# Peer Evaluation Recommendations Guide 2026:

# Interdependence



CARE LEAVERS NATIONAL MOVEMENT

NHP
Living connected and fulfilling lives

# Foreword

CLNM carries out a Peer Evaluation every two years, giving young people across the House Project community the opportunity to reflect on their experiences of the House Project and share their ideas about what could make it even better. This ensures that our approach continues to be informed by young people and remains relevant to them.

Our most recent Peer Evaluation took place in 2025. Since then, CLNM, NHP and Local House Projects (LHPs) have been working together to turn the recommendations into action and make positive changes based on what young people told us.

The recommendations are not simply something to respond to; they are a way of continuing to listen to young people and turn what they have told us into meaningful change.  Over the past year, we have seen ideas turn into new opportunities, activities and ways of working across the House Project community. This work demonstrates what is possible when young people are listened to, their experiences are valued, and their views help shape the support they receive.

For CLNM, it is important that the findings and recommendations of the Peer Evaluation lead to action and that young people can see how their contributions have made a difference. This Guide reflects the progress made so far towards the recommendations of the 2025 Peer Evaluation and, importantly, helps us keep young people's recommendations at the heart of what we do as we move forward.

A huge thank you to all the young people and staff who took part in the 2025 Peer Evaluation, and to everyone across NHP and LHPs who have listened to, responded and worked alongside young people to turn their ideas and recommendations into positive change.



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# Recommendation One

## Increase understanding of interdependence for young people, staff, and the wider sector.

Interdependence is part of the ORCHIDS (Ownership, Responsibility, Community, Home, Interdependence, Directions, Sense of Wellbeing) practice framework, which is central to the House Project approach.



Interdependence is one of the key elements of the ORCHIDS practice framework, which underpins the House Project approach. It is about recognising that we all need other people in our lives, while also recognising the strengths, skills and support that we can offer to others. For young people leaving care, trusted relationships and a sense of connection are an important part of feeling confident as they move into adulthood.

The 2025 Peer Evaluation highlighted that there was not always a consistent understanding of what interdependence means across the House Project community. This highlighted the need to create a clearer, shared understanding for young people, staff and the wider sector, and to explore what interdependence looks like in practice.

CLNM has led the work to take this recommendation forward, working alongside NHP and LHPs. This has included exploring our own definition of Interdependence, developing resources and tools to support understanding, and encouraging a more 'help-friendly' culture where asking for, and receiving, support is seen as a strength.

A key part of the work has also been creating opportunities for care-experienced young people to share what interdependence means to them, what it means to feel connected to a community, and what could help strengthen those connections. This has included bringing young people's experiences into wider conversations with politicians and Local Authority corporate parents.

The following pages share how this work has been taken forward highlighting the ideas, resources and opportunities that will help to build a stronger understanding of interdependence across the House Project community.



# Defining Interdependence

The term interdependence was adopted by NHP following the 2021 Peer Evaluation, when young people challenged the use of independence to describe what we are working towards. Young people recognised that leaving care should not mean doing everything alone, but should be about community, relationships and supporting one another. This is what the House Project approach is all about.

'Independence' is still a commonly used word when talking about young people leaving care. While being able to make our own choices and do things for ourselves is important, none of us are ever truly independent. We all rely on other people in different ways, while also having our own strengths, experiences and contributions to offer.

That's why we are passionate about changing the language we use. We want to move away from the idea that young people need to become completely independent and instead recognise the importance of interdependence – where people have the support they need, while also having the opportunity to contribute, connect and support others. We believe this is a more realistic and positive way of thinking about life after care and should be recognised and used across the sector.

Following the 2025 Peer Evaluation, CLNM identified the need for a clearer and more consistent understanding of what interdependence means. CLNM reps came together to explore this through their own experiences and those of other young people in their LHPs. They explored the importance of relationships, trust, community and mutual support, and the value of recognising our own strengths and what we can offer others. They highlighted that support should work both ways, being able to offer support to others, while also feeling confident to ask for and receive support when we need it.

The reps then worked alongside NHP to co-create and finalise a shared definition. This process has helped us think differently about the language we use around leaving care, placing relationships, community, mutual support and shared strengths at the heart of how we think about moving forward.

The definition below brings together what young people told us and the ideas they felt were most important. It reflects a shared understanding of interdependence and the role we all play in supporting one another:

**"Interdependence is being connected within our communities through relationships we value and trust, with confidence that our strengths can offer a helping hand to others, while also being comfortable asking for and receiving support."**

The definition developed by CLNM is represented in the poster opposite.



## WE OFFER SUPPORT IN MANY WAYS



Listening and encouraging



Sharing skills and knowledge



Lending a hand in practical ways



Showing up and being there

## OUR STRENGTHS MAKE A DIFFERENCE




Skills and knowledge | Time and energy | Experience and perspective

# INTERDEPENDENCE

We're connected in our communities through relationships we value and trust



## IT'S OKAY TO ASK IT'S OKAY TO RECEIVE



Be honest about our needs

Reach out when we need help

Accept support with thanks

Grow stronger together

## WE RELY ON EACH OTHER TO THRIVE



Share resources and opportunities

Support each other's growth

Celebrate each other's successes

# ORCHIDS Conversations

This year, we created a working group with CLNM Reps, staff from LHPs and NHP to review, discuss and develop the current ORCHIDS framework. Within this group, we considered the timing of conversations in relation to a young person's House Project journey, the content and purpose of the questions being asked, and the support facilitators may need when introducing and having these initial conversations with them.

Through this process, we identified opportunities to make the ORCHIDS conversations more relevant to where young people are in their journey, while ensuring that they build on previous conversations and support ongoing development. As a result, we are implementing a new approach to having ORCHIDS conversations with revised questions and timings that feel more meaningful, purposeful and developmental for young people, alongside greater clarity and support for facilitators.

