

# Care Leavers **Connected**

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Summer Edition: July 2024

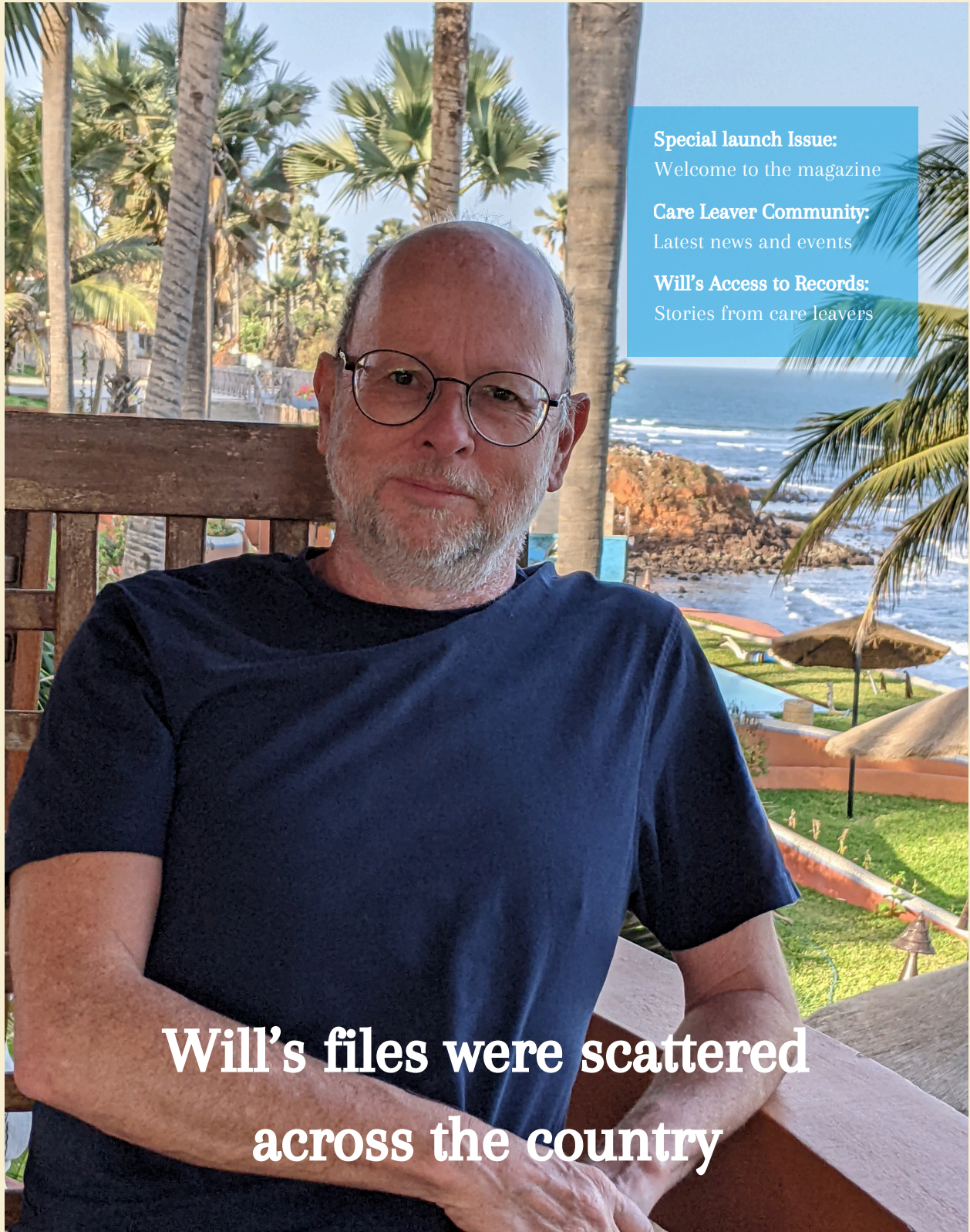


Photo Credit: Sue Hasty



# About Us

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*Yasmine, Yvonne, Jim, Will, Toya and Terri-Anne*

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## Welcome

Dear readers,

Welcome to the first edition of our magazine.

