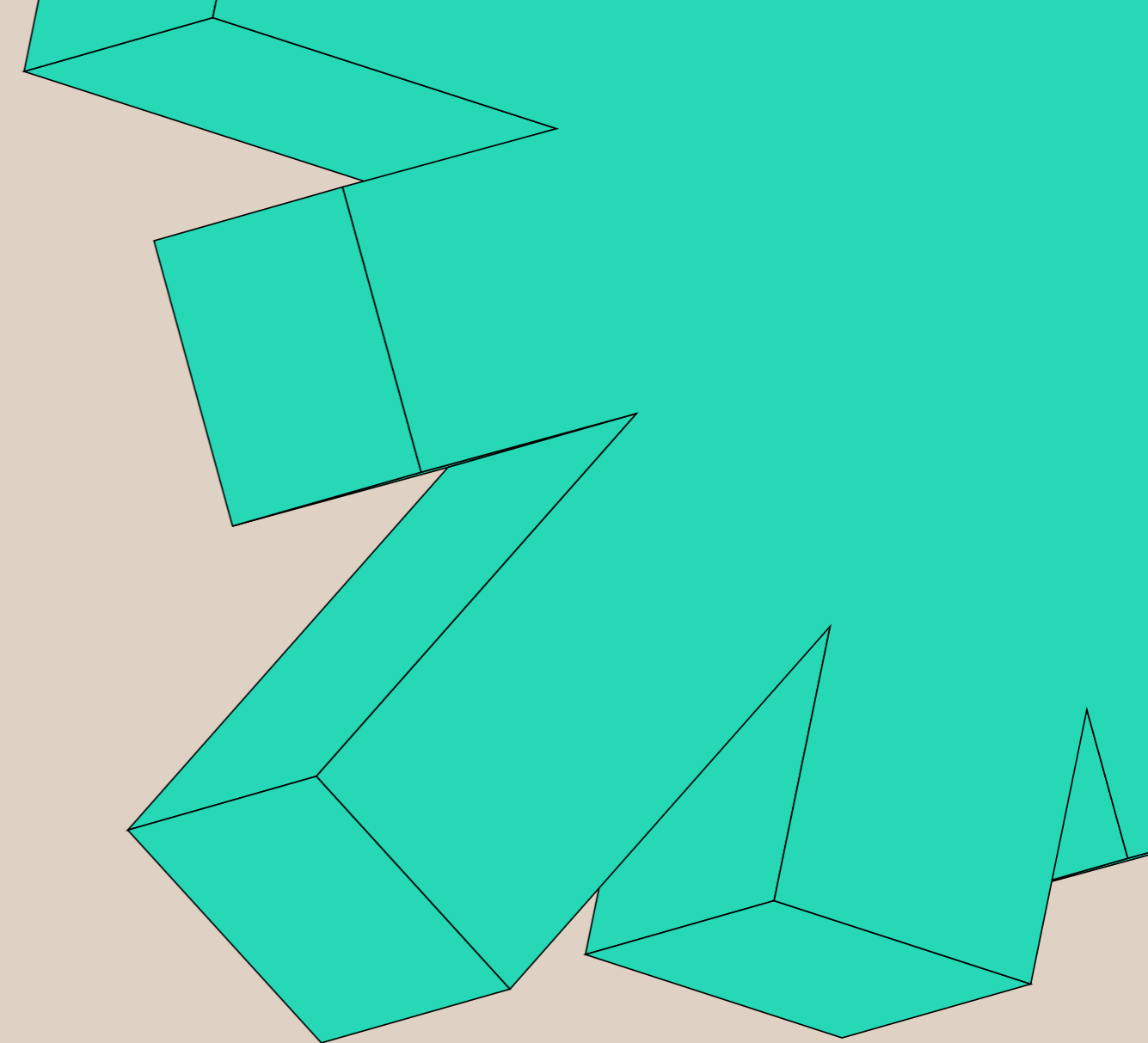




# IMPACT REPORT 2023



OUR  
CHARITY  
PARTNERS



**WHO  
CARES?  
SCOTLAND**



**JOHN LEWIS  
PARTNERSHIP**

# CONTENTS

<b>3</b>	<b>FOREWORD</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>2023 KEY IMPACTS</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>BUILDING HAPPIER FUTURES IN THE PARTNERSHIP</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>JLP POLICY CHANGE</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>2022 CHRISTMAS ADVERT</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>CHARITIES &amp; ORGANISATIONS WE ARE WORKING WITH</b>
<b>22</b>	<b>COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES</b>
<b>24</b>	<b>GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT</b>
<b>26</b>	<b>WHAT'S NEXT?</b>
<b>27</b>	<b>AWARDS</b>
<b>27</b>	<b>THANK YOU</b>
<b>28</b>	<b>GET IN TOUCH</b>

# FOREWORD

## SHARON WHITE

Partner & Chairman

The John Lewis Partnership is an ongoing experiment to find happier, more trusted ways of doing business, for the benefit of us all. We work together to create a successful business and a fairer, more sustainable future for Partners, customers, suppliers and communities. Our Partnership is owned entirely in trust by Partners which means we are more than employees; we share knowledge, power and profit. Our Purpose inspires our principles, drives our decisions and acts as our guide.

Our ambition to build happier futures for Care Experienced people is at the very heart of our purpose - working in Partnership for a happier world. As a Partnership, we're focused on amplifying their voices, changing public perceptions, providing volunteering opportunities and financial assistance and crucially - jobs and education.

It's early days for this programme, and we're learning from others who are further along this journey than we are, forging new partnerships with a range of charities and organisations across the sector. We're excited by the early outcomes. We've become a more friendly employer for foster and kinship families, and we've trained our managers to better support Care Experienced people to be successful when they become Partners.

This is our first report on the impact we're making, and it's a celebration of what we, as a Partnership and a community, have achieved so far, and what we hope to do in the future. I invite you to read it and think about our commitment to this cause, which remains at the heart of our work. We'll keep listening to the Care Experienced community and welcoming their ideas and talents. I'm excited to see our work continue to grow.



**“OUR AMBITION TO BUILD HAPPIER FUTURES FOR CARE EXPERIENCED PEOPLE IS AT THE VERY HEART OF OUR PURPOSE.”**

— Sharon White, Partner & Chairman

## CEIRA THOM

Partner & Head of Learning, Inclusion & Belonging

To work on Building Happier Futures and support the Care Experienced community has been the great honour of my career in the Partnership and it sits at the very heart of our Purpose. In delivering this work, we have worked with an extraordinary group of people who have shared their lived experiences and been generous with their time and support as we have shaped our ambitious plans.

Throughout 2023, we've continued to grow and listen to the community, involving experts in all that we do and I have been extraordinarily proud of the contribution of our Partners who have shown kindness, support, and encouragement to the people we have been working with. This success is driven by the contribution of every Partner.

This is only the beginning of our work and we remain committed to tirelessly working to support the Care Experienced community to achieve all the wonderful things they deserve.



## MARK RIDDELL MBE

National Implementation Adviser for Care Leavers at the Department for Education, Building Happier Futures Advisory Group Member

It's been a pleasure to have been involved in the Partnership for the past twelve months and being a member of their Building Happier Futures Board. The Partnership was founded on the belief that when you raise everyone up and give them access to the same opportunities and living standards, society thrives and so does business. The Partnership wants to use its position as an employer and retailer to do what it can to support and develop talent and in helping to improve the lives of young people who have grown up in care and then leave care.

2023 has seen the Partnership deliver on these things through multiple avenues, be that through its employability programme, donation of its apprenticeship levy or donations to several charities that support those who are care experienced to access both work and learning opportunities. The achievements of Building Happier Futures this year has demonstrated why the Partnership's purpose of working in Partnership for a happier world is what makes it such a special business. It's helping to change people's lives for the better.



