

# North East ADCS Leading Children's Services

## North East ADCS Regional Sufficiency Position Statement Spring 2025

The Children's Services commissioning leads for the 12 north east local authorities work together collaboratively through the North East Association of Directors of Children's Services (NE ADCS) to share knowledge and learning and to seek collaborative solutions to the challenges we face. In this paper we have set out our collective view on the sufficiency of children's living arrangements in the north east, with the intention of opening up a different conversation with providers across the region about how we can work together to create the homes our children and young people need.

In the north east, there aren't always the right kinds of homes available for children and young people in our care. We want to work together with local providers to reconsider how we shape the market to ensure children and young people across the region are always able to live in the right type of home to support them and their needs.

### Context

This North East ADCS Regional Sufficiency Position Statement sets out the challenges faced by local authorities across the north east region when trying to find the right home for a cared for child or young person at the right time.

The statement was developed in response to increasing numbers of children and young people in our care living in residential children's homes when their needs could be met in a family environment, or being placed at distance from the north east region when they should be closer to their community.

Being placed at a distance away from extended family and their local community can have significant negative implications for children and young people's life outcomes, whilst also placing pressure on the public purse.

This statement sets out:

- The region's sufficiency needs and priorities; and
- How we will work in partnership with provider markets to develop solutions that provide positive outcomes for children and young people, and secure value for money.

This statement has been developed in the context of a series of national reviews looking at the needs, experiences and outcomes of children supported by social care and the expansion of the for-profit sector to meet children's accommodation needs.

This includes:

- [Independent review of children's social care: Final Report](#)
- [The Competition and Markets Authority - Children's Social Care Market Study](#)
- [Evidencing the outsourcing of social care provision in England \(Nuffield Foundation\)](#)

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Our north east local authorities are committed to working collaboratively to ensure any expansion of independent children's homes in the region meets the needs of local children and is in line with our strategy.

We will work with provider markets to determine what types of foster care, children's homes, supported accommodation and move on properties will be needed in the future and where they should be located across the north east region in line with our sufficiency needs.

### **Principles: how we want to work together in the north east**

Our commitment to collaborative commissioning across the north east region to meet our sufficiency needs is underpinned by the following principles:

- Children should be cared for in a family context where this is appropriate to their needs;
- Children should be cared for close to home, and connected with their extended families and communities wherever possible; and
- Children should be cared for in safe and stable homes that secure positive outcomes and represent value for money.

We want to actively promote the growth of the 'not for profit' sector and work in partnership with 'for profit' organisations who are agreeable to transparency relating to the true 'cost of care' and are committed to improving outcomes for our children.

### **Sufficiency Needs: what do we need more of in the north east?**

We don't always have enough of the right kind of living arrangements for our children and young people here in the north east. There are a number of areas where we'd like to improve the options available:

- fostering options for teenagers, emergency placements and sibling groups;
- fostering and residential placements for children with physical, learning disability and life limiting health needs;
- overnight short break facilities to meet demand, particularly for children with complex needs (neuro divergence and behaviours that challenge services);
- solo and 2 bedded homes to meet the needs of teenagers with complex trauma and emotional and mental health needs;
- providers of supported accommodation for 16/17-year-olds following the regulation of this sector; and
- 'move on' properties for 17- and 18-year-olds who do not require support to manage their own tenancy.

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### Sufficiency Priorities

Our region's 12 local authorities want to work in partnership with organisations who are committed to improving children's outcomes to progress the following priorities:

- Support the development / adaption of settings to support teenagers with complex trauma, emotional and mental health needs including expansion of solo / 2 bedded homes;
- Support the increase of available fostering and residential home options for children with physical, learning disability and life limiting health needs;
- Support the growth of overnight short break facilities to meet demand, particularly for children with complex needs (neuro divergence and behaviours that challenge services);
- Support the growth of Ofsted registered supported accommodation options for 16 / 17-year-olds and the provision of 'move on' properties for 17-year-olds and 18-year-old care leavers who do not require support to manage their own tenancy.

We already have examples of providers who are working collaboratively with north east local authorities to develop accommodation options linked specifically to local children's needs and we want to build upon this in 2025.

**This paper sets out a collective view from local authority children's commissioning leads in the north east, with full support from Directors of Children's Services. We want to hear from providers across the system about how we can best collaborate to ensure the market is able to support children and young people who need it the most.**

We want to work together with providers in the region to challenge preconceptions and existing ways of thinking and working, reframe our approach, share best practice and develop plans for how we can work together to provide the best arrangements for our children at the right time, in the right place.

Organisations who want to work with us are invited to attend coproduction events in May 2025. Leaders of existing providers will be contacted directly or for more information, contact [neadass-neadcs@durham.gov.uk](mailto:neadass-neadcs@durham.gov.uk)

Together we can develop a bold approach to re-shape the market across the north east.