**Conversation 1:**
Will happen around 1 month in – when you've started group sessions. You can have someone you trust with you to help with this if you want.

**Conversation 2:**
Will happen when you finish the programme or move into your home – to reflect on what you've learned and achieved.

**Conversation 3:**
Will happen 3 months after moving in – to check how things are going and what support you might still need.

## Example of New ORCHIDS Questions

OWNERSHIP

✗ ~~"I am able to make up by own mind about things and have control over my life"~~ ✗

✓ "I am choosing to learn and develop skills that will help me as an adult" ✓

RESPONSIBILITY

✗ ~~"I take responsibility for sorting things out, even when they go wrong"~~ ✗

✓ "I try my best to make good choices" ✓

COMMUNITY

✗ ~~"I take responsibility for sorting things out, even when they go wrong"~~ ✗

✓ "I have positive people in my life who notice and tell me when I do well" ✓

HOME

✗ ~~"I have a place I can call home where I feel comfortable and safe"~~ ✗

✓ "I feel happy and content where I live" ✓

INTERDEPENDENCE

✗ ~~"I feel confident in myself, but I know where I can get help and support if I need it"~~ ✗

✓ "I help and support others when possible" ✓

DEVELOPMENTAL DIRECTION

✗ ~~"I have the skills and confidence I need to make progress towards my goals"~~ ✗

✓ "I do things that I am good at – people around me support with my hobbies" ✓

SENSE OF WELL BEING

✗ ~~"I've been feeling optimistic about the future"~~ ✗

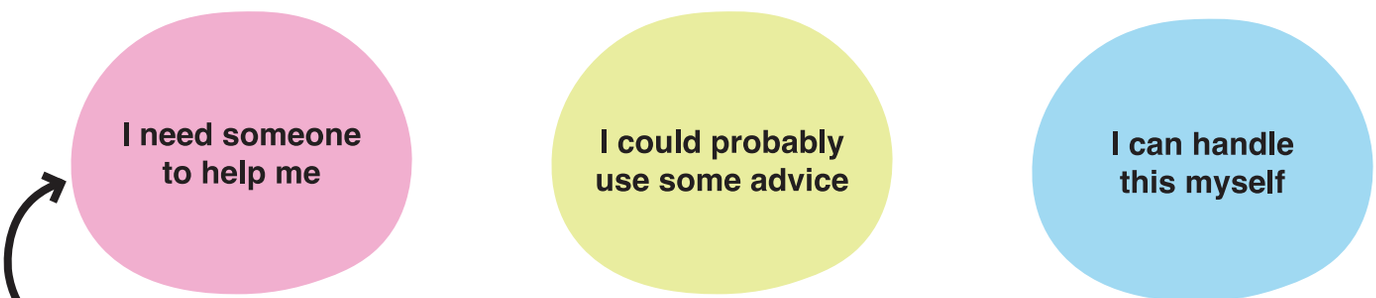
✓ "I enjoy physical activities that are good for my mind and body, e.g. walking or football" ✓

# Seeing asking for help as a strength

To support young people to recognise that asking for help is a positive part of looking after ourselves and others, we worked collaboratively to develop a range of resources and ideas that can be shared with LHPs and used both within their group sessions and more generally in work with young people. The aim of these resources is to create safe and supportive spaces where young people can explore the value of asking for, giving and receiving help, while also recognising the skills, strengths and experiences they already have to offer others.

The resources include a variety of group activities, icebreakers and discussion prompts designed to encourage young people to share their knowledge, give advice and recognise the ways in which they can support others. Through these activities, young people are encouraged to identify their own strengths and consider how these can be used to help others, while also recognising that everyone has different skills and experiences that they can contribute to a group.

These activities aim to build young people's confidence to ask for support when they need it, while recognising that giving and receiving support are equally valuable. They encourage young people to see asking for support as a positive skill and a natural part of being interdependent, while also recognising the strengths, experiences and support they can offer to their peers and wider community.




Interdependence Icebreaker - Help-Seeking Traffic Lights: Helps young people to recognise Strengths and Weaknesses

We have created resources that will be available on the HPP to use within group sessions. These resources focus on helping young people to recognise who can support them and what support they can offer to others.



# Sharing what Interdependence means to us

Throughout the year, CLNM reps have taken part in a range of opportunities to share their perspectives with Local Authorities and others across the sector, helping to build understanding of what interdependence means to them and why community and mutual support matter.

In February 2026, CLNM Champions Rey and Caiden presented at the West Midlands ADCS 'Innovate and Grow' Conference, speaking about what community means to them and inviting those in the room to reflect on what community looks like for each of us. They went on to explore ways in which we can all support a greater sense of community for care experienced individuals. After receiving a standing ovation, they then received feedback about how this had challenged thinking and enabled those in the room (strategic decision makers) to think differently about how they could change practice across the region to develop and maintain relationships for care leavers





In August 2026 CLNM reps presented at their Scotland Conference all about 'Pathways to Participation'. They presented CLNM's work on the 2025 Peer Evaluation, focusing on community and how we support one another interdependently. Speaking to organisations from across Scotland, they were able to share what being a part of the House Project community has meant to them. Reps led activities and discussions about interdependence and challenged others to think about what more they could do to offer opportunities to young people within their local communities.







This work continues as we build a greater understanding of interdependence and what it means in practice, encouraging a shift away from a focus on independence towards an approach that recognises the importance of community, connection and supporting one another.

Members of the CLNM Alumni have also worked alongside Dr Amy Lynch to contribute to two book chapters, helping to influence innovation in social work practice. They reflected on and shared their experiences of the House Project community, offering insight into what makes the approach work well for young people.

It is worth noting that towards the end of this year's work the DFE published guidance on the Local Offer and a strategy on Enduring Relationships. We are pleased to see that there is wider support for the development of community and connections, and will advocate for a change in language from independent to interdependent to recognise the reality of reciprocity of relationships that are so important for young people.

