

Update from the Participation Service

Joy Bell – Participation Officer

October 2023



LONDON BOROUGH OF
HARROW

Children (aged 4-17) have the opportunity to provide feedback at least once-yearly:

My Social Worker is always around.

I would like to spend more time with my brothers.

I am still in touch with my previous foster carers; they care about me.

My Personal Advisor feels like family.

I would like to attend many more CLA Events.

My relationship with my Social Worker has improved.

I really miss my cats; I would like to see them during Family Time.

Key themes:

- all young people could identify a safe, trusted adult with whom they could discuss their worries
- many young people expressed difficulties around timely communication with their Social Worker
- most young people felt uncertainty around the role of the Independent Reviewing Officer
- all but one young people were satisfied with their placement – the dissatisfied young person was moved to alternative accommodation within two weeks

To date, we have:

- connected 50 young people with free gym memberships, including those out of borough
- integrated training from care-experienced young adults into the Social Work Academy – delivering sessions for international Social Workers and Newly Qualified Social Workers
- hosted events and activities for children looked after – with 34 young people attending at least one outing
- briefed the Lead Member on the case for making care experience a protected characteristic

In September 2023, two care-experienced young adults generously delivered training to the Social Work Academy:

- “...it’s completely changed my thinking”
- “you reminded me to treat children as children, and not as checklists”
- “your stories touched me – you’ve opened my eyes”
- “thank you for reminding me of why I made the decision to come into this career”



International Social Workers attending training from experts by experience

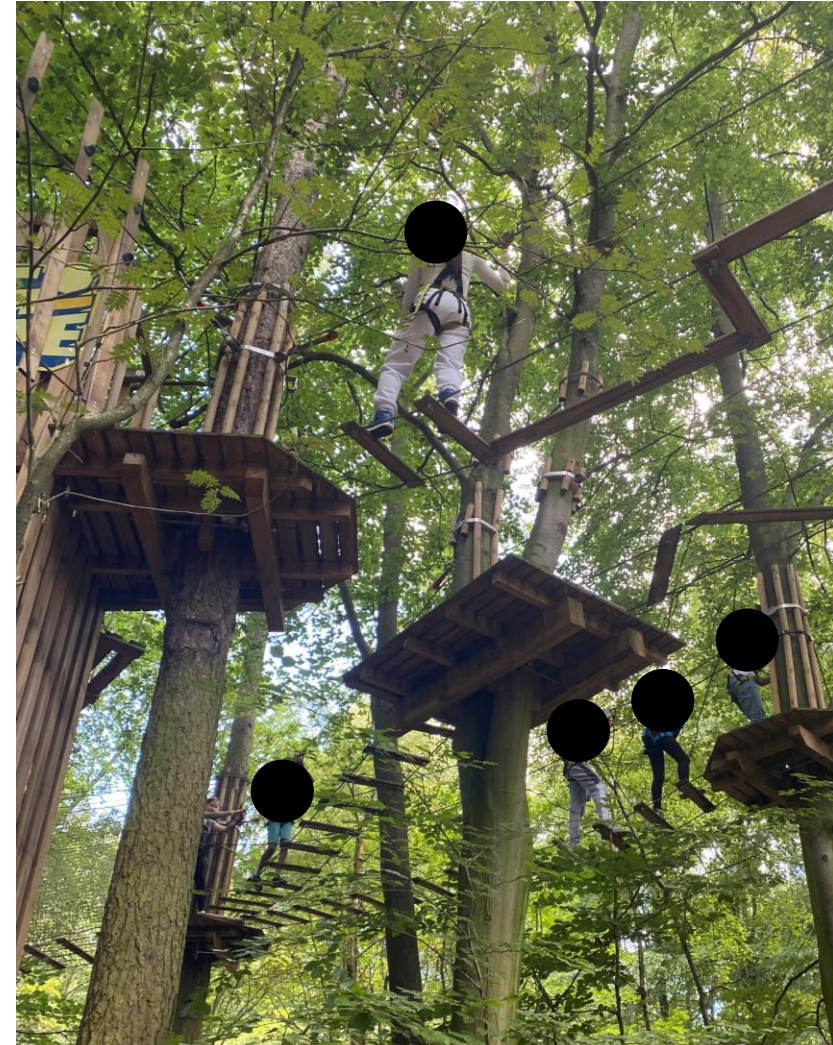
Newly-Qualified Social Workers attending training from experts by experience





Go Ape

“I was so much braver than I thought I would be!”



Participation Activities



LONDON BOROUGH OF
HARROW



Kidzania

"I had so much fun, I hope we get to do lots more events like this."





Thorpe Park, Laser Tag and Frozen

“It was so exciting to come to a theatre for the first time!”

“I Come From”, written by an adopted Harrow child

I came from a broken family

But not broken like you think

I came from a family that was selfish and cruel

I came from a messed up family

People that always had one foot out the door

People that tried but not hard enough

I came from cycles in the park

Jam and toast every morning before school

I came from the good times I had

But I still came from horror stories

That when you tell them they don't sound so bad

But if you were standing there

Breathing the same air I was

Feeling the same way I felt

You would understand

Now I come from a family

that has hope for me and everyone else too

Now I come from a family that care for me

And love me

Who I can trust

I come from my narrowboat, my house, my friends and my family

I come from AFC Wimbledon and Sunday roasts

I come from playing my guitar

I come from all my good friends

The ones I can trust and the ones I've left behind

I come from a family that loves me more now

And that's all that matters

Thank you to the mother and father that brought me into this world

But that's all I need from you

Cause now I come from a loving family

That has hope for me

And everyone else too



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