



Somerset
Council

Engagement and Participation

Annual Report 2022-23



Introduction

Our vision

Every child and young person in Somerset has the opportunity to have a voice about their life experiences and aspirations and the services that care for them. Decision makers and practitioners will listen and act respectfully upon those voices to ensure children and young people are happy, healthy and prepared for adulthood.

Our mission

The Engagement and Participation (E&P) team at Somerset Council (SC) will achieve this vision by:

- Developing fair and accessible opportunities for young people to be able to speak out
- Using creative and imaginative ways to listen so that we can hear children and young people telling us about their lived experiences in order to influence practice, strategy and policy in Somerset
- Enabling our colleagues across all agencies to engage meaningfully with children and young people through training, development and awareness
- Using good governance and due process in order to proactively implement the vision; for example, communications and promotion,

audits, mystery shops, surveys and positively responding to Expressions of Interest, issues raised by young people, speakers, events and all other appropriate means.

We will respectfully maximise the tools we have to achieve our vision, including:

- Resources/Assets
- Ourselves
- The young people who attend forums/ groups
- The Participation Workers Network
- The Toolkit
- E&P Strategy
- Our team governance
- Our networks – internal and external – and partners
- Our reputation/credibility
- Our technology- Zoom, Mentimeter, Google Classroom

We will also continually look for other resources and opportunities to further develop the young people and improve our reputation.

Our skills, knowledge and experience will drive our vision and mission and we will use them collaboratively and generously to develop the young people we work with, the services that support them and the communities they live in.

Our purpose

In order to achieve our vision, we will:

- Develop and facilitate young people forums – Unstoppables, Somerset Youth Parliament, Somerset Youth Forum, Somerset In Care and Leaving Care Councils, Youth Justice Advocates Group (Y-JAG) and Young Carers Voice.
- Coordinate the multi-agency Participation Workers Network
- Work with services/partners who ask to engage
- Collaborate with governance groups – Corporate Parenting Board and its sub groups, SEND Strategic Partnership Board, ICS Children Young People and Families Partnership Board, Children & Families Scrutiny Committee, Full Council, Health & Wellbeing Board, Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP).
- Manage the Expressions of Interest process
- Collate outcomes and evidence the difference they have made
- Write newsflashes/ monthly updates and align to other communications
- Write annual reports and present them as requested
- Promote findings through communications, films, animations,

posters, presentations and training resources

- Undertake research on highlighted issues and align findings to national and regional trends
- Work with SSCP to align progress/data against their priorities to our findings
- Work with partners to avoid duplication and to share findings
- Apply rigorous corporate processes to our work including human resources, finance and health and safety.



Introduction

Youth Forum

Contact: Fiona Phur
fiona.phur@somerset.gov.uk
07811 307699

Website: www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries-leisure-and-communities/somerset-young-peoples-voice/

Young people across Somerset are encouraged to scrutinise Somerset's services through a youth-led forum, where topics affecting them are discussed, their views collected and their voices shared, this helps Somerset deliver safe services for young people and families.



The Unstoppables

Contact: Sian Smiley
SENDparticipation@somerset.gov.uk
Website: www.somersetparentcarerforum.org.uk/the-unstoppables/



A group for young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities aged between 13-25 who want to have their voice heard and help to make changes to services that affect them.

Somerset in Care Council (SiCC) and Somerset Leaving Care Council (SLCC) - Somerset Care Council

Contact: Damien Erangey
somersetincarecouncils@somerset.gov.uk
Website: www.somersetincarecouncils.org.uk



A group of young people that meets up to talk about all things affecting children and young people in or leaving care. These contributions help to shape the care system to make it better for all young people in Somerset.

Participation Workers Network

Contact: Fiona Phur
fiona.phur@somerset.gov.uk
07811 307699
Website: www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries-leisure-and-communities/somerset-young-peoples-voice/

A multi-agency group of Engagement and Participation Workers who work collaboratively to develop and deliver opportunities for young people and elevate the young person's voice.

Somerset Youth Parliament

Contact: Kate Darlington
kate.darlington@somerset.gov.uk
Website: www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries-leisure-and-communities/somerset-young-peoples-voice/



Somerset Youth Parliament works with decision makers, key community representatives and politicians to influence change, identify opportunities and better outcomes for children and young people across the county. Somerset Youth Parliament upholds the core values of democracy, fairness, respect and equality within everything it does.

Youth Justice Advocates Group and Young Carers Voice

For more information on the Youth Justice Advocates Group (Y-JAG) and the Young Carers Voice, please contact: participationmailbox@somerset.gov.uk



Meet the team

Fiona Phur

Participation & Partnerships Business Manager
07811 307699 | fiona.phur@somerset.gov.uk

Fi manages the Participation & Engagement team and facilitates the Youth Forum and the Participation Workers Network. She has over 20 years experience of working in both adult and children services in the private, public and voluntary and community sector and passionately believes that the voice of the child, young person and their family should be at the heart of all good practice. In her spare time she is a youth worker, a mum and a doting granny, practices wobbly yoga and is an even wobblier paddle boarder and can be found in the woods most days calling for her two really badly behaved dogs.



Damien Erangey

Voice of the Child – Engagement & Participation Officer
07585 983356 | damien.erangey@somerset.gov.uk

Damien works with SiCC & SLCC to ensure that the voice of looked after young people and care leavers is included within the decision making processes of Somerset Council. This includes young people being part of the recruitment of new staff; collaborating with services to shape policies; working with commissioning on new projects and services and having an active presence on the Corporate Parenting Board.

Damien has over 30 years experience within both local authority and third sector youth services and feels strongly that a young person's involvement should benefit both their social skill development and employability as well as having their voice heard.



Paul Mitchell

Senior Partnership and Engagement Officer
07875 783426 | paul.mitchell@somerset.gov.uk

Paul works with the Engagement and Participation team in finding the best and most creative ways to share the voice of the child and young person, and make real change to their lives. Paul has 15 years' experience in graphic design and specialises in visual communication.

Paul has always had designs on being a writer or filmmaker and loves a good story. You can normally find him at the cinema, in a comic shop or on a country walk. His Kryptonite is cake, chocolate, and any other sweet treat.

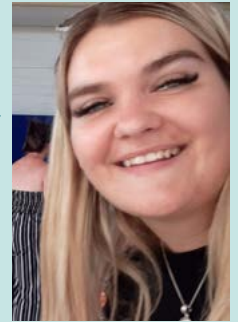


Sian Smiley

SEND Engagement & Participation Officer
07976 809773 | sian.smiley@somerset.gov.uk

Sian supports the Unstoppables Forum and works alongside the SEND Young Person's Champion to advocate, advise and influence the Special Educational Needs & Disabilities sector. She has nearly 7 years worth of experience working children and young people, including working in schools but mainstream and specialist support. Sian wants to change the world one step at a time but wishes to start at getting pineapple permanently removed from Pizza!

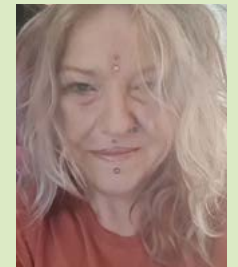
Sian enjoys spending her weekends in muddy fields with her family and friends watching Autograss racing, which is a form of motorsport, that she has been going to since she was 2 weeks old. She also likes to spend time with her husband and the family dogs exploring beaches around the UK.



