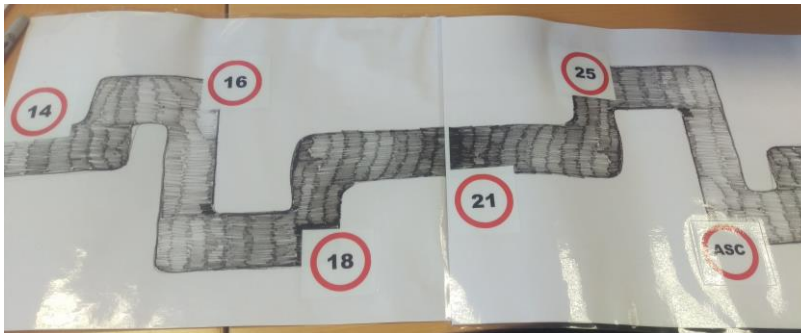


## Thurrock Coalition – Informing a Preparing for Adulthood Strategy for Thurrock



### The Objective of this Report

This Report will provide an evidence base upon which Thurrock Council can draft and implement a Preparing for Adulthood Strategy for Thurrock, for 2018 onwards that takes account of and acts upon the views, aspirations and needs of young people in relation to Independent living/housing, Employment, Good health, Family, friends/relationships and involvement in the community.

### **Responsibilities & Suggested Actions**

Following the Preparing for Adulthood Consultation and Engagement initiative, Thurrock Council officers need to draw up an Action Plan based on their understanding of the issues raised and the Report and Recommendations submitted to them by Thurrock Coalition.

We have collated the Suggested Actions below. Further Good Practice Guidance can be found from Page 24 onwards.

#### **Independent Living**

- Young people should be supported to understand the full breadth of what is meant by Independent Living, and to receive timely information, advice and support on how the Social Model of Disability can have an empowering effect upon their outlook, daily lives and future plans.

- Develop a Thurrock-specific programme of Co-Produced Parent Engagement (as early as possible in the process) that is: Ongoing, holistic, effective and meaningful.

### **Employment**

- Introduce a focus into the curriculum for young people looking at finding a job, using the internet safely. Ensure that young people are supported and able to locate, identify and use any volunteering/employment/placement opportunities or adverts and that they are familiar with the location of nearest JobCentre in their local area.
- In addition, work with young people and all relevant stakeholders to develop understanding or awareness of the value of work, money and the need to purchase food and pay utility bills etc.

### **Health**

- Work with individuals, parents, carers, family members, professionals in education, health and social care to develop a programme for increased understanding and awareness for young people of the overarching importance of register with a G.P., attend regular health checks in order to keep well.
- Work alongside Health Sector and Voluntary Sector partners to actively publicise the availability of Annual Health Checks for Disabled People in Thurrock, providing details of when, where and how to go about obtaining an Annual Health Check.

### **Friends, relationships and community**

- Publicise availability of Advice and Information under Section 4 of the Care Act 2014<sup>1</sup> for adults and carers and the awareness and availability of Advice and Information by way of the Local Offer under Section 30 of the Children & Families Act 2014.<sup>2</sup>
- Build awareness of Community Resources beyond providers.
- Build understanding and awareness of Community Resources for Individuals, parents, carers and family members.

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<sup>1</sup> See: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/section/4/enacted>

<sup>2</sup> See: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/notes/division/4/3>

## **Background & Context**

### **The Local Authority's current position**

Thurrock Council recognises that *young people go through a number of stages as they grow and develop. One of the most important is the move – or transition – from childhood into adulthood. And furthermore that this can be an exciting time, but also sometimes worrying – even more so if you have special educational needs or a disability. It can affect both the young person and their family.* Many things can change for you during transition, such as a young person's education, employment, finance and benefits, home environment, health, medical and social care needs. *Therefore, It is important to plan well for all these changes so that young people and those around them can feel more confident.*<sup>3</sup>

Thurrock Council offers support via the Preparing for Adulthood Team which aims to ensure that as a young person aged 14 to 25 with special educational needs or a disability – individuals have the support and guidance they need to help them plan for the future.

### **The Consultation and Engagement Initiative**

In Q4 2017/2018 Thurrock Council made a request for Thurrock Coalition to plan, facilitate, inform and assist in the development of the Preparing for Adulthood Strategy, via a series of Engagement events and initiatives.

The current contract between Thurrock Coalition and Thurrock Council stipulates that:

*Thurrock Coalition has a key role in ensuring that people who use services and carers in Thurrock have an active voice.*

It was agreed that this process needs to be informed by the views of Young People, parents and carers, schools and health to ascertain what individuals want the Preparing for Adulthood service to look like, in terms of their hopes and wishes for the future and how Thurrock Council can work alongside them to achieve this.

### **Outcomes**

Thurrock Coalition recognises that the experiences (past, present and future) of young individuals, parents and carers embarking on the Preparing for Adulthood process are

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<sup>3</sup> Thurrock Council - Transition for young people with special needs. Available at: <http://www.thurrock.gov.uk/transition-for-young-people-with-special-needs/childhood-to-adulthood>

varied and wide-ranging and we explained exactly of what it comprises to each focus group. By the end of the process:

- a) Individual young people, families and their carers will have expressed and elaborated upon their views, aspirations and needs in relation to Preparing for Adulthood in terms of Good health, Employment, Independent living/housing, Family, friends/relationships and involvement in the community.
- b) Individuals will have timely provision of information, advice and support they each require to attain a good life as they move into adulthood and beyond.
- c) Participants will also have expressed views on the Preparing for Adulthood experience that they should expect to have and what would improve the experience further. Their views will be analysed and collated to inform the Council's strategy in this area.

