

**CHILDREN IN CARE (CiC) AND
CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE (CEYP)
SUFFICIENCY UPDATE SUMMARY
September 2024 – March 2026**



1. Introduction and purpose of the annual report

This sufficiency update sets out the progress made in delivering Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) Council's Sufficiency Strategy for Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People from September 2024 to March 2026. It draws on evidence from the Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People Sufficiency Strategy Action Plan (Version 5, October 2025) and the Children's Services Commissioning Scorecard. Overall, the report shows that BCP has made substantive progress in strengthening local sufficiency, provider relationships and governance, while also identifying the areas where further action is needed during 2026/27.

2. Current Sufficiency Picture

- a) BCP's current sufficiency picture remains one of sustained demand, improving local provision and stronger commissioning oversight, but with continued pressure in key parts of the market.
- b) As of March 2026, BCP had 642 children in care, a rate of 85 per 10,000 children aged 0–17, alongside 361 care experienced young people open to the service and 38 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, representing 4.2% of the children in care population.
- c) Around 67% of children in care live in foster care, 10% in registered children's homes and 8% in supported accommodation or other registered provision, but distance from home remains a challenge, with 27% placed more than 20 miles from their parental home.
- d) Placement stability is comparatively strong, with only 6% of children who had been in care for more than 12 months experiencing three or more moves in the year, and monthly placement moves reduced to 26 in March 2026, the lowest point in the previous 12 months.
- e) Local sufficiency has strengthened during 2025/26:
 - a. the local residential market increased by 47% (11 beds), including
 - i. a new 3-bed parent and child home;
 - b. the supported accommodation market increased by 52% (37 beds); and
 - c. local supported accommodation usage rose by 30%,
- f) This has all resulted in more children living locally, increasing from 51% in April 2025 to 64% in March 2026.
- g) BCP has also developed 24 additional local registered beds for UASC, with sufficiency for that cohort now met, and has created 31 beds through wider housing pathways for care experienced young people. For care leavers, 93% were living in suitable accommodation as of March 2026.
- h) These improvements sit alongside stronger governance, with a commissioning scorecard now in place, regular provider forums embedded, and oversight of 80 commissioned providers across 133 homes.
- i) Overall, BCP's sufficiency position is improving, particularly in supported accommodation and local market development, but pressures remain in family-based care, residential demand and the number of children living further from home than BCP would want as a corporate parent.

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3. Progress against each priority

This section provides a high-level summary of progress against each priority in the Sufficiency Strategy, showing the current position against each success measure up to March 2026. It uses a RAG-rated summary table to highlight whether measures are completed, on track or require further attention. Full narrative and detailed evidence for each priority and success measure are provided in Appendix 1.

Priority	Measure of success	Status
Priority 1 – Ensure there is sufficient local family-based care available in the BCP area	a) The number of children in care living locally in family-based care increases b) The number of foster care households within BCP increases	Requires further attention Requires further attention
Priority 2 – Ensure there is sufficient locally based residential provision within the BCP area	a) The number of children in care placed in residential children’s homes will decrease b) There are sufficient homes locally to meet the needs of children in care	Requires further attention On Track
Priority 3 – Increase supported accommodation provision and develop a range of support models	a) Young people moving into supported accommodation can live in an area of their choice within BCP b) Increase in supported accommodation with lower-level support helping young people to transition more effectively to independence	Completed On Track
Priority 4 – Re-establish positive partnership and collaboration between Housing, Children’s Social Care and Commissioning	a) Increase the number of good quality housing provisions available in a timely way for care experienced young people b) There will be no care experienced young people placed in Bed and Breakfast accommodation or experiencing homelessness	Completed On Track
Priority 5 – Improve relationships with providers through open and transparent engagement	a) Provider engagement events are embedded and providers feel valued b) More children and young people successfully return to their family with a positive, wraparound package where appropriate c) BCP Council develops trusted relationships with providers who work with the local authority to manage sufficiency within the local and regional markets	Completed Completed On Track

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<p>Priority 6 – Embed governance and quality assurance frameworks</p>	<p>a) Targeted and reactive quality assurance visits completed each month by the Commissioning and Contracts Service</p> <p>b) All managers, staff and partners visiting children and young people within a placement understand their quality assurance role and report concerns through to the Commissioning Team</p>	<p>On Track</p> <p>On Track</p>
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4. Overall Assessment and key achievements and challenges

- a) Overall, this annual update shows that BCP has made tangible progress in strengthening sufficiency for children in care and care experienced young people, particularly through the growth of local supported accommodation, improved provider relationships, stronger governance and better joint working with Housing.
- b) The council has increased local residential and supported accommodation capacity, improved access to local provision, embedded quarterly provider forums, strengthened commissioning intelligence through the scorecard, and developed more coordinated pathways for care experienced young people and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. These are significant achievements which provide a stronger foundation for local sufficiency and better corporate parenting.
- c) Sufficiency pressures remain, demand continues to exceed the level of local family-based and residential provision BCP would want, the number of children in residential care has not reduced, and too many children still live further from home than is right for them. As a result, some success measures are therefore fully met, but others remain only partially achieved because the market is still developing, household growth in fostering is not yet fully achieved, and quality assurance and governance arrangements still need to mature further and embed.
- d) Overall, the direction of travel is positive. This is a four-year strategy running from October 2024 to 2028, and it is recognised that not all priorities are quick wins and will take time, alongside a changing landscape for fostering and residential provision and a more regional approach, which has impacted BCP fostering numbers. However, continued focus in 2026/27 to convert the improved infrastructure and partnerships into consistently sufficient local provision across all parts of the system is well underway.

