

The Promise Scotland's response to the Scottish Government's consultation on 'Moving On' from care into adulthood

September 2024

*"[The legislation around young people moving on from care in Scotland] aims to put the question **"is this what I would want for my child?"** front and centre for all professionals and service managers."*

[Staying Put Scotland](#), Scottish Government, October 2013

A note on terminology

This response mirrors the terminology of the Independent Care Review, which refers to young adults 'moving on' from childhood [and care] into adulthood. Wherever possible, 'system language' has been avoided, but on occasion it has been used in line with current and existing legislation for the purpose of clarity.

This response reiterates the urgent need to reframe this language. For example, to reflect that there is no point after which Scotland's care for its children will end, the term 'aftercare' must be replaced in legislation.

The term 'children' is used to mean those under the age of 18, in line with the UNCRC and 'young people' aged up to 26, in line with corporate parenting.

Background

[The Promise Scotland](#) is the organisation set up to support Scotland in its delivery of the implementation of the findings of the [Independent Care Review](#).

The Independent Care Review resulted in a promise that by 2030 Scotland's care experienced children and young people grow up feeling loved, safe, and respected. This response to the Scottish Government's consultation on support for young people moving on from care into adulthood should be read in the context of the seven reports produced by the Independent Care Review, specifically [the promise](#),

and alongside [Plan 24-30](#).¹ An outline of the conclusions of the Independent Care Review is attached to this response as an **Appendix**.

Crucially, this response is informed by the voices and experiences heard by the Independent Care Review, of the 'Moving On Experts' whose views were heard during the [100 Days of Listening](#)², and Who Cares? Scotland's Lifelong Rights report.³ It is concerning that, despite many areas of good practice and good intent, many of the experts who spoke to The Promise Scotland and Staf (Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare Forum) as part of the 100 Days of Listening work shared similar concerns and raised similar issues to those heard during the Independent Care Review.

This response outlines what must be in place for young people moving from childhood into adulthood and transitioning from care for the conclusions of the Independent Care Review to be realised, and the promise made to them kept. It recognises that Scotland has strong policy intent and legislation in this area—but identifies a number of areas for expansion and improvement. It calls for a renewed focus on better implementation and resourcing so that the rights of children and young people are upheld, the workforce feels better able and supported to develop strong and lasting relationships with children and young people and experiences of moving on from care are transformed.

Key messages

- The **views, experiences and rights** of children and young people must be the starting point for making changes to the current policy, practice and legislative landscape for children and young people in Scotland's 'care system' growing up into adulthood.
- Changes to the existing system must **meet the conclusions of the Independent Care Review** and what is set out in Plan 24-30.
- **The areas that are cluttering the existing policy and legislative landscape must be identified and addressed** so that fragmentation,

¹ Plan 24-30 is Scotland's plan, setting out where Scotland must be by 2030 to keep the promise and provides initial routemaps outlining specific steps to get there and support young people moving on from care. These routemaps will be developed collaboratively with the care community and the people and organisations working alongside them and will continue to evolve.

² '100 Days of Listening' was launched by Staf (Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare Forum) and The Promise Scotland to better understand how meaningful change can be made to the support available for care experienced people moving on from care. The final report is a culmination of the voices heard throughout the process and is available [here](#).

³ [LRC Report \(whocaresscotland.org\)](http://whocaresscotland.org)

confusion and overwhelm does not continue to be a barrier to young people leaving care ensuring their rights are upheld and their needs are met.

- There must be **clearer ways for children, families and members of the workforce to understand the impact of making changes** to orders on rights and entitlements.
- There are many examples of good practice across Scotland, led by dedicated and kind members of the workforce who are helping Scotland to keep the promise. **They must be supported, and this good work must be shared and built upon.**
- Scotland must grasp this opportunity to **create meaningful, long-lasting transformational change**. This includes, ensuring an adequately resourced workforce, a simplified and cohesive legislative, regulatory and policy landscape, and sufficient, consistent and reliable funding.
- Young people must have **strong and supportive relationships** with people they can trust to help them navigate moving into adulthood.
- The **current disparity and inconsistency in the implementation of continuing care must not persist**. The initial focus must be on implementing existing duties in a meaningful way, including understanding the systemic barriers and overcoming them. Additional resources will be required.
- There must be a **national understanding of the resources a smaller and more specialised 'care system' will require**—and how they can be best directed to achieve this. This will be determined by an **understanding of the needs of the children who will depend on this 'care system', including the small number with** disabilities or complex health conditions who will transition from immediately into adult social care to meet their needs.
- The **terms used in both policy and legislation to refer to children moving on into adulthood must be change**, including terms such as 'continuing care', 'throughcare' and 'aftercare'.
- Young people must **be encouraged to 'stay put' in their setting of care for as long as they need or want to**, in line with 'Staying Put Scotland'. Planning must include a presumption that children and young people will stay in care for longer and 'aftercare' will be provided until the age of 26. This should be clearly communicated to children and young people and members of the workforce.

- **A statutory 'right to return' must be introduced for young adults for whom Scotland has taken on parenting responsibility** and access must be available to services and supportive people to nurture care experienced young adults for as long as required.
- Decisions about children moving on from care into adulthood must be **made in their best interests**, rather than being influenced by financial or resource challenges.
- Access to 'continuing care' and 'aftercare' must be **extended to children and young people on Kinship Care Orders and young people in further and higher education**, so that this matches their length of study.
- Those with ongoing parenting responsibility must **demonstrate how they are delivering integrated support from childhood to adulthood**.
- There must be appropriate support services for care experienced adults once 'continuing care' and 'aftercare' duties 'end' at 26 so that there is **no 'cliff edge' of care and support**.
- All young care experienced people transitioning into adulthood from care must have **access to safe, secure and suitable housing**.

The need for an enabling environment to keep the promise

The views, experiences and rights of children and young people must be the starting point for making changes to the current policy, practice and legislative landscape for children and young people transitioning into adulthood from Scotland's 'care system'. [The promise](#) is clear: parenting does not stop at 18, there must be greater equity and opportunity and better and more consistent support for care experienced young adults; there must be a right to return to care; and services must be available to support and nurture young people moving on from care.⁴

The Promise Scotland does not underestimate the scale of the challenge ahead. The current 'moving on' landscape exists against a backdrop of recruitment and retention challenges, an extremely challenging fiscal environment, and a lack of capacity and resource, meaning the workforce is already struggling to fulfil their existing statutory duties in full. The workforce who contributed to the [100 Days of Listening](#) work noted they felt time poor, under resourced, unsupported, and restricted by the confines of

⁴ The Independent Care Review (2020) [The Promise](#), Pg 92-93

the system. This is not new - it was raised as an issue during the Independent Care Review.