Kate Darlington

Somerset Youth Parliament – Engagement & Participation Officer
07964 699595 | kate.darlington@somerset.gov.uk

Kate is a professionally qualified youth worker and currently supports the Somerset Youth Parliament to develop campaigns and projects which reflect their representative roles. The Parliament is an open, universal group of volunteers aged 11- 18 yr olds (up to 24 with SEND) and includes 3 publicly elected Members of Youth Parliament (MYP's) who each run a campaign of their choice and have a mandate to challenge and lobby decision makers and government regarding issues of concern for young people locally and nationally. Kate is interested in social justice and enlightenment, loves music and travel and has a mild obsession with Bollywood and K Drama.



Young Person's Champions

Chloe Raeburn

Young Person Champion – Health, Wellbeing and Creative Arts

Chloe is a Young Person's Champion for health, wellbeing and creative arts. Her role will involve talking to artists and young people and getting a feel for young people's opinions when it comes to health, wellbeing and the creatively arts. Chloe has personal experience of being in care. Before this role she did a level 2 health and social care course at Wiltshire college which came from of passion of wanting to help children and young people when it comes to mental health issues. Chloe's ideal role would be a support/youth worker in the mental health field.

Chloe's other interests include music, film and TV and helping out in her community. She also has 2 guinea pigs called Kenai and Koda. She is really excited for what this role might bring and how she can help influence young people.



Daniel Graves

Young Person's Champion – Children and Young People Plan

Daniel Graves is the Young People's Champion for the Somerset Children and Young People's Plan. A plan that outlines the support of children and young people throughout their developmental years and into their adult lives.

Working alongside the Partnership and Engagement team within Children's Social Care. Daniel's role is to support and promote the voice of children and young people throughout Somerset. Listening to the voices of those around him and relaying them back to make the necessary and critical improvements for young people's lives throughout Somerset.

In his spare time Daniel enjoys reading and going on walks.



Gabriella Sorgente

Young Person Champion – SEND

Gabriella is our Young Persons Champion for Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). She has recently joined the Unstoppables. She feels safe sharing her thoughts with the Unstoppables including such subjects like the impact of education on young people with SEND. Gabriella's three goals when it comes to being the advocate for SEND in Somerset include:

Gabriella wants to help young people struggling with SEND. This is so young people don't feel the strain of societal expectations. Gabriella is the voice for young people with SEND, she provides a safe place and someone to trust. Gabriella's goal is to see young people with SEND enjoy their life, in and out of education. Gabriella has dyslexia and slow learning processes, so she knows all too well what it is like to have a learning difficulty in education.

In her spare time, she loves to do arts like photography, that she has a degree in. Gabriella is a keen artist and dreams of bringing her creativity into working with children with SEND in the future. If you dream big and push through, you will achieve great things.



Nicole Tucker

Young Person Champion – SEND

Nicole is our Young Person's Champion for Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). She has been a member of The Unstoppables since it began over five years ago and she is a tireless advocate for issues facing children and young people with SEND across Somerset. Nicole also uses her own experience of accessing support services since she was a child and being a power wheelchair user to inform her advocacy.

In her spare time she loves getting creative in her Art Studio (her happy place!). Nicole is a YouTuber and a huge Robbie Williams fan, and she dreams of having her own TV show to tackle disability awareness and stigma.



Getting in touch


If you'd like to get in touch with us, or make a request to engage with young people, please fill in our Expression of Interest form. You can also engage with us and see the views of young people with our social media channels.

Expression of Interest form

 <https://bit.ly/3pFMQtT>

Somerset Young People's Voice | Participation Toolkit


Whether you are a young person or you are working with young people, with this toolkit there are many ways that you can engage throughout Somerset and beyond.

 <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/children-families-and-education/the-local-offer/having-your-voice-heard/somerset-participation-toolkit/>

Social media


Engagement and Participation team


 www.facebook.com/SomersetYouthVoice

 www.twitter.com/SomerYouthVoice


 www.instagram.com/somersetyouthvoice

Somerset Youth Parliament

 www.twitter.com/somerset_youth

 www.instagram.com/somerset_youth_parliament

The Unstoppables/SEND Participation

 www.facebook.com/sendparticipationteam

 www.instagram.com/sendparticipation



Engagement and Participation team

Case Studies



The impact of the cost of living on children and young people | Engagement and Participation team

Nature of the case

Amidst growing concern about rising cost of living, the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership's (SSCP) and Partnership Business Group (PBG) requested that the Youth Forum captured the perception of the impact from children and young people.

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

We received a request to tackle this topic by the PBG and the SSCP, this was then discussed across our Youth Forum Summer Sessions in collaboration with the UnStoppables, SiCC and SLCC and Youth Parliament.

Details of the case

The first Zoom session of the Youth Forum looked at some financial information to give a better understanding of the cost of living crisis and discussed what aspects of family life could be affected. In the second session of Youth Forum the group looked at a case study of a family and explored how it felt to be the teenagers in the case. At the third session, held face to face in the summer holidays the Youth Forum invited members of The UnStoppables, Youth Parliament and SiCC and SLCC to an event where they played the Cost of Living Game which involved budgeting for the family as costs increased. They also produced flip charts about the impact and the likely outcomes.

The findings were collected onto a presentation which was presented to the SSCP, PBG and Early Help Boards in September and October.

How many young people took part and what was their involvement?

Across Youth Forum, the UnStoppables, SiCC and SLCC and Youth Parliament, around 20 young people shared their opinions.

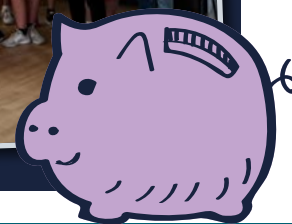
What are the outcomes of the case?

The results of the actions are:

- Young people had a greater understanding of the economic factors involved
- The PBG were able to explore how the impact on young people might need to be considered on services - i.e. raising poor mental health, increase in criminality, services having to support families with food and fuel
- In raising awareness to take in to account the impact on children and young people, building a stronger ethos of Think Family.

Links to supporting document

- *A presentation of results and findings*



Corporate Parenting Board training | Engagement and Participation team

Nature of the case

In May 2022 Somerset Council held local elections to elect the 110 councillors who will lead the five councils in the county into one unitary administration in 2023.

Corporate Parenting training is a mandatory course for all newly elected councillors and, for the first time, was delivered virtually using Mentimeter – an interactive presentation tool.

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

The team contacted the relevant people who sit on the Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) in February and asked them to hold 2 training sessions in their diaries to present their area of expertise.

Details of the case

Once all the presenters had been secured, the team drew up a session plan and timed out each presenters slot. Presenters were given guidance sheets and asked to design slides for their slot on the agenda.

Once all slides had been designed they were pulled together onto the Mentimeter.

Resources produced by the Somerset in Care Council and Somerset Leaving Care Council (SiCC and SLCC) were also added to the presentation – an animation on What Makes a Good Corporate Parent and an animation called Coming Into Care which is shown to children and young people when they first come into care.