### **Statutory Context**

#### **The Children and Families Act 2014**

The Children and Families Act 2014 reinforces the importance of promoting high aspirations and of achieving better outcomes and greater independence for young people with special education needs (SEN).

The Act modified and reformed the arrangements for children and young people with SEN, including disabled children, giving children, young people and their parents greater choice and control up to the age of 25.

Part 3 of the Act contains provisions following the green paper: 'Support and aspiration: a new approach to special educational needs and disability' published by the Department for Education on 18 March 2011 and the follow up 'Progress and next steps' published 15 May 2012.

Local Authorities must involve young people, parents and carers in decision making, have due regard to the overarching wellbeing duty of the Care Act 2014 (Section 1(a)) in respect of parent carers and be mindful of the duty to integrate services across social care, health and education where it promotes and improves wellbeing of individuals and the SEN provision in the local area.

#### **The Care Act 2014**

Part 1 of The Care Act 2014 consolidates key elements from over a dozen different Acts of Parliament into a single, modern framework for care and support. It reforms how the law works, prioritising individual wellbeing for adults with care and support needs over

the age of 18, with a particular focus on person-centred practice and outcomes, giving people choice and putting people in control of their care and support.

The intended outcome of the Care Act 2014 is that people's wellbeing, needs and goals are prioritised, so that individuals will no longer feel like they are struggling against the system to get the care and support they need.

The Act emphasises the importance of preventing, reducing and delaying the need for care, putting people in control, at the centre of their care and support.

It is important to note, and to implement in practice, the legal basis for co-production of Care plans contained within Section 24 of the Care Act. It's a principle of good practice that receives strong reinforcement in the statutory guidance, meaning that everyone who is aware of it should treat it as the norm.

Local Authorities must promote people's wellbeing and independence, rather than waiting for people to reach a crisis point. For the first time, the legislation puts carers on a par with those for whom they care. Local Authorities must have regard to the importance of achieving a balance between the individual's wellbeing and that of any friends or relatives who are involved in caring for the individual.

### **The Equality Act 2010**

It is also vital for practitioners to be aware of the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, particularly the sections relating to the Protected Characteristic of Disability with regard to housing, employment provisions, education and access to goods and services.

Practitioners also need to ensure that young people are at the centre of planning and participate in this process – this includes having their voice heard, individual outcome-focused assessments based on need, client-held Preparing for Adulthood documentation and the transition to adult services taking place only when the young person is ready.

### **Practical Considerations for Officers and Practitioners**

The relationship and alignment between the Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014 must be carefully considered and realised in practice in order to create a meaningful and effective strategy and Action Plan (see "Responsibilities" below), focusing upon:

- Outcome and Wellbeing-focussed approaches to Preparing for Adulthood
- Assessment and planning
- Joint Commissioning, Personal Budgets & Direct Payments
- Information, Advice and Support

## **What is Preparing for Adulthood?**

Preparing for Adulthood will begin at age 14 (Year 9) and discussions about the future will be raised at the young person's annual school review.

The education, health and care plan (EHCP) continues up to the age of 25 if the young person remains in education or training. If the young person chooses to leave education or training, they will be supported until the age of 18.

Young people and their families will be encouraged and supported to make an active contribution to their education, health and care plan and reviews. This will enable them to work towards achieving their individual aspirations and life outcomes.

Four key outcomes have been identified and prioritised by young people nationally as the most important outcomes they want and need when talking about and planning for adulthood and the future.

These four outcomes are:

- Independent living/housing
- Employment
- Good health
- Family, friends/relationships and involvement in the community

We used the four outcomes to design and develop key questions which were then posed to participants

## **The workshops held by Thurrock Coalition**

Thurrock Coalition ran 4 consultation and engagement workshops of approx. 3 hours in duration. These were held across the borough, at The Beehive and Treetops school and Online with 37 Young people, 17 professionals and parents and carers, sourced from across the Thurrock Coalition networks.

## **Audience/Participants**

- Individual young people with SEN and/or various impairment types:
- Two workshops at Treetops School (37 participants)
- Parents, Families and, Carers
- Professionals (17 participants) working in the sector with relevant knowledge, skills and experience of at least one of the 4 key domains of Preparing for Adulthood.

**When**

- Q4 of 2017/2018 – approx. to take place either side of February half term 2018 and throughout March 2018

**Where**

- Various venues (see above)

**Benefits of implementing a Preparing for Adulthood Strategy for Thurrock**

- a) Once implemented, an effective and meaningful Preparing for Adulthood Strategy, informed by the views, aspirations and needs of Individual young people, families and their carers will mean that:
  - i) Young People in Thurrock will benefit from a good transition process into adulthood.
  - ii) Thurrock Council, partners, stakeholders and agencies will work together with young people and their families towards maximising their independence, based on young people's own aspirations for social and community inclusion, accommodation, education, employment and quality of life.
  - iii) Young People and their families will be supported from early teens into their early adulthood by services working together to maximise independence, by:
    - i. Promoting service user and carer independence
    - ii. Maximising opportunities for people to live in their chosen setting
    - iii. Reducing the use of residential placements
    - iv. Developing personalised services

The Preparing for Adulthood process will need to be phased over a period of time to allow young people to adjust.

