

2022-2024

Break's Care Strategy

Providing the best individualised care for the children, young people and families who need us.



Break's Care Strategy 2022-2025

Executive Summary

This document outlines the strategic aims of Break's Care Directorate for the next three years. It has been created in consultation with the Care Workforce, the Care Leadership and Manager Teams, young people, the Executive and Trustees and brings together research into current market conditions, analysis of current services and the views and ideas of stakeholders to deliver a vision, strategy and aim that will guide the activity and growth of the care directorate.

This strategy is ambitious in its drive to deliver the best possible outcomes for the children, young people and families we support and will do this by being aspirational for the children and young people, for staff and for each service. There are KPI's and a strategic plan to drive this work forward. We are proud of our services and by focusing our activity and growth we will ensure the sustainability and continued reputation of Break's Care Services.



OUR VISION

To give every person in our care the opportunity to build a safe, secure and ambitious life.

OUR YOUNG PEOPLE'S VISION

"I want Break to give children and young people the building blocks to experience happiness and belonging so they can reach for the stars and follow their dreams."

- Mei, Co-Production Apprentice



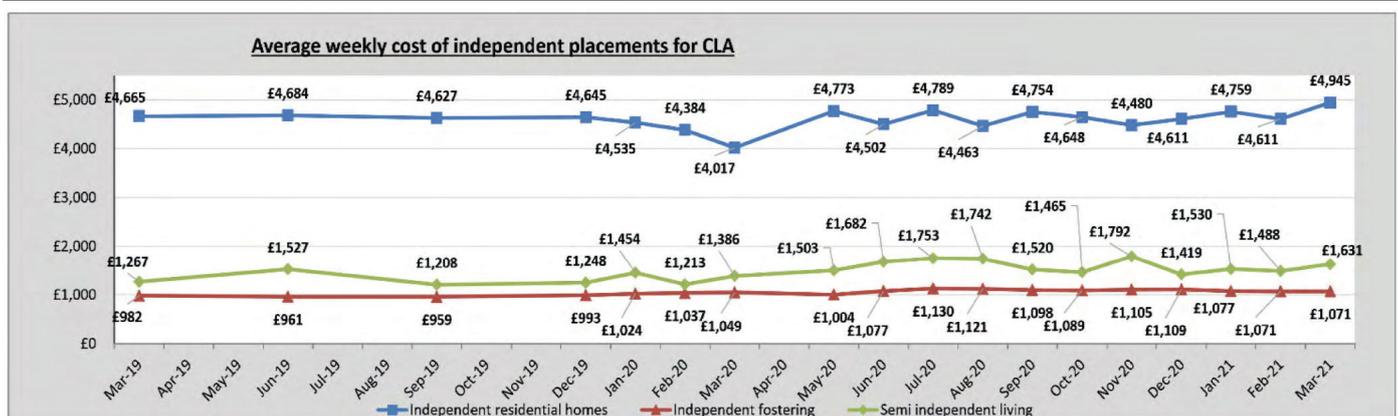
RESEARCH

Research for the strategy has taken place both inside and outside of Break. The internal research focused on SWOT analysis of each service with managers, survey of all care staff (65% response rate) and the creation of a criteria to assess all services that brought together the evidence from the activity described above. The criteria used to assess each service were; financial return, impact, workforce, scalability, sustainability, growth potential, risk and alignment with Break's vision and values.

External research was undertaken into the demand, price, and sufficiency of placements across our nine strategic local authorities (Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Peterborough, Suffolk, Beds, Herts, Essex,

Lincolnshire and Thurrock) using a FOI request.

Authorities described an increased pressure on the need for placements for Children in Care as the numbers of children entering care nationally has been increasing. The market for residential placements has been particularly challenging over the last year with a steady rise in placement prices which is reflected below. Fostering placements continue to be the placement of choice and tend to make up between 50-75% of all care placements for our regional local authorities however despite demand, average prices have remained relatively constant and this is also reflected below:



Taken from Herts CC sufficiency statement 2021

There are over 500 children in residential care across our region, including mainstream, disability and dual education and care funded placements. Local Authorities have to report on the numbers of children and young people placed in county and where out of county, distance to home. Where possible they place in county and encourage new provision locally where they don't have sufficient places in county.

Over 50% of the total number of children in care in the region are between 13-17, accessing a mix of supported accommodation (like SCSC), children's

homes and foster placements.

All authorities describe an increase in the level of need for those children coming into care, many with either complex needs resulting from a disability or from significant trauma having remained in their family home throughout much of their early childhood. It is these children who tend to need more specialist and experienced care that can understand and meet their complex needs.

ANALYSIS OF LOCAL RESEARCH

The research into local need and price supports the proposed weekly price increase for spot purchased placements at Break increasing by £400 from 21/22-22/23 with annual increases from that point. This keeps Break nearly £1000 per week below the national average which means it is very competitively priced whilst able to fund the additional therapeutic support to each service, the increased workforce development and salary offer.