## 2023 KEY IMPACTS

# 21

John Lewis Partnership roles offered to Care Experienced people so far in 2023 in John Lewis shops, Supply Chain sites and Head Office

# 880

Care Experienced people came together at Who Cares? Scotland events for fun, friendship and connection because of John Lewis Partnership's funding

# £1.1m

of Apprenticeship levy transferred to **19 charities** supporting Care Experienced people funding **77 Apprenticeship placements**

## £1.1M GENERATED FOR CARE EXPERIENCE CHARITIES WITH 125,00 CHARITY RELATED PRODUCTS SOLD

## 181 CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE ATTENDED OUR EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME TOURS

# 87

Care Experienced young people completed work experience with interview skills training

# 1,121

microwaves donated to Care Experienced young people starting out in their own homes

# 202

Partners have completed Care Experience learning with Who Cares? Scotland to deepen their understanding of Care Experience and become proactive allies

**33 Partners** have completed volunteering days with Action for children, totalling **42 days**

John Lewis Partnership funding has allowed **44 young people** and **14 foster carers** to receive vital support from **5 transition workers** through Action for Children

# BUILDING HAPPIER FUTURES IN THE PARTNERSHIP

## Our Employability Programme

**We have an ambition to be the employer of choice for Care Experienced People.**

We piloted our programme last year and learned an incredible amount, most of all from the young people who took part. This year we've rolled out our programmes to over 70 Partnership locations including our John Lewis and Waitrose shops, our supply chain locations, our hotels and in Head Office.

### 2023 Engagement

**181 people attended drop in and tour sessions**  
**87 went on to attend work experience**

### 2023 Outcomes

**21 people have been hired so far in 2023 with Christmas recruitment yet to come**

### Snapshot of our programme

#### Locations identified to run programmes

We work with local authorities, Virtual Schools and the Drive Forward charity to signpost the opportunities to Care Experienced young people.

#### Drop in and tour

A short session for young people to meet the teams. Educational and reassuring, this helps to reduce the anxiety we all feel before we apply for jobs early in our careers.

#### Work experience up to a week

A true experience of work, providing real life examples for job applications and a chance to try before you buy before interviews. Includes a session "How to ace your interview."

#### Applications

Interview questions shared in advance are known to reduce anxiety. Guaranteed interviews for those who attended work experience. Held by the Partners met during work experience.

#### Support

- Buddies trained in Care Experience awareness
- Mentoring
- Dedicated wellbeing support from our expert Health & Wellbeing team



## BUILDING HAPPIER FUTURES IN THE PARTNERSHIP CONTINUED

### Employability Programme Stories

Bryan first started with the Partnership in August 2022 through our pilot of the employability programme. He loves speaking with lots of different people, especially having a laugh with his regular customers. In 2023 the scheme ran again in his store and he has been supporting the new wave of Care Experienced people through the programme. Bryan has prepared to become a buddy for the group and told us how chuffed he was for those getting ready to interview.

In Bryan's words, he told us his highlights: "Coming this far and getting to know everyone in the store. Everyone is so supportive and getting to know the other side of John Lewis - its family."

For our Care Experienced People, it is not always about getting a job at the end of the programme. For many, taking part in our Drop In or Work Experience is a big first step for them and can have a huge impact on their development.

"...for some of our young people what may look like small steps are for them big steps. Rates of PTSD are high amongst our unaccompanied asylum seeking young people. To share one example, Sam, a young person under our care was very happy to accept the offer of a work experience placement which shows that they felt comfortable at the John Lewis & Partners store. It can be hard for young people to admit to their struggles and a standard reply is often "I am fine"; taking part in the work experience was a massive step for Sam."

"I came from a destructive upbringing and spent time through the care system as a young child. I had a motto from my youth "If you can't get over the wall go through it." Life was tough but I always tried to focus on the future. You hold the key to your own destiny, sometimes you need advice on what door to open. This was and is my calling, to give something back to those people who have had a tough start to their young lives. Building Happier Futures is so simple yet so inspiring for all those involved. Humbled to be a part of it."

Paul Forsyth, leading the Employability Programme for John Lewis Kingston.

Rhian joined the Partnership in September this year after successfully completing the Building Happier Futures employability programme in John Lewis Welwyn. He had this to say about his experience:

"Everyone was helpful and I felt that Partners genuinely wanted to teach me things. The interview process was short, questions easy to answer and having access to the questions beforehand made it less daunting. I have found it up-lifting as it's my first proper job. Coming into John Lewis, I am more confident in myself."

**“EVERYONE WAS HELPFUL AND I FELT THAT PARTNERS GENUINELY WANTED TO TEACH ME THINGS. THE INTERVIEW PROCESS WAS SHORT, QUESTIONS EASY TO ANSWER AND HAVING ACCESS TO THE QUESTIONS BEFOREHAND MADE IT LESS DAUNTING. I HAVE FOUND IT UP-LIFTING AS IT’S MY FIRST PROPER JOB.”**

— Rhian, Partner at John Lewis Welwyn following completion of the Building Happier Futures employability programme



**BUILDING HAPPIER FUTURES IN THE PARTNERSHIP CONTINUED****SEAN PEARCE**

Selling Partner & Care Experience Lead  
at John Lewis Southampton

The program really gets going with two in-depth training sessions with Who Cares? Scotland, a fantastic charity that works with young people in care. Not only did I learn how best I could support the young people we would be coming into contact with but it also helped me challenge many of the ill informed pre conceptions we have about people with Care Experience. If you ever get the opportunity to work with Laurie from Who Cares? Scotland my challenge to you is to try and resist her enthusiasm and not feel inspired by what they do.

Here in Southampton, we were lucky enough to have four eager-to-learn young people who came with insightful questions and a desire to work for our Partnership. As I spoke to one girl about her enthusiasm for fashion and what we could offer in terms of career paths within that area her beaming smile gave life to the impact this program could have.

While our program has seen its share of challenges, it's important to acknowledge that everyone faces some bumps in the road on their

journey. During the work experience days, we encountered a situation where two candidates left work early one afternoon without prior notice. Nevertheless, we firmly believe in not giving up on the young people who may encounter hurdles along the way, as that's what sets us apart.

The girl with the beaming smile I mentioned above is booked in for an interview and we are confident she will do well. If she does, we have a vacancy we could offer to her and the potential of our first success story. And who knows how far that story could go. Maybe we have played a small part in changing someone's life. Maybe her story inspires others and gives further life to this incredible program. I can confidently say it has changed my life and given me a new found purpose I never knew I needed. And I am so incredibly grateful for that.

**“ AS I SPOKE TO ONE GIRL ABOUT HER ENTHUSIASM FOR FASHION AND WHAT WE COULD OFFER IN TERMS OF CAREER PATHS WITHIN THAT AREA HER BEAMING SMILE GAVE LIFE TO THE IMPACT THIS PROGRAM COULD HAVE.”**

— Sean Pearce, Selling Partner & Care Experience Lead  
at John Lewis Southampton



DRIVE FORWARD

John Lewis Partnership first partnered with Drive Forward in 2022 and continues to work with them today to support young people find employment in London. Drive Forward's mission is to help young adults, leaving foster or residential care, achieve their full potential with exciting and sustainable employment opportunities.

**Ibrahim's story, young person recruited into John Lewis Kingston via Drive Forward**

“Building Happier Futures helped me develop a motto of “Never give up on life”. The last 6 years were hard on me and my brother mentally and physically, the stress of not seeing your family for 6 years had put me and my older brother through some very tough times. My life has been a tough challenge, but for me and my brother there is now light at the end of the tunnel. My time in the Partnership has been enlightening, and for me personally has made me mature as a person. I would like to take this opportunity to thank both John Lewis and Drive Through Forward, and to all those that have been involved.”

The John Lewis Foundation (UK Registered Charity 1118162) recently agreed to a grant funding to Drive Forward Foundation to enable them to continue operating their Community Partnership Manager role which was launched in response to the increased need for bespoke youth services to counteract the negative impact of the pandemic which caused social isolation and deterioration of youth mental health. The post holder will work with the Drive Forward ambassador team, host personal and professional development sessions for participants and manage the Youth Supporter Group that mentors Care Experienced young people. The role will be funded for a year and aims to support around 700 young people aged 16-26.