We are care leavers who are part of the developing editorial team at Care Leavers Connected. This magazine is part of The Care Leavers' Association National Lottery funded project 'Care Leavers Connected' launched in 2024 specifically for care leavers aged 25 and over. The project aims to recognise the challenges many care leavers experience as adults and provide a space to connect with others to share their unique experiences.

Care Leavers Connected Magazine is produced by care leavers for care leavers. It is a safe space to share our stories, ambitions, and tips to support and celebrate everyone in our community. At your leisure, please take the time to read through the magazine and give us any feedback. We want this to be a place that reflects our community, where people have a voice and can also find resources and connections.

If you would like to give any [feedback](mailto:connected@careleavers.com) or want to write for our future editions, please email [connected@careleavers.com](mailto:connected@careleavers.com).

Thank you for your support,

*Editorial Team*



# Inside this Issue



*Terri-Anne and Jim*

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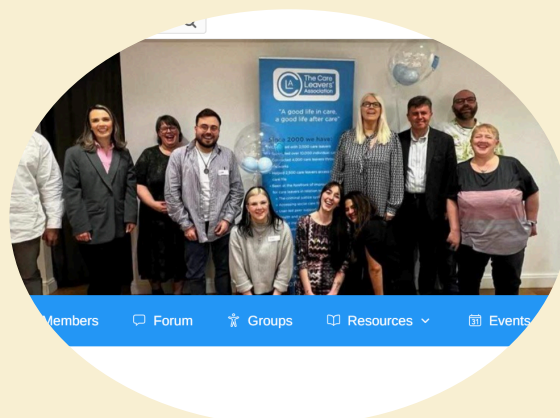
# Latest News

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## *Launch of the Care Leavers' Connected Website*

The new website for Care Leavers Connected will be launched later this summer.

It has lots of features such as placement groups, forums, resources and a chat function that will help our community of care leavers keep in touch with each other and discuss issues that are important to us.



## *Face to Face Gatherings*

Following the success of our meeting in London, Care Leavers Connected is organising a meet-up for everyone who can make their way to Manchester. It will take place on Saturday 3rd August from 2pm to 4pm. All care leavers are welcome. If you want to come then please let us know by registering [here](#)



## *Sign up for our monthly bulletin*

The Care Leavers Association now has a regular monthly bulletin supported by the Care Leavers Connected team. It will keep you in touch with the latest information about the CLA. If you want to make sure that you receive it in your inbox then please sign up [here](#)



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**To contact us please email [connected@careleavers.com](mailto:connected@careleavers.com) or via social media:**

We understand that some of these issues and stories are sensitive.

If you need any support please contact us on 0161 8260214 and leave a voicemail.

If you need urgent support please contact the Samaritans on 116123



@careleaversassociation



@careleavers



@careleaversassociation



# Will's Access to Records

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## *Will's care files were scattered across the country ...*

How did I get here?' I often asked myself. My life's turning points being made up of a series of decisions made for me or by me with no real understanding of what the outcomes might be.

An important turning point was organised by my Nan, who looked after me for five years and encouraged me to go to military boarding school after primary school, which I did, because my Nan said my brother had really enjoyed it.

This turned out not to be not true for him and it was n't true for me. It was done with the best of intentions, as Nan knew she was very unwell and died soon after I had arrived at the school. I stayed for six months, leaving when given the option.

This, and other experiences of institutional care, I unconsciously sent to the back of my mind until I had an almighty life crisis at 40, when everything about being in the care system came pouring out all over the place. It was quite messy.

## *"I asked Jeeves"*

One day I typed 'care leaver' into the Ask Jeeves search engine (it was 2005) and the Care Leavers' Association website appeared. I joined and tried to access my files.

For some older care leavers, aged 50 and over, it can be upsetting to find out that files have been destroyed as there was no legal requirement to keep them before 1989. For others, getting hold of a care file can be very simple, one local authority and one file. Some find files have been scattered across the country due to numerous moves, some have been kept, some destroyed and, it is often suspected, some held back. My files fit into this category. I thought that my files would all be held in the county where I entered the care system, but I also got some of my files from a London Borough.

For care leavers of all ages, every document, every picture and every health or school report can be an important part of piecing together our lives in care.

I lived in multiple children's homes, assessment centres, with siblings, a relative, and in a military boarding school, in two counties and a London borough. My files helped me to make sense of the 30 moves that I had made from birth to 19 as they give me details of what was done and why. They also helped me make sense of what I was feeling in later life and why I was feeling it.



