

IRISH AFTERCARE NETWORK

Providing Support to People Working With Care Leavers

Dear Member,

We are happy to bring you updates on the work of the network and share interesting information since our last newsletter in March.

As always, if the network can help you in any way please get in touch, all our contact details are at the end of this newsletter.

AHB/Tusla CAS Accommodation for Care Leavers National Forum

A meeting of the AHB/Tusla CAS Accommodation for Care Leavers National Forum took place on May 27th in Tusla's headquarters in Dublin. The meeting was chaired by Neil Forsyth, Focus Ireland's Head of Youth Services and Chair of the Irish Aftercare Network. Neil took over as chair of the forum from William McNamara, Tusla's National Lead for Aftercare.

The forum was well attended by Tusla Aftercare Managers from around the country, Approved Housing Bodies and representatives from both the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth and the Department of Housing. William gave several updates to the forum, including the most up-to-date data in relation to acquisitions. To date, 153 units of accommodation across the country have been acquired under the Tusla CAS Scheme. The 2014 Joint Protocol with Local Authorities is being reviewed in line with a recommendation in the government's Youth Homelessness Strategy and Tusla is currently compiling data to inform a 2-year forecast of housing need among care-leavers.

Much of the discussion at the forum centred on the challenges faced by Tusla and AHBs in the operation of the scheme, especially with regard to acquisitions. The number of units acquired recently has been low, primarily due to the very challenging market conditions. However, only 4 AHBs have engaged with the scheme since its inception in 2017 and it was agreed that this is also a factor in the low level of acquisitions. The question of why this is the case was discussed at length. The Department of Housing representatives confirmed that a review of the Tusla CAS Circular will not take place until there is a better understanding of the reasons behind the low take-up by AHBs. To assist with gaining more insight in this regard, the Irish Council for Social Housing and the Housing Alliance, the two main representative bodies for AHBs in Ireland, will be invited to attend the next forum in September.

Finally, a number of operational issues were discussed and it was agreed that Tusla will develop Standard Operational Procedures over the coming months which will seek to

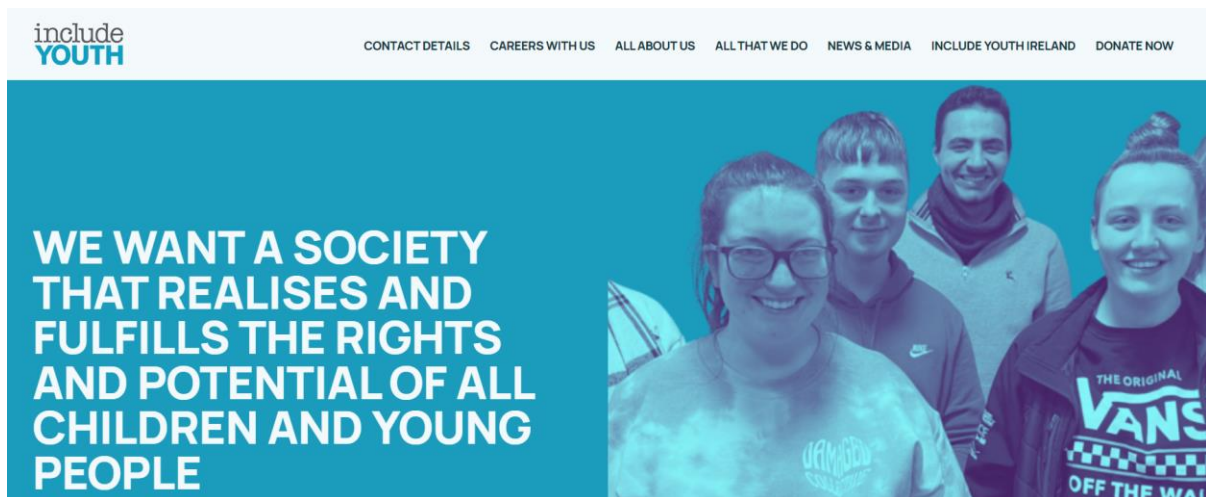
bring clarity to the relationship between the three main stakeholders - Tusla, AHBs and the Local Authorities - and address some of the gaps which have emerged in relation their respective roles and responsibilities vis-a-vis the support provided to young people who are allocated a Tusla/CAS property.