## BUILDING HAPPIER FUTURES IN THE PARTNERSHIP CONTINUED

### Training and eLearning

**“IT HAS MADE ME LOOK IN THE MIRROR AND REALLY ANALYSE HOW I BRING OUT THE BEST IN THOSE I WORK WITH, CREATING AN ATMOSPHERE OF TRUST, WHERE EVERYONE CAN BE THEMSELVES.”**

— Joanne French Thomas, Partner & Insight Action & Broadcast Lead



The Partnership collaborated with Who Cares? Scotland to create an immersive virtual learning experience which has been delivered to the People Managers and buddies who are leading our Employability programme. We've also launched an eLearning package for all who work here, so that everyone can build their understanding of Care Experience and how to drive positive change for the community. The learning includes stories directly from people with Care Experience about their lives, and what can make a really positive difference. People with experience of the care system may not have a strong support system made up of family and friends that many people rely on. As a result, Care Experienced people can find it much more difficult to access and sustain meaningful employment opportunities and the Partnership wants to change that. This learning will continue to be offered, empowering Partners to deepen their understanding of Care Experience and become proactive allies.

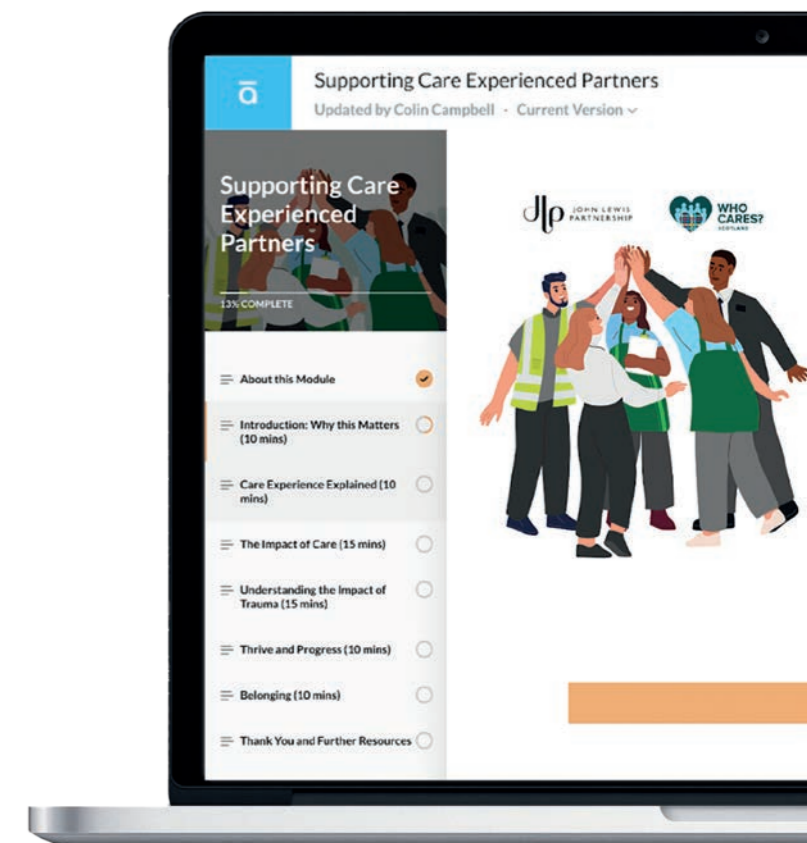
Partners that have experienced the learning have said:

“I found the whole training provided was delivered in a very personable way and I feel more aware of what may or may not be required from a support perspective towards the Care Experience Partners. I look forward to giving them the support and experience they deserve in order to best help their future career prospects.”

“Having recently brought two Partners into my team from the Care Experienced community, I attended what I can only describe as an inspirational training session with Who Cares? Scotland. Not only did it bring to life for me what it means to be Care Experienced, it made me understand the profound impact this can have on an individual's adult life. It has made me look in the mirror and really analyse how I bring out the best in those I work with, creating an atmosphere of trust, where

everyone can be themselves and develop their career. It is a privilege to be able to offer this opportunity and work with my new Partners to develop in this stage of their career path.”

Joanne French Thomas, Partner & Insight Action & Broadcast Lead





**BUILDING HAPPIER FUTURES IN THE PARTNERSHIP CONTINUED**

Young people with experience of care are significantly less likely to continue into higher education than their peers. In fact, figures published annually by the Department for Education show that just 550 care leavers under the age of 19 go onto higher education, representing just 0.2 per cent of students starting undergraduate courses.

To open up opportunities for Care Experienced young people across the United Kingdom, the John Lewis Partnership has been working with The Open University to develop a dedicated scholarship programme.

The Open University's Care Experienced Scholarship launched for the first time in 2023 and provides four full undergraduate scholarships to Care Experienced young people aged 25 and under. The Open University's open-access courses and flexible study arrangements means successful scholars do not have to move away to attend their course and can study from the comfort of their own home. Scholarship recipients are also entitled to additional support from a dedicated Champions Network, carers and employability service and bursaries. This first cohort of scholarship recipients began their studies in October 2023 and more places will be made available in 2024.

"We are delighted to be partnering with the John Lewis Partnership in providing these fully funded scholarships and we look forward to welcoming our first four scholars in October."

Jhumar Johnson, Chief of Staff to the Vice-Chancellor at Open University

Althea, one of this year's scholarship recipients, has chosen to study English Literature and Creative Writing as it is her greatest passion. She is determined to become a published poet one day and is also keen to become a teacher so that she can share her love of words with her students.

"I'd like to thank the John Lewis Partnership for their support of the Care Experienced Scholarship. At every other level of education I've been expected to perform at the same level as my peers, with no account for what I was going through as a Care Experienced individual. As a result, I've always felt I had the weight of the world on my shoulders.

Putting opportunities in the hands of those who need them most is no small feat. This scholarship has changed the trajectory of my life, allowing for greater success on my course and eliminating the stress of student debt. I am forever grateful for this scholarship."

**“ THIS SCHOLARSHIP HAS CHANGED THE TRAJECTORY OF MY LIFE, ALLOWING FOR GREATER SUCCESS ON MY COURSE AND ELIMINATING THE STRESS OF STUDENT DEBT. I AM FOREVER GRATEFUL FOR THIS SCHOLARSHIP.”**

— Althea, English Literature and Creative Writing Student



**BUILDING HAPPIER FUTURES IN THE PARTNERSHIP CONTINUED**



**“OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH JOHN LEWIS IS HELPING THESE ORGANISATIONS GROW THEIR CAPABILITY TO HELP EVEN MORE YOUNG PEOPLE, IN EVEN MORE MEANINGFUL WAYS.”**

— Ayman Omar, Head of Partnerships, Multiverse

Multiverse is a tech startup on a mission to create a diverse group of future leaders by building an outstanding alternative to university and corporate training. In March 2023, the Partnership partnered with Multiverse to support organisations working in the care sector with essential skills that drive digital and data transformation, helping them to do more to support those throughout the care system. The Partnership has been able to utilise the Apprenticeship Levy that is not spent internally by transferring it to other businesses to make a difference.

**Current Multiverse Apprenticeship statistics:**

**77 apprentices on programmes across 19 charitable organisations**

**4 transformative programmes**

**The programme aims to:**

- **Build capability:** After 6 months, 20% more individuals feel they have the skills needed to excel in their roles
- **Increased capacity:** Individuals on programme have freed up 11% of their time through increasing their efficiency
- **Drive engagement:** 100% of apprentices say that the programme aligns with their personal and professional goals

“John Lewis Partnership have a clear and longstanding commitment to supporting young people who are Care Experienced. Their partner charities already do extraordinary work, and now through this donation of apprenticeship levy, these organisations will be able to develop their capabilities to reach and impact more people even further.”

“Apprenticeships are simply the best way to grow skills within an organisation and make every penny count. Through world-class training, our partnership with John Lewis is helping these organisations grow their capability to help even more young people, in even more meaningful ways.”