**Embedding the Workforce Planning Outcome Statements across all Local Authority Adult Social Care Strategies**

We suggest that the following outcomes that emerged from the Thurrock Coalition Workforce Planning Exercise be implemented into the Preparing for Adulthood Strategy for Thurrock as well as all subsequent Adult Social Care strategies in the borough:

The views, experiences, issues and identified outcomes from all 4 Workforce Planning Focus Groups (held throughout September and October 2011) were analysed for commonality from which the following were extrapolated:

**Agreed outcome – A** - I feel I have choice and am in control of the services I receive and they meet my needs

**Agreed outcome – B** - I feel I have been listened to and understood and am in control of the assessment process

**Agreed outcome – C** - I feel confident that social care staff know what they are doing. Social care policies are clear and understood by everyone.

**Agreed outcome – D** - I feel all relevant information about me is shared appropriately and with my knowledge.

**Agreed Outcome – E** - I understand what is available to me both in my community and from health and social care.

**Agreed outcome – F** - I feel recognised as an individual, able to make decisions for myself and my own contribution to society.

## Principles

### **Thurrock Council articulates its vision as follows:**

An ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future.

### **Thurrock Council articulates its priorities as follows:**

**People – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay.**

This means:

- high quality, consistent and accessible public services which are right first time
- build on our partnerships with statutory, community, voluntary and faith groups to work together to improve health and wellbeing
- communities are empowered to make choices and be safer and stronger together

**Place – a heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future.**

This means:

- roads, houses and public spaces that connect people and places
- clean environments that everyone has reason to take pride in
- fewer public buildings with better services

**Prosperity – a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations.**



This means:

- attractive opportunities for businesses and investors to enhance the local economy
- vocational and academic education, skills and job opportunities for all
- commercial, entrepreneurial and connected public services

Add to these aims the principle of Personalisation, as defined by the Department of Health<sup>4</sup>: as meaning that “every person who receives support, whether provided by statutory services or funded by themselves, will have choice and control over the shape of that support in all care settings”.

Whilst Personalisation as a concept is frequently associated with direct payments and personal budgets, under which individuals with care and support needs can choose the services that they receive and the manner in which they receive them, personalisation also requires that services are tailored to the needs of every individual, rather than delivered in a one-size-fits-all approach.

It also encompasses the provision of improved information and advice on care and support for families, investment in preventive services to reduce or delay people’s need for care and the promotion of independence and self-reliance among individuals and communities. As such, personalisation has significant implications for everyone involved in the social care sector. The key test of personalisation’s success is the extent to which it improves the lives of individuals and their carers.

The government’s Care and Support 2020 paper<sup>5</sup> – provides a framework for action in this regard. It states that:

*“We can improve care and reduce the need to use health and care services by enabling more of our citizens to build up the knowledge, skills and capabilities they need to manage their own care and symptoms. We will achieve this by engaging communities, supporting carers, and developing volunteering in and partnerships with the charitable and voluntary sector. We can develop access to high-quality advice and support at the earliest opportunity. Enabling citizens to interact with existing and new services that are more convenient and efficient will increase satisfaction and reduce costs. A number of new service models will be largely or entirely self-directed...”*

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<sup>4</sup> See

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/SocialCare/Socialcarereform/Personalisation/index.htm>

<sup>5</sup> See: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/personalised-health-and-care-2020/using-data-and-technology-to-transform-outcomes-for-patients-and-citizens#enable-me-to-make-the-right-health-and-care-choices>

This framework highlights the fact that it is vital to be aware of the drive to promote autonomy and independence alongside local integrated services and support.

### **Thurrock Coalition - A Solution-focused approach to Consultation and engagement**

In trying to make sure that this planned approach works for people who are Preparing for Adulthood, the consultation and engagement workshops were carried out using a solution- focused methodology. Rather than being told about something and asked their opinions or being asked what problems they had, they were asked to talk about what they hoped and expected to for the future and what they expected to receive from the Council in terms of support, advice and information.

### **Collated findings from Preparing for Adulthood Consultation and Engagement Initiative**

#### **The Priorities of Preparing for Adulthood**

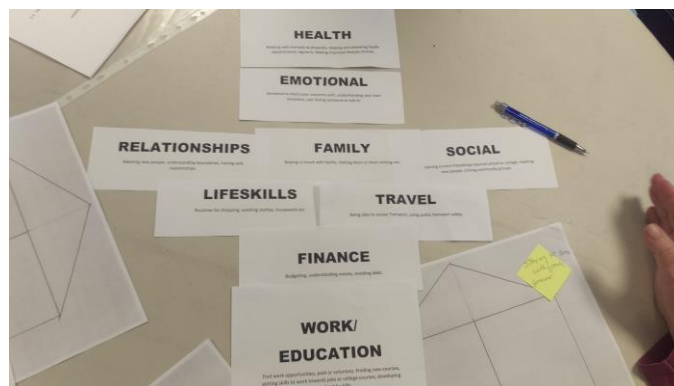
We started each session by asking the groups to arrange and organise the key areas in order of priority or importance to them.

### The Priorities of Preparing for Adulthood

**Group A1**



**Group A2**



**Discussing a logical order in which to prioritise the elements that make up a good life and a smooth pathway to Preparing for Adulthood**

### Findings:

As the above illustrates, although “Health” was seen as a top priority by all groups, no other key area was given the same degree of importance. This highlights the significance of treating each person as an individual, each with their own expectations, plans and ideas about what the future holds for them in terms of Preparing for Adulthood and beyond.