This does not mean that the vision outlined by the Independent Care Review is unachievable. There are many examples of good and innovative practice and committed and caring members of the workforce working hard to make change happen. The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and the associated guidance and regulations set out to transform the experiences of children and young people moving on from care, with much to build on. But the current landscape has become cluttered and confusing for the workforce and for children and young people and care experienced adults.

National policy / legislation relating to children and young people moving on involves *at least* **five pieces of legislation** (the Children (Scotland) Act 1995; the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000; the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014; the Children (Scotland) Act 2020); and the Social Security (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill), **four statutory regulations / orders** (the Support and Assistance of Young People Leaving Care (Scotland) Regulations 2003; the Support and Assistance of Young People Leaving Care (Scotland) Amendment Regulations, 2015; the Aftercare (Eligible Needs) (Scotland) Order 2015) and the Council Tax (Discounts) (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2018) and **eight policy or guidance documents** (Supporting Young People Leaving Care in Scotland: Regulations and Guidance on Services for Young People Ceasing to be Looked After by Local Authorities, 2004; We Can and Must Do Better, Jan 2007; These Are Our Bairns, 2008; Staying Put Scotland, October 2013; and Guidance for implementing Parts 10 (Aftercare) (2015) & 11 (Continuing Care) (2015 & 2024) of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014)).

This national policy and legislation is also accompanied by a number of local-level planning documents and guidance.

Much of this is strong, but the myriad of different rights, entitlements and duties can be confusing—and implementation is significantly under-resourced. Research undertaken by CELCIS in March 2022 around 'continuing care' found *"the duty to provide continuing care is not... universally understood or provided."*⁵

Additionally, the terms used to refer to services and support for children and young people moving on into adulthood are complex and professionalised. [The promise](#) was clear that changes must be made to the 'language of care'.⁶ It must be easily understood, be positive and not create or compound stigma. The terms 'aftercare',

⁵ CELCIS (2022) ['continuing care': An exploration of implementation.](#)

⁶ The Independent Care Review (2020) [The Promise](#), Pg 87

“continuing care’ and ‘throughcare’ do not easily lend themselves to helping people understand what is being offered.

Scotland’s funding and resources are predominantly focused on responding to short-term challenges, meaning there is little long-term, sustainable funding available for ensuring Scotland’s workforce is well resourced to work in the way that will make the biggest difference to children moving on from care.

The vision outlined in [the promise](#) is a Scotland where more families are able to stay together and thrive, wherever safe to do so. This will result in a significantly smaller, more specialised ‘care system’. This opportunity to design a new future around that vision, rather than being constrained by what is possible in the current system, must be grasped for the reality to match the rhetoric.

In order to achieve this, there must be a renewed and laser sharp focus on ensuring an adequately resourced workforce, a simplified and cohesive legislative and policy landscape and sufficient, consistent and reliable funding. This must take into account the broader picture of transformational change, recognising that when significant changes are made in one part of the ‘care system’, impacts will be felt elsewhere. It must also recognise the links with other significant change agendas, including the importance of upholding the rights of children and young people as the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024 is enacted.

To #KeepThePromise by 2030:

- **The experiences of children, young people and adults must inform the changes currently being considered** rather than the boundaries of what the existing ‘care system’ and governance arrangements can currently deliver. The starting point must not be the system ‘as is’ but what children, families and care experienced adults need in order for their rights to be upheld and the changes demanded by the Independent Care Review to be realised in practice. Scotland’s ambition is transformational change: this must be led by new and innovative ways of developing policy and legislation for children moving on from care into adulthood. This includes ensuring the voices, views and experiences of children and young people with experience of care are at the heart of and continue to inform change.
- **The Scottish Government must identify the areas that are cluttering the existing policy and legislative landscape around children moving from care into adulthood and develop an action plan for how to address it. Fragmentation, confusion and overwhelm must not continue to be a barrier to**

young people moving on from care ensuring their rights are upheld and their needs are met. There must be a robust assessment of the various legislation and statutory guidance referred to above in order to determine what can be simplified and consolidated. **The Promise Bill must be used as an opportunity to clearly determines the rights of young people moving on from care into adulthood and the duties of duty-bearers in enabling and upholding these rights must be strongly considered.**

Decades of siloed work on policy and legislation has resulted in a discordant operating environment. This has resulted in policy and legislation that can appear to be in conflict with each other and competing agendas, such as the disparity between the rights and entitlements of Compulsory Supervision Orders and Kinship Care Orders. This can cause more harm than good and must be identified and addressed.

Children, families, care experienced adults and members of the workforce must be able to understand rights and entitlements and how to access them, and the legislative landscape must facilitate and not prohibit this.

Existing policy documents should must be reviewed, consolidated and updated, where appropriate. [The promise](#) is clear that there must be shared aims, values and knowledge for all those with ongoing parenting responsibilities for young adults, stating that too often those with statutory responsibility do not fully understand the extent of their obligations.

This work needs to be undertaken alongside local authorities, social work and children and young people to help understand what would make the most sense to them and what would support and improve local policy making and individual understanding of the current legislation and any future changes to come. It must also align with the incorporation of the UNCRC—the workforce must be supported to understand their duties and how to enable young people to know their rights.

The Promise Scotland has commissioned research to produce an options paper which will inform recommendations around ‘decluttering in the landscape’⁷ of the ‘care system’ and will share findings on this shortly.

- **Policy, legislative and practice changes must be thoughtfully considered and sequenced.** Policy and legislation must be an enabler for positive change and keeping [the promise](#). Layering on more legislation, guidance and policy changes, in the absence of clarity and cohesion, will only result in further

⁷ The Independent Care Review (2020) [The Promise](#), Pg 24

complexity. Any changes brought forward following this consultation must be clearly sequenced, resourced and aligned with other policy areas relevant to the lives of children, families and adults in and on the edges of the 'care system'. For example, explicit links must be made to the work on the redesign of the Children's Hearings System, the reform of foster care and the work to reimagine secure care. Children, families, care experienced adults and members of the workforce must not feel overwhelmed or be confused by these changes—but rather that they are being managed in a way that will help to improve their lives.