Damien shared the role of SiCC and SLCC in the presentation and a Young Persons Champion - Chloe Raeburn – gave a presentation about her own experience of coming into care.

How many young people took part and what was their involvement?

SiCC and SLCC had previously made the resources shown and YPC took part in the training sessions.

What are the outcomes of the case?

The results of the actions are:

- 105 councillors have been trained in their roles and responsibilities of being a good Corporate Parent.
- This should mean that they will have greater awareness of what opportunities there are in their local communities and what issues they might need to help young people and their carers overcome.

Links to supporting document

- [A PDF of the Mentimeter](#)



The Somerset Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) 2022-2024 | Engagement and Participation team

Nature of the case

The CYPP 2019 – 2022 expired on 31st March 2022 and preparation for the new Plan commenced 12 months before this.

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

The Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) directed the E&P team to research what priorities children and young people wanted included in the Plan.

Details of the case

We looked at the results of the national Make Your Mark and extrapolated the Somerset responses (2,500) and took these results to the Youth Forum who added their own findings. The SSCP Forum in December gave practitioners an opportunity to discuss the young people's priorities and wider consultation across the SSCP networks commenced.



How many young people took part and what was their involvement?

2,600+ young people were involved through surveys, focus groups and other engagement activities.

What are the outcomes of the case?

The results of the actions are:

- The new administration elected in May 2022 adopted the plan co-produced by children and young people and integrated the priorities in to their new business plan.

Links to supporting document

- *The Children and Young People's Plan 2022-24*



Family Solutions – from Cradle to Grave | Engagement and Participation team

Nature of the case

To prepare for the new unitary council Children's Social Care were asked to produce some training resources for staff to learn more about how we care for our most vulnerable children and young people.

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

A task and finish group met to identify which services we wanted to promote and who would take the lead from each service. We then created a typical family

in need of support and developed an animation to be shown before each training session. We then created a presentation template for each service to populate so that a consistent style, branding and image was offered.

Nine services were identified and delivered a lunchtime and evening 45 minute session on Teams.

Details of the case

Over 500 staff attended the sessions which were very well received. All sessions were recorded, and a 'library' of Family Solutions training was available for new starters and those who couldn't attend.

What are the outcomes of the case?

The results of the actions are:

- 18 training sessions took place welcoming over 500 staff members.
- Following these training sessions, staff have a better understanding of how the different sectors of Children's Social Care work.

Links to supporting document

- *Family Solutions: From Cradle to Grave - Animation*



The Smith family, stars of the Family Solutions training



Amy's Story - Animation and Young Carers Resources

Engagement and Participation team

Nature of the case

To produce an animation about concerns from Young Carers that provision for them to attend Young Carers groups and participate in activities end at the age of 18 years. As well as produce a variety of other media about Young Carers, their views, opinions and lived experiences.

school to university or work. We took Amy's comments and drafted a script for the animation. Amy was then sent the draft and both reworded and expanded on the script and she recorded a narration for the animation. Using Amy's words we produced character designs and a storyboard for the animation, which Amy then gave comments on. From there we produced the animation.

In addition we talked to other Young Carers about their lived experiences as Young Carers. We then took these views and produced posters and a presentation.

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

The Young Carers service contacted the Engagement and Participation team to ask them to speak with a Young Carer called Amy who was concerned about not being able to continue attending her Young Carers group now she had reached 18 years.

Details of the case

Amy was met at school where she talked about her circumstances and how unfair she thought it was to expect 18 year old young carers to engage with adult carers activities. She also felt they needed as much support to help them through transitions from

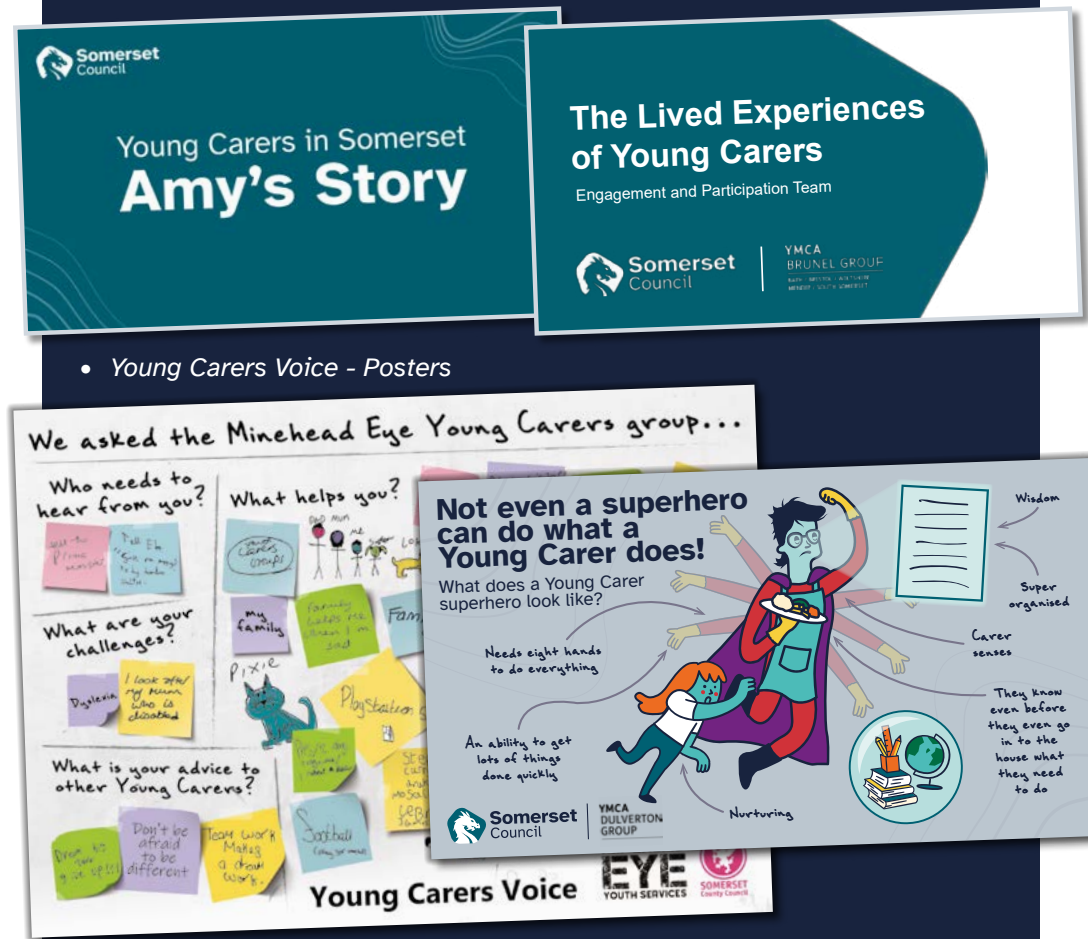
What are the outcomes of the case?

The results of the actions are:

- The film was presented at the Carers Strategic Board and commissioners have used it in collating evidence required to write the new joint Carers Strategy in 2024.
- Presentations and posters from the other Young Carers are being shared with services across Somerset that will help to elevate the voices of Young Carers.

