House Project (LHP) was established in 2020. Joint work between the Midlothian Council and the Champions Board highlighted the need for better housing support and found that young people with care experience were more likely to experience tenancy breakdowns and homelessness.

Twenty young people have been supported into their own homes through the Midlothian LHP since 2020.

A holistic approach to meeting needs

> *"We tailor our support to what works for the young people"*
> Facilitator, Midlothian LHP

The Midlothian LHP was co-designed by young people, - who helped determine how their project would work. Consultation with young people through the care leavers' group provided insights into their specific needs, - and the framework approach supported the inclusion of these.

The LHP offers a broad range of support and flexible shared living – if a young person wants this option. Young people were keen for the LHP to have a particular focus on, - health and wellbeing, transport, and safety, to ensure young people can take the lead to succeed and thrive within their homes.
Facilitators reflected on the positives of this flexible approach and were encouraged by the NHP, with support from Midlothian Council to be aspirational with their young people. It gives them scope to take on a wider coordination role with the other professionals involved in a young person's life, which they believe is valuable and leads to a greater level of support based on a strong relationship and understanding of a young person's needs and experiences.

The importance of involving family and friends is also recognised by the LHP and enabled where possible. Involving family and friends and strengthening the relationships with other professionals has ensured that the young people have a more comprehensive support network and are not dependent on a couple of close relationships with professionals. Staff believe that this focus enables them to meet specific needs which reflect the context of young people's experiences.

Midlothian have supported the NHP working towards the certified achievement of young people's work by SQA. Whilst every young person currently received certificates from AQA they will in future receive certificates from the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework which aligns with other qualifications.

> *"The more they engage, the more it gives them hope that something will change"*
> Facilitator, Midlothian LHP

Impacts for young people

> *"Our home is just the start – It's the final challenge and the reward"*
> Young person, Midlothian LHP

Young people told us about the support they received from staff and their peers. This reduced loneliness, and created a sense of belonging, understanding and of feeling valued.

> *"It just shows how many people go through the same things as you"*
> Young person, Midlothian LHP

Overall, young people were overwhelmingly positive about their experiences. One young person said the LHP had supported her with things she never expected – bills and furniture. Another young person commented that she would be lost without the support available through the project.

Others spoke about the importance of their relationships with each other. They all felt welcomed at the start of the project and after some initial awkwardness, were keen to engage with each other and support each other to secure and maintain their homes. Young people spoke about the base as a place to meet each other, have some company, have food together and strengthen their relationships with each other and project facilitators.

One young mother who faced leaving care said the house project had been a "life-saver" for her during her pregnancy. She reflected that

support from facilitators and other young people significantly helped her and her baby.

Support for LHP staff

Midlothian LHP staff understand the importance of building bonds and relationships with each other. They develop their relationships through weekly catchups and having fun as a team. They spoke about the importance of a shared understanding of each other's roles, allowing for adaptability and different approaches.

> *"Relationship based approach applies to other professionals too"*
> Facilitator, Midlothian LHP

> "It's nice to actually meet professionals so we can share our experiences, rather than them just reading a report"
> Young person, Midlothian LHP

Connections with Corporate Parents

Relationships between the LHP and corporate parents were described by staff as a two-way conversation which had positive benefits for young people. Impacts include young people feeling less intimidated when asking for help and being more likely to engage with other services and professionals than they were previously. Staff reported that young people are more informed on their rights and entitlements and are encouraged to discuss issues and create solutions with corporate parents.

Young people lead sessions with corporate parents, giving them opportunities to provide feedback and speak about what works and what doesn't, and they have also presented to other groups and organisations.

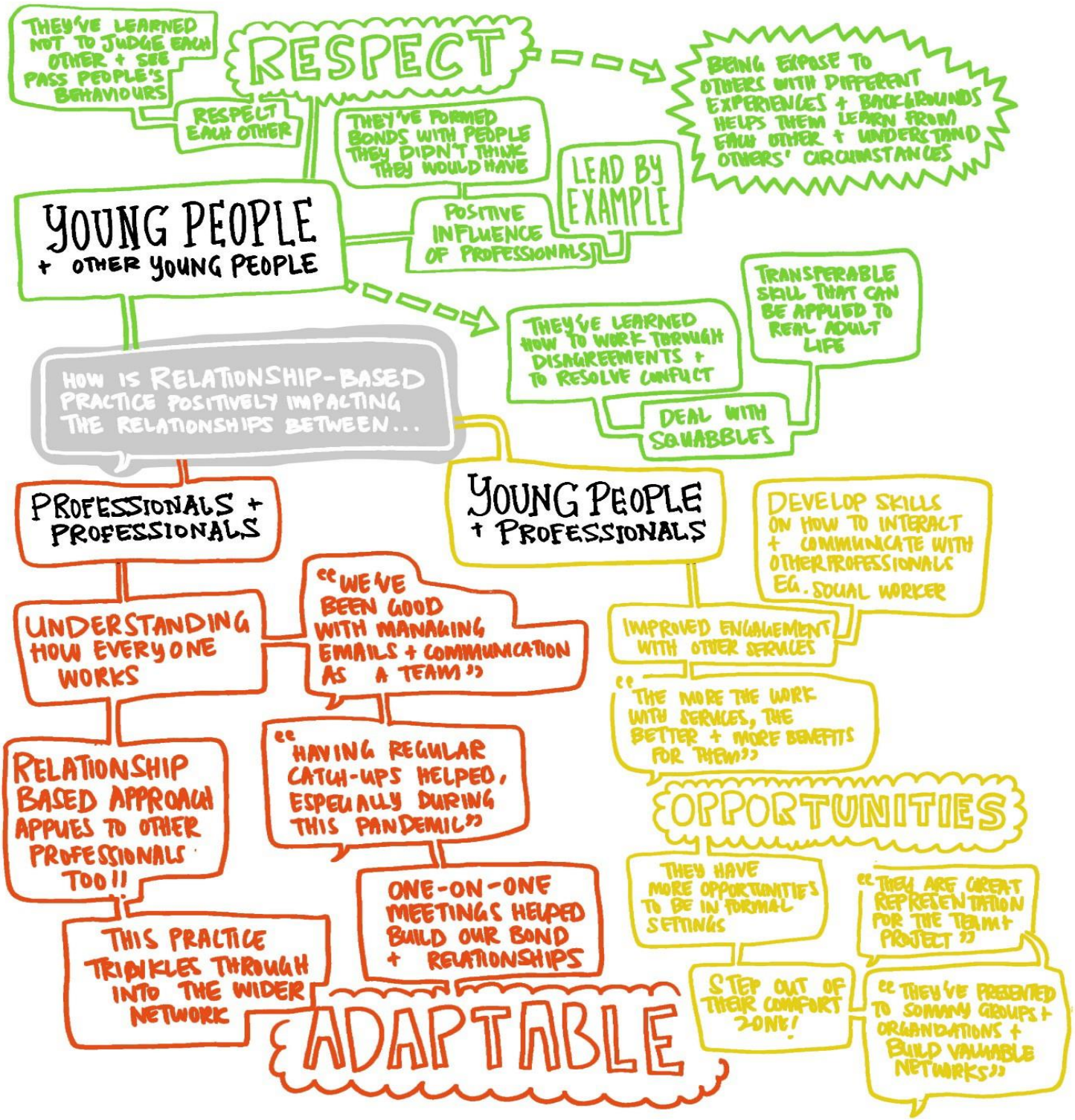
Accredited learning for young people

Midlothian LHP works hard to provide young people with accredited achievement awards for involvement across different levels of the project. This supports development, improves their employability, and gives young people a better understanding of what is available in their communities and how to access financial, health and safety support.

The LHP has had support from the community with offers of help and goods and has accessed resources in the community and beyond.

An enduring legacy

Midlothian Council has made a commitment to continue funding the project after the initial three-year funding period has ended. Reflecting on the learning from the pilot, - young people stated that for house projects to work, they need staff who care, eager young people, and corporate parents who want to work with young people.



Graphic maps created by the floating designer from focus groups with staff at Midlothian house project.

5. Learnings

As this report demonstrates, the House Project approach has had a significant positive impact on young people supported through the LHP. They secured tenancies which have been maintained and they have experienced many other positive impacts which are likely to have lasting benefits for individuals.

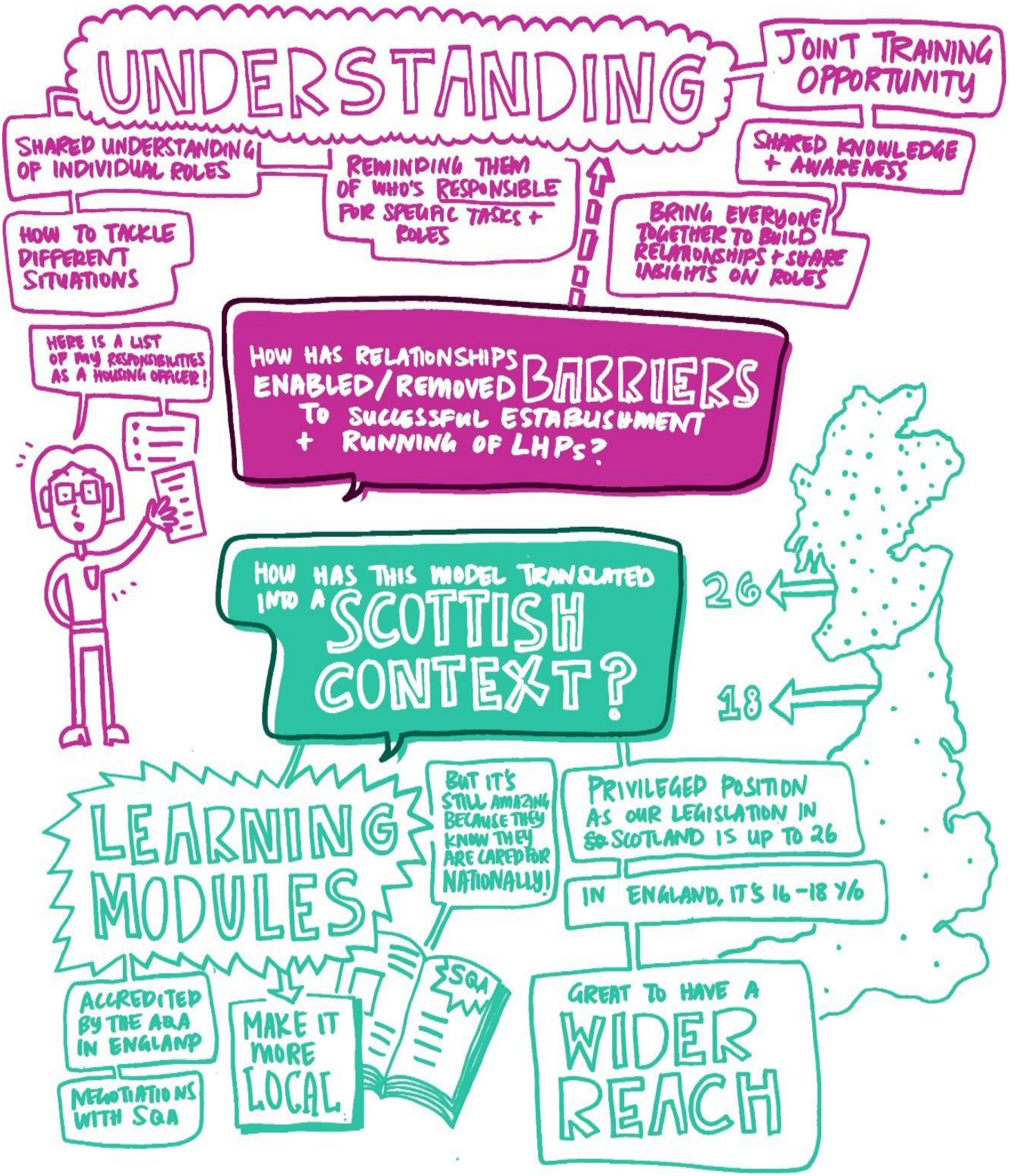
Significantly, through this process Corporate Parents developed a clearer understanding of young people's needs, how the care experience can affect young people, how this might affect the success or failure of housing tenancies, and the specific levels of support that some may need to secure and maintain a tenancy and other positive outcomes.