*Will in a shirt made by his nan and a jumper from Whitechapel market.*

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## *Going back for more*

Then in 2023, 18 years after my first search, the thought suddenly struck me the military boarding school might also have records, which they did. It was a treasure trove of memories.

I have been lucky to get, in total, about 100 pages. There are no photographs but lots of detail. All my living siblings signed letters saying they did not want information about them blanked out (redacted), though, there are still quite a few blocks of black in the files.

There are also important incidents, which I remember quite well, missing. For example, the children's homes I was in had to be investigated for numerous reasons. Remarkably, we were told that as we were all under 16, we could not give evidence to the police.

Eventually, the person in charge was sacked for an entirely different reason - fiddling with the books, no charges were brought and they disappeared into the mist. There are other significant events that are missing from my records.

However, I am pleased I accessed my files as the information they contained, even the parts I knew to be wrong, helped me put together how I arrived at where I am.

**If you want to talk about whether you should try to access your files, get started on the process, or have tried and you need some advice. The Care Leavers' Connected team are all care leavers who have accessed our files, we are here if you need help. Please visit [here](#).**

# Care Leaver Voices

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*“One day I found myself the mum to three beautiful children and a role model to hundreds more in my community”*

**Terri-Anne - Care Leaver**

**My voice wasn't always something I valued, mainly because it felt as though it was never heard. I spent many years becoming the self-fulfilling prophecy the social workers and other professionals had predicted for me. I was lost and angry. With no real place to try and understand and process those feelings.**



I wasted so many years trying to change people, chasing for answers that I knew deep down, I was never going to get. Years wasted blaming myself for the lack of love and care from those who should have provided it. So much time spent feeling lost and alone.

Then I became a kinship carer to my little brother and a first-time mum. This was my time .... my time to shine, to be better than what I came from, to do it (life) the way you're supposed to. Time to break the cycle. One day I found myself the mum to three beautiful children and a role model to hundreds more in my community. Yet no matter how hard I worked, how hard I pushed to change the narrative and expectations for someone like me and the outcomes for my family ... the harder it got. You see even at the ripe old age of 38. Even though I left care at 16, even though I'd broken the cycles I came from. I left care, but care (and the experience of it) has never and will never leave me.

## **Family Privilege**

Family privilege is something so many people don't understand and as a consequence, they take it for granted. Being a care leaver doesn't stop cos you're kicked out at 16, or moved on at 18, or seen less at 21 ... or inevitably signed off at 25.

That's why the Care Leavers Connected is such an important project. It's something that will provide support that I've needed, but never really been able to find. I just hope we do the project justice and can help many others over its duration. Building Bonds, Sharing Stories: Care Leavers Connect, Where Connections Spark Hope!



*“It's ok to be proud and feel sad”*

**Toya - Care Leaver**

**As I look back on my life now aged 26, I feel proud and grateful although I know I will always have that small feeling of sadness and 'why me' and that's ok.**

I have accomplished things in my life that I never thought I would, like becoming a primary school teacher, graduating university and having a career that I love, but often it doesn't feel like my reality.

I am thankful for my life in care as I wouldn't be the person, I am today without it, it makes me appreciate the small things in life, but it still hurts when I think of that first day when I was separated from my brother and left my family home for good.

To break my family cycle is such an achievement but it came from a broken heart, many years of grieving the loss of someone that is still alive and won't change. To work so hard on yourself to finally make you realise that this pain isn't your fault, and you deserve to be happy.

Going through ups and downs with only yourself to guide you, looking for a sense of belonging and love that can only come from within. I am lucky now to have found some who tries their best to understand me when I am only just beginning to understand myself. It will come with time, as does all good things in life. My message is that it's ok to be proud and feel sad – remember how far you've come but also to the future you and how different life can be.



# Care Leaver Voices

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**A famous phrase used throughout the care system. Although there is a high number of children who have positive care experiences and go on to higher education, I'm representing the small minority that don't and sharing a few of their stories.**

I once worked with a boy whose story really shook me, he was a looked-after child I was working with in HMYOI Wetherby. Whilst working together he explained he was from Merseyside living in residential care and there came a time due to lack of placements he was sent out of the country to Scotland to live in a place he described as being like a secure unit. I thought to myself surely our care system isn't that bad we have to send children to different countries. From being a support worker for the CLA I have come to know some great young people with unique stories.