Links to supporting documents

- *Amy's Story - Animation*
- *The Lived Experiences of Young Carers - Presentation*



Unfair delays in the Criminal Justice System

Engagement and Participation team

Nature of the case

We were asked to produce a presentation on the impact of the unfair delays in the Criminal Justice System that was to be taken to Youth Justice Board Spring 2023.

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

The Youth Justice Team contacted us about the impact of delays in court proceedings causing young people who committed crimes as children being prosecuted

as adults for the offences caused as a child when they became 18 years old. The Youth Justice Board requested information about this issue in order to generate some action.

Details of the case

A young person who had been impacted by the delays told his story, which was recorded accurately by his probation officer. We then asked another young person to record a narration, so that we could produce a short film that we would include in a presentation about the issues that delays are causing.

Once we had arranged for the narration we researched the topic and looked at data provided by the Youth Justice Team, so that we could script the rest of the film and put together the presentation.

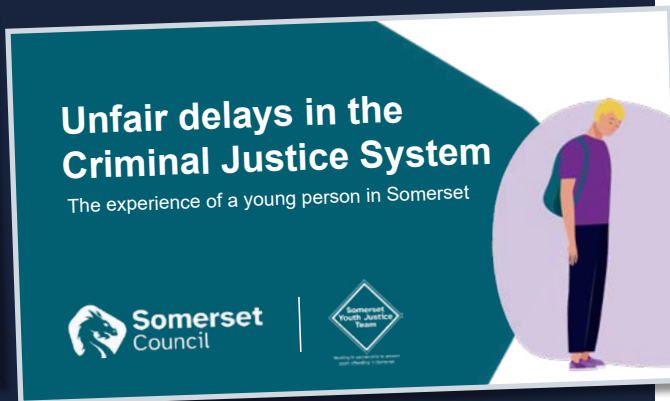
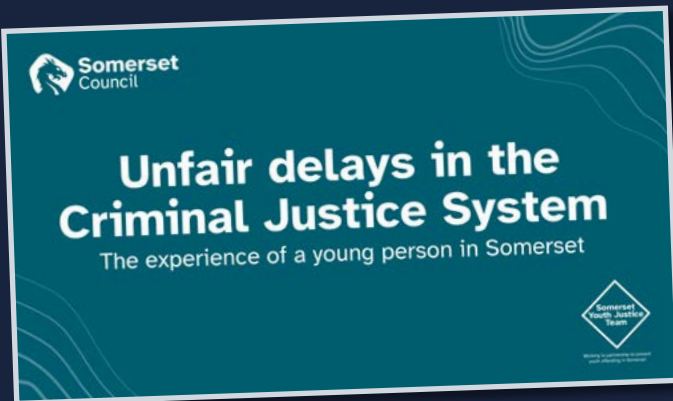
What are the outcomes of the case?

The results of the actions are:

- The Youth Justice Board wrote to the Ministry of Justice Youth Division to ask about solutions to lessen the impact of delays in the Criminal Justice System on children and young adults.

Links to supporting documents

- *Unfair delays in the Criminal Justice System - Animation*
- *Unfair delays in the Criminal Justice System - Presentation*



Youth Forum

Case Studies



What makes you want to go to school? | Youth Forum

Nature of the case

School attendance figures in Somerset are a growing concern. The Partnership Business Group of the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) requested that the Somerset Youth Forum explore the issues around young people's attendance.

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

School attendance figures in Somerset are a growing concern. The Partnership Business Group of the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) requested that the Somerset Youth Forum explore the issues around young people's attendance.

Details of the case

The Youth Forum commenced this project by looking at previous research into poor school attendance. They noted that young people themselves are infrequently asked about the reasons they don't enjoy or engage

with schools, and this became the basis of the project. Once they had looked at the research the young people explored how and what to ask school pupils about their attendance and they felt that it is a sensitive subject for many so didn't want to send out a blanket survey. Once the questionnaire was devised, they interviewed other young people using the Microsoft Forms app that works well on their mobiles.

Questionnaire were completed and analysed in the Summer term and some recommendations were drawn up from the analysis.

The results were shown at the PBG meeting in September and then a presentation was taken to the Inclusion Summit in October 22 and debated on by the delegates at the summit who were mainly from education.

How many young people took part and what was their involvement?

Over the five sessions, a total of twenty young people took part, shared their views and their opinions.

In addition our school's survey was filled in by 96 young people across Somerset.

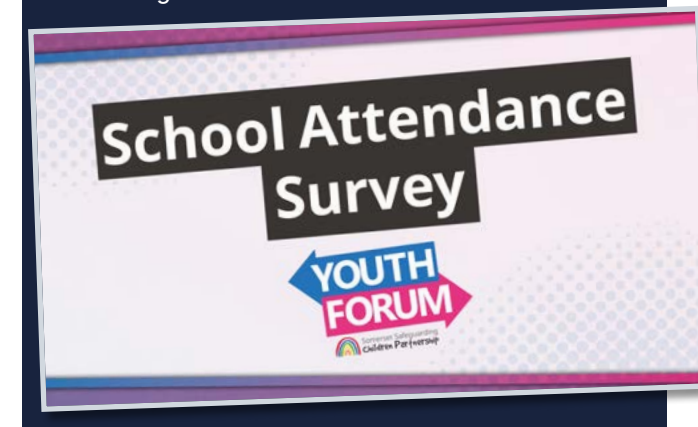
What are the outcomes of the case?

The results of the actions are:

- The voice of the student was heard at a strategic conference with educationalists pledging to listen more closely to the voices of their pupils.
- This piece of work led to a better awareness of the value of giving young people a voice.

Links to supporting document

- *Mentimeter presentation from strategic conference*



Why is it so important to think about where our children live? | Youth Forum

Nature of the case

In September 2022 the Partnership Business Group of the Somerset Safeguarding Children's Partnership (SSCP) requested that the Somerset Youth Forum look at the perceptions of safe homes and housing.

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

We were asked to look at this subject by the SSCP, who requested that we make it one of that term's topics for Youth Forum.

Details of the case

The Youth Forum met over Zoom three times to explore this issue. They looked at what made a good home and what made a poor home. They then categorised these into three elements: the physical, the social and emotional and the location. They used Mentimeter and Google Jam to collect their thoughts. They learned about the rights of children and young people when bailiffs are involved with their families and collaborated with Citizen's Advice on producing a leaflet for children and young people about bailiffs. They undertook an exercise about how they fit into their communities and who keeps them safe in their communities.

How many young people took part and what was their involvement?

Over the three Zoom sessions, a total of ten young people took part, shared their views and their opinions.

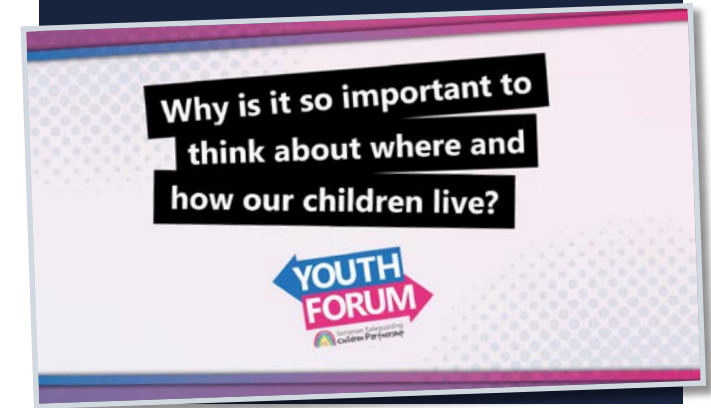
What are the outcomes of the case?

