

**Get More from Medway – A Local Offer for Care Leavers from Medway**



Get More from Medway- A Local Offer for Care Leavers from Medway Council

# Introduction.

Medway Council are required to develop a local offer for its care leavers in accordance with the Children and Social Work Act 2017. This is a document which outlines services and support to Medway care leavers’ .The term “Care Leavers” is used to describe those children and young people who fall within scope of local authority duties set out in sections 23A and 24D of the Children Act 1989. This documents outlines what Medway Council’s Local offer is for care leavers.

1. **Legislation.**

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 sets out a commitment to protect the most vulnerable in society with the “ambition to ensure that disadvantaged children have the brightest possible future”. Edward Timpson, the then Children’s minister in 2017 stated “It defines what good corporate parenting looks like and secures the involvement of the whole council in looking out for children in care or leaving care.” The Children and Social work Act 2017 s2 requires Medway to publish information about services to care leavers and their services that may assist care leavers manage the journey into early adulthood and independent living. This will include financial support, housing health education and training. It requires Medway Council to set out what exactly what support it is offering care leavers making it easier for young people to access support. It also extended the role of the Leaving Care Personal advisor for all carer leavers up to the age of 25 years.

## Your Corporate Parents – what does this mean?

When a child/young person comes into the care, Medway Council (which includes its elected members, employees and partner agencies) becomes the Corporate Parent for that child or young person. This means we take responsibility for ensuring the best possible care for the children and young people we care for. In other words Medway endeavours to be the best possible parent it can be to that child or young person so that he or she can mature into a healthy independent young person

All good parents want the best for their children and young people. They want them to be happy, healthy and achieve their best as they move into early adulthood.

1. **What can you expect from your corporate parents?**

* To respect and honour your identity
* To listen to you
* To always believe in you
* To keep you informed
* To support and guide you
* To find you a safe home
* To be your champion
* To be realistic and honest

1. **Medway Pledge**

## Medway Leaving Care Team.

## You will be introduced to a member of the Leaving Care Team following your 16th birthday by your Social Worker so you get the chance to get to know them and get a good understanding of what’s going to happen after you leave care, before you actually do it. They will work with you to support you.

Your Personal Advisor is here to assist, befriend and advise on everything and anything. You can talk to them about health needs, finances, housing and more and they’ll be able to point you in the right direction.

Once you turn 18, you will no longer have a social worker and your PA will become your main worker and continue working with you at least until the age of 21 or up to the age of 25. Your PA will keep in contact and arrange meetings with you, they will visit you at home and also arrange to meet you in the community. As a young adult the decisions and choices you make are your own – after all, you will have to live with the consequences. Your PA will provide you with advice, information and guidance to help you make the best choices and decisions. The relationship between you and your PA is important, make the most of your PA, treat them with respect and keep in touch. There are many ways to get in touch with your PA, through **email**, **Facebook**, **WhatsApp**, **texting** and **phone calls**, they’ll be able to set up a contact system which is ideal for you.

It’s important that you both establish a solid connection with each other, where you can open up about any problems you may have. Sometimes you and your assigned PA may not click, and that’s okay. If you want to change your worker you can contact the Leaving Care Team Manager to discuss further.

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We have a discreet **Facebook Page** in which your PA will inform you on, where you can message at any point in the day if you can’t get in touch with your PA directly, we also share things you might find beneficial and interesting on that page.

## Your Pathway Plan

The Pathway Plan is a plan of your needs for after leaving care. You will have full involvement in making it as it’s personal to you. It will detail your needs, and record services and actions needed. Your social worker will ensure this is completed as soon as possible shortly after your 16th birthday. Lean more about your Pathway Plan on [Write Enough](http://www.writeenough.org.uk/formats_ics_pathway_plan.htm)**.**

