

A Young Person's Guide



Throughcare & Aftercare Service

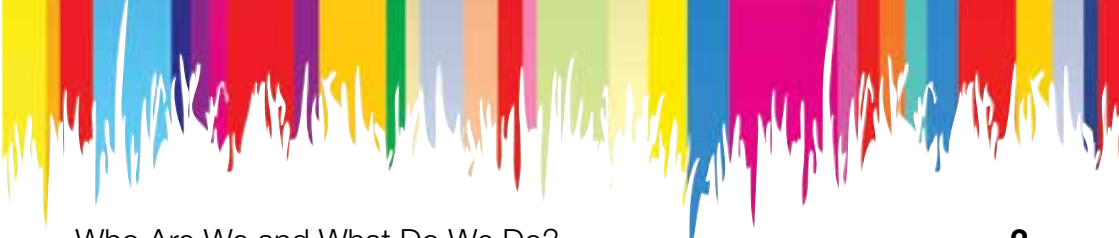
The information in this handbook intends to give you an insight into what Throughcare & Aftercare in Perth can bring you.

It lets you know what you can expect from us, and what we as a service need and expect from you.

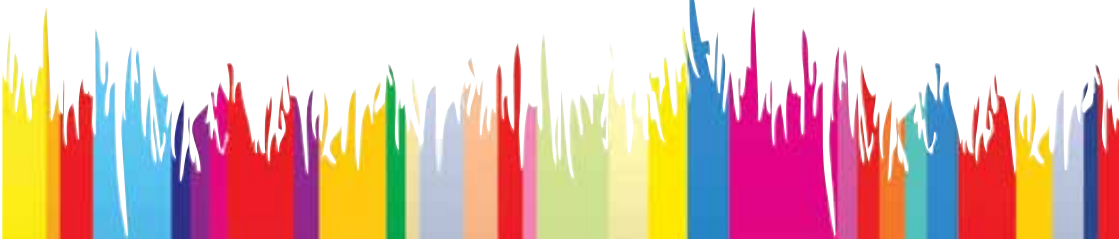
However, we at Throughcare & Aftercare are always keen to hear how the service could be made better, and there is no one more able to do this than the young people who have experienced the service.

Therefore, we ask that young people let us know what bits of the service works and what bits need developed and there is no better way of doing this than the Young People's Council. The Young People's Council sits every two weeks and a minute of what is discussed at these meetings is sent to senior management. At times, senior management will also sit within the Council to hear what you have to say about what it is we do and how it could be better.

If you are interested in this, let your Throughcare & Aftercare worker know and we will support you into this group.



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Who Are We and What Do We Do?

The Throughcare & Aftercare team is made up of a manager and five support workers.

We work across the whole of Perth and Kinross, from Aberfeldy to Kinross, and from Crieff to Invergowrie.

We are a small specialised team and have a great deal of experience working with young people leaving the care system. We work closely with social workers, carers, education and other people who have been involved in supporting you.

Throughcare is the service that supports young people prepare for when they will leave care.

Aftercare is the support that you will get when you have left care and are living more independently.

Your social worker may talk to you before we become involved in your care plan. At this point, you will be allocated a Throughcare & Aftercare worker, who will make contact with you and your social worker.

Our Responsibilities

Like all other authorities and Councils, Perth & Kinross Council has many responsibilities towards children and young people who are looked after. The Children (Scotland) Act 1995 sets out these responsibilities upon which we must stick to.

The Act tells us that we have a duty to provide young people who are currently looked after with support and guidance to prepare you for the time when you are no longer looked after.

It also tells us that we have a duty to provide you with support and guidance when you have left the care system and when you live more independently. This support is aimed at helping you manage all aspects of your independent life.

The Children (Scotland) Acts also states that we have a responsibility to help you financially towards expenses connected with your education or training.



Referral

We can offer a service to you if you have been looked after away from home for at least 13 weeks between your 14th birthday and your official school leaving date.

If this is you, then at some point, you may be referred to the Throughcare & Aftercare team by your social worker. If all the people who know you think referring you to us is a good idea (including and especially you), then as early as 14, we may become involved in your care plan.

