

LEAVERS COME FIRST NEWSLETTER

Monday 1st
September
2025



Welcome to this edition of our Leavers Come First Newsletter

This newsletter is packed with:

- 🎨 Chances to take part at different events with other young people and practitioners
- 📁 Opportunities to build your future
- 🧠 Tips and tricks for everyday life
- 💬 Real voices from young people like you

We believe your story matters. Your voice matters. And this newsletter? It's all for you.

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VOICE OF THE CHILD

APPRENTICE TEAM



Leona Jones



Jamie Perkins



Liam Bradley



Rhianna Nielsen

Hello!

We are the Voice of the Child Apprenticeship Team, a group with real lived experience. We're here to make sure you feel heard and to shout about things that could be better and ensure that your voice is at the heart of everything that is happening in children's services!

Recent Team Updates

Jamie is starting his driving lessons!



Rhianna plays a vital role in our Child Participation Working Group, which meets fortnightly.

Her role is to support activities and planning are not only suitable for children, but also shaped by their input. Rhianna also attends the events we run, offering hands on support and helping gather valuable feedback directly from the children involved.

bright spots

Brightspots survey is now completed!!!
Spend your voucher wisely!



Below are a few examples of events and activities that we have planned or been part of since our last newsletter!



Just a quick reminder: If you're preparing to move and need a bag to carry your personal belongings, your Personal Advisor can help you request for a Madlug Bag. 😊



Leona and Rhianna recently hosted a fantastic pizza-making event for children in care aged 8–14.

It was incredibly rewarding to witness new friendships blossoming among the young people, as well as the strong, supportive bonds they share with their carers.

The session was filled with laughter, creativity, and of course, plenty of delicious pizzas! With such a positive response, we're excited to keep the momentum going. Our 8–14 forum is being established as we speak, keep an eye on future newsletters for more information!!



yummm!



Liam recently headed to Arthog with a group of our young people for an action-packed day of outdoor adventure. The morning kicked off with a peaceful paddle along the River Severn in canoes, soaking in the calm surroundings and enjoying a riverside lunch under the open sky. In the afternoon, the energy shifted as the team took on the challenge of rock climbing.

Despite feeling the burn after a full morning on the water, spirits stayed high and everyone had a brilliant time!



Leona and Rhianna hosted another pamper session which was so lovely. We had make up, skin care, goodie bags, foot masks and hair styling!



Sibling day

Jamie ran this event and took a group of young people to the Sky Ropes adventure course at Telford Town Park.

The main goal was for siblings to do this together and rekindle maybe after a while of not seeing each other.

After arriving, everyone got suited and booted in the appropriate safety gear, ready for the challenge ahead. The instructors gave a short but informative demonstration to ensure everyone felt confident and safe before starting.

Throughout the activity, **there was a lot of laughter and encouragement as we watched each other take turns tackling the various obstacles.** It was great to see the young people supporting one another and building their confidence.

Some siblings who didn't want to participate in the Sky Ropes chose to ride bicycles around the park instead, which gave them a fun alternative and kept them engaged.

Towards the end of the session, we all took a “leap of faith” from the final platform—a moment filled with excitement, cheers, and lots of giggles. It was a fantastic way to wrap up the day, with everyone smiling and enjoying themselves.



The voice group

The voice group is a participation-led group that brings together young people to share their views, shape services, and influence decision-making. It's part of a broader strategy to ensure that children and young people are not just heard but actively involved in shaping the support they receive.

Liam and Jamie took part in the voice group outing for the day to Wenlock edge for a final summer activity before we get ready for the spooky season!!!

What a fantastic time our young people had at Wenlock Edge! We spent a thrilling day on a shooting range (we all loved this and was scarily good!), practiced our aim with archery (we didn't like this as much), and embarked on an treasure hunt

It wasn't all sunshine and rainbows, though. Some of the group went to get some hot chocolate, and Liam and Jamie went for a full English. They were both jealous of each other.

Even though it rained it couldn't dampen our spirits; we had a blast, and a friendly dog joined in on the fun!

The day wouldn't have been complete without some snacks.

It was a memorable day of adventure, laughter, and friendship. They all said they wanted to attend again!



Research Participation Opportunity!

Care-experienced
individuals needed for a new
research study!



Help us learn more about:

Your experiences and opinions of
placement changes within the UK
care system.

You can participate if you:

- Are aged between 16-24 years old.
- Are care-experienced.
- Have experienced at least 2 placement changes in the UK care system.
- Can speak English fluently.

How will you help?

You will participate in a 45-60 minute interview discussing your experiences of placement changes. You will also have the chance to share your recommendations on how young people could be better supported through these changes.