Sequencing must include evidence of an understanding that the composition of the 'care system' will change as the conclusions of the Independent Care Review are implemented. Planning must involve an understanding of the resources a smaller and more specialised 'care system' will require—and how they can be best directed to achieve this.

The expansion of rights and entitlements in a way that has been set out within this consultation response that aligns with the promise is not unrealistic or unachievable in a Scotland where the 'care system' is significantly smaller as the promise is kept.

That long-term vision must be kept in mind: small, incremental changes that layer on more complexity is not helpful, but clearly sequenced changes that align with the overall reduction in numbers of children in the formal 'care system' must be the overall goal. **The initial focus must be on implementing existing duties in a meaningful way** (see below).

- **The language used to talk about children moving on from care into adulthood must change**, including terms such as 'continuing care', 'throughcare' and 'aftercare'. A language of care that better reflects the views and experiences of children and care experienced adults must be developed, with the implications of changing statutory terms clearly understood.

The recommendations made by the Hearings System Working Group around language, which are being considered by the [Children's Hearings Redesign Board](#), and the work of Our Hearings Our Voice must be linked to this work. The upcoming consultation on the definition of care experience and other changes to the 'language of care' should include questions about potential changes to these terms.

- **Recruitment and retention challenges must be addressed** so that the workforce is well equipped to uphold the rights and meet the needs of care experienced people.

- **Funding for those providing care must be flexible, consistent, sustainable and long-term** to ensure the right support for young people moving from childhood into adulthood is available. This funding must not shift dependant on political priorities or focus but must remain constant to ensure children and young people’s rights are consistently upheld.
- **Good practice must be shared and scaled up, where appropriate.** Scotland will require the introduction of new legislation and policy to improve outcomes for young people in care growing up into adulthood; but much of the change required will be around practice and culture, and effective implementation of existing legislation and policy.

Planning and preparation for moving on from care into adulthood

[The promise](#) is clear that Scotland should behave and act like a good parent that supports young people as they enter adulthood. This includes ensuring that children unable to remain safely at home experience safe, loving and nurturing family life and strong relationships and connections with important people in their life—including members of the workforce. Encouraging and supporting young people toward a life of independence, self-reliance and stability means thinking about their individual hopes, aspirations and interests and considering how to maintain connection and contact with the people that matter to them. It also means that, as with all young people, moving away from home is not always linear—sometimes young people will need to stay at home or come home at various times.

Work is needed on Scotland’s policy and legislative framework to ensure it is set up to enable this—there are often not adequate resources available to realise the vision set out in documents like ‘Staying Put Scotland’ and uphold the rights of children moving into adulthood from care.

Young people have shared they regularly did not know what the future held for them and were often disconnected from and felt underrepresented in the limited planning processes that took place. It is apparent for some young people there is a lack of future planning for key transitions such as into independent living or higher education, which has a profoundly negative impact on young people’s outcomes.

The ‘Moving On’ Change Programme has learned that existing practice is often underpinned by the desire to not rush young people into thinking about adulthood and leaving care too early. However, the unintended consequence of this practice means moving on planning is not taking place until the child is aged 14 or 15. Planning must take place throughout a person’s care experience, and consideration

must be given to how decisions can hinder or strengthen a future positive move on from care.

This planning must include children's voices and there must be opportunities for them to fully participate in decisions which affect them (in line with the UNCRC and the provisions outlined in the Children (Scotland) Act 2020—which must be enacted). It must also include the important people in a child's life, including—where safe and appropriate—their birth family, given that many children will return home.

Children must know and feel that a concerted, proactive effort is being made by others around them to understand the relationships important to them that must be preserved, that people in their lives are working to understand their interests, strengths and dreams and that, as with all children and young people, there are people in their lives to help them plan their future and understand the future options available to them. Care experienced children must not feel anxious about what happens to them in the future — they must know that there are options available to help them to flourish in line with the expectations of the Independent Care Review.

The workforce must be supported to take ownership and know that it is their role to proactively plan alongside children in their care for their future. This includes ensuring they have the time and space to work relationally alongside children and young people. Care planning must be robust enough to withstand staffing changes so that the young person feels reassured that the hopes, aspirations and plans that they have been working on will be supported as they move towards adulthood.

The Hearings System Working Group heard concerns from children, families and care experienced adults that, at present, there is not a clear understanding about what needs to happen to 'exit' the Children's Hearings System – a key transition in a child or young person's life.⁸

Although Children's Services Plans in Scotland reflect an immense amount of good work and important services to keep [the promise](#) and support families to stay together, The Promise Scotland's own analysis of the most recent Plans indicate that some omit to comprehensively outline the services and support available for young people moving on from care into adulthood. For some local authorities, this particular group of young people are included within their Plans. However, for many, there are no clear plans or proposed provisions to put in place that will meet the distinct needs, rights, and entitlements of care leavers as they move into adulthood.'

To #KeepThePromise by 2030:

⁸ Hearings System Working Group (2023) [Hearings for Children](#)

- **Young people must have strong and supportive relationships with people they can trust to help them navigate moving from care into adulthood.** It is imperative that the workforce have the time, space and resource to develop these relationships and make strong connections.
- **Rules and regulations getting in the way of developing and maintaining relationships must be removed.**
- **All those with ongoing parenting responsibility must be able to demonstrate how they are delivering integrated support from childhood to adulthood.** This must be part of Children's Services Plans, in line with the expectations of Scotland's existing policy for children moving onto adulthood from care and Part 3 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014. The revisions to the guidance for Part 3 must take this into account.

All local authorities should review their 'transition services' and ensure that they have appropriate help and support in place for children and young people transitioning from care in line with current policy.

- **The provisions in the Children (Scotland) Act 2020 relating to children's participation and listening to their views in decisions that affect them must be enacted.**
- **Transition planning must start earlier**—this must never be about the 'system' and needs to involve discussions with children about their hopes, aspirations and future plans with the workforce proactively considering how they can support these.
- **Decisions about children moving on from care into adulthood must be made in their best interests,** rather than being influenced by financial or resource challenges. This is already Scottish Government policy but it is clear that at present some decisions are driven by pressure on resources and as a result children's rights are not being upheld. As stated previously, there must be a focus on ensuring sound implementation of existing policy and legislation—this will require additional resource, but the longer-term savings and the benefit to children's lives will be significant.
- **All important people in a child's life must be included in planning for a transition into adult life, including birth parents wherever possible.** The potential role of Family Group Decision Making to support decision-making at this stage of a child or young person's life should be explored.
- **There is a need for guidance to clearly set out Scotland's expectations for comprehensive planning processes that take account of a child's evolving**

capacity and individual needs. All young people transitioning from care must have access to pathway planning to support a move from care that recognises their rights as an individual, so that support is provided on a needs-led basis.