I worked with a young girl who shared a bizarre story. She too was living in residential care at the time in a care home. One day she's in the kitchen making herself some food when one of the care staff comes along and says, 'You can't do that.' They threaten to move her out of the kitchen. At the time she had a wooden spoon in her hand and she threatened the staff 'I will stab you with this spoon if you come any closer.'

The staff went on to call the police on this young girl and armed response turned up to the care home for a 15-year-old girl with a wooden spoon in her hand. She was then arrested for several charges because she kicked up a fuss when they took her to the station. What gets me, is that wouldn't have happened if she was living at home with her parents I mean, I have a son who's 10 years old, and I wouldn't ever call the police on him.

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**Care Leavers Connected magazine is produced by Care Leavers for care leavers. We want to fill the pages of each issue with every aspect of the care leaver experience, with a focus on care leavers over 25. The editorial team producing the magazine ranges in age from people in their 20s to those in their 60s.**

You might want to write about a success that you have had or a challenge you faced, either way, we want to hear from you. The magazine will carry regular articles focused on 'Care Leaver Voices', Health and well-being, 'Access to Records', Care Leavers in the national culture and the latest policy developments among others. So, if you want to write 50 words or 750 words and connect with other care leavers then get in touch at

[connected@careleavers.com](mailto:connected@careleavers.com)



*"I didn't leave care, care left me."*

**Sam- Care Leaver**

Imagine being that young girl with the trauma of being torn away from her parents, the trauma of being in care and the trauma of why she was put in to care, to then have to deal with countless charges for wanting to make some food when she should be preparing for her GCSE's.

In this line of work, I won't finish my day with back ache or sore feet but sometimes you go home worrying about these young people, terrified of what could happen to them. I once worked with a young girl in the youth offending service in Leeds, she too was in residential care. After finishing one of our sessions, she spoke with me away from the group and shared some concerns she had about another girl who lived in the children's home. She explained in her own words this girl was getting groomed by a group of men in the area where they lived. Honestly, I wish I could've gone home here and confronted these men, but I had to follow child awareness protocol and tell my boss.



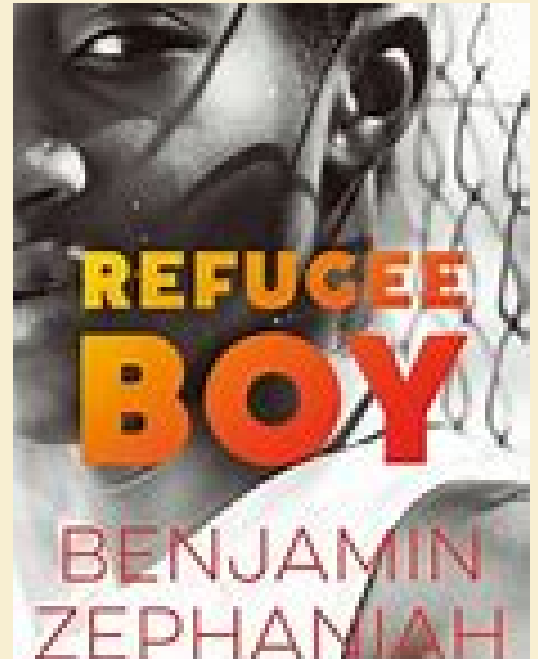
# Care Leaver Culture

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## *Visit the Care Experience and Culture Digital Archive*

The Care Experience and Culture website has a wealth of resources curated by care leavers and academics, Rosie Canning and Dr. Dee Michell. This digital archive features films, books, podcasts, poetry, and more, highlighting care-experienced characters in fiction and on-screen, as well as talented care-experienced writers, artists, and actors.

Visit their [website](#) and share your suggestions for additions to the site with Rosie and Dee. Watch this [YouTube video](#) with Dee to learn more about the site and how you can contribute.



## *Have you seen Alma's Not Normal?*

Alma, residing in Bolton, seeks a "fabulous" outcome for her life amidst managing challenging family dynamics and grappling with memories of her time in care. Inspired by her own experiences, writer Sophie Willan crafted a six-part comedy script that delves into the complexities of the care system. Initially drafted in 2014, Willan aimed to shed light on the struggles faced by welfare and mental health recipients. With the support of the BBC, Sophie completed the script in 2017, focusing on Alma's journey upon receiving her care files—a relatable experience for many care leavers. The comedy, filled with both laughter and tears, has garnered numerous awards and is available on [BBC iPlayer](#).