We have also created a video which will be launched at our 2026 CLNM Conference and can be viewed on our YouTube page.

# Notes

# Recommendation Two

## Develop stronger links for young people within their LHP Community.

Young people feel more fulfilled when they are connected to their peer community.



Feeling connected to other people and having a sense of belonging are important aspects of being part of the House Project community. The 2025 Peer Evaluation highlighted the importance of creating more opportunities for young people to build relationships, spend time together and connect through shared interests and activities.

**“It’s such a community; you always feel part of it, and that’s really special. Even if you go a long time without seeing or speaking to people, you just pick up from where you left off. I never really felt like I belonged anywhere before, but now I do. The staff don’t just care about you as a number – they want to see you do well, and you actually believe it.”**

CLNM has led the work to take this recommendation forward, exploring how LHPs can strengthen connections between young people. This has included identifying the strengths and skills that young people can share with each other and creating more opportunities to try new activities together and making connections with local groups,

Peer support has also been a key part of this. Building on CLNM’s previous work around peer mentoring, we have explored how LHPs can develop approaches that give young people opportunities to support, encourage and learn from one another. This recognises the value of young people’s own experiences and the different strengths they can bring to their community.

We have also looked at how the House Project community can remain meaningful for young people after they have moved into their own homes, through ongoing communication, invitations and opportunities to stay connected.

The following pages share examples of how this work has been put into practice, highlighting the different ways young people have been supported to build connections, share their strengths and remain connected to their House Project community.



# Opportunities to connect

Exploring how young people find out about activities, clubs and opportunities in their local area highlighted the different ways information is shared, including through noticeboards, social media and word of mouth.

Young people told us that getting involved in community activities can feel daunting, especially when going alone. As one young person said, “I feel braver trying things if HP is there to support it first.” Reps highlighted the importance of being able to try things together and have support when attending something new.

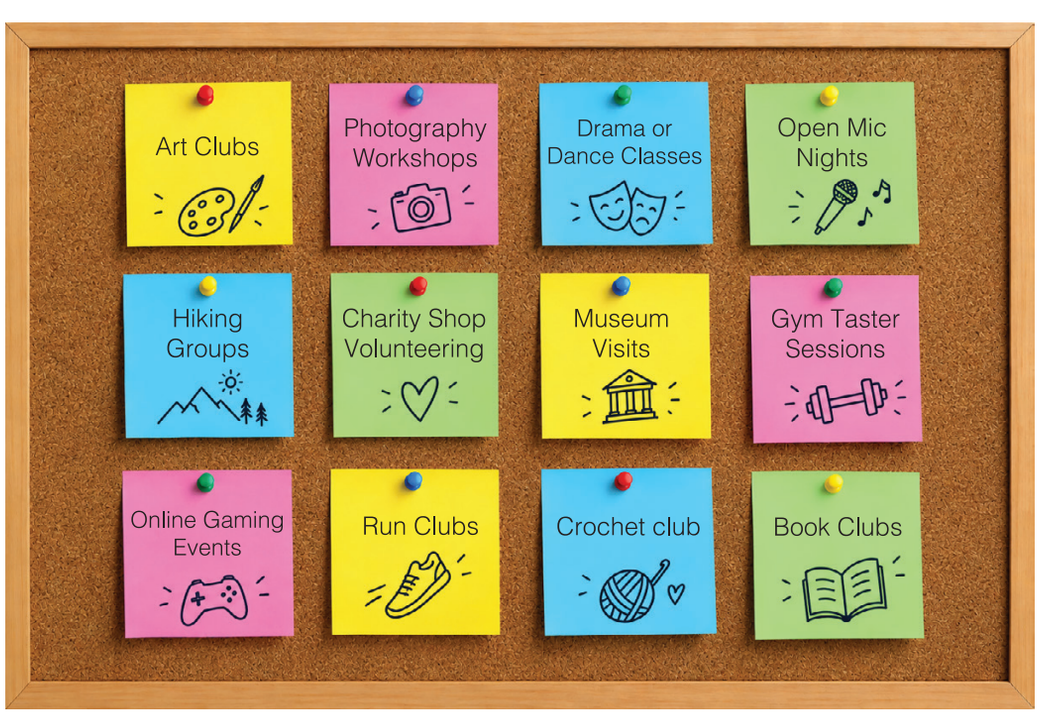
One idea was to have a local opportunities noticeboard in each LHP base, bringing together information about clubs, groups, activities, volunteering and other local opportunities. Finding out more about what is happening locally could help young people discover shared hobbies and interests, creating opportunities to support each other to get involved.

We also explored ways LHPs could help young people take that first step, such as arranging group visits, inviting local organisations into bases for taster sessions or supporting young people to attend their first session.

A key question we discussed was: “Do you feel confident enough to support another young person?” We want young people to support each other to try something new. By sharing interests, attending activities together and encouraging each other to take that first step, young people can build confidence, make new connections and strengthen their sense of community.

This is something each cohort can build on from those before them, developing a culture where young people share what they discover, connect through common interests and support each other to get involved. Over time, this can become a valued part of the House Project community.

Here is an example of a noticeboard we have put together:



# Meaningful ongoing communication

More young people across the House Project community now live in their own homes than those working towards this. We know that moving into a new home is a huge change and at times young people can end up feeling lonely and isolated. Once a young person has moved in, the support and opportunities offered to them must continue, add to the relationships already developed and feel meaningful, welcoming and relevant.

We are committed to continuing to develop the offer for young people as they move into their own homes, making sure support reflects what they need at this stage of their lives. Plans for 2027 and beyond include more support around financial literacy, energy awareness and other practical areas, so watch this space!

We have developed ideas of how LHPs can continue to communicate with and involve young people after they have moved in.

