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# Chairs' Welcome

An increasingly active ICHA brings you its fourth newsletter, complete with updates from organisations including the 'new' Ofsted and latest news on national and cross-regional initiatives.

Just released, and included in this issue, the ministerial division of responsibilities; with the split between Jim Knight MP (Minister of State for Schools and Learners) and Beverley Hughes (Minister of State for Children, Young People and Families), ICHA begs the question: Will we actually get the integrated approach for Children's Services we had hoped for...?

The DfES has strongly encouraged the development of the National Contract, which is due to be implemented in September 2007, for 12 month's trial prior to the first review. ICHA has actively been involved in the development of this suite of contracts since November 2006, advocating on behalf of providers and looking to ensure that there is more emphasis on partnership and shared responsibility of both purchasers and providers. ICHA would like to thank Tracy Bowers and Sika Smith in particular for their parts in driving forward the National Contract in such a professional and constructive manner and Jonathan Stanley for his unfailing ability to remain calm, understanding and supportive from his unique 'neutral' position in the debates and discussions over the past months



ICHA encourages its members to use the National Contract and stresses how important it is that providers continue to feedback on the use of the contract when in place so that constructive comments and suggestions can be included in the initial review. ICHA believes that inter-agency co-operation, full participation and involvement of children and young people and the development of relationships through open and honest discussion is critical to achieving best outcomes.

The shared Chair role works well for ICHA, with each of us working to our strengths. Our different but complementary styles also help to promote a more broad view of ICHA and its membership and our weekly conference calls always have a crowded agenda. The identification a permanent part-time, executive officer in conjunction with further planned developments at the heart of ICHA operations, will enable us to keep

up the pace and step up activities to further promote residential care as a positive option within the spectrum of care for children and young people.

Membership is increasing steadily and more people are using the discussion forums on the website. If you want to join in – log on, sign up and give it a try! In addition to imparting information, it has the potential to become a really valuable tool for exchanging ideas and solutions to problems, especially if you are out there feeling isolated and beset by the many challenges facing us all at this time!

Membership – Wales. We are looking forward to the free event in Cardiff (details in this edition) and the establishment of the Welsh Independent Children's Homes Association, which we believe will bring mutual benefits for both Welsh and English Providers. The ICHA committee fully supports this event and encourages providers from both sides of the border to attend.

Finally, a warm welcome to our new committee member – Anthony Walters from Abronah Care. We look forward to your valuable contribution as an active committee member in the coming months.

**Alison, Danny & Viv**  
Co-Chairs



## Diary dates

**Next committee meeting:**  
4 September 2007, Birmingham

**Next members' meeting:**  
3 October 2007, Leamington Spa  
We are pleased to announce that Ofsted will attend for a 1.5 hour slot of Q&A's for members. You are also reminded that Ofsted would like to receive all details of any issues or compliments (names, dates, times, specifics) – please forward these to the ICHA office and Alison will ensure they are passed on through our Ofsted contacts.

**ICHA Conference:**  
Wednesday 27 February 2008, London.

ICHA are pleased to announce that we are partnering Care and Health and the theme will be Investing in Children – further details to follow within the next month.

# Political Report

The long-awaited transition from Tony Blair to Gordon Brown has led to major changes in the Department for Education and Skills. The DfES has been split into two new departments: one dealing with Innovation, Universities and Skills and the other, the New Department for Children, Schools and Families. The latter will take charge of the government's policy towards Children in Care.

The new Secretary of State for this department is Ed Balls, a long-time lieutenant of Gordon Brown. His appointment is, therefore, a powerful sign of the Prime Minister's commitment to investing in social justice at an early age. Parmjit Dhandu, whom we met for a very useful discussion, has apparently been replaced by Kevin Brennan, the MP for Cardiff West.

Any policy changes are unclear. All we know is that the Department continues to be responsible for the White Paper "Care Matters: Time for Change," which was released by the former Education Secretary Alan Johnson just before the accession of the reshuffle.