Key achievements

- Significant growth in local supported accommodation and residential capacity, including new provision for UASC and a parent and child home.
- More children and young people are living locally, with stronger pathways into suitable accommodation and improved housing coordination.
- Provider relationships, market engagement and strategic commissioning intelligence are stronger and more embedded than at the start of the strategy period.
- Governance has improved through the commissioning scorecard, quality assurance activity and clearer contract and procurement oversight.

Key challenges

- Demand for family-based and residential care continues to outstrip the level of local sufficiency BCP needs.

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number of children in residential care has increased rather than reduced, and this remains an area of strategic concern.

- Too many children are still placed at distance from home, despite some improvement in the proportion living locally.
- Further work is needed to evidence growth in fostering households and to strengthen how learning from quality assurance is fed back into service improvement.

5. Priorities for the next 12 months and updates to the strategy

- a) The priorities for the next 12 months remain consistent with the 2024–2028 Sufficiency Strategy, but the emphasis for 2026/27 will now shift from establishing the foundations for improvement to accelerating delivery in those areas where sufficiency is still under pressure.
- b) There will be a focus on converting stronger partnerships, better intelligence and expanded local provision into more consistent local outcomes for children in care and care experienced young people, while refining the strategy to reflect areas that are now business as usual and those where additional action is required.

Priorities for 2026/27

1. Increase local family-based sufficiency by strengthening foster carer recruitment, retention and supported lodgings, with a clearer focus on evidencing growth in households and reducing reliance on residential care for children with a fostering plan.
2. Reduce the number of children living in residential care and at distance from home by continuing to grow local provision, improving commissioning responses to cohort need and using sufficiency data to target the highest-pressure areas.
3. Strengthen supported accommodation pathways so that young people can move more effectively from higher-support provision to independence, including reviewing the AQA scheme, support models and expectations around preparation for adulthood.
4. Embed the Joint Housing Protocol, Specialist Housing Group and wider housing pathway changes so that care experienced young people continue to access suitable accommodation in a timely way and the risk of homelessness or Bed and Breakfast use is further reduced.
5. Maintain and deepen provider engagement so that market development remains responsive to BCP need, with continued focus on local growth, provider confidence, Ofsted readiness and regional collaboration where this adds value.
6. Further strengthen governance and quality assurance by improving how learning from provider visits, panels and monitoring activity is fed back into commissioning and operational improvement, and by refreshing sub-actions within the strategy to reflect progress made to date.

In practical terms, this means the overarching priorities do not need to change, but a number of sub-actions are now being updated to reflect the current position.

Actions that are now established as business as usual are retired or monitored through routine governance, while new or revised sub-actions have been added to the action plan. Where progress is only partially achieved, particularly in relation to fostering growth, reducing residential use, improving independence pathways and strengthening the impact of quality assurance, these continue to be developed and monitored through the action plan.

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Appendix 1

Detailed action tracker

Appendix 1 provides the detailed action tracker that supports this annual update, showing progress against each priority, the actions taken to date and the impact achieved.

The RAG ratings in Section 3 and Appendix 1 serve different purposes. The Section 3 RAG provides a strategic assessment of progress against each success measure, showing whether the intended outcome has been achieved, is on track, or requires further attention. The Appendix 1 RAG reflects progress against the individual actions in the delivery plan, showing whether those actions have been completed, are on track, or require intervention. As a result, an action may be complete in Appendix 1 while the related success measure in Section 3 remains on track or requires further attention, where the intended impact has not yet been fully realised.

Action RAG – Appendix 1 action tracker

RAG	Description	Number of actions
Completed	Action completed and now monitored through business as usual arrangements where appropriate	29
On Track	Action is progressing as planned and remains on course	19
Requires further attention	Action is off track or requires intervention to achieve the intended progress	0

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Priority 1 - Ensure there is sufficient local family-based care available in the BCP area, so more children can live within a family home.

Measure of Success

a. The number of Children in Care living locally in family-based care increases – Requires Further attention

The proportion of children placed with in-house foster carers has reduced from 53.8% pre-South West Hub to 46.9%, BCP remains above the national average (43%), Good local authorities (42.5%) and statistical neighbours (38.8%). Bed utilisation of in-house foster carers remains strong at 82.5%, above the South West average of 76%, demonstrating effective use of in-house capacity. Kinship care continues to strengthen sufficiency, with a 71% increase in viability assessments, 26% growth in children placed and kinship households now accounting for 48% of all fostering households.

Strengthened local family-based sufficiency through a refreshed foster carer recruitment and retention strategy, continued investment in high-quality foster carer training and support, and the launch of new approaches such as the Mockingbird fostering model. The internal fostering service has also contributed to reducing reliance on residential care, with 5 young people stepping down from residential care to in-house foster care in the last 12 months. In addition, the Special Guardianship Service has returned in-house, increasing the number of SGO families accessing support. Partnerships with local independent fostering agencies have also been re-established, with quarterly meetings now in place and increased provider engagement generating more placement offers.

b. The number of foster care households within BCP increases – Requires Further attention

Nationally and locally foster carer sufficiency remains under significant pressure. BCP mainstream in-house foster carer recruitment at its lowest level in five years and only a small proportion of approvals achieved through the Southwest Fostering Hub. The service is now forecasting a net loss of 10 mainstream households, marking a significant shift from previous performance and indicating a growing sufficiency risk. While this has been partially offset by a 36% increase in approved kinship carers, alongside a 41.7% rise in children exiting care via Special Guardianship Orders, this does not mitigate the underlying decline in mainstream fostering capacity or the longer-term sustainability challenges for in-house provision.