## HELPFUL WAYS OF KEEPING IN TOUCH

### REGULAR CHECK-INS



Send a regular message to check in with young people who are living in their own homes and plan a regular time to catch.

### CREATE A SPACE TO SPEAK OPENLY



Create time and space for young people to continue to feel comfortable sharing both what is working well and what could be improved.

### MAKE COMMUNICATION ACCESSIBLE



Agree together the best ways to communicate, recognising that this is different for everyone.

### USE DIFFERENT WAYS TO COMMUNICATE



There are lots of different ways to communicate. Using WhatsApp groups, face-to-face chats, and being invited to the base for a cuppa are all great ways of staying in touch.

### CELEBRATE GOOD THINGS TOO




Communication shouldn't only happen when there is a problem. Sharing successes and achievements is super important and helps everyone to stay connected.

### KEEP EVERYONE INVOLVED



Keep young people informed about what is happening in your House Project community, so they can continue to stay connected.

# Identifying and sharing your skills

Young people told us that one of challenges to supporting one another can be identifying their own strengths and skills. So we challenged ourselves to do just that and we found that doing this together helped, it's usually easier to identify other people's strengths than our own. We think this could work well as a group session, to do this together and then create your own skills board in your base.



Hi I'm Freddie from Lancashire House Project, I'm good at gardening and would be happy to teach other people to learn how to look after their gardens.



Hi, I'm Benas from Peterborough House Project, I'm great at navigating, if someone else needs help planning a journey or using transport, I'm the person for it



Hi I'm Chloe from Fife House Project and a skill I have is helping other people with outdoor activities and to overcome their fears!



Hi, I'm Leah from Sandwell House Project, I'm good at hair and make-up and would be happy to teach someone else.



We spent time recognising each other's skills and strengths, with the aim of creating a skill-sharing offer that showcases what we are good at and what we can teach, share or support others with.

We photographed our skills to create an example of how each LHP could showcase the strengths and talents of young people at their base, highlighting opportunities to share knowledge, teach a skill or offer support. We also felt it was important for both young people and staff to be involved.

Hi I'm Gideon from Islington House Project, I'm good at using a washing machine and managing my laundry. I'd be happy to teach someone else these skills



Hi, I'm Tibs, I'm a Participation worker at NHP. I enjoy and am good at cooking. At Back Dane I prepare meals with reps, helping them try new recipes.



Hi, I'm Jodie, I'm a Participation worker at NHP. I am good at cleaning, at Back Dane I usually support reps to clean the pots and kitchen space. I am happy to teach others to do this.



Hi I'm Byron a founder from Stoke House Project, I'm good at ensuring everyone feels safe and included in social spaces, something I have worked hard to develop



Hi, I'm Nyron, I'm a Participation worker at NHP. My skills are sports and support. I am good at supporting others to get included in activities.

# Peer Support

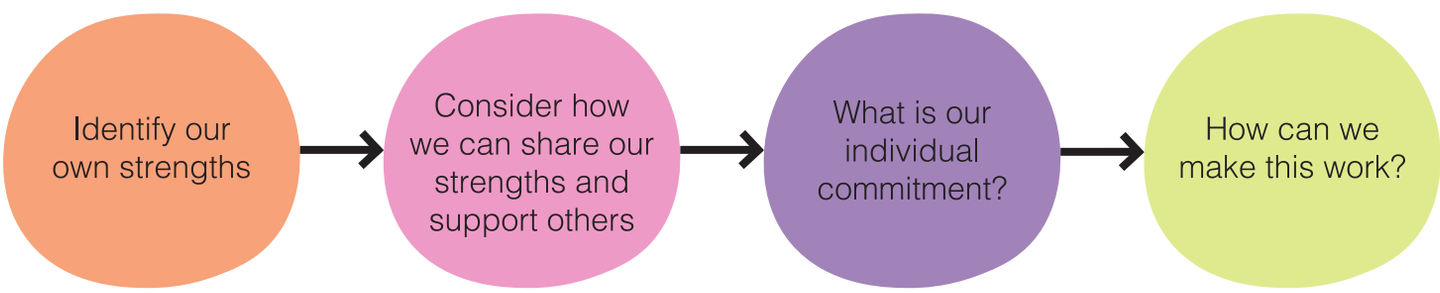
We have spent time working together to understand what is important when it comes to peer mentoring and peer support. We agreed that it is about being there for each other through trust, reliability, honesty and shared understanding.

Across the House Project community, young people already support each other every day. This might be checking in, offering advice, helping someone decorate their home or supporting someone to move into their new flat. These things might seem small, but they can make a huge difference.

Our aim is to build on what is already happening naturally and create a structured but flexible approach to peer support, informed by CLNM's previous peer mentoring work. This recognises the strengths already within our community, while giving young people the tools, guidance and support to use those strengths confidently.

We have developed a session plan for the end of each cohort, bringing young people together to think again about their own strengths, how they can use them to support others and how they can continue supporting future cohorts at their LHP.

## Our Approach:




For example, thinking back to our skills board on the previous page, Freddie might offer to come back and speak to a new cohort about looking after their garden, or even help them get their garden ready when they move in. With support from his LHP to think through the practicalities of how it would work, Freddie could use this skills and experience to support someone else.

**Best Practice Example**

**Stoke Peer Mentoring Programme:**

This year, Stoke House Project developed a Peer Mentoring Programme, with five young people signing up to support Cohort 17. Peer Mentors joined weekly group sessions, helping to run activities and sharing their own real-life experiences of the House Project journey.

Hearing directly from young people who had already been through the House Project gave the cohort the opportunity to ask questions, learn from their experiences and see what might be possible for them. The Peer Mentors were supported by the LHP staff team throughout the programme and had their own WhatsApp group to plan sessions, share ideas and support one another.

This is just one example of the many ways young people are already sharing their knowledge and experiences with newer cohorts. Across the House Project community, this happens through one-to-one conversations, joining group sessions, answering questions and simply being there for each other.