### Key identified areas:

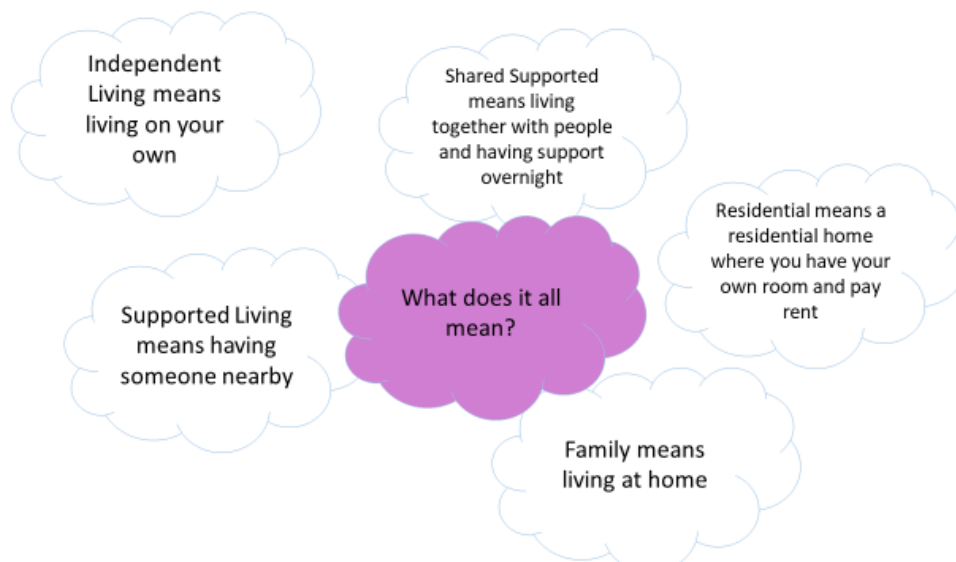
#### Independent Living

We provided each group of individuals with 5 different future housing options and asked them to describe what each “setting” meant to them. We then asked each individual to think about where they would like to live and how old they think they will be when they live in or move to each setting.

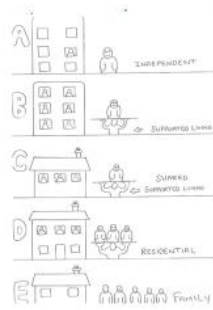
We asked each group to imagine a life where you are able to live as independently as possible, and to talk about:

- What does independence look like for you?
- Where would you like to live?
- What does it look like?
- What help would you need?

Their answers are set out below:



“Where would you like to live, and how old do you think you’ll be when you live there?”



- Group A: 31 individuals
- Group B: 6 individuals



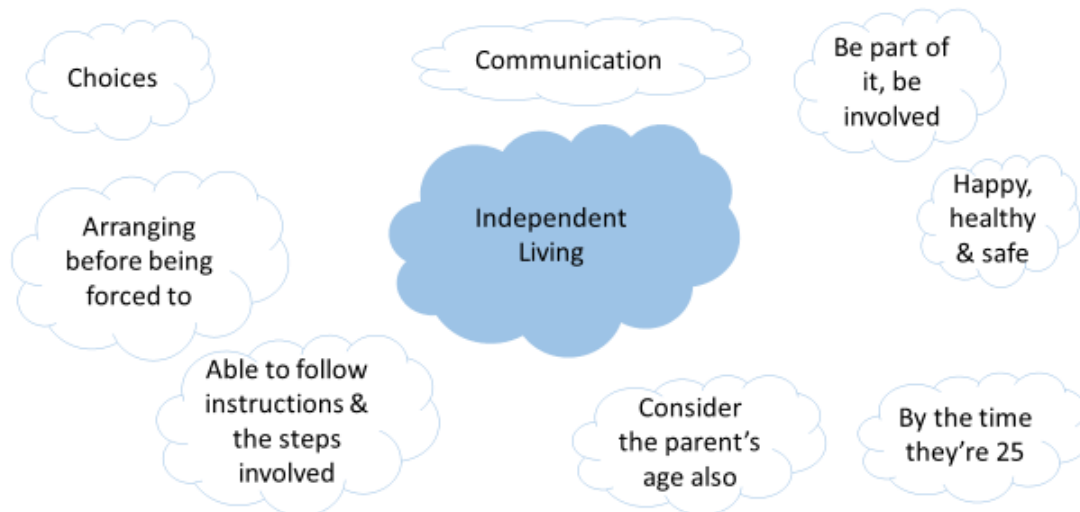
## Independent living – Treetops Group A

Setting	Age 17-19	At age 20	At age 21-22	At age 25	At age 28 - 30	At age 35	Total
A – Independent Living	3	4	1	3	3	1	15
B – Supported Living	1	1	1				3
C – Shared Supported Living			2				2
D – Residential							0
E - Family	2	7	1	1			11
	6	12	5	4	3	1	31