Many of the successes in Scotland's first LHP stem from inter-agency working. This started in the early stages when scoping work was undertaken to evidence the requirement for LHPs and the co-creation of a LHP in each area to meet local need. It continued through project delivery, as local authority staff at all levels from senior management to support workers across children's services, housing services and other agencies engaged with LHPs. The approach contrasts with previous practice models where there was little joint understanding of each other's strengths and roles and is an example of significant culture change.

Close working across organisations enhanced the support that LHPs were able to provide and facilitated engagement between corporate parents and young people with experience of the care system. This process generated shared insights, pooled resources, and sparked changes to practice at local levels. It has also generated wider learning through the evaluation, engagement with the NHP and through participation of two young people from each LHP in CLNM.

Other clear learning is the crucial role that LHP staff play in the project's success. This is underpinned by a relationship-based approach to working with young people. This helps to build trust and rapport, for staff to truly understand young peoples' support needs and how these can be addressed. Trust and understanding helps young people engage with the LHP, - developing important skills that underpin independent living, access services and form enduring communities of support with peers. This develops a base from which stable housing is secured. There will be a legacy from this work for the individual practitioners and young people who participated in the LHPs.

This was a new, relatively small-scale pilot delivered in the challenging context of covid. Nevertheless, all targets were achieved, and stakeholder feedback was positive; one local authority has already committed to continuation funding. We have every reason to believe these outcomes will be replicated in other local authorities should the framework be rolled out on a national level.



Graphic maps created by the floating designer from focus groups with Staff at Midlothian house project

Appendix 1: Literature Review [9]

Introduction

i. This brief desktop review sets the relationship-based policy and practice in context, summarising the knowledge and policy thinking currently available on the topic. Given the breadth of the topic and the wealth of information available, this review is not exhaustive. We have focused on identifying relevant information from key policy and implementation bodies: CELCIS, the Independent Care Review, Corra Foundation, Barnardo's, Iriss and Staf. Relevant documents from these bodies were reviewed using specific search terms, including:

- 'Relationship', 'relationship-based', 'relationship-based practice', 'relational', 'co-production'
- 'Trust', 'commitment', 'consistency', 'communication', 'connection', 'continuity'
- 'Caring', 'belonging', 'support', 'understanding', 'nurture', nurturing', 'engaging, 'engagement'
- 'Personal', 'flexibility', 'flexible', 'individual'

What is relationship-based practice?

> *"Overcoming trauma often requires a foundation of stable, nurturing, loving relationships. Scotland's focus and understanding of risk must shift to understand the risk of not having stable, loving, safe relationships. For above all else the Care Review has heard it is that children want to be loved, and recovery from trauma is often built on a foundation of loving, caring relationships. However, the current 'care system' is failing to provide that foundation for far too many children. Scotland must care in a way that gives children every possible chance to experience love in their lives… Scotland must create an environment and culture where finding and maintaining safe, loving, respectful relationships is the norm. That will involve fundamentally shifting the primary purpose of the whole of Scotland's 'care system' from protecting against harm to protecting all safe, loving respectful relationships."*
>
> Fiona Duncan, Chair of the Independent Care Review

ii. Relationship based practice is not a new concept, but has been gaining traction in recent years across a wide range of social care policy areas and is core to the recommendations

[9] This literature review was conducted by The Lines Between, as part of an evaluation for The Life Changes Trust into relationship-based practice across two funding streams. It is included within this report with permission from The Lines Between. For the original report, see: https://www.lifechangestrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/publication/files/Relationship%20Based%20Practice%20Full%20Report%20July%202021.pdf

of Scotland's Independent Care Review, as the quote above (from the forward to The Promise[10]) illustrates.

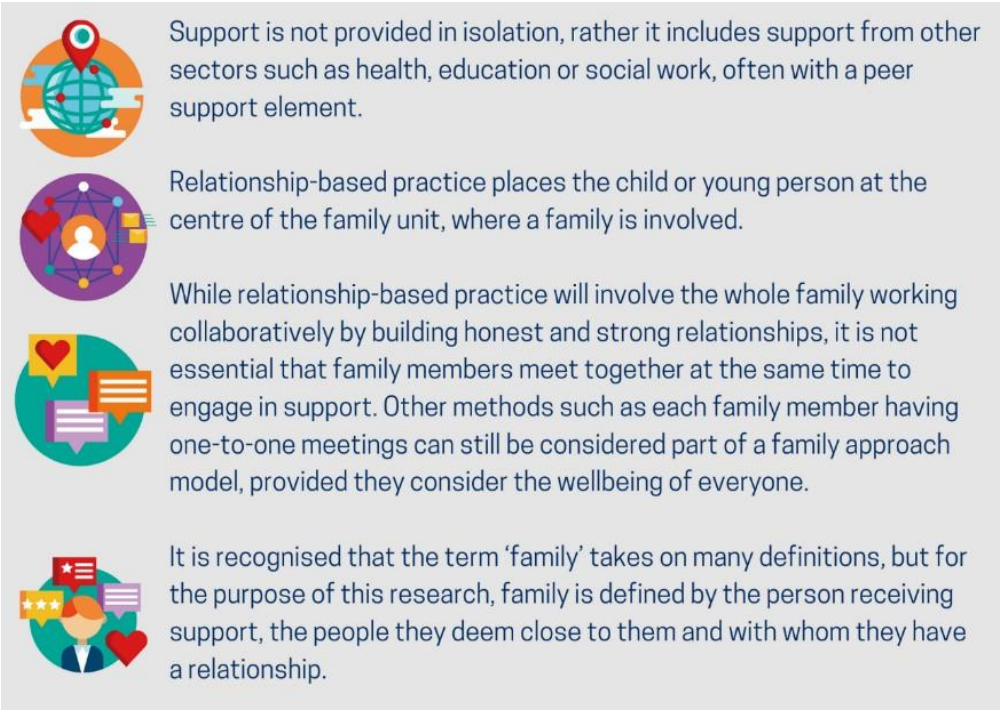
iii. A review conducted for Iriss in 2018[11] notes that, since the Christie Commission (Scottish Government, 2011), relationship-based practice has been increasingly resonating across Scottish public policy. The Commission's *'emphasis on the need to move away from a top-down 'expert' culture towards one that seeks the views and involvement of individuals and communities, through what might be identified as a process of co-production'* has, they argue formed the foundation of thinking that has resulted in policies such as GIRFEC (Getting It Right for Every Child). The literature reviewed provided clear messages about what clients value:

> *"A good social worker is experienced as a 'friend' and an 'equal' (MacLeod, 2008); clients look for 'ordinary friendship' where they meet on equal terms (Halvorsen, 2009). Beresford and colleagues (2008) (re)introduce the idea of friendship within the client/worker relationship. Their conception of friendship identifies qualities of reciprocity (of sharing aspects of oneself; of flexibility (going the extra mile, perhaps through offering small gifts or maintaining contact out of hours), but also straight talking). Kleipoedszus (2011) suggests that relationships can be forged through conflict; genuine engagement and negotiation rather than artificial sensitivity make it possible for workers to encourage and nurture change rather than demanding it. Smith and colleagues (2012) identify the centrality of effective relationships even in work with involuntary clients. In all of this, everyday acts of care and recognition are more important than formal standards and procedural requirements."*

iv. In 2019 Corra Foundation's Partnership Drugs Initiative gathered information on third sector support services to identify elements of practice that support, strengthen and maintain positive relationships for children, young people and families affected by drugs and alcohol. Their scoping review defined relationship-based practice through a set of principles that they believe can be considered good practice:

[10] *Scottish Government, The Promise, Independent Care Review, 2020*

[11] *Iriss, Relationship-based practice: emergent themes in social work literature, 2018*



v. This widens out the parameters of the relationships involved in a relationship-based approach to include all the relationships that are likely to be important to the person being supported. Four relationships were found to be key:

- Relationship between a practitioner and supported person
- Relationships between third and statutory sector
- Relationships within a family
- Relationships within a community

vi. The report also stresses that:

> *"There is a need to reflect on the reliance in Scotland on particular models of delivery. This research did not hear practitioners or people who use services talking about models of care, or programmes to which they attribute positive outcomes. Rather, they talked about how it is personal, trusting, connections that helped people to get well, or to stay safe. This suggests that practice which is based on relational approaches is what is fundamental to supporting people, and not reliance on any one model or intervention."*

vii. In 2020 Staf established a *Building Relationships Advisory Group* that is creating a tool to support organisations to prioritise relationship-based practice. This group also recognises that the context of young people's relationships is complex and can include immediate and wider family, the people they live with, community and a range of statutory and third sector services.[12]

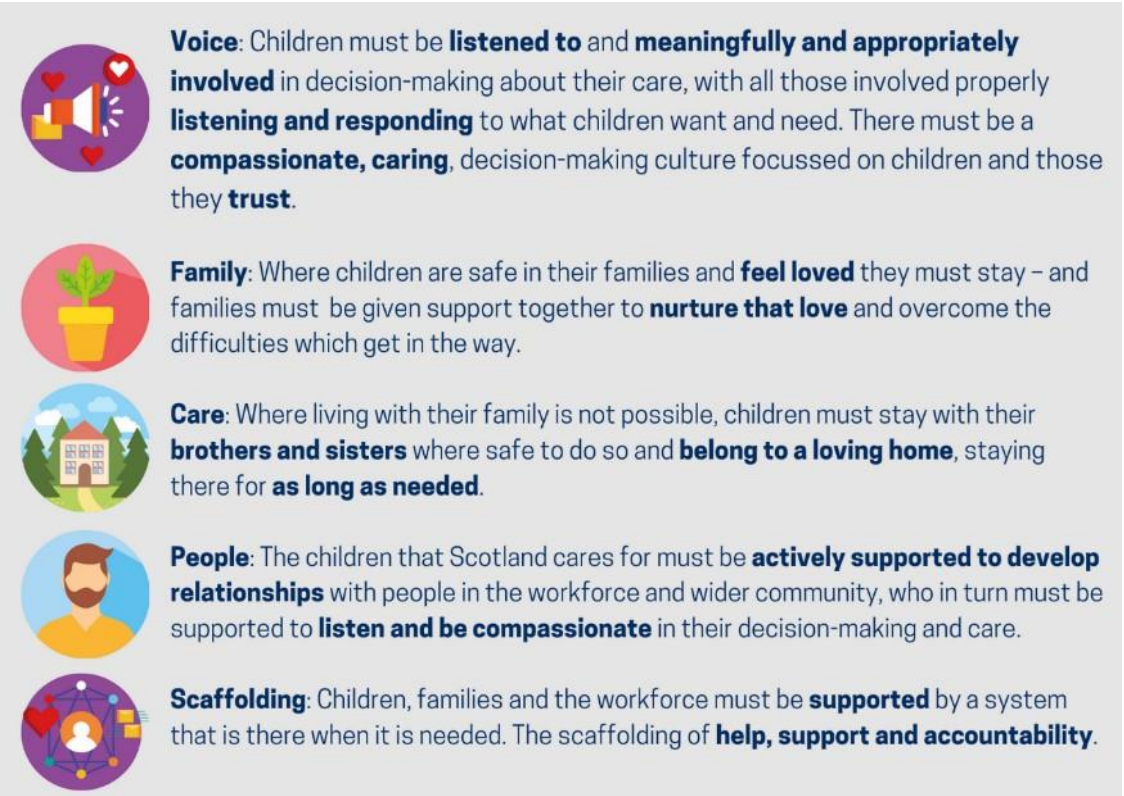
[12] *Staf Building Relationships Advisory Group, 2020*

viii. Scotland's Independent Care Review[13] was a 'root and branch' review of the care system which '*listened very carefully to those with experience of living and working in and around the 'care system' to properly understand what needs to change*.'

ix. Its report entitled 'The Promise' is built on five 'foundations'[14] which 'must be at the heart of a reorganisation of how Scotland thinks, plans, and prioritises for children and their families'. These are all expressed in terms of aspects of relationships, illustrated in the graphic overleaf.

