

# LIIA NEWSLETTER

July 2024 Issue

Dear colleagues,

I am pleased to share with you all the news that I have been elected as Chair of the Association of London Directors of Children's Services (ALDCS) following Jane McSherry's retirement. I would like to take the opportunity to thank Jane for her great work during her time as our Chair and I look forward to working with you all as we move forward, keeping momentum on our collaborative work and ambitions to improve outcomes for London's children and young people.



My appointment as Chair comes hot off the heels of the London Innovation and Improvement Alliance (LIIA) Review and in parallel with the election announcement. We have a welcome opportunity to consider not only the change we want to see, but our vision for ALDCS and how we can shape and influence the new government, with LIIA as our 'engine room'. We will be taking time in coming months to develop our vision and an action plan to ensure we continue to progress together, in collaboration with our many partners.

Very best wishes,

**Florence Kroll**

**DCS Royal Borough of Greenwich, ALDCS Adolescent Safeguarding policy lead and chair of the London Adolescent Safeguarding Oversight Board (LASOB) chair of the ALDCS**

## THIS NEWSLETTER PROVIDES COLLEAGUES WITH AN UPDATE ON;

- **Liia's Core Activities:** 24/25 annual plan, making data speak for London, improving engagement between DCS and health systems, 'baking-in' Anti-Racism & Disproportionality.
- **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND):** SEND Leadership programme, 2023 EHCP data and insights, Local area inspection insights, London SEND Summit.
- **Resources and Commissioning:** collaborative commissioning for ASD/SEMH, London Accommodation Pathfinder (LAP), Dynamic Sufficiency Tool.
- **Adolescent Safeguarding:** Adolescent Safeguarding in London Handbook, Your Choice Programme, MACE Review & Implementation, Stop & Search, Violence & Exploitation Service.
- **Workforce:** London Pledge & national CSC SW agency proposals, London Social Work for Children, Regional Children's Homes Managers Network Launch.
- **Care Leaving:** London Care Leaver Compact Launch, Beyond the Compact, Priorities for Regional Action.

# LIIA'S CORE ACTIVITIES

LiiA's Core Activities are identified by ALDCS and the LCII Board to enable our success measures;

- Impact for children.
- Financial sustainability.
- Culture shift.
- Shared intelligence to better direct resources.
- Common Infrastructure.
- A louder voice for children.

## Review of LIIA & 2024/25 Annual Plan

- The London Children's Innovation and Improvement (LCII) Board commissioned a review of LIIA due to the significant growth of the programme since its inception 4 years ago.
- Following the final report, presented to LCII Board in June, an action plan will now be developed to respond to the key priorities and opportunities identified.
- The [LIIA Annual Plan 24/25](#) is a summary of ALDCS' innovation and improvement priorities for London's children and young people. As ALDCS' portfolio grows, so too does their ambition to overcome shared and pressing challenges through systemic collaboration.

## Making Data Speak for London's Children

- The ALDCS Intelligence, Data and Research (IDR) Priority is led by Alasdair Smith. The inaugural meeting of the ALDCS IDR Steering Group was in March and the next meeting is the 22nd July.
- Our Data & Intelligence team is in the process of refreshing the Child-level data (CLD) and collecting the 22/23 Looked after children data in the process. This will enable us to refresh the dashboards we have started developing and the Dynamic Sufficiency tool created by the Commissioning Alliance and make better use of the data we collectively have about our children.
- We're continuing to provide benchmarking data on a quarterly and annual basis, the Q4 benchmarking reports were published at the beginning of June in the [Making Data Speak for London's children](#) pages on the LIIA website. We are also continuing to expand our catalogue of analytical dashboards across education, children's social care, youth offending, and related areas. Currently in development; refresh of the SEND dashboard featuring some new data (using DfE published data), a new Care Leavers dashboard drawing on CLD, a new dashboard looking at SDQs for our looked after children drawing on CLD.
- We also have a pilot research project in the preparation phase, this is a collaboration with the Rees Centre of Oxford University exploring *Do journeys through care differ according to young people's ethnicity?* This will use the Admin data from our CLD project to explore this topic. The research is planned for the Autumn to report findings in early spring of 2025.

## Improving engagement between LA DCS and health systems in London

- Kate Kewley and Ian Lewis have been working on behalf of LIIA to develop the relationships between Children's Services and the five developing Integrated Care Boards; meeting with DCSs and senior leaders within ICBs to explore current priorities across the respective sectors.
- Overall there is considerable amount in common on the priorities for children's health, but there is still much work to make sure governance is aligned and that clear plans are developed.
- For the remainder of the year the priorities are; Supporting the ASD/SEMH and SEND Business Case, developing specifications for roles that replicate the NCL resource arrangement and clarifying DCS roles for ICB and other health partners, with a view to maximising opportunities for engagement.