- **Transitions from care into adulthood must be appropriately planned, phased and staged, and take a needs-led approach which places less emphasis on the crescendo of a child's 16th birthday.** . There must be appropriate resources available for different career pathways, housing options and further education or training dependent on what a young person is interested in and wants to do.
- **Birthdays must be avoided as days on which to send letters, plan moves or create cliff edges of help and support.** Birthdays are supposed to be joyous occasions and not opportunities to be alerted to fundamental life changes.
- **Care planning must include a presumption that children and young people will remain in care for longer,** in line with 'Staying Put Scotland'⁹ and 'aftercare' will be provided until the age of 26. This should be clearly communicated to children and young people and members of the workforce (see below). Ensuring that this is the default position for local authorities must involve planning finances to guarantee every eligible young person's 'continuing care' and 'aftercare' entitlements.
- **There must be agreed and planned approach to young people transitioning from children to adult services** to ensure care experienced people have their needs met in a seamless and consistent manner. Where a young person has established a strong relationship with a member of the workforce, for example an advocacy worker or a mental health worker, there must be options for these relationships to continue.
- **Children, families and those working alongside them must understand what steps need to happen to 'exit' the Children's Hearings System.** This includes an understanding of the impact of different decisions, for example orders 'ending' and the impact that this can have on various rights and entitlements at specific points. The work to progress this recommendation from the Hearings System Working Group (recommendation 11.21) must continue at pace and must link to the next steps following this consultation.

⁹ This is an ask also included in CELCIS' March 2022 briefing/ research on the implementation of 'continuing care', available here: [continuing care report briefing.pdf \(celcis.org\)](https://www.celcis.org/continuing-care-report-briefing.pdf)

Accessing information, services and support

Care experienced young people and adults must have a right to access supportive and caring services for as long as they are required, which mirrors the type of support many families provide for their children.

The Independent Care Review heard that there is inconsistency, unfairness and inequity in relation to the provision of information about what rights individuals have, and what financial support they are eligible for.¹⁰ Through direct engagement with people with care experience, Staf also heard that the current system of support can be complex and confusing.¹¹ A lack of clear guidance in relation to rights and entitlements for care experienced young people has resulted in inconsistencies in practice and rights not being upheld.¹² Those care experienced young people and adults who were aware of their rights and entitlements noted this was because they held a strong relationship with a member of the workforce who championed their access to entitlements.'

The Independent Care Review heard that many care experienced young adults felt abandoned and ill prepared as they moved on from care into independent living and were often faced with challenges during that transition, including stress around financial instability, having limited knowledge of budgeting and managing household bills, and experience high levels of debt.

There is evidence that without financial literacy and education, many care experienced young people have little knowledge of how to budget and manage household bills when leaving care,¹³ which can have a detrimental impact on their transition into independent living. Care experienced young people shared directly with those working on the 100 Days of Listening project how incredibly important it is to be taught how to handle and manage money.

But it is also important to ensure that Scotland is not asking young care experienced people to behave in ways that are 'beyond their years' and would not be expected of their peers. This means not throwing young people in at the deep end and asking them to manage tenancies, pay bills, organise contracts or arrange affairs that others their age would not be expected to do. The answer must not be providing only higher levels of financial literacy, but rather making clear assessments of what is appropriate to ask of older teenagers in terms of independent living and making adjustments to the system itself.

¹⁰ Independent Care Review (2020) [Evidence Framework](#).

¹¹ Staf (2021) [Is Universal Basic Income the key to tackling care leaver poverty?](#)

¹² Independent Care Review (2020) [Evidence Framework](#).

¹³ Barnardo's (2023) [No Bank of Mum and Dad: The impact of the cost-of-living crisis on care-experienced young people](#).

In Scotland, the average age for leaving care is between 16 and 18 years old, whereas the average age for leaving home is 24 years old.¹⁴ This is a stark reminder that those with care experience are often expected to leave care whether they are ready or not due to their age and are expected to manage a multitude of challenges and financial demands of living independently much earlier than their peers.

There is also an inequity in the level of support available to young people moving on from care into adulthood, and inconsistencies in the delivery of this support across Scotland. The Promise Scotland understands that support in some areas includes assisting care leavers with a deposit for private rented property, ringfenced apprenticeship vacancies, driving lessons, a setting up home allowance, and practicing independent living in taster flats.

This is welcome, however, this support is not offered consistently and equitably across all of Scotland. Furthermore, when this support is provided, there are clear disparities in what a young person receives due to where they live. For example, many young people moving on from care into adulthood will be eligible for a setting up home allowance, however, the amount given can differ quite substantially between local authority areas.

Many children or young people leaving care return home. In many cases their parents have not received support to address the issues and challenges in their lives that led to their children being removed. This was an issue that was consistently raised throughout the 100 Days of Listening project. The Supporting Roots research¹⁵ provides a broad picture of the support needs of families. While the Scottish Government's 'Supporting Birth Parents Fund'¹⁶ is funding a number of excellent projects, the funding remains short term and unstable and the services provided not reaching all people who may be in need of support.

To #KeepThePromise by 2030:

- **All care experienced young people must have access to comprehensive financial support that includes financial education**, support to manage money and budget, including help to access a bank account and support to navigate the welfare system. This should be included in 'aftercare' provisions (see below).
- **Care experienced young people and adults must be made aware of their rights and know where to access the support and services offered.** Some local authorities are doing this well—but the landscape is complex and confusion

¹⁴ Office for National Statistics (2024) [Milestones: journeying through modern life](#)

¹⁵ Critchley A, Grant M, Hardy M & Cleary J (2023) [Supporting Roots: Support for birth parents in Scotland](#). Scottish Government.