Strengthening the infrastructure needed to grow household numbers, including the refreshed recruitment and retention strategy, regional collaboration on fostering recruitment, the review of the retained carers scheme, and the development and Ofsted registration of the Supported Lodgings Scheme, with recruitment activity now underway. The benefits of supported lodgings are now being actively championed, and the recruitment strategy for carers has been developed and launched.

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Independent Fostering provision is commissioned via a South-

Central Framework arrangement, annual sufficiency data evidences a significant reduction of 17% (129 beds) in fostering households regionally. The total number of beds has also decreased by 16% (268 beds). This is in line with national fostering sufficiency trends, which show continuing decline in mainstream fostering households.

The latest England data shows mainstream fostering households have continued to decline over the last four years, with approved mainstream foster carers falling to 56,345 by March 2025, while Local Authority mainstream households have reduced overall even though new approvals have increased slightly and independent fostering agency capacity has grown modestly. This means many Councils continue to face challenges in securing the right family-based placements in the right place, contributing to greater reliance on independent agencies, increasing placement distance and ongoing instability in local sufficiency arrangements.

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Ref	What we said we will do	Completed / On Track / Requires further attention	What we have done to date	Impact
1.1	Review the in-house foster care recruitment and retention strategy in order to ensure an increase in local family-based provision (foster care). This shall include the launch the Mockingbird fostering model	On Track	<p>Formulated a strong partnership with Corporate Communications which is strengthening BCP Fostering's market presence and reach. BCP Fostering now has a clear and recognisable identity within the Council's wider brand architecture, improving public visibility and consistency of messaging.</p> <p>Monitored enquiries which have increased over the past year but have not translated into a net gain in approved foster carers, highlighting a gap between interest and conversion that continues to impact sufficiency.</p>	<p>The new recruitment strategy has maintained fostering sufficiency over the last 12 months.</p> <p>Foster for BCP now has a consistent social media presence, strengthening brand visibility and supporting local recruitment.</p>
1.2	Work collaboratively with regional colleagues, to develop the Southwest regional fostering recruitment hub with the aim of increasing sufficiency of in-house provision	On Track	<p>Collaborative working continues, referral rates remain static. National guidance is being considered.</p> <p>Funding South West Fostering Hub enabled the development of a professionally produced marketing video focused on the importance of recruiting local carers for local children. This has become one of BCP Council's most viewed videos. No net growth reported to date.</p>	<p>Strengthened the recruitment infrastructure and local market presence, resulting in increased the visibility of BCP's in-house fostering offer and generated greater public awareness and enquiry activity.</p>
1.3	Continue to provide high quality training and support with the aim of retaining foster carers.	Completed	<p>Carers continue to engage positively with training and development, helping to maintain a skilled and confident carer workforce able to meet children's needs effectively and support positive placement outcomes.</p>	<p>BCP's retention rate of approximately 97% is significantly higher than the national position of around 65%, demonstrating a stable, high-performing in-house fostering service, sustaining placement stability and protecting sufficiency within the in-house offer. Consistently strong engagement in</p>

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				training and support groups has strengthened carer capability and resilience, while workforce stability has ensured continuity in support, minimising disruption to carers and contributing to placement stability for children.
1.4	Review the internal 'retained carers' scheme, accessible for children requiring emergency care.	Completed	<p>Review completed, the Retained Scheme remains a key strength of BCP's fostering offer, with regional recognition and demand from other local authorities for guidance. It provides consistent, responsive capacity for emergency and out-of-hours homes, with availability on all but fewer than five days this year.</p> <p>High reliance on the scheme and reduction of newly approved carers underlines its importance to sufficiency but requires ongoing monitoring to ensure the scheme is sustainable.</p>	The Retained Care Scheme provides reliable emergency fostering capacity, strengthening local sufficiency and reducing escalation to residential care or children being placed at a distance.
1.5	Evaluate the internal fostering service to ensure provision is created with an aim of reducing the numbers of children going into residential care who have a Care Plan of fostering.	Completed	Evaluation completed with a focus on the It Takes A Family Programme and the model's ability to step children down from residential care.	<p>In the last year, the ITAF scheme has supported 6 children to step down from residential care. In addition, 4 children stepped down from IFA provision.</p> <p>At 46.9%, BCP remains above the national average (43%), Good local authorities (42.5%), and statistical neighbours (38.8%) for children placed with in house carers.</p> <p>Bed utilisation remains strong at 82.5%, above the South West average of 76%, demonstrating effective use of in-house capacity.</p>