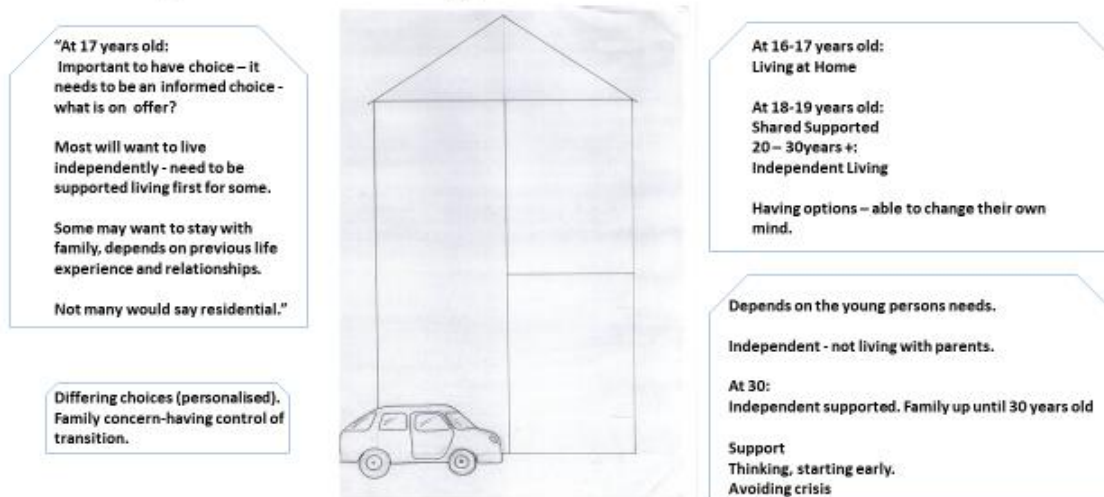
## Independent living – Treetops Group B

Setting	Age 17-19	At age 20	At age 21-22	At age 25	At age 28 - 30	At age 35	Total
A – Independent Living		4					
B – Supported Living		1					
C – Shared Supported Living		1					
D – Residential							
E - Family							
		6					6

## Views of Parents, family members and Carers



## Independent Living – Views of Professionals



### Findings:

#### Individuals

The groups showed a good understanding of the various concepts. However, we ensured that we explained that Independent Living didn't simply mean living on your own, but that you could exercise choice and control, still visit family and in fact that:

*Independent living is the daily demonstration of human rights-based disability policies. Independent living is possible through the combination of various environmental and*

*individual factors that allow disabled people\* to have control over their own lives. This includes the opportunity to make real choices and decisions regarding where to live, with whom to live and how to live. Services must be available, accessible to all and provided on the basis of equal opportunity, free and informed consent and allowing disabled people flexibility in our daily life. Independent living requires that the built environment, transport and information are accessible, that there is availability of technical aids, access to personal assistance and/or community-based services. It is necessary to point out that independent living is for all disabled persons, regardless of the gender, age and the level of their support needs.<sup>6</sup>*

The most popular options amongst individuals were either eventually living independently or living with family (at various points between the ages of 17 and 35).

One participant said they would like to start in Supported living, move to Shared Supported Living and then to Independent Living.

The amount of support the individuals said they would need ranged from 14 – 20 hours a week to live independently, with one individual needing 24-hour support in supported living.

#### **Findings:**

##### **Parents, family members and carers**

The group emphasised the importance of communication with all involved and forward planning when supporting young person in terms of independent living/housing solutions alongside community safety and having choice and control over the future.

#### **Findings:**

##### **Professionals**

There was recognition of the fluidity of independent living solutions, and that decisions and choices may change as the person gets older. There was also an emphasis upon the importance of Choice and control and that any choice made by young people must be an informed one. For this to work, all involved need to know precisely what is on offer and what is available to them. There was a discussion around the fact that most will want to live independently eventually and that may need to be in a supported living setting for some initially, and some may want to stay with family, but this would likely depend upon previous life experience and relationships. And finally that not many young people would choose to move into residential settings.

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<sup>6</sup> As defined by the UNCRPD 2006 and the European Network on Independent Living. Available at: <http://enil.eu/independent-living/definitions/>

### Suggested Actions:

- Young people should be supported to understand the full breadth of what is meant by Independent Living, and to receive timely information, advice and support on how the Social Model of Disability can have an empowering effect upon their outlook, daily lives and future plans.
- Develop a Thurrock-specific programme of Co-Produced Parent Engagement (as early as possible in the process) that is: Ongoing, holistic, effective and meaningful.

### Employment

Here, we asked the Groups to imagine a life where you are able to access, make use of and be supported to find and stay in a job/training opportunity, and to think about things like:

- What kind of job do you want?
- The work experience opportunities in the local area
- The importance of job coaching
- Clear pathways or help to find a job
- Voluntary, supported internships, traineeships and apprenticeships
- Information & advice to support you need around you to make a decision

We asked the Groups of young people to arrange and organise the key areas in order of priority or importance to them. Building confidence, personal appearance and understanding money were seen as the most important in this area. (See below).



## Employment – Treetops Group A

- What would you like to do after you leave school?

Where?
More support
College - *
Work - *
Voluntary - *
Other
The Best thing about getting a Job
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having new experiences</li> <li>• Meeting new people</li> <li>• Starting low and building up</li> <li>• Learning something</li> <li>• Starting on a placement</li> </ul>

- Where would you like to work?
- What Skills would you need?