Participants
will receive a

£25

voucher

For more information, or to participate, email
Cody Varnish at cv339@bath.ac.uk



Economic
and Social
Research Council



UNIVERSITY OF
BATH

This study has been approved by the Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee at the University of Bath: 2713-3901



Reverse Mentoring sessions with Senior Management Team.

Each member of our team has been paired with a mentor from the Senior Management Team at Telford & Wrekin Council. We have been paired based on our interests, ideas, and career goals. This has created some brilliant opportunities for learning and connection.

Over the past few months, we've been meeting regularly with our mentors. Some of us catch up over drinks, go for a walk or talk over the phone. These sessions have helped us share ideas, build confidence, and explore new pathways. Leona and Fliss have teamed up for reverse mentoring. Hear from both of them below as they share the benefits of their experience.



Jamie Perkins :

I was nervous in meeting my mentor but getting to know him in an hour I learned a lot and understood a lot. I have shared my experience and ideas on what could be improved in due time and I think we have a lot to learn from each other - I'm glad to be paired with Darren to understand the ins and outs of his job role and how intends to help with supporting these young people. He has allowed me to be open and honest. With this being said I can develop my skills and more with Darren's help for further employment after this apprenticeship. In the future meetings I hope to share more on what I have discovered over my current time in the apprenticeship. We are also talking about current offers that can be improved or can be reworked I think it's key that a young person has a voice and that this will help Darren.



Jamie Perkins :

I was really excited when asked to be paired with Jamie through our reverse mentoring programme. The gist of the scheme is for lived experienced young people to share their experiences with members of the Senior Leadership Team to influence policies and practices that affect them and other care experienced individuals.

The scheme is still in its early days – but can already see so many benefits for both myself, the other mentees and the apprentices. On our first session, I asked Jamie what he fancied doing - with him enjoying the outdoors, we went for a walk in the Town Park and then ended up finding shelter as the weather turned and rain arrived... It was great to walk and talk and to hear about what is important to Jamie, where he aspires to be in work after his apprenticeship and what we can do at future sessions.

For me, it is about having open and honest conversations, sharing experiences and getting new perspectives, which is of great benefit in my role as Director of Children's Safeguarding and Family Support. For Jamie, it is a way for his voice to be amplified and heard at all levels of the Council. It is also a way to grow confidence and develop new skills.

Having the scheme has given me the opportunity to get to know Jamie more as well as learn about the realities of leaving care for our apprentices, any gaps they identify in support systems and ways in which we can then improve our offer ongoing with the voice of young people at the heart.

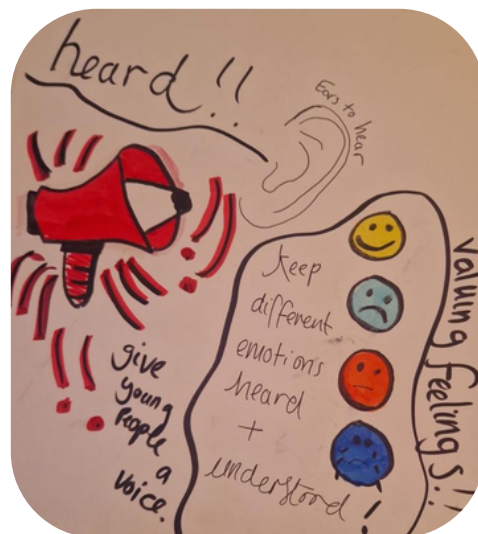
7 Child friendly telford wishes

The apprentices did some art work with Lola based around the 7 child friendly wishes which are :

- i am healthy
- i am heard
- i am safe
- i am acheiving
- i am independent
- i have friends and people i trust
- i am happy



Not only is this just a few words on 7 child friendly wishes on paper, we get to think back to our experiences and what would make us feel these ways and what did make us feel this way to fully promote what it means to feel each one.





YOUTH OFFER

In Telford and Wrekin, we are committed to developing and expanding the local youth offer, including activities and provision for young people in our local area linked to health and wellbeing; education, employment and training; arts; culture; and participation.

The Youth Partnership are committed to working together to ensure that we give all children and young people the right support and opportunities at a time and place that it suits them most and will also ensure that all young people in the local area have equal opportunities to access inclusive youth provision and that young peoples' voices are central to influencing the development of a local youth offer.

Additionally, the partnership will be working towards inclusive youth activities and provision for young people who may be vulnerable or 'at risk' for example young carers, those with additional needs, young people at risk of exploitation, care leavers to ensure our most vulnerable young people are well supported through positive activities.



you can find out about what activities are available for young people your age in your local community such as

- youth clubs
- sports
- dance
- performing arts
- wellbeing support for young people.