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1.6	Ensure internal Supported Lodgings provision is seen as a viable option for Care Experienced Young People by raising awareness of its benefits and positive outcomes.	On Track	<p>The benefits of the Supported Lodgings Scheme is championed at Creative Care Panel and considered as move on provision post 18yrs.</p> <p>The Supported Lodgings scheme achieved Ofsted registration at the end of the financial year , marking a key milestone in strengthening local sufficiency.</p> <p>A targeted recruitment campaign has increased awareness, with learning identified around the need to better articulate the role and attract interest. A refreshed campaign developed with Communications will launch in July to drive improved engagement and conversion.</p>	Too early to report impact
1.7	Work collaboratively to register our internal Supported Lodgings Scheme in line with Ofsted guidance. Once registered, work with Commissioning colleagues to ensure this option is explored for children in Care aged 16 years plus.	On Track	<p>Supported Lodgings Scheme is now registered with Ofsted (March 2026).</p> <p>Ofsted registration (March 2026) has established Supported Lodgings as a credible in-house option for 16+ young people. A Registered Manager is now in post and recruitment is underway; however, there is not yet a measurable impact on sufficiency due to current vacancies and limited placement availability. Impact is expected to increase as recruitment is completed and placement capacity grows.</p>	Too early to report impact
1.8	Develop a recruitment strategy for the Supported Lodgings Scheme once it is registered	On Track	<p>Recruitment Strategy has been developed, advertising for carers has commenced.</p> <p>A targeted recruitment campaign has increased awareness, with early learning identifying the need to better articulate the Supported Lodgings role and strengthen enquiry pathways. Initial enquiries were routed via the Hub rather than directly into the service; this has now been</p>	Too early to report impact

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			addressed, with improved processes to manage enquiries more efficiently and at pace. While this has not yet translated into a net increase in approved carers, a refreshed campaign with Communications launching in July 2026, alongside greater confidence in progressing enquiries through to assessment, is expected to improve conversion.	
1.9	Bring the Special Guardianship Service back in-house from Aspire Adoption.	Completed	Service has transferred, increasing number of SGO families accessing support	Bringing SGO into the fostering service has delivered a measurable increase in SGOs granted, bringing BCP in line with the national rate (11.9%). This structural shift, alongside strengthened support to SGO families, has increased professional and family confidence in SGO as a viable permanence option. As a result, more children are achieving timely, family-based permanence, with higher conversion rates and reduced reliance on alternative permanence routes, including final kinship approvals.
1.10	Ensure BCP works strategically with the South-Central Independent Fostering Agency Framework to increase the sufficiency of local provision.	On Track	The collaboration continues and the regional frameworks are being utilised which provides access to compliant provision. Nationally fostering sufficiency trends show continuing decline in mainstream fostering households. Sufficiency of IFA provision continues to be a challenge, it is reported that nationally that mainstream fostering households have continued to decline for four consecutive years, with Ofsted reporting that mainstream households were still falling as of March 2025.	Annual sufficiency data for 2025 evidences a significant reduction of 17% (129 beds) in fostering households regionally. The total number of beds has also decreased by 16% (268 beds).
1.11	Re-build partnerships with local on and off framework Independent	On Track	Partnerships have been re-established with providers, quarterly meetings in place. Enhanced	Too early to report impact

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Fostering Agency providers, noting the number of local foster care beds which are filled by other local authority children.		engagement is yielding increased offers. IFA providers are approaching BCP to work in collaboration for available carers.	
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Priority 2 - When children need to live in a residential home, ensure there is sufficient locally based residential provision within the BCP area to meet the needs of those children and young people who cannot, or chose not to, live in a family setting.

Measure of Success

a. The number of Children in Care placed in residential children’s homes will decrease – On Track

In April 2024, there were 52 children placed in standard residential care, which equated to 9.2% of the overall child in care population. As of April 2025, there were 55 children, 9.8%. This increase is in line with the rising number of children in care, which has risen by 97% (14 children). The number of children living in all residential provision has increased, BCP is an outlier and there is a strategy in place to address this.

b. There is sufficient homes locally to meet the needs of children in Care – On Track

c. Local sufficiency has increased but is not yet at sufficient capacity to meet demand in residential and family-based care. We continue to work with the local market, and the South West Alliance to strengthen regional market capacity, in line with future reforms for regional care collaboratives to support future growth.

Sufficiency impact

- Local residential market has increased by 47% (from 23 – 34 beds)
- A new residential Family Assessment Centre (parent and child home) offers new capacity of 3 beds. No provision previously in BCP.
- Increase of 16% (circa 12 – 14 beds) in usage of local provision
- Local void rates of provision has increased by 17%, linked to expansion of local capacity with controlled growth, vacancies reflect planning commissioning.

Ref	What we said we will do	Completed / On Track / Requires further attention	What we have done to date	Impact
2.1	Improve data reporting, analyse all cohort needs across the service, benchmark and understand trends to meet and predict demand for children	On Track	Developed the Commissioning Scorecard, which is reported via governance by monthly, informs local market development	Stronger strategic oversight of demand, improved forecasting, planning and market development. Increasing number of local residential beds enabling more children to live in the BCP area.