The White Paper sets out how the government will seek improve the education of children in

care. It aims to increase support for children and young people in care across all children's services. Specific education proposals include: a £500 educational allowance for children in care at risk of falling behind at school; putting the 'designated teacher' on a statutory footing to improve the expertise in schools; appointing 'virtual school heads' to oversee their education; improving attendance and reducing exclusions; reducing mobility of school placements, particularly in the crucial years before GCSEs;

and a bursary of a minimum of £2,000 for all children in care who go on to university.

It is highly likely that the reshuffle will not alter the government's strong commitment to improving the position of children in care. The Association will seek to present its views to the new Minister as well as his counterparts in the other main parties.

**Gary Kent**



## Gary Kent our political lobbyist – brief profile

Gary Kent has worked in Parliament for two decades and is also active in providing solidarity to Iraqi civil society organisations and seeking to increase integrated education between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland.

## ICHA promotes the formation of Welsh Association of Independent Children's Homes

The Children's Residential Services Forum:

Invite you to the launch of The Welsh Independent Children's Homes Association to be held on Wednesday 19th September at The Marriott Hotel Cardiff

The Independent Children's Homes Association welcomes the views of the Welsh Assembly and is honored to invite all independent Providers in Wales to come together with the aim of providing a clear voice for all Independent Children's Homes in Wales.

It is a priority for the Welsh Assembly Government to ensure that children who are looked after have a stable life and a brighter future. The Assembly Government has and will continue to take steps to secure these objectives and improve outcomes for children. These are long term ambitions and are dependent on the commitment and engagement of all key stakeholders across the public, private and voluntary sectors.

The Assembly Government recognise and support the central role and contribution of children's homes as well as strengthening and improving the provision in Wales. The aim is to make sure that every children's homes in Wales is actively engaged in delivering the best outcomes for children in Wales.

Speakers on the day will include representatives from WAG and the independent sector.

To book your Free place please call The Icha Office on 01948 830008 or email [admin@icha.org.uk](mailto:admin@icha.org.uk). Closing date 20th August 2007.



# Bollington's care leavers scheme goes from strength to strength

In our last newsletter we told you that the Bollington Group, the UK's leading children's home insurance broker, has launched a career bursary programme to help people leaving care begin a career in the insurance sector.

Since then, the scheme has proved successful, despite the loss of one of the care leavers who decided that insurance wasn't for him. The other three trainees have settled in well and are ahead of where they would be expected to be at this stage of their development.

The scheme is designed as a two year training scheme, leading to an appropriate qualification, and gives the trainees the chance to develop a career in insurance or in a related area such as IT.

If the scheme continues to prove a success then Bollington will be looking to provide opportunities for more care leavers.

Paul Moors, Chairman of Bollington said: "We are very pleased with the start each of the three trainees has made. They have adapted

well to the disciplines of a working environment and are keen to progress and learn. The signs are very encouraging that this scheme will prove to be a success and an example for other firms to follow."



# The West Midlands Children's Commissioning Partnership becomes a DfES Regional Commissioning Pilot

The West Midlands Children's Commissioning Partnership is one of six regions in England to receive funding to develop innovative regional commissioning arrangements. The developments in the West Midlands will be significant for both providers and local authorities and will include placements for looked after children and young people placed in residential schools from September 2007. This will be extended to other services and will eventually be used to commission all children's services. The system can be described as a Care Provider

Sourcing and Management Process that allows children to fulfill their full potential - a "matching engine". We are developing this as a public/private partnership to create a system we believe will have major benefits for both providers, local authorities and will improve outcomes for young people.

Bidding to become a DfES pilot has meant that the last few weeks have been extremely busy. We are therefore delighted to announce that we recently appointed a Project Manager who will be responsible for driving forward the work of the

Partnership and the new DfES pilot. Mark Thomas, took up his new post on 1st June 2007. Mark will be known to most ICHA members as a former Treasurer of the Association. Working in partnership with providers has been one of the main principles underpinning the WMCCP and we were really pleased that the successful candidate will be seconded from his employment with a provider. We wish Mark well in his new role.

We held the WMCCP Provider Forum on 4th July at the Centennial Centre in Birmingham to let providers know more about the DfES pilot and the development of the "matching engine". The system, which will be formally evaluated by the DfES from January 2008, has the potential to be rolled out nationally.