# Notes

# Recommendation Three

## Develop stronger links for young people across the House Project Community.

The House Project community currently operates in England and Scotland. Young people have said they like meeting young people from other LHPs.



The House Project community extends across England and Scotland, bringing together young people from different LHPs who share the experience of being part of the House Project. Young people have told us that they value opportunities to meet people from other LHPs, build new friendships and connections, and take part in things together. These wider connections can help young people feel part of something bigger than their own LHP and create opportunities to share experiences, interests and skills with others.

CLNM has led the work to take this recommendation forward, creating more opportunities for young people from different LHPs to come together. This has included developing regional and national activities and events, creating opportunities to try new things, develop skills and connect through shared interests, as well as supporting CLNM-led Community events across the regions.

CLNM has also looked at how young people can continue to stay connected. Developing the CLNM Alumni offer has been an important part of this, creating more opportunities for young people to stay connected.

The following pages share examples of how CLNM has brought young people from across the House Project community together, and how these opportunities have helped to build connections that can continue beyond individual LHPs.



# Connecting through shared interests

CLNM has been working to develop different ways for young people across the wider House Project community to connect, share interests, try new things and celebrate each other's talents. One idea that has grown from this work is a new creative call-out. What started as a photography competition has grown into a wider opportunity for young people to share all kinds of creative work.

Launching in January 2027, the 'call-out' will invite young people across the House Project community to share a form of creative expression that they are proud of. This could be poetry, drawing, photography, painting, etc.

The aim is to showcase the different talents, interests and perspectives of young people across the community, while creating opportunities to try something new and celebrate each other's creativity. We'll be sharing more information about how to get involved over the coming months, including opportunities to share and celebrate the work submitted. Watch this space!

Another way to create opportunities for young people to connect is through shared activities such as Fantasy Football.

CLNM has had a league in the Premiership Fantasy Football Tournament for the past few years, and this year it has been opened up to young people and staff across the wider community. The league provides a fun way for people from different LHPs to connect around a shared interest, while creating opportunities for friendly competition and conversation throughout the season. Last year, we introduced a trophy for the winner, with Louis, a member of CLNM Alumni, taking home the trophy for the 2025–26 season. The 2026–27 season is already proving competitive, although some teams are struggling at the bottom of the table, including our CEO, Mark!

The ideas don't stop there. In 2027, CLNM Reps will continue developing new ways for young people across the community to connect, including online gaming tournaments, movie nights and online quizzes. These will create more informal opportunities to come together, share interests, have fun and build connections across LHPs.

**Best Practice Example**

We know there are already some great examples of LHPs creating opportunities for young people to connect with others. This year, several LHPs took part in a national football tournament for care-experienced young people.

In Peterborough, the House Project team played a key role in making this happen. They trained together in local parks, played friendly matches and had the opportunity to train at Peterborough United's Stadium with one of the club's coaches.

The team competed against 26 other local authority teams and came away as National Lead Trophy winners. Alongside the achievement on the pitch, the tournament gave young people the opportunity to build confidence, develop relationships, experience new environments and connect with other care-experienced young people from across the country. It is a great example of how bringing people together around something they enjoy can create opportunities for connection, belonging and pride.