[13] *Scotland's Independent Care review, 2020*

[14] Scotland's Independent Care Review, Promise report – Foundations, 2020



x. Furthermore, *The Promise* states that:

> *"Every care setting must facilitate a relationship-based approach, the workforce must be trained and supported to attune to children's physical and emotional states. This practice of 'tuning in' to how children are feeling, enables a process of co-regulation and stability where children can learn to manage stress and anxiety. The workforce must be supported to be present and emotionally available to the children in their care … Many workforce models will put the 'child' at the centre. However, children live in families and communities and this model seeks to convey the importance of relationships around the child. Scotland must move away from process towards a relationship-based understanding and approach to all children."*

In summary, relationship-based practice takes a relational approach to supporting a child or young person, rather than an approach that is based on processes or models of delivery. This includes a wide consideration of relationships that the child or young person has, not simply focusing on the relationship with the person delivering a service (though the quality of that relationship is critically important). This way of thinking about how to best support children and young people has become increasingly understood, recognised and strived for in recent years and is core to the recommendations from Scotland's Independent Care Review.

What are the benefits and opportunities?

Outcomes

xi. In 2018, CELCIS published a literature review[15] summarising important learning from academic and other literature about relationships between young people and those caring for them. Amongst other things, this review discusses the importance of relationships for young people leaving care and the growing interest in relationship-based practice. The review notes that the important role of supportive relationships in improving outcomes is recognised in literature from recent years:

> *"There has been a growing interest in relationship-based practice throughout various strands of social work in recent years. This interest recognises that case management approaches which focus only on standards, outcomes, and targets, can threaten continuity and fail to realise the benefits of supportive relationships (Coady, 2014; Ruch, 2005; Ruch, Turney, & Ward, 2010)."*

xii. This review also looked at wider, existing and informal relationships and concluded that:

> *"The literature also highlights the importance of helping young people to build informal networks of support to complement statutory and professional provisions. One strong theme that emerges is the considerable potential in harnessing the power and commitment of existing relationships and facilitating the extension of these beyond the care setting, as a formal, or semi-formal, aspect of a young person's support plan (Marion et al., 2017)."*

xiii. The CELCIS literature review noted evidence that less formal relationships benefit young people in improved resilience and outcomes, with particular reference to older young people and care leavers.

> *"Mentoring programmes have become an increasing feature of the landscape for children on the edge of care, for those in care, and for care leavers. A young person's mentor may fulfil the role of a trusted adult from outside the family, and some studies suggest this can be helpful in building resilience and improving outcomes (Stein, 2007). The role of 'natural mentors' (informal, unpaid supporters) in the lives of older young people in transition from foster care was explored in a study by Greeson and colleagues, who concluded that these relationships had much to offer in alleviating some of the challenges faced by young people (Greeson, Thompson, Evans-Chase, & Ali, 2014). The authors also highlighted the advantages that this informal approach had over formal programmes that can be difficult to establish with older young people."*

xiv. Barnardo's in their Connected Scotland consultation response[16] highlight that:

- Evidence suggests that relationship-based practice and enabling positive and enduring relationships with significant adults is vital to supporting children and young people with care experience.

[15] *CELCIS, In and beyond the care setting: relationships between young people and care workers: A literature review, 2018*

[16] *Consultation Response by Barnardo's Scotland, A Connected Scotland: Tackling social isolation and loneliness and building stronger social connections, 2018*

- The importance of having at least one stable and committed relationship with a supportive adult is also highlighted as a protective factor in supporting people who have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences.

Policy and practice

xv. The Iriss literature review[17] noted compelling philosophical, policy and practice reasons to put relationships at the heart of social work, namely:

- The importance of relationships is increasingly recognised in 'people work' but especially in social work and social care, across all domains of practice.
- Effective relationships are central to successful outcomes.

xvi. Current policy directions in Scotland are rooted in the need for effective personal/ professional relationships.

xvii. Notwithstanding these policy imperatives, Staf's Papoula Petri Romão in her blog highlights organisational learning and benefits from Brighton and Hove City Council's Children's Services who implemented a whole-systems model of relationship-based practice, based on empowering workers to build relationships. This involved creating smaller teams with less bureaucracy; giving power back to the frontline; purposeful recruitment; and increasing support for staff.[18] The results were impressive:

- Workload decreased significantly: time spent on admin and reports decreased from 39% in 2018 to 29% in 2019.
- This freed up time to spend with children and young people, which increased from 13% to 25% of total workload.
- Staff satisfaction: Percentage of staff that feel safe and supported is at an all-time high (up from 64% to 89%).
- Complaints decreased (from 101 in 2015 to 40 in 2018) and young people and families reported a more positive experience. Compliments increased from 14 in 2015 to 103 in 2018.

xviii. There is agreement that GIRFEC has provided a helpful, consistent framework for ensuring that the needs of the child are central to support provision across the sector.

> *"What the GIRFEC framework has done is help to evidence needs of the child in different sectors in a way that allows information to be listened to and heard regardless of working background or experience in support. It has eased collaboration and centred the child and their positive development as the most important factor when providing support."*[19]

> *"The GIRFEC framework is essential In Scotland, … (it) has embedded a shared approach to understanding a child or young person's circumstances within schools and across children's services more widely. The GIRFEC approach has been developed over many years and is built on the broad consensus that our culture, systems and practice should support a child centred and integrated*

[17] *Iriss, Relationship-based practice: emergent themes in social work literature, 2018*
[18] *Staf blog, 2019*
[19] *Corra Foundation, Connections Are Key: Unlocking the heart of relationship based practice, 2019*

approach to delivering high quality children's services across Scotland for all children, young people and families."[20]

In summary, better outcomes can be achieved for children and young people by building and delivering support in a relational way and by taking all relational spheres into account, including existing informal relationships/peer support and coordinating effort across the various statutory and other services that might be involved in a child or young person's life.

For services, support that is more relationship-based can result in empowered and more effective workers and a more streamlined and efficient service. Putting children and young people at the centre of what is delivered can help improve workloads and satisfaction. GIRFEC is acknowledged to be a helpful and effective framework that is supporting progress towards a more consistent approach to delivering support to children and young people.

What are the challenges?

Organisational culture

xix. A move away from a process-based approach to a more relationship-based approach represents a significant shift in culture for many organisations involved in the care system, particularly the statutory sector. Nurture and care for the workforce, support and care for the people working for and with children and young people is recognised to be crucial to delivering better relationship-based care. This will require empowerment, opportunity and support for reflective practice, autonomy, trust, consideration of attitude to risk and risk management and a host of other workforce directed support, development and encouragement.

xx. The promise[21] highlights the importance of rising to this challenge:

"Scotland's understanding of the workforce must primarily be about their role in terms of the degree of closeness of relationships they have with children, rather than their status as paid/unpaid or in terms of professional/voluntary.

Supporting the workforce to care must be at the heart of Scotland's service planning. Supervision and reflective practice is essential for all practitioners, regardless of their professional discipline or role, who are working with children. That must include teachers, particularly those working in residential or alternative provision. Providing adequate time for effective, flexible, day to day and more regular structured support, supervision and reflective practice is vital in caring for the workforce so that they can care for others. It supports the development of a workforce that can manage risk in a relational rather than a process driven way and feels safe to practice even in challenging circumstances. Scotland must ensure the provision of properly trained supervisors. Without

[20] *Barnardo's, Closing the poverty related attainment gap; early learning from our partnership work with schools and communities across Scotland, 2019*
[21] *Scotland's Independent Care Review, Promise report, 2020*

proper supervision and support, the workforce is more likely to feel isolated, vulnerable and risk averse. Scotland must recognise the secondary effects of working with and caring for children who have and continue to experience trauma. Reflection, supervision and support must be recognised as an essential part of practice for anyone working with children. …Reflective practice (coaching, mentoring, and supervision) must include things that matter to children, including how loved they feel, how their rights are upheld and how stigma is being reduced. This must emphasise support for the worker and their relationship with the child over evaluation of performance."

xxi. The CELCIS literature review,[22] which focussed on care leavers, also discussed this issue:

"In the case of residential care, there is a growing interest in reclaiming the central importance of relationship-based practice, but considerable barriers need to be tackled before support beyond the care setting becomes core practice (McGhee, 2016). These include training and awareness-raising for staff and young people in residential units, as well as clear, consistent guidance from managers about the importance of relationships in and beyond the care setting. Taking this action could be central in developing a smooth transition for young people moving on from residential care, ensuring positive and supportive relationships with adults involved in their care continue to be maintained and encouraged."

xxii. This review also cites evidence of a recognition of the importance of empowering a workforce. It reflects on the tension between an approach that frees workers to build a relational approach and the organisational need for performance review, accountability and assessment that often pervades public services.

"If the 'relationship is the intervention', the uncertainty of practitioners to engage fully in that relationship can only be detrimental to young people (Fewster, 2004). Attachment informed and relationship-based practice needs to be at the heart of any good service (Care Inquiry, 2013; Furnivall, 2011; McGhee, 2016; Winter, 2015). Creating a model of care underpinned by this approach requires staff to be encouraged and empowered to develop their practice within a supportive culture (Scottish Government, 2013; Trevithick, 2014)…. In making the case for a renewed emphasis on relationship-based practice, many authors recognise that universalised systems of assessment and review can serve to de-emphasise the relational aspects of working with a child in care, leading to situations where children have been denied the close relationships that they need (Holland, 2009a; Steckley & Smith, 2011)."

xxiii. The review conducted for Iriss [23]explored the complex nature of relationships and what this means for relationship-based practice and again concluded that:

"Current practice cultures can make it difficult to practice in properly relational ways and would require a radical shift for issues of power, agency and status to be addressed. A renewed emphasis on relationships challenges many of the assumptions that have built up over what it is to be a professional… Relationship

[22] *CELCIS, In and beyond the care setting: relationships between young people and care workers: A literature review, 2018*

[23] *Iriss, Relationship-based practice: emergent themes in social work literature, 2018*

Based Practice collides with and poses a fundamental challenge to managerial approaches to social work, foregrounding relationships, in all their ambiguity and messiness, above the bureaucratic, instrumental and ostensibly rational foundations of contemporary practice. Embracing Relationship Based Practice would call for a radical shift in how worker-client relationships are conceived, opening up possibilities for a greater ethical symmetry between worker and client (Lynch, 2014) namely recognising agency and balancing power between fellow human subjects. It might also prompt the deconstruction of current terminology (Smith and Smith, 2008), replacing words like boundary, compliance, delivery, intervention and outcome with those of help, love, friendship, compassion and association."

xxiv. In their review of their work with schools and communities Barnardo's focussed on closing the poverty-related attainment gap[24] and stress the extent to which poverty, trauma (ACES) and attainment are linked. They go on to stress the importance of relationship-based approaches and the challenges posed by current approaches to funding this type of work.