However, in most cases, it is unlikely that we will take an active involvement in your care plan at this stage, but we will be kept up to date about how you are getting on.

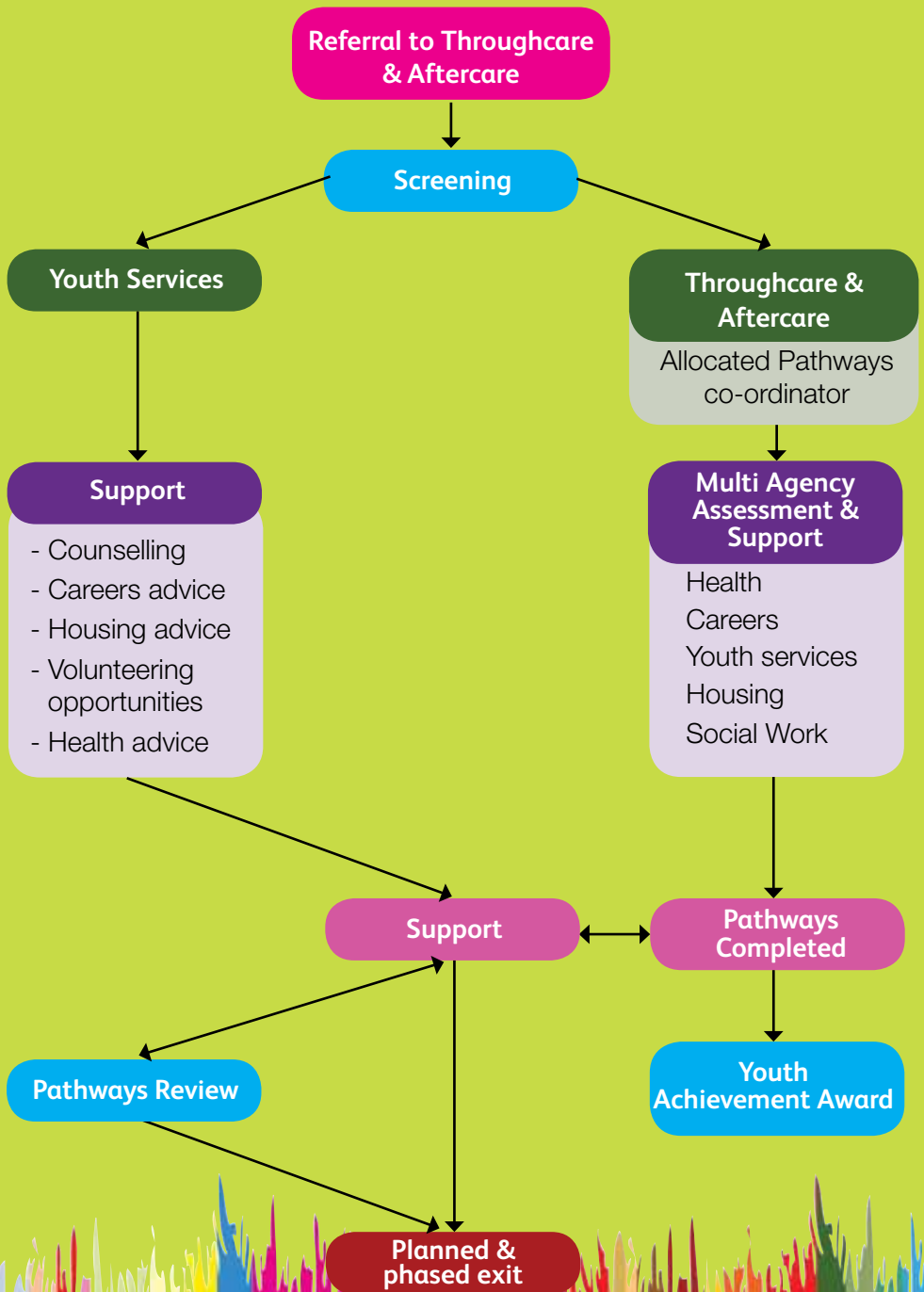
For many, Throughcare & Aftercare will likely become directly involved with you between the ages of 15 and 16. This is the point that we can help you and those around you look and explore what options will be around for you when you leave care. For many, this can be scary.

