

Community Impact Fund Autumn 2024 – Care Leavers Case Studies

In the Autumn 2024 round of the Community Impact Fund, we prioritised projects working with care leavers.

Below are some case studies from some organisations working with care leavers that were funded during this round.

Manifestive CIC – Future Flourish Youth Development Programme

This youth-led program involves twelve vulnerable young people, identified as care leavers, taking part in a ten-week intensive course. The primary focus is to significantly improve young people's health and wellbeing and remove financial barriers to accessing wellbeing activities, such as exercise, engaging with local community projects and creative sessions. The program also focuses on education, employment and subsequent financial stability.

The group has completed two sessions so far, with positive results and feedback. One participant commented, "it's only 2 sessions in and I am already feeling so much more confident". Another responded, "we're making new friends, and I feel like we'll be in touch for the rest of our lives." A good level of engagement has resulted in the program being oversubscribed and there is now a waiting list of individuals.

Freedom Church – Not Forgotten

Not Forgotten was set up to support care leavers who find themselves moving into their own accommodation by providing them with a starter pack. This consists of essentials such as bedding, kitchen items, towels and some snacks. The ages of these young people vary from 17-24, but all have experienced difficulties in their early childhood and now must make the transition to living independently. This is often with little or no family support.

The feedback received has been positive from both professionals and the young people themselves. One professional responded, "I would like to say a BIG thank you to Not Forgotten. I have several starter packs for my young people, and I can say every one of them has been so happy and appreciative of it." One young person described the starter pack as a "magician's hat" as they couldn't believe the number of items that came out of the box and commented, "it's like they know exactly what I needed!"

NYAS – Side by Side Wirral

This project supports care leavers as they begin to live independently by pairing a young person with a volunteer mentor, who helps support their transition out of care. They also celebrate achievements, provide praise and encouragement, which in turn improves the young person's self-esteem, self-worth and self-confidence. The project aims to support young people to become more resilient, better manage their wellbeing and protect their mental health moving forward. This Side by Side journey is tailored to the needs, ambitions and wishes of each young person.

Daniel is a care leaver who has been diagnosed with autism and has struggled with his mental health. NYAS paired Daniel with a Side-by-Side volunteer who shares a love for nature and has similar musical interests. Daniel's family have said that they "genuinely don't know where we would be without the ongoing support from this organisation and the incredible volunteer, who Daniel refers to as his best friend. Daniel has benefited greatly from the companionship and was given the opportunity to express his feelings to someone other than his family. NYAS and Side by Side has been a blessing beyond words. The impact is immeasurable and cannot truly be captured in words."