## More Contacts and Links

**Become**:   
www.becomecharity.org.uk

**Write Enough, Pathway Plan:**

www.writeenough.org.uk/formats\_ics\_pathway\_plan.htm

**Care Leavers Charter**:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-leavers-charter

**GOV.UK Leaving Care:**

www.gov.uk/leaving-foster-or-local-authority-care

**Medway Council:**

www.medway.gov.uk

**Medway Council: A Better Medway:**

www.medway.gov.uk/info/200221/a\_better\_medway

**Medway Council, Leaving Care:**

[www.medway.gov.uk/info/200170/children\_and\_families/514/children\_in\_care/2](http://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200170/children_and_families/514/children_in_care/2)

**My Corporate Parents:** [www.mycorporateparents.co.uk](http://www.mycorporateparents.co.uk)

**The Care Leavers Foundation:** [www.thecareleaversfoundation.org](http://www.thecareleaversfoundation.org)

**The Young Lives Foundation**: www.ylf.org.uk

Contact the Leaving Care Team:

[leavingcareteam@medway.gov.uk](mailto:leavingcareteam@medway.gov.uk)

# You and Your Home.

Moving towards living independently is a daunting prospect for most young people and even more so for young people leaving care. We want to ensure that this is a smooth transition for you as possible and with the support of your social worker and leaving care personal advisor discussions will take place on what is the most appropriate accommodation for you. Sometimes it is best this is a gradual move where by you move at your own pace. It is important you discuss this with you leaving care pa so the most appropriate accommodation can be identified that will best support your eventual move into your own independent accommodation. These plans will be and included within your pathway plan. We aim to help each and every one of you find a home where you feel comfortable, safe and secure once. We will support you get all your necessary identity documents sorted. Here are some of the possible options available.

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## What is a “Staying Put” Arrangement?

If you are living with a foster family it may be possible that an arrangement can be agreed where you can stay with your foster carer after you turn 18. You and your foster carer will both have to agree to this, and you can discuss the arrangements with your social worker/Personal Advisor. Have a look on **GOV UK** and **Catch 22** for more information on Staying Put.

1. **What is supported accommodation**?

If you cannot remain in your current home when you reach 18 years and you need continued support to prepare to living independently you could reside in supported accommodation. Medway has different types of supported accommodation which your Leaving Care Personal advisor can discuss with you and take you to see.

1. **What is supported lodging?**

## Medway has a supported lodgings scheme where you may reside with a family in their home and they support you with learning to live independently.

## What is “Shared Lives”?

If you are a young person in foster care with a disability and you meet Adult services criteria and you would like to continue to be under the care of a friendly and mature carer, have a look at the **Shared Lives** page on Medway Family Information Services and Medway Council.

## E. Managing Your Own tenancy

Your PA and social worker will discuss with you what living accommodations would be appropriate for you. With the support of your PA you can register on Home Choice for social housing within Medway from the age of 17 years as a means of expressing your interest. Your PA will support you when you are ready to take the next steps into your own tenancy.

**What Happens if I am at risk of losing my accommodation?**

It is important that you contact your Leaving Care Team, if you have any concerns that your accommodation may be at risk. The earlier we hear from you the sooner we can offer the appropriate advice and support you require.

Kingsley House in Gillingham is a hub where you can seek out more housing advice, and also obtain temporary emergency accommodation if you are in a situation in which you couldn’t help. For more information look at the **dedicated page on our website.** Take a look at Housing **Provision for Vulnerable Young People in Medway** for help with housing necessities.

Your PA is here to give advice on how to stay safe in your home and who to contact if there are any maintenance issues, or issues with neighbours.

It’s good to make sure you’ve got your facts straight, have a look at **Housing Myth Buster** to understand what you actually are and aren’t entitled to.

Make sure you ask lots of questions, really understand your tenancy and ask your PA to read it through with you. Your PA will be able to help you formulate the right questions, but for even more help go to the **Housing** page of our website, and **Money Saving Expert** has 50+ Top Tips for first time renters.

**GOV.UK: Staying Put: Arrangements for care leaves aged 18 years and above.**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-put-arrangements-for-care-leavers-aged-18-years-and-above>

**Catch 22: Staying Put**

<https://www.catch-22.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Staying-Put-FINAL-WEB.pdf>

**Housing Myth Buster**

<http://housingmyths.com/>

**Medway Council: Kingsley House**

<https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200151/housing_advice/113/housing_advice_at_kingsley_house>

**Medway Family Information Services: Shared Lives**

<http://medwayfisd.com/kb5/medway/fis/service.page?id=dizD0-4ZAGU>

<https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200134/housing>

# You and Your Health.

Your ongoing physical and emotional health is very important to us and as such we have expanded our health services to include the needs of our care leavers. Your PA will be able to put you in touch with them.