In a pub	In a shop
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cleaning tables</li> <li>• Washing up</li> <li>• Health &amp; Safety</li> <li>• Being friendly to customers</li> <li>• First aid</li> <li>• Money</li> <li>• Maths</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stacking shelves</li> <li>• Health &amp; Safety</li> <li>• Being friendly to customers</li> <li>• First aid</li> <li>• Money</li> <li>• Maths</li> <li>• Making notes</li> </ul>

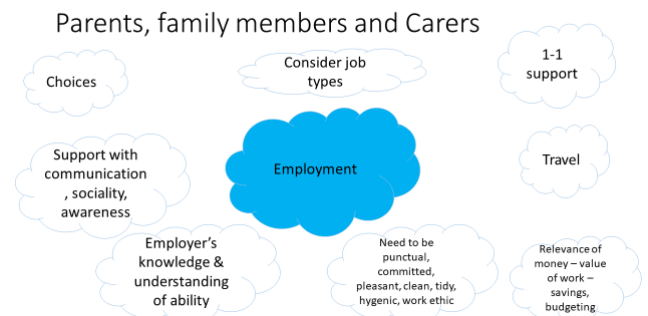
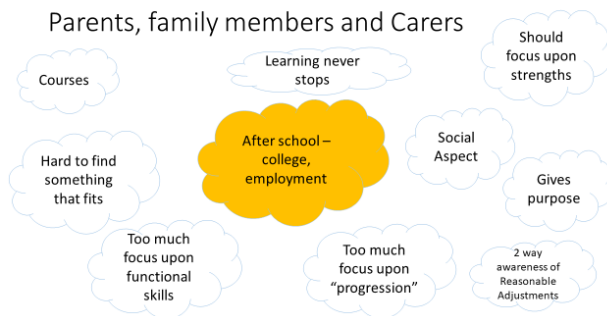
## Employment – Treetops Group B

- What would you like to do after you leave school?

After school, I want to
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get a job as a teaching assistant working with young children. I have work experience at Woodside</li> <li>• Get support with Housework, cooking, reminding me each day</li> <li>• Work as a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ICT Programmer</li> <li>• Lift Engineer, after I get my PEO Certificate</li> <li>• Shop Assistant – in a clothes shop</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

- Where would you like to work?
- What Skills would you need?

To get a job, I would need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel training, to get the bus</li> <li>• To go to Lakeside</li> <li>• Have a Plan B</li> <li>• Life Skills</li> <li>• Cooking, Washing up &amp; shopping</li> </ul>
Where would I find out about a job?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adverts</li> <li>• Job Centre and Agencies</li> <li>• Shop windows</li> <li>• Online</li> </ul>





**Findings:****Individuals**

The Groups identified College, Work/Employment and Voluntary opportunities as the top 3 potential options for future opportunities alongside looking forward and feeling positive about new experiences, new people, starting on a placement and progressing through a career.

A number of key skills were identified, including: daily living skills; cooking, washing, cleaning, travel training, money, maths, making notes.

Crucially, there was a recognition of the importance of finding a job, using the internet or adverts in shop windows. However, no one in the Groups had found or used any adverts and did not know where the nearest JobCentre was located.

In addition, there was little understanding or awareness across the groups of the value of work, money or the need to purchase food and pay utility bills etc.

**Findings:****Parents, family members and carers**

The parents we spoke to said that it was often hard to find something suitable for their son/daughter, and that there is currently too much focus upon functional skills and progressing through courses and educational settings. Further, that there needs to be a variety of choices available and a two-way awareness and appreciation to implement Reasonable Adjustments in terms of support with communication, accessibility, sociality and travel training.

**Findings:****Professionals**

The professionals who participated in the initiative highlighted the potential options open to individuals after they leave school. These being: College, further education, finding an apprenticeship, volunteering or job, or doing nothing. The importance of having a plan (and a backup plan) was also emphasised, alongside key skills of English, maths, and money/budgeting skills.

**Suggested Actions:**

- Introduce a focus into the curriculum for young people looking at finding a job, using the internet safely. Ensure that young people are supported and able to locate, identify and use any volunteering/employment/placement opportunities or adverts and that they are familiar with the location of nearest JobCentre in

their local area.

- In addition, work with young people and all relevant stakeholders to develop understanding or awareness of the value of work, money and the need to purchase food and pay utility bills etc.

### **Good Health**

Under this heading, we asked participants to Imagine a life where you are able to access, make use of and be supported to have the best possible health and well-being.

What has to happen to make sure that you have all the **information** and **support** you need?

Think about things like:

- Managing my health as I move towards adulthood.
- Registering with a GP from age 14
- Accessing Dentist and Optician Services
- Being offered and taking up an annual health check
- Taking part in Person Centred Approaches, in partnership with Education and Social Care Professionals as part of the EHC planning process.

**The feedback from Young People fell into 3 related categories, namely:**

- **Lots of exercise**
- **Healthy eating**
- **Playing sports – mainly football**

### **Findings:**

#### **Individuals**

When we explored the “Health” issue in conversations with young people, it was universally understood to be important, but only in terms of “Healthy Eating”, “Exercise” and “Football.” Moreover, that visits to the doctor or hospital primarily took place at the instigation of parents or families. There was no real understanding or awareness of the need to register with a G.P., attend regular health checks in order to keep well.

#### **Suggested Actions:**

- Work with individuals, parents, carers, family members, professionals in education, health and social care to develop a programme for increased understanding and awareness for young people of the overarching importance

of register with a G.P., attend regular health checks in order to keep well.

- Work alongside Health Sector and Voluntary Sector partners to actively publicise the availability of Annual Health Checks for Disabled People in Thurrock, providing details of when, where and how to go about obtaining an Annual Health Check.