Provider input to the development is important and we hope to receive further feedback from ICHA, NASS and the Forum of Independent Foster Providers around the concept and the ideas behind the "matching engine".

The WMCCP has until now been structured around four key work streams which have

had representation from ICHA members. The timescale for implementing the regional pilot means that we need to find new ways of working as the implementation milestones are challenging with a launch date in September 2007. We will review the work streams and develop a new structure during the next few weeks that will allow us to work smarter. We want to continue to involve providers at every stage and we will use the ICHA weekly bulletins and quarterly newsletters to communicate with members about future arrangements.

The work stream responsible for developing the outcomes framework has completed this work which will now link with the development of the national contract for residential care. The outcomes framework will also be a major component of the "matching engine" we are developing. We will make this available soon in a web-based format so that providers and local authorities can make use of the information.

To feedback or for further information about the project please contact Jane Shepherd [jane.shepherd@dial.pipex.com](mailto:jane.shepherd@dial.pipex.com)



# The abilities of residential child care

'Contestability' sounds like a word from the football manager Ian Dowie. You must have heard of his invented word 'bouncebackability'? If not then as soon as you read it you know what it means. Residential work has always needed plenty of it, never more so than over the past few months when 'contestability' has been high on the agenda. 'Contestability' is not a synonym for competition but rather refers to a situation where a provider faces a credible threat of competition. As the relationship between the administration of finance and child care are so closely linked in residential work whenever we are discussing one we must be doing the other. In fact you can't do one without the other.

Let NCERCC as an outside observer applaud the work of ICHA's three co-chairs for articulating both whilst emphasising the child care case in many long meetings over the last months.

The place of Residential Child care in services for children is always the result of dialogue and an essential part of the work is keeping communication open. These last two words are crucial. A break in communication always precedes a more visible breakdown in relationship. Keeping it open means ensuring everything is available for discussion, stating the obvious, the known knowns and unknowns and being open to what we do

not know. That there is nothing that cannot be unspoken is an essential prerequisite for successful Residential Child Care.

So the theme for your representatives, and others including NCERCC, has been of holding on to the breadth of the residential role and task. Throughout the recent discussions, for example regarding the National



Occupational Standards and the national contract, it is the role and task of residential work that is being discussed.

At such times holding on to that combination of administration and practice cannot be compromised without letting go the primary task of the work. NCERCC has its own valued independence from which it can offer observations. NCERCC

has observed that in these times of change and stress there is a trend of providers not engaging as directly as much as previously. The large engagement with the consultation on the national contract bucks the trend true, but the NOS and others have struggled to get a response. NCERCC appreciates the reasons, it understands work and survival are dominating daily life for many providers.

NCERCC is encouraging providers to be resilient (a NCERCC discussion paper will be with you shortly on this subject, and you can keep up to date with the NCERCC work plan and new practice materials via the website), to get in touch with your 'bouncebackability.'

This is a time when empowerment and equity as much as efficiency can be on any agenda. This

can be seen in the forthcoming reconstituting of the national contract working group. With the focus now on implementation and monitoring the need for a balance of representation is necessary if all each of the three elements is to be in balance.

ICHA is an important voice and having your representatives active is important. You have that for sure with Vivien, Danny and Alison. Observing from outside NCERCC can see that the sustainability of their activity also requires ICHA taking strategic decisions as to involvement, that others join them. The need for vision, skills, incentive, resources and action planning are all present in the residential sector. Your knowledge, experience and expertise are needed.

Yes the sector is stretched yet it is still responding positively. Recently NCERCC and Fostering Network were asked to make a presentation to a North West providers forum on the theme of a 'Celebration of Residential Child Care and Fostering. What a delight it was to have the opportunity to report the wide and significant developments made since NMS. So to everyone, everywhere – well done!

**Jonathan Stanley**  
NCERCC



## Ofsted

A new single inspectorate for children and learners came into being on 1st April 2007, with a mission to raise standards and improve lives.

The new Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills is still known as Ofsted. It retains one of the best known and trusted names in the public sector. Its vision is to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages, through inspection and regulation.

There are significant challenges ahead for the new Ofsted which brought together the Adult Learning Inspectorate, work from the Commission for Social

Care Inspection and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Court Administration, and the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) into a single inspectorate for children and learners of all ages.