## 'Baking In' the Commitment to Anti-Racism & Disproportionality (ARD)

- The ARD ALDCS Priority is led by Jacquie Burke and Bev Hendricks in partnership with the regional Leadership in Colour (LINC) Reference Group, established in 2020 in response to the Black Lives Matter movement.
- Important progress has been achieved in the Anti-Racism & Disproportionality priority since its creation, with the (LINC) Reference Group maintaining a powerful critical friend role to ALDCS.
- Earlier this year ALDCS formally broadened the remit to tackle racism and disproportionality across both workforce and children and families, with a commitment to 'baking in' the priority across the programme, with stronger extension to partnerships.

## Sector Led Improvement, Regional Networks & Influencing Change

- LiiA have run a regional peer challenge programme alongside a series of thematic events under the priority areas. Feedback provides a regional appetite for more thematic, practice sharing events.
- A growing number of regional networks, boards and partners sit central to ALDCS priorities. LiiA's priority is to build on the connections between these groups to strengthen shared learning, improved outcomes for children and to influence reform and delivery of the Care Review.
- LiiA will soon prepare the annual London's Children's Services Summit. This will be an important opportunity to bring all the strands of regional work together to shape the direction of the priorities and enable collective regional influence on the national agenda.

# SEND

The ALDCS SEND Programme is chaired by Elaine Allegretti, and works across four cross cutting priorities:

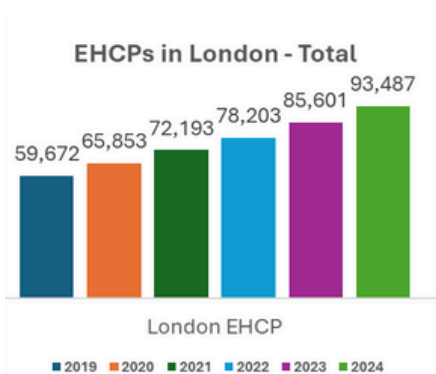
- Enhancing Provision and Support for Children and Young People with SEND.
- Supporting pan-London Collaboration and Joint Working.
- Building Capacity and Capability within the SEND Workforce.
- Supporting Developments and Sharing Learning across SEND.

## London SEND Leadership programme

- The London SEND leadership has launched its first cohort and will host 90 participants across 3 cohorts, encompassing aspiring leaders from local authorities, NHSE, Integrated Care Systems, Health Provider Collaboratives, and the London branch of the National Network of Parent Carer Forums (NNPCF).
- Following a successful launch of the first cohort, nominations for fully funded places on Cohort 2 closed on the 28th June. Nominations for the third and final cohort will open in the Autumn.
- You can find out more about the programme [here](#).



## SEND Data and Insights



- The [2023 EHCP data](#) shows further increases in requests and a small improvement in timeliness. England saw an 11% increase in total EHCPs from 2022 to 2023 and a 63% rise over five years, while London had a 9% increase last year and a 57% rise over five years. Initial requests grew by 21% in England and 15% in London last year, with five-year increases of 68% and 46%, respectively. Timeliness in London improved significantly, with 70% of EHCPs issued within 20 weeks in 2023, up from 54.7% in 2022, surpassing the national average of 50.3%.
- LIA has developed some headline analysis of the data while we work to integrate the updated data into our London SEND Dashboard. You can access the headlines [here](#).
- We have continued engagement sub regionally to promote and analyse data presented on the [SEND Data dashboard](#) to understand and present key insights and trends in SEND services.

## Local Area SEND Inspections

- Since the introduction of the new SEND Inspection Framework in January 2023, a total of 32 inspection reports have been published, including five from London Boroughs. Of these, three reports demonstrated positive outcomes, one was inconsistent, and another highlighted systemic failings. The table shows that London Boroughs are performing above the national average.
- LIA continues to monitor and analyse SEND inspection reports and has developed [a short summary of emerging themes](#) from the inspections conducted so far.

% of OUTCOME	1	2	3
London Boroughs Outcomes	60%	20%	20%
National Outcomes	28%	41%	31%



## London SEND Summit

- In March 2024, the [annual London SEND Summit](#) was held at the Guildhall, with representatives from Local Authorities, Health, Parent Carer Forums, DfE, and Education in attendance.
- The agenda focused on engaging Local Authorities with the Change Programme Partnerships and sharing progress under three key reforms: New EHCP Templates, Advisory Tailored Lists, and Local Area Inclusion Plans.
- The next Summit will be in May 2025, with a focus on transition and potential collaboration with adult services.