### **Friends, relationships and community**

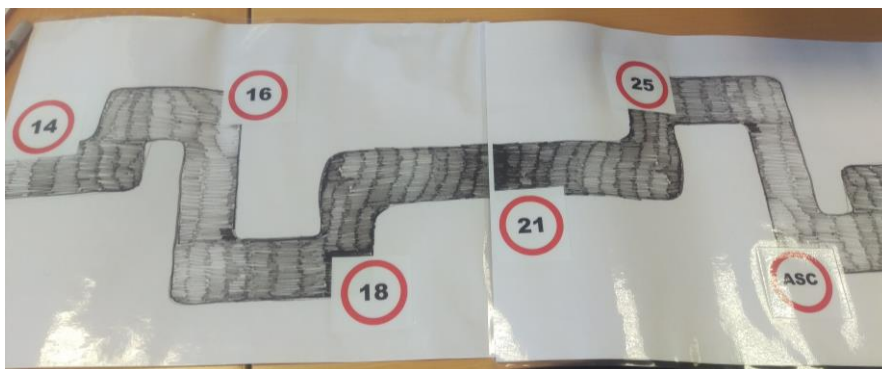
In relation to this key area we asked the Groups to Imagine a life where you are able to make a positive contribution to the community in which you live.

Think about things like:

- Having an active social life
- Spending time with friends/peers outside school/college
- Developing and maintaining friendships and relationships
- Building my confidence
- Enjoying safe access to the community

We developed a Community Roadmap to represent the Preparing for Adulthood pathway, and relevant milestones for planning and accessing health services, employment support, independent living accommodation and local communities.

We asked individuals to populate the Roadmap with the organisational logos of various places and support organisations located in Thurrock, and to think about when they might need to access each one.



**Findings:**

**Individuals**

There were varying degrees of knowledge and understanding from individuals in terms of identifying the range of support organisations and community based services (this was also the case for Parents, carers, family members as well as professionals). We explained what each organisation does, what support they offer.

Unsurprisingly, the specific ages at which the participants said they may want to access and make use of the various services differed between groups. However, the following discernible trend emerged:

Access to which services?	From which age?
Access to school, Health services (GP) and support, Friends, family, Youth Groups, online gaming/YouTube	From age 14-16
Access to independent living and employment support opportunities from Thurrock Centre for Independent Living (TCIL) as well as wanting to engage with Health-related support from GPs and Healthwatch.	At/around age 16
Access to Thurrock Coalition, Advocacy, Carers Support, Housing information and the organisations in The Beehive.	At/around age 18
Access to Citizen’s Advice, Supported Living Solutions – TLS, Shared Lives, Employment information from JobCentre Plus, Support from Local Area Co-ordinators.	Between Age 21-25
Access Thurrock Council Services (Not all sure what the Council does) and Adult Social Care with help with daily routine and independent living.	Post-25

**Findings:****Parents, family members and carers**

Parents identified the importance of having the family at the centre of any community networks, as the base that supports everything else. Choice and control was also seen as vital in terms of recognising the difference between individual social isolation and actively choosing time alone.

Other topics of discussion in this key area included:

- Familiarity with home environments and accessing the local area
- When accessing the community, it's important to foster understanding and inclusion, particularly where a young person may be vulnerable but presents as more able in certain situations.
- When accessing Community resources & support - Road & Community Safety, including travel training is important, alongside greater operator awareness and understanding (links also to Employer awareness[above]) of Reasonable Adjustments pursuant to the Equality Act 2010.

**Findings:****Professionals**

We asked professionals to identify a range of support organisations and community based services, and also to note down any that we may have missed in relation to Preparing for Adulthood. There was good general awareness across the various providers/groups of professionals, with potential to increase understanding of the breadth of services and support offered by the range of organisations. This could be addressed with wider publicity around Advice and Information and the Local Offer, as often, people "don't know, what they don't know" and increasing awareness for all involved will improve access to relevant support.

**Suggested Actions:**

- Publicise availability and scope of Advice and Information under Section 4 of the Care Act 2014<sup>7</sup> and the awareness and availability of Advice and Information by way of the Local Offer under Section 30 of the Children & Families Act 2014<sup>8</sup>.
- Build awareness of Community Resources beyond providers, for Individuals, parents, carers and family members.

<sup>7</sup> See: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/section/4/enacted>

<sup>8</sup> See: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/notes/division/4/3>

## **Responsibilities & Suggested Actions**

Following the Preparing for Adulthood Consultation and Engagement initiative, Thurrock Council officers need to draw up an Action Plan based on their understanding of the issues raised and the Report and Recommendations submitted to them by Thurrock Coalition.

We have collated the Suggested Actions and Good Practice Guidance below:

### **Independent Living**

- Young people should be supported to understand the full breadth of what is meant by Independent Living, and to receive timely information, advice and support on how the Social Model of Disability can have an empowering effect upon their outlook, daily lives and future plans.
- Develop a Thurrock-specific programme of Co-Produced Parent Engagement (as early as possible in the process) that is: Ongoing, holistic, effective and meaningful.

### **Employment**

- Introduce a focus into the curriculum for young people looking at finding a job, using the internet safely. Ensure that young people are supported and able to locate, identify and use any volunteering/employment/placement opportunities or adverts and that they are familiar with the location of nearest JobCentre in their local area.
- In addition, work with young people and all relevant stakeholders to develop understanding or awareness of the value of work, money and the need to purchase food and pay utility bills etc.

### **Health**

- Work with individuals, parents, carers, family members, professionals in education, health and social care to develop a programme for increased understanding and awareness for young people of the overarching importance of register with a G.P., attend regular health checks in order to keep well.
- Work alongside Health Sector and Voluntary Sector partners to actively publicise the availability of Annual Health Checks for Disabled People in Thurrock, providing details of when, where and how to go about obtaining an Annual Health Check.