However, the Throughcare team are good at helping you make sense of this, and remember, just because you reach 16, does not necessarily mean you have to move on from wherever you are staying. This decision about when you move on will be made by you and the people who know you best.

In the very early stages of becoming involved with the Throughcare team, your Throughcare worker will work with you and your social worker to make sure you leave care with your national insurance number, birth certificate, passport and bank account.

We may also attend some or all of your LAC reviews. It will be at these LAC reviews when you can especially express your opinion (along with others) on how soon Throughcare becomes more involved in your care plan alongside your other supports.

Throughcare & Aftercare can support you until the age of 19, or if you feel it necessary, we can extend this to the age of 21.





Confidentiality

Staff will treat all of your personal information as strictly confidential. Your file will be stored in a secure and locked location.

If we believe there is a risk of someone being harmed, including you, there may be times when we as a Throughcare team need to pass information about you or other people on to other services. However, if this does happen, we will tell you what was said, who it was said to and when it is either to be said or when it was said.

The Throughcare team does not work alone, but alongside other services, including Careers Scotland, Youth Services, Housing and Health. In order for us to give you the best supports possible, we need to be able to speak to these other services.

If you agree and allow us to do this, we will ask you to sign an information sharing agreement which sets out the type and the amount of information that you agree to share.

If you wish to view your file, you can do this by making this request to your social worker or to your Throughcare worker, who will be able to help you access it.

What Can Throughcare & Aftercare Do for Me?

Throughcare provides you with supports and guidance in all areas as you prepare for independence.

Aftercare provides you with supports as you make the move into your own accommodation as well as providing you with ongoing support when you do move so that you can manage your tenancy.

Your views and wishes will always remain central to any plans that we make about you.

We will work with you at your own pace.

You will be allocated a Throughcare & Aftercare worker, who will also be called your pathways co-ordinator.

Your pathways co-ordinator will ensure that you are able to express your views and opinions and that these will be fully considered.

Your pathways co-ordinator will carry out an assessment of your strengths and area that you may need support in. We do this by speaking to all those who know you best, but most importantly, you are key to completing this.

This assessment is called the Pathways Plan and is divided into 9 sections.

We will review your Pathways Plan on a regular basis. A Pathways Review is a meeting that allows us to make sure that you receive the right supports from the right people at the right time. We ask you and those who know you best to express views on how best we can do this.

If you don't agree with the plans and decisions made in the Pathways Review, you can discuss this with your pathways co-ordinator, and hopefully, you can reach an agreement.

If you can't reach this agreement, Perth & Kinross Council has a complaints procedure, which you can access. You can find out how you can make a formal complaint later in this handbook.

We carry out pathways reviews every 6 months. However, we can carry out informal reviews in-between your formal reviews if we think it is necessary.

You can access further information on the pathways process and other resources and information from the Scottish Throughcare & Aftercare Forum at **www.scottishthroughcare.org.uk**

Accommodation

Whatever your situation, your goal is to probably have a place of your own. Your goal is our goal, and here at the Throughcare team, we can help you to access a range of accommodation.

Supported Lodgings

This is a great option as a temporary stepping stone from leaving care into independent living. You will have your own room within a family home or be in a self-contained annexe attached to a family home. Those offering the supported lodgings will be trained and supported to help you acquire all of the skills that you will need once you are living on your own.

Supported Accommodation

This is another short-term option to help you gain the skills that you need. You may either be in your own flat, or share a flat with support workers available on or close by.

In all supported accommodation, there is an expectation that you are willing to accept the support provided. If you fail to accept these supports, it is likely that your supported accommodation will be taken from you, and this will likely influence the chances of you getting a secure tenancy.

Private Lets

You will see private lets advertised in estate agents and in the local papers. This option is not normally affordable or accessible to young people.

Local Authority Temporary Accommodation

Perth & Kinross Council can provide limited emergency accommodation, and has access to hostels and other temporary accommodation in Perth.

Local Authority and Housing Association Tenancy

Once the Housing officers receive evidence from those supporting you that you are ready to manage a home of your own, and you are eligible within their points system, you will be ready to be offered a secure tenancy. Once you are offered a secure tenancy, this will then become your permanent home. We can support you in understanding and signing all the documents you will be asked to sign.