You can view upcoming events on:

<https://youthoffer.telford.gov.uk/ActivityProviders/calendarList>

You can view the website for the Youth offer:

<https://youthoffer.telford.gov.uk/>

National Databank Scheme

This scheme distributes free SIM cards offering mobile data, calls, and texts to people who meet specific eligibility criteria:

- **Aged 18 or over From a low-income household**
- **Limited or no access to the internet at home or on the go**
- **Unable to afford a monthly contract or top-up**



Get Boxes

These are compact, book-sized devices that provide an instant and secure Wi-Fi network, helping families get online quickly and safely



Smartphones and Laptops

The project also includes the distribution of smartphones and laptops to individuals who are digitally excluded.

Drop-in Support and Training

Free digital drop-in sessions are offered across Telford. These sessions help residents learn how to use devices, access online services, and build confidence in digital environments



Community Engagement

Posters have been used to raise awareness among professionals working with families, ensuring they know how to refer individuals to the scheme. I have also attended some team meetings to highlight the offer and encourage the uptake of the offer.

Partnerships

The project is supported by organisations like the Good Things Foundation and local services such as Sight Loss Shropshire, Forum 50+



Jolene Hallen is the overall Project Manager for the national databank scheme and Karen Stevens has now taken over from me distributing and communicating with staff members to give out phones, sims and get boxes.

To receive support with one of these anyone can get them from the south water library - just come and drop in and ask to speak to Karen Stevens.

events

TELFORD COMMUNITY BASKETBALL

MONDAY NIGHTS:
TELFORD COLLEGE
SPORTS HALL
(8-9:30PM)



TUESDAY
NIGHTS:
CHARLTON SCHOOL
SPORTS HALL
(7-9PM)

AGE GROUP: 16+

PRICING: FIRST SESSION FREE,
THEN £5 PER SESSION

Haybridge Rd, Wellington,
Telford TF1 2NP

The Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Festival Locations across Ironbridge, Ironbridge, Shropshire, TF8 7EG



The Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Festival returns from **Friday 12 to Sunday 14 September 2025**, celebrating the rich history and vibrant culture of the Ironbridge Gorge UNESCO World Heritage Site. This special weekend features a packed programme of events including **guided walks, arts, music, poetry, a street festival, and the much-loved Coracle Regatta.**

Saturday 13 September

The Rotary Club of Ironbridge Family Fun Dog Show takes place with event registration from midday. A full list of competition categories can be found [here](#).

Sunday 14 September

The popular Coracle Regatta returns to Dale End Park, offering coracle races, duck races and “have-a-go” activities for all ages.



4 May – 14 Sep

**Park Yoga - FREE outdoor yoga
at Bowring Park, Telford.**

Haygate Rd, Wellington, Telford TF1 1QX

Join us for FREE Park Yoga.

Every Sunday from 4th May until 14th September.

9.30am - 10.30am.

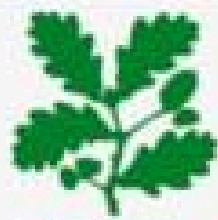
Look out for the Park Yoga flag.

No need to book.

Bring a mat or towel.



Telford & Wrekin
Co-operative Council



National
Trust



Archaeology experience!
we will be doing a number of sessions
with the National trust @ Attingham
park

Wednesday 9th July
10am-2pm

Introduction and Geophysics

Monday 22nd September
09:45am-3:30 pm
Excavation

Monday 13th October
10am-2pm
Finds processing

Leavers come first age 16-25

www.facebook.com/Leaverscomefirst



www.instagram.com/leaverscomefirst/



TWCatLeavers@telford.gov.uk

www.telford.gov.uk/leaverscomefirst

ARE YOU CURRENTLY PREGNANT OR HAVE
HAD A BABY IN THE LAST YEAR?

Baby first aid and accident
prevention

Thursday 18th September
10:30-2 @ The leavers lounge
meeting point house

Contact Louise to book your
place

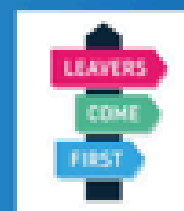
Louise.Bull@Telford.gov.uk
07530097681



Leavers come first age 16-25

 www.facebook.com/Leaverscomefirst

 www.instagram.com/leaverscomefirst/



TWCareLeavers@telford.gov.uk

www.telford.gov.uk/careexperience

Employment / Training

Supported internship – Starting this September!



Search apprenticeships

44,895 apprenticeships currently listed

What	Where
Enter a job or company	Enter a city or postcode
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Telford, Shropshire"/>
<input type="button" value="Search"/>	Browse by your interests instead

An apprenticeship is a paid job that combines on-the-job training with study, leading to qualification. It's a structured program where apprentices work alongside experienced professionals, gaining practical skills and knowledge while also dedicating time to formal learning and development, typically 20% of their working hours.