"Relationships are central, but developing and sustaining relationships takes time, consistency and resources. Short term funding and reporting undermine relationship-based approaches."

xxv. Corra Foundation[25] also note that it takes time and resources to develop trusting relationships with families. They highlight the challenges of coordination between services supporting children and adults so that a whole family, relationship-based approach can be adopted. These include understanding and co-ordination/integration of child and adult services.

"Practitioners expressed the need for robust services that consider the needs of parents and children, through whole family support methods and integrated adult and child services. Further responses also suggested there are barriers that often prevent the effective communication between adult and child services, such as data protection concerns and different approaches to support. Findings from this survey… suggest that more understanding of what a whole family approach looks like is required to ensure children and young people's voices are heard."

Nature of practice

xxvi. Beyond the organisational challenges of creating a culture that supports and encourages relationship-based practice, there are challenges in the practice itself, and in the number of relationships that might be involved, also highlighted in CELCIS's review:[26]

"… forming and maintaining these relationships can itself be challenging. Studies have highlighted the complexity of building and sustaining meaningful and supportive relationships with children and young people, particularly when there is a high likelihood that they have experienced adverse childhood experiences and significant levels of abuse and neglect (Schofield, Beek, & Ward, 2012). Other

[24] *Barnardo's, Closing the poverty related attainment gap; early learning from our partnership work with schools and communities across Scotland, 2019*
[25] *Corra Foundation, Everyone Has a Story, 2015*
[26] *CELCIS, In and beyond the care setting: relationships between young people and care workers: A literature review, 2018*

policy drivers may, in some ways, clash with those that promote relationship-based practice. For example, while generally welcoming collaborative approaches promoted by corporate parenting, some commentators have raised concerns that collaboration may de-emphasise relational continuity if this leads to a range of professionals being involved in the life of a young person (Holland, 2009b; Steckley & Smith, 2011). These commentators argue that sometimes no-one takes individual responsibility for following through with specific issues, or indeed offering a closer, more reciprocal relationship to that young person."

xxvii. The CCPS Family Support Research Project[27] highlighted challenges to practice:

- Focusing on the whole family poses a risk of services being diverted from the child to the point where the child's behaviour may be viewed as the cause of problems within the family
- The rights of children, their parents and family, may differ and clash. Workers can feel split in responding to parents' and children's needs, which could result in a lack of focus on the child
- Ensuring strengths-based perspectives can be challenging where parents view their own family situations differently to practitioners (parents often emphasise their close and supportive bonds, where practitioners focus on deficits and adversity)
- Divergence between funders' or referrers' expectations of the services, and what workers believe families need
- Shared, realistic, reviewed goals and setting achievable targets can be difficult if parents do not feel able to be open about the challenges they face (and/or do not believe that workers fully appreciate the difficulties involved)

xxviii. Barnardo's in their Connected Scotland consultation response[28] highlight the following challenges:

- The large numbers of new and different relationships in the lives of young people with care experience can be difficult to manage
- Staff turnover can create worries about who a child or young person can trust
- Young people raised the isolating experience of adults remembering you when you don't remember them and assuming they have a relationship with you based on experiences you don't remember
- Young people also talked about the quality of their relationships with professionals – they raised the power that adults have over children and young people and talked about forced intimacy when people think they have a right to know everything about your life
- Services also talked about the reality that not all social contact was positive for young people and raised concerns around vulnerabilities to domestic abuse, exploitation and substance misuse due to loneliness

[27] *CCPS Family Support Research Project - Part 2 What does existing research identify as effective strengths-based family support? Scoping Review, 2018*
[28] *Consultation Response by Barnardo's Scotland, A Connected Scotland: Tackling social isolation and loneliness and building stronger social connections, 2018*

In summary, there are a number of important challenges to developing and delivering better relationship-based practice. These include organisational challenges such as culture shifts to better empower, enable and support staff and balancing this with the organisational need for review and assessment, the short-term nature of funding for many services and the integration of services that support children and the adults in their lives.

They also include challenges inherent in the nature of relationship-based practice, such as the number and complexity of relationships involved, and the difficulty in maintaining the focus on the child at the centre, the difficulty of ensuring a quality relationship that is also professional, power imbalance, conflicting rights and priorities and maintaining consistency where demands on staff time and workloads are high.

What are the implications for services?

xxix. There is a clear consensus that services need to consciously develop approaches that actively promote a relationship-based approach to service delivery. This encompasses a wide range of considerations, including:

- service design
- organisational culture
- policy and protocol
- nurture and support for staff
- communication with other agencies and organisations

xxx. The CELCIS literature review[29] concludes that:

> *"There is a clear, consistent message from research that, where supportive relationships are in place, they are central to the process of successful transitions for young care leavers. We should not leave these relationships to chance."*

xxxi. Corra Foundation's *Connections are Key* report[30] stresses the importance of considering these issues in service design and delivery.

> *"It became clear that the importance of relationship-based practice extended beyond relationships within families, or between supported people and their workers. Relationships between workers, and between agencies, were of critical importance to offering optimum support for people. We heard how collaborative relationships between workers in statutory and third sector agencies meant staff were more able to share important information or to have frank discussions… relationships between the workers, regardless of the agency they work for, are as important as relationships between family members."*

xxxii. The report lists the aspects of this that the research suggests should be considered:

[29] *CELCIS, In and beyond the care setting: relationships between young people and care workers: A literature review, 2018*
[30] *Corra Foundation, Connections Are Key: Unlocking the heart of relationship based practice, 2019*

- Understanding the roles and remits of each worker and building an appreciation of their specialisms and practice
- Relationships within an organisation which are based on compassion
- Leadership which is trusting, nurturing, compassionate and supportive
- Consistent and regular communication
- Parity in staff training and the requisite skills to provide quality of support provision
- Sufficient staff numbers to allow staff to do their jobs well
- More physical integration of social work in third sector working environments; from small changes to practice such as popping by for meetings to formal reconfiguring of spaces to allow coworking or colocation of teams so that they are physically in the same spaces more frequently

xxxiii. It goes on to explain why these are important, particularly with respect to the relationships between statutory and third sector organisations:

> *"Leadership, which is trusting, nurturing and supportive appear to result in committed workers, who stick with organisations, weather short term contracts, without burn out or compassion fatigue. The importance of understanding roles that each practitioner has is of critical importance and building relationships can help workers maintain respect and value towards colleagues from other agencies. Positive relationships between agencies and practitioners mean that, because third sector workers often have a stronger relationship and connection with supported people, the quality of support offered to people and their families becomes more robust, especially when good relationships mean third sector staff are valued, and become integral to meetings and panels that involve the family or individuals."*

xxxiv. The CCPS Family Support Research Project[31] comes to similar conclusions:

> *"Flexibility was needed in terms of service design, which could adapt to the family's changing needs, and in service duration; an ongoing relationship with services should not necessarily be regarded negatively. Wider partnerships with other agencies are vital to promote a holistic family support service. As well as building on strengths with children and families, services needed to build on practitioner strengths, with space for reflective practice, supportive management, and a service context that enhances ability to seek to address wider structural factors."*

xxxv. It lists the common principles of good family support as:

- Trust and openness (with the third and voluntary sectors perceived as flexible and approachable, and well placed to generate trust)
- Non-judgmental person-centred support

[31] *CCPS Family Support Research Project - Part 2 What does existing research identify as effective strengths-based family support? Scoping Review, 2018*

- Workers as humans - the qualities workers need to demonstrate include approachability, honesty, showing empathy and respect, making parents feel safe and being a good listener
- Consistency of worker - viewed as crucial in assisting families to cope in challenging circumstances by reducing the sense of isolation.
- Collaboration between families and workers – to demonstrate a realistic, transparent approach to practice. Reciprocity and partnership with practitioners was highly valued by families.
- Peer support - social support from other parents.

In summary, services need to be consciously designed to enable and support a relationship-based approach. This encompasses a wide range of considerations, including: service design; organisational culture; policy and protocol; nurture and support for staff; opportunity for true reflective practice; and communication with other agencies and organisations. Relationships between statutory and other organisations need to be strengthened and based on good communication, trust and openness and understanding and even co-location. Services that can be provided in a way that is consistent, non-judgemental, collaborative, respectful and trusting will best support families.

Conclusion

xxxvi. Recent policy developments, research and practice in supporting young people with care experience were driven by increasing recognition of the importance of relationships in engaging young people and improving the outcomes of a range of interventions. The available literature identifies impacts across a range of relationships (between organisations and with family or carers as well as the central relationship between a service or worker and a young person).

xxxvii. The current literature, policy direction and practice reviews in Scotland in relation to supporting young people with care experience are all moving in the direction of understanding the importance of relationships based on equality, trust, compassion and understanding through natural and less formal interactions. It is recognised that this generates some challenges for workforce and organisations. Cultural shifts and values relating to empowerment, autonomy, trust and reflection are important to support the development of the relationship-based practice that will provide better support and better outcomes for children and young people.