The research also shows that targeting our services to children and young people who are in their pre-teen and teenage years is in line with the growing care population at this age. All of our services, aside from Hazledene, primarily work with this age range which supports our continued growth and focus on this area.

We can see there is significant demand and need for residential care placement and there was some evidence of growing need for solo placements (5 of the 8 authorities were currently using solo placements), although this continues to be an emerging need and much of the

data shared by the Local Authorities is retrospective. The increased number of children entering care who have a disability suggests there will be a continued and growing need for specialist disability services.

There is also evidence of a significant number of placements currently being used by LA's that have education included in the placement. Whilst there is no evidence that this is increasing, the demand is significant enough to suggest that this need will continue and therefore will be increasingly needed as part of the placement offer.



OUR STRATEGIC THEMES

From the research, evaluation and feedback we have identified **four themes** that will guide our work:

QUALITY



Providing quality services is at the heart of what we do. We want to have a shared understanding of what we mean by quality at Break and to be constantly striving for better. This means

knowing our own strengths and weaknesses and seeking to reflect and improve where we need to. We also recognise that most of our services must align to our regulators view of quality and for Ofsted this means good and outstanding services.

LOCAL



A key driver for our work is to keep children and young people close to their communities and families so they can build networks that are sustainable long after they have left Break's

care. Whilst over 80% of our referrals are from outside of our local area, we have made a strategic decision to build partnerships with the 9 Local Authorities in the region, starting with those closer to us for building new services, but offering spot purchase placements in our homes and services to those across the region. As we do this we expect to be able to align the growth of care with the growth in the retail and fundraising strategy.

AMBITIOUS



We recognise that for many children in care they experience outcomes that are out of line with their contemporaries who are not in care and we are passionate about being ambitious for our

children and young people. We want them to have the adulthoods and opportunities they deserve and being constantly ambitious for them is at the heart of what we do. We also are proud to work in care and whilst many join Break as their first step into care we want to be ambitious for them too. We want all staff to see themselves as having the opportunity for a career in care at Break. Not only does this have positive impacts on the individuals, it also means that we tackle retention and provide children and young people with skilled staff who are consistent in their lives. Finally we are ambitious for Break as an organisation. We want to be innovative and test new ways of working, we want to provide the best possible services and grow into new areas and have a national influence.

ADDED VALUE



We are fortunate to be a charitable organisation who have the benefit of charitable income to supplement services that are funded by the local authority to give children, young people and

families what they need to live safe, secure and ambitious lives. We have identified four areas that are missing from statutory funding that young people tell us enhances their lives.

THEY ARE:

1. **Therapeutic support** – both direct and indirect to each service
2. **A life-long offer** – staying with children when they move on from our care for as long as they need us
3. **Pathways to employment** – support to take the steps to employment, building confidence, connections and experiences along the way
4. **Mentoring services** – volunteers who can provide a non paid for relationship without agenda for the children and young people

COMMITMENTS AND ACTIVITY

The following four commitments contain all of the activity that sits within the 3 year plan and are linked closely with our strategic themes.

Statutory services are full cost recovery and sustainable by 2024

We recognise that the cost of delivering care has increased over recent years and the needs of the Local Authorities are changing. However, consistently across the region the numbers of children in care is rising and expected to continue to do so over the next five years. However, Local Authorities are under significant pressure with budgets and thresholds are rising which means the needs of the children coming into care are also increasing and their sufficiency statements all state a need to grow the fostering capacity in the region. In order to address the need for FCR in our services we will focus on:

1. **Adapting Hazeldene** - working with commissioners to create a service that is financially viable with a three year business case mid 2022
2. **Focus on fostering** - a growth target of 6 new households, which is a 40% growth rate, during the next 12 months
3. **Fee increase with residential services** - continue to build on the 28% fee increase this year to ensure that new placement price covers the cost of delivering the service - increase by £400 per week in 22/23
4. **Grow contracts with regional LAs** - proactively work with the 9 strategic authorities so we are informed of potential contracts and new need as early as possible and be creative in how we grow outside of Norfolk.

We have a life long offer for all of our children and young people who want it and this provides stability and consistency for children and young people

1. **Create 18-25 service for disabled care leavers** - working with adult services and children's services to understand the need and the gap in provision and create a model and offer that means Break have a life long offer for all our young people
2. **Continue to develop and adapt SCSC** - as funding changes and we move towards being a provider the model will need to adapt and align with the needs of the Local Authorities. There may also be opportunity for more scaling work, depending on DfE funding.