The results of the actions are:

- The findings were made into a presentation and shown at the December meeting of the Partnership Business Group. This was also shared with Children's Commissioners and the Strategic Housing Group in Somerset.
- The voices of children and young people were heard in consideration of housing strategy and policy.

Links to supporting document

- *Presentation of the findings shown to the Partnership Business Group*



Building Stronger Families | Youth Forum

Nature of the case

The Youth forum was approached by the Building Stronger Families project to look at their perception of parental conflict.

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

We invited the Supporting Families team to a Youth Forum meeting and created some engagement opportunities on a Mentimeter presentation on the topic of Building Stronger Families.

Details of the case

The session was attended by the Supporting Families team who explained the topic. During the discussion with the young people word clouds and speech bubbles were created of their comments and opinion, that will be included in the Building Stronger Families tool kit.

How many young people took part and what was their involvement?

Over the Zoom session 15 young people participated.

What are the outcomes of the case?

The results of the actions are:

- The voices and opinions of young people will be included in the Supporting Families team's Building Stronger Families toolkit.

Supporting documents

The various assets produced by Youth Forum during the session.



What makes you happy? | Youth Forum

Nature of the case

The Youth Forum were asked by the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) to help them to understand what children and young people need to help them to have good emotional health and wellbeing.

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

During Youth Forum we themed the spring sessions around this theme, looking at the theme broadly and then looking more closely at specific parts of it.

Details of the case

The Youth Forum spring sessions ran over four Zoom meetings, where using Mentimeter we asked the attending young people their opinions on:

- What makes them happy
- How they would describe good emotional health
- What they need to achieve good emotional health
- What the barriers are to good emotional health
- What they would advise young people to do or not do to feel better if they had bad emotional health

We then recorded these opinions and views and collected them together as quotes, word clouds and speech bubbles.

How many young people took part and what was their involvement?

Across the four sessions 10 different young people participated in the sessions.

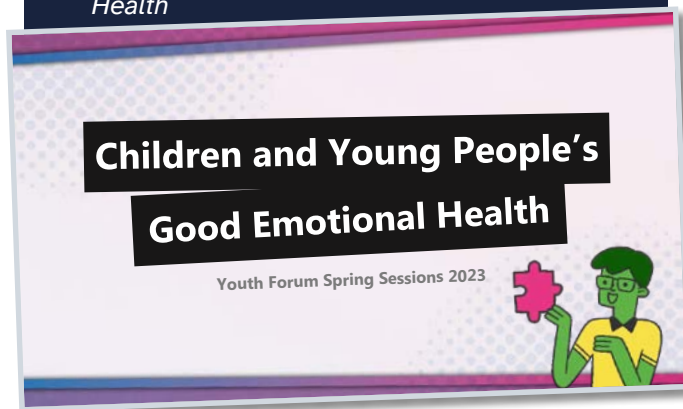
What are the outcomes of the case?

The results of the actions are:

- The findings have been compiled in to a presentation that has been shared with the SSCP.
- The findings have also been shared with health and social care colleagues and used in the new strategies for Somerset Council.

Links to supporting document

- [Children and Young People's Good Emotional Health](#)



Somerset Youth Parliament

Case Studies



SSCP Event Campaign Presentation and Launch

| Somerset Youth Parliament

Nature of the case

The launch of Joel's campaign on children and young people's Mental Health and Wellbeing at the Somerset Safeguarding Children's Partnership's (SSCP) Forum Week.

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

SSCP approached Youth Parliament to offer a place on their Mental Health and Wellbeing staff/ workers Forum event agenda in June. Member of Youth Parliament Joel Fowler accepted the opportunity to introduce himself and talk to service reps about his campaign beliefs and aims over his term of office.

Details of the case

SSCP contacted the Youth Parliament Engagement and Participation Officer to explore the potential of Joel participating in Forum Week.

Joel agreed to take part and adapted his campaign to create a PowerPoint presentation which was used as his first launch. He then presented his presentation at Forum Week.

How many young people took part and what was their involvement?

Elected Member of Youth Parliament Joel Fowler.

This gave him the chance to represent young people's views and experiences, promote Youth Parliament and build networks with adults in order to influence better outcomes for young people.

What are the outcomes of the case?

The results of the actions are:

- Joel has been asked to speak at schools about Youth Parliament and his campaign
- Joel has also been approached by Public Health's Schools Team to support, share and explore findings around priorities in schools regarding pupil health and wellbeing
- Joel has been invited to the Emotional Mental Health Practitioners meetings. Multi-service meetings that Joel will be able to regularly attend and present at, update, and listen directly to discussion about initiatives, change, outcomes, impact and challenges for teachers and schools.

Links to supporting document

- *Joel's presentation on Mental Health and Wellbeing*



Members of Youth Parliament Annual Conference

Somerset Youth Parliament

Nature of the case

Annual conference for members of the British Youth Council, where Members of Youth Parliament (MYP) debate and vote on the priority concerns.

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

Each year the British Youth Council invite MYPs from across the UK to attend a weekend conference to represent their constituents by debating and voting on priority concerns they have raised. Those top priorities then inform the annual House of Commons debate where MYPs will hold a final vote which will determine the national UKYP manifesto and agenda for the year, raised by their constituents.

Due to Covid this event didn't run for 3 years which has challenged the MYP roles and their capacity to overcome covid restrictions in order to represent and platform youth voice.

Details of the case

Young people took part in debating concerns of young people, followed by a vote to choose priority issues for further debate later in the year. Young people also took part in workshops, networking and started to develop the national UK Youth Parliament manifesto for next year.

How many young people took part and what was their involvement?

3 elected Members of Youth Parliament from

Somerset, Jasmine Fowler, Roxanne Wylie, Joel Fowler and a total of over 190 MYPs from across the UK.

What are the outcomes of the case?

The results of the actions are:

- Delegates learned more about their national responsibilities, became more confident, skilled and knowledgeable about the complexities and intersectional nature of issues for young people in the current sociopolitical climate.
- Members of Somerset Youth Parliament were able to strengthen Somerset's youth voice on a national stage, as well as gaining an understanding of the links between local and national voices.

Supporting imagery from the conference



Young people's interview panel for CEO and Assistant Director | Somerset Youth Parliament

Nature of the case

During the recruitment process for the CEO and Assistant Director appointments of the new Somerset Council, young people were asked to form a complimentary panel to assist in the interview process.

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

The Somerset Council HR department contacted the Engagement and Participation team to ask about the availability of young people to form a panel for the interviews.

Details of the case

Although timescales were short, a panel was selected, trained, prepared questions and were able to practice ahead of the interviews.

One interview took place over Zoom and one face to face. There were complications when one worker contracted COVID, but the young people rose to the occasion.