Review of approaches and models of partnership working TU Dublin

Please find a link to the summary report here

[Click here for report](#)



Include Youth Ireland

Recently established Include Youth Ireland, will have one base in Tallaght and a second base in Cavan supporting care experienced young people aged 16-21 through their youth work programme called “Give and Take”.

This is a 2-year pilot with TUSLA and they have employed two youth workers at each base.

The Give and Take programme is designed to empower and equip young people with essential life skills, qualifications, training and personal development.

Through the Give and Take programme, young people in these regions will have access to comprehensive personal development and employability skills training, tailored to their unique needs and aspirations. By providing practical tools, resources, and mentorship, Include Youth aims to enable participants to unlock their full potential and thrive.

[Include Youth Ireland - Include Youth](#)

Petition to Help End Youth Homelessness

Focus Ireland is partnering with Spunout to highlight youth homelessness and care leavers feature in the campaign. Neil Forsyth, Head of Youth Services, Focus Ireland and Chairperson of the Irish Aftercare Network shares what he thinks the Government needs to do more of in response to the housing crisis. Click on the link to view.

[@Focus Ireland Head of Youth Services Neil Forsyth discusses the links... | homeless in ireland | TikTok](#)



If you would like to sign the petition calling for housing specifically to meet the needs of vulnerable young people you can do so here

[Petition to Help End Youth Homelessness - spunout](#)

Upon completion this petition will be presented to the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

Staying Put programme in the UK

The European Journal of Homelessness published an examination of the Staying Put programme in the UK which is a type of extended care approach adopted in various countries across Europe. Staying Put has been in place since 2014 to ensure that young people have the right to stay with their foster families upon turning 18, if both parties agree. In this study, the impact of Staying Put on housing outcomes for young care leavers in England was evaluated. It found consistent evidence of the positive effects of Staying Put, recommended further funding and support be directed to Staying Put, and that longer-term analysis be conducted to further enhance the evidence base for extended care policies. [EJH_18-1_A06- A04_v02.pdf \(feantsaresearch.org\)](https://www.feantsaresearch.org/EJH_18-1_A06-A04_v02.pdf)

A roller-coaster Summer awaits young people in DNC aftercare


The last twelve months have seen a huge number of innovative projects relating to aftercare happen throughout the Country. Over the coming weeks there will be a day of fun provided to young people accessing aftercare in Tusla DNC where a visit to Emerald Park to try out all the new rollercoasters will take place. Over the coming months care leavers will be given the opportunity to engage in further dialogue with aftercare workers within the Tusla DNC region to further explore best practices and ways to improve the service, as well as focusing on all aspects of the aftercare service that are working well. This dialogue will happen later in the year and is being coordinated in conjunction with a Christmas party in December to offer young people a space to celebrate Christmas in an environment that is supportive of their needs. The roll out of a very successful laptop scheme, which saw all young people within full time education in the DNC region offered a laptop if they needed one, will also once again be offered to young people accessing full time education within the upcoming academic year.




We would love to hear about any other projects and forums taking place throughout the country that are enhancing the lives of young people in aftercare. If you are organising or are aware of future events taking place, please contact us so we can inform our members. Also, if any member would like to contribute to the next newsletter, please get in touch.

If any of your colleagues would like to become members of the network please send them this link:

<https://www.irishaftercare.com/membership-form/>

	<p style="text-align: center;">DATE FOR THE DIARY IRISH AFTERCARE NETWORK Online Members Webinar 9th September 2024 at 11am Decision Support Service</p> <p>The presentation will cover the key provisions of the Act, including the tiers of support, the guiding principles, the role of the DSS, the functional assessment of capacity, who is eligible to become a decision supporter, how they supervise decision supporters and investigate complaints about them.</p>
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	<p style="text-align: center;">DATE FOR THE DIARY IRISH AFTERCARE NETWORK ANNUAL CONFERENCE SHERATON HOTEL, ATHLONE 18th October 2024</p>
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	<p>Irish Aftercare Network LinkedIn Page We now have a new LinkedIn page to keep you all informed, please click the link below and follow us</p> <p>Irish Aftercare Network: LinkedIn</p>
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