We offer a career in care for our people

1. **Succession planning** - we want to have a plan for all roles, including those new to Support Worker roles, working with colleges and other possible pathways into care
2. **Workforce development offer** - we want to enhance the offer so it is more role specific and linked to the strategy for each service. Growth and development of all will underpin this work
3. **Break academy for the workforce** - Building to having our own academy in year 2 and 3 will solidify this work and bring together the 'career in care' offer that we want to be available to all staff

Our services are agile and meet the needs of the children, young people and families who need us

Referral and LA data shows the need for education to sit alongside care for many of the children requiring residential care, both disabled and non-disabled children. We also know that outcomes are poor for many children in care and this needs addressing. We therefore want to focus on exploring, testing and delivering an education offer over the next three years. Alongside this we also need our services to provide high quality care and this means we need to do more to address the quality standard across our services and maintain good or outstanding gradings across all of our services. In line with the needs of staff and children we will be moving away from Solihull and the 4S's as our model of care towards a Trauma Informed Model, with Signs of Safety, Steps and Social Pedagogy complimenting the model. We are doing this because staff and young people need to understand the trauma they are experiencing to grow and develop. In order to stay agile we must review the delivery model for children's homes annually, based on referral data, to ensure we can meet the needs of local children requiring residential care.

1. **Develop an education offer** – this will likely not be a building but more of a flexible offer that has Break named on individuals EHCP as the education provider – dual funded placements
2. **Embed quality assurance processes** – we will be building on the work of the last year so all services have quarterly external QA that is supplemented by the regulatory and LA monitoring
3. **Trauma informed model of care across services** – rolling out our 2 day trauma informed course to all staff and building on this over the three years with DDP training and BTS embedded in each service

4. **All services good or outstanding Ofsted grading** – focused programmes for services on the edge of outstanding to give them the best chance of securing the highest grading
5. **Review the children's home model of delivery** – using intelligence from referral data to inform the offer from services
6. **Develop the intensive model** – review and develop the model, considering a specific model or programme to direct the work of the intensive teams
7. **Grow the mentoring offer** – build the service so all children and young people have access to a mentor if they would like one



GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Alongside this document sits a work plan to ensure we are achieving this ambitious strategy. The responsibility for delivering this strategy primarily sits with the Care Leadership Team but requires the input from both the People and Income Generation Directorates. The progress against the work plan will be shared at each care committee and quarterly at Executive Meetings so any areas of delay or concerns can be quickly picked up and mitigated / resolved. A risk log will sit alongside the work plan.

The key activity for each year is listed below:

2022

- **Adapt Hazeldene** - fit the needs of local commissioners whilst being innovative in its approach
- **Grow Fostering** - initial target of 6 new households in the year
- **Create education model** - pilot by September 2022 a placement with education attached
- **Align opportunities team with added value** - focus on pathways to work and opportunities that enhance the experiences of our children and young people
- **Review Children's home model** - review of referral data on a 3 monthly basis
- **Embed quality assurance processes** - quarterly review of each service this year
- **Align work force development offer with roles** - create specific offers for each role
- **Model 18-25 service for disabled young people** - research and develop an 18-25 model ready for piloting in 2023/24 including exploration of funding models
- **Embed succession planning work** - create succession plans for all management care roles
- **Grow services by winning contracts that are local** - bid for relevant contracts that fit our strategic themes

2023

- Embed trauma informed model of practice
- Launch a dual care / education placement offer pilot
- Launch break academy for workforce
- Open new intensive service
- Pilot 18-25 disability offer
- All services will be good or outstanding
- Mentoring offer to all children and young people who want it

2024

- Deliver 18-25 offer for disabled young adults
- Have 4 new services (likely mix of intensive and disability)
- Increased contracts with the regions authorities
- Embed education and pathway to education offer

Key Performance Indicators 2022/23

<p>95% of services graded good or outstanding</p>	<p>We aim to have all services good or outstanding this year (22/23) and will put in specific targets around outstanding gradings for the following two years</p>
<p>75% of young people making progress against their plans</p>	<p>This will be measured by the outcomes tracker on Charms and is a new tool. We will monitor progress over the year and review the measurements and targets for 23/24</p>
<p>75% of staff qualified to level 3</p>	<p>This is critical to having a workforce capable of delivering the care we want to deliver and is also a requirement of Ofsted, this has not been previously measured</p>
<p>50% of managers qualified to level 5</p>	<p>This is also critical as the managers need to have the knowledge to be able to be effective in their roles. Again, this is a new measure and is a requirement of Ofsted</p>
<p>22% staff turnover</p>	<p>We have tried to measure this during the last quarter of 2022 as this is data that hadn't previously been reported. This is single biggest factor that will impact on positive experiences and outcomes for the children and young people who crave consistency of relationships</p>
<p>85% occupancy across spot purchased placements</p>	<p>This comprises of all fostering beds (currently 10) all mainstream residential beds (16) and Hazeldene (4). All other services are funded through block contracts or sit outside a simple spot purchase framework</p>
<p>10% income that is not NCC</p>	<p>This will grow as we move through the three years of the strategy and will require a focus both from spot purchase and new contracts on relationships with commissioners and Directors in our 8 strategic local authorities</p>