It’s also worth looking at the **Medway NHS Foundation Trust** for general health information.

Easy access to resources that help keep your health in check. Find support for mental health problems, and how to register with a GP and all sorts here.

If you or someone you know need urgent help: call 999 for emergency services or 111 for advice from the NHS.



## GPs and Hospitals

You’ll need to register with a GP closest to you so you can get checkups on any health concerns, and being aware of your nearest GP and hospital and what they can do for you, is a must. We’ve linked a map of all the **general practitioners**, **hospitals**, **opticians**, **dentists** and **pharmacies** in Medway. If you’re anxious about making an appointment your PA can help make one for you, and come with you to the GP if you wish.

## Drug and Alcohol Support

If you are in need of any support relating to substance or alcohol misuse, you can access **Open Road which is based** in Gillingham.

## Emotional wellbeing.

Your emotional wellbeing is so important, as it has a domino effect with everything else in your life. If there are any concerns you have in this area please don’t be afraid to voice them to your PA, being able to talk with them is a big step into getting to the route of the problem. Your PA can support you accessing the right support to meet your needs.

If you’re in need urgent help right now, call the **Samaritans** on 116123. The **healthy mind page** on Medway Council has a diverse range of support detailed in the local area. **Rethink Mental Illness**, **Mind** and **The Samaritans** can provide education and guidance on seeking support for mental health issues.

There are **many counselling services available in Medway**, or there are online counselling options available if you would prefer such as **Better Help**. Again your PA can help you arrange the appointments and even come with you to them if you need.



## Relationships

Maintaining positive relationships, building bridges, and making new friends all face their challenges. You and your PA should be open in discussing your relationships and we can provide as much support as you need to help you find and maintain positive and healthy relationships. If you need that extra bit of advice, [Relate](https://www.relate.org.uk)or [Medway Family Information Services](http://medwayfisd.com/kb5/medway/fis/home.page) can help with familial or romantic issues, or you can see our **health page** for more info on emotional support.

## Sexual Health

We can help you stay safe and happy when it comes to your sexual health. Understanding how sex works, how to have safe sex, and consent are extremely important. **NHS** **Clover** **Street** is the main Medway sexual health clinic, where you can get assessed for STIs, get advice on contraception and free condoms. Our website also has a page dedicated to **sexual health advice**.

If you become pregnant we are here for you whatever you decide to do. If you decide to have the baby we will complete a pre brith assessment after 16 weeks to see if you need additional support, including financial aid. If you wish to have an abortion, there are some **clinics you can access in Medway**.

If you’re questioning your sexuality, or you want to learn more about the LGBT+ community, go to **Broken Rainbow** <http://medwayfisd.com/kb5/medway/fis/service.page?id=3-waJiQCMPk> on Medway Family Information Services, or the **Medway Gender and Sexual Identity Centre.**

You don’t need to feel embarrassed about coming to your PA about anything related to your sexual health, all we want is for you to be safe, and have access to all the resources and education you need to allow you to be safe.

## Disability Support

If you have a disability we are here to make sure you receive the extra support you need either from us, your work place, and across Medway. Your PA will try their best to learn about your disability and find out all the best support for you. **Medway Family Information Services** already have a **Local Offer** dedicated to those with disabilities which may be able to help you further. On **MyMedway** you can see more details on Adult Disability Support as well.