How many young people took part and what was their involvement?

The panel consisted of two elected Members of Youth Parliament Jasmine and Joel Fowler, one Youth

Parliament Advisory Group member Jessica Bullen, Unstoppables and Youth Parliament member Josh Lancaster.

What are the outcomes of the case?

The results of the actions are:

- The young people interviewed a total of seven people for both positions and had complete ownership over their questions
- Their feedback and reflection on the answers to their questions, scrutiny and preferred choices revealed a high level of integrity and rationalism
- Two people were successfully appointed, with the adult panellists both surprised and impressed by how capable the young people were, how they owned their space and voice
- They built stronger relationships between adult decision makers and the young people, establishing more potential to work collaboratively
- Youth Voice was proven to work.

Links to supporting document

- *The questions asked by the young people*
- *A thank you letter that the young people received*

Feedback from adult panellists

"I learned things from the work that you and the panel did. There was a lot of positive feedback about this part of the process, so a real impact."

HR Director

"And finally on the Monday, a completely utterly fantastic Young People's Panel; honestly, the preparation they put into their questions and understanding of the role would put most of us to shame!"

HR Director

"The panel were fantastic and showed real interest and commitment to the task which was great to see and hear during the feedback. Thanks Kate for all the organising and support."

HR Strategic Manager



Somerset Youth Parliament visit to the House of Commons | Somerset Youth Parliament

Nature of the case

Elected Members of Somerset Youth Parliament represented local young people on a national stage in the House of Commons.

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

The British Youth Council (BYC) hold the contract for UK Youth Parliament (UKYP). Local Authorities & organisations across the UK affiliate to the BYC which gives them a mandate to run Youth Parliament elections.

Somerset Council pay an annual membership fee and the group sits within the Engagement and Participation teams remit of supporting and developing young people's learning/ skills and campaign work.

Details of the case

Members of Youth Parliament, their support worker and group volunteer travelled by train from Somerset to London, attended an assembly within the House of Commons, discussion, debate and voting processes were facilitated by the Leader. MPs attended as quest speakers. Young People were able to represent their local constituents and discuss/ debate current challenges and priorities for young people.

How many young people took part and what was their involvement?

Three members of Somerset Youth Parliament took part, with approximately 280 members of Youth Parliament from across the UK also in attendance on the day.

What are the outcomes of the case?

The results of the actions are:

- Voting results have identifies Mental Health, Equality, Education, Child Poverty and climate as the topics which will form the basis for the national UKYP manifesto campaign 2023.
- The results will be incorporated into this year annual Make Your Mark ballot and all young people aged 11-18yrs will have the opportunity to vote on their main priorities for local young people. This in turn will inform services about what young people want/need and align with the Children and Young People's Plan.

Links to supporting document

- [UK Youth Parliament House of Commons Sitting: Key Event Info](#)
- [Somerset Elected Members of Youth Parliament discuss priority issues for young people at the House of Commons](#)



The Unstoppables

Case Studies



Graduated Response Tool - Animation

| The Unstoppables

Nature of the case

To consult with children and young people to then be able to promote the Graduated Response Tool.

We planned to use an event to consult with children and young people and create an activity where we could hear the voice of children and young people. The question we asked: 'If I need help with my learning, what can I expect?'

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

The team became involved through IP1 steering group, it was originally decided that it would be a promotional animation for the tool however after discussions it was decided that it wouldn't be beneficial for the Unstoppables to read the document as it is a lengthy document which isn't always child and young person friendly to read. We decided we were going to consult with children and young people about what they can expect if they need help with their learning to then turn it into an animation of children and young people's voices which would direct them to the tool.

Details of the case

We wanted to learn what children and young people expected if they needed help with their learning, so we

asked the question: 'If I need help with my learning, what can I expect?'

In the June Unstoppables meeting Participation worker Sian Smiley, the SEND Young Person's Champion Nicole Tucker and members started planning what activities we could do to get the voice of children and young people at a Family Fun Day in July. It was decided to create a caterpillar with the answers. Children and young people could write/draw their answers on a paper circle then decorate it - they would then be stapled together with a paper head to create the caterpillar. Members helped children and young people create the body and then decorated a 'pet rock' with them as a thank-you for their time answering our question.

After the event the answers were typed up and handed to Paul Mitchell who was creating the animation. We wanted the animation to be more on the cartoon side so the caterpillar was drawn in cartoon form and then a script was created to run along the animation. Sian & Nicole recorded this script.

How many young people took part and what was their involvement?

Eight members of the Unstoppables planned the activity and helped to run it at the event we attended.

One Young Person's Champion recorded their voice for the animation and help organise the activity.

34 young people were consulted with at the Family Fun Day event.

What are the outcomes of the case?

The results of the actions are:

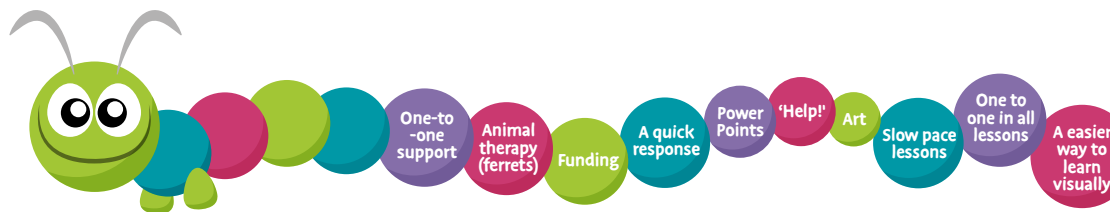
- There were a wide range of answers given from the voices we heard, some of the answers were expected and some answers were not expected - 'Not sitting me next to someone who distracts me'. The answers were eye-opening to professional as the children and young people's answers may not have been what was expected and gave an insight into what they may need.
- The answers then become an animation which was targeted at Children and Young people to promote the Graduated Response Tool.

Links to supporting document

- [The Graduated Response Tool](#)
- [The Graduated Response Tool - animation](#)



The caterpillar star of the Graduated response tool animation



Education and development Foundation Degree in Education (FdA) with specialist pathways | The Unstoppables

Nature of the case

We were asked to help write the specialist pathways that were Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) related, to help shape the SEND modules of the foundation degree being created for the University of Worcester.

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

We were asked by the Somerset Centre for Integrated Learning (SCIL) to help write this as the Unstoppables have a lot of varied lived experience of SEND, which was invaluable to help shape the modules.

Details of the case

Using our knowledge of and the lived experience of SEND to decide what the Foundation Degree in Education and Development (FDED) learners should learn as part of their studies. This included looking at what policies should be in the modules, but our biggest contribution was really highlighting how the modules should involve lived experience and how hearing the voice of the child is vital – which is going to be incorporated in all modules and pathways including those that aren't SEND.

How many young people took part and what was their involvement?

The members of the Unstoppables participated in this project, sharing their lived experiences and views.

What are the outcomes of the case?

The results of the actions are:

- A foundation degree that involves SEND as a specialist pathway has been created, which is still fairly unique.
- The Unstoppables helped shape those modules.
- Learners on the course will be able to learn about lived experience and how important the voice of the child is. Also by having us involved as well as other professionals in SEND departments it ensures things that are important to those in SEND are involved because we decided it rather than someone in a different department writing it.