Those who have access to different types of accommodation will try to find you the accommodation you want and need in an area where you want to live. However, this is not always possible, and you may have to consider other areas. A young person living alone will be offered a one bedroom property. If you are a parent, or are going to share your accommodation with someone, then a tenancy with more bedrooms may be offered.

Housing Application Process

At age 16, you will be encouraged to complete housing applications for all housing providers.

We will introduce you to the team within Housing that deals with applications from young people. They will be able to advise you on accommodation options and what needs to be done before accommodation is offered. If appropriate, Housing will attend any reviews we have.

Whilst your housing application is in, we will work with you to develop skills necessary for independent living.

Once you have demonstrated this ability to live independently, accept the need for further support if it is required, and when appropriate accommodation becomes available, housing providers will offer you a tenancy.

When you are offered this tenancy, you will receive practical support from us on how to manage this as well as financial help from us to help make your new home comfortable.



Family, Friends and Young Person's Supporter

Everyone wants to enjoy good relationships with family and friends. However, this is not always possible. If you are experiencing family difficulties, you can talk to your worker about this.

Young parents can ask for help in accessing appropriate supports and information on all aspects of parenting, and in Throughcare, we have good working relationships with people and teams who work for health who are very experienced in working with mums-to-be as well as young mums and dads.

Throughcare & Aftercare cannot provide a direct service to infants and young children. However, we support young parents in all Throughcare & Aftercare issues.

At Throughcare & Aftercare, you will have the opportunity to meet young people who have experiences similar to your own. This can provide you with additional friends and supports.

Young Person Supporter

Some young people need a person who can ensure that their voice is heard as well as providing support and guidance. Some meetings can be daunting and discussing the future may be difficult and stressful. In such circumstances, having someone you know and trust available can allow you to ensure that we as a service hear what it is you want and when you want it.

We ask that all young people bring a supporter to Throughcare, and if you can't think of anyone you want, we can help appoint one for you. The only thing that we ask is that we as a service are satisfied that whoever you choose as a support is capable of performing the role of a supporter.

Lifestyle

Throughcare can help you maintain a healthy balance between work, study and leisure. Everyone chooses to live their life in their own way. We respect this choice, but we will encourage you to make positive choices that will keep you safe, well and happy.

Health and Wellbeing

Good health and feeling well is important to everyone. Throughcare & Aftercare and our health partners including the young people's health team can support you in accessing medical advice, treatment and other medical services. Guidance is available on managing alcohol, smoking, diet, exercise and mental health. This will ensure that you are aware of other services available to you.



Learning and Work

Education

We will work with your teachers, careers advisors, college lecturers and others to ensure that you are fully supported in your education.

When the time is right, careers interviews will help you decide on options for the future.

You could be entitled to financial support to help you get the most out of your time in education. We will ensure that you access your entitlement.

Training

Throughcare & Aftercare will work closely with local training providers. These can assist you to gain skills that will increase the likelihood of you gaining employment in your chosen field.

Financial assistance might be available to you if you are in training or in employment, for specialist equipment, work clothes, transport and others.

Employment

If employment is your goal, Throughcare & Aftercare will offer practical help in finding a job and will encourage you to liaise with local employment agencies. Ongoing support, encouragement and practical assistance is always available.

Throughcare & Aftercare will always ensure that appointments with your worker do not interfere with your education, training or work.

Income Maintenance

If you are 16 or 17 years old, are a care leaver and are not in education, training or employment, you may be eligible to receive income maintenance from Throughcare & Aftercare.

If you are eligible to be paid by us, the money that we will pay you will be the same as the unemployment benefit paid by the Department of Work and Pensions. In order for you to receive this payment, you will have to sign an income maintenance agreement which will detail your responsibilities.

Once you turn 18, you will move across to the DWP benefit system, and you will be given support to do this. Young parents and young people who have a disability will receive their benefits from the DWP system whatever their age.



Practical Skills

Before you move into your own home, you will be assisted by your carers and your Throughcare & Aftercare worker to develop budgeting skills that will help you manage all aspects of your finances once you are living independently

Once you are in your own home, we will continue to offer support until you have gained the knowledge and the skills necessary to manage your finances.

