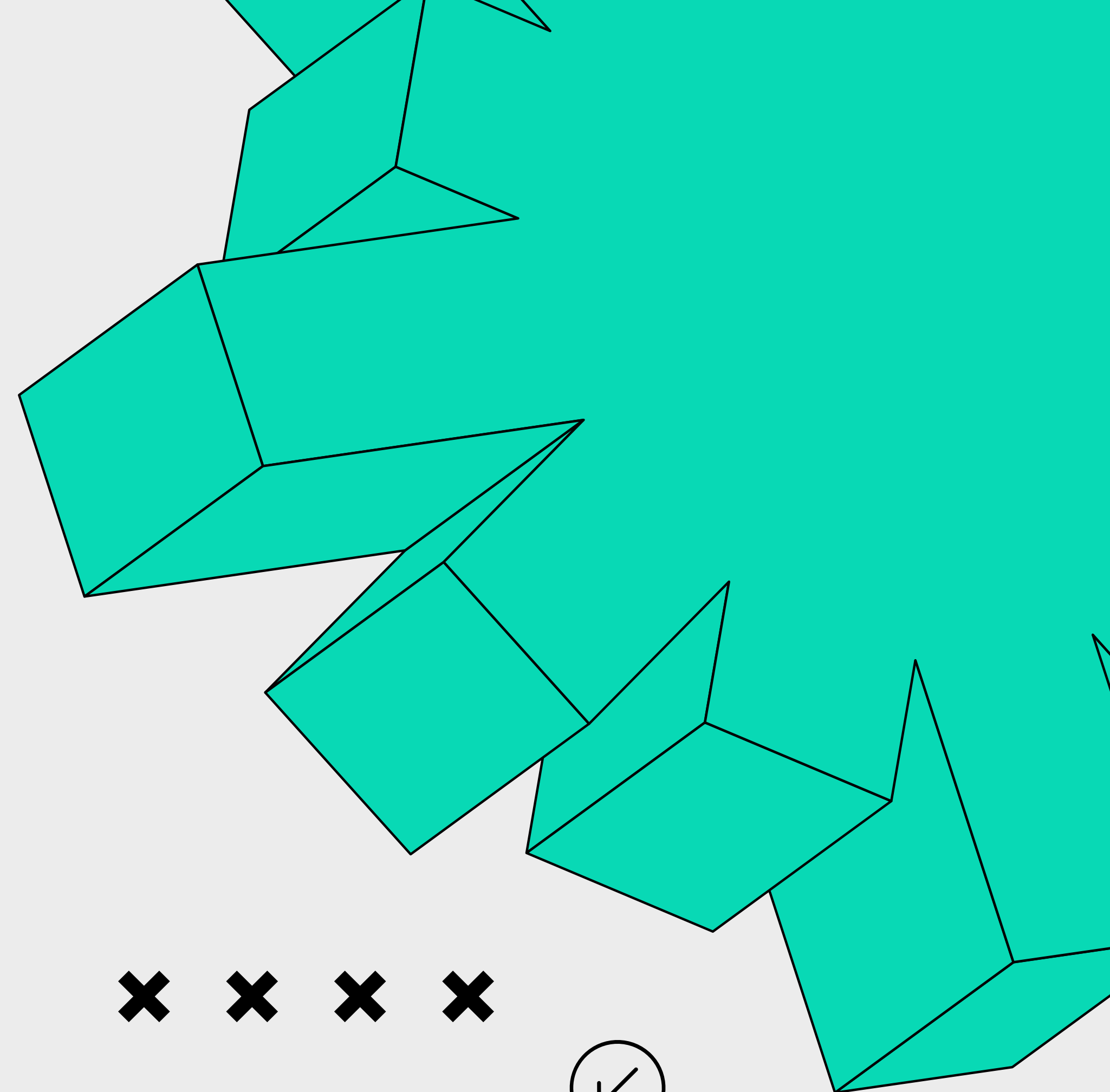


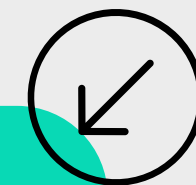


OUR IMPACT STORY



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CELEBRATING 3 YEARS OF GROWTH



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2025



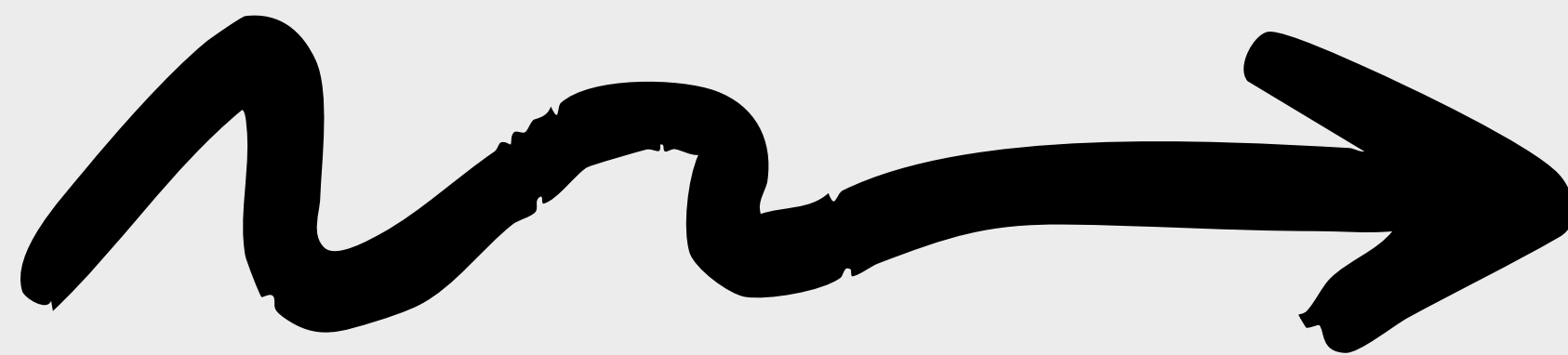
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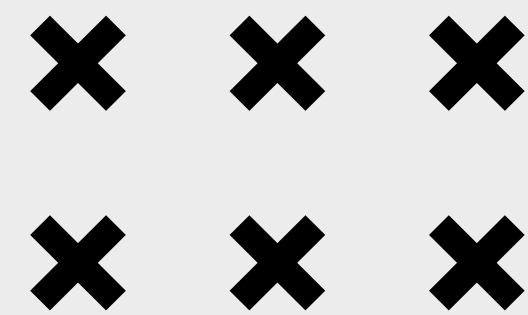
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INTRO- DUCTION



Working in Partnership for a happier world.

Now entering its fourth year, our Building Happier Futures (BHF) programme continues to grow, and I've been delighted to see its impact go from strength to strength. Our commitment to investing in underrepresented groups very much aligns with our purpose of 'Working in Partnership for a Happier World' and we believe a care experienced background should not be a barrier to success.

After three years of significant progress, we are now focused on deepening our support, amplifying voices, and challenging systemic barriers.

I'm thankful to the BHF Advisory Group, who bring their expertise to our work and challenge us to do more. I'm also very grateful to our Partners, who work with care experienced people in our local communities, offering work experience and skills development.

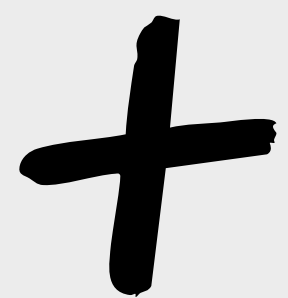
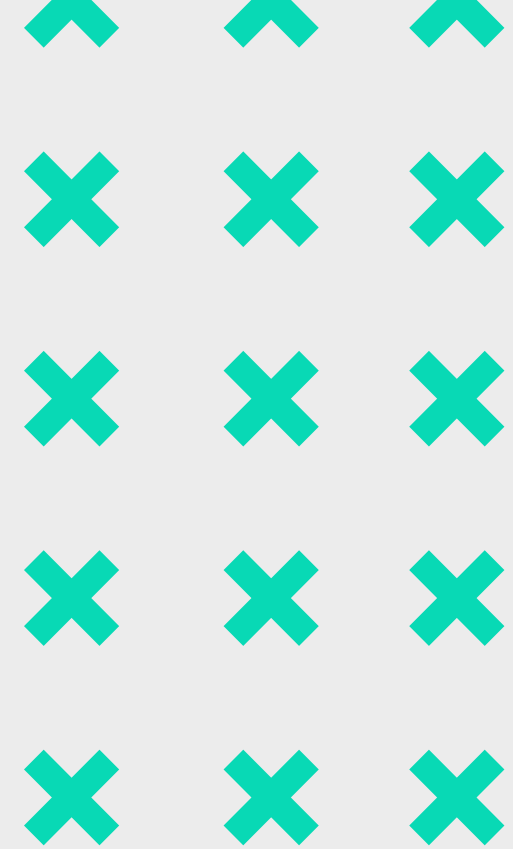
Most importantly, I'm thankful to the talented care experienced Partners we've had the privilege of hiring. Our business is undoubtedly better for having them. This report celebrates the strength and resilience of people with lived experience, and those who support them.



– Jason Tarry, Partner and Chairman



REAL IMPACT



Building something we are all proud of.

Social mobility is something I care about deeply, and I'm energised to see our Building Happier Futures programme enter its fourth year, delivering real opportunity for the care experienced community and for our Partnership.

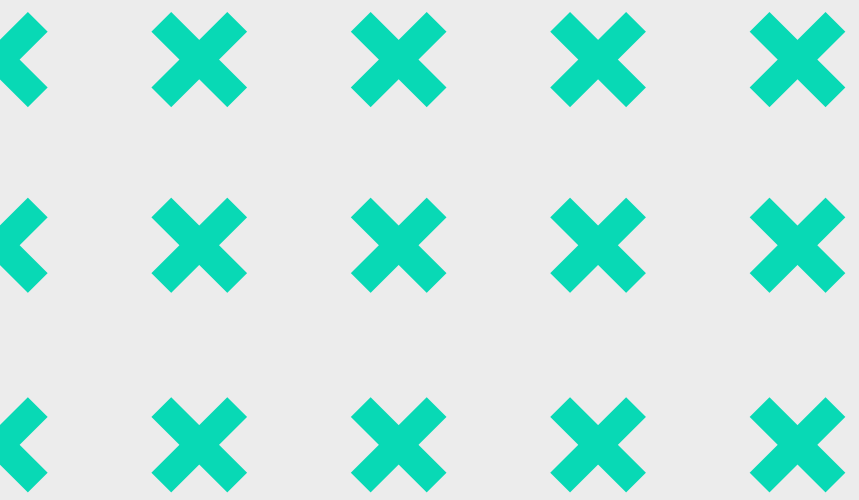
Our business is better through what we learn from the care experienced people who work here and I'm incredibly proud of how this programme, and in turn its impact, has grown. Through welcome tours of our sites we've engaged over 1300 people, resulting in over 850 work experience placements and ultimately, we have hired for more than 300 people with care experience into roles within our business.

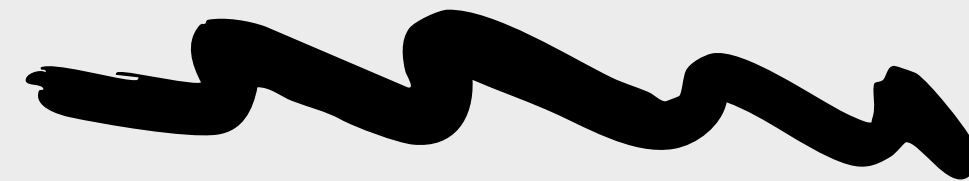
Alongside this, a key milestone this year has been that our programme is now active in every local community where our

Partnership operates, and our ongoing collaboration with The Open University has provided 22 scholarships to date, directly addressing the barriers to social mobility that care experienced people can face.

There is always more to do, and we are keen to collaborate with other organisations to share our work and learn from them, together growing the impact for this community. We look forward to the ongoing collaboration with those with lived experience both internally and externally - as doing so helps our business become a more creative, innovative and diverse place to work and shop. Thank you to the care experienced community for everything you bring to us as a Partnership and to our customers across the UK.

– Jo Rackham, Partner and Chief People Officer (interim)





A testament to the power of a helping hand.

“As someone who has navigated the care system, I know firsthand that the journey can be a tough one. The work of Building Happier Futures, isn’t just about a project—it’s about a belief that a care background should never be a barrier to a happy, successful life.

This Impact Report is a look at what happens when that belief is put into action. It’s not just a collection of data; it’s a testament to the power of a helping hand and a supportive community. You’ll see how the programme has opened up opportunities through employment pathways, providing vital training and career access. You’ll also learn about the Care Experience Network, a place where we can find connection and support from those who understand our journey.

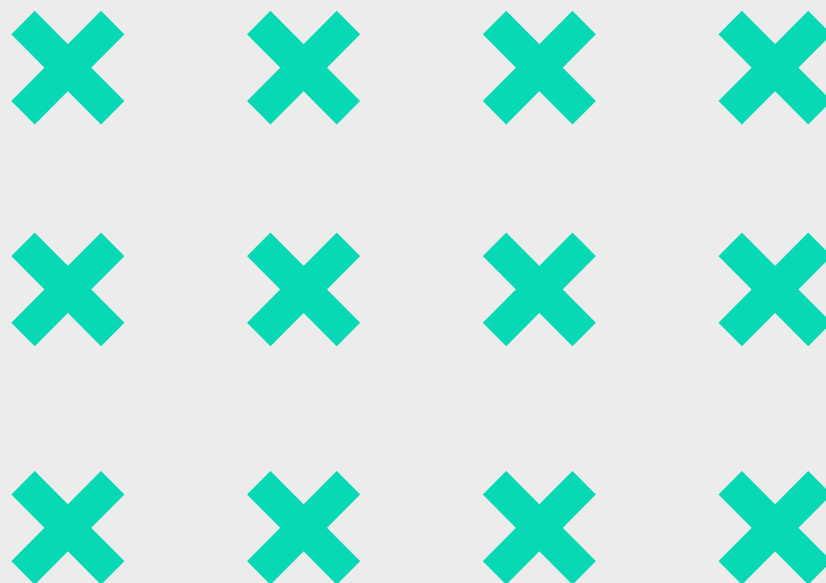
Inside, you will find real stories that show how these initiatives create meaningful change. You’ll get to see the creativity and talent of care experienced individuals through the Made by Care (MxC) brand and how it contributes to our community.

This report is a tribute to everyone who has believed in us and a powerful reminder of what is possible when we work together. I’m proud to be a part of this story, and I hope you find it as inspiring as I do.”

– Kim, Partner and Customer Assistant, John Lewis

KIM’S

WELCOME !!!



ABOUT US

Our Purpose:
**Working in Partnership
for a Happier World**



OUR MISSION: To be the employer of choice. Building Happier Futures was founded to ensure a care experienced background is never a barrier to opportunity.



OUR APPROACH: We combine collaborative partnerships, targeted fundraising, and dedicated employment pathways to break down barriers and empower talented individuals to shape their own futures.



HOW WE WORK

Employability Programmes



→ [READ MORE](#)

Care Experience Network



→ [READ MORE](#)

Wraparound Support



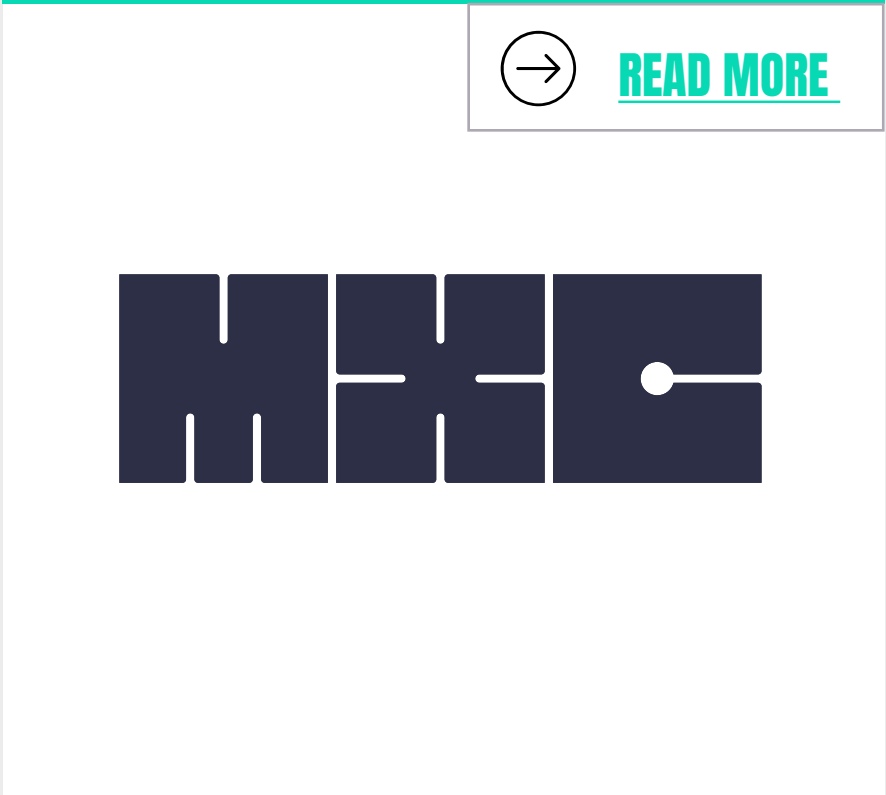
→ [READ MORE](#)

Building Happier Futures Fund



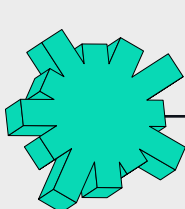
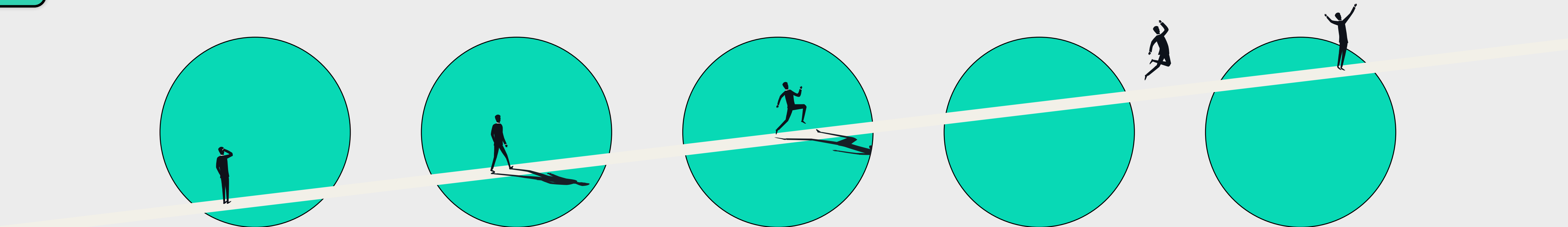
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Made by Care



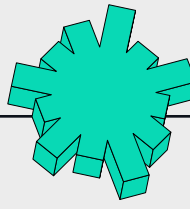
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MOMENTS ...