Ayman Omar, Head of Partnerships, Multiverse

**COLETTE BOOTH**  
Apprentice at Action for Children

Colette is currently seven months through the advanced data fellowship.

“I feel privileged to be on the apprenticeship programme, It’s a great experience and our service will benefit as a result.”

Through upskilling on power query, Colette now combines reports within her role, saving significant time and reducing errors. Positive feedback was received for the detailed data breakdown that Colette is now able to provide. With a 50% time saving, Colette can allocate more time to accurate data provision. Colette plans to automate processes for quicker operations and is gathering ideas through community webinars. The automation will allow sharing data with other managers currently not able to access it.



## BUILDING HAPPIER FUTURES IN THE PARTNERSHIP CONTINUED

### CELIA ROCHA

Apprentice at Coram

Through the apprenticeship, Celia aims to streamline reporting by automating tasks and leveraging suitable tools. This will enable the production of more accurate reports, offering enhanced insights into the experiences of children and young people in the care system. Consequently, local authorities can improve their practices and services for the looked-after population.



#### Utilising our Apprenticeship Levy to Change Lives

The Partnership's work with Multiverse as a training provider continues into 2023 as applications have closed for our second cohort of external apprentices to be funded from our surplus apprenticeship levy.

In this cohort, the Partnership will be funding 12 charities who directly support care experienced people to lead more fulfilling lives. The range of apprenticeship schemes to be undertaken include Advanced Data Fellowship; Business Transformation Fellowship; Data Fellowship and Data Literacy. Equipping their employees with these vital skills will enable these charities to provide more accurate data reporting for measuring their impact and, as a result, be able to submit more competitive bid responses and attract more funding to widen their reach. It will also provide valuable professional development for employees resulting in potential for greater contribution and improved retention rates.

The value of the second cohort levy transfer is £594,000 over the course of the schemes - ranging from 13 months to 42 months. The first cohort levy transfer was £506,000 (8 charities supported), making the Partnership's total levy transfer commitment of £1.1 million to date.



**“ THROUGH OUR GROUNDBREAKING INTERACTIVE AND FUN GROUP WORKSHOPS AND 1-2-1 SESSIONS, YOUNG PEOPLE WILL BENEFIT FROM IMPROVED TENANCY, HOUSING AND MONEY SKILLS, CONFIDENCE, RESILIENCE AND NETWORKS OF HELP AS THEY APPROACH ADULTHOOD.”**

— Rebecca White, Chief Executive Officer, Your Own Place

John Lewis Partnership will be working with Your Own Place at its John Lewis & Partners Norwich shop alongside Norfolk County Council Children's Services. Your Own Place started in 2013 to tackle the inequities facing young people leaving care.

John Lewis & Partners Norwich is offering meaningful work experience and Your Own Place is complementing this with interactive and fun group workshops and 1-2-1 sessions.

“Your Own Place couldn't be more delighted to be working with the John Lewis Partnership and their groundbreaking Building Happier Futures programme. Through our groundbreaking interactive and fun group workshops and 1-2-1 sessions, young people will benefit from improved Tenancy, Housing and Money skills, confidence, resilience and networks of help as they approach adulthood. For a handful of young people this will be a unique opportunity opening doors to a happier future.”

Rebecca White, Chief Executive Officer,  
Your Own Place

# JLP POLICY CHANGE: FOSTER FRIENDLY ACCREDITATION



In May 2023 the Partnership announced its accreditation with The Fostering Network, the UK’s leading fostering charity as a Fostering Friendly workplace and launched a new standard, giving eligible foster carers additional leave to balance the needs of their role alongside working. Currently there is a national shortage of foster carers to meet the needs of all the children that are likely to need a foster family this year. The impact of this is that some children are placed far from home, separated from their siblings or in a placement that does not meet all of their needs. Fostering Friendly employers do an amazing job in supporting fostering to help ensure children can remain in their local community connected with everything that is familiar to them. We celebrated The Fostering Network’s annual Foster Care Fortnight during May, holding awareness sessions in our stores with fostering groups across the UK. The fortnight ended with a walk to signal our collaboration from The Fostering Network office in London to our flagship Oxford Street store.

“Becoming a Fostering Friendly employer - the largest one in the UK - and joining the fostering community is something to be really proud of. This is key in supporting foster carer employees and recognising the vital difference they make to the lives of children and young people.”

Kate Lawson, Director of External Affairs at The Fostering Network and Building Happier Futures advisory board representative

During Foster Care Fortnight, we spoke to Partners who are also foster carers, to find out about their fostering journeys. One of their stories can be read on the next page.

**“ THIS IS KEY IN SUPPORTING FOSTER CARER EMPLOYEES AND RECOGNISING THE VITAL DIFFERENCE THEY MAKE TO THE LIVES OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE.”**

— Kate Lawson, Director of External Affairs, The Fostering Network  
Building Happier Futures advisory board representative



**JLP POLICY CHANGE: FOSTER FRIENDLY ACCREDITATION CONTINUED****DANIEL COBB**

Partner & Regional Operational Support Coordinator

**What made you want to become a foster carer?**

My husband and I both come from large, loving families, and very early into our relationship, we talked about wanting our own family one day. Having explored all the options available to us as a same-sex couple, we decided fostering was the best route for us, as we know that there are so many children and young people that need a loving home.

**How do you find it balancing working and being a foster carer?**

I have been very fortunate to have some supportive people managers who have shown me great flexibility by allowing me to flex my working pattern when needed so I have never struggled with the balance, although sometimes I've felt guilty about asking to change. It was certainly harder in the beginning, as newly approved foster carers are required to complete various training courses. Even after ten years of fostering, I'm still required to keep up with my learning, and I do need to complete a certain amount of training, but I have worked this around my Partnership role.

**The Partnership has been accredited as Fostering Friendly by The Fostering Network. How does it feel to know the business is working to support the lives of foster families and care-experienced people?**

All the work the Partnership is doing under Building Happier Futures brings me so much pride and makes me even happier to say I am a Partner in our business. As a foster carer, I am actually a member of The Fostering Network myself, so I know the good work that they do to support foster carers too. Being accredited by The Fostering Network shows

the steps that the Partnership has taken to support people like me.

**What is the best thing about being a foster carer?**

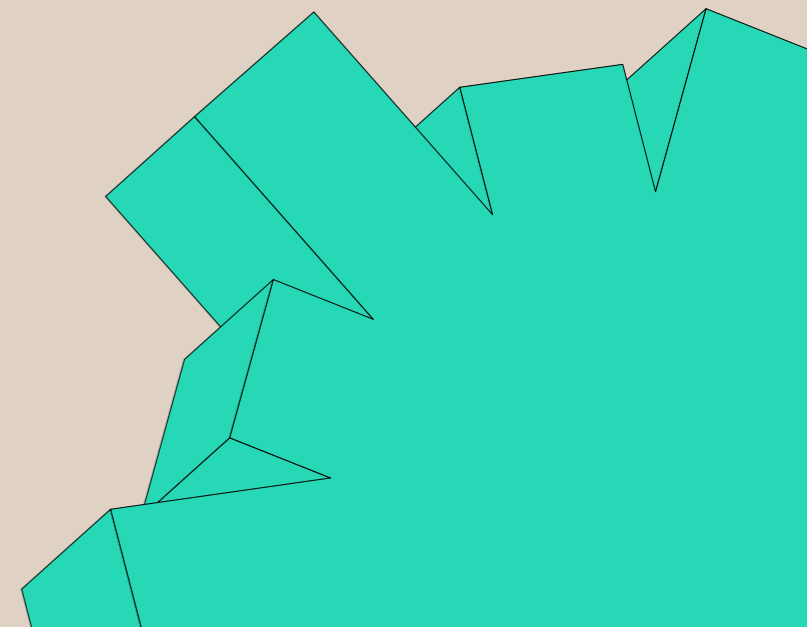
The best thing is seeing the children come to you and watching them grow and develop, and become part of your family. Knowing that you are helping them repair the trauma that they have lived through and that you are helping them to go on to have the best possible futures. It's probably the best decision I ever made.