### **Friends, relationships and community**

- Publicise availability of Advice and Information under Section 4 of the Care Act 2014<sup>9</sup> and Advocacy Support under Section 67 of the Care Act 2014<sup>10</sup> for adults and carers and the awareness and availability of Advice and Information by way of the Local Offer under Section 30 of the Children & Families Act 2014.<sup>11</sup>
- Build awareness of Community Resources beyond providers.
- Build understanding and awareness of Community Resources for Individuals, parents, carers and family members.

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<sup>9</sup> See: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/section/4/enacted>

<sup>10</sup> See: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/part/1/crossheading/independent-advocacy-support/enacted>

<sup>11</sup> See: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/6/notes/division/4/3>

## The Preparing for Adulthood Good Practice Guidance

We also suggest adopting the following good practice guidance<sup>12</sup> as it provides a useful summary on Responsibilities and Actions for Local Authorities to take in relation to Preparing For Adulthood:

### Outcomes and Wellbeing

- Use this Report and Recommendations Report to develop a shared vision for Preparing for Adulthood with young people, families and key stakeholders who work with young people aged 14-25.
- Raise awareness of what helps disabled people achieve employment, independent living, community inclusion, and good health, to young people, families and across all agencies.
- Develop capacity and skills in outcome-focused support planning across children's and adults' services. Staff and professionals who are developing EHC plans, including Child's Needs Assessments and care and support plans will need to develop common skills in person-centred practice, developing and monitoring outcomes, integrated support plans and personal budgets. Training staff together can lead to efficiencies and a more seamless experience of transition to adulthood for disabled young people.
- Develop a lifespan approach to outcomes. Ensure that professionals at each stage understand their role and responsibilities and how they relate to other stages of a young person's preparation for adulthood.

### Assessment and planning

- Ensure that there is a representative from adult social care on the local authority's SEND implementation board. Ideally this person would have responsibility for implementing the Care Act 2014 locally.
- Ensure that the process for Adults' Needs Assessment and Care and Support plan for young people post-18 are aligned to the assessment and planning process for the care element of an EHC plan.
- Work in partnership with families, young people and other professionals to ensure planning enhances and supports wider aspirations.
- Establish which professional, with good knowledge of adult care and support services, is responsible for CNAs, ensuring they work with those designing the coordinated assessment and EHC planning process.
- From Year 9 ensure young people and families receive information on how to

<sup>12</sup> See: <http://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk>



request a CNA. This can be done as part of their Year 9 review. If the young person is likely to be eligible for care and support post-18 it is important that Adult social care is part of transition reviews from Year 9. The local authority should work with schools to identify the best way to achieve this and to inform the preparing for adulthood planning process.

### **Joint commissioning and personal budgets**

- The joint commissioning strategy, the Thurrock Health and Wellbeing strategy and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) should be informed by young people, their families, information in a young person's EHC plan and the Local Offer. Young people and families can play a valuable role in quality checking, the results of which should feed back into the strategy.
- Develop a process to allow the information from the EHC plan, including the CNA, and from personal budget holders' choices, to inform the Joint Commissioning Strategy.
- Ensure that the work streams around developing joint commissioning across the 0-25 age group and the Better Care Fund are joined up and that there is a common process being developed.
- Develop the market to ensure that there are quality services, which lead to the intended outcomes of the Children and Families Act 2014 and the Care Act 2014, that young people can buy with their personal budget.
- Local authorities should work with education and training providers, health, social care, employment and housing agencies to develop a range of post-16 support options that lead to better outcomes and more efficient use of resources.
- Explore how personal budgets across education, health and social care (and personal health budgets for young people eligible for NHS Continuing Healthcare post-18 or those in receipt of children's Continuing Care funding) can be integrated to develop personalised post-16 options and support that lead to better outcomes for young people.
- Ensure that young people and their families have access to good information, advice and support in relation to what is available and how to purchase it.

### **Information, Advice and Support**

- Develop the Local Offer in partnership with young people, parents, carers and professionals.
- Use the Local Offer to identify gaps in provision and feed into the joint commissioning strategy.
- Use the Local Offer to review and update the remit of IAS services for disabled

young people and those with SEN and their families, where required (e.g The Information, Advice and Support Services) and for disabled young people 18+ and their families (e.g. Disabled Peoples' User Led Organisations (DPULO) and other local authority IAS services).

- Ensure there is a strategic approach to developing good IAS for young people moving into adulthood.
- Explore how IAS can be developed to meet the new duties in the Children and Families Act 2014 as a single point of access signposting to other services.
- Ensure that professionals responsible for developing the Information and Advice service in the Care Act 2014 are working closely with those developing the Local Offer and IAS.
- Consider establishing a joint information and advice offer across all age groups, or across the 0-25 age group.

Now that this Consultation and Engagement Initiative has demonstrated what more needs to be done, officers need to develop, revise and review action plans and add timescales to the delivery of key staged improvements which will lead to a comprehensive appreciation of the needs of individual Preparing for Adulthood and demonstrate the Council's intentions to address them.

## **Conclusion**

This Report has detailed where Thurrock is now according to people who are Preparing for Adulthood and where they want to be, Thurrock Council are advised to consider the need to address the issues raised throughout the consultation and engagement process.

It is hoped that the above suggestions for areas of development in local social care service provision for individuals Preparing for Adulthood based on what individuals have said about their experiences and what they need for the future will assist and inform the drafting of Thurrock Council's Preparing for Adulthood Strategy and that it will be reviewed and refreshed periodically in co-production with individuals, parents, carers and professionals to ensure that services meet the needs of the community as they change over time.

**Thurrock Coalition – April 2018**