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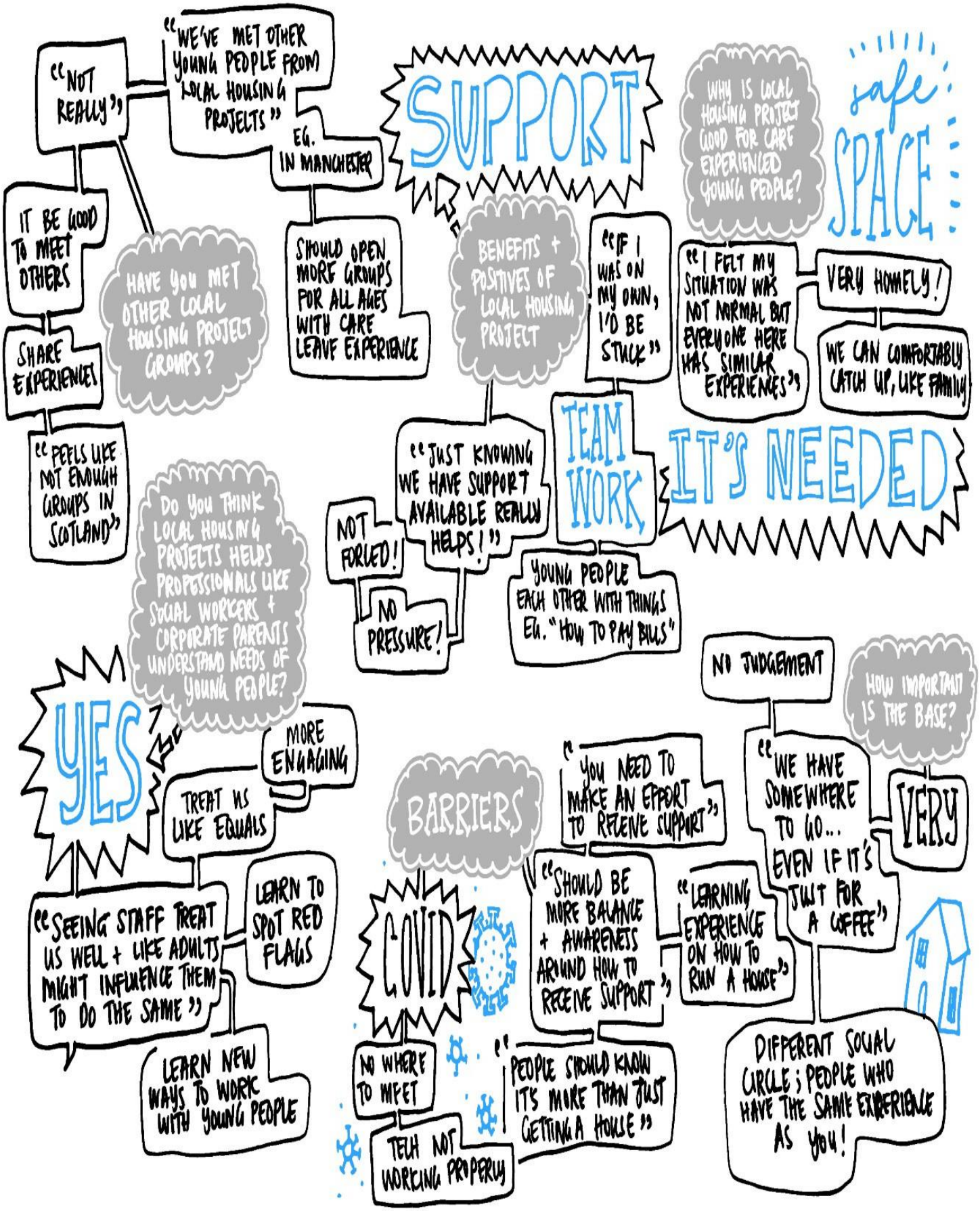
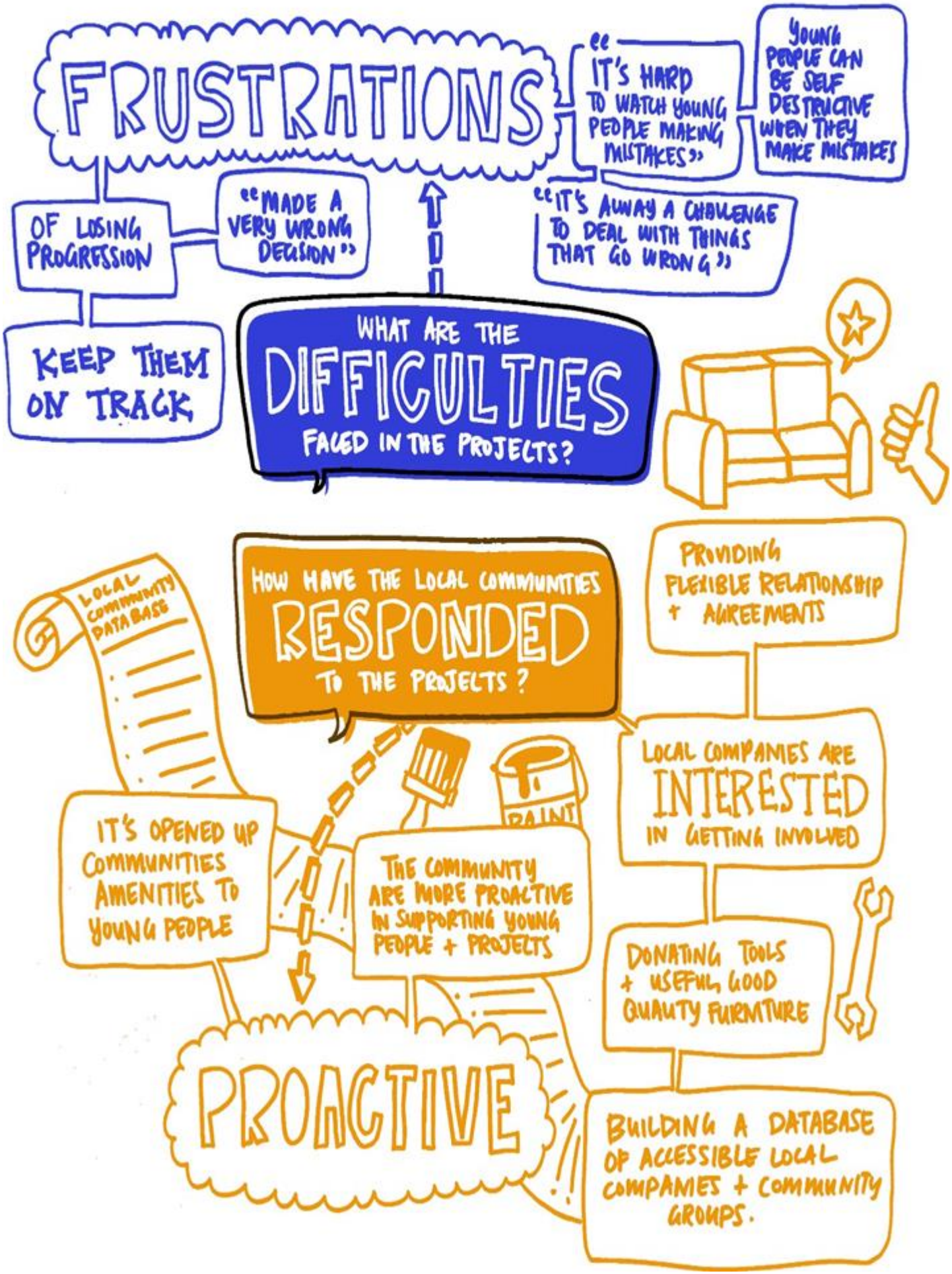
https://www.corra.scot/everyone-has-a-story-project/

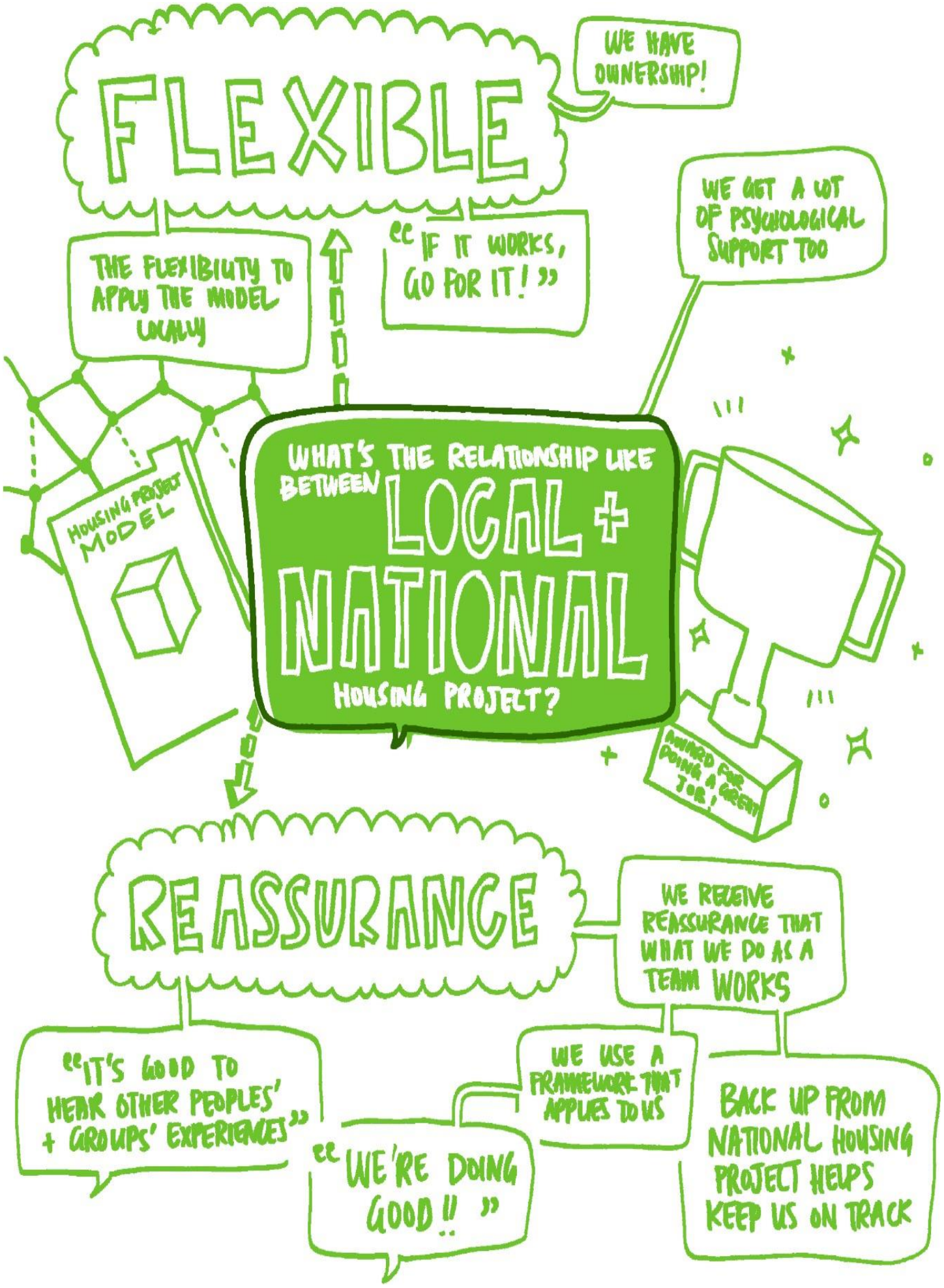
Appendix 2: Graphic Maps of evaluation feedback

Graphic maps created by the floating designer from focus groups with Staff and young people from East Dunbartonshire house project.



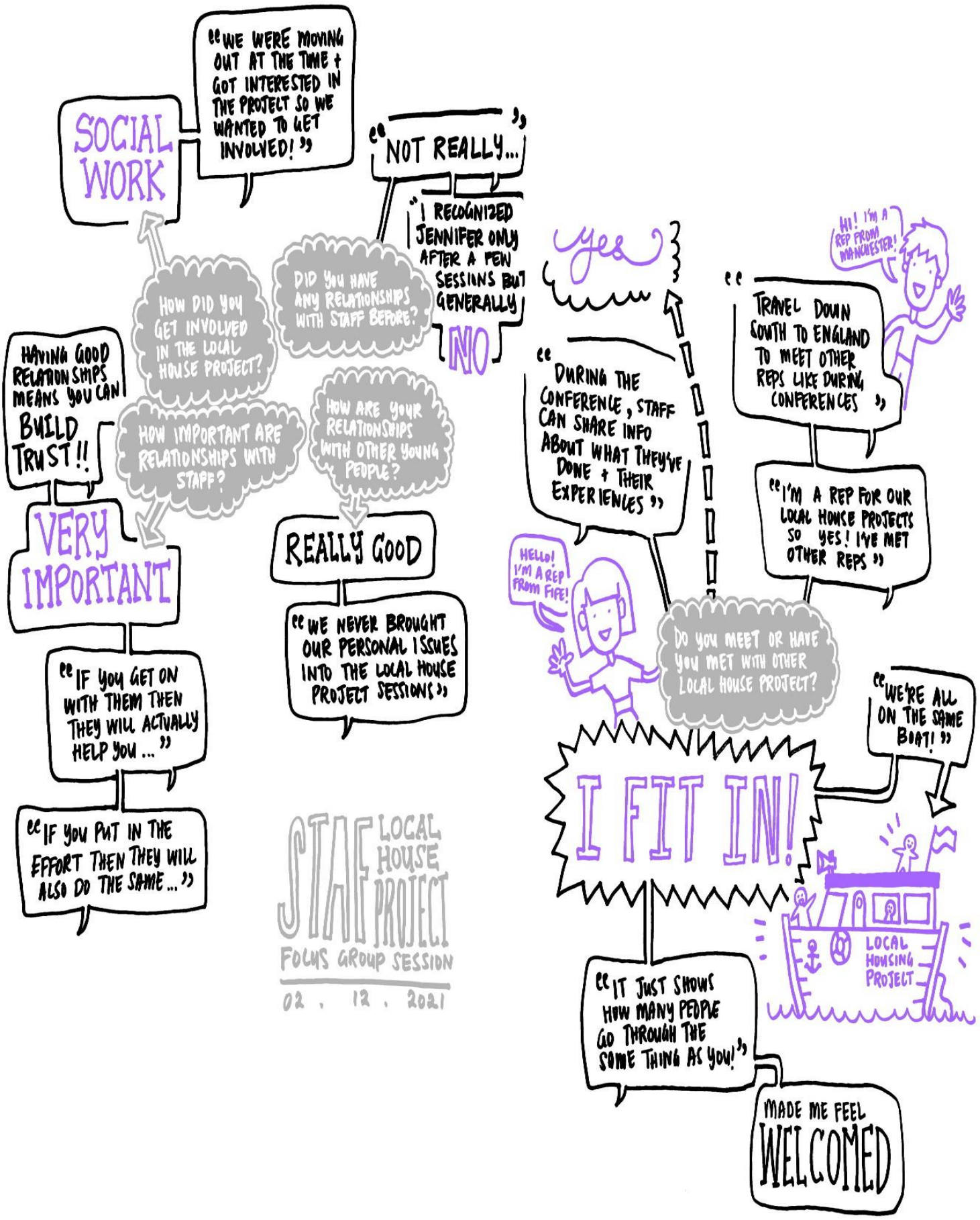
"LET'S TALK ABOUT IT"
WORK WITH THEM OUT OF RESPECT
WE HAVE TO REMIND THEM THAT WE WANT THEM TO DO THEIR BEST
"REMEMBER THAT NOT EVERYONE IS OUT TO GET YOU!"
PROVIDE THEM THE SPACE TO EXPLORE THEIR EMOTIONS + FEELINGS
MY STORY
WHAT IS THE PROCESS OF ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE IN A PROJECT WHO HAVE TRANSITIONED OUT OF CARE, ARE A BIT OLDER, ARE YOUNG PARENTS, HAVE EXPERIENCED HOMELESSNESS, AND/OR EXPERIENCED SUBSTANCE MISUSE OR ADDICTION?
NOT ENOUGH OF INFORMATION + EXPERIENCES ARE SHARED + TALKED ABOUT
"WE DON'T NEED TO DRAMATISE SOMEONE'S SITUATION JUST BECAUSE THEY RECEIVE SUPPORT..."
NORMALISE TALKING ABOUT YOUR SPECIFIC SITUATION
"WHY SHOULD WE REACT DIFFERENTLY JUST BECAUSE SOMEONE HAS CARE EXPERIENCE?"
EXPERIENCES WITH THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