**A Map of Abortion Clinics in Medway**

<https://www.google.com/maps/search/abortion+clinics/@51.3888509,0.5214782,13.64z>

**A Map of all the Dentists in Medway**

<https://www.google.com/maps/search/dentists/@51.3888466,0.4991622,13z>

**A Map of all the General Practitioners in Medway**

<https://www.google.com/maps/search/doctors/@51.3910953,0.5170269,13.61z>

**A Map of all the Opticians in Medway**

<https://www.google.com/maps?client=safari&rls=en&q=opticians+medway&oe=UTF-8&um=1&ie=UTF-8&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjdu7TrlLrcAhWBJcAKHTHGCvEQ_AUICigB>

**A Map of Counselling Services in Medway**

<https://www.google.com/maps/search/Counselling+services+available+in+Medway/@51.3982762,0.528551,14z/data=!3m1!4b1>

**Better Help: Online Counselling**

<https://www.betterhelp.com>

**Broken Rainbow (LGBT) FISM**

<http://medwayfisd.com/kb5/medway/fis/service.page?id=3-waJiQCMPk>

**Medway Council: A Better Medway, Healthy Mind**

<https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200221/a_better_medway/569/healthy_mind/1>

**Medway Council: Drug and Alcohol Services**

<https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200219/community_safety/387/drug_and_alcohol_services/1>

**Medway Council: Support for Disabilities**

<https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200172/support_for_disabilities>

**Medway Gender and Sexual Identity Centre**

<http://www.mgsd-centre.org>

**Medway NHS Foundation Trust**

<https://www.medway.nhs.uk>

**Mind**

<https://www.mind.org.uk>

**MyMedway: Adult Disability Support**

<https://www.mymedway.org>

**NHS Clover Street: the Medway Sexual Health Hub**

<https://www.cloverstreet.nhs.uk>

**Official Addiction Helper Site - Immediate Admission to Rehab**

<https://www.addictionhelper.com>

**PAPYRUS: Prevention of Young Suicide**

<https://www.papyrus-uk.org>

**Port of Call Alcohol Help: Right Help at the Right Time**

<https://www.portofcall.com/our-services/right-help-right-time/>

**Rethink Mental Illness**

<https://www.rethink.org>

**The Samaritans**

<https://www.samaritans.org>

# Work and Education.

Going out into the world and putting your own “bread” on the table may seem like a scary process, however we are here to make it as easy for you as possible, and help you get the job of your dreams.

Between the ages of 16-18 you must be in an education or training scheme. Your social worker is responsible for your education planning, so you must communicate with them what you wish to do. You have more flexibility now, and you can pursue your dream career via multiple routes. There are plenty of resources online, or your PA can help you get in touch with a Careers Advisor.

Medway Council are committed to supporting you achieve your potential and realizing your ambitions. We work alongside other agencies such as **APM**, **Links to Work**, **Prince’s Trust** and the **Jobcentre** to provide the best support for you. **Care Leavers Progression Partnership** and **National Careers** **Service** have many more resources as well.



**Information Advice and Guidance (IAG).**

The IAG Team can offer Careers Information, Advice and Guidance to young people aged 16/17 – this may be in a one to one appointment, group work, drop in or virtually via social media and email.  The IAG team have a social media presence to support young people of all ages.

The main phone line is 335599, email is [IAG@medway.gov.uk](mailto:IAG@medway.gov.uk) and the social media presence is below,

**Twitter:** [**@IAGMedway**](https://twitter.com/IAGMedway) **l | Facebook:** [**IAGMedway**](https://www.facebook.com/IAGMedway.gov.uk/) **| Instagram:** [**@IAGMedway**](https://www.instagram.com/iagmedway/)

**Education Psychology Service.**

The role of the Educational Psychology Service with Care Leavers is to be part of the statutory assessment process. Where a young person has an Education Health and Care Plan, we can be part of the review process and advise about needs in relation to an educational placement. Typically we are only involved if there is a need to change of placement or it is thought the needs have changed. The EHCP can stay with the young person until they are 25 if they continue in education and continue to present with special educational needs and disability.

From the age of 16 young people can request an education, health and care plan assessment in their own right.  Other professionals and carers can always support a young person to do this or apply on their behalf

Care leavers with an EHCP will be eligible for the Supported Internship Programme which is a year long programme that supports young people into the workplace. Bemix are our main providers –see these links

<https://www.bemix.org>

<https://player.vimeo.com/video/268581168>

## Further Education

There are many interesting education options out there for you to choose from.