Managing your own home will no doubt mean that you will receive many letters from many people, including gas and electricity companies, Housing and from a variety of other companies. However, your Throughcare & Aftercare worker will help you deal with keeping on top of these letters.

Being able to manage your own home requires you to learn and develop new skills. In the years and months before you move on to living totally independently, your carers and workers will have been helping you acquire many of the necessary skills needed for you to keep and enjoy being in your own place.

Your Throughcare & Aftercare worker can help you manage a range of practical tasks once you have your own place, including:

- *Decorating*
- *Cleaning*
- *Shopping*
- *Cooking*
- *Budgeting*
- *Dealing with all the letters you will get from all the different companies*
- *How to be a good neighbour*

Rights and Legal Issues

Everyone in Scotland has rights and responsibilities.

However, those leaving the care system have additional rights under 'The Support and Assistance of Young People Leaving Care (Scotland) Regulations 2003'.

If you want to see these regulations, you can access them at your Throughcare & Aftercare office.

Further information is also available at your Throughcare & Aftercare office that will help you understand what you are entitled to. For more information, go to **www.scottishthroughcare.co.uk** and **www.sccyp.org.uk**, which tells you about what your rights are when you leave the care system.

What are Your Responsibilities?

These are many, but can be summed up briefly....

You must live your life within the law and respect those around you at all times.

Sounds easy enough, but young people can often struggle when they find themselves with greater freedom that they had before.

Your Throughcare & Aftercare worker will work with you and your housing provider to ensure that you manage your home in a manner that shows respect for your neighbours. In the same way, we can also help if you feel that you are being discriminated against because of your age or your neighbours are failing to show you the respect that you show them.

Here in the Throughcare & Aftercare team, we are committed to providing you with the best possible service. Everyone is entitled to work in an environment that is free from verbal or physical abuse. Therefore, you must respect those working for and around you.

If you attend an appointment, and it looks like you are under the influence of either alcohol and/or illegal drugs, you will be asked to leave and will be given an appointment for another time.

Finance

Local authorities have many responsibilities towards all children and young people who have been looked after. These responsibilities are set out in the Children (Scotland) Act. This includes a financial responsibility.

When you are allocated a Throughcare & Aftercare worker, he/she will start to look at what we as a service will give you financially alongside other more practical supports.

You could be eligible for financial help in some of the following areas:

- *Furnishing and decorating a tenancy*
- *Financial support towards education*
- *Costs that are related to training or employment*

The Throughcare & Aftercare team has no direct access to money. Therefore, any request for financial support must be discussed with your Throughcare & Aftercare worker first.

In addition to the above, you will be eligible to apply for living expenses if you are 16 or 17 years old and a care leaver not in receipt of a wage, education or a training allowance.

If you are 16 or 17 years old, are a care leaver and are a parent or are registered disabled, your Throughcare & Aftercare worker will help you secure financial support from the Department of Work & Pensions.

When the time comes for you to move into your own tenancy, you may be eligible for a leaving care grant. This allows you to work alongside your Throughcare & Aftercare worker to look at using the grant to purchase items that will be necessary for you for when you move into your tenancy. For example, some young people who have moved into their own tenancy for the first time have needed to buy a bed, some have needed a sofa and some have needed to buy a washing machine.

This grant is dependent on what other funds may be available to you, for example, a community care grant and what other income that you have.

The grant will be used to buy necessities for your accommodation and not luxuries, for example, games consoles or laptops or top of the range plasma televisions.

As part of your grant, you will be bought a 12 months television license and 12 months contents insurance.

During periods of cold weather, depending on your circumstances, we may pay you additional money towards your heating.

Youth Scotland: Youth Achievement Awards

If you are aged 14 or over then Youth Achievement Awards can help you get recognition for your achievements when you're involved in activities that interest you and help you develop life skills.

The Awards are accredited by ASDAN, a qualifications authority, and are part of the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework so they really are worth having.

