

# Darlington Youth Participation



**DARLINGTON**  
Borough Council

April Newsletter 24

## Christmas support

Over the Christmas period, we were overwhelmed by the amount of support we received from external partners. These included TFM Cash for Kids, North Park Care Home and the Rotary Club. In the weeks leading up to Christmas, the team were busy supporting Santa, delivering these gifts to many children and families throughout Darlington and beyond.



## Children in Care Council groups

- **Care leavers forum 16+ years -**  
Once a month, 4-5pm at Pease House.  
Please contact [Faye.marsh@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:Faye.marsh@darlington.gov.uk) for dates.
- **Still Our Life 12-16 years -**  
Once a month on a Thursday, 4-5pm at the YMCA.
- **Our Life 5-12 years -**  
Once a month on a Thursday, 4-5pm at the YMCA.

[Jamie.wassell@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:Jamie.wassell@darlington.gov.uk) or  
[Evie.chambers@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:Evie.chambers@darlington.gov.uk)



## Girls' Group

We have a new girls' group starting in April. The aim of the sessions is to provide a safe space for girls, aged 16+, to meet and talk about any concerns and do some crafts. Please email [Evie.Chambers@Darlington.gov.uk](mailto:Evie.Chambers@Darlington.gov.uk) for more information.

## Lego Group

We have a Lego group starting on Friday 26 April in Darlington library, from 4-5.30pm. The first build will be the Harry Potter castle.

[Jamie.wassell@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:Jamie.wassell@darlington.gov.uk) or  
[Evie.chambers@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:Evie.chambers@darlington.gov.uk)

## MYP (Member of Youth Parliament)

Over the last couple of months, four young people, Stephen, Jack J, Charlie and Jack P, have been working hard campaigning for votes to become the next Member of Youth Parliament (MYP) for Darlington. During this time, they have also been campaigning for Make Your Mark (MYM) votes which is a nation-wide consultation where young people aged 11-18 can have their say on what is important to them. 12 schools across Darlington were part of MYP and MYM and a total of 7,927 votes were collected. These votes will be used to direct changes within Darlington and across the UK. On Monday 25 March, members of the council came to a count night in which Stephen Adenuga was voted as the new MYP for Darlington with Jack James acting as deputy. For more information on Youth Parliament, please contact:

[Evie.Chambers@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:Evie.Chambers@darlington.gov.uk).



Left to right - Jack James (Deputy MYP), Charlie Cela, Peter Gibson (MP), Stephen Adenuga (MYP) and Jack Parvin

## Young Darlington Advisor

The Young Darlington Advisor role is moving forward at a nice pace. We currently have 6 young people signed up and committed to the project. We have had our first meeting to bring all the young people together and are planning a small activity and a day's training session. We are still looking for several more young people to join the group, so if you would like any information about the group, please get in touch with, [Jamie.wassell@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:Jamie.wassell@darlington.gov.uk).

## Live card

All Live Card enquiries need to go to [livercard@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:livercard@darlington.gov.uk)

## C Card drop-in sessions for Children in our care and Care Leavers (16-25 years)

A confidential service offering free condoms, sexual health information and support is available at Pease House. The sessions are on a Thursday from 2-4pm. These sessions are a drop-in service with no appointment necessary. For more information, please contact [gemma.evans@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:gemma.evans@darlington.gov.uk).

## Leaving Care Larder (Fare Share)

Fare Share fights hunger and food waste by redistributing surplus food to frontline services. This support arrives at Pease House every Monday and is available for young people who find themselves a little short and need some food. The ingredients that arrive are varied, but there is always a good choice.

## Document translation

We have now officially translated the 'Your Journey Through Care' and '15-18 Year Old' guides into Pashto and Kurdish Sorani. This piece of work was supported by two young people who gave their opinions on the support they have received since arriving in Darlington, and what information they would have liked to receive before arriving in Darlington.

## Local Authority Children and Young People's Plan and SEN strategy

Throughout March and April, we have/are visiting seven schools across Darlington from Early Years to post 16. This piece of work is to make sure that the voice of young people is at the forefront, in the creation of the Children and Young People's Plan and SEN strategy.

## Mind Of My Own (MOMO)

MOMO is slowly being rolled out across Children's Services. In the first instance, the Looked After Through Care team are going to champion it with the plan of driving it forward once embedded. If you are familiar with MOMO, please continue to use it and encourage the young people you work with to use it. If you would like any training on MOMO, please contact Evie or myself.

## Mentoring programme

We have appointed 15 peer mentors who are currently going through the employee process. The service will provide a caring and responsive mentoring and befriending service to children and young people cared for by Darlington. We will be working with children and young people to address their social and emotional needs, improve their well-being and access to positive activities and opportunities.

[faye.marsh@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:faye.marsh@darlington.gov.uk)

## Regional Children in Care Council

On Wednesday 3 April, young people from Darlington joined members of the other North East Children in Care Councils to deliver this year's regional conference at Hardwick Hall in Sedgfield. The focus of the conference was 'Let's Talk Change', we decided to deliver a workshop on the local offer for care leavers, specifically on improving the digital offer. Decision makers were in attendance from across the 12 North East authorities and were challenged on the various offers for care experienced young people. The young people were amazing, inspirational and spoke from the heart, they should be exceptionally proud of themselves.



Katie Rooney and Nilima Begum

## New youth hub in Pease House

We now have a lovely inviting youth hub in Pease House. The room has been transformed to support more group work and general chit chat between professionals and young people.



## Safe Space

The Safe Space project is officially underway, and we are currently delivering sessions every other Tuesday in the YMCA Hub. The aim of the session is to work with children in care of a secondary school age, who are identified as needing some extra support and guidance. Going forward, a Friday session is being planned to focus on intervention work with partners, to support the different needs of the young people involved in the project.

[Jamie.wassell@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:Jamie.wassell@darlington.gov.uk) or  
[Evie.chambers@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:Evie.chambers@darlington.gov.uk)

## Young panel interviews

Over the last couple of months, members of the various Children in Care Councils have been busy forming a youth interview panel. They have been part of recruiting the new Mentoring Participation Officer, Leaving Care Personal Advisor, Advanced Practitioner and Mentoring Support Worker.



Sinead Hinton, Ara Kohi and Shaun Straw

If you have any questions on any of the above, please contact the Participation team on [Jamie.wassell@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:Jamie.wassell@darlington.gov.uk) or [Evie.chambers@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:Evie.chambers@darlington.gov.uk)