## *Antiques Roadshow - Ronnie Archie-Morgan*

During [an episode of BBC's Antiques Roadshow](#), Ronnie Archer Morgan, born in 1951, had a touching encounter with Sue, the owner of the Sooty and Sweep glove puppets. Ronnie reminisced about meeting Harry Corbett, the presenter of the Sooty and Sweep Show, during a visit to his children's home in Merseyside in 1955.

After the episode aired, Ronnie's foster family, who cared for him on weekends, sent a letter along with a photograph of Ronnie and his childhood friend Anna from their time in the children's home. Despite being inseparable, Ronnie was separated from Anna at a young age, with no means of keeping in touch. However, an incredible reunion took place when Anna travelled from New Zealand to England later that year.







# Creative Corner

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## *If The System Wasn't Broken - A Poem by Terri-Anne*

If the system wasn't broken  
Perhaps I would have felt less frown.  
Growing up without parents to be spoken  
Would not have felt like a break-down.

If the system wasn't broken  
Maybe my scars wouldn't be so deep.  
I wouldn't have felt so awoken.  
From the nights I spent trying not to sleep.

If the system wasn't broken  
Maybe I could trust again.  
I wouldn't feel so outspoken.  
With my distrust of worldly men.

If the system wasn't broken  
Maybe I could find my feet.  
Maybe I wouldn't be so woken,  
From the nightmares I still meet.

If the system wasn't broken  
Maybe I could feel whole,  
Maybe I wouldn't be outspoken,  
When judging the system's role.  
But the system is broken  
And I am just a statistic  
A number that can be woken  
To prove just how I'm misfit.

The trauma inflicted deeply,  
All because of a system's flaw  
The nights spent crying me to sleep,  
And memories that I can't withdraw.

A trauma-informed system  
Could have been my saving grace.  
But in reality, all too dreary  
Feeling like I'm in a hopeless race.

If only I had a steady hand  
To guide me through the fog  
Maybe I wouldn't be so bland,  
Just another broken log.

The system may be broken  
But I am stronger than that  
I will not be a mere token cos  
My future is where it's at.

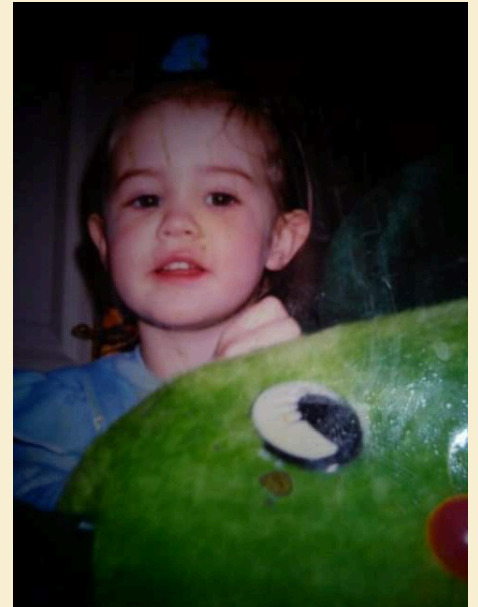
We put our trust in those in power  
To help us find a way  
But they need to walk the talk, not just  
cower  
And truly hear what we say.

But I won't give up, no, not me  
For I know there must be a way  
To make a difference and to be  
A light in the darkness, come what may.

So let's piece the system back together  
And make it what it's meant to be  
Where trauma survivors can weather  
The storm and come out feeling free.

So let me break the cycle  
Let me be the change we need  
For I know I am not an obstacle  
But rather, a growing seed.

Together we can make a difference  
And bring justice to our calls  
For a brighter and safer existence  
And to ensure others never fall.  
The journey is long, but it's not in vain  
And with every step, we'll pave the way  
For a system that's truly humane  
Its time to break that chain.



*Terri-Anne aged 3*

Broken systems, broken statistics  
Feels like a don't have a choice.  
I need to shout it loud and proud  
You will never break our voice!

So, my story may just be the start  
Of an activist revolution, I'm told  
Where trauma survivors find their heart  
And come together with love, and stand strong  
and bold.