The reach of this new single inspectorate is extensive - the new Ofsted touches the lives of more than one third of the population of England. This puts us in a position to make a difference to the lives of many millions of our fellow citizens, of all ages. It is a privilege and a great responsibility.

The inspection and regulatory work of the new Ofsted covers child-minding and day care; social care



services for children including children's homes, family centres, adoption and fostering services; the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service. The organisation also inspects

schools; initial teacher training; colleges and 14 – 19 provision; work-based learning and funded training; adult and community learning, and Children's Services in local authorities.

The post of the Children's Rights Director (CRD) has also transferred from the Commission for Social Care Inspection to Ofsted. The role of the Children's Rights Director is to provide a voice for disadvantaged children.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills, Christine Gilbert, said:

"The reach of the new inspectorate is extensive. At least one person in three makes use of the services we shall inspect or regulate. This puts us in a position to make a difference to the lives of many millions of our fellow-citizens, of all ages. This is a privilege, and a great responsibility."

(Ed.: ICHA is pleased to announce that Christine Gilbert has accepted an invitation to speak about Ofsted, one year on, at the ICHA conference in London on February 27th 2008. Further details to follow)

# National Contract

The working group which drafted the Framework met at the end of June, to receive the feedback from the consultation and begin work to amend the Framework in response. The response to the consultation, both at events and by questionnaire, has been detailed and constructive and was welcomed by the working group. There was a lot of consistency in the responses from both commissioners and providers.

Common ground continues to be the essence of the work between providers and commissioners involved in the group which is addressing care, education specifications as well as Terms and Conditions.

The working group was actively seeking solutions for the small number of areas that still need defining or clarifying. Feedback told the group that the benefits of the contract included consistency, promoting quality and good

outcomes, fewer fee disputes, standard conditions shared between purchasers and providers, reduction in administration and a common language and clearer understanding. Concerns about termination, price and insurance clauses have been addressed by the group along with those about the capacity and monitoring of data.

'The ease of use was foremost in the mind of the working group. The work of the development group should be completed during June and there should be opportunity for some further regional consultation with both commissioners and providers', said Jonathan Stanley of NCERCC.

The plan is to redraft the Framework and develop a monitoring framework over the next three months. The launch of the Framework is planned for September 2007.



An implementation and monitoring group will be set up. This will be representative of providers and commissioners. This group will monitor the implementation over the first twelve months and will review the Framework in September 2008. Consultation with young people will take place during this twelve month period.

## ICHA comment on the National Contract:

ICHA supports the use of the National Contract and encourages constructive feedback and positive suggestions for ways forward, particularly in the 12 month period that constitutes the 'pilot' phase. ICHA will continue to be a portal for communication and will collate and submit any feedback from members. The entire process of consultation and collaborative working has been a great example of how purchasers and providers can work together and achieve a greater understanding of each other's perspective and it has been encouraging to note that where compromise has been sought and agreed, the defining factor has been the consideration of the children and young people, who need to remain protected and respected throughout. We fully support participation & feedback from the young people's consultation mentioned in the press release above.

# Success of Funding Bid

The South West has been successful in obtaining £75k funding from the DFES under their Regional Commissioning Unit Pilot for Children's Services. The South West Centre of Excellence coordinated the bid on behalf of the Region's Directors of Children's Services. Added to the existing funding of £300k from the SWCoE the extra money will permit greater support for Sub-Regional projects such as Placement Tendering in the Peninsula, Residential Tendering between seven authorities in the North of the Region, and partnering with Independent and Non-maintained Schools for residential SEN placements. Under-pinning these activities will be a new Collaborative Commissioning Support Unit and the regional Commissioning Forum and Provider Forum, both of which have met in the last month. The South West continues to work with Eastern, East Midlands and South East Regions within the Cross Regional Placement Database (also the subject of a successful bid) and with Sub-Regional systems such as that in the Peninsula in developing an innovative version of a "Matching Engine", an IT system to facilitate easier and better placement, and to support Commissioning. The "Matching Engine" is a key required part of the DFES bid.