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	requiring residential care or access to respite provision		Sufficiency data and cohort needs are regularly shared through provider forums in order that the market is developed to meet need.	
2.2	Map all local residential provision, understand usage by other local authorities and impact on local sufficiency and determine need for BCP council.	Completed	All local provision is known and mapped; quarterly void data informs reporting on other LA usage.	Worked with providers to prioritise BCP children for homes used by other LA's. Local void rates of provision has increased by 17%, linked to expansion of local capacity with controlled growth, vacancies reflect planning commissioning.
2.3	Work strategically with the South-Central Residential Framework to increase sufficiency of local provision based on analysis of need.	Completed	Due to the South-Central framework moving to the South East region, we have worked with local BCP providers to meet need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local residential market has increased by 47% (from 23 – 34 beds) A new residential Family Assessment Centre (parent and child home) offers new capacity of 3 beds. No provision previously in BCP. Increase of 16% (circa 12 – 14 beds) in usage of local provision
2.4	Consider all regional framework arrangements based on national findings and provider feedback, linked to the benefits of local authority partnership working.	On Track	Regional collaboration with South West is resulting in new framework arrangements for 2027/2028 which is anticipated to result in market growth.	Too early to report impact
2.5	Hold providers accountable for their charges and understand the level of profit to ensure value for money and delivery of outcomes.	Completed	Annual Fee Uplift process is robust, and increases are on average lower than inflation. Local providers are transparent in costs and usage rates required in order to make profit.	Annual fee increase was 3.2% with cost avoidance of circa £700k for 2025/2026 fee uplift requests, which was below the CPI reported figure of 4%.
2.6	Produce a Short Breaks Position Statement, review needs and eligibility criteria, ensure local service can meet all needs. Co-produce the offer with all partners.	On Track	New Position Statement written, Needs Analysis complete, tender for new services based on identified need will go live 2026/2027	BCP now has a clearer understanding of short breaks needs, providing a stronger foundation for a more transparent and targeted offer. Revised eligibility criteria and co-production are helping to align services more closely with local need with

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				a focused needs led service specification ready to tender
2.7	Work with regional colleagues and with local NHS partners to consider the development of a residential provision for children with complex needs.	On Track	A provider has been identified, planning permission for site granted. Service design planning now underway	Too early to report impact
2.8	Explore regional secure provision through the Southwest Sufficiency group.	Completed	Ministry of Justice (MoJ) Regional Remand Partnerships proposal bid considered, and decision made not to submit. This is based on the Southwest generally experiencing low remand volumes and placement sufficiency (availability and appropriateness)	Current regional secure sufficiency is adequate, enabling BCP to prioritise commissioning effort and resources on higher-pressure areas of need.

Priority 3 - Increase supported accommodation provision and further develop a sufficiency model which offers a range of provision models (high to low support) so children and young people have a choice to move through a pathway of services, offering a range of homes across the BCP area which shall prepare them for independence.

Measure of Success

a. Young people moving into supported accommodation can live in an area of their choice within BCP - Completed

All local supported accommodation is now mapped, and improved relationships with providers, supported by regular provider forums, have increased BCP's ability to access local beds ahead of other authorities where providers can meet need. This is contributing to more children being able to remain connected to their local communities, with the proportion of children in care living locally increasing from 51% in April 2025 to 64% in March 2026, the evidence shows tangible progress in increasing local choice and access within the BCP area.

- Increase of local provision by 52% (30 beds), 103 in total
- Use of local sufficiency has increased by 83% (39 to 66 beds)
- Local voids rates of supported accommodation have increased by 27%.
- Joint working with Housing and a local established provider has created a sustainable accommodation pathway for UAS Care Experienced young people.

b. Increase in supported accommodation with lower-level support helping young people to transition more effectively to independence – On Track

Through a targeted review of supported accommodation, we have identified that low level support does not enable our young people to live independently prior to move on at 18yrs. As a result, we are now working with our providers to review independence planning which includes a review of the existing AQA

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Scheme and learning from the Ofsted inspection framework to

consider how young people can transfer appropriately from residential care to supported accommodation and then independent living

Local lower-support capacity has increased materially through the development of registered supported accommodation, particularly for UASC, and through wider sufficiency planning informed by cohort data, Housing Strategy development, and the establishment of a Specialist Housing Group. These actions show that BCP is building a broader range of provision models from higher to lower support, helping young people transition more effectively toward independence.

Ref	What we said we will do	Completed / On Track / Requires further attention	What we have done to date	Impact
3.1	Understand the sufficiency and quality of local provision, though effective process and activity, for example through monitoring Ofsted registration and mapping of providers.	Completed	Quality of provision, number of local beds, voids and BCP usage is now reported through the newly developed commissioning scorecard, this is monitored on a quarterly basis and informed sufficiency planning.	Local provision within BCP is now available to our children in care when supported accommodation is requested. Increased number of children in care living in local supported accommodation, connected to local community
3.2	Implement greater oversight of young people who have high support packages, implementing regular meetings with providers and all partners.	On Track	Provider accreditation and regular quality assurance have strengthened oversight of high-cost supported accommodation packages and assurance that provision is safe and meeting need.	Improved oversight and quality assurance are strengthening the safety, suitability and consistency of high-support provision.
3.3	Ensure preparation for independence is planned. Work with providers and all partners to consider preparation for independence in a timely manner and ensure support hours / packages are reasonable, in line with independence planning.	On Track	We are not yet assured that the current AQA scheme is effectively supporting our young people to achieve the outcomes we expect. As a result, the scheme is being reviewed and adapted to ensure it better contributes to preparing children for independence. This work will also strengthen how we assess individual needs and ensure that the voices, preferences and aspirations of young people are	No reportable impact to date