Links to supporting document

- *Education and Development FdA with Specialist Pathway*



University
of Worcester



Recruitment animation and roadshow planning

| The Unstoppables

Nature of the case

To adapt, update and try out new channels of recruitment for the Unstoppables in order to recruit new members.

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

Recruitment is a major theme for our youth voice groups this year, though we have been finding that traditional methods haven't yielded as many expressions of interest as we would like.

Details of the case

The plan was to create an animation that could show who we are as a forum and what we do so that children and young people might be inspired by it and want to become a member.

It will also be used at events we attend and places we visit as we feel a visual animation may be easier to follow for some children and young people than our existing leaflets. Though we can use both methods, leaflets and the animation to promote our forum.

This animation is a baseline to our next project 'Unstoppables roadshow'.

How many young people took part and what was their involvement?

Seven members of the Unstoppables took part in the planning and scripting of the animation.

Every member was able to record their voice to be featured in the animation.

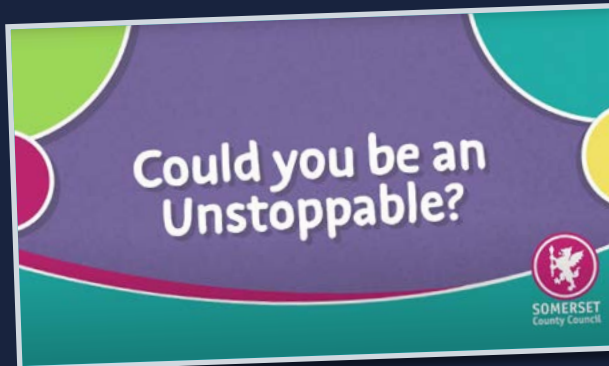
What are the outcomes of the case?

The results of the actions are:

- The animation is a baseline to our next project 'Unstoppables roadshow'.
- We have been featured on the BBC Radio Somerset wellbeing hour and have shared this through our social media channels.

Links to supporting document

- *Could you be an Unstoppable - Recruitment Animation*



- *BBC Radio Somerset Interview*



QI (Quality Improvement) Therapies

| The Unstoppables

Nature of the case

As part of the Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) Improvement work that happened across Somerset the SPOT (Sensory, Physical and Occupational Therapy) service wanted to work collaboratively with children and young people to make the services work even better.

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

The Engagement and Participation team were involved in order to engage with children and young people to gain their lived experiences on the SPOT services and feedback to the team so they can know what is working well and what could be better.

Details of the case

Nicole and Sian visited two schools to speak to children who had a hearing teacher visit them and who had also been known to speech and language therapists. The questions asked were: What do you enjoy? What don't you enjoy? What would make it better? We then asked two follow up questions about how their workers helped them.

This was followed by home visits with two young people who used Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) devices to communicate*. The first visit was unable to engage in the planned activity, however his mum answered to her best ability what his thoughts may be. We completely changed the

activity and had a informal conversation using the eye gaze. For the next visit, the activity was adapted to a conversation through eye gaze, talking aid and verbal between Engagement and Participation Officer, Young Person's Champion and the young person.

How many young people took part and what was their involvement?

The SPOT team referred 10 young people to us, of which four took part - two in school and two homes visits.

What are the outcomes of the case?

The results of the actions are:

- Overall, the feedback given towards the SPOT teams were positive from the CYP we engaged with.
- Some examples of the feedback:
 - "Comfortable in the sessions and environment"
 - "Teaches me new things".
 - "Get to talk about my views".
 - "Fun"
 - "Friendly"
 - Mum said: "He can communicate with peers using one word sentences and the family hope in the future he could create longer sentences with the eye gaze"
 - "... go above and beyond for us - really approachable and willing to help always".

- Using the feedback from the children and young people the SPOT team want to continue working to improve the therapy services and continue helping children and young people who need it.

Links to supporting document

- [Feedback from QI Therapies engagement](#)

Feedback from QI Therapies engagement

Sian Smiley and Nicole Tucker
SEND Participation Team



Somerset in Care and Leaving Care Councils (SiCC & SLCC)

Case Studies



Your Journey - Coming Into Care | SiCC and SLCC

Nature of the case

SiCC and SLCC wanted to make a short animation for children and young people coming into care in Somerset about what they could expect.

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

During a SiCC and SLCC meeting, members looked at the current booklet that children and young people receive when they first come in to care and felt that it needed to be made more accessible for young people. They decided the best way to do this would be with an animation.

Details of the case

The group looked at the current booklet and used the main key information to make a script for an animation.

During the creative process for the animation the young people also created some characters and recorded narration to be incorporated in to the animation.

How many young people took part and what was their involvement?

In total 10 members of SiCC and SLCC took part in the creation of the animation.

What are the outcomes of the case?

The results of the actions are:

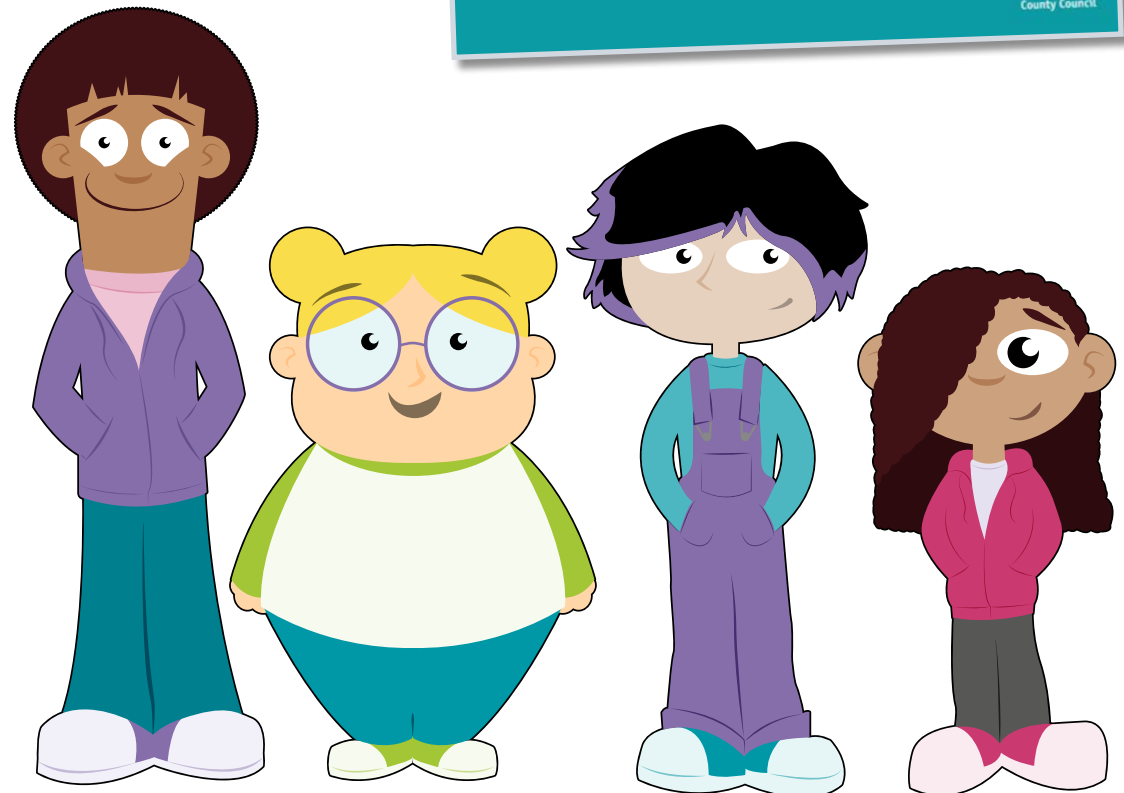
- The animation is now used by Route One advocacy and social workers when they first meet a child or a young people coming into care.
- It is also on the SiCC and SLCC website.