So, heed my words and take them in  
For a better system, we must begin.

And with that, my final line is through

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Have you got a creative talent you want to share? Get in touch: [connected@careleavers.com](mailto:connected@careleavers.com)

# Past Lives

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*Past Lives will look at the history of the care system from the point of view of those who lived in it. In this first article, Dr Jim Goddard, Chair of the CLA writes about the history of the institutional care of children.*

For this first issue, I'm going to draw on my interest in the history of the institutional care of children. By institutional care, I mean those big old institutions that have now all been closed but which used to house hundreds of children. A lot of them were run by religious organisations and charities, such as Barnardo's, National Children's Home and The Children's Society.

However, local authorities also ran a lot of big institutions. For example, Manchester had the Styal Cottage Homes, which housed over 400 children and which were closed in the mid-1950s. Interesting, the person who closed them, Ian Brown, was not only the Children's Office for Manchester, meaning he was in charge of all their services for children in care, he had also been in care himself, in a workhouse, in foster care and in a children's home.

My interest in these places partly arises from my experience of living in such institutions. I lived in three Roman Catholic institutions in Liverpool: 1) Kelton Convent (for six months), 2) Nazareth House (for six months), 3) St Gabrielle's, Knolle Park (for two and a half years). I only have memories of the latter, which I left at the age of six and a half to move into a Family Group Home on the Wirral. Of the three institutions I only have memories of Knolle Park, which was run by nuns.

I'm not going to write about the places I lived in, though. I might do that in a future column. Instead, I want to draw on my travels around the UK to visit the sites of many of these institutions. It's often not appreciated that the buildings themselves often still exist. They have usually been turned into private homes or offices. However, some sites have records of the fact that they were once children's homes. You can also walk around them freely. I've visited half a dozen of them and hope to visit more.

The first one I'm going to write about is the Barnardo's site at Barkingside, in London. The former homes are in a small village setting behind what is still the main Barnardo's office



*Barnardo's Barkingside Village publicity photograph, 1906*



*One of the 'Cottage Homes' in the village, now a private dwelling.*



# Past Lives

*"It was seen as better than the old  
workhouse institutions"*

You can freely walk around the former 'cottage homes'. Lots of old institutions in the UK were built on the 'cottage homes' model. It was seen as better than the old workhouse institutions of dormitories and large buildings that looked like army barracks.

These 'cottage homes' were usually grouped in a village setting, of maybe a dozen or more of them with their own schools and other facilities. The 'cottages' were usually large houses that accommodated large numbers of children, perhaps 20 or so in each cottage, with one or two live-in staff. You can get a sense of what this looked like in the case of Barnardo's from the photographs I took when I visited there in 2017. I've also included a couple of photographs of what it was like in Edwardian times, back at the start of the twentieth century. It's easy to see that the houses, at least, are the same as they are now, even if everything else is different.

As you can see, if you visit the village site, there's quite a lot that will tell you about its history. As well as the map board, there's also a big statue of Thomas Barnardo, the founder, in a very visible spot on the end of the village green. The village church also has some details of how it was used when the place was still being used to raise children. Barnardo's has a long history, and I haven't space to go into that here. Everyone who lived in their care will have different memories of their experience, which are part of that history.

**In future editions of this magazine, I'm hoping to look at the other places I've visited that readers might remember growing up in. I'm also happy to correspond by email on this subject: [jim.goddard@careleavers.com](mailto:jim.goddard@careleavers.com)**

**If you would like share a story or topic you are interested in please let us know at [connected@careleavers.com](mailto:connected@careleavers.com)**



*Some of the 'Cottage Homes' on the edge of the village green*



*Map and History Board for Barkingside Village*



*A fete in the village in the early 1900s*

# Health and Wellbeing

## *Toya's Ice Bath Journey ...*

This January, I started my Ice Bath journey. The Wim Hof method of Ice Baths have been proven to make people stronger, happier, and healthier individuals. I have been trying this every morning starting with a plunge, then attempting an extra 30 seconds each morning. I am now at 3 minutes and working each week to increase this. The Wim Hof method focuses on your breathing technique and your commitment to cold water exposure.

I found myself waking up tired, groggy and in a bad mood that I could not shift. After my first plunge I found myself more awake and in a much better state of mind ready to start my day. I have been sleeping much better and feel more productive through the day. This is journey that I will keep on working on.