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			actively informing their pathways and future planning	
3.4	Seek to utilise local provision for BCP children rather than them residing out of area	On Track	<p>All local supported accommodation is mapped; available beds, voids and usage is collated quarterly to better inform sufficiency planning.</p> <p>Improved relationships with providers and regular provider forums is ensuring the BCP now has access to local beds before other LA's where the provider can meet need.</p>	<p>We are currently above national figures of 22% for those children placed greater than 20 miles from BCP = 31% (March 2026). Noting the rise in cohort numbers.</p> <p>This continues to be an area of priority 2026/2027</p> <p>We have seen some improvement in the number of CiC living locally by 13% April 2025 = 51% March 2026 = 64%.</p>
3.5	Develop registered supported accommodation provision locally for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children in Care aged under 18 years.	Completed	<p>In the last 12 months an additional 24 local beds specifically for UASC have been registered with Ofsted in BCP.</p> <p>Sufficiency need is now met, and provision is being monitored as business as usual.</p>	Where appropriate all UASC for whom BCP have responsibility are now living in the BCP area in suitable accommodation.
3.6	Review commissioning intentions for Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Care Experienced young people, ensuring accommodation is suitable.	Completed	Joint working with Housing and a local provider has created a new sustainable accommodation pathway with sufficient provision available to meet cohort need.	All accommodation for UAS CEYP is suitable and within BCP
3.7	Work collaboratively with our external market, in-house supported lodgings scheme and housing to meet the accommodation needs of all Care Experienced young people.	On Track	Joint Housing Protocol co-produced. Housing Strategy 2026 – 2030 now published. Review of CSC CEYP provision underway. Cohort data informs sufficiency planning. Supported and Specialist Housing Strategy Group established.	A Joint Housing Protocol has been established and embedded, clearly defining roles and responsibilities for housing provision for individuals aged 18 and over, and ensuring they are offered suitable accommodation in a timely manner.

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Priority 4 - Re-establish positive partnership and collaboration between Housing, Children’s Social Care and Commissioning, focusing on the Joint Housing priorities for Care Experienced young people.

Measure of Success

a. Increase the number of good quality housing provisions available in a timely way for Care Experienced young people - Completed

Partnership working between Housing, Children’s Social Care and Commissioning has improved the housing pathway and strengthened timely access to suitable accommodation. A Joint Housing Protocol for Young People has been co-produced, helping to embed a more consistent corporate parenting response to accommodation needs. The review and mapping of supported and independent accommodation across BCP means that all housing-related supported accommodation provision is now known, improving sufficiency planning and oversight. Use of housing-related supported accommodation by care experienced young people is over 50%, indicating that existing provision is being actively accessed.

The system for identifying, planning and accessing good quality housing provision is now more coordinated, better informed and more responsive, increasing the council’s ability to secure suitable accommodation in a timelier way.

b. There will be no Care Experienced young people placed in Bed and Breakfast accommodation or experiencing homelessness – On Track

Data evidences that the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation has remained static over the last 18mths with an average of one care experienced young person living in bed and breakfast accommodation at any one time.

The proportion of care experienced young people living in suitable accommodation is now consistently above 90%, with a reported figure of 92% as of April 2025. This evidences that the majority of young people are now being supported into more appropriate housing arrangements, with clear evidence of better prevention of homelessness and earlier housing planning.

Ref	What we said we will do	Completed / On Track / Requires further attention	What we have done to date	Impact
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4.1	Work together across all Directorates to embed a corporate parenting response to the accommodation needs of Care Experienced young people.	Completed	Joint Housing Protocol for Young People co-produced between Housing and CSC. Following significant changes to the policy and procures cohorts of young people who require accommodation are known.	93% of our young people are now living in suitable accommodation, which has been consistent over the last 12 months
4.2	Review and map the sufficiency of supported and independent accommodation provision available across BCP council for Care Experienced young people.	Completed	All housing related support accommodation provision across BCP is known, informing sufficiency planning. Usage of Supported Accommodation provision by CEYP is over 50%	There is sufficient supported and independent accommodation for BCP children and young people with current occupancy of all provision is 48% (April 2026)
4.3	Review and relaunch the Youth Homelessness Board.	On Track	The Youth Homelessness Board has had a successful relaunch supported by The Royal Foundation Homewards Project and the organisation EveryYouth. The Board will provide strategic oversight and shared leadership across BCP Council and partners.	The Board will report to the Homelessness Delivery Board however it is too early to report on impact at this stage.
4.4	Review the housing pathway and options for Care Experienced young people.	On Track	BCP Council Supported and Specialist Housing Strategy and Needs Assessment have now been completed and published following Cabinet approval in March 2026. This sets out a 10-year commitment to deliver supported accommodation that meets the needs of young people in the BCP area.	The governance for this work is in the process of being agreed. Too early to report impact
4.5	Consider a collaborative review of the Accommodation Planning Panel, linked to the implementation of social care 'gateways'.	Completed	Following an initial review and a further review in May 2026, a single panel is now in place to oversee the Accommodation Planning Panel. This supports a smoother pathway into housing. The panel provides a focus on more vulnerable cohorts, including UAS CEYP and those who are being released from custody.	This has enabled more timely accommodation planning for care experienced young people, reducing delay and improving pathway coordination.

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4.6	Inform the design of the Single Homelessness Accommodation Provision with accommodation identified specifically for Care Experienced Young People	Completed	Active involvement in the Single Homelessness Accommodation Provision (SHAP) tender.	Between April 2025 and April 2026 31 beds have become available for CEYP
4.7	Embed training and share knowledge of the Joint Housing Protocols. Ensure knowledge of, and contribution to, the Homewards partnership work in the BCP area to work towards eradicating any risk of homelessness for our Care Experienced young people.	Completed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint training was delivered across children’s services and housing in early 2024 following the launch of the policy • Further review of the policy to be completed by September 2025 with a view to relaunch by October 2025 - this will include a renewed programme of training • Accommodation Panel providing quality assurance to JHAs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most Children in Care being referred for Joint Housing Assessment (JHA) at age 17, reducing delay in planning for their independence. • Care Experienced YP living in suitable accommodation, 93% as of March 2026
4.8	Support the delivery of the Council’s Housing Strategy.	Completed	Co-produced Housing Strategy 2026 – 2030 now published, strategic priorities for CEYP to be implemented	Too early to report impact (Define measures within the strategy)

Priority 5 - Improve relationships with providers through open and transparent engagement in order to further develop services to meet the needs of BCP council’s children and young people.