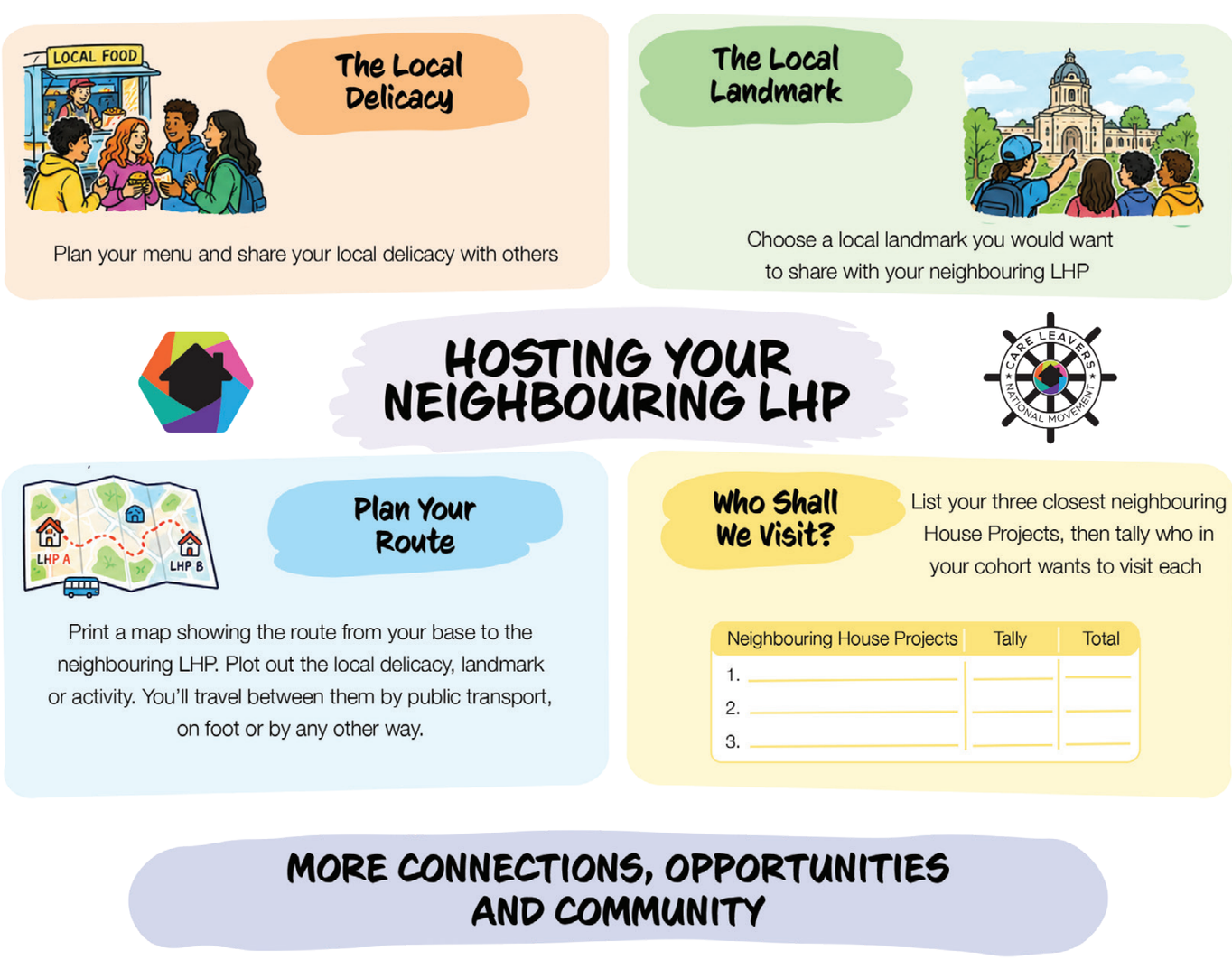
# Hosting your neighbouring LHPs

We've also spent time developing more ideas for ways in which LHPs can connect with one another. We know from CLNM Reps that travelling as part of their role can add a lot to their experience, with 89% rating it as adding 'a lot' or 'quite a lot' to their experience (CLNM, Peer Evaluation 2026). Therefore, we developed Hosting Your Neighbour, creating opportunities for young people from across the House Project community to travel, spend time together and share the places and activities that are important to them.

Young people will take the lead in deciding what they want to share and planning the day together. This could include trying a local delicacy, visiting a local landmark, exploring the area or planning activities to enjoy together. They can also plan their route between different locations and think about what would make the visit interesting and enjoyable.

The activity is about more than visiting another LHP. It gives young people the opportunity to share their knowledge, make decisions and show others what their local community has to offer. At the same time, the visiting LHP can discover somewhere new, meet other young people and find out more about their experiences.

By creating opportunities to spend time together, Hosting Your Neighbour can help young people build confidence, develop new friendships, discover shared interests and strengthen connections across the wider House Project community. It also provides an opportunity for each LHP to build on the experiences of previous cohorts, with ideas and knowledge being shared and passed on.



# Community Fund

CLNM has also been exploring new ways for LHPs to connect and create opportunities for young people to come together. One idea that has grown from this work is the Community Fund, which will provide the financial support for young people to develop and deliver their own community events.

We know that finances can sometimes be a barrier to bringing ideas to life, so we have worked with NHP to think about how we can overcome this. NHP has created a fund that young people in each LHP can collectively apply to, helping them turn their ideas into a community event.

Young people will be able to design an event, apply for funding and then make it happen. Events should include young people from their leaving care community and create opportunities for as many young people as possible to take part.

There is lots of flexibility in what these days could look like. They could be held at the LHP base or take place out in the local community. The important thing is that young people are at the centre of deciding what they want to do and how they want to bring people together.

Young people will also be encouraged to work with their LHP's local partners, creating opportunities to develop their ideas further and make the most of what their local community has to offer.

The fund is about more than paying for an event. It is about giving young people the opportunity to turn their ideas into reality, take the lead and create something that brings their care-experienced community together.

The Community Fund will launch in January 2027 and we are looking forward to seeing how this will help to strengthen our House Project community and beyond.



# CLNM Led Community Events

In 2025, CLNM Reps began exploring how they could bring LHPs together across the regions. What started as one conversation has grown into a range of CLNM-led Community Events.

These are days designed, planned and hosted by CLNM Reps. There are now eight events planned each year, with two in each region. Here is some of what we have been up to so far this year.

## North - Scotland

The Scotland Community Event brought together young people and staff from Fife and East Dunbartonshire for a day of fun, connection and collaboration. Activities included a picnic in the park, a head-to-head Scotland quiz, outdoor sports and team games. The event gave young people and staff the opportunity to spend time together, get to know each other and build connections.













## North - BMT & Lancashire

Lancashire and Bury, Manchester and Trafford LHPs spent a day together at Arcade Club in Bury, exploring its four floors of arcade machines and games. Young people competed on dance mats, Guitar Hero, racing games and classic arcade machines, while supporting and encouraging each other along the way. The day provided an opportunity to socialise, build friendships and connect over a shared pizza and nacho lunch, creating positive memories together.



## Midlands

The Midlands region came together at Staffordshire House Project's Base for a day of sunshine, fun and connection. Young people had the chance to get to know each other, enjoy games, share food and cool down with treats from the ice cream van. It was a great opportunity to build friendships, strengthen the wider House Project community and create brilliant memories together.









## South

Our South CLNM Community Event brought together young people, staff and Reps for an afternoon of fun, creativity and connection. Activities included pool and ping pong tournaments, a very competitive egg and spoon race, sports day games, music, party food, arts and crafts, a raffle with prizes and ice creams. It was a great opportunity to spend time together, build connections and create positive memories.



# CLNM Alumni

The work to develop the CLNM Alumni offer began with an Alumni Planning Group, bringing together young people online to think about what an Alumni offer should look like and what would help young people stay connected. Through these conversations, the group identified that while online communication and regular updates were useful, young people particularly valued opportunities to meet face to face. They missed spending time with the people they had built strong relationships with during their time as CLNM Reps.









In response, in June we held our first Alumni Summer Celebration in Crewe, bringing young people together for a day focused on reconnecting, having fun and celebrating the community they had helped to build.

The day included an inflatable obstacle course, an ice cream van, games and plenty of opportunities to spend time together. While the activities provided lots of fun and laughter, the most important part of the day was creating space for young people to catch up, share memories, reconnect with old friends and strengthen relationships.