## SEND Networks and Workshops

- We continue to support the SEND Strategic Manager Parent Carer Network, hosting focused sessions on Supported Internships and Early Years, with the next session on 4th July focused on measuring outcomes. The London SEND Finance Network held its first 2024 meeting, featuring insights from the DfE and Local Authorities on savings programmes like Delivering Better Value and Safety Valve, along with innovative case studies from Local Authorities. If you would like to be added to the distribution lists for either of these networks, [please get in touch!](#)



# RESOURCES AND COMMISSIONING

**The Resources and Commissioning Programme, chaired by Chris Munday, focuses on the following areas:**

- Increasing financial pressures on placement budgets.
- High cost low incidence provision and lack of suitable local provision resulting in placements at great distances from the home local authority.
- Pan-London collaboration with local authorities to improve sufficiency, value for money and outcomes for child.

## **Collaborative Commissioning for ASD/SEMH**

- Phase 2 of the project, building on [NCB's research](#) has concluded following the Pan-London Business Case receiving approval a ALDCS. The report "Developing a New Model of Care for Children and Young People in London" outlines a case to support Local Authorities to meet the needs of Children and Young People with ASD SEMH Needs.
- Phase 3 of this project has now commenced, with focus now on engagement with Local Authority and Health Partners to understand how the proposals can be implemented sub regionally.

## **London Accommodation Pathfinder**

- The London Accommodation Pathfinder (LAP) offers a psychologically-sensitive alternative to custody for at-risk children, providing 10 additional beds across North Central and East London. In 2023, the LAP opened centres in Newham and Barnet.
- Funding has been secured from the Youth Justice Board for funding until March 2026, along with an extension to open properties South and West London, engagement is underway with commissioners working across South and West London.



## **Secure Children's Home (SCH) and Pan-London Vehicle for Children's Complex Commissioning Ltd (PLV)**

- In December 2023, the DfE formally approved the allocation of the proposed site for London's secure children's home (SCH) - we can now confirm that the site is on Lea Bridge Road, LB Waltham Forest.
- Public pre planning application (pre-app) consultation with local residents, politicians and other groups affected by the proposals began in January 2024 and there has been some media coverage of the proposals at local and national level.
- Architectural design development and preparation for planning application submission is progressing, incorporating feedback from consultation activities with the public, statutory authorities and other key stakeholders. Planning application submission is now likely to happen at the end of 2024 to allow time to complete some additional activities that will further strengthen this contentious planning application.
- Nominee director and shareholder arrangements for PLV Ltd are currently being transferred to LB Barnet, following Council and Cabinet approvals secured in February 2024. Establishing LB Barnet as the first PLV member has supported the progression of critical legal processes for future construction and leasing of the land.
- A new needs assessment has confirmed the urgent need for the SCH and will guide its ongoing development.
- Please contact the [Secure Children's Home lead](#) for any further information about this programme.

## **Pan-London Commissioning Network and London Children's Homes Managers Network**

- LiIA continues to support the Pan-London Commissioning Network as a key resource for Local Authority Commissioners to share good practice and challenges. Now chaired by Julia Mills from LB Camden, its next meeting is on 20th September – [please get in touch](#) for more information.
- Following the Children's Homes Workforce Scoping Survey, the next key step is to develop a London Children's Homes Leads Network. Further detail on this project can be found in the Workforce update below.

## **Pan-London Dynamic Sufficiency Tool**

- The Commissioning Alliance, and Social Finance, has developed the Dynamic Sufficiency Tool. This resource provides valuable data for London Local Authorities, to support sufficiency planning and enabling them to make well-informed commissioning decisions.
- All Local Authorities have signed a data protection agreement and have been granted access to the Pan-London Sufficiency Tool.

# ADOLESCENT SAFEGUARDING

## The Adolescent Safeguarding workstream, led by Florence Kroll, focuses on the following areas:

- Refreshing and disseminating the Adolescent Safeguarding Practice Handbook.
- Supporting the evaluation of the Your Choice programme, which will run until December 2024.
- The MACE Review and Implementation work will become a new protocol in 2024.
- Supporting the roll out of phase 4 of the Stop & Search project across London.
- Leading the LA component of MOPAC's CYP Violence and Exploitation Service.
- Supporting inclusion to promote safeguarding adolescents in education.

## Adolescent safeguarding in London

A handbook for collaboration

Build safety with every young Londoner



ALDCS

LIA

## Adolescent Safeguarding in London (ASIL) Handbook

- The LIA team are working with Colin Michel and a wider ASIL project team to produce a second edition of the [Adolescent Safeguarding Handbook](#), with a view to publish this in November 2024.
- The team recently distributed a [survey](#) to colleagues operating in the local safeguarding partnership to update on their safeguarding arrangements.