Measure of Success

a. Provider Engagement Events are embedded, attendance and engagement by the external market creates established partnerships which improves local sufficiency. Providers feel valued - Completed

BCP has made strong progress in embedding provider engagement through a structured framework of quarterly provider forums across all care sectors, including residential care, support accommodation, independent fostering agencies, short breaks and independent non-maintained special schools. These forums have strengthened relationships with both on and off framework providers, improved communication in respect of sufficiency need, and created regular opportunities for providers to contribute to market development. Positive feedback from providers indicates that they now feel more informed, engaged and valued as partners. This has had a clear impact on local sufficiency by supporting a more collaborative approach to shaping services and encouraging providers to work with BCP to meet the needs of children and young people locally.

- During 2025/2026
- Local residential market has increased by 47% (11 beds), Q3 usage is 44%
- A new residential parent and child home offers new capacity of 3 beds. No provision previously in BCP. Q3 usage 66%
- Local supported accommodation market has increased by 52% (37 beds), Q3 usage 64%

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b. More children and young people successfully return to their family with a positive, wrap around package where appropriate – Completed

Progress has been made through the creation and embedding of a dedicated Reunification Team for children in care, with cohorts proactively identified and reviewed through regular data monitoring. This has established a more coordinated and intentional approach to reunification across Children’s Social Care, ensuring that children are supported to return home where this is safe and appropriate, with the right wraparound support in place. The impact of this work is evidenced by 28 children having been successfully reunified to date, alongside a rate of children leaving care in 2025/26 that is slightly above comparator authorities. This demonstrates that BCP is strengthening family-based solutions and reducing reliance on care where positive outcomes can be achieved within families.

For 2025/26, the rate of children leaving care was 31.6 children per 10,000 (a total of 235 children), slightly above comparators with Good+ LAs at 30, Statistical Neighbours at 29, England at 28 and the South West lower at 24. (DfE published rates for 2024/25).

c. BCP Council develops trusted relationships with providers who work with the local authority to manage the sufficiency within the local and regional markets – Completed

BCP has strengthened provider relationships through consistent engagement, shared planning and regional collaboration. The Commissioning Scorecard has improved visibility of need and supports more strategic market development. Through the South West Alliance, BCP is also strengthening regional market intelligence and readiness for Regional Care Cooperative reform.

Consideration is also being given to a Regional Care Cooperative, which has a vision of bringing together Local Authorities, health services, and youth justice partners to collaboratively plan, commission, and deliver care for looked-after children.

Ref	What we said we will do	Completed / On Track / Requires further attention	What we have done to date	Impact
5.1	Re-build the relationships with BCP local area providers and review the commissioning arrangements with on and off framework providers.	Completed	Implemented a structured provider engagement framework, meeting with providers on a quarterly basis in order to inform them of our sufficiency needs and develop the market, build relationships	Provider Engagement Events are embedded, attendance and engagement by the external market creates established partnerships which improves local sufficiency. Providers feel valued.
5.2	Establish quarterly provider engagement events for each care sector, seek to understand barriers, develop the market to meet all children	Completed	Quarterly Provider Forums are now established. Positive Feedback from Providers who now feel informed	Provider engagement events are now established and embedded across all care sectors, including residential care,

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	and young people's care / support needs including those with a disability.		and engaged in sufficiency planning for BCP	independent fostering agencies, short breaks and independent non-maintained special schools. This supports a joint approach between the Local Authority and providers to shape and develop the market.
5.3	Actively engage with providers who wish to be inventive within the market.	Completed	Embedded Provider engagement events now in place	BCP now attracts and retains local providers who share BCP's values and can evidence safe, high-quality service delivery through the Ofsted ratings achieved.
5.4	Create a market development plan of provision.	Completed	Market Development has been replaced by a comprehensive Commissioning Scorecard, which provides data and insight into emerging needs. Data is shared with providers to inform and support market development.	This has improved strategic market planning by giving BCP and providers better visibility of emerging need, enabling more informed service development and supporting local sufficiency over time.
5.5	Participate in regional collaborations to enhance learning, practice and aid the shaping of the market.	Completed	Head of Commissioning is an established member of the South West Alliance a regional collaboration. The purpose of the collaboration of 14 LA's to enhance and share learning, practice and proactively informing regional market shaping.	This has strengthened BCP's regional influence and market intelligence, supporting shared learning, more coordinated market shaping and improved readiness for regional care collaborative reforms as these arrangements are prepared for.
5.6	Develop reunification and our family support offer, consider returning children to their families where appropriate.	On Track	Created and embedded a Reunification Team for children in care, cohorts are proactively identified and monthly data evidences impact.	BCP now has a more coordinated and proactive approach to reunification across Children's Social Care, with 28 children to date successfully reunified. For 2025/26, the rate of children leaving care was 31.6 children per 10,000 (a total of 235 children), slightly above comparators with Good+ LAs at 30, Statistical Neighbours at

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				29, England at 28 and the South West lower at 24. (DfE published rates for 2024/25)
5.7	Consider the need for a Supported Accommodation framework, seek views from the market and local authorities with established framework arrangements.	Completed	Needs analysis completed which informed a co-produced service specification. Tender advertised and supported accommodation framework went live in April 2026.	26 Local Supported accommodation providers within BCP area offering suitable registered accommodation. Supported accommodation sufficiency now met
5.8	Continue to work in partnership with our providers in preparation for Ofsted inspections between 2024 - 2028.	Completed	Through Provider Forums and monitoring visits the Commissioning Team work with providers to assess their ofsted readiness for their inspection framework as well as the LA inspections	All local providers are inspection ready with improved quality, compliance and stability, strengthening trusted relationships.