Ice baths and cold-water exposure has been proven to support:

- Physical recovery
- Weight loss
- Anti-inflammatory
- Mental Wellbeing
- Improved Sleep

**Disclaimer** - this article does not provide medical advice and will not be suitable for everybody. Please seek advice from a medical professional if you have any concerns.



*Ice Bath - 2 degrees*

## *July's Top Tips*

- 01** Reading for 10 minutes each day can improve your mood and sleep.
- 02** Just a 10 minute walk in the morning or lunch time can give you some 'me' time to focus on yourself and be at one with nature.
- 03** Journaling is a great tool to let everything out, somewhere to put your thoughts, worries and to keep yourself accountable with goals. I recommend Terri- Ann's Journaling prompts give you a safe space to talk about your thoughts and feelings.

## *Journaling...*

Terri- Anne has written a guide to help you on your journaling journey. Journaling is not just a form of expression; it's a powerful tool that can play a crucial role in the lives of care leavers. This resource explores the importance and reasons for care leavers to embrace the practice of journaling as a means of self-discovery, healing, and empowerment.

It's not just writing, it's your personal comedy-drama, your superhero origin story. With each stroke of the pen, you're not just documenting life; you're crafting your own tale of resilience, empowerment, and a sprinkle of humour.

For the full recourse [click here](#).





# Health and Wellbeing

## *Cost of Living tips...*

**Over the last few years most people have had to look at what they spend because of the cost-of-living crisis. Care leavers have been harder hit than most. The team offers top ten tips are for care leavers who are finding it hard to make ends meet.**



- 01** Ask your local council about its Household Support Fund if you need help to cover the cost of food, clothing, or utilities.
- 02** Ask if you qualify for social tariffs for water, broadband, gas, and electricity. Most companies also have hardship funds. You can also tell them if you cannot afford your monthly direct debits.
- 03** Check if you live near a social supermarket or community shop. These are social enterprises that are generally, but not always, aimed at those on low incomes, selling surplus from major supermarkets at heavily discounted prices.
- 04** If you are claiming benefits, you might also be able to get a Budgeting Advance or Loan to pay for emergency household costs or help with getting a job or staying in work. This is up to £812 that you will have to repay through your benefits within 2 years (without interest).
- 05** For help with food and other essentials, try the Trussell Trust. They have a free helpline run by Citizens Advice – you can call 0808 208 2138 between 9 and 5 Mondays to Fridays to speak confidentially to a trained adviser about what support you might be able to get.
- 06** Slow cookers and electric blankets are so much cheaper to use and have really helped me to cut back costs of electricity this winter.
- 07** If you have fallen behind with your rent, you may be able to use the Breathing Space scheme. This gives you a break of up to 60 days when people cannot chase you for money and you can get help to deal with your debts. To apply for this, speak to a debt adviser at National Debtline or StepChange.
- 08** You might be able to get a small grant to pay for school uniforms from your council. Every council is different. If you cannot get a grant, ask your school if they have vouchers or sell second-hand uniforms.
- 09** Unemployed and looking for work? You can get your interview outfit dry-cleaned for free. Retailer Timpson offers free dry-cleaning to anyone unemployed who needs their suit/outfit for a job interview. Just ask for the deal at the counter – staff are likely to check it is for a genuine interview.
- 10** Ask your housing provider to do an energy efficient assessment of your property. They may recommend and fit draught excluders for your windows, new doors, insulation in the property.

**We will have many more resources on our new Care Leavers Connected website if you need support to access any of these resources in the meantime please contact us via**

**[connected@careleavers.com](mailto:connected@careleavers.com).**

**If you have any ideas of resources that you would find useful or you think would help others please do get in touch.**

# Policy and Practice

## *The case of the disappearing care leavers*

**If you ask most people who have not been in care what they think a care leaver is, they will usually reply a “young person who has been in care”. This is completely understandable but mistaken. Do you stop being a care leaver on your 26th birthday? At Care Leavers Connected, we don’t think so and want all levels of government to address the issues that arise during a whole lifetime.**

Over the last ten years, there has been an increasing policy focus on ensuring that care leavers are better supported when they come out of the care system, resulting from the 2013 Care Leaver Strategy, published by the Coalition Government. This has led to mixed results, with some local authorities prioritising the issue more than others, while all have been dealing with the decimation of the local government finance since the financial crash of 2008.

