



Child and Youth Voice
Regular update to the Children's Select Committee

Wiltshire Youth Union

Young Carers Consultation

1. The Child and Youth Voice (CYV) Team has completed its consultation with young carers in Wiltshire. On 5th November a group of young carers were supported to present their findings to senior officers and elected members. As a result of this consultation improvements have been made to the way that Wiltshire Council carry out young carers assessments, commitments have been made to explore the possibility of young carers having free access to council run leisure facilities and there is now a specific portfolio holder for young carers, Cllr Peter Hutton who will act as their champion.
2. The next consultation will be focused on the experiences of LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (or questioning)) young people in Wiltshire, with the Meet the Leaders Session scheduled for the 22 March 2022. Future consultations will be carried out by members of the Wiltshire Youth Council.

Wiltshire Youth Council

3. We have 24 out of 28 mainstream secondary schools all holding elections to nominate a Wiltshire Youth Councillor and Deputy Youth Councillor. We are hopeful that the remaining 4 schools will come onboard and hold elections. We also have one independent school and one special school also taking part.
4. Information about community seats has now gone out on social media and has been disseminated by the Community Engagement Managers. These seats will allow children that live in Wiltshire but do not go to school in Wiltshire to have the opportunity to stand in a community election.

5. We are planning a special welcome event for the new Wiltshire Youth Councillors on 5th March 2022. Here the participants will elect a shadow youth cabinet and the 3 Members of Youth Parliament for Wiltshire.
6. We are recruiting young person Special Advisors to support the work of the Wiltshire Youth Councillors on important issues that young people face. These Special Advisors are experts by experience and have lived experience of being part of an underrepresented group in the community. We will be recruiting Special Advisors from the LGBTQ community, young carers, military families, children in care and more.

Children Social Care

Children in Care Council (CICC)

7. We are working with Wiltshire Leisure Centres and community partners to finalise the 2022/2023 CICC activity plan and will be launching monthly fun activities starting in March 2022. Confirmed activities include climbing, a football tournament, street dance and a roller disco.
8. The CICC will also be supporting the up-and-coming Star Awards by performing songs from different eras and wearing clothes they have made.

Mind of My Own App

9. Mind of My Own is an award-winning app designed with young people for children and young people. It helps children and young people communicate their views in a way that suits them. They can create their own accounts, which can be used on any device at any time and is fully accessible in over 100 languages! Having a voice is empowering for young people and the Mind of My Own app helps them to share what's important and can help workers understand what is going on in their lives. It's also a very good way for workers to better evidence young people's views and show them that they are being listened to.
10. Teams are starting to embed Mind of My Own into their practices and it is being used now more for business reasons e.g. preparing young people for meetings, creating pen pictures to support with placement planning and receiving feedback/complaints. We have set out new terms of reference for the Mind of My Own Champions, whose role it is to support the wider directorate. We have recently launched Mind of My Own Monday training sessions and currently have 281 staff members trained in how to use the app.

Youth Consultants

11. We have a fantastic group of 12 Youth Consultants who are care experienced or have experience of being on a child protection plan. They are eager to be more involved and take part in various activities.

12. Already the consultants have done a lot of work to improve services in Wiltshire. Alex continues to represent young people on the Corporate Parenting Panel. Tyla's hair and skin guide has been used by foster carers and residential care staff within Wiltshire to help them better understand afro hair and skin. Natasha has helped us recruit a fantastic new Operational Lead for the IRO service. Tegan's knowledge and experience has helped us better understand young people's views of being on a child protection plan and Josh, Rose, and Leo were amazing Dragons on the Care Leavers Local Offer day and spoke well to Mark Riddell when he visited. The feedback that they gave will make positive changes for all care leavers in Wiltshire.
13. The Child and Youth Voice Team will be meeting with the Youth Consultants monthly from January 2022.

Working with the Kinship and Fostering Team

14. We are working with the Kinship and Fostering Team to involve care experienced young people in the recruitment and assessment of foster carers. We currently have 6 young people ready to be trained to be our new Young Persons Fostering Panel. Training will take place on Thursday 27th January. The new Young Persons Panel will enable our prospective foster carers to better understand the needs of children in care and will also give our children a say on who becomes a Wiltshire carer.
15. We are also now involved in placement sufficiency planning offering advice and guidance from our feedback with young people.
16. We are recruiting a new care experienced apprentice into our team. It is our hope that they will support the Kinship and Fostering Team by attending recruitment events and speaking to prospective foster carers about the difference that they could make to a young person's life

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