



Some of Fostering North Yorkshire's carers with Stuart Carlton, Director of Children's Services (left), and Alan Tucker, Placement and Fostering Manager (right).

Annual conference celebrates the county's foster carers

Fostering North Yorkshire (FNY), part of North Yorkshire County Council, looks after around 300 children across the county at any one time – and it takes some very dedicated people to care for them.

The achievements of these foster carers were celebrated at FNY's annual conference, when more than 100 of them got together to reflect on another year of looking after some of the county's most vulnerable young people.

The fostering conference included seminars and group discussions, and in breaks the foster families got the

chance to share experiences and enjoy each other's company. The day ended with a presentation of long service awards to mark the foster carers' valued contribution to providing safe and secure homes for the county's looked-after children.

The presentations were made by the Director for Children's Services, Stuart Carlton, who said: "The conference has been a tremendous opportunity to share ideas and celebrate the care that foster carers offer every day, truly transforming the lives of our looked-after children."

FNY is committed to ensuring that the children and young people it looks after
Continued on page 2

In this issue

Click on the page numbers below to view those pages

MYPs choose issues for 2018



page

We can all help in spotting abuse



page

Help in making healthy choices



page

New community directory goes live



page

Board discusses annual review



page

Young people take concerns to the top



page



Retiring foster carers Keith and Gill at their Coxwold farm with some of the FNY team, who came to say a huge thank you to them for their 32 years of caring for some of the county's young people.

Annual conference celebrates the county's foster carers

From page 1

can stay in their local communities and its carers are given the best training available. They get knowledgeable support from locally based fostering social work teams; access to professional experts in education, mental and physical health; and specialist services for autism and speech and language where needed.

"Being a foster carer is an incredibly important job, helping to develop positive experiences and skills that have sometimes been missed out on earlier in life," said County Councillor Janet Sanderson, North Yorkshire's Executive Member for Children's Services.

"Foster carers who look after young

people for FNY come from many backgrounds, but one thing they have in common is a desire to make a difference to the lives of those they foster, and to help them through this difficult time in their lives."

Fostering with FNY also brings generous tax-free allowances. An FNY accredited carer receives more than £300 each week tax-free for fostering a child aged 11 to 15, equivalent to £15,785 a year (the example is based on a 52-week placement).

For more information, visit www.northyorks.gov.uk/fostering or call Fostering North Yorkshire on 01609 534654.

Hundreds unite for special service

More than 600 children and young people from military families came together for Ripon Cathedral's fifth annual Service of Remembrance.

More than 3,000 service pupils live in North Yorkshire, one of the largest groups in the country.

"Service children make a great contribution to their schools and communities," said County Councillor Janet Sanderson, North Yorkshire's Executive Member for the Children and Young People's Service. "They share their experiences of moving from place to place and their resilience in spending prolonged periods apart from loved ones. Changes in schools, friends and often countries are part of their normal lives. We are hugely proud of their contribution and we do everything we can at the County Council with our wider partners to support service children."

The County Council has expanded several of the county's primary schools and has also received extended funding from the Ministry of Defence for its two Service Pupil Champion posts. The two champions operate in areas where there is a concentration of service personnel, including Ripon, Dishforth, Catterick and Richmond and Bedale.

Board sets its priorities for 2018

The Children's Trust Board has agreed a set of priorities to focus on in 2018. The three priorities selected reflect the strategic outcomes of Young and Yorkshire 2 – a happy family life; a healthy start to life; and education as our greatest liberator.

The selected priorities are:

- child poverty and social mobility;
- social, emotional and mental health; and
- school readiness.

Read the rationale behind the selection of these priorities at <http://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/childrens-trust-agenda-papers>.

A sponsor will be identified for each priority to work alongside the County Council's strategic and performance team to undertake a review based on five themes: where we are now; where we want to be; progress update; challenges; and adding value.