## Supersonic? CWDC news

What do Marilyn Monroe, John Lennon and Malcolm X have in common? Well, yes they're famous people but that's not the interesting thing. The answer is that they are people who experienced some type of Care, as were many comic book superheroes like Superman and Spiderman. This elite list also contains the names of fictional characters such as Tracy Beaker and Harry Potter as well as some mythological/religious figures. It would seem that these are individuals who are able to break through any barriers that may come with that Care experience and pursue goals and achieve success. This has become the inspiration for ANV's Supersonic campaign. ...to find out more, log onto <http://www.anationalvoice.org/>

### The final draft standards NOS Leadership & Management (Revision of National Occupational Standards for Registered Managers of Adult Social Care and Managers of Residential Child Care

Skills for Care and Development is the Sector Skills Council for social care, children's and young peoples workforces within the UK. It is an alliance of five organisations:

- Care Council for Wales
- Children's Workforce Development Council
- Northern Ireland Social Care Council
- Scottish Social Services Council
- Skills for Care

Skills for Care and Development is developing National Occupational Standards for Leadership & Management for Care Services. The Task & Finish Group met on July 12th. The final draft standards have been agreed and sign-off has been requested (deadline 27th July 2007) by all partner organisations, as listed above.

The next stage will be to send them to the UKCG (United Kingdom Co-ordinating Group) in September for accreditation. They then go out to the awarding bodies, with the expectation of release in April 2008. Thanks to all who participated in the consultation events and/or contributed feedback via e-mail, telephone calls or on-line consultation. This has been very useful.

Further details or queries may be directed to:

Louise Kershaw  
Development Manager Standards & Qualifications/Skills & Learning  
Children's Workforce Development Council  
Direct Line: 0113 390 7772  
Fax: 0113 390 7744  
Website: [www.cwdcouncil.org.uk](http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk)

# Ministerial Responsibilities: Department For Children, Schools and Families

## Rt Hon Ed Balls MP

Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families The SoS is responsible for all the Department's policies

### Jim Knight MP

Minister of State for Schools and Learners

- School standards
- Ofsted and school improvement
- National curriculum 5-19, including assessment and liaison with QCA
- Personalised learning
- 14-19 curriculum, qualification and delivery programme
- Work-based learning for 14-19s, financial support for 16-19s
- School funding
- School admissions
- School governance
- Schools' capital and BSF
- Teachers and workforce issues including pensions and GTC
- PREVENT strategy/counter-terrorism/community cohesion
- Raising the participation age
- School trips/Education outside the Classroom
- Olympics
- ICT, digital curriculum, Teachers' TV and e-strategy
- Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM)
- Parental engagement in schools
- School Leadership including NCSL
- New Relationship with Schools
- Local authority funding (with Beverley Hughes)
- Black Country Challenge

### Lord Andrew Adonis

Parliamentary Undersecretary of State for Schools and Learners

- House of Lords Spokesman
- Academies
- Trusts
- Specialist schools
- School Organisation
- Class sizes
- Supporting Jim Knight on 14-19 qualifications
- 16-19 Reorganisations, including school 6th Forms
- Primary schools and National Strategies oversight
- Failing schools
- Performance tables
- Special Educational Needs and disabled children
- Independent schools
- Boarding schools
- Gifted and talented
- Specialist Schools and Academies Trust
- Music and dance scheme
- School transport
- Pupil health and safety
- Music
- Freedom of Information
- London Challenge

### Rt Hon Beverley Hughes MP

Minister of State for Children, Young People and Families

- Youth and Youth Justice
- Children's views/Children and Youth Board
- Child poverty
- Parenting and families strategy
- Financial capability (across the board, including in schools)
- Early learning and development, Curriculum 0-5
- Extended schools
- Children's Centres
- NEETs
- Ofsted re children's services
- UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children)
- Childcare Act 2006 implementation
- Children's Trusts
- Every Child Matters finance
- ECM inspection and intervention
- ECM commissioning and market development
- ECM communications
- Local government policy
- Government offices and field forces
- Teenage pregnancy strategy
- Domestic violence
- Young people's Information Advice and Guidance
- Social Exclusion
- Knowledge for improvement
- Local authority funding (with Jim Knight)
- Manchester Challenge