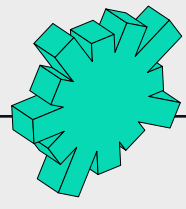
The John Lewis Partnership Purpose

Working in Partnership for a Happier World
The Building Happier Futures programme sits at the heart of this purpose, aiming to harness the talents of care experienced people.



Building Happier Futures begins

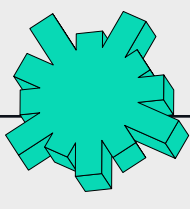
The first employability programme started in Essex built with feedback from the local authority and young people.
We formed an Advisory Group whose mix of professional expertise and lived experience ensures our work reflects the realities of the people we aim to support.



The Beginner: John Lewis Christmas Advert

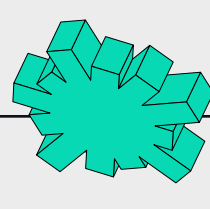


The 2022 John Lewis Christmas advert, 'The Beginner', told the heartfelt story of one man's determination to connect with a foster child with the message 'it's the things we do that matter the most.' The advert signalled our long-term intent to support care experienced people in a number of ways, including finding meaningful careers.



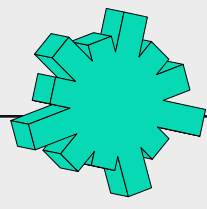
Building Happier Futures Fund

Part of the John Lewis Partnership Foundation, the fund awards grants for UK projects to provide education, connection, experience and fun for care experienced people.



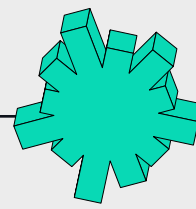
Deepening Commitment

The Care Experience Network was founded in 2022 for care experienced people in the John Lewis Partnership to connect.
The John Lewis Partnership became Fostering and Kinship Friendly in 2023 giving additional time off for Partners fulfilling these caring roles.



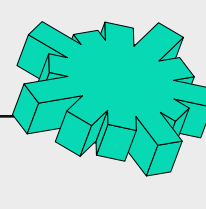
Education and Learning

The John Lewis Partnership and the Open University jointly fund scholarships for care experienced people.
The John Lewis Partnership offers a wide range of Apprenticeships for Partners who work in the organisation.



Made by Care

Talent is everywhere, opportunity isn't.
The Made by Care range sold in Waitrose and John Lewis raises funds for the Building Happier Futures fund, part of the John Lewis Partnership Foundation.
Each range is designed by care experienced people.

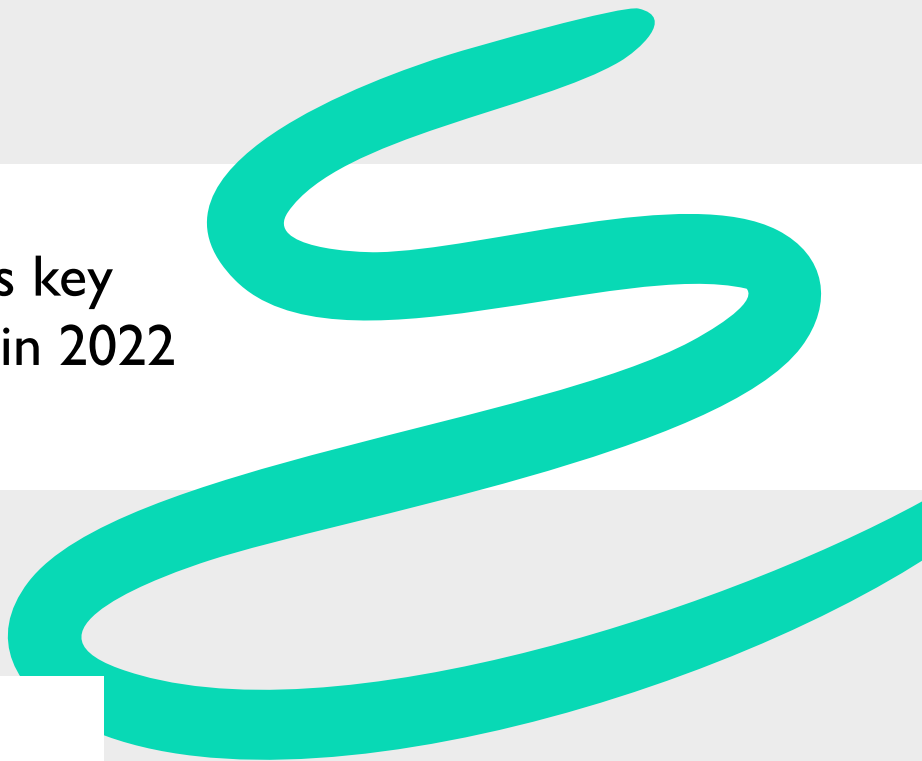


Employer of Choice

From its early inception days in Essex, the Building Happier Futures employability programme is now live in every John Lewis Partnership location.
Every Partner can access our Who Cares? Scotland Care Aware training which supports a deeper understanding of the care experience community and how to be an ally.

THE DIFFERENCE SO FAR

Building Happier Futures key impacts since inception in 2022



EMPLOYABILITY

1442

Welcome Tour
spaces attended by care experienced people in our shops, supply chain locations and central offices.

1000

Work Experience
placements offering hands on skills and experience for the future.

402

Roles Offered
to care experienced people.



EDUCATION

22

Scholarships
for care experienced people jointly funded by the John Lewis Partnership and the Open University.

79

Care Experienced People
completed our virtual work experience programme which gives a taste of work across the John Lewis Partnership

People who work in the John Lewis Partnership have completed “Care Aware” learning with Who Cares? Scotland to deepen their understanding as allies.

1000+

FUNDRAISING

26

Charities
supported by the Building Happier Futures Fund, part of the John Lewis Partnership Foundation.

£2.8m

Raised for Charities
supporting the care experienced community through selling products in our shops, online and through other customer fundraising initiatives.

£271k

Raised for the BHF Fund
through the sale of our Made by Care products, designed by care experienced aspiring designers.



EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME



Since the launch of the Building Happier Futures employment programme in October 2022, we've made it our mission to break down barriers and create a dedicated pathway to opportunities for care experienced people.

Through our structured programme, which we run in our John Lewis and Waitrose shops, Central Office, Contact Centres, Supply Chain and hotel locations, we've had over 1331 care experienced individuals participate in our employability Welcome Tours

and 888 in our Work Experience days. This has led to 359 roles being offered to the community so far.

Our programme is designed to provide a supportive and tailored experience for care experienced individuals.

Ongoing support:

Once you accept a job offer and become a Partner (employee), your journey with us is just the beginning. We provide ongoing support to help you settle in and thrive in your new role.



KEY STAGES



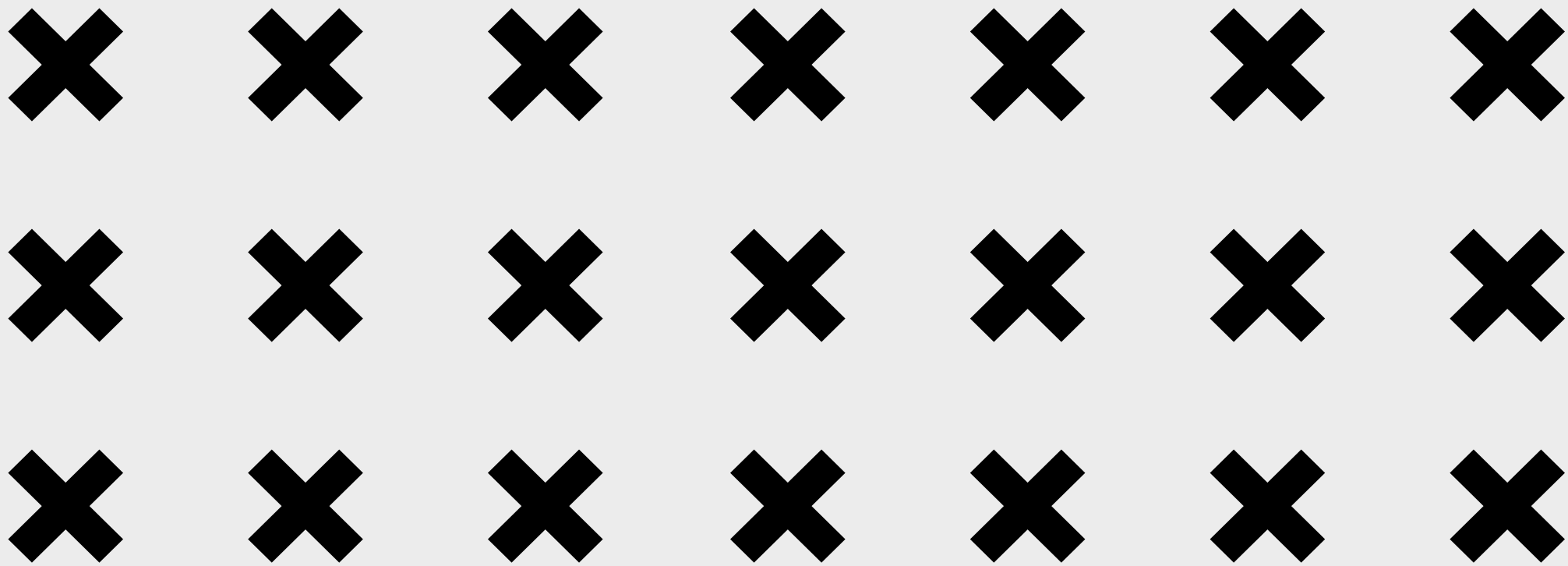
ONGOING SUPPORT



CARE EXPERIENCE

NETWORK

The Care Experience Network champions care experience across the John Lewis Partnership.



Formed in late 2022 the network is for people who work in the John Lewis Partnership.

The network's purpose is to ensure that a care experienced background is never a barrier to opportunity. It connects care experienced people, foster and kinship carers, adoptive parents and allies of the community with a supportive peer network and offers mentorship. It also works to educate and

raise awareness among other John Lewis Partners. Success is measured not just by membership growth, but by the network's wider impact on career progression for its members and increased awareness among allies. The long-term vision is for the network to continue growing as a supportive community, with more care experienced people taking leadership roles and using their voices to drive change within the business.

TESTIMONIALS



Being a care experienced person myself...



I feel really passionately about supporting other individuals with care experience, and raising awareness of some of the barriers that people from care experience can face.



Mike, Partner and Care Experience Network Co-lead

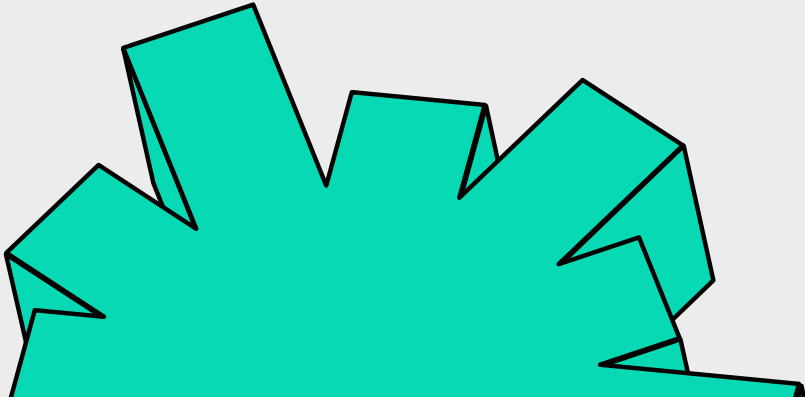
“Being a care experienced person myself, through spending some of my younger years in foster and residential care, I feel really passionately about supporting other individuals with care experience, and raising awareness of some of the barriers that people from care experience can face. By increased conversation, care experience individuals, allies and organisations can work together to break down these barriers and allow more opportunities for talent to be supported”

Rosa, Partner and Care Experience Network Co-lead

“I’ve been a Partner for six years, always drawn to roles linked to our purpose, and the launch of the BHF (Building Happier Futures) programme inspired me to co-lead the Care Experience Network (CEN). My motivation is deeply rooted in my past experience supporting care experienced children and families; I saw how essential it is to create a nurturing space to help them thrive. As an Ally, I want the inclusive term ‘care experience’ to empower members to find strength and belonging. While BHF offers opportunities, the CEN’s biggest goal is to tackle the stigma attached to being care experienced, fostering a culture of acceptance so Partners feel safe to be themselves. I measure our success not through a series of metrics but on feeling that our community is represented, understood, and welcomed throughout the Partnership, and my vision is for the network to keep growing and creating meaningful ways for our Partners to connect and thrive.”

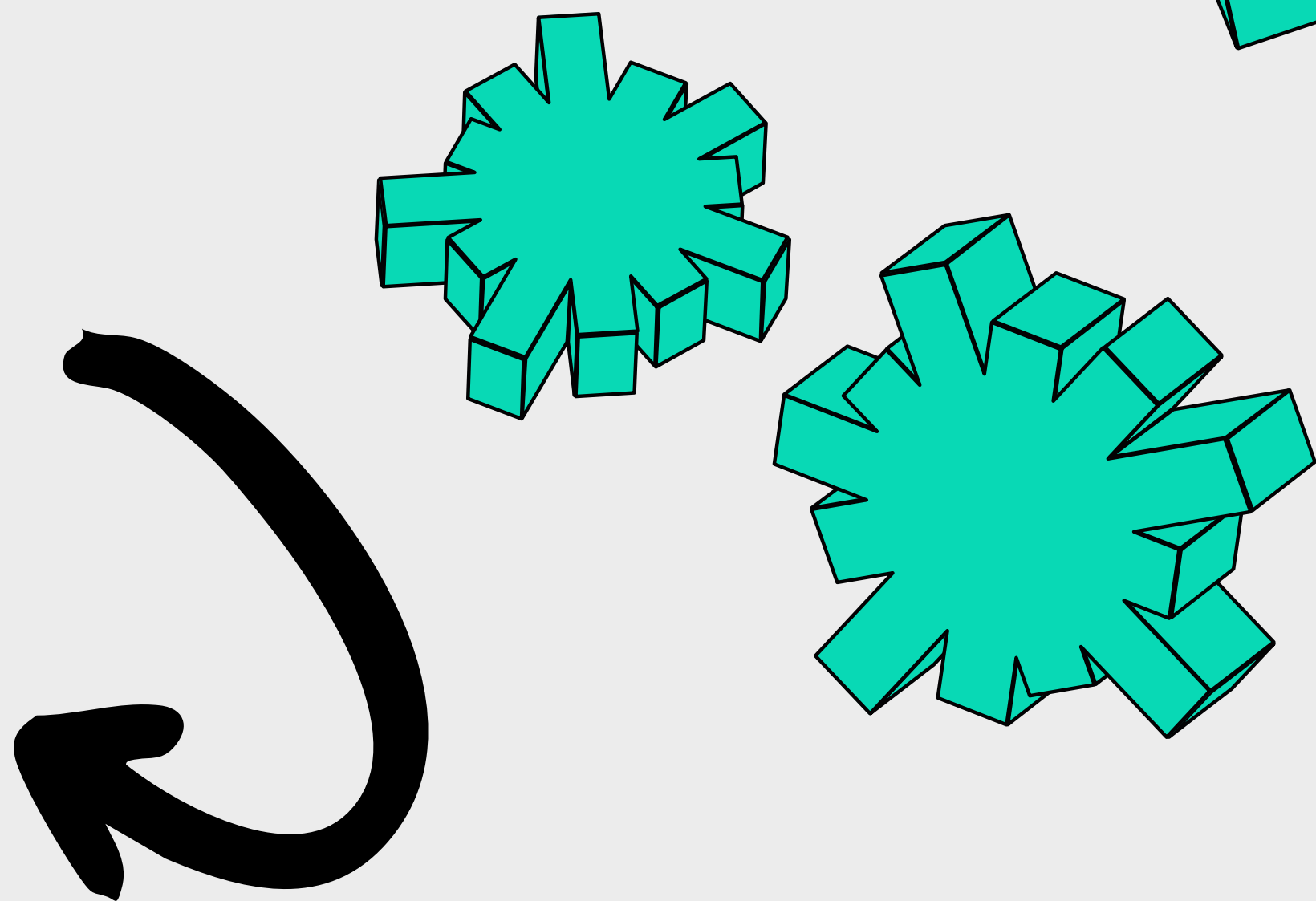
Andy, Partner and Executive Sponsor, Care Experience Network

“Our work is about more than just employment; it’s about true allyship rooted in our purpose of working in Partnership for a Happier World. We are committed to providing great opportunities and support, helping talented care experienced individuals successfully navigate the barriers they can face as they step into the world of work and empowering them to develop a meaningful career and drive change within the Partnership.”



KIM'S

STORY



“On the programme, my confidence grew as I was encouraged to step out of my comfort zone with the help of supportive managers and amazing Partners and buddies.”

— Kim, Partner and Customer Assistant, John Lewis

Before the programme, I was searching for a stable and supportive workplace after leaving my Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) course. My goal was to find a meaningful career path, build confidence, and gain skills in an environment that understood the unique challenges I faced as a care experienced person.

A New Beginning

I chose the “Building Happier Futures” programme because it was the first time I saw a major employer genuinely committed to developing care experienced people. This felt

like a pivotal moment—a sign of a supportive community rather than just a work experience placement.

