



# Participation Opportunities for care leavers

Meet & Eat is a group of care leavers who meet up once a month. It's a chance to share your views about any challenges you experience as a care leaver, be listened to and together take forward any actions for change. By coming to Meet & Eat you are part of the Care Leavers Council.

You can also catch up with your Personal Advisor (PA), meet other care leavers and have a meal. Each Meet & Eat has an activity, visitor or theme too, if you have any ideas what you'd like us to include, let us know.

Every 3 months you also get to meet Senior Leaders, so ideas or issues can be shared, discussed and actions agreed to try and improve services.

Anyone who is 16yrs + preparing to leave care or a care leaver up to 25yrs is welcome. Come along, speak up and get involved.

## Newsletters

We send out newsletter every 3 months so you can find out what's been happening, upcoming activities, events, offers and opportunities. If you don't receive these, let us know so we can make sure you're on the mailing list.

## Messages from current members

As a care leaver it's important to me that everyone should be involved and feeling included, no matter who they are. Participation is not just about me, it's important for other young people who are younger. It's important for them to make sure that their experiences are better than it would have been a few years ago if we hadn't been involved. I've enjoyed interviewing for new staff at the council, we can tell them our experience and how they can make it different or better for someone else. I feel respected and valued, I feel I can speak and be honest about experiences. By sharing our experiences, I feel like we can be understood more, and staff have more knowledge to support young people, opportunities like this help to strengthen our voice and opportunities.

**Paris, care leaver & Member of Meet & Eat**

It is vitally important that everyone's views and experiences are heard whenever this is possible, and this is a fundamental part of the Meet & Eats which now incorporates the Care Leavers Council as well. Also, as part of Meet & Eats throughout my time this past year with being part of the Young Persons Benchmarking Forum, I have been able to bring back any relevant and useful information which has been heard nationally which we as a local authority should be able to do and implement. I also attend Corporate Parenting Panel as a care leaver representative. I attend Meet & Eat to make sure that any views are taken forward, are heard and at the heart of the council and corporate parenting. I feel that the Meet & Eat are a vital role in the participation of care leavers to make the differences that we need which will make all our lives a lot easier.

**Mark, care leaver member of Meet & Eat, Corporate Parenting Panel and NCLBF Legend**

Find out more about support for care leavers on the council website.

[www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/care-leavers](http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/care-leavers)



## Contact Details

To find out more about Meet & Eat and other opportunities talk to your PA.

Or contact

[clc.team@bracknellcareleaverscouncil.com](mailto:clc.team@bracknellcareleaverscouncil.com)  
or Louise MacLennan, Participation Officer  
[cyp.participation@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:cyp.participation@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)  
07825 682 524



## What we do and how can you get involved?

By raising issues and speaking up about things like extending council tax support for care leavers up to 25yrs and that care leavers should have priority for housing we have made some positive changes for all care leavers in Bracknell Forest. Help us make a change!

You can be a voice for care leavers by getting involved in national events through the National Leaving Care Benchmarking Forum and their young people's forum.

Sit on interview panels for new staff and use your knowledge and experience to help choose the right people to support other young people. We also share out top tips on how to be a great social worker.

Share your views in our care leavers survey so managers can understand more about your day-to-day experience, what's good about our services and what we could improve.

We celebrate National care leavers week each year, help us plan our events.

You can get involved by giving your views on other services too like our semi-independent accommodation and other services.

You can speak directly to managers at our Meet & Eats and there are opportunities to meet councillors by attending our Corporate Parenting Advocacy Board to make sure your views are heard at the top!

You can also get involved in work experience or volunteering opportunities within the council.

There are day trips and activities that we choose where you can get together with other care leavers, socialise, try something new like climbing, canoeing, ice skating. Come and join us.

## What we've been up to



Climbing, canoeing, cooking, socialising, having our say