The secondary school you took your GCSEs at may have a sixth form you can remain at and study your A-Levels, BTECH or iB. However there are many more **sixth form centres to choose from** in Medway as listed on our website.



**Higher Education.**

As you most likely know, Medway has an assortment of university campuses, however you can apply to whichever university you would like. Even if you’re 100+ miles away, we will still be here to support you access finance and accommodation and any other support you require. Your PA will support with ascertaining all you will need to know.

**Adult education.**

If you are 19 years old and would rather take part in a short vocational course while you work, look on our **Adult Education** page to find out a variety of opportunities, some courses may even be free for you.

**Apprenticeships**

You could undertake an apprenticeship: this is where you will be spending part of your time in education and training, and another part in work. You can find out more on our website’s **Apprenticeship page** or check out **Kent Training and Apprenticeships**.

**Medway Libraries**

<https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200181/libraries>

Medway Libraries offer a safe space for young people to meet and relax and they offer a lot more than books. Every library has free computers to use, access to WIFI and at small charge printing facilities. They have resources to help you with education, your well-being, job searching and can signpost you to events and groups in Medway. Libraries offer opportunities to volunteer, are about the start offering apprenticeships and have free space for groups to meet within our opening hours. The library has a great collection of books and DVDs, a massively expanding e-book and magazine offer and many online reference tools that can be used free in the libraries.



## Employment

We’ve got lots of options for you when it comes to finding employment.

If you’re just looking for any kind of general work, we can recommend many job listing websites such as **Indeed** or **Reed** and even **LinkedIn**. If there is a particular company you’re after, it would be worth searching for their official website as not everyone chooses to post on job sites. For more support visit our own **Jobs page**.

You could undertake an apprenticeship: this is where you will be spending part of your time in education and training, and another part in work. You can find out more on our website’s **Apprenticeship page** or check out **Kent Training and Apprenticeships**.

**Internships.**

Internships are another great way to get into various industries, these are typically taken by those studying at university or after they have graduated. They are limited time and give you the opportunity to assess whether you would want to work in this environment. The best places to look for these would be **RateMyPlacement**, **StudentJob UK** or the **Internship** page on GOV UK.

## Volunteering

There are also many volunteering opportunities out there that can help boost your CV which are really easy to get into. Putting in those extra hours to help out your community could open up so many windows for you. You can have a look on **DoIt.org** or **Medway** **Voluntary Action** to find opportunities.

## Applying

Applying for these jobs and courses can be a long process, so it’s important that you get the proper guidance in every aspect of applying. Your PA can work closely with you on this, from CV writing to interview prep. Establish a good social media presence, having a clean Facebook profile will be a huge help, and having a LinkedIn profile helps you keep track of all your achievements, qualifications and interests. **Prospects**, **Assessment** **Day** and **MidKent College** also offer free advice on all areas of the job application process, even some of the universities you apply to will be able to offer support in the process.

Whatever you decide to do with your career, we will be here every step of the way.

**Learning to drive.**

From the age of 17 years you can apply for assistance with the costs of learning to drive. Access to funding will be based on an assessment of your capacity to learn how to drive safely, including your ability to pass the necessary tests. You must also be able to demonstrate that you have a history of seeking and sustaining education, training and employment opportunities.  Where agreed, funding will cover the costs of:

* Provisional driving licence.
* Up to 10 driving lessons. In exceptional circumstances and with the agreement of the Service Manager additional lessons may be funded.
* Theory test fee (and one re-take if needed)
* Driving test fee (and one re-take if needed)
* Full licence once test has been passed.