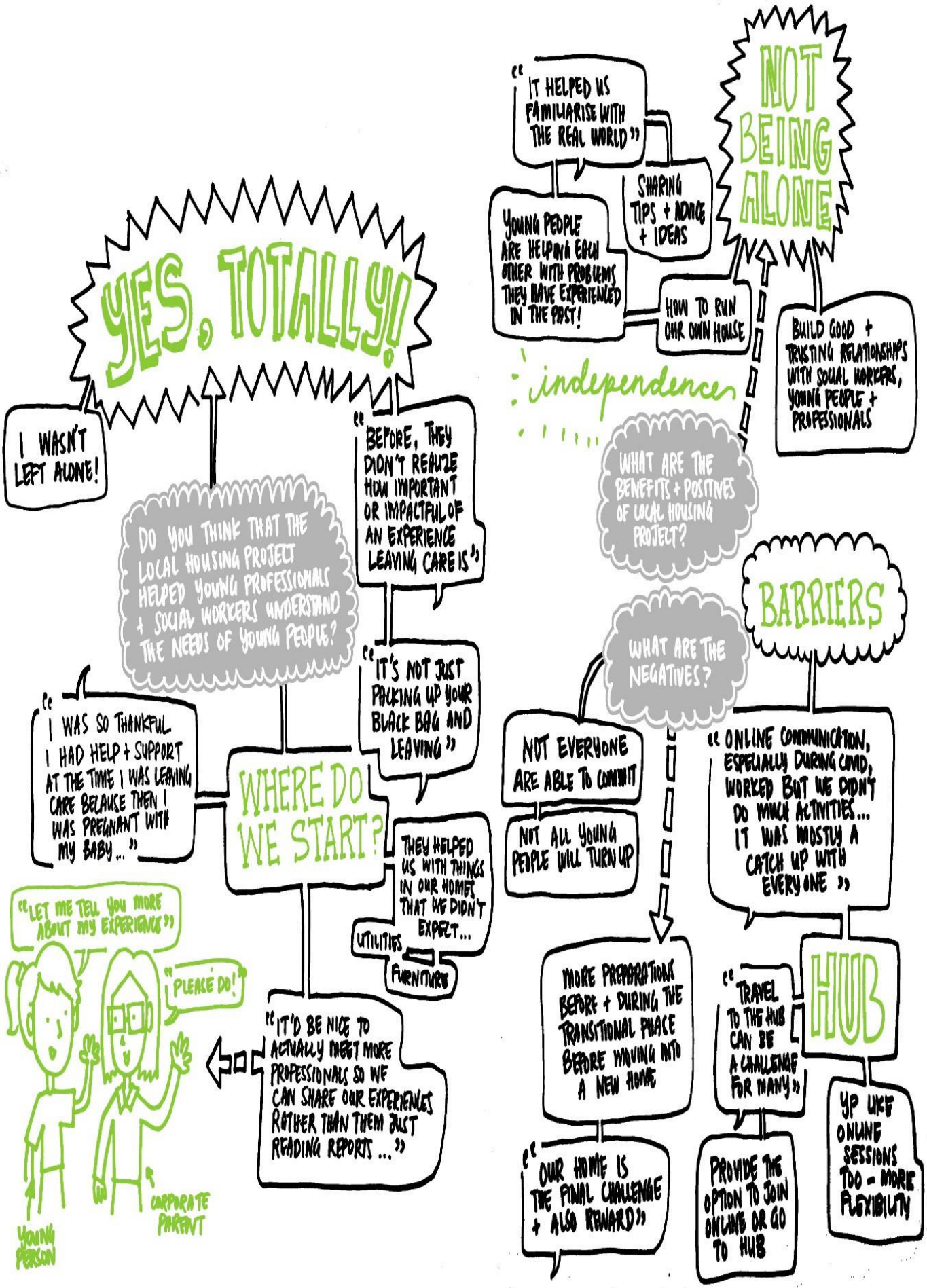

FRUSTRATIONS
"IT'S HARD TO WATCH YOUNG PEOPLE MAKING MISTAKES"
YOUNG PEOPLE CAN BE SELF DESTRUCTIVE WHEN THEY MAKE MISTAKES
"IT'S ALWAY A CHALLENGE TO DEAL WITH THINGS THAT GO WRONG"
"MADE A VERY WRONG DECISION"
OF LOSING PROGRESSION
KEEP THEM ON TRACK
WHAT ARE THE DIFFICULTIES FACED IN THE PROJECTS?
HOW HAVE THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES RESPONDED TO THE PROJECTS?
LOCAL COMMUNITY DATA BASE
PROVIDING FLEXIBLE RELATIONSHIP + AGREEMENTS
LOCAL COMPANIES ARE INTERESTED IN GETTING INVOLVED
PAINT
IT'S OPENED UP COMMUNITIES AMENITIES TO YOUNG PEOPLE
THE COMMUNITY ARE MORE PROACTIVE IN SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE + PROJECTS
DONATING TOOLS + USEFUL GOOD QUALITY FURNITURE
PROACTIVE
BUILDING A DATABASE OF ACCESSIBLE LOCAL COMPANIES + COMMUNITY GROUPS.


FLEXIBLE
WE HAVE OWNERSHIP!
THE FLEXIBILITY TO APPLY THE MODEL LOCALLY
"IF IT WORKS, GO FOR IT!"
WE GET A LOT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT TOO
HOUSING PROJECT MODEL
WHAT'S THE RELATIONSHIP LIKE BETWEEN LOCAL + NATIONAL HOUSING PROJECT?
AWARD FOR DOING A GREAT JOB!
REASSURANCE
WE RECEIVE REASSURANCE THAT WHAT WE DO AS A TEAM WORKS
"IT'S GOOD TO HEAR OTHER PEOPLES' + GROUPS' EXPERIENCES"
WE USE A FRAMEWORK THAT APPLIES TO US
"WE'RE DOING GOOD!!"
BACK UP FROM NATIONAL HOUSING PROJECT HELPS KEEP US ON TRACK

Graphic maps created by the floating designer from focus groups with Staff and young people at Fife house project.

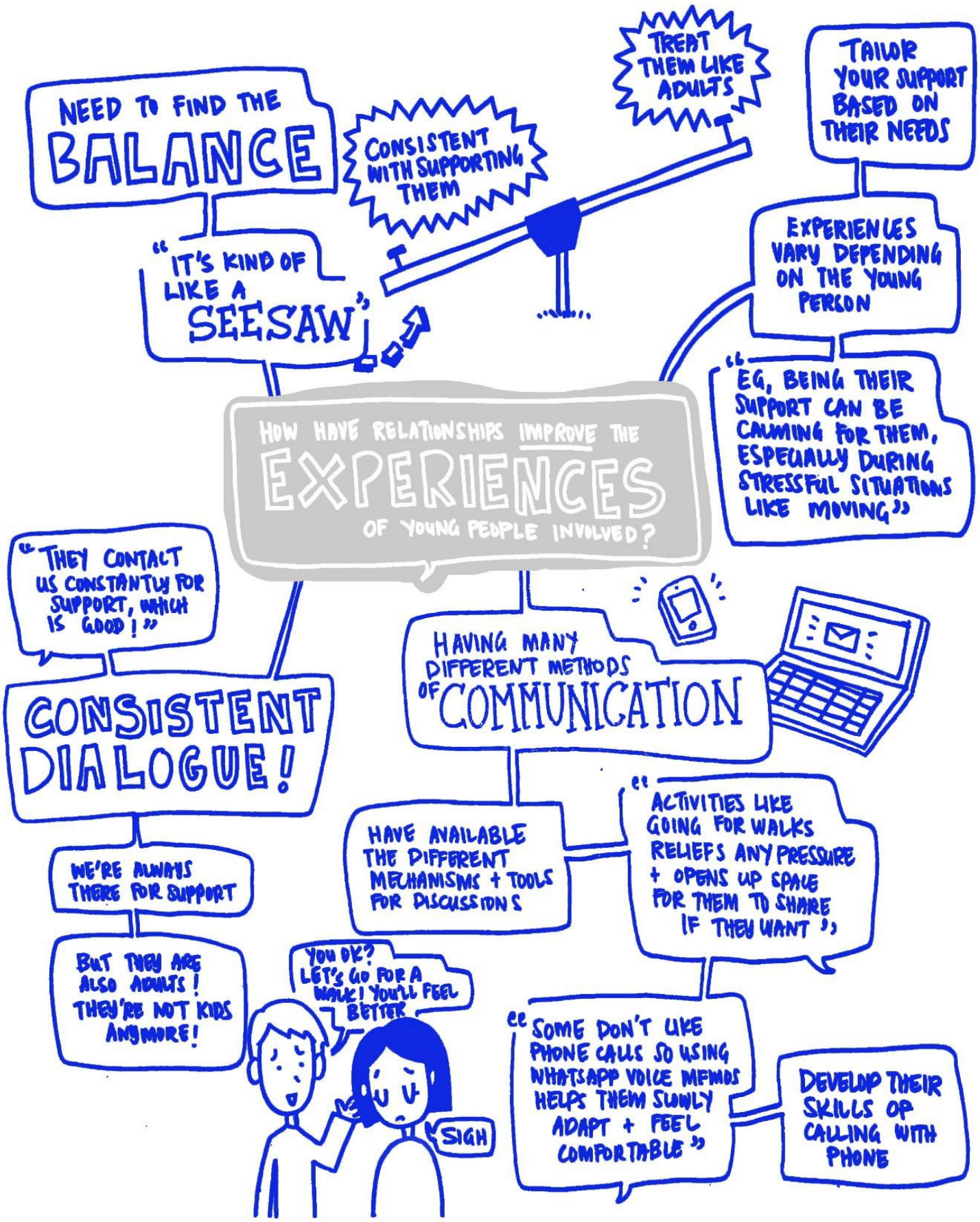
Graphic maps created by the floating designer from focus groups with Staff and young people at Midlothian house project.

