

Annex A

CARE LEAVER COVENANT

Through signing this document I commit the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to support the principles of the care leaver covenant, and to provide the support detailed below to help care leavers in their transition from care to independence in order to improve their life chances.

Signed on behalf of: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government



Signature

NameJames Brokenshire.....

PositionSecretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government.....

Date26.10.18.....



Principles of the care leaver covenant

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government supports the key principles of the care leaver covenant, which are:

- That all parts of society have a responsibility to help care leavers to avoid poor outcomes and make a successful transition to adulthood; and
- That action to support care leavers should be in their best interests, promote their health and well-being and secure the best possible outcomes for them.

Demonstrating our commitment

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will demonstrate its commitment to the care leaver covenant through the following actions:

- offering employment opportunities to care leavers through participating in the Civil Service care leaver internship scheme;

- providing targeted support to care leavers who are not in education, employment or training and who are also at high risk of rough sleeping, through the Young Futures Social Impact Bond;
- supporting local authorities to implement the care leavers' accommodation and support framework (developed by Barnardo's and St Basils), which aims to stop care leavers being homeless and make sure they have suitable housing and support;
- carrying through the recent joint announcement with the Department for Work and Pensions that funding for 'Supported Housing' for young people and care leavers will continue through individual entitlement to Housing Benefit;
- introducing an oversight scheme, to make sure that supported housing accommodation for care leavers is of the right quality and delivers value for money;
- continuing to encourage local authorities to recognise the special circumstances of care leavers and identify them as a group who may need priority for social housing as outlined in current guidance;
- giving care leavers aged 18-20 automatic 'priority need' for accommodation if they are homeless;
- giving care leavers aged 21 and above priority need if they are vulnerable as a result of having been in care;
- providing for care leavers aged 18 – 20 who are homeless to have a local connection with both the authority which has looked after them and the area in which they have lived, so long as they have lived there for 2 years, including some time before their 16th birthday. Care leavers who have been looked after by a County Council now have a local connection with every housing authority within the county;
- funding expert advisers to provide targeted advice and support to local authorities to improve the services provided to young people leaving care.
- We have recently developed a new rapid rehousing response and accommodation pathway for those sleeping rough or at risk of doing so, including care leavers, into independent and sustainable accommodation, through:
 - piloting '**Somewhere Safe to Stay**' – an emergency 'sit-up' assessment service for those in crisis sleeping rough or immediately threatened with doing so.
 - introducing a new **Supported Lettings Fund**, of up to £19 million, to provide tenancy sustainment and support for those recovering from sleeping rough.

- Using the **Housing First Pilot** to provide accommodation with wrap-around support for those rough sleepers with the most complex of needs.