Growth and Transformation

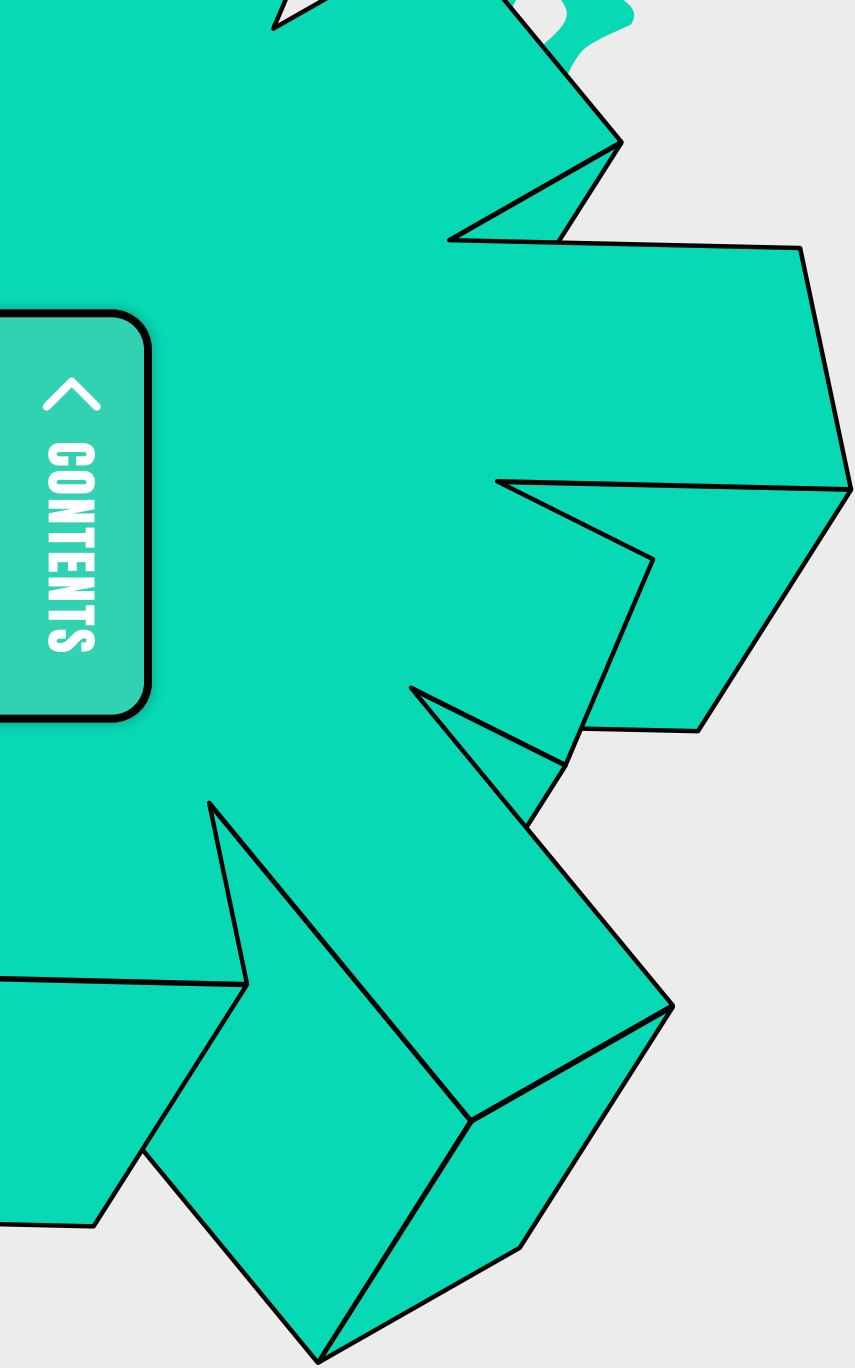
On the programme, my confidence grew as I was encouraged to step out of my comfort zone with the help of supportive managers and “amazing Partners/buddies.” I learned the value of a business that invests in its people. Now, I’m a John Lewis apprentice, working toward a management qualification in retail. I’ve even taken on the Lead role for the Building Happier Futures programme in my shop which means I am

the person welcoming other care experienced people into our Partnership to explore the opportunities that we offer.

Looking Ahead

My life has changed dramatically; I now have a sense of purpose and belonging. The programme helped me unlock potential I hadn’t seen in myself, making me feel more resilient and ambitious. My advice to others is simple: “Go for it—you won’t regret it.” I see a long-term future at John Lewis, a place where I feel truly valued and can continue to grow.





SARA'S STORY



“The Building Happier Futures programme is a chance to truly shape someone’s life and be their cheerleader.”

— Sara, Partner and Team Manager, Waitrose

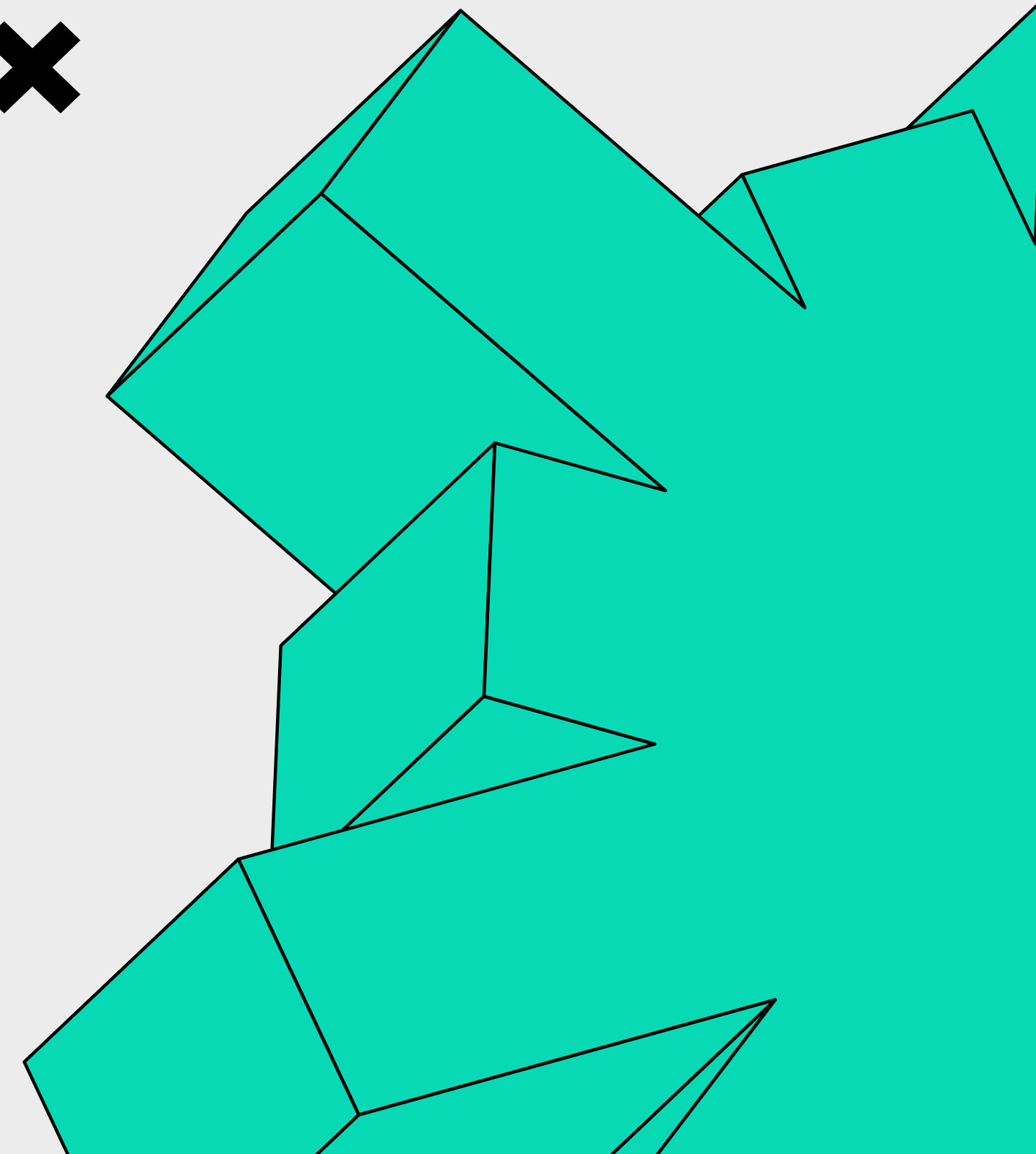
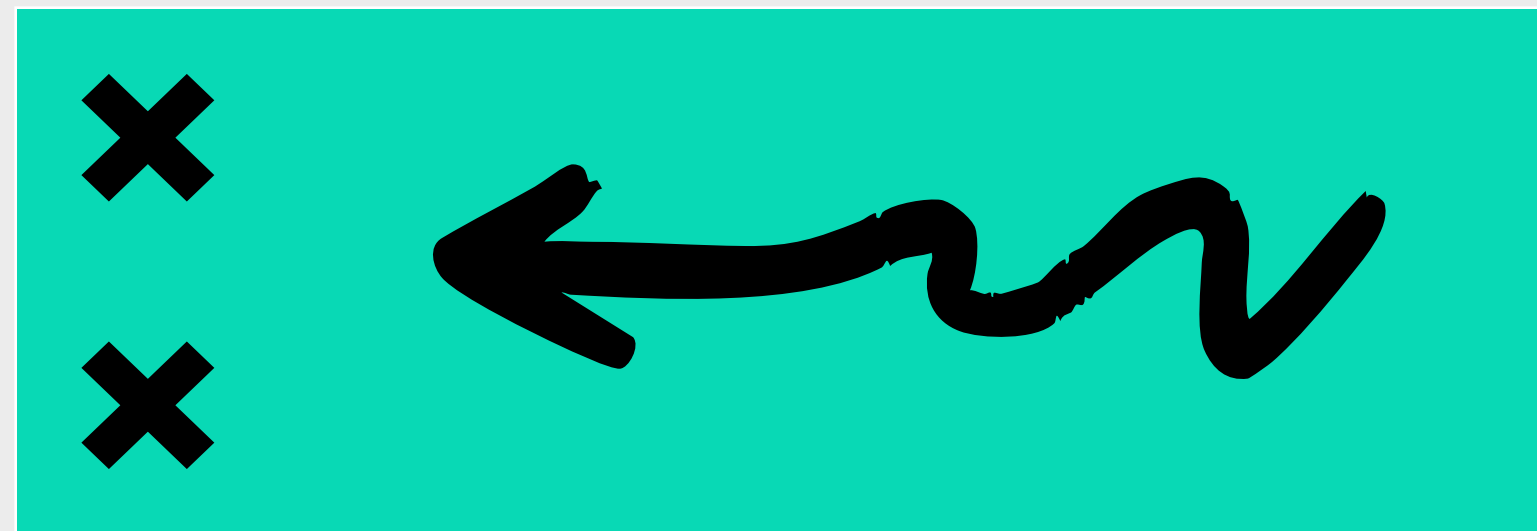
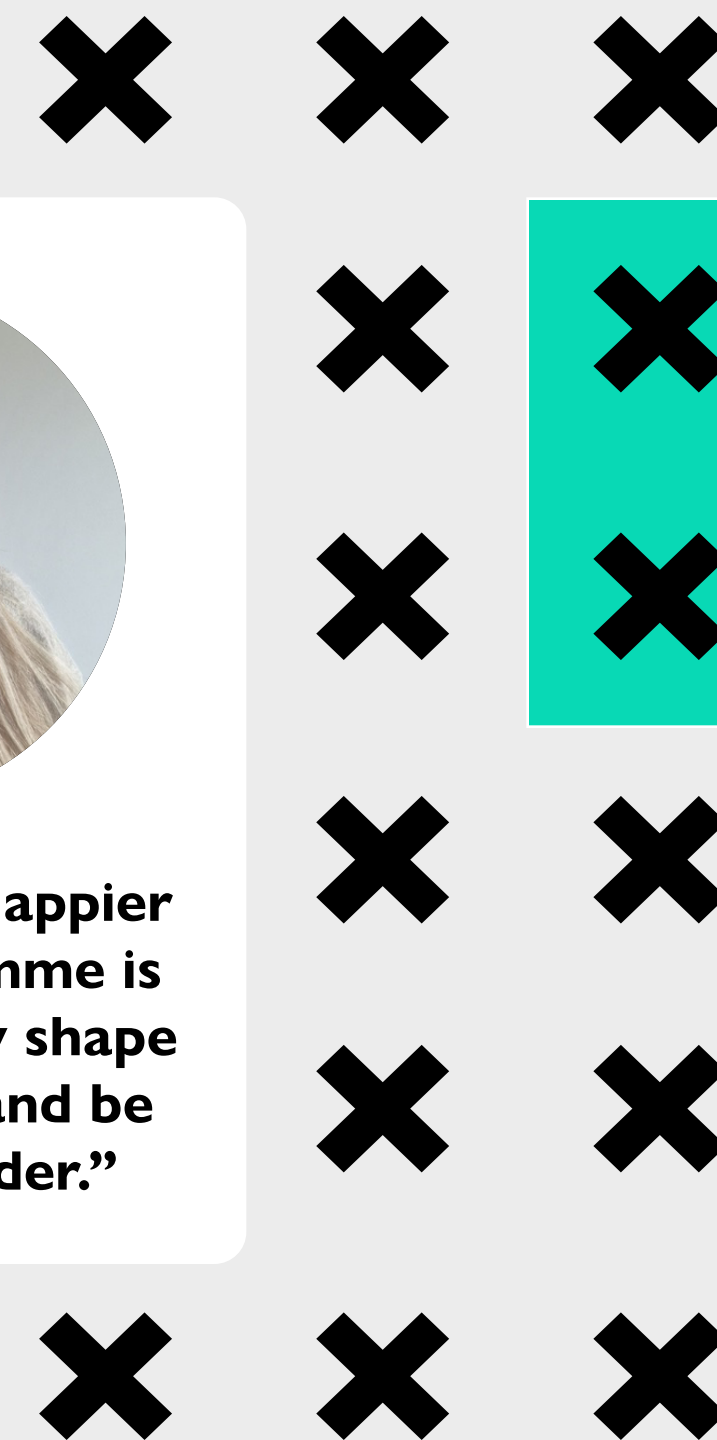
For seven years, I’ve been a Team Manager at Waitrose, driven by my passion for developing people. I was instantly excited to lead the Building Happier Futures programme when I found out about it. I knew this was an opportunity to provide work experience and life skills that could truly impact someone’s life.

The Building Happier Futures programme fits seamlessly into my role. We have a great support network and a range of useful tools, which I adapt for our branch. My main responsibilities include hosting tours and coordinating work experience dates. I also introduce our Partners—who act as “buddies”—and handle the initial welcome and training for each candidate. One of my favorite parts is the one-on-one interview skills session,

where I provide skills for future job opportunities.

Our first candidate was incredibly engaged and learned new skills quickly. They were offered a role and grew from strength to strength, they are now looking into a Team Leader trainee position before leaving to go on to further education. Running the programme has added another layer of warmth to our already welcoming branch culture.

Each person is unique, and I’ve learned to adapt. My main takeaway is that for any Partner considering getting involved, I say: do it! It is one of the most fulfilling aspects of my role. The Building Happier Futures programme is a chance to truly shape someone’s life and be their cheerleader. I am proud to be a part of this incredible programme.

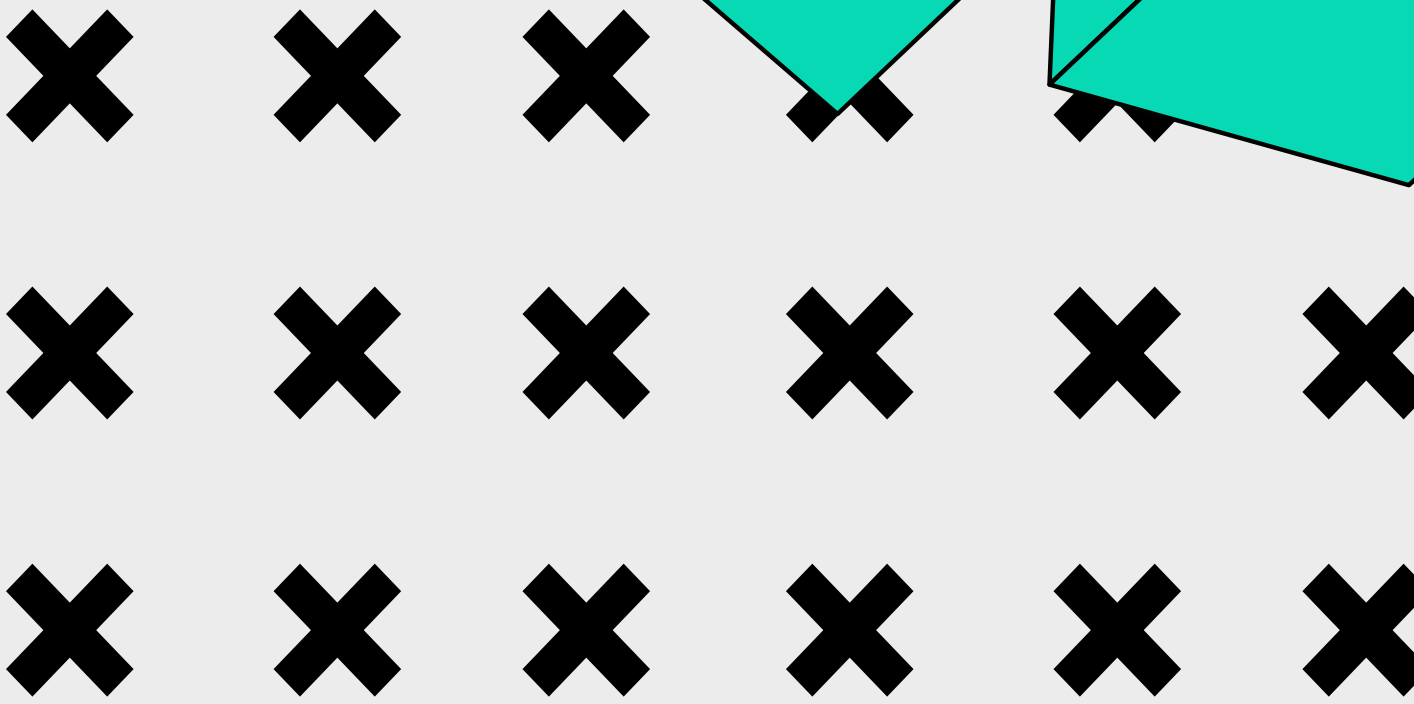


KATHERINE'S

STORY



“A young woman named E... thrived in the supportive atmosphere at John Lewis... she was offered a contract and successfully rebuilt her confidence.”



Local Authority - Glasgow City Council

Our collaboration with the John Lewis Partnership

The collaboration began when we were contacted by Building Happier Futures team about the Building Happier Futures (BHF) programme. Our goal was to help care experienced young people, who face significant disadvantages, by providing them with real-world retail experience and a pathway to employment.

The Value and Impact

A major employer like the John Lewis Partnership engaging with us on this issue is a powerful example of corporate social responsibility. It helps us fulfill our commitment to The Promise, Scotland's pledge to provide equal opportunities for care experienced young people. The BHF Programme creates practical pathways into work, which directly supports our strategy to combat inequality.

We've seen incredible results. Young people have gained confidence, self-belief, and resilience. For example, a young woman named E, who had a negative past experience

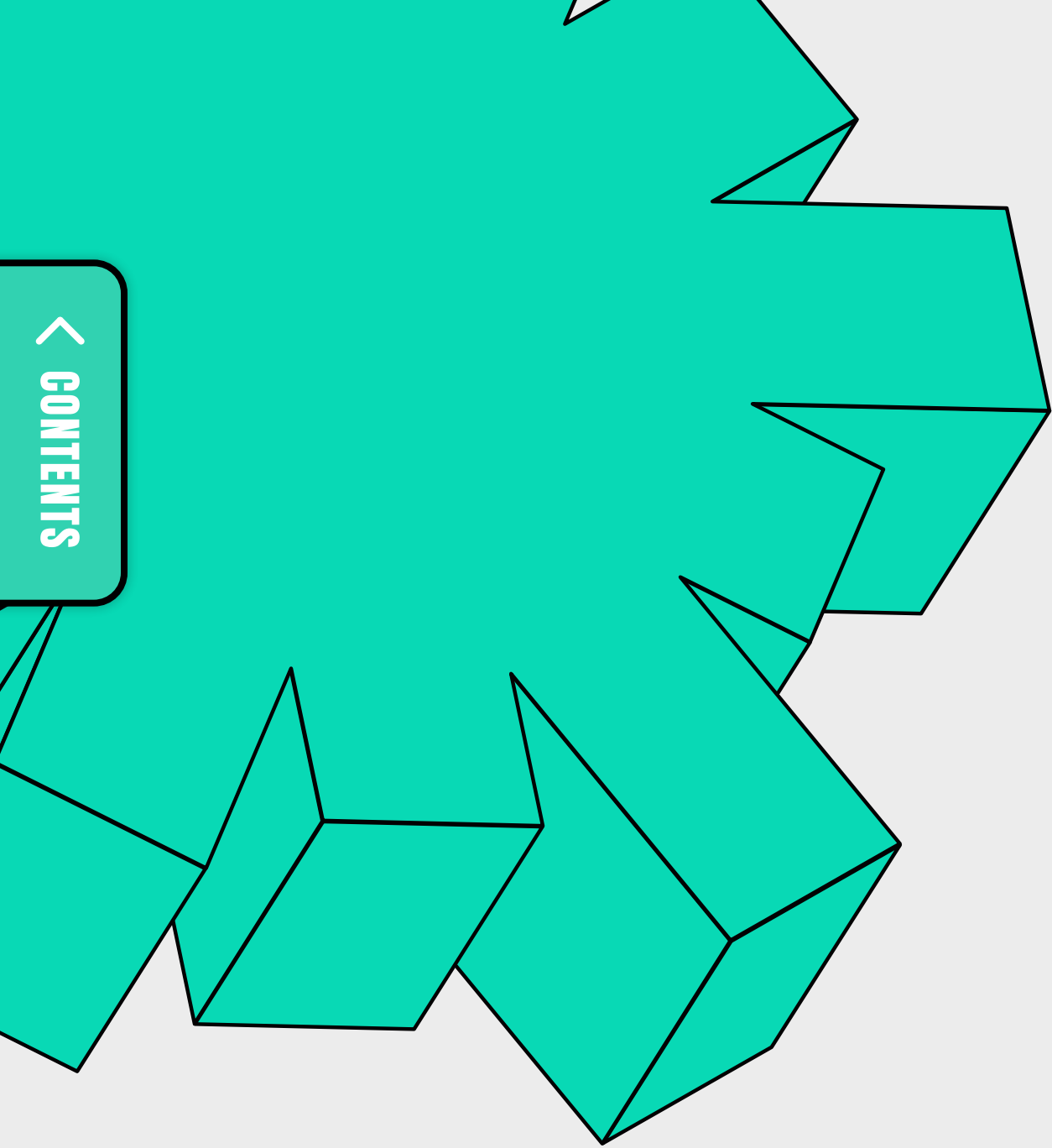
with another employer, thrived in the supportive atmosphere at John Lewis. After her work experience, she was offered a contract and successfully rebuilt her confidence. Another young person, M, who struggled to find stable work, was offered a permanent role as a driver in one of the distribution centres and now feels settled and valued.

Challenges and What's Next

The main challenge has been ensuring all opportunities are accessible, as some locations are difficult for our young people to reach due to travel barriers. To improve the programme, we hope to offer longer placements so participants can gain a fuller experience and build stronger relationships.

Looking ahead, we want to continue our collaboration by aligning with John Lewis's local workforce planning. By identifying local skills shortages, we can help upskill our young people and match them to future opportunities, like helping M get his driving license to further his career. This collaboration is a prime example of how the public and private sectors can work together to create meaningful change.

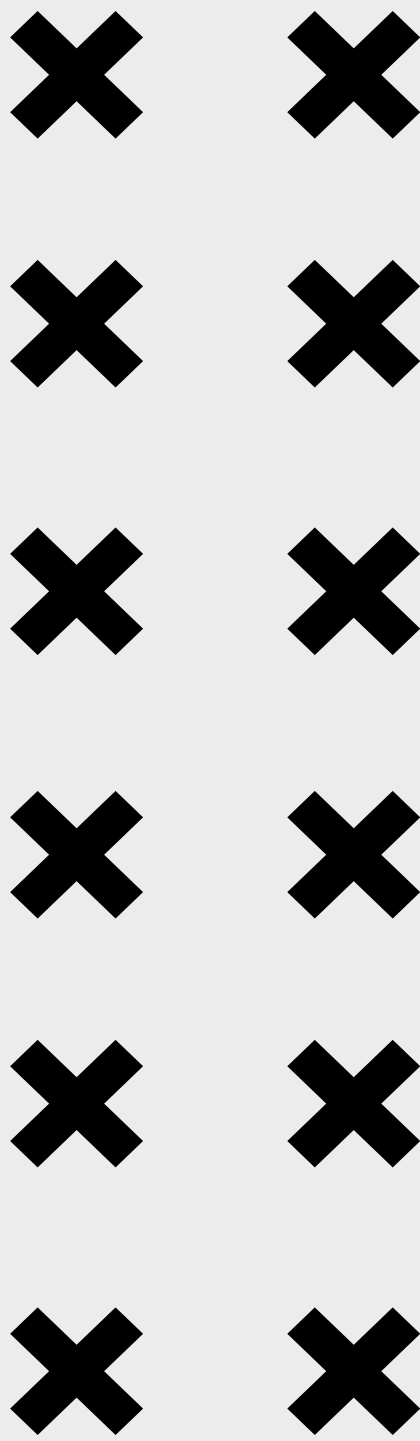




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“I feel the apprenticeship has given me an opportunity that I might not have had access to without Building Happier Futures. This gives me a chance to prove stereotypes about care experienced people wrong and set an example for other generations of cared for children to see that they can still achieve no matter what.”



ALISHA’S

STORY

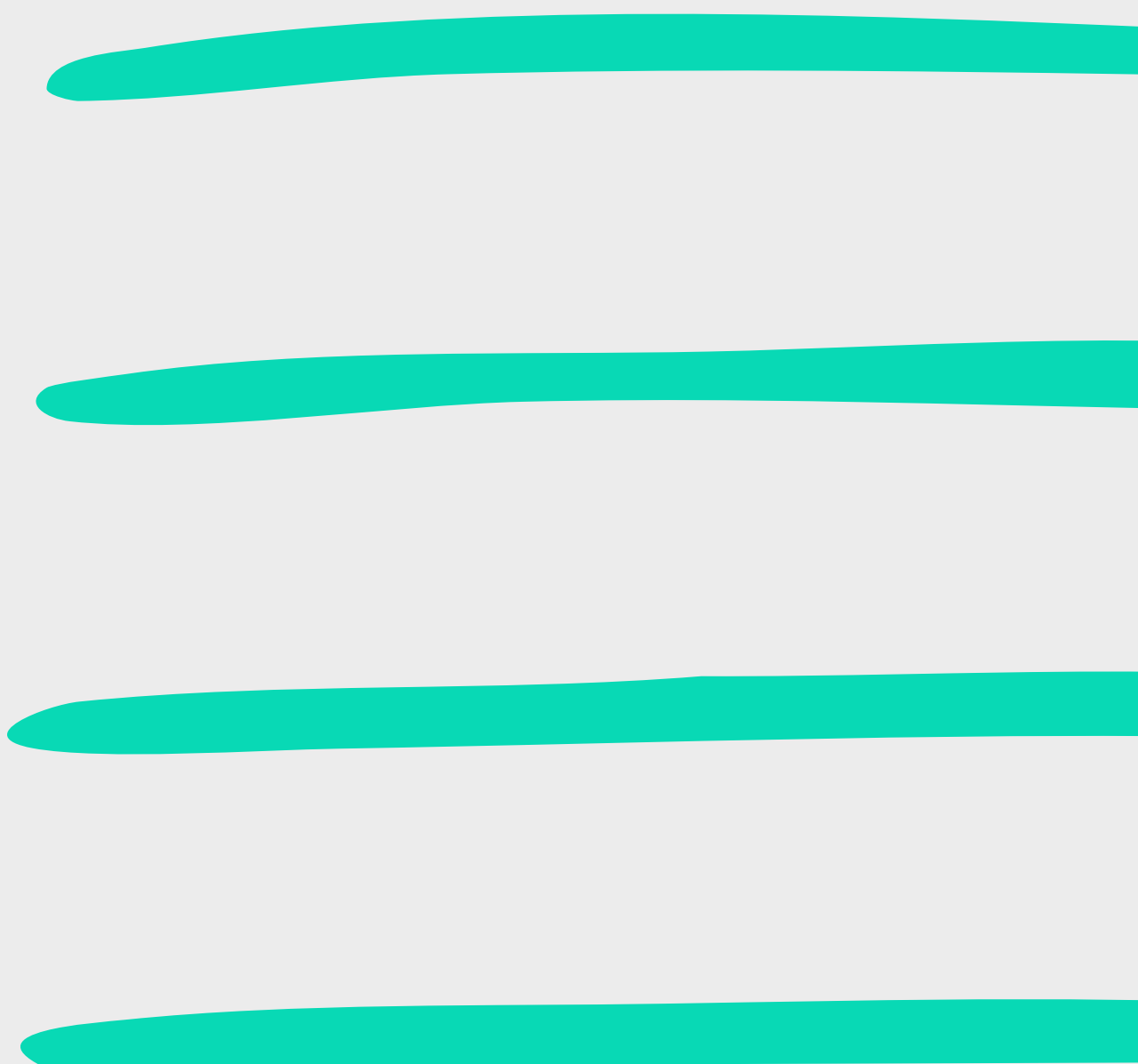
Alisha

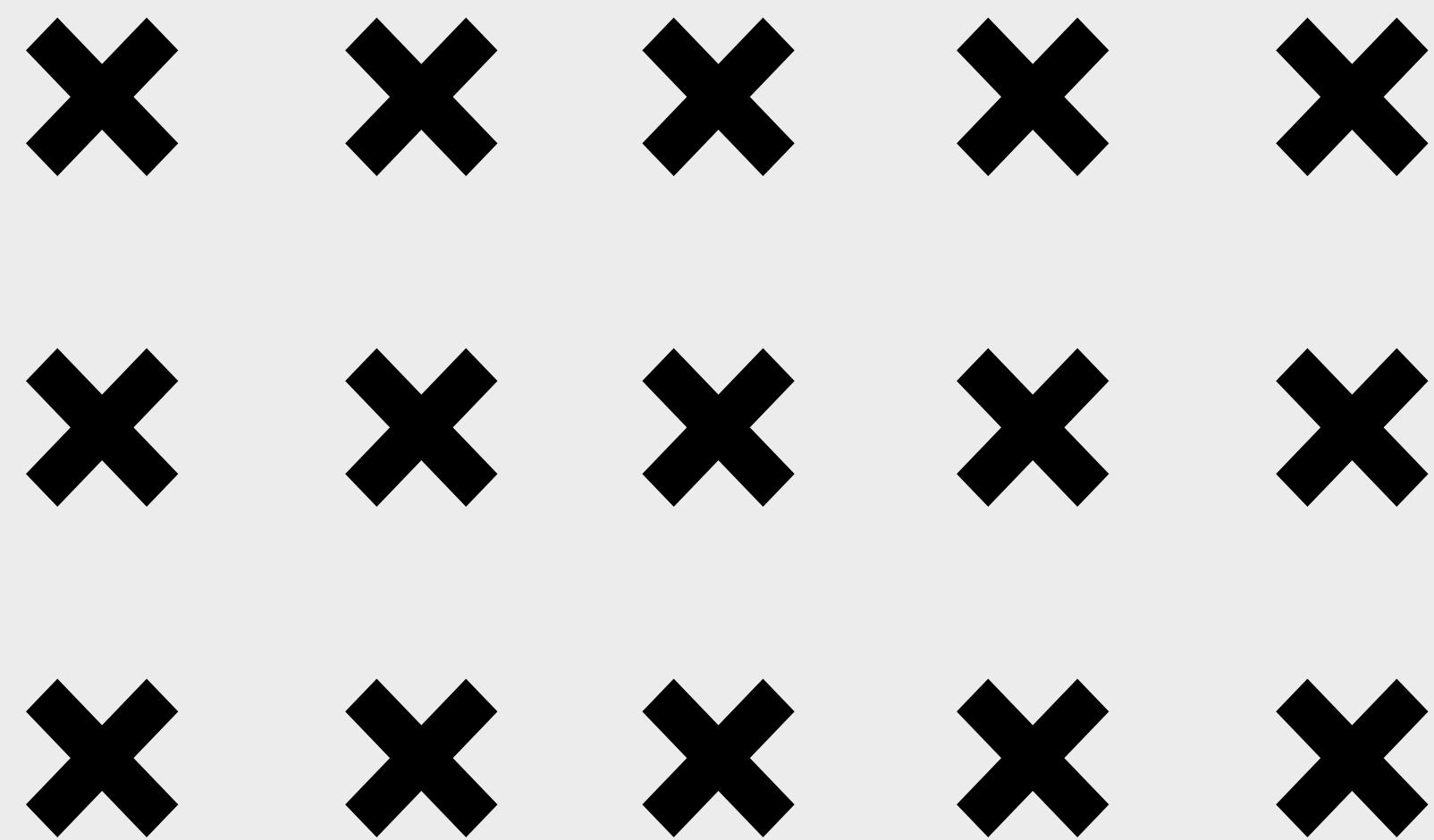
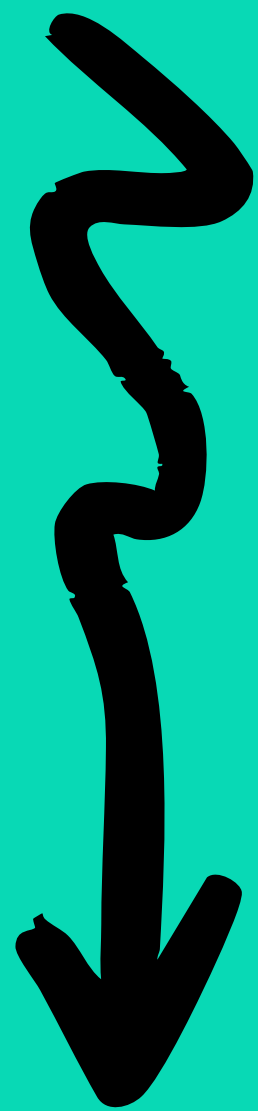
I heard about the programme through my career advisor that you get access to as a care experienced person. I decided to apply as I was currently job hunting but wasn’t getting any luck or replies. I had a part time job with a small family business that I really enjoyed but I needed to start thinking about more income and full time work and learning new skills as I am older, going into adulthood.

A key person who has supported me since joining has been my people manager. She has supported me and made me feel comfortable and confident since joining. I feel she always has my back and I can go to her with any problems I am facing, and she will find ways to help and support me and help me do better and exceed in my career.

I have only really just started studying for my apprenticeship but I feel that when I finish it and hopefully pass my exams it will make me feel more confident in my role and give me a bit of background knowledge about why we do what we do in my role. It will also be rewarding to have a qualification on my CV that I worked hard for and give me an advantage for the future.

What would I say to other young people? I would recommend to go for it 100%. I would say as much as you might not want to study sometimes, just push through, work hard. You will have lots of support and help if needed and opportunities such as these will open up even more doors for you.





CLAIRE'S STORY



“For my son, the programme has offered... a sense of belonging and recognition... opportunity to be part of something bigger”

Claire - An adoptive Mum

As an adoptive parent, I've seen first-hand how important initiatives like Building Happier Futures can be. For my son, the programme has offered not just work experience but also a sense of belonging and recognition.

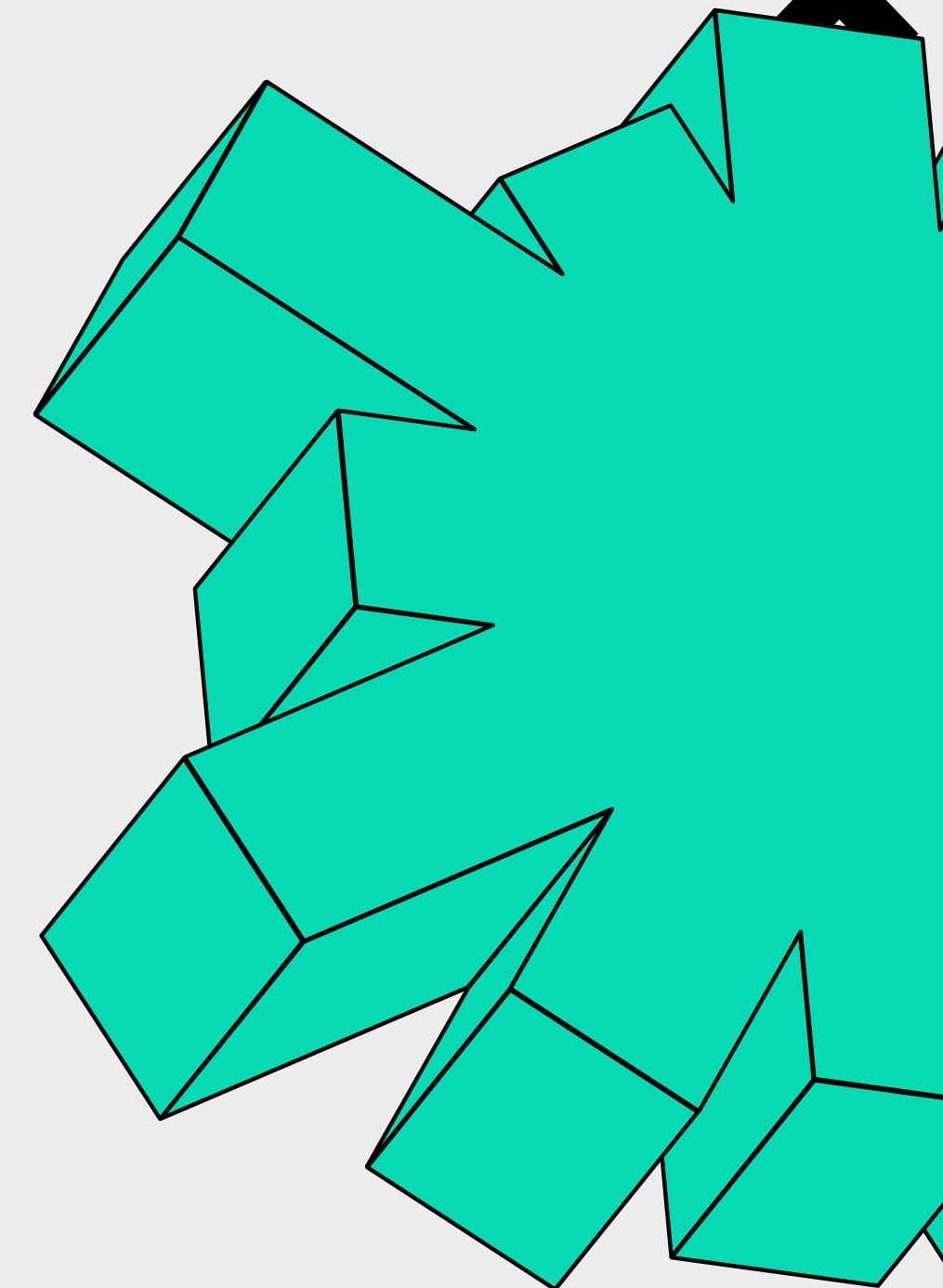
The opportunity to be part of something bigger, with colleagues who value his contribution, has been transformative.

That said, like many care experienced young people, he has faced moments where the workplace has felt challenging to navigate. These are not unusual difficulties for him, and I have

appreciated the willingness of the team to listen and learn. Every small step towards understanding trauma and neurodiversity makes a big difference.

Looking ahead, my hope is that the John Lewis Partnership, and organisations across the sector, continue to strengthen their commitment to genuine inclusion.

By embedding trauma-informed, trauma-sensitive, trauma-responsive and neurodiversity-aware practice at every level, programmes like this can ensure that no young person is left feeling they don't belong.



EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS + VIRTUAL WORK EXP

Our commitment to people is at the core of our mission.

By empowering individuals with skills and opportunities, we contribute to a more skilled and equitable future.



CO-DEVELOPED VIRTUAL EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS: We believe the best solutions are born from real experiences. That's why we teamed up with The Vision, a North West community interest organisation to co-develop a virtual employability programme.

This isn't just another training course. It was built with the voices and insights of those who know the journey best, ensuring the content is relevant, powerful, and truly impactful. By putting lived experience at the centre, this programme

directly supports people as they build their skills and navigate the path to meaningful employment.

QUOTE FROM THE VISION: The virtual employability programme isn't just another training course. It was built with the voices and insights of those who know the journey best, ensuring the content is relevant, powerful, and truly impactful. By putting lived experience at the centre, this programme directly supports people as they build their skills and navigate the path to meaningful employment.



“WOW!”

They have taken all of our feedback and really made it into a programme!

- The Inner Spark, Outer Voice Group

The online Employability Skills programme includes 10 modules from CV writing to being more confident in the workplace.

Explore the Employability Skills offer here

The online Virtual Work Experience offer gives a taste of some of the roles on offer in the John Lewis Partnership and anyone can sign up **HERE**

EDUCATION

OPEN UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS:

We believe in lifelong learning and providing access to education. Our collaboration with the Open University offers fully-funded scholarships, removing financial barriers and enabling our people to achieve their academic and professional ambitions.

APPRENTICESHIPS:

Our apprenticeship programmes are a vital pipeline for future talent. They provide hands-on, practical experience, allowing individuals to earn while they learn and develop the specialised skills needed to succeed in a dynamic environment.



[Explore Apprenticeships here](#)

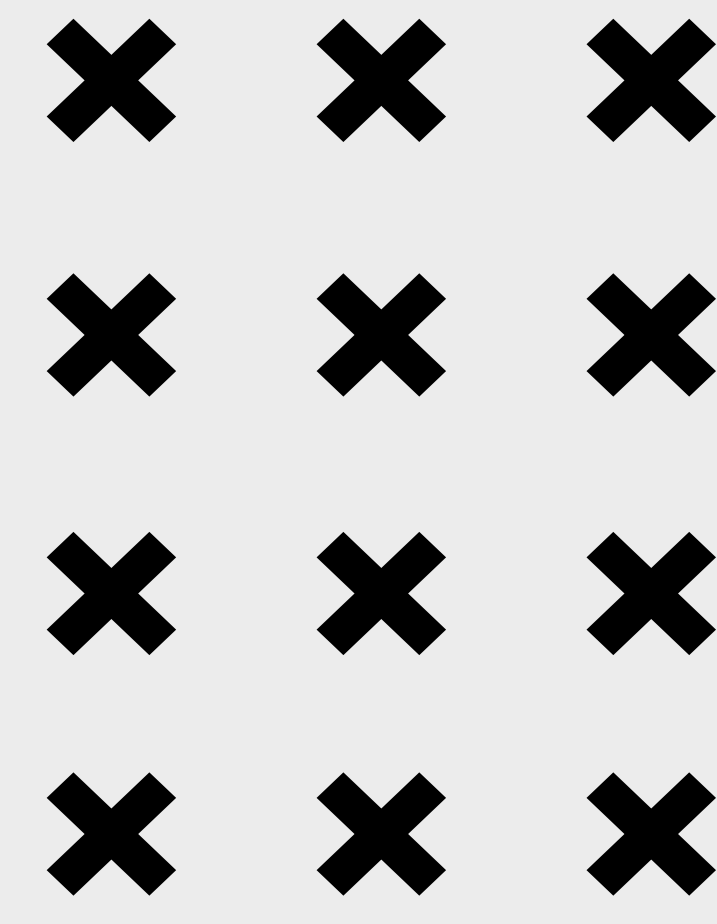




FOSTER CARE

FORTNIGHT

Fostering Friendly Employer
Kinship Friendly Employer



The John Lewis Partnership has been accredited as a Fostering Friendly organisation by The Fostering Network and as Kinship Friendly by the Kinship charity since 2023.

We are proud to support Partners who are foster and kinship carers with additional time off, giving them the flexibility to attend appointments and training. We know that a supportive employer can make all the difference to those who foster, which in turn can improve the experience of the children in their care.

The John Lewis Partnership celebrated foster and kinship carers this year during Foster Care Fortnight, which was themed “The Power of Relationships.” We hosted coffee mornings at various John Lewis shops across the UK, offering foster and kinship carers a welcoming space to connect.

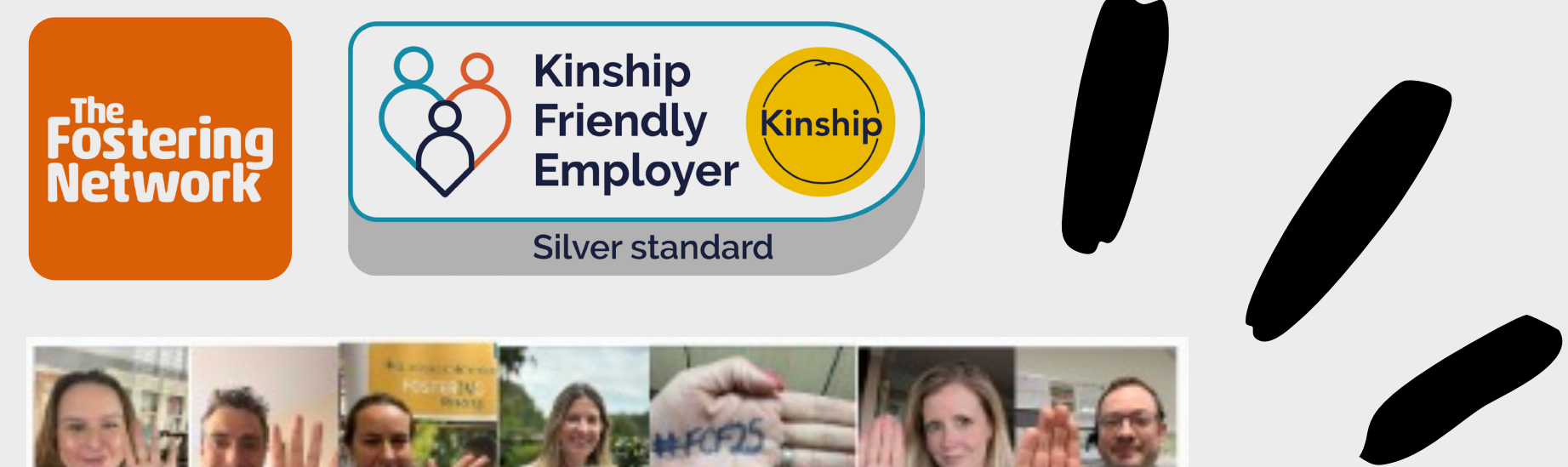
In recognition of Foster Care Fortnight, The John Lewis Partnership Community Matters charitable giving scheme that runs throughout John Lewis and Waitrose shops dedicated its funding to causes which support fostering and children’s activities during quarter two.

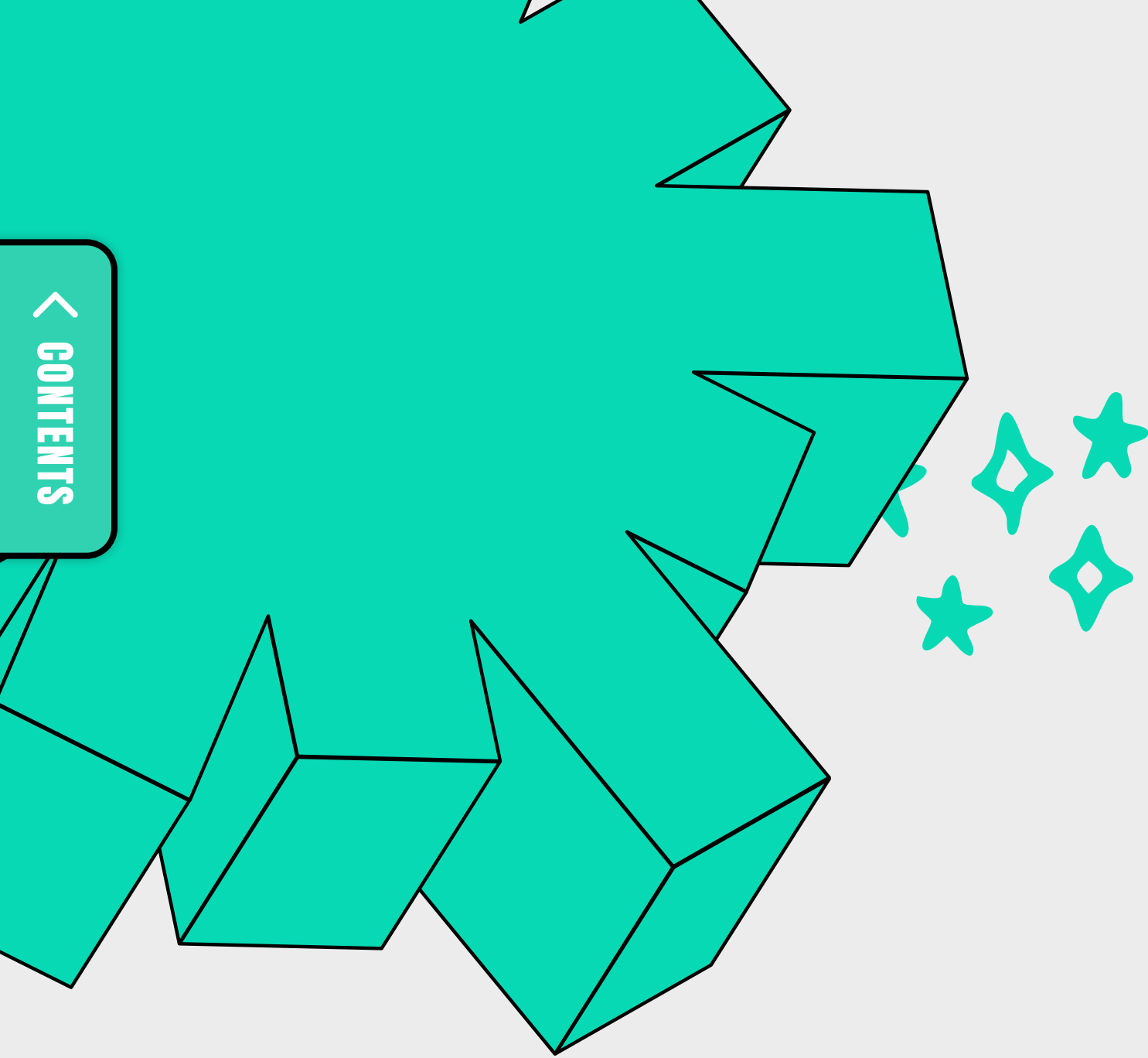
“In 15 years this is the best recognition and thank you I’ve received as part of the foster care community - it’s been lovely.”
– Foster carer at John Lewis Norwich coffee morning

“The Fostering Network are proud to partner with the John Lewis Partnership. Our collaboration comes into its own throughout Foster Care Fortnight. Thanks to the John Lewis Partnership, we were able to bring the true meaning of the annual campaign to life, bringing foster carers from across the UK together to build networks and be celebrated for the incredible difference they make every day.

As a charity, we were grateful for the generous support provided to our charity and local fostering causes through the Community Matters funding. This funding helps the whole community to continue to champion foster care across the UK.”

– Sarah Thomas, CEO The Fostering Network





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“Working for the Partnership has always been a source of pride, but this feeling has deepened for me with the introduction of Building Happier Futures”

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EMMA’S

STORY

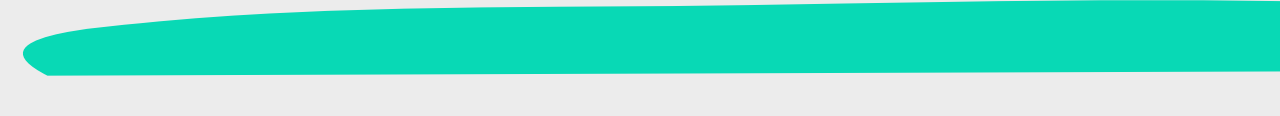
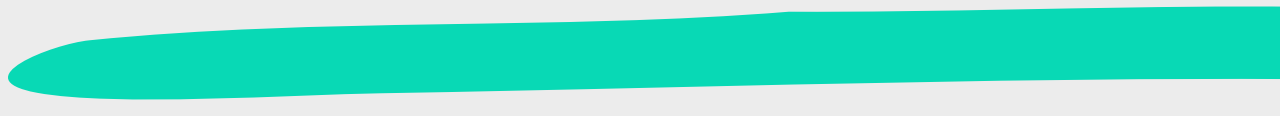
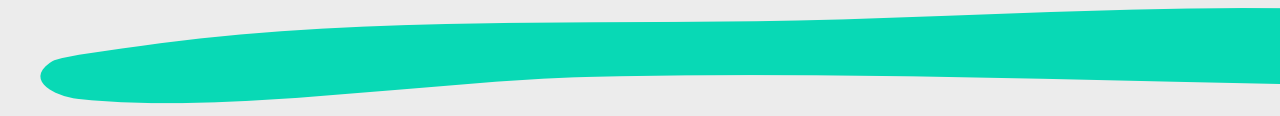
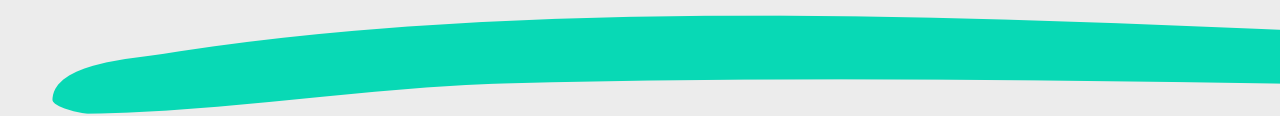
Emma, Partner and Foster Carer

"Working for the Partnership has always been a source of pride, but this feeling has deepened for me with the introduction of Building Happier Futures (BHF) as an expression of our Purpose and a practical intervention to improve the lives of our Partners.

The support offered to colleagues with care experience, those who have adopted, are fostering, or are kinship carers truly reflects an organisation that values its people. Becoming a foster carer involves navigating a complex system and addressing a multitude of unmet needs for the young person in your care, often requiring numerous appointments and meetings.

The ability to connect with others within the Partnership, to receive understanding and backing from colleagues, and to benefit from the supportive culture exemplified by BHF has been an important contributor to my ability to get through the assessment process and provide a stable and loving home for my four children. Seeing my foster son, now 18, and my daughter on the verge of their A-levels and heading to university fills me with immense pride.

Their journey, alongside mine, has involved challenges and resilience, and I am certain that the connections and support I have found within the Partnership have been crucial in reaching this point as a family.

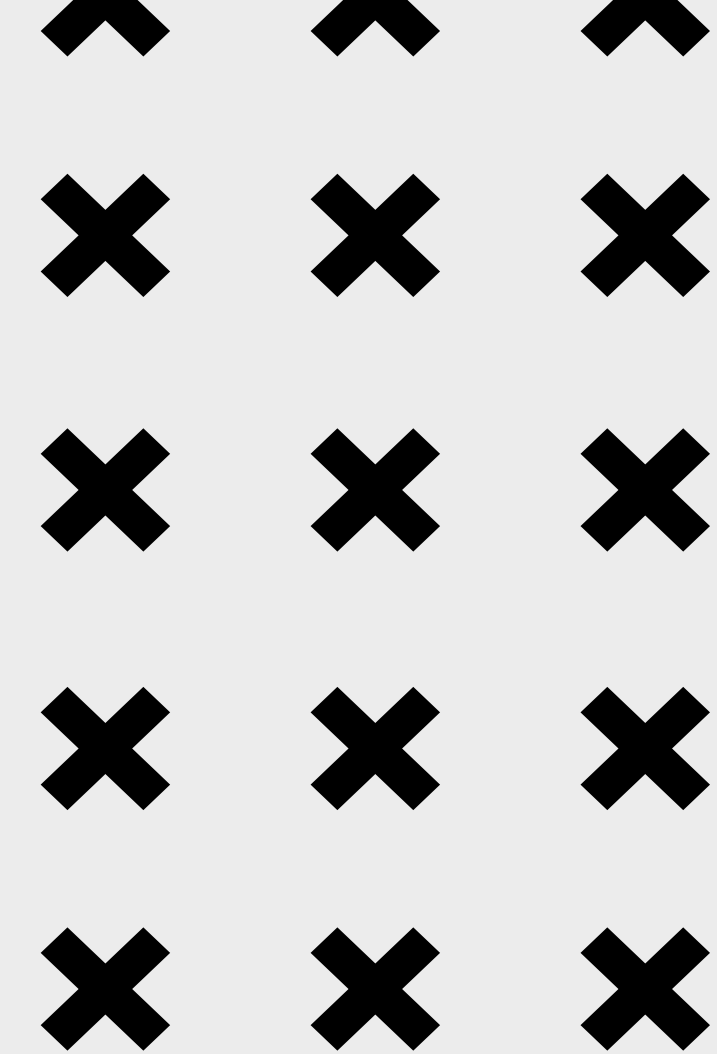


✓

Made by Care

Talent is everywhere, opportunity isn't

The Made by Care brand is designed by care experienced people. Profits from each product sold in Waitrose and John Lewis are donated to the Building Happier Futures fund, which is part of the John Lewis Partnership Foundation*.

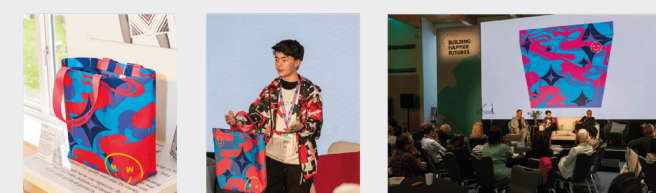


YEAR ONE



(2023)

Michael's design



YEAR TWO



(2024)

Izaak's design



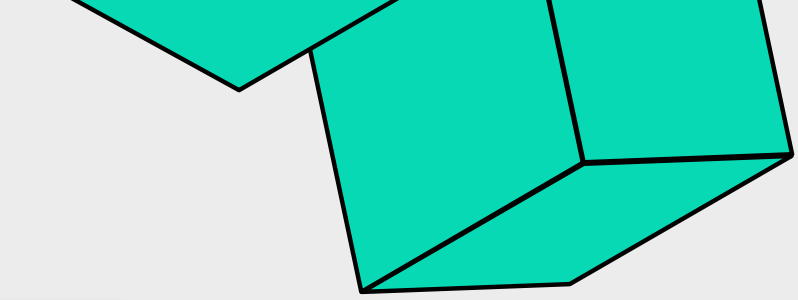
YEAR THREE



(2025)

Leah's design





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Made by Care

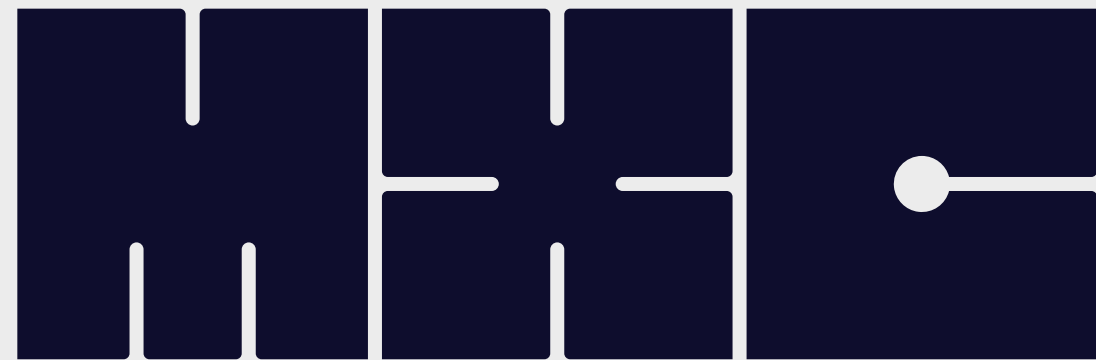
 Buy here 

Designed by Leah

Care experienced teacher and aspiring designer, Leah, has collaborated with the John Lewis Partnership in-house design team to create this exclusive new collection.

Wildflowers

Leah’s designs focus on wildflowers, which represent the care experienced community. Wildflowers possess an inherent resilience, strength, and unique ability to thrive and flourish despite challenging circumstances, embodying a fierce and free spirit.





JOHN LEWIS PARTNERSHIP FOUNDATION + BUILDING HAPPIER FUTURES FUND

Since 2022, the John Lewis Partnership has raised funds for our three charity partners Action for Children, HomeStart UK and Who Cares? Scotland. These charity partners work to build supportive communities for care experienced people and help families and carers to create happy and secure homes.



THE BUILDING HAPPIER FUTURES FUND

We believe that every child and young person should have a fair start in life. Building Happier Futures is how we fund UK projects for care experienced people, and make a difference

to vulnerable children and young people who don't have the safety net of family support. 23 charities have been awarded financial grants from the fund so far.

“We will fund UK projects to provide education, connection, experience and fun for care experienced people.”



BUILDING HAPPIER FUTURES FUND

CASE STUDIES

ADOPTION UK - THE BRIDGE

3

**Year project
UK wide**

The Bridge supports adopted young people (aged 14-17) by offering activities that:

5

**Locations
Across Yorkshire
& Humber**

Provide a safe space and community, building confidence, connections, and self-esteem.
Raise aspiration by broadening horizons, through mentoring and providing diverse opportunities to help young people explore their interests and prepare for the future.

30

**Adopted
young people
supported**

Develop skills and amplify their voices through a range of creative and advocacy-focused activities.
Improve mental health by combating isolation and enhancing wellbeing through inclusive sessions and a space to explore adoption. Overall, the young people have substantially developed their confidence and life skills, and been supported in planning for their futures.

LITTLE BIRD PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT

14

**Week project
Wakefield**

10

Mothers

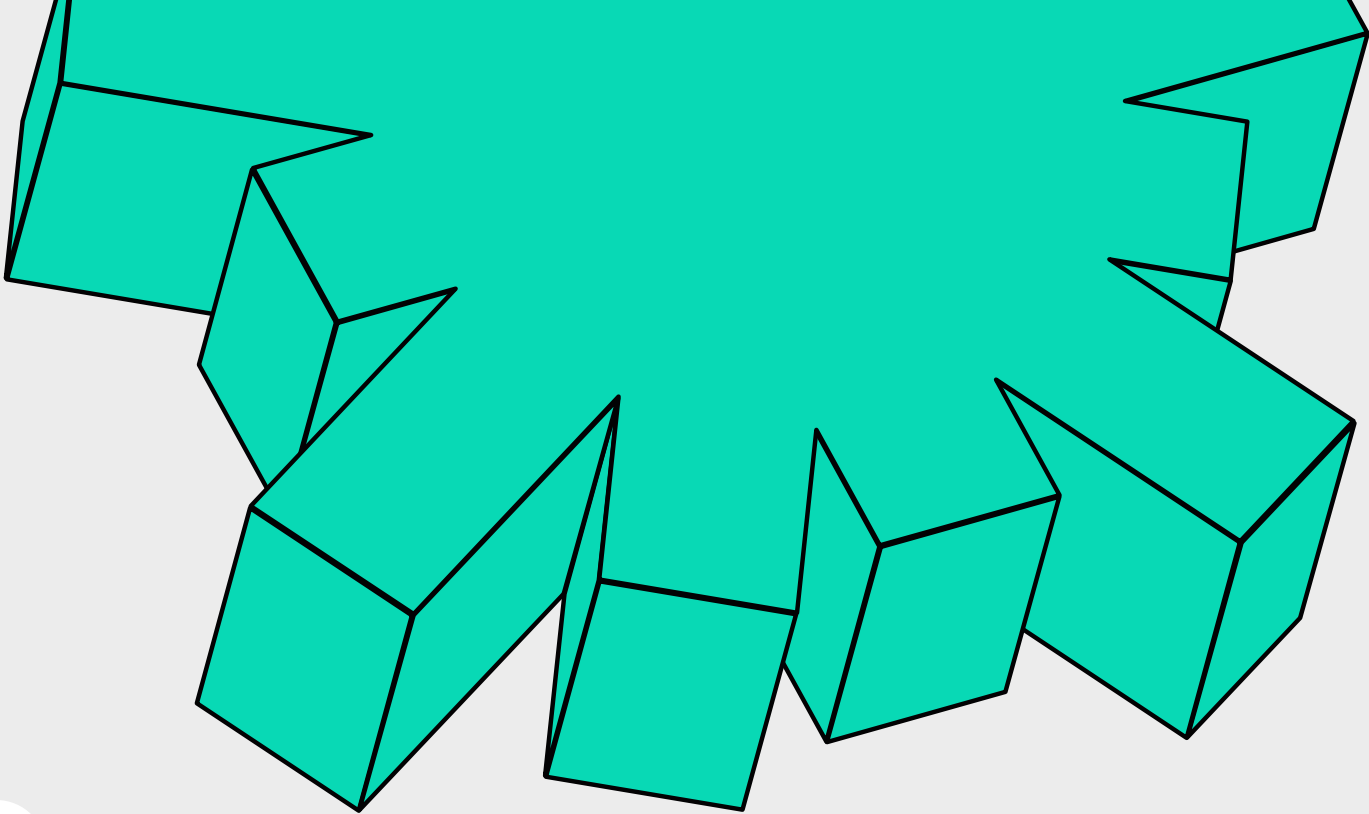
10

**Care experienced
children**

The “Take Flight and Fly High” project at HMP New Hall, in partnership with Little Bird People Development, has established a comprehensive 14-week program with specific desired outcomes for participants:

CASE STUDY

ADOPTION UK



Leo* was adopted at aged 5 and is the eldest in a sibling group of three. Following her adoption, she remained with her adoptive family into her teenage years but has experienced ongoing difficulties at home.

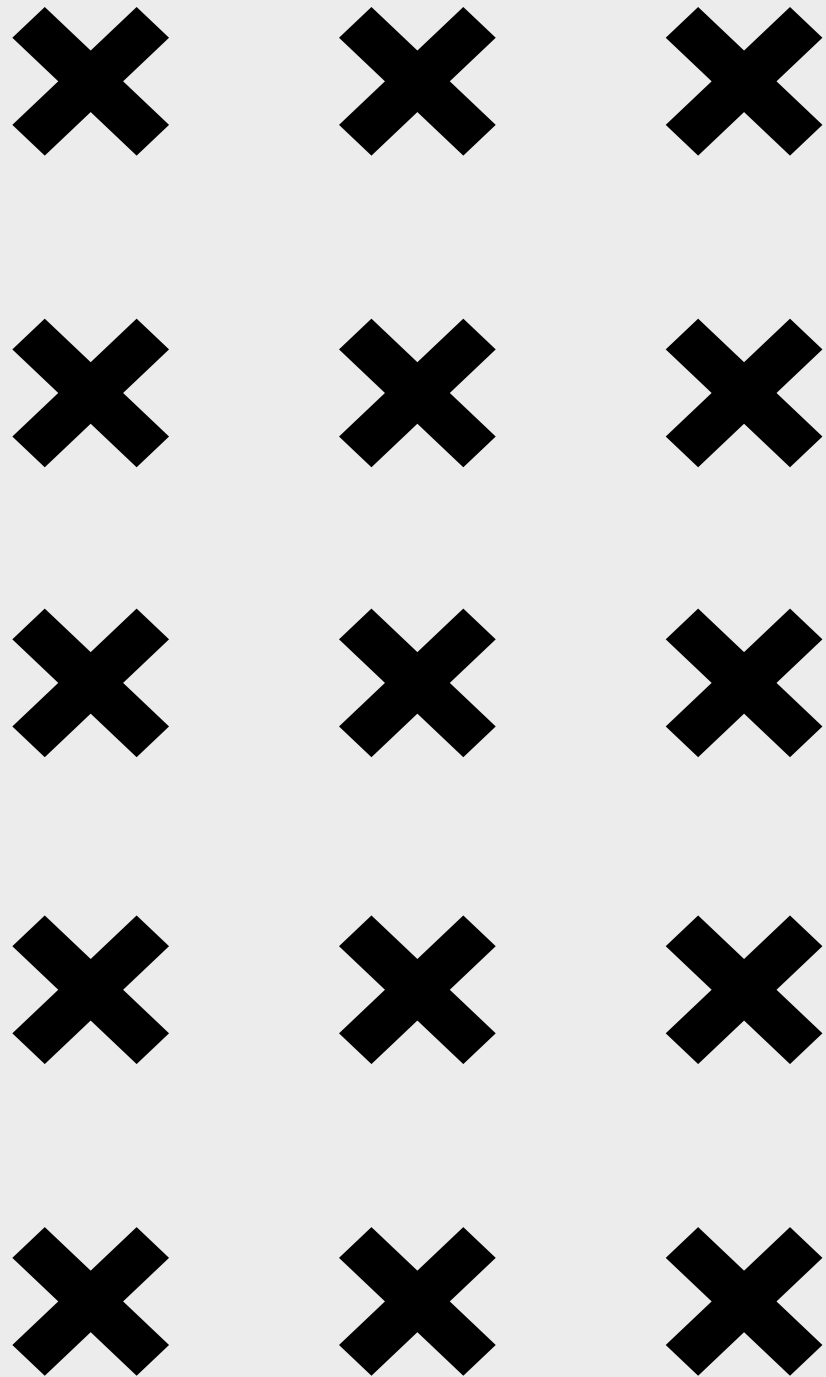
Leo has been attending The Bridge youth group for several years and is a loyal member. She engages regularly in group sessions and maintains contact with staff in between sessions. She has formed strong peer relationships and has even attended sleepovers with other members; a significant sign of the trust she has built. The team have developed a strong rapport with Leo and are able to support her with consistent boundaries, especially when her behaviour puts strain on relationships. These interactions have played a key role in helping Leo feel more grounded, seen and supported.

In addition to The Bridge support, Leo was referred to a local mentoring organisation that offers drop-in support and ongoing one-on-one guidance. She continues to access this help alongside her engagement with The Bridge staff.

In 2024, Leo was selected as a member of Adoption UK’s youth delegation to meet with the Adoption Minister at the Department for Education. She spoke clearly and confidently about her experiences – an incredible achievement for a young person who has faced so much. Her involvement shows not only her resilience but her growing confidence in using her voice to advocate for other adopted young people.

*Names changed to protect identity

“Leo is growing confidence and using her voice to advocate for other adopted young people.”



CASE STUDY

LITTLE BIRD PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT



Businesswoman and author Alison Delaney launched a new programme aimed at supporting mothers and babies in prison, with funding from The Building Happier Futures Fund.

The ‘Take Flight and Fly High’ initiative, a not-for-profit project from Alison’s company Little Bird People Development, is designed to empower mothers within the prison system and help them create a positive future for themselves and their children.

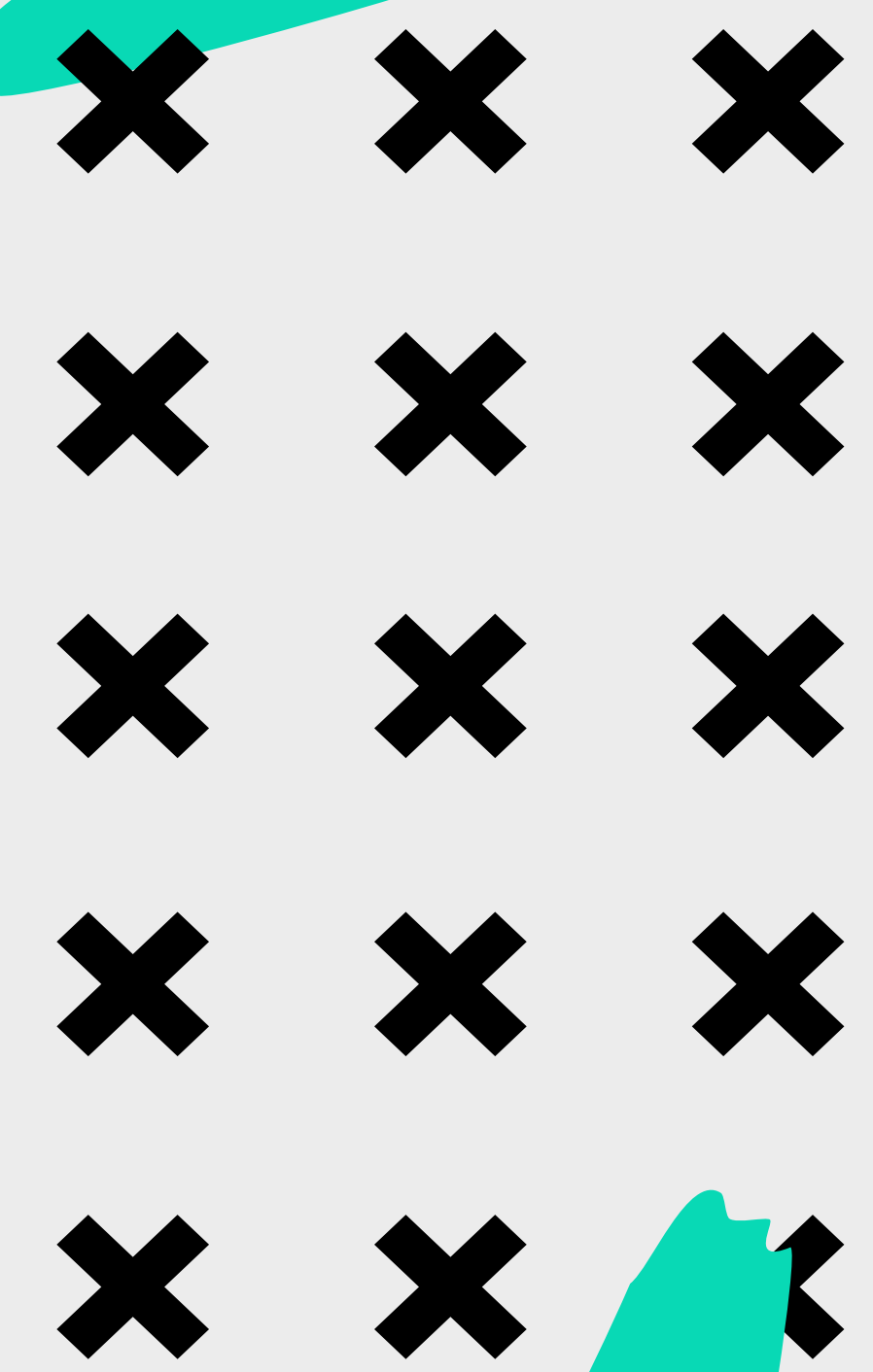
In England and Wales, women who give birth during their prison sentence may be eligible for placement in one of six mother and baby units. After 18 months, if the mother is still serving her sentence,

the child may need to be placed in care, either in kinship care or foster care.

The programme provides each mother with a children’s book to read with their baby each day, as well as additional books for family visits. Alison’s award-winning education programme, ‘Little Chicks Life Lessons’, supplies these resources. Alongside the reading materials, mothers participate in a 14-step personal development workshop designed to improve life skills, self-esteem, and confidence.

Having experienced the challenges of the care system herself, Alison is dedicated to helping those with similar backgrounds.

“Having experienced the challenges of the care system herself, Alison is dedicated to helping those with similar backgrounds.”

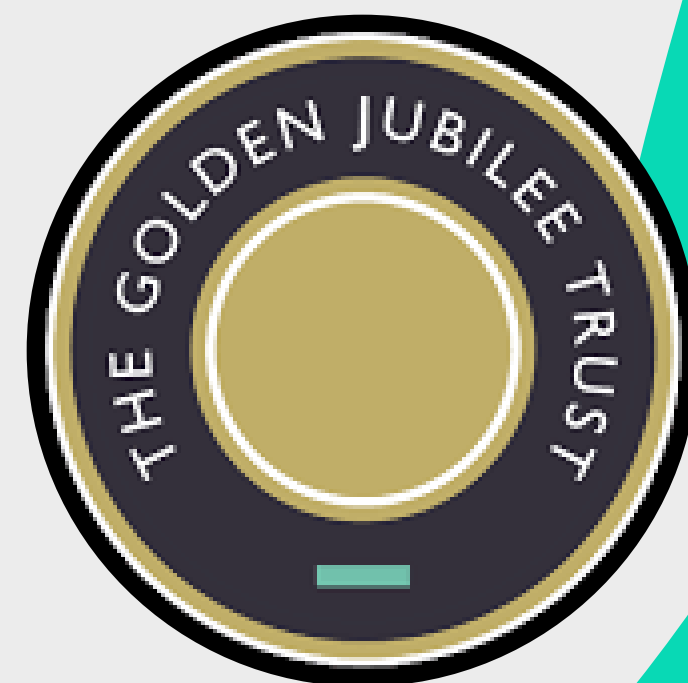


GOLDEN JUBILEE TRUST

Leveraging specialist skills to deliver meaningful impact

Our programme is strengthened by the Golden Jubilee Trust (GJT) Secondment scheme, which became part of the John Lewis Partnership Foundation in March 2025. This initiative delivers a unique form of support by leveraging the specialist skills of our Partners for critical, non-financial projects, enabling UK registered charities to expand their services and local impact.

Five dedicated secondments were awarded specifically for care experienced projects over the last three years:



ACTION FOR CHILDREN

Activity and Design Coordinator.

Improved Care Environment:
Applied design expertise to update 14 rooms and create a new sensory room at the Merryfields Care Home for Children, directly enhancing the therapeutic space for vulnerable children.

ACTION FOR CHILDREN

Family Support Assistant Early Intervention.

Direct Programme Delivery:
Created and led weekly one-on-one and group sessions on practical parenting and baby care, providing immediate, essential care and resources to families.

WHO CARES? SCOTLAND

Gala Events Fundraiser.

Sustainable Capacity Building: Led the development and foundation of a new fundraising dinner (for August 2024), establishing a new, long-term revenue stream for the charity's advocacy and support work.

HOME START KNOWSLEY

Rapid Response Worker.

Service Expansion: Delivered group work for children, mapped vital community connections, and developed a support programme tailored for a new cohort of 19-25 year olds, extending support for young adults transitioning from care.

HOME START

Family Empowerment and Operations Placement.

Streamlined Operations & Compliance: Supported the charity in streamlining processes, planning procedures, and the HR function. Provided specialised training to the team on complex HR legislation, increasing staff capability and compliance.

SOPHIE'S STORY



“The opportunity allows me to support a cause I care deeply about while representing Waitrose in the wider community”

Sophie, Partner and Team Manager, Waitrose

I applied for the Golden Jubilee Trust (GJT) secondment because I'm passionate about using my skills to make a positive difference outside of my day-to-day role. The opportunity allows me to support a cause I care deeply about while representing Waitrose in the wider community.

My motivation is rooted in my past work, including the BHF (Building Happier Futures) programme, which showed me the transformative power of providing support and inclusion.

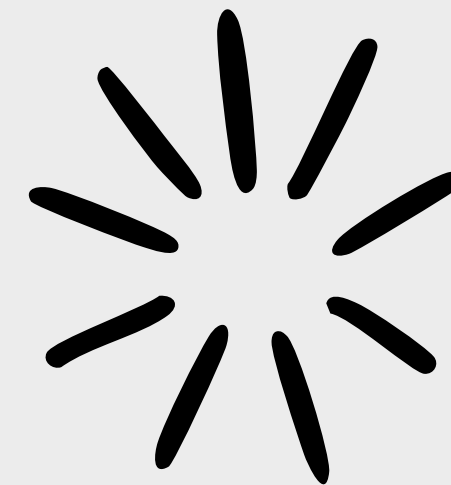
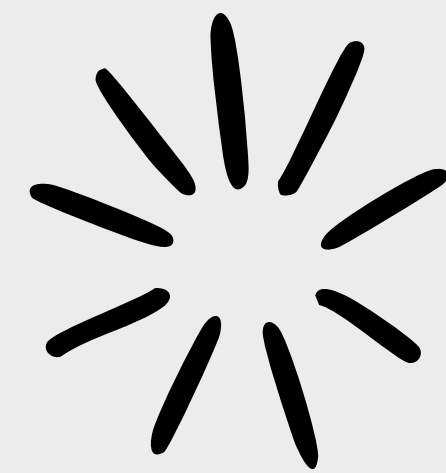
My seconded role is HR, Planning & Support with Home-Start Arun. I'm focused on strengthening their people processes and planning, ensuring they have the structures in place to focus on supporting local families. My goal is to leave behind practical improvements that benefit the charity long-term, while also broadening my own skills and bringing back valuable learning to the Partnership.

The journey so far has been incredibly rewarding, reinforcing that a GJT secondment is a rare chance to step outside your usual role and make a meaningful difference.

DISCOVER OUR BUSINESS

The John Lewis Partnership aims to be the employer of choice for care experienced people.

We want to showcase the diverse opportunities across our business by utilising the full Partnership estate — from our supply chain’s specialised driver pathways and Herbert Parkinson textiles factory to our John Lewis Partnership owned hotels and our innovation kitchen where Waitrose products are developed.



JOHN LEWIS MONEY x THE RED ROSES



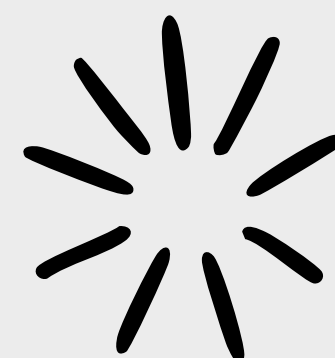
OFFICIAL CREDIT CARD PARTNER
OF ENGLAND RUGBY

John Lewis Money proudly supports the women's elite rugby team, The Red Roses, as the Official Credit Card Partner of England Rugby.

Engagement in sports can have profound benefits for young people, including supporting emotional wellbeing, building skills like resilience and team building and mentorship - so John Lewis Money teamed up with care experienced young people from the Building Happier Futures programme to chat to Red Roses stars Maud Muir, Lark Atkin-Davies and Cath O'Donnell about everything from body image to building a legacy.



Watch two inspiring groups of women as they delve into personal journeys, societal barriers and the beliefs that drive them to succeed.



OUR ONGOING COMMITMENT

OUR COMMITMENT IS TO BUILD HAPPIER FUTURES
FOR THE CARE EXPERIENCED COMMUNITY

OUR GOALS

**1. Be the employer
of choice for care
experienced people**

**2. Fundraise for
investment in the care
experience community**

**3. Influence societal
change using our voice and
collaborating with experts**

OUR ACTIONS

EMPLOYABILITY AND EDUCATION

1. Further investment
in employability,
education,
progression and
life skills

INFLUENCING AND COMMUNICATION

2. Influencing
change to address
inequality via
Government working
with our expert
Advisory Group

CUSTOMER

3. MxC brand and
customer initiatives
raising £s, awareness
and creating
opportunities

COLLABORATION

4. Collaborate and
learn from other
organisations,
including our
supplier base

ADVISORY GROUP: WHO AND PURPOSE



The BHF Advisory Group

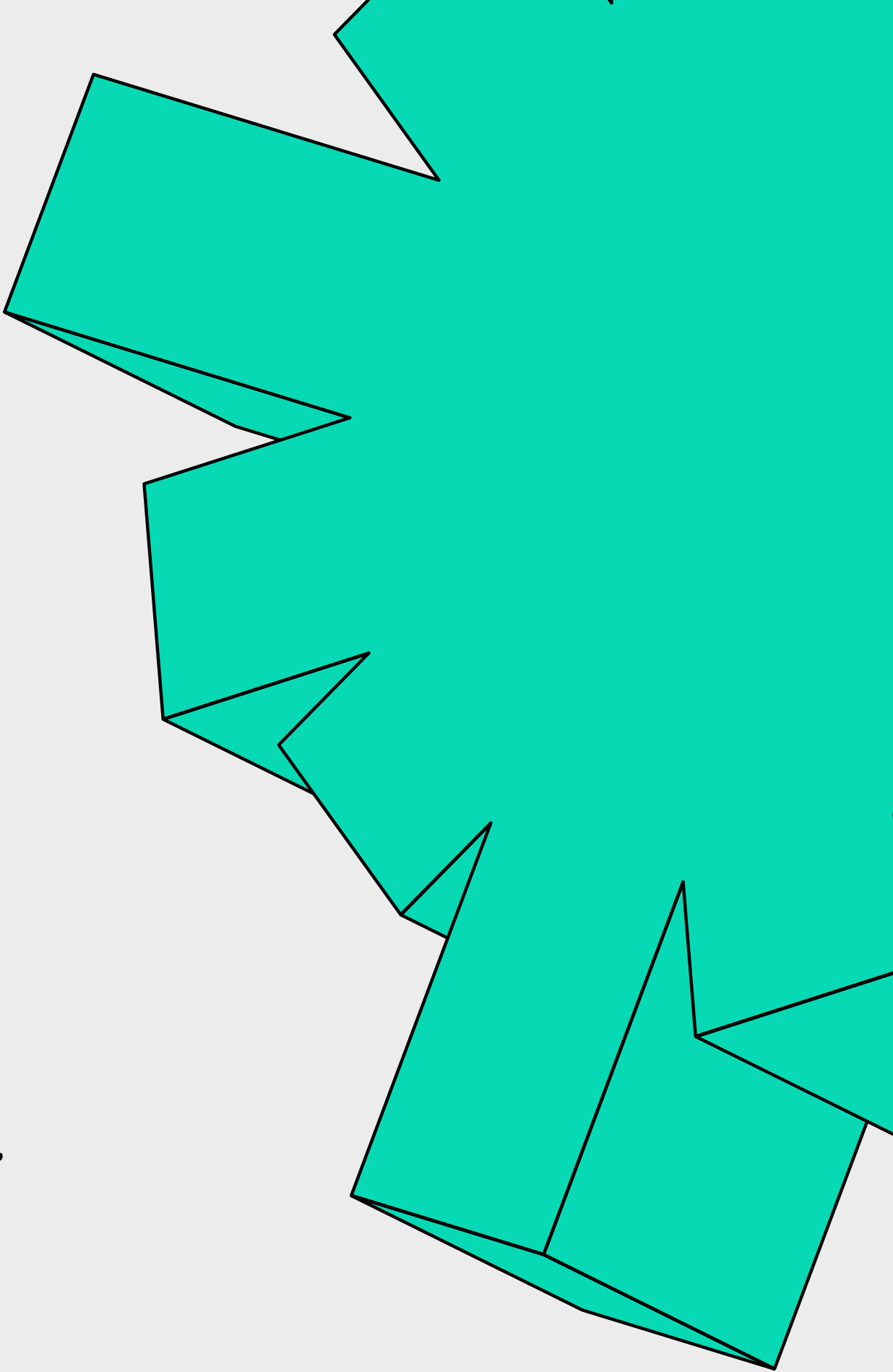
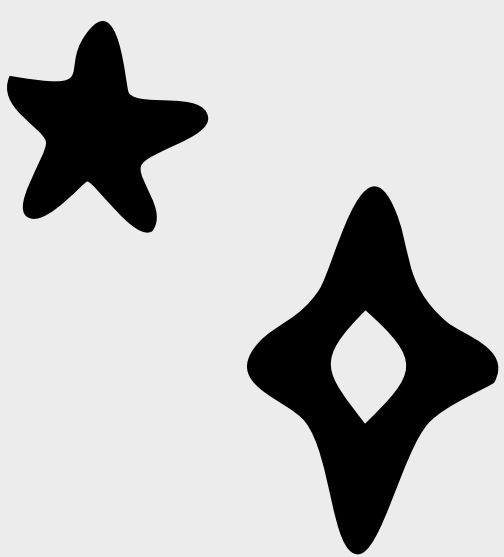
Our Building Happier Futures Advisory Group:

- Bring the voice of lived experience to our work
- Advise on the development and strategic intent of the John Lewis Partnership’s Building Happier Futures programme,
- Bring the voice of lived experience to our work
- Regularly reflect on our progress, offering thoughtful challenge and guidance to help Building Happier Futures stay true to its purpose.
- Are ambassadors for the broader social change we’re collectively trying to achieve

Thank you to:

- Sarah Thomas - CEO, The Fostering Network
- Vivien Waterfield CBE - Deputy CEO, Home-Start UK
- Mark Riddell MBE - National Adviser for Care Leavers, Department for Education
- Louise Hunter - CEO, Who Cares? Scotland
- Ashley John-Baptiste - Broadcast Journalist, Presenter and care experienced author
- Cerys Shepherd - Director of Fundraising, Become
- Rebekah Pierre - Deputy Director, Article 39, care experienced author and campaigner

- Anela Anwar - CEO, Become
- Alison Delaney - Founder and Director, Little Bird People Development
- Fatima Whitbread MBE - Founder and Chair, Fatima’s UK Campaign
- Dame Rachel de Souza - Children’s Commissioner for England
- Amber Henshaw - Deputy Director: External Affairs, Children’s Commissioner
- Gillian Hosier - Head of Philanthropy and Events, The Open University
- Paul Carberry - CEO, Action for Children



LOOKING AHEAD

“Looking ahead, I can tell you that this journey is far from over. This report shows the incredible steps we’ve taken together, but for me, it’s also a powerful reminder that we’re not done yet.

The work of Building Happier Futures is about creating a better world, and I’m so proud to be part of the vision for what’s next. Our focus now is on what matters most:

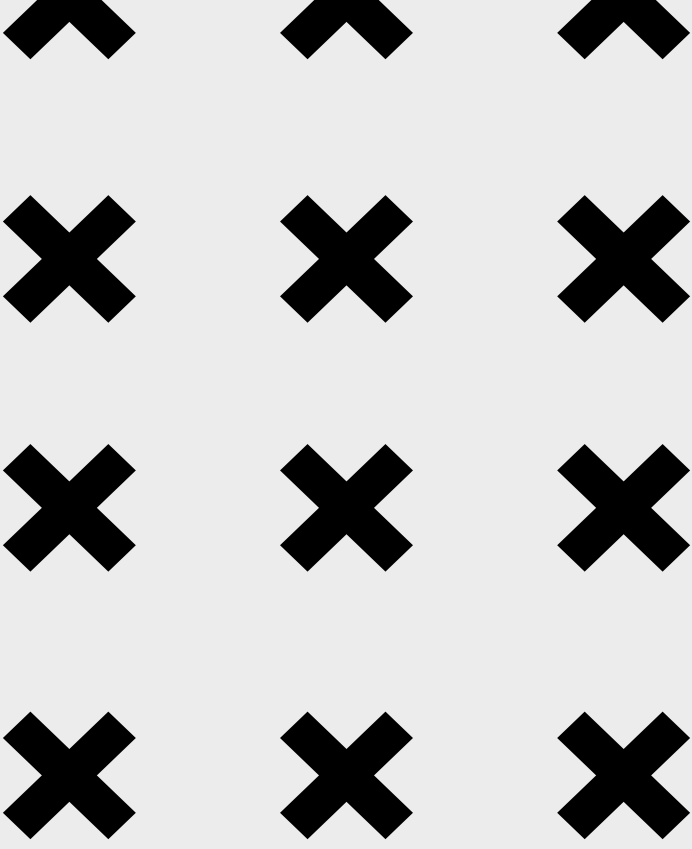
Deepening Our Support: We’re going to keep building on the programmes that have made such a difference in my life and the lives of so many others. It’s about making sure that the right help is there for even more people, exactly when they need it.

Amplifying Our Voices: My story is just one of many, and I know the best way to create real change is by making sure every voice like mine is heard. We’ll be using our platform to advocate for policies and changes that can truly transform the care system from within.

Challenging the System: I know firsthand that a care background can bring unique challenges. We have to keep challenging the barriers that can hold us back, pushing for a future where opportunity is a given, not a fight.

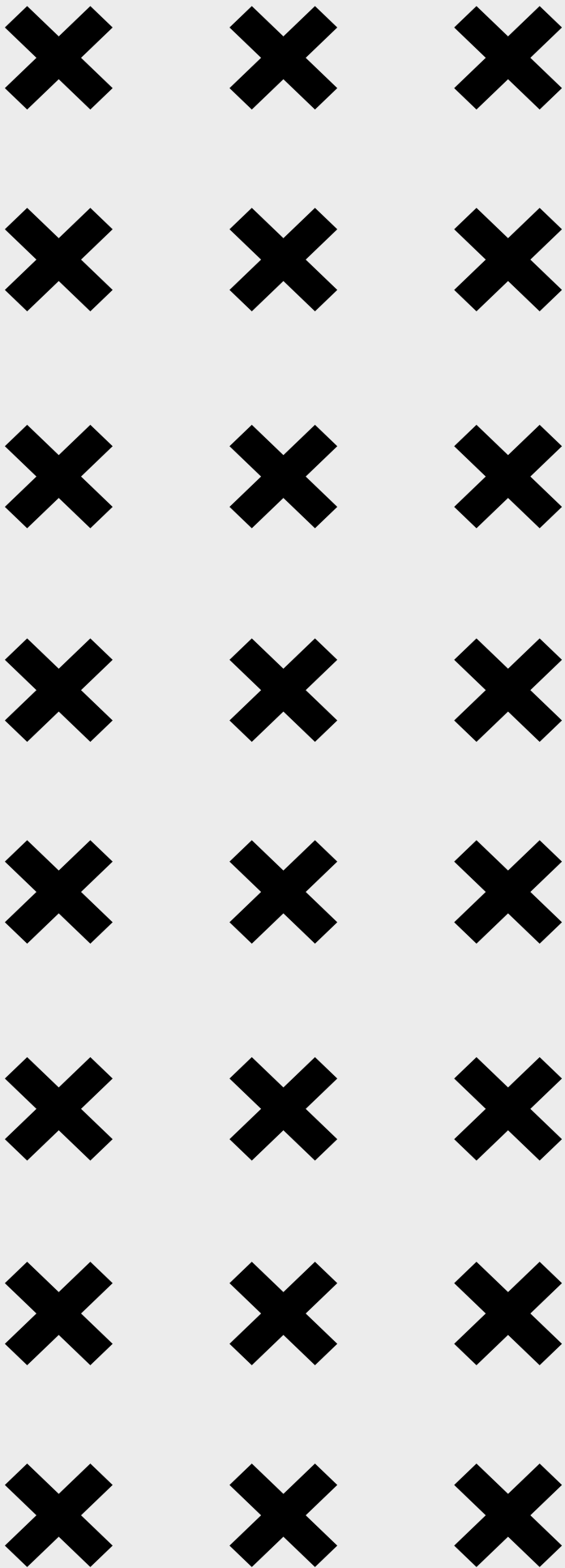
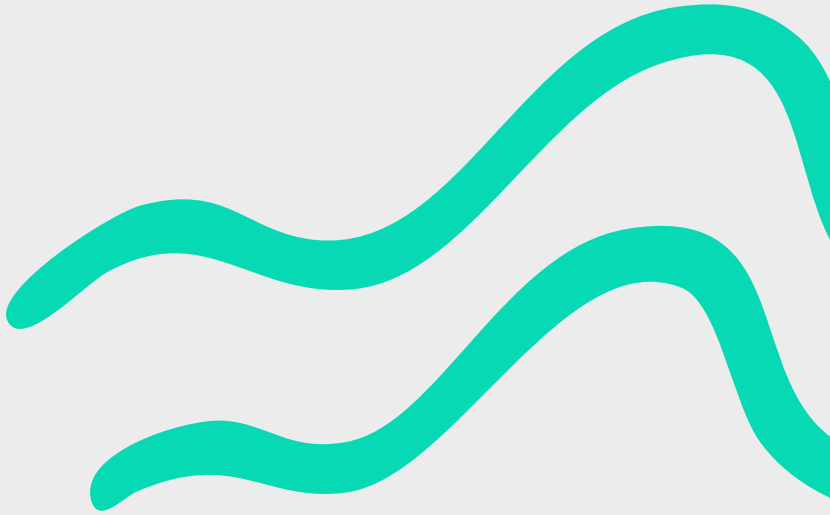
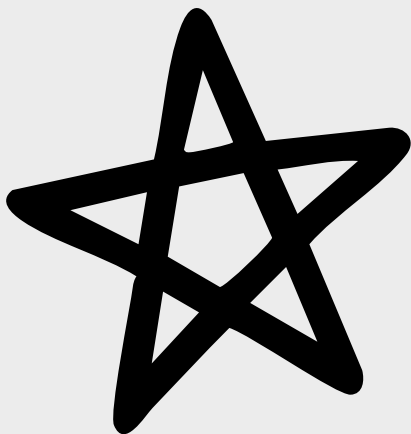
Thank you for your support, and for believing in us. I’m excited for what’s to come, and I’m proud to be part of this incredible journey toward a happier and more equitable future for all”

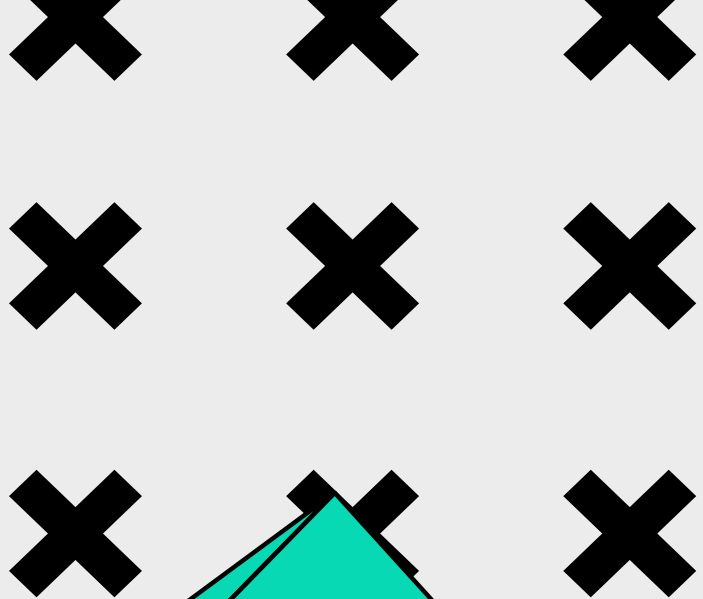
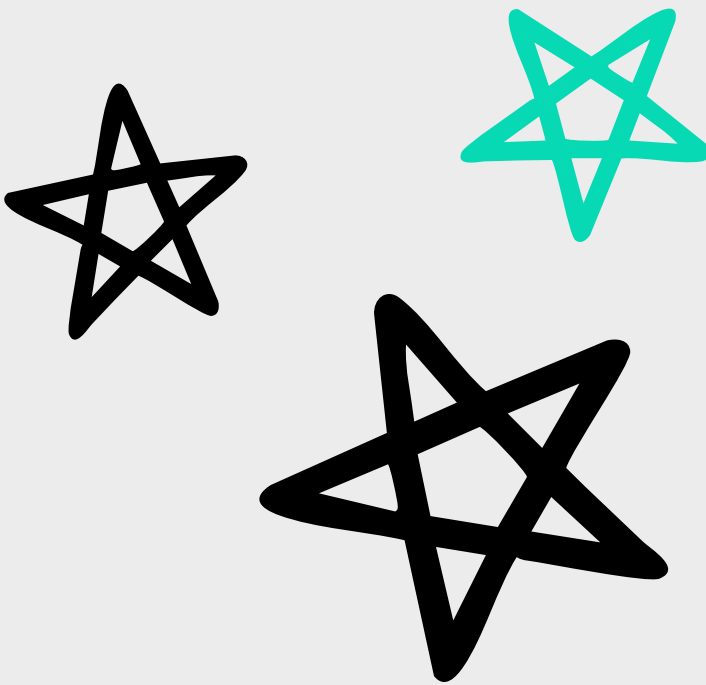
Kim, Partner and Customer Assistant, John Lewis





“The work of Building Happier Futures is about creating a better world, and I’m so proud to be part of the vision for what’s next.”





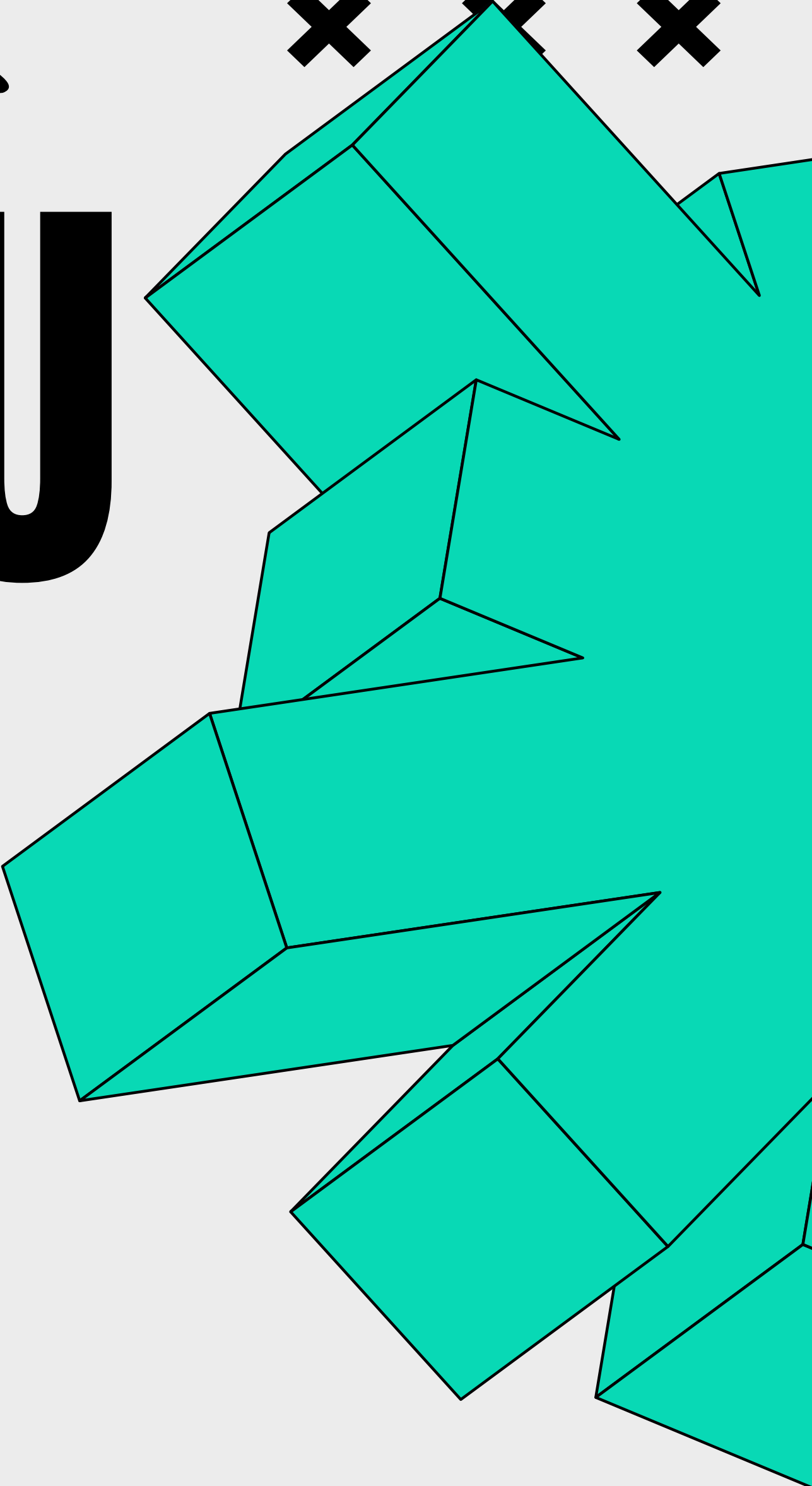
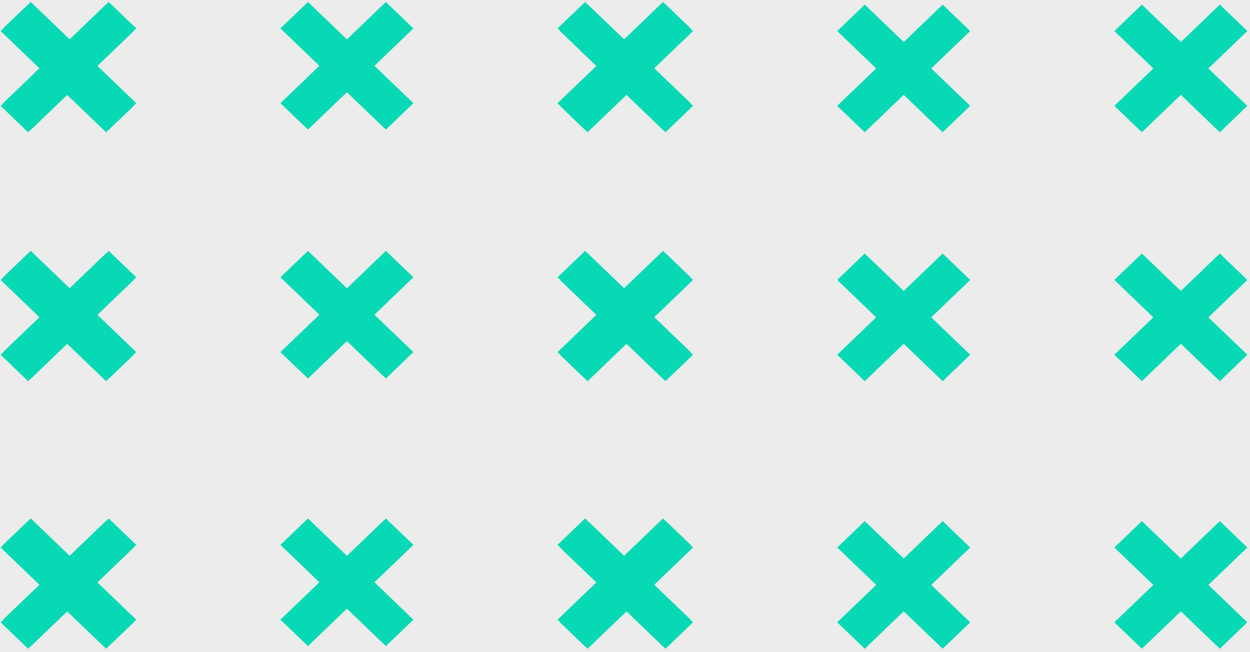
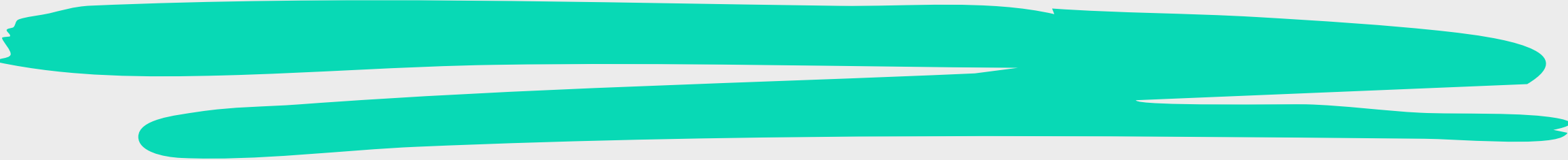
THANK YOU

We're grateful to the organisations we collaborate with in our shared mission to build happier futures for care experienced people. A heartfelt thank you to care experienced people for sharing your talents, insights and ideas with us.

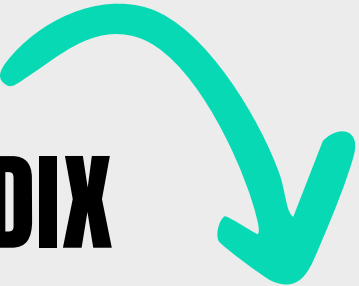
Get in touch:

If you'd like to find out more about Building Happier Futures, please email: careexperience@johnlewis.co.uk

If you'd like an audio or simple text version of this report, please contact: careexperience@johnlewis.co.uk



APPENDIX



ABOUT

Our Purpose:



OUR MISSION: To be the employer of choice. Building Happier Futures was founded to ensure a care experienced background is never a barrier to opportunity.

HOW WE WORK...



Employability Programmes

We offer work experience, interview coaching, apprenticeships, and career opportunities.

[LINK](#)

Peer Network

We connect individuals with a supportive network and mentorship through our Care Experience Network.

How to Support

We champion changes for a better care system.

Fundraising

We fund UK projects to provide education, connection, experience and fun for care experienced people.

Made by Care

We create a product range in collaboration with care experienced designers to raise funds and awareness



EMPLOYMENT

KEY STAGES...



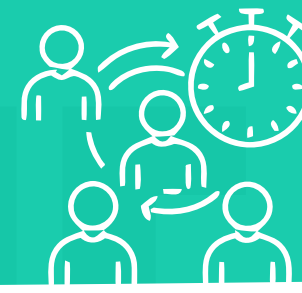
Care Aware Training:

We believe that understanding is the first step. Before anyone meets a candidate, all teams involved in the programme attend a “Care Aware” training session. Devised and facilitated by the charity Who Cares? Scotland, this training ensures our teams have a greater understanding of the challenges our community may face and how to offer the best support.



Welcome Tour:

You’ll be invited to a welcome tour at one of our locations. This isn’t a formal interview. It’s a relaxed, informal session where we’ll show you around, explain the different roles we have, and give you a feel for our Partnership culture. We even encourage you to bring a support person along to help you feel more comfortable.



Work Experience:

You’ll then take part in a 3 to 5 day work experience. During this time, you’ll be paired with a buddy who will guide you and show you what a day in the life of their role is really like.

Work experience includes an interview skills workshop with coaching and tips on interview technique. We can introduce you to the person who’ll be interviewing you and show you the room where the interview will take place to help you feel familiar for your future interview.



Guaranteed Interview:

Interviews are guaranteed if you’ve completed work experience.

As is standard for the John Lewis Partnership, interview questions are shared in advance to reduce anxiety and enable preparation.

If you do well and there’s a suitable role available, your work experience could lead to a job offer.



Since launching our employability programme, we have helped 1254 care experienced individuals to break down barriers to employment and access a range of opportunities to support their future.

Through our partnership with John Lewis, we run our John Lewis Partnership Office, which provides a range of support and advice to our care experienced individuals across our locations.

Contact our dedicated team of advisors, who have supported over 1254 care experienced individuals to participate in our employability Welcome Tours and 838 in our Work Experience days. This has led to 331 roles being offered to the community so far.

Here’s a breakdown of the key stages:

Ongoing support:

Once you accept a job offer and become a Partner (employee), your journey with us is just beginning. We provide ongoing support to help you settle in and thrive in your new role. See what the ongoing support includes: [pop out](#)

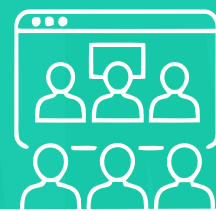
EMDI OVERABILITY

ONGOING SUPPORT...



Dedicated Buddy:

You will be paired with a dedicated buddy who will continue to support you beyond your initial training period. They will be there to answer questions, introduce you to other Partners, and help you navigate your first few months.



Access to Our Care Experience Network:

You'll have the opportunity to join our dedicated Care Experienced Network. This internal community provides a safe and supportive space where you can connect with other Partners who have similar backgrounds. The network is a place to share experiences, offer advice, and build lasting friendships, helping you feel a sense of belonging within the Partnership.



Wellbeing Offer:

We offer free access to our in-house confidential counselling and wellbeing services. These services are available to all Partners and can provide support for a wide range of issues, from mental health to financial worries.



John Lewis Partnership Benefits:

As a co-owner of the business, you'll gain access to a range of exclusive benefits, including a discount at John Lewis and Waitrose, access to our holiday hotels, and opportunities to get involved in sports and leisure clubs.



Since launching the Building Happier Futures employment programme in October 2022, we've made it our mission to break down barriers and create a dedicated pathway to opportunity for care experienced people.

Through our structured programme, which we run in our John Lewis and Waitrose shops, Head Office, Contact Centres, Supply Chain and hotel locations, we've had over 1254 care experienced individuals participate in our employability Welcome Tours and 838 in our Work Experience days. This has led to 331 roles being offered to the community so far.

Ongoing support:

Once you accept a job offer and become a Partner (employee), your journey with us is just beginning. We provide ongoing support to help you settle in and thrive in your new role. See what the ongoing support includes: [pop out](#)