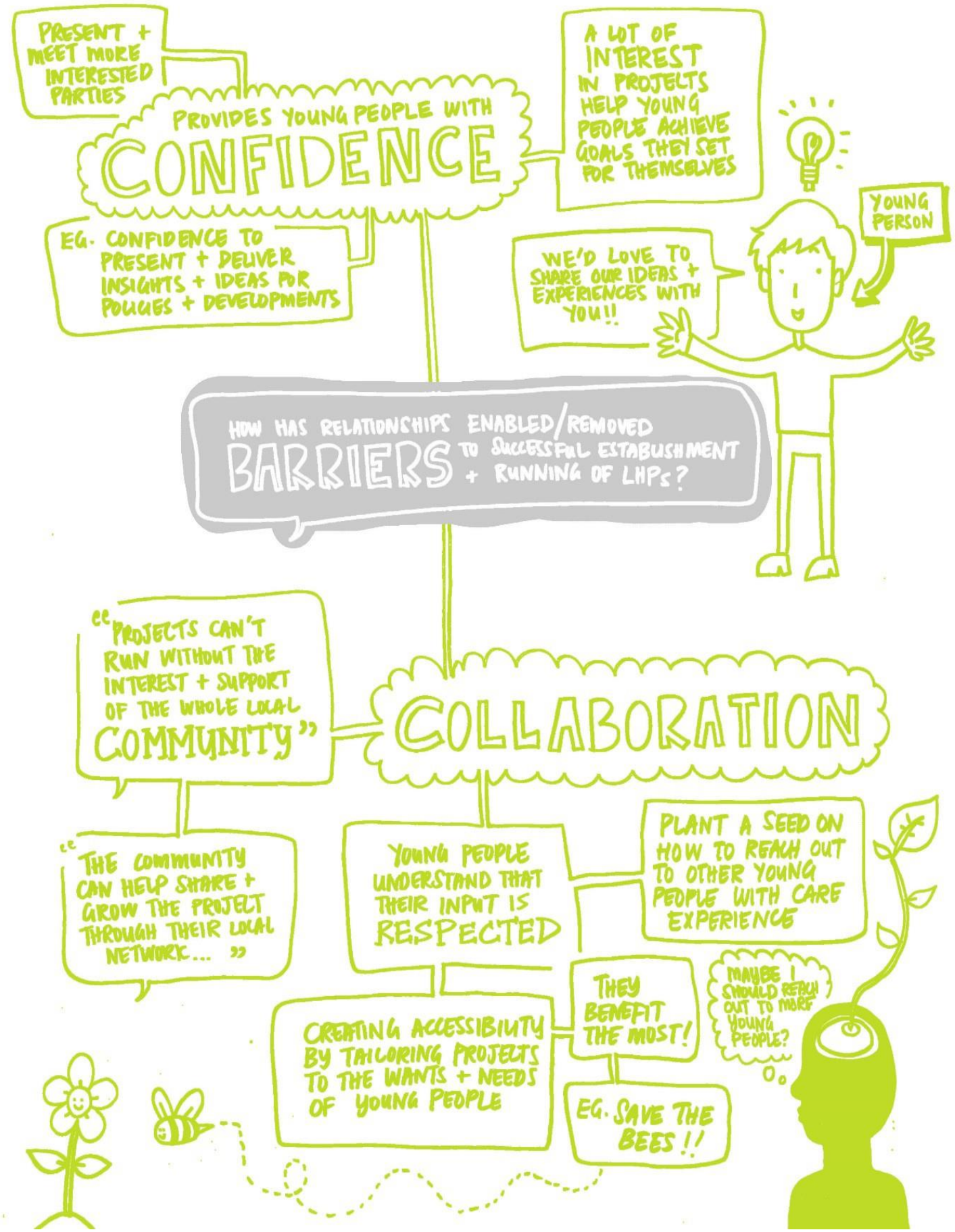



YES, TOTALLY!
I WASN'T LEFT ALONE!
DO YOU THINK THAT THE LOCAL HOUSING PROJECT HELPED YOUNG PROFESSIONALS + SOCIAL WORKERS UNDERSTAND THE NEEDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE?
"BEFORE, THEY DIDN'T REALIZE HOW IMPORTANT OR IMPACTFUL OF AN EXPERIENCE LEAVING CARE IS"
"IT'S NOT JUST PACKING UP YOUR BLACK BAG AND LEAVING"
"I WAS SO THANKFUL I HAD HELP + SUPPORT AT THE TIME I WAS LEAVING CARE BECAUSE THEN I WAS PREGNANT WITH MY BABY..."
WHERE DO WE START?
THEY HELPED US WITH THINGS IN OUR HOMES THAT WE DIDN'T EXPECT...
UTILITIES
FURNITURE
"LET ME TELL YOU MORE ABOUT MY EXPERIENCE"
"PLEASE DO!"
YOUNG PERSON
CORPORATE PARENT
"IT'D BE NICE TO ACTUALLY MEET MORE PROFESSIONALS SO WE CAN SHARE OUR EXPERIENCES RATHER THAN THEM JUST READING REPORTS..."
NOT BEING ALONE
"IT HELPED US FAMILIARISE WITH THE REAL WORLD"
SHARING TIPS + ADVICE + IDEAS
YOUNG PEOPLE ARE HELPING EACH OTHER WITH PROBLEMS THEY HAVE EXPERIENCED IN THE PAST!
HOW TO RUN OUR OWN HOUSE
BUILD GOOD + TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS WITH SOCIAL WORKERS, YOUNG PEOPLE + PROFESSIONALS
independence
WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS + POSITIVES OF LOCAL HOUSING PROJECT?
BARRIERS
WHAT ARE THE NEGATIVES?
NOT EVERYONE ARE ABLE TO COMMIT
NOT ALL YOUNG PEOPLE WILL TURN UP
"ONLINE COMMUNICATION, ESPECIALLY DURING COVID, WORKED BUT WE DIDN'T DO MUCH ACTIVITIES... IT WAS MOSTLY A CATCH UP WITH EVERYONE"
MORE PREPARATIONS BEFORE + DURING THE TRANSITIONAL PHASE BEFORE MOVING INTO A NEW HOME
"OUR HOME IS THE FINAL CHALLENGE + ALSO REWARD"
HUB
"TRAVEL TO THE HUB CAN BE A CHALLENGE FOR MANY"
PROVIDE THE OPTION TO JOIN ONLINE OR GO TO HUB
YP LIKE ONLINE SESSIONS TOO - MORE FLEXIBILITY

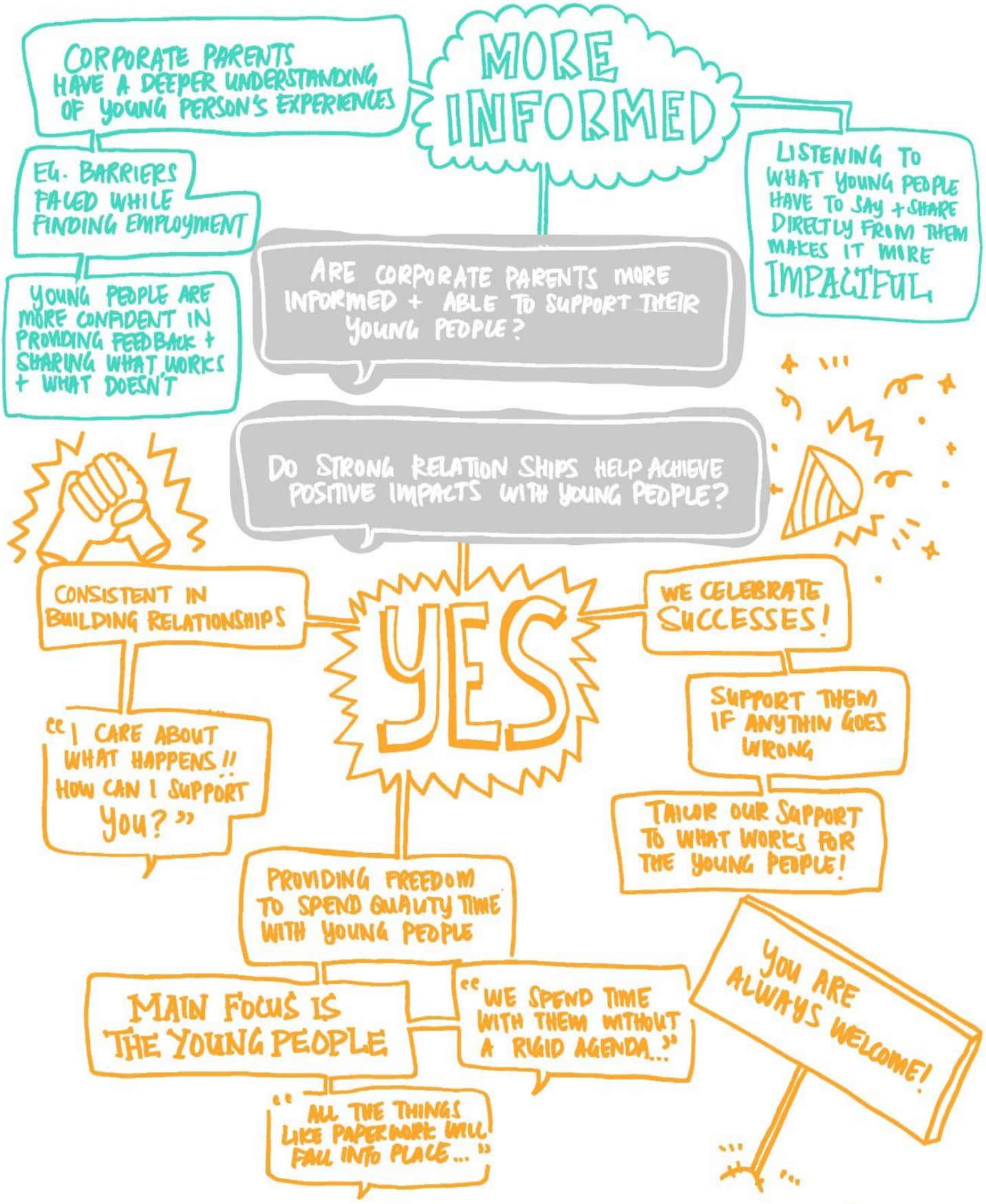
HOPE
"WE TRY!"
"IT'S THEIR CHOICE TO MAKE TO COME ON..."
"THE MORE THEY ENGAGE, THE MORE IT GIVES THEM HOPE THAT SOMETHING WILL CHANGE..."
"THEY WANT TO ENGAGE"
"FOR EACH COHORT, THERE'S ABOUT 12 YOUNG PEOPLE BUT IT DOESN'T COST EXTRA TO HAVE ANOTHER PERSON JOIN US..."
"IT MIGHT NOT AFFECT THE GROUP THAT MUCH BUT IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE FOR THAT ONE YOUNG PERSON"
NEVER GIVE UP ON THEM! THAT'S OUR POLICY!
"WE'RE OPEN TO EVERYONE!!!"
YOU ARE WELCOME
"WHEN THEY KNOW WHAT THE SUPPORT IS, THEY USUALLY BUY INTO IT..."
WHAT IS THE PROCESS OF ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE IN A PROJECT WHO HAVE TRANSITIONED OUT OF CARE, ARE A BIT OLDER, ARE YOUNG PARENTS, HAVE EXPERIENCED HOMELESSNESS, AND/OR EXPERIENCED SUBSTANCE MISUSE OR ADDICTION?
HOW HAVE RELATIONSHIPS STRENGTHENED PROFESSIONALS + CORPORATE PARENTS UNDERSTANDING OF WHERE THIS WORK FITS?
"RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS – ORGANIZATIONS + NETWORKS HAVE BEEN GREAT FOR SUPPORT + BUILDING STRENGTH"
GUIDE!
FILL IN THE GAPS!
WE'VE FOUND SUSTAINABLE SERVICES TO HELP CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE
"... SET YOUNG PEOPLE UP IN TENANCIES THE RIGHT WAY..."
ACCOUNTABILITY + WEEKLY CHECK-UPS
CORPORATE PARENTS CAN HAVE DIRECT COMMUNICATION WITH YOUNG PEOPLE WITH CARE EXPERIENCE
YOUNG PERSON
I'VE BEEN GOOD THANK YOU!
HOW R U?
CORPORATE PARENT
CAN HELP WITH IMPROVING THE LIVES OF YOUNG PEOPLE TO HAVE THIS CONNECTION
STRESS
WORRIES
OUTCOMES