Priority 6 - Embed governance and quality assurance frameworks to ensure compliance and support strategic decision making in the future

Measure of Success

a. Targeted and reactive quality assurance visits completed each month by the Commissioning and Contracts service – On Track

BCP has embedded a targeted and reactive programme of monthly quality assurance visits through the Commissioning and Contracts Service, strengthening oversight of provider performance, compliance and children’s safety. This provides a more robust system for identifying concerns early, holding providers to account, and ensuring services continue to meet BCP’s expected standards of quality and care. In turn, this strengthens assurance for operational leaders and supports more informed commissioning decisions about sufficiency, risk and service improvement.

BCP currently commissions 80 providers for fostering, supported accommodation, residential and residential education provision.

There are 133 homes, 33 are located within Dorset (24%)

- 20 homes are rated Outstanding, 3 are located within Dorset
- 65 homes are rated good, 13 are in Dorset
- 20 homes are rated requires improvement, 8 are located within Dorset
- 4 homes are rated inadequate, 2 are located within Dorset
- 19 homes are awaiting an inspection
- 7 homes are unregistered so do not receive an Ofsted inspection.

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b. All managers, staff and partners when they visit children and young people within a placement have a clear understanding of their role in quality assuring and report any concerns through to the Commissioning team, addressing them also within the provision - On Track

Within BCP, managers, staff and partners visiting children and young people in placement now have clearer expectations about their role in quality assurance. Concerns and findings are identified and escalated more consistently to BCP's Commissioning Team, addressed directly with the provider, and reported back through the Creative Care Panel into Children's Social Care. This has strengthened shared accountability for quality and safety across BCP placements, improved oversight, and supported earlier action where issues arise. Further work is still required to ensure that learning is consistently fed back into the service and used to drive continuous improvement.

Ref	What we said we will do	Completed / On Track / Requires further attention	What we have done to date	Impact
6.1	Develop and embed a robust commissioning governance and commissioning quality assurance framework to understand the quality of provision and hold providers accountable.	On Track	Quality Assurance principles are in place and embedded. Further work required on governance and feeding back the learning into the service (commissioning and CSC)	This has strengthened BCP's oversight of provider quality and compliance by embedding consistent quality assurance principles across commissioning activity. It provides a stronger basis for holding providers to account, identifying risks earlier, and supporting safer, more informed decisions about placement quality and service improvement. Further work is still required to strengthen governance arrangements and ensure learning is consistently fed back into both Commissioning and Children's Social Care.

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6.2	Update the existing contracts register for children’s services, thus informing the strategic commissioning plan and assurance in respect of procurement compliance. (noting the implementation of the new procurement regulations).	Completed	Commissioning Contracts Pipeline to inform the Corporate Contracts Register now full imbedded and compliant with corporate procurement standards	This has strengthened BCP’s contract management and procurement assurance by improving visibility of commissioned services, supporting forward planning, and ensuring children’s services commissioning is aligned with corporate procurement standards and new regulatory requirements. This reduces compliance risk and provides a stronger foundation for strategic commissioning decisions.
6.3	Ensure and aim for there to be sufficient provision within BCP available to only place children in provision that is judged ‘Good’ or ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted.	Completed	The Ofsted ratings of all BCP providers are known, logged and monitored 11 residential providers are located within BCP with 19 homes. 3 homes are rated ‘good’, 5 homes has not yet been inspected, and 4 homes are rated RI. 2 homes are rated Inadequate. Robust monitoring underway as the new Ofsted inspection framework is rolled out.	Residential Homes located in BCP – 77% are rated ‘good’, 7 of the 9 homes. 2 are yet to be inspected.
6.4	Improve data collection using current digital systems to inform sufficiency planning.	Completed	Commissioning Data Scorecard developed, providing clear oversight of cohort data, linked to referral and sufficiency data.	This has strengthened BCP’s sufficiency planning by providing more timely and reliable data on cohort need, referrals and provision. As a result, commissioning decisions are better informed, trends can be identified earlier, and strategic planning is more responsive to emerging demand.
6.6	Work in partnership with providers to regularly monitor all provision rated ‘Requires Improvement’ or ‘Inadequate’, ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children to allow them to remain in their home.	Completed	Procedure in place and adhered to for monitoring of RI or inadequate provision, robust action plans in place which are monitored monthly by the social worker and	Risks are clearly identified and actively managed, helping to safeguard children and ensure they can remain in their home where this continues to be safe and in their best interests.

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			commissioning team to ensure the placement remains safe for the child.	
6.7	Be actively engaged in the procurement compliance planning ensuring that commissioning of provision meets the required quality assurance and contract monitoring compliance standards.	Completed	Head of Commissioning is a member of the Corporate Procurement Board to ensure that Children's Services remains compliant with BCP Corporate procurement regs	Procurement regulations are met by Children's Services.