## Your Choice Programme

- Following a successful [pilot](#), the London Young People Study (the evaluation of the Your Choice violence reduction programme), which formally commenced in August 2023 will be open to new participants until December 2024.
- With over 600 young people signed up to the Study so far, it is already the largest study of this cohort in England and Wales.
- Read more about the programme, its background and system-wide feedback in our [latest brief](#).

**YOUR CHOICE**

## MACE Review & Implementation

- The work on the next edition of the Multi Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) Protocol, led by MPS with LIA, is underway. The findings from the Task & Finish group review will feed into the revised protocol. It is expected that the new MACE Protocol will be finalised by November 2024.

## Stop and Search

- The London Borough of Haringey and the North Area BCU have successfully completed phase 1 to 3 of a joint pilot project to consider stop and search from a safeguarding perspective. LIA is set to support colleagues in Haringey and MPS with the coordination of Phase 4.
- Phase 4 will involve rolling out the Stop & Search Pilot across London and promoting a collaborative approach between LAs and Police partners to ensure that safeguarding opportunities stemming from encounters with children who are stopped and searched are pursued.
- The project team has identified Points of Contact (POCs) in 26 London LAs who will coordinate this work locally. Two launch meetings will take place in June and July.

## London Violence and Exploitation Service

- MOPAC has awarded a contract to an Alliance of four VCS organisations for the newly commissioned integrated Violence and Exploitation Service. The new service aims to have a single front door for violence and exploitation and to ensure wrap around support across London.
- LIA has been identified to lead the LA component of this work and facilitate pan-London coordination of the project between LA's and the VCS Alliance providers.

## AS Data Dashboard

- The LIA Intelligence team has produced a high-level [dashboard](#) for adolescent safeguarding and youth justice which can currently be accessed by members of the London Adolescent Safeguarding Oversight Board (LASOB).

## Adolescent Safeguarding in education

- A safeguarding and education sub-group of SELL has been established and will feed into LASOB. LIA will contribute to the work of the sub-group.

# WORKFORCE

## The ALDCS Workforce Programme is chaired by Nigel Chapman and works across six strategic objectives;

- Drive sufficiency and supply; increase the supply of talent and develop a forward-looking profession.
- Strengthen and model leadership at all levels; culturally competent leadership, first line management training and amplify the voice of leadership.
- Ambitious London offer and increased stability; bold London offer that responds to changed expectations.
- Empower and develop talent; listen to the workforce, a transparent progression pathway and prioritise wellbeing
- Tackling racism and disproportionality; ensure anti-racism is 'baked in' and LAs are supported.
- Sustainability; a workforce strategy is owned and delivered with the workforce, incorporating the voice of the child.

## London Pledge & National CSC SW Agency Rules Implementation

- After 2 years since launching the London Pledge continues to support London LAs to work together in cooperation rather than competition to better control the CSC SW agency market.
- The final [national CSC SW agency proposals](#) are expected to be released in July 2024, when the terms and timeframes will be clarified and allow LAs to collectively progress implementation to the new guidance.
- In parallel LiiA continue to work in collaboration with London's surrounding regions; East of England, South East and East Midlands and will be developing a single MoC strengthen partnership working.
- The 5 sub-regional governance groups benefit from regional data transparency and provide a strong foundation for accountability and a supportive space for collaborative workforce planning. The group's remit has broadened to include a direct role in Anti-Racism and Disproportionality action and improvement.

## London Social Work for Children (LSWC) to Continue Following ALDCS Support

- The proposal to continue the [London Social Work for Children \(LSWC\)](#) platform was unanimously agreed by ALDCS with all 33 London's LAs confirming their contribution to the annual subscription. The strategy and development plan for the year ahead has been agreed by the Workforce Steering Group with exciting plans to improve and enhance the platform for all.
- LiiA have officially launched the LSWC Dashboard to strengthen local recruitment campaigns and attraction strategies.
- In July we host two LA User Training Refresher Sessions to ensure all colleagues are re/trained on best practice and the tips and tricks learned across the pilot year to support effective use of the platform.

## Leadership in Colour's (LinC) Reference Group & Progress

- The LinC Reference Group developed proposals for ALDCS for a refreshed staff development programme and the 'baking in' of anti-racism across all ALDCS work areas.
- Having secured ALDCS agreement, they are now focussing on the recommissioning of the staff development programme and supporting ALDCS with the detail of the 'baking-in'.
- The Reference Group and ALDCS will work closely together on these areas, as well as designing the 2024/25 LinC staff summit after two successful events in previous years.