¹⁶ Scottish Government (2023) [Supporting Birth Parents fund](#)

and the changes are often hard to keep up with. In order to address this (in addition to the recommendations above relating to 'decluttering' and simplifying the landscape):

- There must be a dedicated publication (both online and physical) which outlines rights and entitlements of for care experienced young people.
- All local authorities must produce and keep up to date a dedicated publication (both online and physical) which outlines all the support available for a care experienced young person.
- **There must be clearer ways for children, families and members of the workforce to understand the impact of making changes to orders on rights and entitlements.** For example, the positive and negative consequences of making the change from a Compulsory Supervision Order to a Kinship Care Order, including with respect to young people's rights and entitlements and status, must be clearly justified and explained.
- **The level of support available to a young person must not be a lottery and accessibility to those supports must not be dependent on the knowledge held by the workforce supporting them.**
- **Access to financial support must be more consistent across Scotland—a statutory approach to consistent financial support or allowances** should be considered alongside ongoing implementation of the Care Leavers Payment, work to develop a Minimum Income Guarantee for Care Leavers and the operation of the Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund.¹⁷
- **The Scottish Government needs to identify and action the ways in which it can help care experienced people to overcome challenges relating to accessing personal identification,** including passports. Where necessary, facilitating and leading partnership working with other agencies to expedite change.
- **There must be long-term and sustainable funding available for effective projects working alongside birth parents.** Where something is working well this must be able to continue and good practice shared and scaled up so that the needs of more birth parents can be met.

Continuing Care and Aftercare

¹⁷ [Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund: operational guidance 2023 to 2024 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/resources/consultation-papers/care-experienced-children-and-young-people-fund-operational-guidance-2023-to-2024/)

There are many excellent examples of members of the workforce, kinship and foster carers and local teams working relationally alongside care experienced children and adults across Scotland in exactly the way [the promise](#) expects, implementing the 'continuing care' and 'aftercare' provisions set out in Scotland's legislation.

It is also clear, however, that there remains a significant number of unresolved, systemic challenges that are getting in the way of implementation in line with the original policy intent. 'Staying Put Scotland' (2013) is very clear:

*"The pathways care leavers take in early adulthood are strongly influenced by the nature of their transition from care, and the support they receive after they leave. In order to meet our aspirations for looked after children and young people we therefore need to ensure that they are encouraged, enabled and empowered to remain in stable and secure care settings **until they are ready to move on into adulthood**; and that the same supports, standards and expectations are applied to them in throughcare and aftercare. This should be underpinned by a clear and positive philosophy of care – as outlined within this guidance – which emphasises young people's rights, responsibilities and entitlements."*

However, research by CELCIS highlights that it is often discussed too late with young people, it is not appropriately planned for financially or logistically and is hindered by misunderstandings and misinterpretations of guidance and legislation.¹⁸ There is not always a clear understanding of what 'continuing care' and 'aftercare' means in practice, which leads to inconsistent implementation between or within local authorities in Scotland, despite the entitlement for this being enshrined in legislation through the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

[Annual Social Work Statistics for 2022/23](#) show that only 29% of young people eligible entered 'continuing care'. Members of the workforce have indicated that financial difficulties within local authorities is adversely affecting young people's entitlement to 'continuing care' being delivered. This must be urgently addressed so that existing provisions can be implemented in full—and the expansions and changes demanded by [the promise](#) can be realised.

Different models and experiences of care bring with them unique and distinct complexities and challenges for young people, and generally, care experienced people who grew up in kinship care or were 'looked after' at home, do not have the same access to entitlements and support of other care experienced people.¹⁹

¹⁸ CELCIS (2022) ['continuing care': An exploration of implementation](#).

¹⁹ Staf (2024) [100 Days of Listening](#)

The need for Scotland to challenge some of the underlying assumptions that govern the approach to supporting children and young people who are moving on from care into adulthood is urgent.

Additionally, the current system of access to certain supports and entitlements for children after the age of 16 risks unintended consequences, such as children being removed from their order before their 16th birthday because of financial pressures. Research from CELCIS found that thresholds in legislation leads to young people transitioning from care in a way that is at odds with the stated ambition and spirit of the legislation put in place to support them.²⁰

There is a disparity between rights and entitlements of a Compulsory Supervision Order and a Kinship Care Order.

To #KeepThePromise by 2030:

The Scottish Government must use this consultation as an opportunity for a reset of provisions around 'continuing care' and 'aftercare'. This includes:

- **Changing legislation to ensure the overarching legislative environment is enabling** (see above) and makes sense to children, families, care experienced adults and members of the workforce. This includes reviewing the language so that it is easy to understand.
- **Ensuring that Kinship Care Orders remain in place until the age of 18**, in line with the UNCRC's definition of a child, Scotland's 'Staying Put' Guidance and the conclusions of the Independent Care Review.
- Families **must never be encouraged to move, nor must this move be imposed, from an existing Compulsory Supervision Order to a Kinship Care Order unless it is demonstrably in their best interests**, discussed and agreed.
- **Ensuring full and effective implementation of existing legislation and guidance relating to 'continuing care' and 'aftercare'**, including Parts 10, and 11 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and related guidance and Staying Put Scotland, 2013, that will make a real impact on children and young people's lives.

For 'continuing care' this means:

1. Ensuring young people are being **encouraged to 'stay put'**. By removing the pressure or legal orders to end prior to the age of 16, this will remove the pressure on children.

²⁰ CELCIS (2022) ['continuing care': An exploration of implementation.](#)

2. As stated above, planning must include a **presumption that children and young people will remain in care for longer**, in line with ‘Staying Put Scotland’²¹ and ‘aftercare’ will be provided until the age of 26. This should be clearly communicated to children and young people and members of the workforce.
3. **Understanding the barriers to effective implementation**, including carefully taking into account CELCIS’ conclusions.²² Rules, processes and culture must support that approach.
4. **Removing regulatory barriers for young people to stay with foster carers for as long as is required**. This includes removing or making changes to registration requirements that might prevent children and young people adults from staying in some places.
5. **Recruiting, assessing, registering and training foster carers on the basis of providing care through to adulthood**.²³
6. **Supporting and resourcing residential homes to keep places open for children and young people** in line with ‘continuing care’ legislation.²⁴
7. **Supporting kinship carers to continue offering safe and loving** homes to children and young people.
8. **Facilitating innovative discussions about how the rights of older children and young people can be upheld in the spirit of the original legislation and guidance—and any further expansion—alongside upholding the rights of younger children who may also be living in residential care settings or foster or kinship care alongside them**. Their rights are not in conflict, there must be ways to safely ensure they are all safe and protected.
9. **Understanding better what ‘continuing care’ looks like for children and young people when it is not possible for care to continue in the exact same place**. For example, children in secure care (see below) or where foster or kinship carers are no longer able to care for young people.