**We spoke with Daniel in September to hear his reflections on how foster leave has supported him this year in his role as a foster carer.** I have used two days of Foster leave since it was introduced, one allowed me to attend some training I would have struggled to do. The other day let me attend our Foster son's sports day and attend his review meeting without having to try and work out when I would work the time back just before the school holidays. The leave which does not have to be taken in big blocks really does show how the business wants to support us as Partners and Foster Carers to be able to be there and support the young people we care for.



**“ALL THE WORK THE PARTNERSHIP IS DOING UNDER BUILDING HAPPIER FUTURES BRINGS ME SO MUCH PRIDE AND MAKES ME EVEN HAPPIER TO SAY I AM A PARTNER IN OUR BUSINESS.”**

— Daniel Cobb, Partner & Regional Operational Support Coordinator



**JLP POLICY CHANGE: FOSTER FRIENDLY ACCREDITATION CONTINUED****#TickTheBox week  
25 October – 1 November**

As part of our commitment to Care Experienced young people, we are proud to support The Fostering Network's #TickTheBox campaign during Care Leavers' Week (25 October – 1 November) this year.

The number of people with Care Experience entering higher education is just 13 percent, compared to 43 percent of all other students. The Fostering Network aims to change this by encouraging people with Care Experience to 'tick the box' on their UCAS or further education application to say they have spent time in care, to enable them to get the support they are entitled to while attending university.

The campaign also raises awareness of the support available at university for young people who have spent time in care and helps show them that university is an option for them while challenging the stigma around being Care Experienced. From 2008-2022, the number of people ticking the box

more than doubled – but there is still a long way to go. During Care Leavers' Week, we will be using our social media channels to show our support for amazing people with Care Experience and highlight the difference ticking the box makes.



After working closely with the leading national charity Kinship, we announced the expansion of our foster leave policy to include kinship carers during Kinship Care Week 2023. Kinship carers are family members and friends who step up to raise children when their parents are unable to – sometimes in formal arrangements such as Special Guardianship Orders or as Family and Friends Foster Carers, or sometimes in informal arrangements worked out

within families. Paid leave enables kinship carers to take time to help settle a child into their home, and respond quickly to becoming a kinship carer which often happens at a time of crisis. Kinship care is part of our heritage as the father of our founder, John Lewis Sr., was part of a kinship family arrangement.



# #TICKTHEBOX

## 2022 CHRISTMAS ADVERT

The 2022 John Lewis Christmas advert, 'The Beginner', told the heartfelt story of one man's determination to connect with a child, with the message 'it's the things we do that matter the most.' It supported the launch of our Building Happier Futures programme by shining a light on a much overlooked issue: the challenges faced by people with experience of the care system. The advert signalled our long-term intent to help Care Experienced people stay in a number of ways, including finding meaningful careers.

The advert was created with input from partner charities Action for Children and Who Cares? Scotland, as well as specialist advisors and, most importantly, Care Experienced people.

During the Christmas campaign, we raised £1.1m for Action for Children and Who Cares? Scotland. Customers donated through Giving Trees in our John Lewis and Waitrose shops and online, and we donated 25% of the retail price of a selection of Christmas products, including Lewis Bear in John Lewis and a Chocolate Yule Log in Waitrose.

The 2022 Christmas campaign signalled a public commitment to our ongoing work with the Building Happier Futures programme. This report looks back at what we've achieved so far, working alongside our partners in the voluntary, charity, not for profit, government and local authority sectors. We recognise that we're still in the foothills of the work, and we will continue to learn, build and keep the voices of Care Experienced people at the heart of our work.



## CHARITIES & ORGANISATIONS WE ARE WORKING WITH

We are proud to be working with a range of charity partners: some that benefit from our customer and Partner fundraising; others that we have been able to support through offering financial grants or other practical support.

### ACTION FOR CHILDREN

[actionforchildren.org.uk](https://actionforchildren.org.uk)

### WHO CARES? SCOTLAND

[whocaresscotland.org](https://whocaresscotland.org)

### HOME-START

[home-start.org.uk](https://home-start.org.uk)

### CATCH22

[catch-22.org.uk](https://catch-22.org.uk)

### BECOME

[becomecharity.org.uk](https://becomecharity.org.uk)

### LITTLE BIRD PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT

[littlebirdpeopledevelopment.org.uk](https://littlebirdpeopledevelopment.org.uk)

**CHARITIES & ORGANISATIONS WE ARE WORKING WITH CONTINUED**



In 2022, John Lewis embarked on a meaningful partnership with Action for Children, a collaboration that has continued into 2023. Action for Children boasts a long legacy dating back to 1869, when they pioneered their mission by establishing their very first children’s home in London, dedicated to safeguarding and nurturing children living on the city’s streets.

Ever since those early days, the organisation has continued to support children in care and young individuals with Care Experience. Their overarching vision remains unwavering: that every child and young person in the UK has a safe and happy childhood and the foundations they need to thrive.

The primary areas the Partnership has supported Action for Children are:

**1  
WRAP  
PROGRAMME**

**2  
TRANSITION  
WORKERS**

**3  
EMPLOYABILITY  
OPPORTUNITIES**

**4  
VOLUNTEERING  
PROJECTS**

**1 - Wrap Programme**

**“ I’VE NOT ONLY SEEN FIRST HAND HOW THIS SERVICE TRANSFORMS LIVES, BUT ALSO HOW IT GIVES CHILDREN A MUCH-NEEDED SENSE OF BELONGING.”**

— Jo Fowles, Lead Therapeutic Practitioner, Action for Children

The Wrap Programme works to provide foster carers, along with the child or young person, with essential therapeutic support to help stop foster placements breaking down. The child’s needs are the focus and Action for Children works to give families bespoke parenting strategies and tools to manage difficult situations and stop them from escalating. Foster carers learn to better recognise the child’s emotions, making them feel safe and helping them to build those positive relationships.

“Foster carers have reported back that they’ve learnt better to recognise children’s emotions – helping the children to feel safe, and giving them the opportunity to build positive relationships.”

“I’ve not only seen first hand how this service transforms lives, but also how it gives children a much-needed sense

of belonging. One of the young people I’m working with can now leave the house and can actually sleep through the night. For the first time in her life, she’s feeling loved and is accepting of that love.”

Jo Fowles, Lead Therapeutic Practitioner, Action for Children

John Lewis Partnership’s funding of the Wrap Programme in Manchester started before Christmas 2022. The Manchester programme has supported 28 people: 11 children/young people and their foster families. A second location for Wrap work has been funded by John Lewis Partnership in South Yorkshire and started in September 2023.



**CHARITIES & ORGANISATIONS WE ARE WORKING WITH CONTINUED**

**2 - Transition Workers**

**“MY CONFIDENCE HAS GROWN AND I AM ABLE TO MAKE MY OWN CHOICES.”**

— A young person supported by an Action for Children Transition Worker

Action for Children’s Transition Workers provide vital care and guidance to young people transitioning from care into independent living.

Their support includes a number of different elements including (but not limited to):

- **One-to-one practical and emotional support**
- **Help to secure safe and suitable accommodation**
- **Support to identify suitable education, training or employment opportunities**
- **Teaching basic life skills**
- **Working with foster parents and carers.**

The young people that have been supported by Transition Workers feel listened to, more connected to the wider community, and that they can be their authentic selves with their Transition Worker.

“My confidence has grown and I am able to make my own choices.”

“I am back at college and learning to be independent.”

“I have been introduced to people at a local community centre and I’m joining different activity groups so I don’t feel so alone in my home.”

“I have been able to open up about the problems that I have had growing up.”