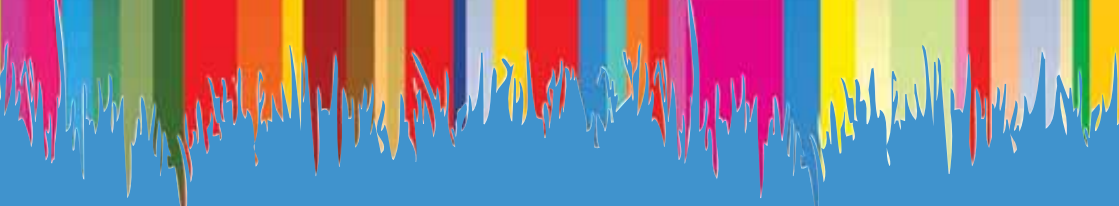
There are 4 levels of Award: **Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum**. The levels represent the responsibility you take so at:

Bronze (*Comparable to a General Standard Grade*) it's about **taking part** in activities

Silver (*Comparable to a Credit Standard Grade*) it's about **helping to organise** activities

Gold (*Comparable to a Higher*) it's about **planning and organising** your own activities

Platinum (*Comparable to an Advanced Higher*) it's about taking on a **leadership** role



Each level of the Award is broken down into 15 hour challenges and at each step of the way you are supported by the people involved in the activities with you. Below is the number of challenges in each level of award:

4 challenges are needed to get a Bronze Award

6 challenges are needed to get a Silver Award

8 challenges are needed to get a Gold Award

For a Platinum Award things change as the challenges include doing a 60 hour work placement and 30 hours of training.

If you complete your **Pathways Plan**, this in itself could bring you a Bronze Award.

If you are interested in achieving a Youth Achievement Award please contact Lorna Dickson, who is the Smart Citizenship Worker at Perth & Kinross Council. Her email address is **Ldickson@pkc.gov.uk** or you can telephone her on **01738 783450**.

Any of the Throughcare & Aftercare workers can help you achieve completing a Youth Achievement Award, and if this interests you, you can discuss this with your Throughcare & Aftercare worker if you want before you and your worker contacts Lorna.

When you no longer need Throughcare & Aftercare support

The amount of time that a young person will receive support from Throughcare & Aftercare will vary according to individual needs.

Generally, supports will be available if necessary until you reach 19 years of age.

If you are in full-time further or higher education, supports can continue until your course ends or you reach the age of 21.

If you are not in education, but you and your worker feel that you would benefit from further assistance past your 19th birthday, then you can request that your supports are continued until you are 21 years of age. This will be considered by the Throughcare & Aftercare senior, and will be discussed with you at a Pathways Review.

Whatever your age, eventually you will reach a stage in your life where Throughcare & Aftercare supports will end. Our experience has been that young people generally feel confident and happy about this further step on to independence.

If you feel you need further assistance when your Throughcare & Aftercare support ends, we will work closely with our other agencies to try to identify a service for you.



What Can You Do if You are Unhappy With the Service?

We hope that you will enjoy working with Throughcare & Aftercare.

If for any reason you are unhappy, you should speak to a member of the team.

If you are still unhappy after speaking to a team member, you can take your complaint to the senior social worker for the Throughcare & Aftercare Team. If need be, you can then go to the Improvement Officer for Looked After Services. They are based at Colonsay Resource Centre, and can be contacted on **01738 783450**.

You might wish to contact the 'Who Cares' worker or the Rights & Information Officer for children and young people. These people are independent of Perth & Kinross Council and will be happy to help you. You will find their contact details at the end of this booklet

Most problems should be sorted out at this stage.

However, if you believe that your complaint has not been resolved, you can ask for your complaint to be heard through Perth & Kinross Council's formal complaints procedure. A leaflet about how to make a complaint is available from all Perth & Kinross Council offices.

Contacts

Further information is available from the following websites and telephone numbers.

Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare Forum

Aims to improve support for young people leaving care by influencing the development of national policies and local support services.

Tel **0141 357 4124**

www.scottishthroughcare.org.uk

Who Cares? Scotland

Who Cares? Scotland is a voluntary organisation working with and for children and young people in care.

Tel **0141 226 4441**

www.whocaresscotland.org

Scotland's Commissioner for Children & Young People

SCCYP promotes and safeguards the rights of children and young people living in Scotland.