### Kevin Brennan MP

Parliamentary Undersecretary of State for Children, Young People and Families

- Safeguarding and child protection including Vetting and barring scheme
- Children in Care, Fostering and adoption
- Supporting Beverley Hughes on Youth Justice Board
- Behaviour and attendance, bullying
- PRUs
- Respect
- Health issues including school food, Healthy Schools, obesity, drugs and alcohol
- Sport and Youth Sport Trust, Playing for Success
- Efficiency
- Children's workforce
- Parent Know-How
- Parenting Fund
- CAF (Common Assessment Framework) and Lead Professional
- Contact Point
- Sustainability and environment
- Young carers
- Asylum seeking children
- CAFCASS and family law
- Third sector

## New Members

ICHA is pleased to welcome 6 new members since the publication of the Handbook in May:

Arch Young Adults Project - Stoke on Trent  
Pilgrims Corner Ltd - Kent  
Cromlet Care - Kent  
Lynstead Children's Services - Kent  
Hillcrest Care - West Sussex  
A Wilderness Way T/A Wilderness Experiences - Carlisle

We additionally have several applications currently being processed. Enquiries about membership can be directed to [admin@icha.org.uk](mailto:admin@icha.org.uk) or by telephoning 01948 830008. We have a website with a dedicated members' area and encourage members to make suggestions and comments to further improve membership benefits. 01948 830008

## What is LILAC?

Well in a nutshell it is an exciting new pilot project and is the ultimate form of participation.

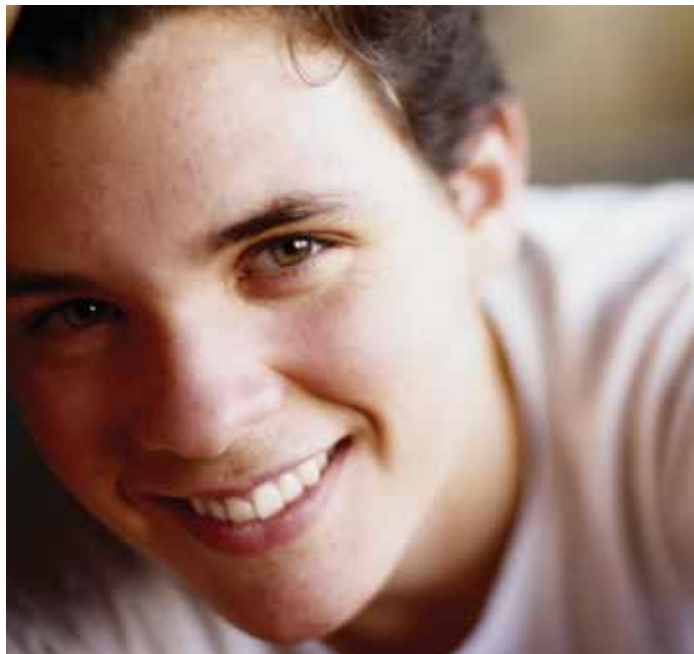
## Why is this?

Because it draws upon the experience and expertise of care experienced young people to improve the policy & practice of local authorities of how they consult with their looked after children and care leavers. If you like, they are experts by experience.

LILAC stands for **Lifelong Improvements for Looked After-Children**. It is a groundbreaking initiative in which young people, who have spent a large part of their own lives in care, have been trained to be inspectors of two pilot local authorities' care services. The two local authorities who had kindly volunteered to be involved & inspected were West Sussex Social Services & the City of York. Pioneered by the care-leavers group, A National Voice (ANV), the LILAC inspections have concentrated on how well local authorities involve their looked-after children in the following key areas:

- The involvement of service users in the planning and evaluation of services
- The involvement of service users in developing and reviewing individual packages of care
- The effectiveness of mechanisms to handle complaints & advocacy

Back In September of last year, Lucy Smith (LILAC Project Co-ordinator) and Simon Nixon (the Young Person's Involvement Worker for ANV) short-listed 15 young people from all the applicants. Having done telephone interviews, they then selected their final ten young people, all of whom were from different parts of the country. It is important to mention that these young people have their own unique care experiences, whether this was living in a residential home, being fostered, fostered then adopted, moving placement a couple of times or, in one case, being moved 27 times. This mixture of life experience alongside their own individual personalities & expertise, contributed to a well rounded team of individuals who would be able to offer their own unique take on things.