This will require **additional resource and a clear plan of action** for how to address the systemic issues raised.

²¹ This is an ask also included in CELCIS’ March 2022 briefing/ research on the implementation of ‘continuing care’, available here: [continuing care report briefing.pdf \(celcis.org\)](#)

²² CELCIS (2022) ‘[continuing care: An exploration of implementation](#)’.

²³ This is an ask also included in CELCIS’ March 2022 briefing/ research on the implementation of ‘continuing care’, available here: [continuing care report briefing.pdf \(celcis.org\)](#)

²⁴ The Independent Care Review (2020) [The Promise](#), Pg 80

For what is currently termed ‘aftercare’ this means:

1. **Reframing the language** to remove the term ‘aftercare’ to reflect that there is no point after which Scotland’s care for its children will end.
 2. **Providing a clearer definition** to support consistent practice, including in terms of access to financial support and housing, so that there is less room for inconsistency and misunderstanding about the various rights and entitlements. This includes ensuring a person-centred approach, with thoughtful planning, so that it meets the individual needs of each child and young person.
 3. A focus on what **children who are ‘looked after’ at home** need and how improvements can be made as these children transition into adulthood.
 4. **Removing the legislative duty for an ‘eligible needs’ assessment** when young people reach 19. Young people should not require an assessment to be able to access additional help and support.
 5. There must be a **national understanding of the resources a smaller and more specialised ‘care system’ will require**—and how they can be best directed to achieve this. This will be determined by an **understanding of the needs of the children who will depend on this ‘care system’**, including the small number with disabilities or complex health conditions who will transition from immediately into adult social care to meet their needs.
- In line with the comments above on prioritising implementation of existing duties and sequencing further changes, **extending access to what is currently termed ‘continuing care’ and ‘aftercare’ to:**
 1. Children and young people on Kinship Care Orders.
 2. Young people in further and higher education, so that this matches their length of study.
 - **Improving monitoring of the statutory duties linked to what is currently termed ‘aftercare’ and ‘continuing care’.** This includes putting safeguards and monitoring in place to ensure that financial challenges do not drive decisions about young people or restrict their entitlement to ‘continuing care’ or ‘aftercare.’
 - **Introducing a statutory right to return for young adults for whom Scotland has taken on parenting responsibility** and access to services and supportive people to nurture them for as long as required.²⁵ The provisions and resources to enable this must be put in place by 2030. This is not only required in order to

²⁵ The Independent Care Review (2020) [The Promise](#), Pg 92

keep [the promise](#) but is reflected in Staying Put Scotland which states that “*care leavers **must be able to return to care placements or a more supportive care setting** – if and when they meet with any difficulty.*”

The proposed consultation on the definition of ‘care experience’ must link into these changes. Decisions made about children and young people determines their ‘looked after status’, which in turn determines their rights to entitlements and support.

Lifelong Care

[The promise](#) is clear that Scotland’s parenting responsibilities must be lifelong and holistic for the young people that Scotland has cared for. And that older care experienced people must have a right to access services for as long as they are required.²⁶

[Who Cares? Scotland’s ‘Lifelong Rights for Care Experienced People’](#) campaign is clear that there is a pervasive inequality for care experienced people that goes beyond the statutory support currently provided to them, and is clear that extra protection is needed for those of all ages to access their rights, and that independent, relationship-based, lifelong advocacy must be available for every care experienced person in Scotland who needs it.²⁷

Many young people and care experienced adults have spoken about a ‘cliff edge’ of support after 26 (when legislative duties around corporate parenting and ‘aftercare’ end).

In order to address some of these challenges, [the promise](#) concluded that there was a need for a renewed and more consistent approach to the provision advocacy, and the Scottish Government subsequently committed to supporting The Promise Scotland to scope a [national lifelong advocacy service](#) for care experienced people and their families.²⁸

To #KeepThePromise by 2030:

- **Care experienced young people and adults must have a statutory right to accessing independent advocacy and legal representation** at all stages of an individuals care experience and beyond – as recommended by The Promise

²⁶ The Independent Care Review (2020) [The Promise](#), Pg 92

²⁷ Who Cares? Scotland (2023) [Lifelong Rights for Care Experienced People](#)

²⁸ The Promise Scotland (2023) [Scoping and delivering a national lifelong advocacy service for care experienced children, adults and families](#)

Scotland's paper which scopes a [national lifelong advocacy service](#) for care experienced people and their families.

- **The four phases outlined in The Promise Scotland's [advocacy scoping paper](#) must be explored and implemented in full**, in collaboration with advocacy providers and children in families. In particular, the National Practice Model must be expanded to reach more children and there must be a statutory right to advocacy.
- **There must be more thought into the specific support needed for care experienced adults once 'continuing care' and 'aftercare' duties 'end' at 26.**

Support for specific groups of people leaving care

Every person leaving care must be able to access appropriate help and support, tailored to meet their bespoke needs. Specific groups, for example young people with a disability, those leaving secure care, those who are parents or unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people may face unique challenges or have distinct needs which must be met as they move from care into adulthood.

[The promise](#) is clear that children and young people leaving secure care must receive support that ensures that the transition out of a restricted environment happens with thought, planning and care. This includes ensuring there is more scope for young people to remain in secure care if they turn 18 during their time living there. 'Hearings for Children' recommends that an exit plan must be put in place which helps children to understand that a Secure Care arrangement is temporary and when they can expect to move home or to another place of safety, what needs to happen in advance of that, and how they can be involved in that decision-making (recommendation 11.5.4).