Young people will be excluded from applying for or continuing their lessons where:

1.  They have had any driving-related convictions, charges or charges pending during the preceding 18 months or  
2.   They have had any convictions, charges, or charges pending in relation to violence, drugs or alcohol during the preceding 6 months or  
3. The have been in custody during the preceding 6 months or  
4.  During a lesson they behave in any way which the driving instructor deems unacceptable

**Kent County Council: College, Sixth Form, Employment and Training**

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/college-sixth-form-employment-and-training>

**Medway Council: Adult Education**

<https://www.medway.gov.uk/homepage/71/adult_education>

**Medway Council: Jobs:**

<https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200188/jobs>

**Medway Voluntary Action**

<http://www.mva.org.uk>

**MidKent college careers advice**

<https://www.midkent.ac.uk/help-advice/careers-guidance/>

**National Careers Service**

<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/home>

**Prince’s Trust, Chatham**

<https://www.princes-trust.org.uk>

**Prospects: Applying For University**

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/applying-for-university/getting-into-university>

**Prospects: Assessment Centres:**

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/interview-tips/assessment-centres>

**Prospects: Careers Advice**

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice>

**Prospects: CV and Cover Letters**

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/cvs-and-cover-letters/cover-letters>

**Reed: Free cover letter template**

<https://www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/free-cover-letter-template/>

**Reed: Love Mondays**

<https://www.reed.co.uk/lovemondays>

**StudentJob UK**

<https://www.studentjob.co.uk>

**Totaljobs: Assessment Centre advice**

<https://www.totaljobs.com/careers-advice/interviews/assessment-centre-tips>

**UCAS**

<https://www.ucas.com>

**Kent Training and Apprenticeships**

<https://www.kenttrainingandapprenticeships.co.uk/>

**LinkedIn**

<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/>

**Medway Council Apprenticeships**

<https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200188/jobs/407/apprenticeships>

# Your and your Money.

# Managing your money can be complex and intimidating, but your PA is here to help you get started and support you manage your daily living expenses. Your Pa will support you ensuring you are receiving all the relevant financial support.

The Government has introduced Universal Credit which supports adults who are unemployed and on low incomes. Your PA will discuss your financial entitlements with you and support you accessing the relevant finances you are entitled to as a care leaver.

The Medway Leaving Care Team has a partnership agreement with their local job centre who has a dedicated person who will support care leavers and you PA will support you in making contact with this service if required.

## Managing Savings.

When you were in care you should have received allowances and had money put into a savings account, or a Junior ISA that was opened for you. You’ll be able to access your savings on your 18th birthday. Saving money is tricky, but there are a lot of resources that can help you save on your spending. Your PA can help you organise a budget plan, and be as involved in your spending as you would like. **The Money Saving Expert** is an excellent resource posting about sales, discounts, hacks and all sorts to help you save, and GOV UK offer an over the phone **Savings Helpline**.



## Financial Support with your first tenancy.

You are entitled to up to £2000 to help set up your home for when you move into your own flat. Your PA will help to manage your budget: they’ll come out shopping for you or help you order supplies online. Note that this is only for essentials.

## Financial Support for Education and Work

Access to education for all is important to us, so we provide some financial support in this area. Your PA will support you accessing bursaries and grants to enable you continue with your further education.

If you attend higher education Medway will support you accessing student finance, HE Bursary and support you with your university accommodation and any textbooks and tools you may need. You also

If you have a learning difficulty, health problem or disability you may be able to apply for DSA if you feel you need extra financial help for your studies. Look on GOV.UK for details on **Disabled Students Allowance.**

## Financial Support for Health.

Most healthcare through the NHS is free for all, you don’t need to pay for doctor’s appointments or hospital visits. Though you’ll still need to pay for a prescription unless you’re claiming benefits, pregnant or you have a child under 1 year old. If you are in urgent need of a prescription and you cannot afford to pay for it, contact your PA for further help.

Please don’t hesitate to talk to us if you feel you need more financial help, you could be entitled to more than you think.

**GOV UK: Council Tax**

<https://www.gov.uk/council-tax>

**GOV UK: Savings Helpline**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs/contact/register-to-receive-bank-and-building-society-interest-without-tax-taken-off>

**GOV UK: Universal Credit**

<https://www.gov.uk/universal-credit>

**GOV.UK: 16-19 Bursary Fund**

<https://www.gov.uk/1619-bursary-fund>

**GOV.UK: Grants and Bursaries for Adult Learners**

<https://www.gov.uk/grant-bursary-adult-learners>

**Medway Council: Council Tax and Benefits**

<https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200131/council_tax_and_benefits>

**Medway Council: Universal Credit**

<https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200171/benefits_and_financial_support/417/universal_credit/1>

**Money Saving Expert**

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com>

1. **You and your rights – more information**

**Accessing your File.**

You have every right to access your records held by Medway Council.