The celebration highlighted the importance of maintaining these connections beyond young people's time as CLNM Reps and ensuring that Alumni continue to feel valued, included and part of the NHP community. Following the success of the first celebration, this will now become an annual event, with CLNM committed to creating a regular opportunity for Alumni to come together face to face. In 2027, the Alumni Planning Group will come together in person to plan the next annual event and continue developing the Alumni offer, exploring additional opportunities for young people to stay connected, take part and shape what the Alumni community looks like in the future.

**"The alumni event was just brilliant, seeing everyone all together from all the years I have been part of CLNM and House Project community. It was a whirlwind of positive memories and just being able to catch up and find out what people are doing now."**

# Notes

# Recommendation Four

## Develop stronger links alongside young people with the wider Community.

When young people move into their own homes, it's important that they feel connected and part of their neighbourhood. A strong community is one where people support each other and feel they belong.



Moving into their own home is an important step for young people, but feeling settled is about more than having a place to live. Having connections with people and places around them can help young people feel that they belong and are part of their local community. A strong community is one where people know they have something to offer, can build relationships and can support one another.

The 2025 Peer Evaluation highlighted the importance of supporting young people to build these connections and feel confident within their local communities. This includes helping young people discover what is around them, develop relationships with neighbours and local groups, and recognise the strengths and skills they can contribute.

CLNM has led the work to take this recommendation forward, exploring practical ways to support young people to connect with their wider communities. This has included looking at how young people can discover local opportunities and resources, build confidence in communicating with others, and be supported by staff to develop and maintain relationships.

A key part of this work has also been recognising that young people are not only recipients of support within their communities; they have their own strengths, skills and experiences to contribute. Supporting young people to recognise what they can offer creates opportunities for them to take an active role in their communities and build meaningful connections with others.

The following pages share examples of how this work has been developed, highlighting the different ways young people have been supported to discover, contribute to and feel connected to their local communities.



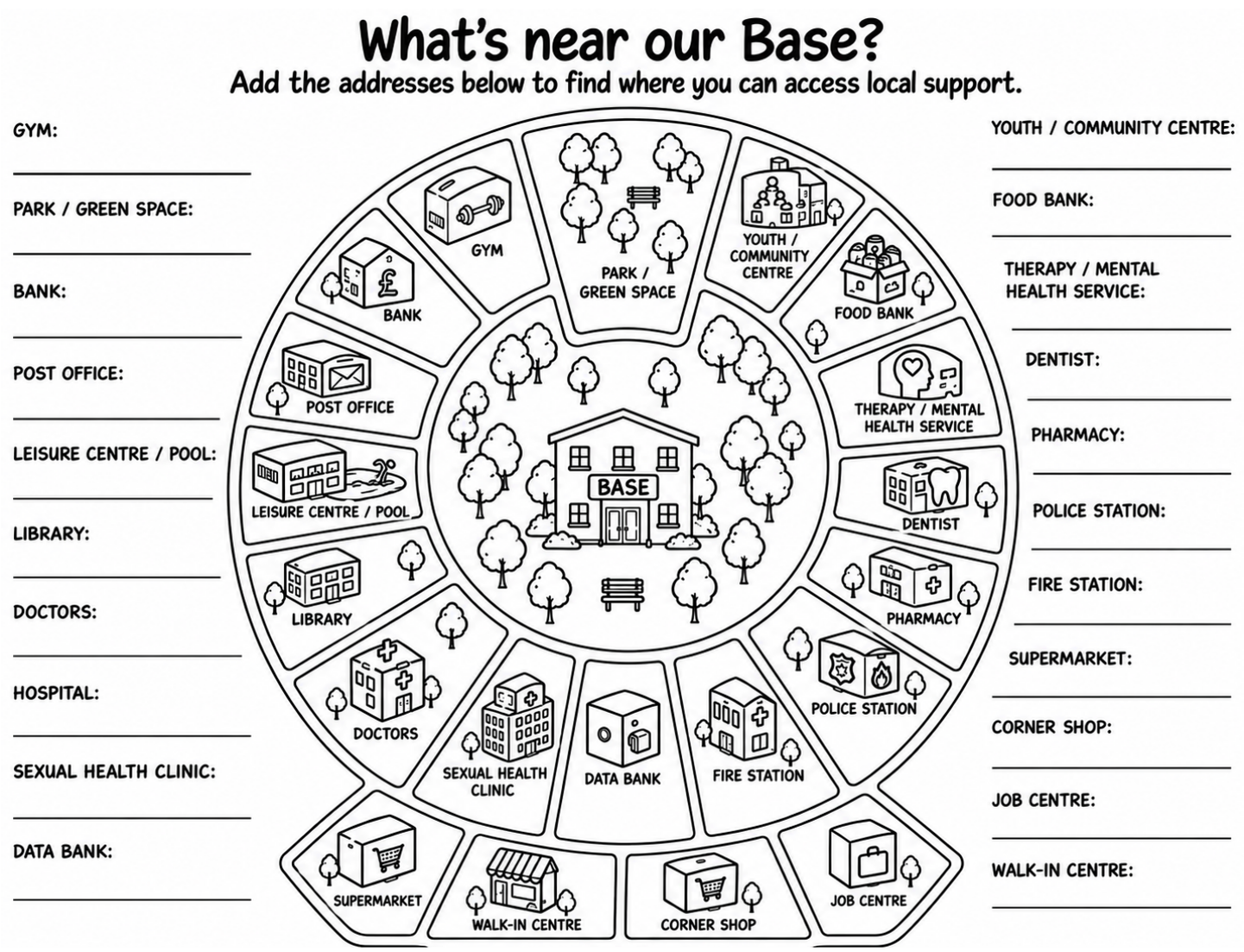
# Discovering your local community

We explored how young people can connect with their local community, including how confident they feel in understanding what is available locally and accessing the services, spaces and opportunities around them.