Search up :

<https://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/>
and you should be took to the image above! Put your desired location in to work and just search! A range of different apprenticeships will come up which you can apply for..

Are you looking for work?

Do you need training?

The Job Box in Southwater library are now doing supported internshipsthat you may be interested in.

But what is a supported internship?

They are basically an exciting opportunity to gain confidence and make steps towards a paid work placement

Speak to one of the Job Box advisors at Southwater One, Telford from:

Monday to Friday (10am-5pm)to find out more about them. Or call on 01952 388988



Indeed is a online website where you can job search! You can also upload your personal CV here and companies can reach out to you.

<input type="text" value="Job title, keywords or company"/>	<input type="text" value="City or postcode"/>	<input type="button" value="Find Jobs"/>
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You will be asked to put in a location for where you want to work or a job title. If you are looking to work in Telford simply type "Telford" OR if you know what job you want to do already, (for example) simply search in "hairdresser" and follow the steps to apply!

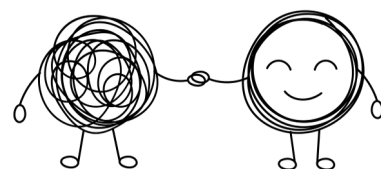
TELFORD COLLEGE

Telford also has a college. You can apply for apprenticeships through here or a range of other courses ranging from beauty courses to construction courses.

For more information, view their website!
<https://www.telfordcollege.ac.uk/>



HELP LINES!



Here are some additional contacts that may be use to you if you need any additional support. Remember it is ok to speak out and ask for support. You matter.



Shropshire domestic violence -
03003031191
24hr support - 08082000247

Support with addictions



03004564291
www.telfordstars.org



Are you in a
mental health
crisis?

NHS

111 - Mental health support 24/7

FREE online counselling



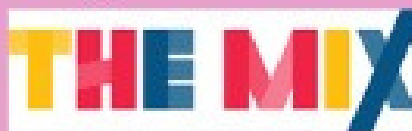
Anonymous online service
www.kooth.com

Support for suicidal thoughts



9am - midnight
08000684141
pat@papyrus-uk.org

Support for under 25s



www.themix.org.uk
08088084994

Emotional support 24/7



Free call 116 123
jo@samaritans.org

Support with personal crisis



www.youngminds.org.uk
Mon-Friday 9.30-4pm
08088025544

Mental health support



Mon-Friday 10am-5
07434869248
talk2@telford-mind.co.uk

Support to understand self-
injury



www.lifesigns.org.uk

IT'S OKAY
to ASK
for HELP

HINTS AND TIPS

In this weeks edition, we have included a **brownies recipe** as well as a **Mindfulness activity**!

BROWNIES

Ingredients

- 2 cups white sugar
- 1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup butter, melted
- 4 eggs
- 1/2 cup cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup walnut halves

Method

1. Gather all ingredients
2. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Grease a 9x13-inch pan.
3. Mix sugar, flour, melted butter, eggs, cocoa powder, vanilla, baking powder, and salt in a large bowl until combined.
4. Spread the batter into the prepared pan.
5. Decorate with walnut halves.
6. Bake in the preheated oven until top is dry and edges have started to pull away from the sides of the pan, about 20 to 30 minutes.
7. Let them cool then ENJOY!!



Mindful activity

1. Choose a song
2. Pick a track that feels calming or emotionally meaningful. Instrumentals or lo-fi beats work well.
3. Find a quiet space
4. Sit or lie down comfortably. Close your eyes if you feel safe to do so.
5. Listen with intention
6. As the music plays, focus only on the sound. Notice:
 - a. The instruments or layers
 - b. The rhythm or tempo
 - c. How your body feels as you listen
 - d. Any emotions or memories that come up
7. Breathe with the beat
8. Try syncing your breathing with the rhythm of the music. Inhale slowly, exhale slowly.
9. Reflect (optional)
10. After the song ends, jot down a few words or draw something that captures how you felt.



Hey there! We want to hear from You!



Thanks for reading this edition of our newsletter—we hope you found something inspiring, helpful, or just plain fun!

Please can i remind you of the Local offer for care leavers:
<https://www.telford.gov.uk/children-and-young-people/local-offer/who-is-the-local-offer-for/>

Got ideas? Thoughts? Something for to share which is helpful to other young people?

We'd love to hear from you! Whether it's:

- A cool tip or life hack you want to share
- A question you'd like answered
- A shout-out to someone awesome
- Or just your thoughts on what we should include next time...



Get in touch with the team!!

yourvoicematters@telford.gov.uk