**The Partnership has donated towards funding six Transition Workers across London, South-West England, South Wales, North Wales, North Yorkshire and Scotland, and Action for Children are recruiting for another Transition Worker in Scotland.**

**Five Transition Workers were in post before June 2023, and have provided vital support to 49 young people and 14 Foster Carers.**

**3 - Employability Opportunities**

The John Lewis Partnership is supporting Action for Children with a new employment service which will be co-designed by young people with Care Experience. It will aim to support them in meaningful ways with problems and issues they identify as important. The process for design is: discovery, define, develop, and deliver. Action for Children has completed the ‘discovery’ and ‘define’ stages.

The ‘discovery’ phase involved extensive desk research, from which Action for Children identified specific groups of Care Experienced young people who are underrepresented in both service provision and research related to improving issues they face around employment. The young people identified were:

- **Those who feel ready to seek employment but may be struggling to know what support is available to them, and how to access that support**
- **Those who are in employment, but who are at risk of leaving because they are not receiving adequate practical or emotional support.**
- **Those who have been employed in the past, but who have now left work.**

The ‘define’ phase of the project saw Action for Children interview Care Experienced young people from the target groups identified. To recruit the young people, Action for Children approached their services around the UK, as well as working with the John Lewis Partnership Care Experience team and other organisations (such as charities and local authorities) who support Care Experienced

young people. Action for Children recruited and spoke with eleven young people through in-depth semi-structured interviews. The young people were aged between 18 and 25 and came from different locations across the UK.

From the interviews and desk research, eight themes have been identified that highlight and represent the key issues the young people have faced in relation to employment:

- 1. Inconsistent support in the transition to work**
- 2. Underprepared and fearful of work and realities of job search**
- 3. Access to impactful support from outside of the care system**
- 4. The importance of work-life balance and having a voice at work**
- 5. Working and the nuance of openly sharing your past in care**
- 6. Value of employer support for success in work**
- 7. Role fit for happiness and retention in work**
- 8. The positive emotional and practical impact of working**

The work for this is moving into the ‘develop’ phase of the project where Action for Children will carry out a series of codesign workshops with young people, working together to develop ideas of how we can potentially solve the core problems and issues that have been identified. Look out for more information on this in 2024.

## CHARITIES & ORGANISATIONS WE ARE WORKING WITH CONTINUED

### 4 - Volunteering Projects

Since January 2023, 33 Partners have completed team-based volunteering days with Action for Children, donating 42 days of their time.

#### Action for Children Adlin House 30th and 31st January 2023

John Lewis & Partners Newcastle has made a significant impact at Action for Children's Monksfield's Adlin House in Northumberland, a specialised facility providing residential short breaks and care for disabled children. This purpose-built four-bed bungalow offers a nurturing environment with communal living and play areas, serving the complex and diverse needs of the children and young individuals under their care.

Action for Children deliver enjoyable, inclusive, and adaptable support, empowering disabled children, young people, and their families to lead the lives they envision. In line with this mission, a dedicated team of nine volunteers from John Lewis & Partners Newcastle embarked on a transformative project spanning two days.

Their goal? To transform Adlin House's activity room into a vibrant, inviting space where children could learn, play, and unwind. The visionary project, meticulously crafted by the John Lewis & Partners Newcastle Home Design team, introduced new sofas, chairs, and captivating artwork, along with a calming starlight projector to offer a soothing bedtime experience for the children.

#### Action for Children Merryfields Short Breaks 26th May 2023

As part of The Big Helpout, seven Partners from John Lewis & Partners High Wycombe volunteered to spend the day painting three bathrooms at the service.

Shamsah Mahmood, Senior Residential Worker, said: "The bathrooms here at Merryfields really needed to be refreshed for the young people coming to the service. So it was amazing to have the John Lewis volunteers come in and paint – it makes the room so much brighter and fresher. It feels homely and nicer for the kids."

#### Action for Children Camden & Islington Short Breaks 4th July 2023

To celebrate Partnership Week, nine Partners volunteered at the Camden and Islington Short Breaks service in London. Sharon White, Chairman, and the Ethics and Sustainability team were among the hands-on volunteering, which included refurbishing one of the activity rooms. The Action for Children centre is used by local families and children can enjoy after school activities, breakfast clubs, and holiday clubs. You can see more about the day from the volunteers in this short video: [youtu.be/VDI44Z22rTs?si=O8Fd8yNK6OhtvFkQ](https://youtu.be/VDI44Z22rTs?si=O8Fd8yNK6OhtvFkQ)

Simone McArthur, Service Coordinator at Action for Children, said: "Thank you for your time and support doing a job that really brightened up our entrance for the children. I had children saying they like the colours - one was touching the walls when he came in yesterday!"

**“ THANK YOU FOR  
YOUR TIME AND  
SUPPORT DOING  
A JOB THAT REALLY  
BRIGHTENED UP  
OUR ENTRANCE FOR  
THE CHILDREN.”**

— Simone McArthur, Service Coordinator,  
Action for Children



### CHARITIES & ORGANISATIONS WE ARE WORKING WITH CONTINUED



In 2023, the John Lewis Partnership made a substantial impact by supporting Who Cares? Scotland in their relentless pursuit of a vision that encapsulates **“a lifetime of equality, respect, and love for Care Experienced people.”** Our generous donation played a pivotal role in advancing their mission, with a particular focus on fostering connections, one of our key priority areas.

The support extended by the Partnership throughout the year enabled Who Cares? Scotland to orchestrate over 150 events, bringing together approximately 880 individuals with care experience and their supporters. This vibrant tapestry of gatherings was characterised by fun, friendship, and a profound sense of connection, contributing to the organisation’s membership growth by an impressive 274 individuals during this period.

Within this year of achievements, several highlights stand out. From the jubilant Care Day celebrations, including the lively Carelidlh, to the expansive Spring and Summer programs featuring group excursions, beach trips, cinematic outings, theme park adventures, zoo visits, sporting tournaments, and enriching residential – each event has infused the lives of Care Experienced children, young people, and care leavers with moments of pure happiness.

Furthermore, the year witnessed the development and expansion of the ‘Glasgow Drop-In,’ a testament to Who Cares? Scotland’s unwavering commitment to creating lasting connections and uplifting the lives of those with care experience.



**150** Events held throughout the year  
**880** Care Experienced attendants and their supporters  
**274** New members joining Who Cares? Scotland



**CHARITIES & ORGANISATIONS WE ARE WORKING WITH CONTINUED**



Home-Start supports families from their children’s earliest years, building stronger families and helping to minimise additional social care intervention.

There is evidence that early intervention and preventative services such as Home-Start can reduce the risk of escalation to more serious problems. This can include:

**Emotional and Practical support for parents** – supporting parents at the earliest opportunity in a child’s life to help build and strengthen relationships with their children and their wider community and help provide long-term stability and security for children.

**Building family resilience** – addressing the needs of parents and families with a focus on broader parent well-being, supporting a nurturing home environment, family functioning, finances and coping strategies, and providing a bridge, as necessary, into more specialist services.

**Targeted support** – on particular categories of vulnerability such as family conflict, parental mental health and perinatal mental health, domestic abuse and parental substance misuse, problematic child behaviour

**The two projects where Building Happier Futures funding will help Home-Start with its work from 2024:**

- **Building and strengthening home-visiting volunteers and a specialist workforce to help strengthen family relationships.**
- **Building supportive community networks for families via a local enrichment fund.**

Home-Start is actively involved in the government’s vision to reform children’s social care following three independent reviews. Funding through the Building Happier Futures programme will further support achieving this.

“The best way of promoting children’s welfare is very often by supporting children’s families and the loving relationships around them. To achieve this vision, we need to rebalance children’s social care away from costly crisis intervention to more meaningful and effective help for families, so that it achieves the outcomes children deserve. Achieving this will require a major reset that puts love and stable relationships at the heart of what children’s social care does.”

Home-Start Deputy Chief Executive Vivien Waterfield

**STEPHANIE CALVERT**

Golden Jubilee Trust Placement  
(donation by Golden Jubilee Trust)

During my placement with this remarkable charity, Home-Start’s unwavering passion for early years and family support stood out to me. Witnessing the dedication and commitment of the staff, trustees, and volunteers who tirelessly work to make a positive difference in the lives of families was truly inspiring. The charity sector operates in an environment of constant change, uncertainty, and limited resources. Home-Start embraces these challenges head-on by constantly adapting strategies and approaches.