Tel **0131 558 3733**

www.sccyp.org.uk

The Debate Project

A group run by young people for young people who are or have been accommodated. Helps improve services for young people who will enter the care system in the future.

Email **amy@scottishthroughcare.org.uk**

Children & Young People

Rights & Information officer

Tel **01250 874234**



Youth Services

Tel **01738 451236**

Careers Scotland

Tel **01738 637639**

Young Peoples Health Team

Tel **01738 564294**

British Association for Adoption and Fostering

advice for members of the public on adoption and fostering in Scotland.

www.baaf.org.uk

Children in Scotland

Children in Scotland is the national agency for voluntary, statutory and professional organisations and individuals working with children and their families in Scotland.

www.childreninscotland.org.uk

Enquire

The online guide to leaving home and housing for young people in Scotland.

www.enquire.org.uk

Tel **0845 123 2303**

Leaving Home - Practice Bites

A database which lists a range of youth housing and support projects.

www.leavinghome.info

NCH

NCH helps the most vulnerable children and young people in the UK.

www.NCH.org.uk

National Leaving Care Advisory Service (NLCAS)

The focus of NLCAS is to improve the life chances of people leaving care.

www.raineronline.org

Prince's Trust

The Prince's trust offers practical solutions to help change lives.

www.princess-trust.org.uk

Scottish Council for Single Homeless (SCSH)

SCSH exists to highlight the need of homeless people and offer practical ideas and information to tackle homelessness.

www.scsch.co.uk

Scottish Institute for Residential Child Care (SIRCC)

SIRCC was established with the aim of ensuring that residential child care staff throughout Scotland has access to the skills and knowledge they require to meet the needs of the children and young people in their care.

www.sircc.strath-ac.uk

Scottish Youth Housing Network

The Scottish Youth Housing Network aims to improve housing for young people.

www.syhn.org.uk

Young Minds

National charity committed to improving the mental health of all children and young people.

www.youngminds.org.uk

Young Scot

Scottish Youth Information for 12-26 year olds.

www.youngscot.org

Perth & Kinross Council is not responsible for the content of external websites.

Much of the content of this handbook has been replicated with the kind permission from Moray Council.



Notes

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion only a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting
Iain Wilkie on 01738 783450

إن احتجت أنت أو أي شخص تعرفه نسخة من هذه الوثيقة بلغة أخرى أو تصميم آخر فيمكن الحصول عليها (أو على نسخة معدلة لمخصص هذه الوثيقة مترجمة بلغة أخرى) بالاتصال ب:

الإسم: Iain Wilkie

رقم هاتف للاتصال المباشر: 01738 783450

اگر آپ کو یا آپ کے کسی جاننے والے کو اس دستاویز کی نقل دوسری زبان یا فارمیٹ

(بعض دفعہ اس دستاویز کے خلاصہ کا ترجمہ فراہم کیا جائے گا) میں درکار ہے

تو اس کا بندوبست سروس ڈیولپمنٹ Iain Wilkie سے ہون

نمبر 01738 783450 پر رابطہ کر کے کیا جاسکتا ہے۔

如果你或你的朋友希望得到這文件的其他語言版本或形式

(某些時候，這些文件只會是概要式的翻譯)，請聯絡

Iain Wilkie 01738 783450

來替你安排。

Jeżeli chciałbyś lub ktoś chciałby uzyskać kopię owego dokumentu w innym języku niż język angielski lub w innym formacie (istnieje możliwość uzyskania streszczenia owego dokumentu w innym języku niż język angielski), Proszę kontaktować się z
Iain Wilkie 01738 783450

P ežete-li si Vy, anebo n kdo, koho znáte, kopii této listiny v jiném jazyce anebo jiném formátu (v n kterých p ípadech bude p eložen pouze stru ný obsah listiny)
Kontaktujte prosím Iain Wilkie 01738 783450
na vy ízení této požadavky.

Если вам или кому либо кого вы знаете необходима копия этого документа на другом языке или в другом формате, вы можете запросить сокращенную копию документа обратившись
Iain Wilkie 01738 783450



Council Text Phone Number 01738 442573

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility