



# Homes and Horizons

## Making collaboration more than words: developing an enduring delivery partnership in Somerset

Strategic Partnership between Somerset Foundation Trust, Somerset Council & The Shaw Trust. Supporting children with complex needs including homes, high needs fostering and therapeutic education.

**Claudine Brown** - Head of CAMHS and Interim Head of Paediatrics

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**Claire Winter** – Executive Director, Children's Services

ACHIEVEMENT  
AWARDS 2023  
IMJ

Innovation in Partnerships

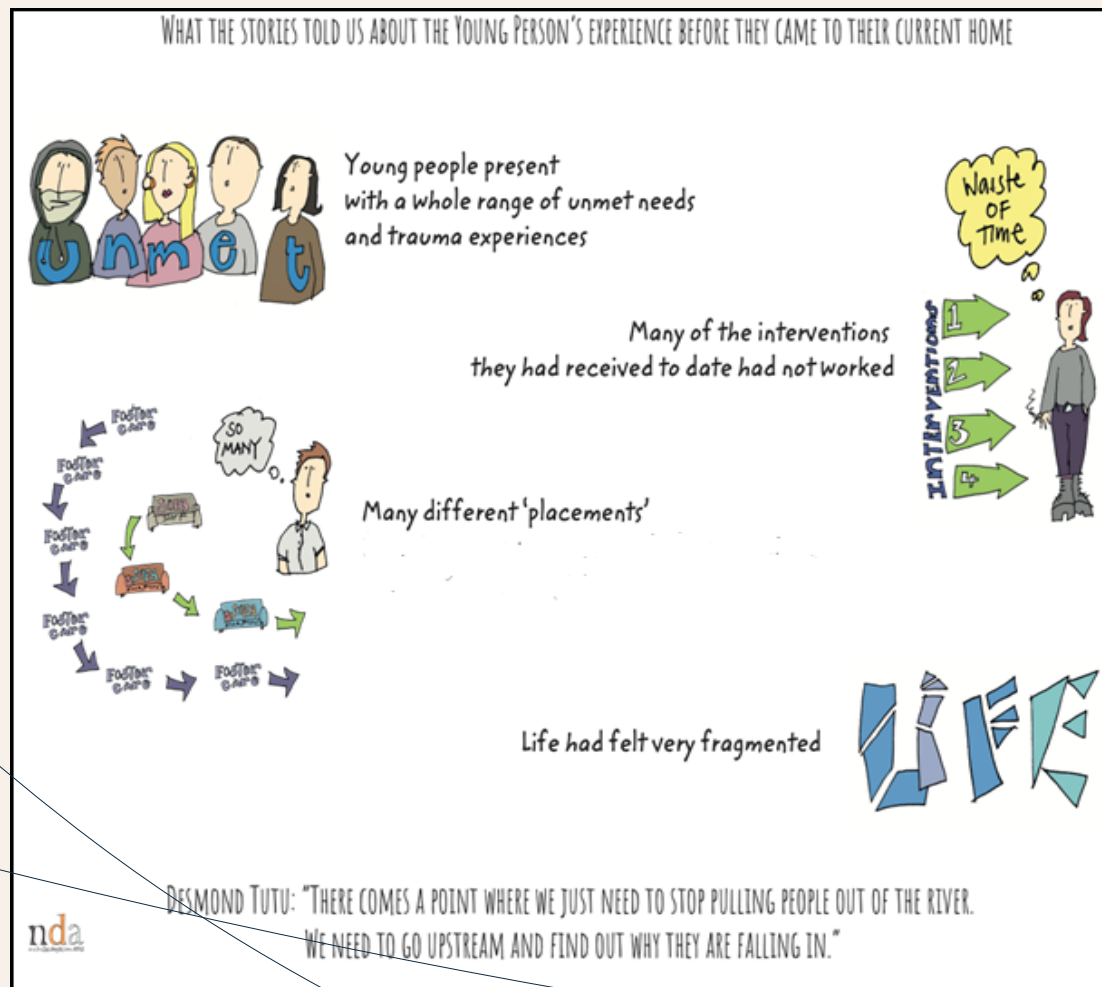
**WINNER**



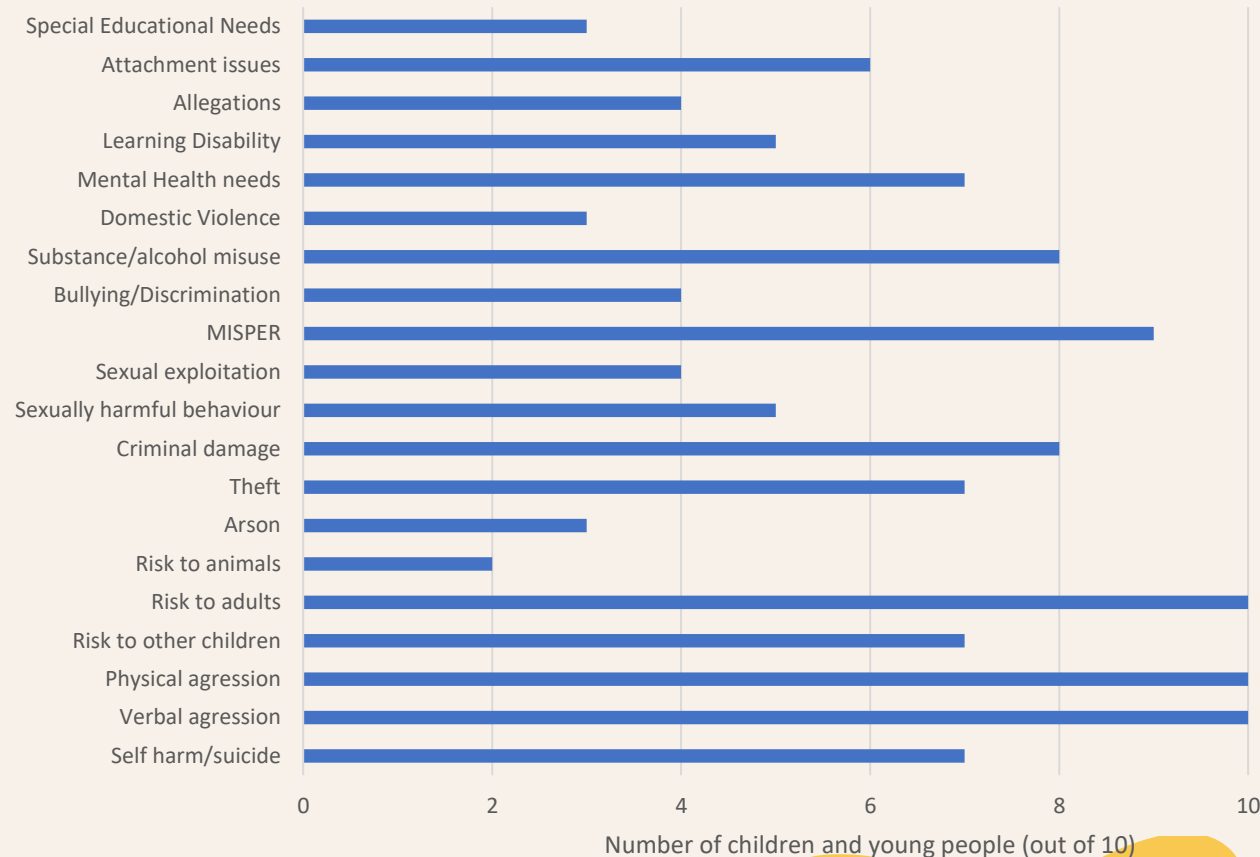


**Homes and  
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# Why was it needed?



## Analysis of 10 Crisis Placements: presenting needs on placement



- Need to do something different to ensure there are enough high-quality homes for our most vulnerable young people.
- Costs are rising, outcomes aren't improving.
- Lack of choice results in children living far away from home, family, friends and school.



# First Principles of Care

For those with acute need - 70% of our young people have DoL order when they first make a home with us

Young people co-produced and supported

Stickability and relational stability

Sharing risk (when supporting young people & financial)

Long term outcomes, not short term KPIs (Human Learning Approach)

Joint management & partnership work with MDTs

Avoiding cliff edges with a pathway of support





# What does it look like?

Up to 10 children's homes  
High needs fostering  
Therapeutic education (new SAT)

10-year contract  
Property owned by SCC

Strategic Partner

Address excessive profit levels

Integrated management with  
children's services  
Human learning system approach

Competitive dialogue Approach (Independently evaluated - IPC)  
Creating 'buy-in' across finance, property, procurement and external partners



# System change

The marketplace for children's care is broken.

We can evidence through delivery how to mitigate this through partnership, integrated services and innovation, while reducing costs.

**Innovation is critical.** Innovation funding has been used to add a local mentoring provision and an integrated approach for care leavers with resilience coaching added in, which has smoothed the join between formally commissioned services, leading to longer term positive outcomes for the children.



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*A Strategic Partnership between SomersetFT,  
SC & The Shaw Trust. Supporting children with  
complex needs including homes, high needs  
fostering and therapeutic education*

Links to other education provisions. Our provision focuses on therapeutic care with the curriculum constructed by specialists. This provision will run for 50 weeks in a year.



Therapeutic  
Education  
**2 schools**



**8-10 homes**  
Residential  
Homes



**20 carers**  
High Needs  
Fostering

All our homes will be 2 or 3 beds. The homes will have constant communication with our school, CAHMS, and our HNF service to ensure that children are in the right place at the right time

We are recruiting High Needs Foster Carers who will be able to link with our homes and school, providing every opportunity to help our YP have a loving home environment







- Partnership formed in April 2022
- Purchased 8 homes (with Planning in place & building work complete at 7).
- 14 young people in the first 7 homes.
- 2 DfE Innovation capital and Stay close funding secured (totalling £4.3m)
- Registered Manager recruitment & support workers trained. Over 100 staff, trained through joint model. Recruitment is an ongoing challenge.
- 5 Foster carers supporting children.
- Therapeutic education staff in place and all young people engaged with some education activity.



**Progress to date**



# Homes and Horizons



## Rose's Experiences

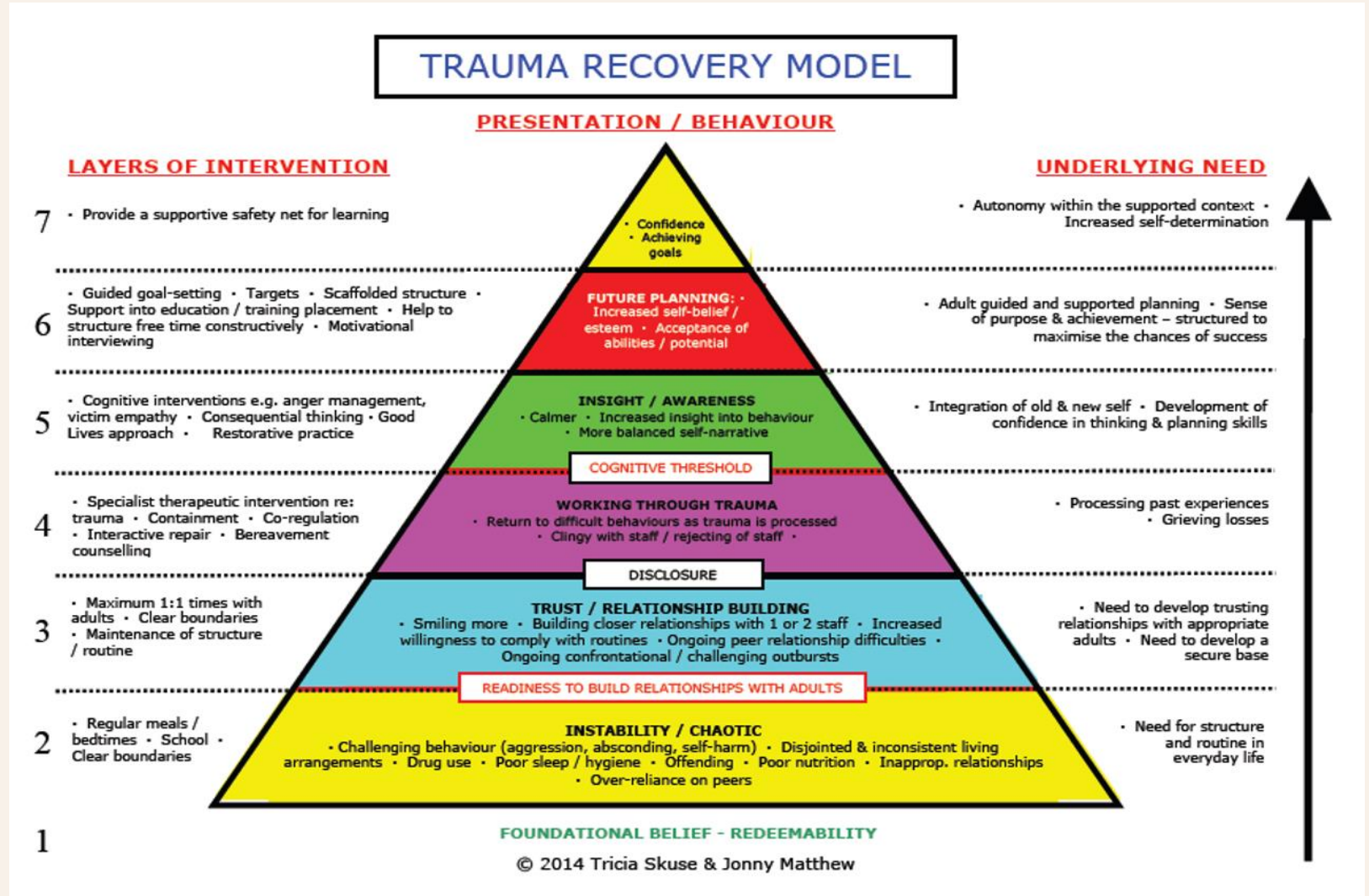
- 4 ½ months on a paediatric ward, and 1 month on CAMHS ward.
- Unregulated provision broken down, after second self harm event.
- Similar challenges faced within H&H home.
- CAMHS joint working; and share risk management.
- After 2 months self harm has significantly reduced.
- Challenges to support good eating and exercise routines.
- Support is being delivered in a Community setting and she sees the H&H home as her home, which she wants to return to.
- Re-integrate into mainstream education and college.



# Changing Our Scripts...finding a shared language

They need urgent therapy....but CAMHS won't help

They're not able to engage...they need to be more settled first





# Therapeutic Education

# Learning from:

- Hope House Services
- No Wrong Door
- Trevone House



Home / Placement

Breakdown

Education





# Therapeutic Education

Misterton site – 1<sup>st</sup> of 2 planned locations

Multi-disciplinary Team (50% CAMHS funded)

10 young people start education on 5<sup>th</sup> September with a fulltime offer.

8 are regularly engaging with school and therapeutic activity.

Timetables and progress plans being developed to plot pathways back into mainstream and local SEND provision.

‘Community’ approach and relational security.

Not a ‘secure’ or ‘typical PRU provision

2<sup>nd</sup> School site due to open in September



# What young people tell us about our school

*I come to MLC because I have struggled going to a mainstream school. I like the way the teachers adapt to me and my needs and difficulties.*

*The difference is in a mainstream school its 6 hours a day in a classroom having to learn things and not putting students' mental health and needs first but in MLC as it's a therapeutic school they understand and put your feelings first and try and help with struggles. It's had a positive impact on me as I can learn in my own way and at my own pace.*

CW female Age 14

*Firstly, I'd just like to be heard on how not all the kids in this school have the same needs as kids in mainstream. And we've probably all had a bit different lives than most mainstream kids and this school helps us in so many ways. There all qualified and educated on how to meet our needs so in a way this school could have a massive impact in these children's lives creating their futures and making this world a better place.*

FR Male age 16

*MLC is a great school for me. I have struggled in the past with mainstream schools and the teachers here are very adaptable and friendly, the school has a very positive impact on my life and has helped me with my anxiety and lots of my other struggles.*

BH male Age 16



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# The importance of family life

## Onward progression

80% of children spend time with foster carers or shared care with family within 12 months of moving to a residential home. 40% of children return home to their family.

x2 YP supported into Supported Accommodation

x2 Young people supported back to family

x1 Young person into Fostering Provision



## Destinations





# Impacts

## **Fewer children in out of County placements and in unregistered provision**

This was a particular challenge identified at the last Somerset OFSTED inspection (2022) was “*the need for greater ‘placement sufficiency for older children with complex needs’*. A key initiative in building this sufficiency has been Homes and Horizons, a ten-year strategic partnership” (p45, [Somerset Council - CIPFA External Assurance Review](#), 2025).

## **Financials**

Not only has H&H helped us find homes for children, but it has significantly reduced the amounts we would have otherwise spent on expensive unregistered and out of County provision. *Projected cost avoidance through this better value approach is projected as £1.8 million in 2024/25* (p45, [Somerset Council - CIPFA External Assurance Review](#), 2025).

Reported in the media at: [Experts identify 45 financial risks at Somerset Council - BBC News](#)



# What is our impact?

**Social value of children in homes with better outcomes for our children**

One child had 14 placement moves in the previous 12 months before moving into a H&H home in April

**Improved education and lifelong learning impacts**

All our children were not engaged in education before moving to us, and now all engage with at least some education provision.

**Social Impact**

**Social Investment Fund**

Fund set up, focused on improved outcomes for children leaving care (estimated value £1.7m)

**Savings and Sector Impact**

Financial sustainability of partners and changing the sector through OFSTED and DfE engagement



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# Challenges and responses

## **Recruiting staff**

*Career pathways into Education, social work & fostering*

## **Ongoing construction delays and stressed corporate support capacity within LA**

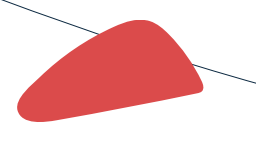
*Innovative planning approach and project resource*

## **Poor progress into education & employment for young people**

*Focus on longer term outcomes not short term KPIs*

*Innovation fund focusing on career pathways*

*Therapeutic Education Provision*





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## Questions?

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**shaw  
trust**



**Fostering  
to Inspire**

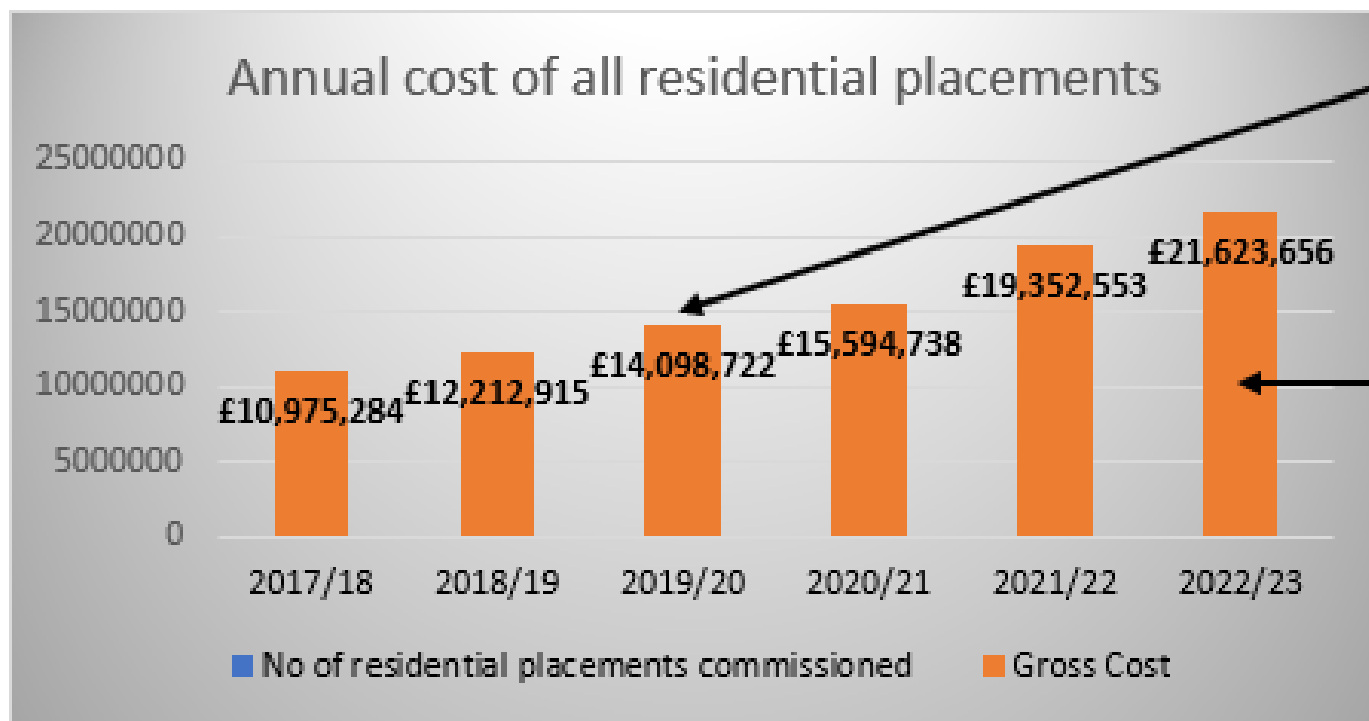












## Financials

Homes in 2023/24 – saving +£2M system costs (£1.8m to CSC) with a similar projected revenue saving projected for 2024/25

Education provision needed for fostering 'move on' and further savings are made by education costs being far less than an independent provision costing £90k per place.

These cost savings are based on revenue and do not include capital investment (Somerset Council has invested over £3m in buying and renovating homes)





## Post 16 'staying close' Pod design

- For a staying close model, with young people staying for around 6 months as they develop the life skills as a stepping-stone to independence.
- A simple design with similar facilities as supported accommodation in Somerset aids move on (also reflected in furniture)
- Providing separation and separate grounds to the main house to develop independence





## Assessment & stepping stone Annex

- When we need to manage assessments and matching issues
- Short term stepping stone home
- Integrated staffing with homes
- Plan to utilise permitted development route and container construction to limit build time at homes.