MYPs choose two key issues for 2018

The UK Youth Parliament, including three members from North Yorkshire, has chosen to focus on lowering the voting age to 16 and a curriculum for life in 2018, following the Youth Parliament's ninth House of Commons debate, chaired by Speaker John Bercow MP.

The issues were two of the five topics chosen for debate by people aged 11 to 18 in the Make Your Mark national ballot.

The North Yorkshire Members of the Youth Parliament (MYPs) are Kitty Jackson, who represents the east of the county, Eden Shackleton, who represents the west, and Evie Stevenson, who represents the central area. They took part in the debate with more than 500 members of the Youth Parliament from across Britain.

Kitty said: "I had a fantastic time representing North Yorkshire East in the House of Commons. I learned a lot about government and the rules of Parliament. I was honoured to be chosen by John Bercow to speak about



North Yorkshire's three Members of the Youth Parliament, from left, Eden Shackleton, Kitty Jackson and Evie Stevenson

public transport for children with disabilities and special educational needs."

Evie said: "The House of Commons sitting was a brilliant experience. I am happy to see the Curriculum for Life being voted in as a national campaign and look forward to championing it. It encompasses numerous areas - mental health, sexual and financial education and tools to employ in the work place."

County Councillor Patrick Mulligan, Executive Member for Education and Skills, said: "Our MYPs play a very important role on the national stage, representing the concerns of the county's young people."

For more information on the British Youth Parliament, visit www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk.

Breastfeeding - giving a healthy start to life

Children's Trust Board members have been updated on progress around improving breastfeeding rates among the county's new mothers.

Young and Yorkshire 2 includes actions to promote positive health choices by parents, especially during pregnancy and to ensure good public health outcomes in maternity services. Breastfeeding is a key factor in giving every child a healthy start to life.

In North Yorkshire, breastfeeding rates are similar to the national average and have improved over the last few years. However, the data highlights that inequalities exist across North Yorkshire. For example, initiation rates vary from 84.4 per cent in Harrogate to 60.3 per cent in Scarborough.

A strategy and action plan has been developed in partnership with York that is focusing on:

- increasing initiation of breastfeeding in York and North Yorkshire;
- increasing breastfeeding at six to eight weeks in York and North Yorkshire; and
- reducing the gap between breastfeeding rates in the most deprived areas/population groups and the York and North Yorkshire average.

To achieve this, the following priorities have been identified and are being taken forward by the group:

- providing effective professional support to mothers and their families;
- ensuring mothers have access to support in their community; and

- supporting employers to implement policies, practices and environments so mothers can breastfeed during study and work.

There have been a number of achievements in the last three years, one of which is the appointment of an infant feeding co-ordinator through the Healthy Child Programme. This post has driven forward improvements in data collection on breastfeeding and Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust now has robust systems to record accurately the breastfeeding status of all mothers receiving their six to eight weeks check.

The full report can be downloaded from <http://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/childrens-trust-agenda-papers>.



At the conference (from left): Jon Stonehouse, Corporate Director, Children Education and Communities City of York; North Yorkshire County Councillor Michael Harrison, Executive Member for Health and Adult Services; Cllr Carol Runciman, Executive Member, Adult Social Care and Health, City of York Council; Stuart Carlton, Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Service, North Yorkshire County Council; Louise Wallace, Assistant Director, Health and Integration, Health and Adult Services, North Yorkshire County Council; Professor Nick Frost, Independent Chair of North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children's Board; and Kevin McAleese CBE, Independent Chair of City of York Safeguarding Adults Board.

We can all play our part in spotting abuse

The need for everyone to play a part in helping to spot abuse in its many forms was the key message from a York and North Yorkshire conference that brought together professionals working to safeguard children and adults.

The aim of the conference, which was held during safeguarding week, was to emphasise that everyone has a role to play in spotting these signs and to encourage the public and professionals in all walks of life to

be vigilant in their everyday lives.