Nevertheless, slowly but surely, due to new legislation and local authority implementation, and the work of the Care Leavers’ Association and other organisations like [careleaveroffer.co.uk](http://careleaveroffer.co.uk) and Become, the profile of the experience of being a young care leaver has risen up the policy and media agenda.

It has even entered popular culture through drama, with some positive, overcoming adversity, representations, and some not-so-positive - the troubled and troubling young person. The 2023 documentary by Joe Swash, “Teens in Care”, which is still available on BBC I Player, is a good factual take on the young care leaver’s experience.

## *But, as if by magic...*

However, something very strange happens when a care leaver turns 26. It seems, as if by magic, they wake up on their 26th birthday and are no longer a care leaver. All the experiences of being in care evaporate into thin air and that is the end of the matter. Local and national government policy simply refers to care leavers up to the age of 25 because after that is when being in care experience has ‘ended’.

At Care Leavers Connected, we know from experience this is very often not the case. We are all very different people. Being a care leaver can be just one experience in life that does not have a long-lasting impact. For some, it can stay at the front of the mind and be very troubling. For others, it can hang around in the background, moving to the front of the mind now and again due to life events



## *Will in Parliament for the Education Select Committee*

Some of us pack away the experience and ‘move on’, only to get an unexpected reminder later in life. Three examples show why being a care leaver does not end at 25, and why government policy needs to think about the whole life course of care leavers.

Many care leavers only return to their care experience in their 30s or much later. At Care Leavers Connected we support many people in their 30s to well past retirement age in trying to access their files. Reading available files can have a profound effect, sometimes generating more questions than answers. This recent 20-minute sub-titled film from Denmark, “The Right to Your Own History”, covers some of this ground.

Having children can bring to the surface memories of entering care. Of course, some care leavers consciously decide not to have children. Some parents mention not wishing to see a repeat of their own experience and being troubled by the idea that this is inevitable, which as the many good enough care leaver parents show, is not true. All parents need support now and again, care leaver parents are no different but might need some non-judgmental support because of their care experience.

Finally, some older retired people may need a care home if their social networks are unable to offer the right support. “I’d rather die” (2024) is an interesting film made in Australia that explores the challenge of going back into care for elderly care leavers.

There are many other examples of how the care leaving experience does not magically disappear when turning 26.

# How to Get Involved?

## *Campaign With Us*

At Care Leavers Connected, we are determined to ensure that these issues are addressed by both national and local government. We want to make sure that every care leaver has as good a life as possible after 26. If you want to join us in this campaign, then get in touch.

## *Share With Us*

If you would like to send in any stories, art work, photos, media recommendations or any resources you have found helpful, it would be greatly received. We want it to be your voice!

## *Connected Zoom Groups*

Join our Care Leavers Connected Zoom groups. Our upcoming dates are 12th/14th August and 16th/18th September. Please note we run the same session twice, first at 12pm on Monday and then at 6.30pm on Wednesday. If you would like to join these sessions please get in touch.

## THE *Black* CARE EXPERIENCE CULTURE • IDENTITY • HERITAGE

Support other Care Leaver organisations, like the Black Care Experience who's vision is to see that every Black Child and Young Person remains connected to their Culture, Identity and Heritage as they journey through the Children's Social Care System.

## *Jim's Zoom Groups*

Jim's Zoom sessions run once a month, on the first Wednesday of the month between 7-9pm. They sometimes have a topic for discussion and sometimes we just talk about any topic that those who turn up want to raise. They always try to find subjects that are of interest to all people who have been in care as children.

## *Manchester Gathering*

Following the success of our gathering in London in May, there will be a meet-up for everyone who can make their way to Manchester on Saturday 3rd August from 2pm to 4pm. All care leavers are welcome. If you want to come then please let us know by registering [here](#)

## *Accessing your Records*

We currently support many people across different generations in accessing their social care files. In the future, we be running some support groups for accessing social care files. If you need any support in accessing your file please get in touch.

## *Get in Touch*

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## Support Our Work!

*If you simply don't have the time to get actively involved in the CLA, but you still want to support our work, you could think about making a donation. All donations will go towards helping the CLA to keep going and to running our projects and campaigns. Also, because the CLA is a registered charity, we can claim an extra 20% back from the government for every £1 you donate.*



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