[The promise](#) concluded that all unaccompanied asylum-seeking children must have access to legal support, advice and advocacy to navigate the Home Office asylum procedures. The 100 Days of Listening is clear that this group of children have distinct needs due to their experiences, including, for example, war, separation from their family, communities and culture, and abject poverty. The workforce recognised that respecting and supporting this particular group of children and young people's culture and heritage was critically important, but is challenging due to a lack of suitable resources, and that a shortage of other provisions such as legal representation, advocacy services and translation services were impacting this.²⁹

²⁹ Staf (2024) [100 Days of Listening](#)

To #KeepThePromise by 2030:

- **All young people’s rights must be respected and protected when they move on from care into adulthood**—this includes young people with a disability, those leaving secure care, those who are parents or unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people. See above for the specific improvements that must take place in order for these rights to be fully upheld, including a right to advocacy.
- **If a young person turns 18 during their time in secure care, there must not be an automatic transfer to a Young Offenders Institute.** The ongoing work to implement the Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Act 2024 must be cognisant of this and ensure the appropriate provisions are in place to implement this conclusion from the Independent Care Review by 2030.³⁰
- **There must be more scope to remain in secure care for those who have turned 18,** where this is in a young person’s best interests.³¹ The ‘Reimagining Secure Care’ work should align with this conclusion from the Independent Care Review.
- **Any young person who is ‘looked after’ and is in secure care and turns 18 must retain social work support.**
- **When children and young people leave secure care, they must be able to access appropriate throughcare and ‘continuing care’ provisions.**³² Children leaving secure care must receive tailored support that ensures a managed transition out of the restricted environment of secure care happens with thought, planning and care. A thoughtful approach is required to ensure young people moving from the highly restrictive environment of secure care do not feel abandoned or expected to live autonomously in the absence of interim appropriate care and support that helps them to recover from their experiences, encourages safety and independence.
- **Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children must be considered as ‘looked after’ and must live in caring, supportive settings.** They must have access to legal support, advice and advocacy to navigate the Home Office asylum procedures.³³
- **The rights of all unaccompanied asylum-seeking children must be upheld,** and they must have access to all that would be expected for any other child or

³⁰ The Independent Care Review (2020) [The Promise](#), Pg 82

³¹ The Independent Care Review (2020) [The Promise](#), Pg 82

³² The Independent Care Review (2020) [The Promise](#), Pg 82

³³ The Independent Care Review (2020) [The Rules](#)

young person, including access to education, health services and appropriate translation.

Peer support and maintaining lifelong links

The [promise](#) concluded that children must be supported to continue relationships that are important to them, where it is safe to do so. Understanding birth identity and family history and connections is important to all children. The 100 Days of Listening report notes that those with lived experience spoke of the need to have enduring, positive lifelong relationships with those who mattered to them.

An evaluation of Lifelong Links in England found that it increased the number of family and friend connections for care experienced people, improved individuals' sense of identity, and increased feelings of connectedness and community³⁴ – all of which are particularly important at the point of transitioning into adulthood.

Peer support often forms an important part of supporting children and adults with experience of care. The Independent Care Review concluded that it has been proven to work in other parts of the world and needs to be tested in Scotland.

However, it is important to be clear that services and processes cannot and should not replace or attempt to regulate the establishment of genuine relationships, friendships and connections. The focus must be on ensuring that care experienced children and young people are supported to maintain connections and relationships with important people in their lives and to ensure that they have ownership of and are supported to understand their story and what has happened in their lives.

To #KeepThePromise by 2030:

- **Where safe and appropriate, care experienced children and young people should be able to access Lifelong Links.** Learning from local authorities in England by the Family Rights Group should be applied.
- **Peer support must be tested and expanded where there is evidence that it is effective,** as part of the broad package of support offered to young people transitioning from care.

Out-of-hours services providing support and advice

³⁴ Department for Education (2020) [Lifelong Links: Evaluation Report](#)

As with all young people, health and wellbeing and other support services are not always available at times that are convenient. Services need to be designed alongside those who are accessing them to ensure that they are available as and when they are required. The workforce must be resourced and supported to work in different ways to ensure that there is flexibility.

[The promise](#) concluded that intensive family support services must operate out with a Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm approach. There must be no concept of an 'out of hours' service. Families do not operate on those timescales and support must be responsive to family need.

To #KeepThePromise by 2030:

- **Services must be accessible to all people who need them** rather than being designed in a way that meets the needs of the 'system'.
- **Particular effort must be made to listen to the voices of the people accessing help and support** to ensure that services are co-designed to maximise accessibility.

Health and wellbeing

Many care experienced children, young people, and adults told the Independent Care Review that they were unable to access mental health support at the point it was needed, and it only became available once they were at the point of crisis.

[The promise](#) is clear that the workforce and in particular family carers must know that they have a particular role in supporting children to have good overall health across dental, physical, mental and sexual. This must be done through caring, nurturing relationships that model good habits and a healthy approach to life.

The complexities of Scotland's current mental health system, the lack of sufficient and good quality support, and the added difficulties of transitioning from children services to adult services was consistently highlighted throughout the 100 Days of Listening.

To #KeepThePromise by 2030:

- **Scotland must ensure that there is timely access to mental health support for care experienced people before crisis point.** There must be a better understanding of current referral pathways and how care experienced people can access early help and support when it is needed.

- **The transition from children to adult services, including health, must be planned and seamless so there are no gaps in the provision of support.**

Housing

Scotland is experiencing a housing crisis, and due to extensive waits for housing, care experienced young people have highlighted that they are often strongly encouraged to accept their first offer of housing, regardless of whether this meets their needs. Who Cares? Scotland's recently published 'Housing Issue Paper' highlights that the housing offered is mostly located in areas of deprivation, where young people can feel unsafe, isolated and subject to anti-social behaviour from neighbours.³⁵ These circumstances can further compound the existing challenges young people may be experiencing when moving on from care.

The [100 Days of Listening](#) highlights existing challenges within the system, including its focus on age-related provisions rather than needs-led individual assessments. The workforce spoke of a disconnect between protocols and practice, and a concern that some decisions were financially driven rather than focusing on the needs of the young person.

In 2019 the Scottish Government published an 'Improving Care Leavers Housing Pathway',³⁶ which has since been paused due to capacity challenges—although various related activities are being progressed. A Way Home Scotland and the Rock Trust are due to publish a report in Autumn on the progress of implementing this pathway, which will reflect on examples of best practice, identify gaps and suggest how those gaps can be bridged in consideration of planned homelessness prevention duties.

The [Housing Options Protocol for Care Leavers](#) exists in all local authorities across Scotland to ensure care leavers are regarded as a priority group for social housing. However, colleagues have heard the housing protocol is only accessible for care experienced young people who originate from the local authority where the housing is located. Meaning, young people who grow up in a care setting out of authority have difficulty in accessing the housing protocol for the area they grew up in.³⁷

To #KeepThePromise by 2030:

³⁵ Who Cares? Scotland (2024) [Lifelong Rights for Care Experienced People: Housing Issue Paper](#).