Lucy's and Simon's choice in young people proved to be well chosen, as was demonstrated over both of the training weekends in October and November of last year, and throughout the whole project.

The first weekend looked at 'What is LILAC?', 'What is participation?' & 'What to do next?'.

The second training weekend was more "full on" and involved the young people coming up with their own set of standards. This was quite a challenge but with the help of NYAS's Hear by Right standards as a guide &, of course, the enthusiasm of the young people, they came up their own unique set of standards.

A few more training days in York followed on from these training weekends; these were designed to thoroughly look through the standards and finalise them and to also look at the methodology side of things, such as the content of the staff and young people questionnaires. Issues of confidentiality and transference were also discussed

All that was left to do now was for Lucy and an inspector to liaise with both contacts at West Sussex and York Social Services. This was so that the team could have pre-inspection material and to plan & organise both of the inspections.

West Sussex Children's Services was inspected in March and the City of York's Children's Services in April. Both of the inspections in general went very well! Lucy Smith (Project Co-ordinator) is currently finishing off writing a final inspection report for each local authority which will include key findings and recommendations, which she hopes will inspire both local authorities to improve any areas which have been highlighted.

In addition to this, the LILAC team successfully held a launch event at the House of Commons on Wednesday 6th June.

Key findings in the form of a six page report were given to invited professionals including the likes of David Kidney MP and Dame Denise Platt as well as staff and young people from the local authorities

There is still more work to be done with LILAC. From doing the inspections it is clear that there is a strong need for more work like this to be continued and developed. Afterall, the inspection team have been in care and are able to pinpoint the subtleties & intricacies that other 'traditional' inspectors may not be aware of.

In the words of one of the young people interviewed during the inspection "it's nice to be interviewed by young people from care rather than people in suits".

## Lucy Smith

LILAC Project Co-ordinator

For further information, contact [Martin.Hazelhurst@raineronline.org](mailto:Martin.Hazelhurst@raineronline.org) (Martin will be line managing the project from the end of July 2007 onwards).

# ICHA Committee Members 2007

## Chairs

### Danny Curran

Link for Press Releases  
& Nominated Spokesperson

### Vivien Snape

Link for NASS & potential partnerships  
Representative for NCERCC,  
WMC and National Contract

### Alison Trainor

Link for Political Lobbyist,  
Gary Kent  
Representative for publications  
Representative for Ofsted

## Treasurer

### Tom Starkey

Representative for CWDC, CSIW

## Membership Secretary

### Greg Watson

Representative for Members  
& Sponsors

## Committee Members

### Mike La-Borde

Representative for Website

### Karen Mitchell-Mellor

Representative for Children's  
Rights & Conference

### Peter O'Neil

Representative for Marketing  
& Conference

### Paul O'Leary

Representative for CRB

### Steve Shiner

Representative for Quality  
& Statistics

### Jim Sullivan

Representative for Staffing Issues

### Anthony Walters

Representative for Diversity  
and Equality

# ICHA comment: Intelligent spot-purchasing and value for money

With many of the “cost and volume block contract arrangements allegedly failing to meet the expected requirements of purchasers, ICHA appeals to Commissioners to engage in discussions with local providers to look at mutually beneficial arrangements for spot purchasing:

1. check out providers and resources in your local geographical area
2. develop open and honest relationships with providers – find out about experience and expertise – know the people behind the organisation
3. compare your identified needs with available provision

4. discuss gaps in provision with local providers – can they help?
5. highlight specialist needs & potential providers (may be National – the DfES has acknowledged (ref Ben Arora speaking at Child Placement conference on 3rd July 2007, LGA) that for SOME children, their needs dictate that they are best placed away from their home environment.
6. look at quality and cost with consideration to complexity of need
7. discuss how payment terms, commitment to length of placement, 2nd and subsequent concurrent placements of children with