## SEND Workforce Research & Next Steps Building on CSC SW Workforce Efforts

- Following the design and launch of the regional [SEND Workforce Survey](#) that outlined shared recruitment and retention challenges, LiiA are engaging with Managed Service Providers, creating Local Authority case studies to articulate key survey findings, analysing roles in relation to experience and pay, investigating barriers for Educational Psychologists, and developing a proposal to address these issues.
- In parallel LiiA are progressing discussions with London's surrounding regions to explore opportunities for collaboration where SEND workforce challenges are shared, building on the work in CSC SW workforce.

## Children's Homes Workforce Network Launch & Future Pipeline

- LiiA will be hosting the first London Children's Homes Managers Network in July. The workshop will bring together Registered Managers, Deputy Managers, and Responsible Individuals from LA-owned and run children's homes, as well as those involved in the opening of new homes.
- Following [regional research with current and existing LA owned and run Children's Homes](#) to better understand the recruitment and retention challenges, some of the findings were encouraging, but the workforce pipeline is a priority in order for London's planned growth of Children's Homes to be realised.
- LiiA will launch a workforce demographics survey with the new network to help inform future targeted pipeline and supply initiatives.

## International Recruitment Framework Design & Development

- Following the launch of the [Framework for London In Permanent \(FLIP\)](#) Recruitment for CSC Social Workers, LIIA we are now progressing phase 2 - International Recruitment (IR) alongside our partner YPO.
- Building on [market research undertaken earlier this year](#), a multi-skilled LA Task & Finish Group are now leading on the design of a framework specification, expected to be released to tender in Summer 2024.

# CARE LEAVING

The ALDCS Care Leaving Programme is led by Jacqui McShannon, Stephen Kitchman and Debbie Jones. It works to meet care leavers needs across five priority areas:

- Housing
- Health
- Relationships
- Education, Training and Employment
- Immigration

## Pan London Care Leavers Compact Launch

- Young people, national and regional government, and partners including the NHS, Transport for London, the Care Leavers Covenant, and Catch 22, came together at the Guildhall in March 2024 to celebrate the launch of the Pan London Care Leavers Compact.
- The Compact has brokered support packages across partners including free prescriptions, discounted TfL travel, and strengthened housing positions within Local Authorities.
- We will continue to develop new, practical, support offers under the banner of the Compact, which is an umbrella for a series of commitments to London's care leavers.



## Beyond the Compact

- There is collective determination that the launch of the Compact is just the start of the journey to better support care-experienced people in London.
- The partnership that worked on the Compact is developing regional workstreams to improve care leavers experience of Housing, ETE, Health and Relationships. Each of these will also consider the specific needs of former unaccompanied asylum seeking children, who make up around 35% of London's care leaver cohort.

*We are currently consulting extensively with local authorities and partners to identify the specific regional activity that will make a real difference to care leavers experiences. To find out more or get involved in this work please email [Matthew Raleigh](mailto:Matthew.Raleigh@aldcslondon.org).*

## Priorities for regional action

We already know some of the key priorities for regional action, which include:

- Improved mental health and emotional wellbeing provision (building on our work with TPHC to map London provision). Read the access the executive summary and full guidance document [here](#).
- Sufficiency of quality housing options for care leavers.
- Developing new and improved offers from Higher Education, Further Education and Businesses.
- Reducing criminalisation of care leavers and better supporting them when they do enter the criminal justice system.
- Supporting LA's who have taken protected characteristic decisions to share/develop their practical implementation.
- Identifying options to help resolve immigration status at the earliest opportunity
- Working with ADCS, other RIAs and the VCS to share approaches and agree priorities for lobbying a new government.

# MEMBERS AREA ACCESS

As always, [you can click here to register for access](#) to our dedicated Members Areas.



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## OUR NEWSLETTERS

LIIA produces several newsletters to keep partners updated. You can read these on our website or click the below links to access the latest editions:

[Adolescent Safeguarding and Youth Justice Newsletter](#) (June Issue)

[Workforce Newsletter](#) (June Issue)

[Resources and Commissioning Bulletin](#) (November Issue)

[SEND Bulletin](#) (June Issue)

[Care Leaving Newsletter](#) (June Issue)

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## GET IN TOUCH

Please visit our website: [liia.london](http://liia.london) for more detailed information on each of the ALDCS priorities, or contact the team directly to discuss anything in greater detail.

Please let us know your feedback on this newsletter [via email](#) so we can keep improving future editions.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED  
SUPPORT OF ALDCS REGIONAL WORK**

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