During my time, I created a Learning and Development blueprint for Home-Start having engaged with over 200 staff and trustees to understand their roles and learning needs. This blueprint aims to establish a culture of continuous learning and development within the Home-Start network, nurturing growth for staff, trustees, and volunteers which I am confident will contribute to great achievements in the future.

Learning about the charity sector and witnessing Home-Start’s passion and dedication have left a lasting impression on me. I’d like to finish by saying a heartfelt thank you to Home-Start for providing me with this transformative opportunity. The memories and lessons I learned stay with me, the impact this has had on my personal and professional growth has been huge.



**“LEARNING ABOUT THE CHARITY SECTOR AND WITNESSING HOME-START’S PASSION AND DEDICATION HAVE LEFT A LASTING IMPRESSION ON ME.”**

— Stephanie Calvert, Golden Jubilee Trust Placement

**CHARITIES & ORGANISATIONS WE ARE WORKING WITH CONTINUED**



Catch22 supports the transition to independence to ensure care leavers have the same opportunities as other young people and to prevent the negative impact caused by a lack of suitable housing, employment or emotional support.

Catch22 is launching a three-year partnership with John Lewis Foundation, supporting care leavers into work in Manchester. This new programme is due to launch in October 2023.

**CATCH22 IS LAUNCHING A 3-YEAR PARTNERSHIP WITH JOHN LEWIS FOUNDATION, SUPPORTING CARE LEAVERS INTO WORK IN MANCHESTER.**



Little Bird People Development supports organisations and education to build social value impact through investing in the 'Little Chicks Life Lessons' education programme for primary schools across the UK. The programme focuses on building life skills such as self-belief, resilience, confidence and healthy saving habits empowering our children to become leaders of the future.

John Lewis Partnership 2023 donation to Little Bird outcomes:

**Little Chicks Life Lessons programme launched in three schools**

**730 primary school children and teachers supported**

**2190 books provided**

**Over 25 primary schools engaged and waiting to take part = circa 10,000 children and teachers**

**BECOME.**

THE CHARITY FOR CHILDREN IN CARE AND YOUNG CARE LEAVERS

**“WE WANT TO GIVE CARE EXPERIENCED YOUNG PEOPLE THE SUPPORT THEY NEED TO ACHIEVE WHAT THEY WANT IN LIFE.”**

— Chloe Grant, Director of Services

Become works with Care Experienced children and young people – who face particular challenges in life. Become’s Propel project helps Care Experienced young people to access higher and further education, so they have opportunities for a better future. John Lewis Foundation funding means that Become will be able to also support with vocational training and work-based learning, including apprenticeships.

This is important because higher education isn’t right for everybody. Additionally, care leavers often have to be financially independent from 18, so being able to earn and learn opens up opportunities for even more young people. The expanded Propel project will empower more Care Experienced young people to access opportunities that suit their individual paths towards a brighter future.

“We want to give Care Experienced young people the support they need to achieve what they want in life. This three-year grant from the John Lewis Foundation means we can provide support from an expert to young care leavers who want to pursue vocational education and work-based learning, through 121 advice and support, workshops and engagement with employers keen to expand opportunities for care leavers. We wouldn’t have been able to do this without your support, so thank you.”

Chloe Grant, Director of Services, Become

# COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES

## Microwave donation

In August, the Partnership donated 1,121 new microwaves to young Care Experienced people setting up their first homes. Our Buying team noticed a surplus of stock and worked to deliver the products across the UK and Scotland.

The microwaves were distributed with the support of:

- **Who Cares? Scotland**
- **Streamline Shipping Group**
- **The Rees Foundation**
- **Gold from the Stone Foundation**
- **Essex County Council**
- **Portsmouth City Council**
- **Bury Council**
- **Care to Dance**
- **Together Trust**
- **The Caldecott Foundation**
- **Lighthouse Pedagogy Trust**
- **The Trussell Trust**
- **Break**

“Thank you so much on behalf of the team here and of the young people who will receive those awesome microwaves!”

Paul Lovin, LAC Targeted Youth Adviser, Essex County Council



**THE PARTNERSHIP DONATED 1,121 NEW MICROWAVES TO YOUNG CARE EXPERIENCED PEOPLE SETTING UP THEIR FIRST HOMES.**

## Ex-window display bears

**“ I HOPE YOU WILL SEE THEY HAVE HAD A GRAND YEAR AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE PART OF THE STORY OF CALDECOTT.”**

— **Caroline Hallett, Service Development Manager, Caldecott Foundation**

In February 2023, John Lewis Partnership donated two nine-foot bears from a Christmas window display to the Caldecott Foundation, a leading provider of therapeutic care and education. The bears inspired a colouring competition and volunteers from the Swiss Reinsurance company painted the bears as part of a larger project to create a pixie forest, treehouse, and bear sanctuary in the woods surrounding the Caldecott Foundation’s school and children’s homes.

“We will be writing a storybook for the children to demonstrate the values of the school and the bears will feature heavily in the illustrations. I hope you will see they have had a grand year and will continue to be part of the story of Caldecott.”

Caroline Hallett, Service Development Manager, Caldecott Foundation



## COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES CONTINUED

### Inspiring Choices York & North Yorkshire

Inspiring Choices York & North Yorkshire deliver impartial careers information, advice and guidance about further and higher education to young people across York and North Yorkshire.

The Care Experience team whose remit is to achieve our ambition to become the employer of choice for Care Experienced people ran an event for Care Experienced students from North Yorkshire at its School of Service at John Lewis & Partners Westfield. This included sharing our organisation's ambition for Building Happier Futures as well as giving the young people insight into future trends in the world of work. John Vary, JLPs Futurologist and Natou Camara, a JLP Future Analyst talked with the young people about what they felt the future could look like and shared their own thoughts and experiences too.

The day ended with some speed career networking with Partners from teams such as Customer Care and Marketing who shared insight into their roles and advice for succeeding in careers such as theirs.

"We have been able to speak to people of the real world"

"It has helped me think about my future as it's given me wider options"

**"IT HAS HELPED ME THINK ABOUT MY FUTURE AS IT'S GIVEN ME WIDER OPTIONS."**

— Attendee



# GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT

We commit to using our voice to raise awareness amongst policy makers of the inequalities faced by those who are care experienced, and encouraging a call to action.

Over the past year John Lewis Partnership has used the Building Happier Future Programme, and the opportunities and milestones created by it, to deliver a programme of engagement with Ministers, Members of Parliament and other key policy influencers to raise awareness of the challenges faced by those who have experienced care.

The John Lewis 2022 Christmas advert was shared extensively by MPs on social media including by the Secretary of State for Education, Rt Hon Gillian Keegan MP, and the then Minister for Children and Families, Claire Coutinho MP. We engaged local MPs in those areas where The Partnership was supporting renovation of children’s homes and where we were supporting the Christmas Dinner project with Gold from the Stone Foundation.

## Parliament

**“BY FLAGGING UP CHILDREN IN CARE IN ITS CHRISTMAS ADVERT, JOHN LEWIS IS NOT JUST TRYING TO SELL MORE CRACKERS AND TURKEY; IT HAS ACTUALLY INVESTED IN CHILDREN IN THE CARE SYSTEM.”**

— Tim Loughton MP

Motion in the Scottish Parliament, by Miles Briggs MSP:

“That the Parliament congratulates John Lewis in its #BuildingHappierFutures campaign in support of children and young people in care this Christmas; understands that there will be an estimated 100,000 children and young people spending their Christmas in care; recognises how difficult, isolated and lonely being in care can be, particularly at Christmas, and wishes John Lewis all the best in its partnership with Who Cares? Scotland and Action for Children.”

Tim Loughton MP, who secured a backbench debate on the Independent Review of Children’s Social Care commented:

“I am really pleased with the John Lewis advert this year. It is one of those heart-tugging adverts... but it is not just an advert; it is a cause and a mission. By flagging up children in care in its Christmas advert, John Lewis is not just trying to sell more crackers and turkey; it has actually invested in children in the care system.”