Links to supporting document

- [Your Journey: Coming in to Care - Animation](#)



Characters created by young people that feature in the animation



Creative Arts and Care Leavers Emotional Health & Wellbeing | SiCC and SLCC

Nature of the case

Public Health approached the team to work alongside a project with creative arts organisations and schools in Somerset.

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

The Care Leavers project would be managed by a care leaver to work with the creatives and take their findings to care leavers groups and test the impact of creative work on their emotional health and wellbeing.

Details of the case

We recruited a Young Persons Champion who was a care leaver and they mapped their journey via a journal that looked at the art forms being used in schools that might be useful for care leavers to manage their own emotional wellbeing.

How many young people took part and what was their involvement?

In addition to our Young Person's Creative, over 500 children from schools across Somerset participated in this project.

In addition two members of SiCC and SLCC helped out at one of the events.

What are the outcomes of the case?

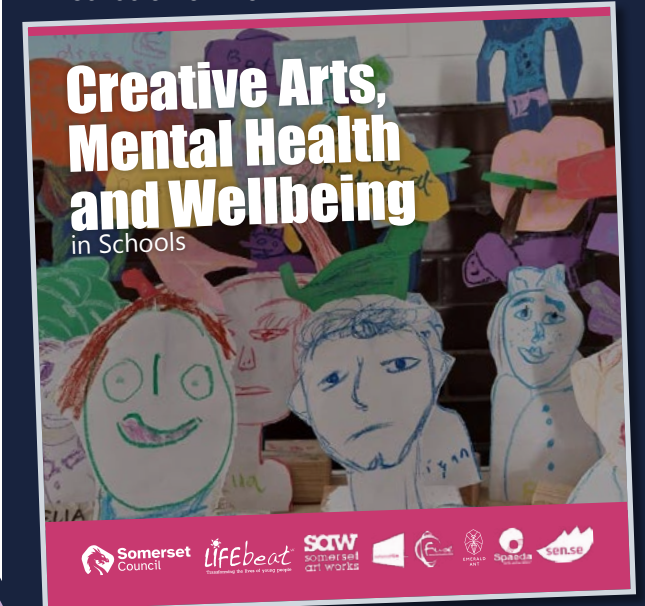
The results of the actions are:

- There is a better understanding of professionals appreciating the impact of making creative opportunities for care leavers to take part in.
- An e-zine that Public Health will promote with schools and social media was produced.



Links to supporting document

- *Creative Arts, Mental Health and Wellbeing in Schools - e-zine*



Homes and Horizons – a strategic partnership

| SiCC and SLCC

Nature of the case

Somerset Council have formed a strategic partnership with the Shaw Trust to run a project called Homes and Horizons which will see 10 new children's homes in the county for our most complex children looked after; two therapeutic schools and a high needs fostering service.

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

Working collaboratively with Children's Social Care and the Programme team at Somerset Council.

Details of the case

SiCC and SLCC have been involved from the concept of the project and have contributed by:

- Inspecting children's homes across the country
- Speaking at the Shaw Trust Board's Annual General Meeting
- Choosing furniture and décor for the new homes
- Helping to name the new homes
- Talking to local residents about their experiences in care
- Speaking at the Strategic Partnership Board about young people's involvement
- Informing the training for foster carers
- Looking at plan for young people to be accredited Quality Checkers

How many young people took part and what was their involvement?

As well as the core 10 Young People involved we also had 32 responses to the names of the homes poster so a total of 42 involved.

What are the outcomes of the case?

The results of the actions are:

- The young people are working with the Shaw Trust and Somerset Council Communications Teams to promote the benefits of children and young people being involved in a strategic partnership.

Links to supporting document

- *SiCC and SLCC - Homes and Horizons Corporate Parent Board Update*



Vaping and Young People in Somerset

SiCC and SLCC

Nature of the case

Public Health approached the team to find out how young people felt about the health aspects of vaping.

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

One young person from SiCC and SLCC volunteered to lead the vaping project and worked with the Engagement and Participation team.

Details of the case

The young person leading on the project devised a survey, which was circulated to youth organisations, about the social and health aspects of vaping. With the results of the survey the lead volunteer produced some findings which when added to some researched data and statistics on vaping were used to create a short animation.

How many young people took part and what was their involvement?

In addition to the young person leading the project, an additional 40 young people shared their opinions through the survey.

What are the outcomes of the case?

The results of the actions are:

- A short animation has been made about this project for public health to share with schools and use on their social media.
- Hopefully, it'll meant that fewer young people will vape in Somerset

Links to supporting document

- *Vaping and young people in Somerset - Animation*



Corporate Parenting Thematic Workshop on Children Going Missing | SiCC and SLCC

Nature of the case

On 14th March 2023, there was a Missing Children thematic workshop to take an in depth look at children who go missing.

How did the Engagement and Participation team become involved?

The Corporate Parent Board requested thematic workshops and identified this topic as its first theme.

Details of the case

The meeting was opened by the Independent Chair of the Corporate Parenting Board, with the theme presented by the Prevent Missing and Exploitation (PMEX) team. A representative from the Avon and Somerset and Somerset Constabulary also attended.

There were discussions on what constitutes a missing child, local data was presented regarding numbers of missing children and the reasons they run away, they looked at the systems in place to support parent/ carers and young people when they go missing and heard case studies.

How many young people took part and what was their involvement?

The meeting was attended by representatives from the Somerset Leaving Care Council (SLCC) and Dan Graves, the Young Person's Champion for the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP).

What are the outcomes of the case?

The results of the actions are:

- They identified the pressure on residential providers who feel they must report a child missing under their OFSTED responsibilities.
- The Corporate Parenting Board are raising the issue of these pressures with OFSTED.

Feedback from a young person

"This was an interesting event, where I got to learn about the inner proceedings and what Somerset as a county is handling and addressing missing children across the county."

Daniel Graves - Young Person's Champion

Supporting imagery





Participation Workers Network

The Participation Workers Network is a multi-agency group of Engagement and Participation Workers who work collaboratively to develop and deliver opportunities for young people.

Participation Workers Network


To find out more about the network or how you can be involved contact Fiona Phur:

 fiona.phur@somerset.gov.uk

 07811 307699

Participation Workers Network | Mapping Tool

This toolkit contains details of all of the participation services that form the Participation Workers Network, as well as how to get in contact with them

 [Participation Workers Network | Mapping Tool](#)





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