Cllr Michael Harrison, Executive Member for Health and Adult Services at North Yorkshire County Council, said: "There are many signs of abuse, for example if someone is dirty or not dressed properly, has an injury that is difficult to explain, seems frightened around certain people, seems unusually sad or withdrawn, or finds money is missing.

"Sometimes signs of abuse are

not obvious or visible, especially where grooming is taking place, but someone may start to behave differently, which may give cause for concern."

Safeguarding week was supported by the four safeguarding boards that look after children, young people and adults in North Yorkshire and York and their partner organisations, including the Office of the North Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner and the community safety partnerships.

Developing a new Early Help Strategy

The Children's Trust Board has been updated on the development of an Early Help Strategy, and the progress of the Prevention Service as it nears the end of year three.

The Prevention Service aims to reduce the numbers of children and young people requiring more intensive and more costly interventions from Children's Social Care.

North Yorkshire recognises the need to look continually for improvements in service delivery and it is timely to look again at the Early Help Strategy and the service delivery model. While the delivery of outcomes is strong, feedback at times points to a lack of co-ordination of services, impacting on the ability to deliver the right support at the right time.

Work has begun on developing a new Early Help Strategy. The strategy will build on the Children Act 2004 and

Working Together (2015), as well as the current draft Working Together, which is out for consultation. These reinforce the partnership responsibility for both Early Help assessment and the provision of services.

The strategy will look at how the progress made by the Prevention Service since 2015 can be reinforced, and build a model of service delivery that is joined up, strengthens multi-agency working and ensures that the Early Help system is responsive at the earliest opportunity. This includes exploring how professionals outside of the Prevention Service can begin to pick up lead practitioner roles and complete Early Help assessments and plans.

You can read about the developing Early Help Strategy at <http://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/childrens-trust-agenda-papers>.

Helping families make healthy choices

North Yorkshire County Council's Healthy Choices service provides a family-focused package of support for children and young people aged five to 19 who are above a healthy weight.

More than 300 families have been supported to make healthier lifestyle choices by the service, which is delivered by a countywide team of healthy lifestyle advisors.

Data from the National Child Measurement Programme 2016-17 reveals that 21 per cent of four- to five-year-olds and over 30 per cent of 10-11-year-olds are living with excess weight in North Yorkshire. This can influence physical and mental health and reduce healthy life expectancy.

Each family is offered a free, 12-week personalised programme in their own home and/or community settings, during which they take part in fun and interactive sessions, complete weekly challenges and set their own goals to help them on their journey towards a healthier lifestyle. After completing the programme, families are offered continued support and guidance by motivational phone calls and follow-up



appointments, helping them to stay on track.

Group sessions are also being piloted, with the support of community development staff from Harrogate Borough Council and the County Council's Family Outreach Support Workers.

Michelle Hanchard, dietitian and Healthy Choices Manager, said: "From portion size guidance and menu planning to physical activity and fitness, the programme is not about telling families what to do, but helping them with the tools and knowledge to make positive, realistic and achievable changes."

Feedback from families about the Healthy Choices service is overwhelmingly positive. In the words of one family, "Go for it! Only good things will come from taking part".

To find out more or to make a confidential referral into the service, contact the Healthy Choices team on 01609 798081.

North Yorkshire is top of the tree at GCSE

North Yorkshire has been ranked first in Yorkshire and the Humber and in the top 15 per cent of authorities nationally for GCSE results, including new grading for English and maths, in provisional figures published by the Department for Education.

Under new gradings for English language and literature and in maths, where 9 is equivalent to A* and above and 1 is the lowest score, nearly 50 per cent of North Yorkshire's pupils gained a strong 9-5 pass compared to 40 per cent for Yorkshire and the Humber and 42 per cent nationally.

Over 70 per cent of the county's students attained a standard 9-4 pass in English and maths compared to 61 per cent in Yorkshire and the Humber and 63.5 per cent

nationally. North Yorkshire also came first in the region in the new attainment 8 and progress 8 measures, which include GCSE scores and progress scores from across the curriculum, including English and maths.