In the Government’s response to the MacAlistair Review of Children’s Social Care, the Secretary of State for Education, Rt Hon Gillian Keegan MP, praised our Build Happier Futures Programme, noting that “The additional support and encouragement that employers, such as the John Lewis Partnership, are putting in place to improve care leavers’ life chances are inspiring”.

**41%**

**of care leavers aged 19-21 are not in education, training or employment compared to 14% of their peer group**

Source: Dept of Education 2022

**10,000**

**young people (aged between 16-18) transition from care to being a care leaver each year; often entering into independent living at this very young age**

Source: Gov.UK

**70-80%**

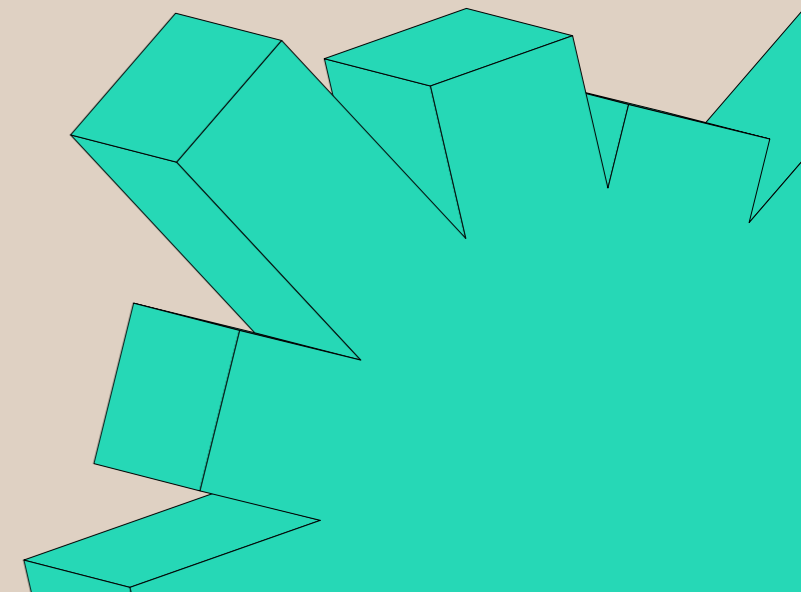
**of care leavers have a recognisable mental health concern**

Source: NICE

**25%**

**of the homeless population have been in care**

Source: Crisis; 2022





## GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT CONTINUED

### Collaboration

**“IT’S CLEAR THEIR POLICY OF FOSTER CARER LEAVE WILL BE A REAL GAMECHANGER AND I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH THEM TO SUPPORT FOSTER CARERS WITH ALL THEY DO.”**

— Minister Coutinho

In January 2023 we hosted members of the **Work and Pensions Select Committee** at John Lewis & Partners Trafford, as part of their inquiry on Plan for Jobs and employment support. We shared information about the Partnership’s Building Happier Futures employability programme to help inform and shape the Committee’s understanding of the support that is available to people outside of the Department of Work and Pensions schemes.

In January 2023 we **hosted the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Rt Hon Mel Stride MP**, at John Lewis & Partners Stratford to highlight its employability programme and the need and wider national economic benefit of supporting this vulnerable group into employment.

In May 2023 we held a Coffee morning with then Children’s Minister, Claire Coutinho MP and Department of Education officials, and foster care Partners to promote our new

Foster Friendly accreditation:

“It was brilliant to meet the John Lewis team and some of their Partners who are foster carers this morning. It’s clear their policy of foster carer leave will be a real gamechanger and I look forward to working with them to support foster carers with all they do. #FCF23”  
Minister Coutinho

**Encouraging other employees to support Care Experienced people**

John Lewis Partnership have worked with the Care Leavers Covenant (CLC), the Department for Education and other employers to share its insights to help inform and develop the CLC’s ‘Inclusive Employment Toolkit - your guide to creating effective employment programmes and initiatives for care leavers’. The toolkit, which was launched at the CLCs Employers Summit on 18 September, provides practical advice and support for other employers who are considering employing Care Experienced young people.

### Policy

The Partnership’s political engagement has helped to influence a number of positive policy outcomes, most notably, commitments in the Government’s February 2023 response to the Review of Children’s Social Care to **triple the apprenticeship bursary for care leavers from £1,000 to £3,000 and increasing the allowance for children leaving care from £2,000 to £3,000.**

The Government has also recognised the need for movement on some of the other policy issues we have been advocating, including: a commitment to increase employment and education opportunities for care leavers, recognition of the need to extend educational advice and support beyond age 18, progressing moves to tackle digital and transport poverty for care leavers and convening a working group of employers to move the agenda forward.

### Pipeline

**Public Affairs work in the pipeline**

The Partnership will continue its political engagement, providing a voice for Care Experienced people and the challenges they face, and to share insights and successes from its employability programme, to help inform public discourse.

The Partnership’s work in the second year of the programme will focus in particular on:

- **Advocating for further public policy changes that help support more care leavers in finding routes to meaningful work or education, providing them with the building blocks to thrive in life and work; and**
- **Working with charity partners to support measures that smooth the transition for Care Experienced people from care to independent living.**

**THE PARTNERSHIP WILL CONTINUE ITS POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT, PROVIDING A VOICE FOR CARE EXPERIENCED PEOPLE AND THE CHALLENGES THEY FACE.**

# WHAT'S NEXT?

We're proud to be working with talented Care Experienced people to develop a range of stylish and beautiful products sold through John Lewis and Waitrose. Profits will go to our charity partners Action for Children, Who Cares? Scotland and Home-Start through our Building Happier Futures fund.

The range will launch with an inspiring tote bag designed by Michael Archibald, a young man who has experienced care. Michael applied to take part in the project through Who Cares? Scotland, and has worked collaboratively with the John Lewis Partnership and ad agency Saatchi & Saatchi to design the bag.

The stars on Michael's bag represent the brilliance of Care Experienced people, and the surrounding clouds depict the love, care, and respect these individuals need. The bag will be available to buy from John Lewis and Waitrose in December. More products will be available next year, so watch this space.

**THE RANGE AIMS TO CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR TALENTED DESIGNERS WHO ARE CARE EXPERIENCED.**



## Coming up in 2024

Alongside the launch of this tote bag, we remain committed to advancing the initiatives we initiated this year. This includes expanding our employability programmes to reach more locations within the John Lewis Partnership estate, enhancing educational opportunities through the provision of apprenticeships and scholarships, maintaining our dedication to fundraising and volunteering efforts, and leveraging our influence and voice to drive perceptual changes.

Our unwavering commitment also extends to ensuring that the Care Experienced perspective remains at the heart of our work. We will achieve this by harnessing our internal network, which unites Partners who identify as Care Experienced, our panel that actively contributes to shaping the direction of our work and continually working with the Care Experience community and the organisations and people who support them.

**OUR UNWAVERING COMMITMENT ALSO EXTENDS TO ENSURING THAT THE CARE EXPERIENCED PERSPECTIVE REMAINS AT THE HEART OF OUR WORK.**

## AWARDS

We are proud to have won two awards for Building Happier Futures in 2023.

### BEST BRAND LED FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN, PURPOSE AWARDS 2023



### SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE WINNERS, PEOPLE IN RETAIL AWARDS 2023



## THANK YOU

**To our Partners** who continue to drive our Purpose through our Building Happier Futures programme.

**To our charity partners, local authorities, virtual schools and organisations** supporting Care Experience who are with us every step of the way.

**To our Building Happier Futures Advisory Group** who steer, champion and freely share their expertise.

**Thank you to the talented Care Experienced people** who keep the voice of your community at the heart of our work. We could not be without you.

# GET IN TOUCH

You can get in touch with the John Lewis Partnership's Care Experience team on the following email address: [careexperience@johnlewis.co.uk](mailto:careexperience@johnlewis.co.uk)