MENTAL HEALTH
ADVICE
HOUSING
SUPPORT ON EVERYTHING!
"THEY TRY THEIR BEST WITH EVERYTHING"
SOLUTIONS TO QUESTIONS
SUPPORT
LHP SUPPORT
WHY DO YOU THINK CARE + LOCAL HOUSING PROJECT IS A GOOD THING?
FOR FOOD!
WHEN YOU NEED COMPANY!
"WE CAN JUST POP IN!"
TO SPEND TIME WITH EACH OTHER!
FOR A CHAT!
"FOR INDIVIDUALS, IT'S IMPORTANT TO KNOW THERE'S SOME WHERE TO GO..."
HUB DOESN'T HAVE MUCH SPACE...
COVID HAS MADE IT HARD TO MEET UP...
HOW IMPORTANT IS THE HUB?
DO YOU THINK LOCAL HOUSING PROJECT WOULD WORK IN A BIGGER CITY LIKE GLASGOW?
WHAT DO YOU HOPE FOR WITH LOCAL HOUSING PROJECT?
YES
"IT COULD WORK IN GLASGOW, AS LONG AS YOUNG PEOPLE + SUPPORT ARE READY + AVAILABLE"
NEED STAFF THAT CARE
COMING SOON...
GLASGOW
NEED YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE EAGER
WE HOPE TO SEE LHP IN SCOTLAND
THERE ARE MORE LHP IN ENGLAND, SHOULD BE THE SAME IN SCOTLAND!
RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT LOCAL HOUSING PROJECT!
OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE TO VOLUNTEER TO SUPPORT OTHERS
"PEOPLE DON'T KNOW ENOUGH ABOUT THE LOCAL HOUSING PROJECT"


NEED TO FIND THE BALANCE
CONSISTENT WITH SUPPORTING THEM
TREAT THEM LIKE ADULTS
TAILOR YOUR SUPPORT BASED ON THEIR NEEDS
"IT'S KIND OF LIKE A SEESAW"
EXPERIENCES VARY DEPENDING ON THE YOUNG PERSON
"EG, BEING THEIR SUPPORT CAN BE CALMING FOR THEM, ESPECIALLY DURING STRESSFUL SITUATIONS LIKE MOVING"
HOW HAVE RELATIONSHIPS IMPROVE THE EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG PEOPLE INVOLVED?
"THEY CONTACT US CONSTANTLY FOR SUPPORT, WHICH IS GOOD!"
CONSISTENT DIALOGUE!
HAVING MANY DIFFERENT METHODS OF COMMUNICATION
WE'RE ALWAYS THERE FOR SUPPORT
BUT THEY ARE ALSO ADULTS! THEY'RE NOT KIDS ANYMORE!
HAVE AVAILABLE THE DIFFERENT MECHANISMS + TOOLS FOR DISCUSSIONS
"ACTIVITIES LIKE GOING FOR WALKS RELIEFS ANY PRESSURE + OPENS UP SPACE FOR THEM TO SHARE IF THEY WANT"
YOU OK? LET'S GO FOR A WALK! YOU'LL FEEL BETTER
SIGH
"SOME DON'T LIKE PHONE CALLS SO USING WHATSAPP VOICE MEMOS HELPS THEM SLOWLY ADAPT + FEEL COMFORTABLE"
DEVELOP THEIR SKILLS OF CALLING WITH PHONE


PRESENT + MEET MORE INTERESTED PARTIES
PROVIDES YOUNG PEOPLE WITH CONFIDENCE
A LOT OF INTEREST IN PROJECTS HELP YOUNG PEOPLE ACHIEVE GOALS THEY SET FOR THEMSELVES
EG. CONFIDENCE TO PRESENT + DELIVER INSIGHTS + IDEAS FOR POLICIES + DEVELOPMENTS
YOUNG PERSON
WE'D LOVE TO SHARE OUR IDEAS + EXPERIENCES WITH YOU!!
HOW HAS RELATIONSHIPS ENABLED/REMOVED BARRIERS TO SUCCESSFUL ESTABLISHMENT + RUNNING OF LHPs?
"PROJECTS CAN'T RUN WITHOUT THE INTEREST + SUPPORT OF THE WHOLE LOCAL COMMUNITY"
COLLABORATION
"THE COMMUNITY CAN HELP SHARE + GROW THE PROJECT THROUGH THEIR LOCAL NETWORK..."
YOUNG PEOPLE UNDERSTAND THAT THEIR INPUT IS RESPECTED
PLANT A SEED ON HOW TO REACH OUT TO OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE WITH CARE EXPERIENCE
CREATING ACCESSIBILITY BY TAILORING PROJECTS TO THE WANTS + NEEDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE
THEY BENEFIT THE MOST!
EG. SAVE THE BEES!!
MAYBE I SHOULD REACH OUT TO MORE YOUNG PEOPLE?

LEARN TO HAVE TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS
TRUST
WE LISTEN!
YOU MATTER
"THEY'RE NOT JUST PASSIVE PARTICIPANTS"
THEY FEEL RESPECTED
WE ENGAGE WITH THEIR CURIOSITY TO DEVELOP THEIR IDEAS!
DEVELOPING LONG-LASTING RELATIONSHIPS
"THEY UNDERSTAND THAT THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO WILL STICK BY THEM"
HOW HAVE RELATIONSHIPS BENEFITTED FROM THIS MODEL OF PRACTICE?
IT'S A 2-WAY CONVERSATION
"IF YOU DON'T WANT TO DO SOMETHING, IT'S FINE! IT'S YOUR CHOICE"
WE TREAT THEM LIKE ADULTS
EMPOWER
THEY ARE LESS INTIMIDATED WHEN ASKING FOR HELP
WE ALWAYS HOPE THAT WOULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE
"WE CAN ALWAYS TALK ABOUT WHAT SUPPORT YOU NEED"
I'M REALLY STRESSING OUT ABOUT THIS MOVE!! CAN YOU PLEASE HELP?
OF COURSE!! TELL ME WHAT'S HAPPENING..


MORE INFORMED
CORPORATE PARENTS HAVE A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF YOUNG PERSON'S EXPERIENCES
EG. BARRIERS FACED WHILE FINDING EMPLOYMENT
YOUNG PEOPLE ARE MORE CONFIDENT IN PROVIDING FEEDBACK + SHARING WHAT WORKS + WHAT DOESN'T
LISTENING TO WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE TO SAY + SHARE DIRECTLY FROM THEM MAKES IT MORE IMPACTFUL
ARE CORPORATE PARENTS MORE INFORMED + ABLE TO SUPPORT THEIR YOUNG PEOPLE?
DO STRONG RELATION SHIPS HELP ACHIEVE POSITIVE IMPACTS WITH YOUNG PEOPLE?
YES
CONSISTENT IN BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS
"I CARE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS!! HOW CAN I SUPPORT YOU?"
WE CELEBRATE SUCCESSES!
SUPPORT THEM IF ANYTHIN GOES WRONG
TAILOR OUR SUPPORT TO WHAT WORKS FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE!
PROVIDING FREEDOM TO SPEND QUALITY TIME WITH YOUNG PEOPLE
MAIN FOCUS IS THE YOUNG PEOPLE
"WE SPEND TIME WITH THEM WITHOUT A RIGID AGENDA..."
"ALL THE THINGS LIKE PAPERWORK WILL FALL INTO PLACE..."
YOU ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!

Appendix 3: Report from Brawtalent

Choosing Art Forms

Our initial session had three main steps. The first was to discuss some of the themes that were explored with the Staf sessions - finding out about their personal experiences of the programme etc.

Secondly, we had a skills audit with the group - finding out about skills in the group or previous creative experiences as well as creative skills that they have always wanted to learn about or were intrigued by but had not had the opportunity to do.

Finally, we tried to merge the first two steps. Exploring how we could share their ideas, experiences and stories with an audience, who their intended audience was, and what art form & platform might be the most successful to engage them.

EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE

Animation: Cinderella, in our own words:

https://vimeo.com/680130801

The group very quickly identified animation as an area of interest for their project. From there we had two sessions to develop a character and script that encapsulated each of their experiences into one character and storyline. They came up with the idea of rewriting a fairytale from their character's perspective and chose Cinderella as a basis to work from. From there, we worked with a screen writer to develop the structure and script before developing storyboards. There were four more sessions to shoot the animation, where participants experienced prop making, animating, lighting and performing voiceovers. The edit was completed by our team before screening a premiere at the House Project Base. One participant in particular showed incredible enthusiasm throughout the process and has recently joined us for some work experience on another animation project where he is developing more advanced animation skills and techniques.

MIDLOTHIAN

Creative outputs – Zine Design and Artworks:

https://indd.adobe.com/view/1cc842d6-fb26-46f7-a7bd-b02ee4aee60a

This group wanted to create something that spoke to new cohort members to offer reassurance as they identified their personal growth in confidence over the course of the programme as something of huge value and could relate to the anxieties being experienced by the new cohort. They wanted to create something that was personal and could be a comfort at times of loneliness but also something that could inject some vibrance and colour to the project base. They decided to create artworks that could be used within a small booklet but also as posters within the base or beyond.

Initial sessions explored advice and information that they wanted to share and asked the new cohort about their feelings and the information that might help them. From there we had two art & design sessions where participants were encouraged to visualise the information creatively.

Their writing and artwork were then used to inform poster designs to be displayed in the project base and were collated in a booklet to be provided to new cohort members.

FIFE

Animation: Welcome to Fife House Project

https://vimeo.com/713832995

The group identified animation as an art form that interested them all, but also there was one member who was studying sound engineering who also had a vested interest in an animation project. It was very clear that the group had strong bonds and were immensely proud of the project base. There was a sense of belonging and ownership that they wanted to share with potential new cohort members, but also with local authorities where bases are not as nice or where there are no Local House Projects in action at all.

As a group they were all keen to be involved and it was important that the project built on that energy and fun. Firstly, we explored the information they wanted to share before developing questions that would allow them to share that. We conducted podcast sessions giving them the opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas. We used the project base as the canvas and created animation scenes and scenarios throughout the base and tried to create a sense of belonging, fun and relationships.

Some members were not comfortable with being on camera, so the decision was made by the group not to feature faces but to try and communicate the relationships through other interactions. The edit was completed by our team before screening a premiere at the House Project Base.