"This is an outstanding set of results for North Yorkshire," said County Councillor Patrick Mulligan, North Yorkshire's Executive Member for Schools. "They are testament to the hard work and commitment of our young people and their teachers. This success reflects the very strong teaching in North Yorkshire schools, the partnership between schools, the county council, teaching school alliances and the diocese as well as the strong partnership with parents and families."

New community directory goes live

The County Council is encouraging people to find information about community organisations using the new online directory, North Yorkshire Connect.

The directory represents a key priority for the council of using technology to improve ways of working and encouraging more people to go online for help and advice.

County Councillor Greg White, Executive Member for Customer Engagement, said: "I'm delighted to see this valuable resource up and running and our hope is that it will help to build self-reliance in communities.

"It will be incredibly useful for people of all ages and for professionals working with the vulnerable or socially isolated."

Listings on North Yorkshire Connect are generally non-profit community groups, clubs or organisations, although it also includes activities and things to do. People are able to search either by area, look up specific types of groups or use the category menu. It is easy to use and maintain and is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Community organisations can set up an account and add their details themselves, but will be prompted to check



Julie Blaisdale, Assistant Director for Library and Community Services; County Councillor David Chance, Executive Member for Stronger Communities; County Councillor Greg White, Executive Member for Customer Engagement; Dominic Grainger, Analyst Programmer; and Marie-Ann Jackson, Head of Stronger Communities.

their listing every six months to make sure information is kept up to date.

North Yorkshire County Councillor David Chance, Executive Member for Stronger Communities, said: "We are very fortunate in North Yorkshire to have hundreds of wonderful community groups and organisations helping people to access information, advice and guidance.

"There are some excellent resources for families and a range of positive activities for young people.

"However, it can be difficult to find information that is trustworthy and up to date. What we've achieved in launching North Yorkshire Connect is to create an online platform where community groups can make a connection with those who might benefit from their support."

For more information and to use the new directory, go to www.northyorkshireconnect.org.uk.

Performance continues to be strong

The Children's Trust Board has been updated about Quarter 2 performance against the Young and Yorkshire's key outcomes. These are:

- education as our greatest liberator with high aspirations, opportunities and achievements;
- a healthy start to life with safe and healthy lifestyles; and
- a happy family life in strong families and vibrant communities.

Performance continues to be strong and highlights include:

- the 2017 GCSE results were the best ever, placing North Yorkshire in the top 15 per cent in the country and top

overall in the Yorkshire and Humber region;

- the percentage of pupils attending a good or outstanding schools remains 3.3 per cent above the national average; and
- the success of the No Wrong Door and other County Council edge of care services is reflected in the fact that the number of children in care North Yorkshire is significantly lower than the national average.

The full performance report can be downloaded from <http://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/childrens-trust-agenda-papers>.

Voice, Influence and Participation team poses questions

The Voice, Influence and Participation (VIP) team captures the voice of children and young people to influence change and to improve services. They seek to involve children and young people at all stages of planning, delivery and evaluation.

The VIP team directly facilitates opportunities for looked-after children and care leavers (Young People's Council), and young adults with learning difficulties and disabilities (Flying High) to meet to allow them to share their views and thoughts on services.

The VIP team also works indirectly with a number of other groups within North Yorkshire to seek their views on issues affecting them, ensuring these are collated and shared with the appropriate services and managers. Examples of those other groups it currently works with are:

- Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust - Young People's Panel
- Harrogate Youth Council
- LGBT+
- Military Kids Club
- Police and Crime Commissioner - Young People's Panel
- Young Advisors
- Young Carers
- School Councils

The VIP team is also developing area and county wide meetings for young people to allow them to work together to address local issues and issues specific to them, at the same time involving local managers and decision makers.