Your request must be made in writing and sent to [freedom@medway.gov.uk](mailto:freedom@medway.gov.uk). It is likely they will require photographic ID and proof of address before your request can be processed. For more information or for any queries please contact them by emailing [freedom@medway.gov.uk](mailto:freedom@medway.gov.uk).

**Identification.**

All young people prior to leaving care will be supported to have the relevant identification documents such as birth certificate, national insurance number and passport and it will be your responsibility to keep these in a safe place.

**GOV UK: Apply for a National Insurance Number**

<https://www.gov.uk/apply-national-insurance-number>

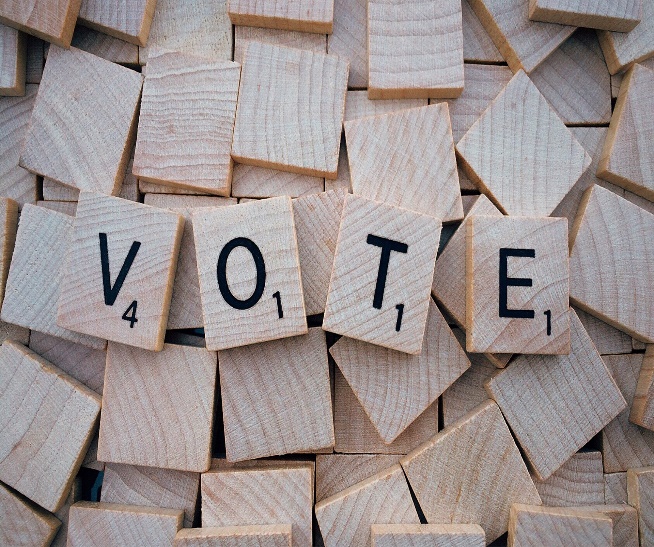
**Medway Passport Office**

<https://passportinfoguide.com/passportoffices/medway/>

<https://www.4csr.co.uk>

## Your Vote

Everyone having a say on who runs the country is vital, if you want certain changes to happen, you have to get your voice heard, starting with voting. Check out our page on [Registering to Vote](https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200168/elections_and_voting/344/register_to_vote), or if you’re unsure on why it matters, have a look on [Your Vote Matter](https://www.yourvotematters.co.uk)**s** for some inspiration.

<https://www.yourvotematters.co.uk>. Being registered can also help your credit rating as it is one of the things the credit reference agencies take into account when they assess applications for any sort of credit – mobile phone accounts, utility accounts, loans etc. So registering to vote can also be a benefit for these reasons.

## MOMO: Mind Of My Own

We want to encourage you to get involved with Mind Of My Own, an application where you can share your thoughts and feelings in a confidential way with your PAs, make a complaint and let your voice be heard. Find out more on their [website](http://www.mindofmyown.org.uk), and ask your PA. **MOMO:** [www.mindofmyown.org.uk](http://www.mindofmyown.org.uk)

**Advocacy**.

All Children in Care and Care Leavers have the right to support of an advocate if they have concerns about their care. Advocates are independent which means they do not work for Medway Council; they can help you to understand your rights and entitlements, support you to attend meetings and contact people on your behalf. Advocates can also support you to make a formal complaint if you wish. The Young Lives Foundation provides independent advocacy for Medway Children in Care and Care Leavers.  You can contact them directly or ask someone to contact them on your behalf: Young People’s freephone number: 0808 164 0096 Email: [Advocacy@ylf.org.uk](mailto:Advocacy@ylf.org.uk)

Please note the advocacy service is a confidential service and unable to share information provided by young people unless requested by the young person or a safeguarding concern. The service is transparent and shares all information with young people we are working for.