³⁶ The Scottish Government, CELCIS, A Way Home Scotland (2019) [Youth Homelessness Prevention Pathway: Improving Care Leavers Housing Pathways](#)

³⁷ Staf (2024) [100 Days of Listening](#)

- So **no care experienced young person lives in a home that is of a poor standard or unsafe**, the Scottish Government must **urgently address the housing shortage and ensure a better quality of social housing** in Scotland.
- **All young care experienced people transitioning into adulthood from care must have access to safe, secure and suitable housing** and there must be parity for all across Scotland.
- **Young people must not be moved into a tenancy in crisis or be encouraged to take their first housing offer if unsuitable.** When a young person moves into their first home, they must feel safe, supported and able to cope with the inevitable challenges and excitement of independent living.
- **Ongoing support must be available that young people can access when they need it, to help ensure they are kept safe and that they can successfully maintain their tenancy.** When things go wrong there must be a place where young people can go to talk things through and get help and support to get back on track. The option of a 'right to return' (see above) must be available where safe and appropriate.
- **Planning must be in place to support young people to move into affordable housing that is tailored to their individual needs and preferences** and takes cognisance of their existing relationships and community links. It must be accepted that in the longer-term, tenancies are more likely to work well if young people are happy, connected to friends, neighbours and communities and feel safe and supported.
- **All local authorities must ensure that they have options for young people moving from care into adulthood that allow for a supported approach to independent living**, for example, the National House Project (NHP).³⁸
- **Where local authorities offer a housing protocol for care leavers, this must be extended to all care leavers in an area regardless of where they originated from.** Young people with experience of care must have the expectation of the same level of support regardless of which local authority they are seeking that support from.

³⁸ The [National House Project](#) (NHP) provides support and expertise to local authorities to set up and manage local house projects so that young people can leave care in a planned and supported way. Care experienced young people are supported to access, decorate and furnish their own home, and once they have moved in, support is provided for as long as they need it – which is found to have a significant positive impact on young people. For more information on other projects see Staf (2022) [Study of House Projects in Scotland](#).

- The [Improving Care Leaver's Housing Pathways](#) that is currently paused must be reinstated with sufficient funding and resource allocated—or an alternative option must be set out.

Further and higher education and employment

Care experienced young people must have options for positive and sustainable destinations into education and employment.

There is good practice taking place across Scotland to support care experienced young people in education and employment. An example is The Hub for Success – a partnership between the City of Edinburgh Council and eight universities and colleges – with an overarching aim of supporting people with care experience to get in, stay in, or return to education. A recent independent evaluation of The Hub for Success recognises it as a highly valued partnership³⁹.

Despite good practice, this provision of support is not consistently available and delivered across Scotland, and learning from initiatives such as The Hub for Success should be replicated in other areas.

To #KeepThePromise by 2030:

- **The Scottish Government should extend 'continuing care' for young people in further or higher education so that their care aligns with the length of their study** (see above). Where staying is not possible and a young person must live in a new home, there needs to be funding to cover this.
- **Universities and colleges must act on their parenting responsibilities, ensuring their care experienced students are provided with access to mentoring and support** throughout their studies.
- **Scotland must prevent students leaving settings of care from getting into significant student debt through higher education, and that must involve financial support and debt write off as required.**⁴⁰

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with The Promise Scotland's Policy Officer, Emma Young, with any questions or comments about this briefing: emma@thepromise.scot

³⁹ The Hub for Success (2024) [Evaluation of The Hub for Success](#)

⁴⁰ The Independent Care Review (2020) [The Promise](#), Pg 93

Appendix: What did the promise say?

This Appendix sets out what the Independent Care Review concluded must happen to change the lives of children and young people moving on from care into adulthood. The page numbers refer to pages in [the promise](#).

An enabling environment

Scotland must create a clear legislative, enabling environment that supports families to stay together and protects and allows relationships to flourish (Pg 112).

There must be a significant decluttering of guidelines and procedure – giving clear permission to make connections and act in kindness. Guidelines must be targeted and necessary so that relationships take clear precedence over everything else (Pg 24).

Fundamentally there must be a shared language of care and approach between services and professionals so that families are not navigating between competing standards and expectations (Pg 54).

Moving on

There must be comprehensive thematic reviews of 'transition services'; and all those with ongoing parenting responsibility must be required to explain how they plan to deliver integrated services for care leavers to adulthood (Pg 93).

Staying Put

Young people must be encouraged to 'stay put' in their setting of care for as long as they need to. Rules, regulations and systems must support that approach. There must be no regulatory barrier for young people to stay with foster carers for as long as is required (Pg 92. Also see Pg 78: Rules, regulations and payments must align to allow young people to stay with foster carers (if that is what they want to do) for as long as is required).

When young adults move on to independent living or need to return to a caring environment, all decisions must be made in their best interests and not on the strict application of age criteria (Pg 92).

Residential care

Residential Care settings must be supported and resourced to keep places open for young people in line with continuing care legislation. Scotland must ensure that this is not brought to an end when young people do not want to and are not ready to leave (Pg 80).

Right to return & 'no wrong door'

Scotland should behave and act like a good parent that supports young people as they enter adulthood. Scotland must be a parent that encourages young people toward a life of independence, self-reliance and stability, but also recognises that, often, young people will need to stay 'at home' or come home for some time and at various times (Pg 92).

Young adults for whom Scotland has taken on parenting responsibility must have a right to return to care and have access to services and supportive people to nurture them (Pg 92).

Scotland must ensure that there is 'no wrong door' for care experienced young people and that Scotland's parenting responsibilities are life long and holistic for the young people that Scotland has cared for (Pg 92).

Aftercare

Aftercare must take a person-centred approach, with thoughtful planning so that there are no cliff edges out of care and support (Pg 92).

Lifelong support

Parenting does not stop at 18. Scotland must continue to consider how to create greater equity and opportunity for care experienced young adults. That consideration must include how to increase opportunity for care experienced people to access employment, training, stable housing and support (Pg 93).

Older care experienced people must have a right to access to supportive, caring services for as long as they require them. Those services and the people who work in them must have a primary focus on the development and maintenance of supportive relationships that help people to access what they need to thrive (Pg 92).

Financial support

There must be a streamlining and clear communication of the variety of financial support available to those with care experience (Pg 93).