They have asked the Children's Trust Board to consider the following questions:

- How does the board currently engage with young people in North Yorkshire, and what does that engagement look like?
- Does there need to be more meaningful engagement with young people and what should this look like?
- Is there a strategy in place to engage actively with young people in North Yorkshire? If not, should there be?
- Should young people in North Yorkshire be invited to be part of the board?

Safeguarding board members discuss national review



The North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children's Board (NYSCB) has produced its annual report, with a foreword written by its independent chair, Professor Nick Frost.

Prof Frost explains that the board has had a busy year, with the national review of safeguarding boards being undertaken. The board members have discussed the likely implications of the review and have agreed that they will maintain business much as it is while being guided by the following principles:

- maintaining quality;
- independent scrutiny;
- involvement or partners and agencies;
- involving young people;
- involving the community; and
- making the best possible link with City of York.

The findings of the review are expected to be published in spring 2018.

Meanwhile, the board's key concern is ensuring that the children and young people of North Yorkshire are protected as effectively as possible.

The board believes it is doing well in achieving this core task, while facing many complex challenges.

It is also confident that, by the time of the next annual report, there will be greater clarity about government expectations for safeguarding boards – and that NYSCB remains well placed to respond to the challenges.

You can download the annual report from <http://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/childrens-trust-agenda-papers>

Young people take their concerns to decision makers



The voices of young people are being heard at the highest level in North Yorkshire thanks to a group set up by North Yorkshire County Council.

North Yorkshire Youth Voice Executive was formed earlier this year to bring together young people from across the county to represent youth councils, school councils, LGBT groups, young carers and looked-after children and it is working on projects about issues that concern young people.

The Executive presented its work to senior managers and decision makers, including the County Council, North Yorkshire Police, schools, safeguarding, health and leaving care services and Compass Reach, which supports young people affected by substance misuse, poor sexual health and issues relating to emotional wellbeing and mental health.

Ideas from the Executive include the creation of a flowchart to provide quick, readily available and effective mental health advice for young people and a Caring Culture Award that recognises work by schools to support young people. They have also explored how they would work more effectively with senior managers and decision makers to ensure their views are sought and considered when services are developed.

North Yorkshire takes a stand against hate crime

Take a stand against hate crime – that’s the message that came from the County Council as it backed National Hate Crime Awareness Week (14-21 October) as part of its work to support lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) young people in North Yorkshire.

The County Council has a national track record for the education, training and support it gives to lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans young people and about the issues they face. Stonewall, Britain’s lesbian, gay, bi and trans equality charity, has named North Yorkshire as one of the best local authorities in Britain for tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and celebrating difference in its schools.

County Councillor Janet Sanderson, North Yorkshire’s Executive Member for Children’s Services, said: “We have been ahead of the game working hard with our schools over a number of years and carrying out an action plan to ensure that the needs of LGBT young people are taken into account.

“We’re providing training for teachers in secondary and primary schools that supports them to challenge homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying, and celebrate difference. Schools have also been provided with guidance and work is under way to support them, raise awareness and understanding about hate crime and to encourage young people to report hate crime.”

Hate crime can be reported online using the Stop Hate UK website, www.stophateuk.org.

This newsletter is produced by North Yorkshire County Council on behalf of the Children’s Trust

For more about the work of the Children’s Trust, visit <http://cyps.northyorks.gov.uk/childrenstrust>.

To submit an article to this newsletter, email Helen Bawn at helen.bawn@northyorks.gov.uk

Who are the partners?

North Yorkshire County Council, North Yorkshire schools, NHS North Yorkshire and York, district and borough councils, North Yorkshire Police, Youth Justice Service, National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Companies, North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service and the voluntary and community sector.

How do I get copies?

The newsletter is emailed to partner organisations and is available via the cyps.info website. You can also call Helen Bawn on 01609 533665 or email helen.bawn@northyorks.gov.uk

If you would like this information in another language or format such as Braille, large print or audio, please ask us.

Tel: (01609) 532917 Email: communications@northyorks.gov.uk



If you print this newsletter, please recycle when you have finished with it.