We have developed resources to help young people identify and understand what is available in their community, building their knowledge and confidence to navigate their local area. We also want staff to have the tools to support young people to explore their communities, particularly when they are living in or visiting an unfamiliar area.

One resource we have created is a local community map, which will be provided to each LHP to display at their base. Young people and staff can work together to add local services, facilities, activities and other places that may be useful or relevant.

The maps will provide an accessible way to see what is available locally, encourage conversations about getting involved and support young people to become more familiar with where they live. Over time, each map can grow with the needs and experiences of different cohorts, becoming a shared resource that helps young people feel informed, confident and connected to their community.



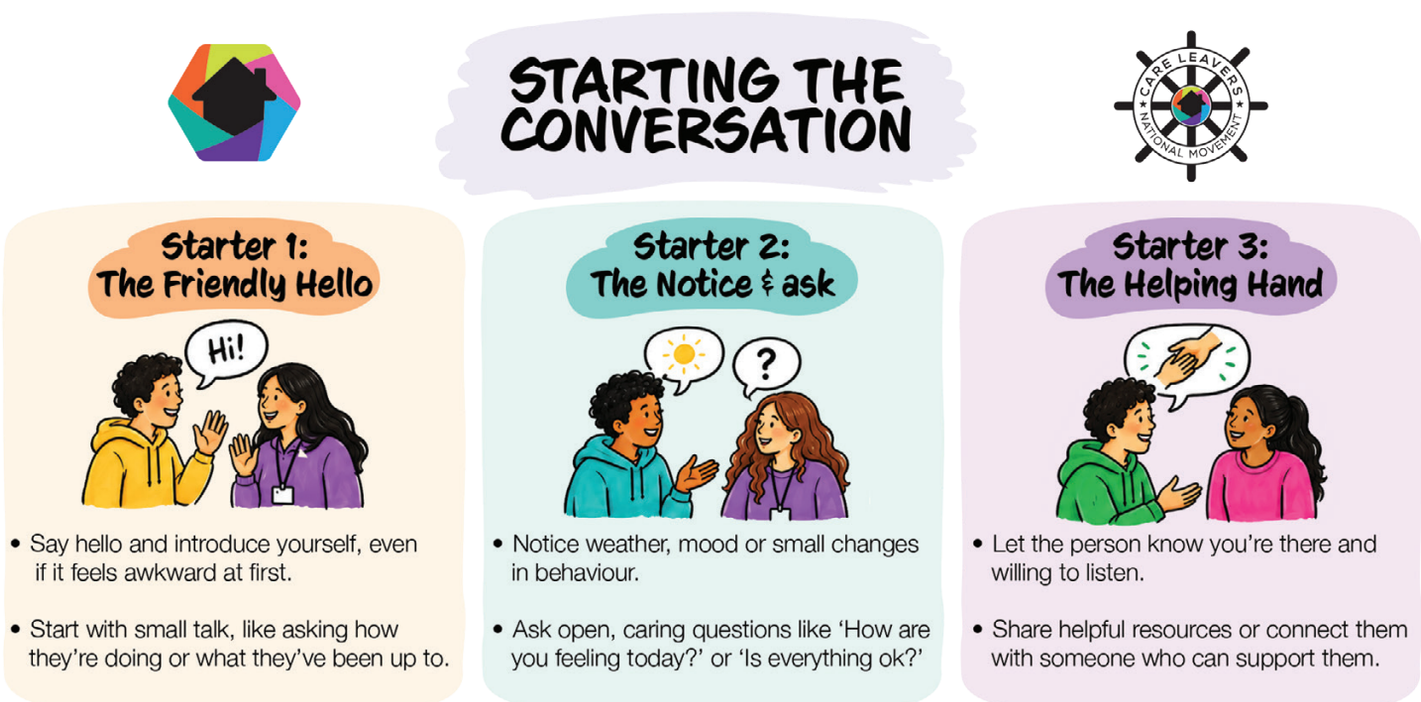
# Getting to know your neighbours

When thinking about how young people can feel more confident and connected in their local communities, we wanted to focus on building positive relationships with neighbours. Getting to know the people around you can make a real difference to how comfortable you feel where you live, and can make everyday interactions with neighbours feel easier and more positive.

CLNM spent time considering different ways of communicating with neighbours, creating some examples of ways to meet your neighbours. This led to discussions about communication, boundaries, respect and how to respond calmly and constructively to different situations.

We also developed a short conversation and activity for LHPs to use in group sessions, giving staff an opportunity to role-model positive communication and get young people thinking about how they might respond to different situations with their neighbours.

Across the House Project community, there are many great examples of young people building positive relationships and having successful conversations with their neighbours. When this happens, we hear from young people about the positive impact it has on their confidence, their relationships with others and their sense of connection within their communities.




**"My relationship with my neighbour started with a simple Hello and a smile. I see her when I leave sometimes and we have a catch up or I help her with things, such as lifting her shopping bags into her home. I've learnt that the smallest of things make a difference even for someone like her who might be lonely at times. Sometimes, the biggest part of being kind, is simply being there for someone."**

*Chloe - CLNM Rep - Fife House Project*

# Giving back to your community

CLNM have explored how we can support young people to contribute to their communities while recognising and celebrating what they have to offer. We considered how making a difference does not always mean doing something big. Small actions using the skills we already have and taking time to connect with others can have a positive impact.

A key part of our conversations was recognising that everyone has strengths, skills and interests they can offer to others. CLNM came up with practical examples of how young people could make a difference from helping others and looking after shared spaces to volunteering, bringing people together and supporting local organisations. The key message was simple: you do not have to do something huge to make a difference. Small actions can help build stronger communities.

We have pulled together some of these ideas to create the poster below. This reflects the importance of recognising what young people already bring to their communities while encouraging them to explore new opportunities, build relationships and develop their strengths.



# Notes



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