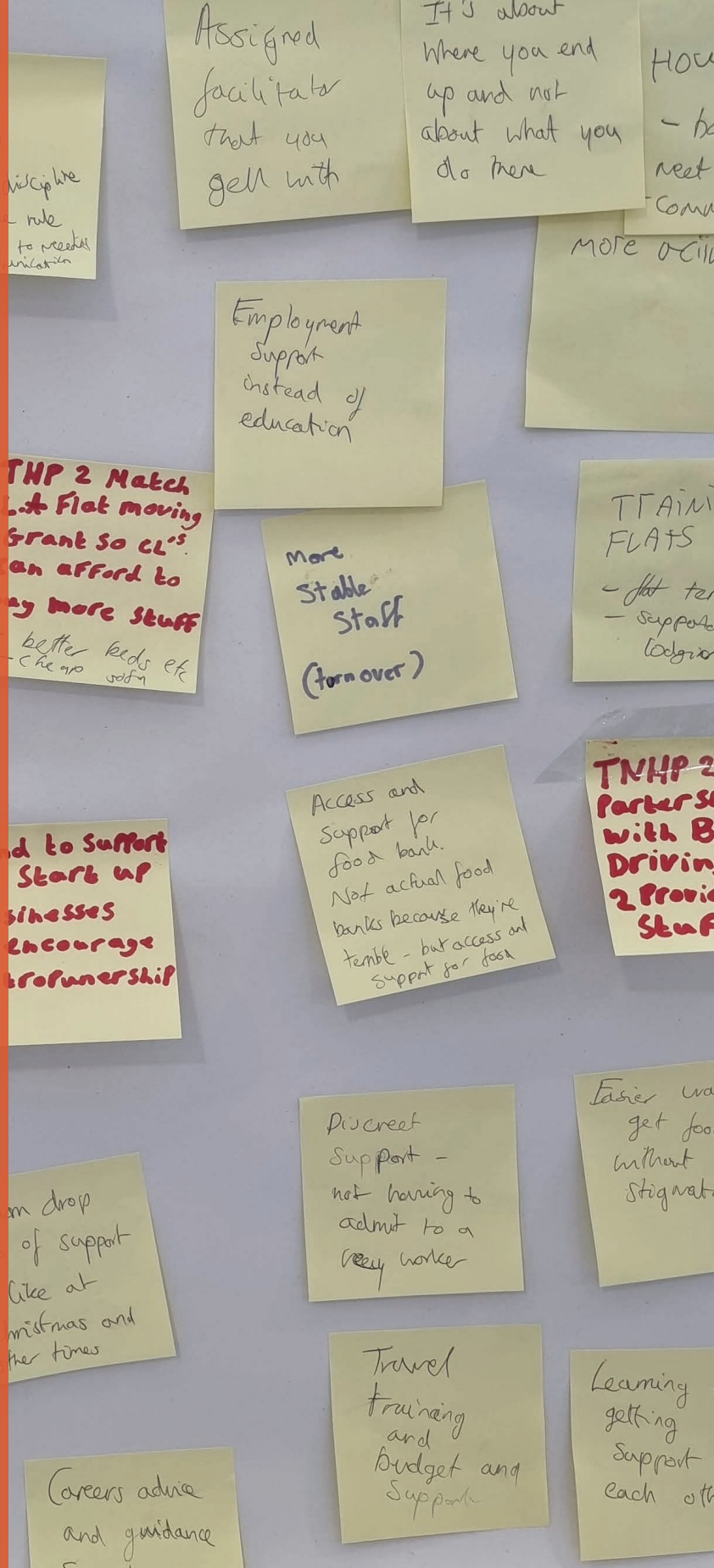


Our Community: A peer evaluation of our Local House Projects



THE NATIONAL
HOUSE PROJECT

Partnership
for Young
London

Key findings

1. Young people feel positive about their House Project

Young people said overwhelmingly (92.8%) that they thought that their House Project is managed well and the vast majority (94.2%) of young people rated their House Project as 'Very Good' or 'Good'.

2. The House Project supports the mental health and wellbeing of young people

Most young people (78%) said that their House Project has a positive impact on their mental health and wellbeing. Staff were the most important aspect of the House Project approach that supports young people's wellbeing (76%).

3. Young people feel a sense of ownership over their House Project

Young people feel in control of their House Project with most (88.4%) saying that their opinions mattered to how decisions were made and that they feel a sense of ownership over their House project (79.7%).

4. The House Project is effective at building a sense of community

Most young people (91.3%) said that their House Project is hugely important to their sense of community with the trust built between young people and staff being key. For many (61%) young people the House Project is their community.

5. The House Project staff are key in supporting young people

Almost all young people (97.1%) said that their House Project supports them to help deal with their responsibilities. Importantly, young people feel comfortable going to key workers if they feel like they have too much on.

6. The House Project expands young people's goals past the house

Almost all young people (97%) said that they have a goal for the future. The most common goal was starting a career (75.8%), followed by managing their home (60.6%), and saving money (40%).

7. Young people already feel independent but also need support

Young people define independence as dealing with responsibilities without needing the support of others and many (73.9%) said that they felt 'very independent', or 'somewhat independent' (21.7%). However, most (87%) also said that the House Project has supported them to live independently.

Recommendations

1. A new mental health and wellbeing support offer designed by young people

Currently, support comes from good relationships with staff and informal conversations. Local House Projects can strengthen how they support young people through the co-creation of a wellbeing offer so that young people design what additional or specialised support could be offered for their mental and physical wellbeing.

2. More opportunities for young people to participate in decision making

Young people feel heard and have a sense of ownership over decisions through their relationships with staff. Local House Projects can build on this by implementing more participatory approaches, such as participatory budgeting, a process where young people work collaboratively to take funding decisions internally.

3. Every House Project should have a physical base with more face to face activities

All House Projects need an easily accessible base, a communal space where House Project young people can meet and socialise. A lack of a proper base can stop the development of a community. Covid-19 has been challenging but as lockdowns ease up, young people want more opportunities to meet face to face and to meet young people from other House Projects across the country.

4. More peer support between House Projects and cohorts

To build on the sense of community, graduates from previous cohorts should be empowered and supported to support younger members, through informal conversations or mentoring. Many young people support each other with the responsibilities they have, but the NHP should build on this and create a system where young people are empowered to support each other across House Projects.

5. Create more consistency with staff; and look at how new staff are introduced

New staff and staff turnover can be disruptive for young people. Local House Projects should explore how new staff are introduced to young people with extensive bios and additional relationship building activities.

6. Create a stronger careers advice and guidance offer for young people with work experience opportunities and apprenticeship support

Provide more tailored one to one employment support, careers advice and guidance. Help young people move towards what they want, not just into education. The National House Project should support Local House Projects to support young people to access work experience, to enable them to try out a range of career options and educational choices like degree apprenticeships.

7. The House Project should provide ways for young people to ask for specific support and help in a discreet way and provide more unsolicited support

Many young people feel independent and do not feel comfortable asking for support. There should be ways that young people can seek support discreetly. Young people as part of Local House Projects should get unsolicited support, like food drops, that would help them when they least expect it.



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