- same provider, etc, may enable a provider to reduce vacancies and pass any savings on to purchasers
8. plan properly: with participation! (placements generally work a lot better when young people commit to them through having time, choice & support)
  9. minimise emergencies: maximise planning; true emergencies occur due to illness, accident, death, disclosure and other unforeseen circumstances or events – many “emergencies” are preceded by early warning signs and may be preventable – encourage a culture of early

identification and intervention and/or contingency planning before the situation becomes irreversible

10. monitor placements to ensure that Individual education plans and care plans are benchmarked and tracked to progress in line with individual outcomes

If you have a letter, comment or suggestion you would like to submit, please e-mail [admin@icha.org.uk](mailto:admin@icha.org.uk) with “newsletter comment” in the subject line. Submissions (name withheld, if requested) may be published subject to the discretion of the Committee.

## ICHA Solo Placements Case Resume

The following is a brief resume of an example of one of our member’s intervention with a young person in need of individual support.

It is, of necessity, anonymised and some details have been changed slightly.

Francis at the age of 11 years was living with Mum and two other siblings. His lifestyle was chaotic and he was in effect living unsupervised because of, amongst other things, Mum’s drug and alcohol dependency and her bipolar disorder.

Things came to a head when Francis went missing for three months. When eventually found, it was discovered he had been living rough, staying in sheds, parks and anywhere he could find.

He was placed in a secure unit on welfare grounds where he stayed eight months. His behaviour was extremely challenging, necessitating over 100 restraints during this period. Secure clearly was not working for this young man and he was moved to a private provider directly from secure.

A solo placement was decided upon because of the exceptional needs of this young man. Total lack of boundaries and his semi-feral lifestyle indicated that a placement in a standard children’s home would not be appropriate and could not meet his needs.

This was agreed by the placing

authority and the provider with the emphasis of the placement being on addressing absconsions and intimidating behaviours.

Mental health input was arranged through an existing contract in place with the provider and the young man moved to his placement shortly following his 12th birthday.

The impact of living in a small unit with two designated staff at all times was apparent. Clear boundaries were established and also included regular supervised contact with Mum. The relationship the team established with Mum was to prove crucial to the success of the placement and she seemed much happier to see her son in what she perceived as the more normal environment of a standard 3-bedroom house with her son being the only child living there.

The young man received a level of attention previously unknown to him. He was encouraged to become a child again and thrived on a new situation where there were no perceived expectations of behaviour (positive or negative) from staff or, more importantly, other children – thus allowing him to behave in a way reflecting his own needs.

The intensive input and support he received allowed him to develop mechanisms to deal with his behaviours. Importantly the close relationship he developed with staff was the key to all of the therapeutic work done with the young man.

Staff had the time to prepare him for sessions and support him afterwards.

Over the next two years, Francis’ behaviour changed dramatically. He attended school regularly and even developed his own mini business using skills he had learned from staff. His absconsions and threatening behaviours became a rarity and his mother was ecstatic to “get her little boy back again”.

The changes in the first 12 months were dramatic:

12 months prior to placement	12 months, post placement
Absconsions = Total 3 months	Absconsions = 3 days, 1 overnight
Restraints = 100+	Physical Interventions = 4

These figures speak for themselves. Such a dramatic turnaround, enabling this young man to move forward to a far more positive future would not have been possible in a larger unit with staffs’ attention being spread around. He remained a challenging young man but was clearly benefiting from such intensive input.

The Social Worker was happy with the placement and Francis’ progress.

It was at this point that the Local Authority decided to remove Francis back to home area,

despite recommendations to the contrary. This after the most settled two years since his early childhood. Mum was devastated.

Within 28 days he was moved to a multi-bedded unit and rapidly deteriorated. Staff tried to engage with him but the numbers of young people in the unit made close support impossible. Within six months he was regularly involved in the criminal justice system and was eventually tagged.

He is now almost stoical about his drift into the criminal justice system and is much less positive about his future, despite putting a brave face on it.

This is a young man of extremely high intelligence, a gift for I. T. and a flair for business. He, despite his difficulties, was engaged in education and was viewing his future with relish. He is now adrift and likely to become another statistic; another care leaver with low expectations ; a probable ‘client’ of the welfare and criminal justice provision for many years to come.

Does Every Child Matter?

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