**Mentoring.**

Leaving Care Mentoring is a new service which is specifically for Care Leavers who feel they need extra support during their transition out of care. A Mentor can help you by listening to you and giving you advice on essential life skills. They can support you to attend meetings, find work, and manage your finances. You can identify four goals you would like to achieve by having a mentor, and would meet with your mentor a minimum or 4 hours a month, or at a frequency that works for you over a period of 6-9 months, or until you are ready to stop. Mentors are all volunteers, who would have been trained by the Young Lives Foundation and are independent from social services. If you would like to find out more about having a mentor or if you would like to request having one you can speak to your Personal Adviser or contact the Young Lives Foundation directly on their Young People’s Freephone Line : 0808 164 0096

## Keeping yourself safe.

Your safety is our responsibility and priority, and it should be yours too. We have plenty of resources and contacts for you if you want to learn more about how to keep safe both online and offline, and who to contact if something seems off. [Kent Police](https://www.kent.police.uk/) and [Medway Council](https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200219/community_safety/386/community_safety_in_medway) are easy to get in touch with and have clear guidance on all aspects of community safety on their website.

For more information on online safety, [THINKUKNOW](https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/14_plus/) keeps you up to date with online safety tips, and you can still contact the Police if you’re worried about any suspicious activity online.

[Bullying UK](https://www.bullying.co.uk) and [Domestic Abuse Support](http://www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk/search/area-search.asp?areasearch=medway#advice-and-support) in Kent and Medway are two more good online resources to seek advice and support with any sort of bullying and domestic violence.

If you feel unsafe at any way shape or form, get in touch with your PA, they can help remove you form any space where you feel unsafe and help you make contact with the Police if you are anxious to do so alone. It is so important you communicate your uncertainties, even if you’re unsure if it’s an emergency, your comfort and safety is a number one priority.

# You and your Community.

Being a part of a community, be it in a sports club or a society, allows us to create meaningful connections and develop social and practical skills we can take with us in all aspects of our lives. On the Medway website, we have multiple pages which can help you get involved with your community.



## 

## Activities

There is a lot to do in Medway, with lots of free events available to everyone, and there are plenty of places where you can find out what’s going on. [Visit Medway](https://www.visitmedway.org/whats-on/) will detail everything that’s going on, and you can apply for a[Medway Youth Pass](https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200161/travel/351/medway_youth_pass)on our website to access most of these activities and events at a major discount, or even for free. [Our Youth Programs and Activities](https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200142/leisure_and_libraries/318/youth_programmes_and_activities_in_medway/1) page can also help you find something to do that’s right for you.

For general one off events have a look at [Enjoy Medway’s](http://www.enjoymedway.org/events-medway) events page, or our [own calendar](https://www.medway.gov.uk/events) of events.

If it’s sports you’re after there is a [map of many sports facilities](https://www.google.com/maps?client=safari&rls=en&q=sports+centres+medway&oe=UTF-8&um=1&ie=UTF-8&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjLxYT1rrrcAhXDgVwKHTU_AxAQ_AUICigB) linked at the end of this section, or you can see a detailed list of [Sports Centres on our website](https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200180/sport_centres).

You can take on pretty much any hobby you want in Medway. Get involved in retro gaming with [AllGen Gaming](http://www.allgengaming.co.uk) in Rochester, learn an instrument with [Medway Towns Music Centre](https://www.kent-music.com/music-centres/medway-towns-music-centre/) or get involved with theatre with [The Three Towns Theatre Company](https://www.threetownstheatrecompany.co.uk). [Medway Hobbies and Pastimes](https://www.locallife.co.uk/medway/hobbies-pastimes.asp) can help you get started, or just talk to your PA about anything you’re interested in, whether it’s knitting or cooking, or both!

Participating in awards and societies can help boost your CV, make new friends, and discover lots of interesting hobbies and activities you never thought you’d take on. The [University of Kent, and Greenwich University](https://www.gkunions.co.uk/) allow anyone to participate in their societies, they have an enormous list. You can also take part in the internationally recognised [Duke of Edinburgh’s Award worth the Medway Open Award Centre](http://www.apple.com), or the [Arts Award with Nucleus Arts](http://www.nucleusarts.com/). For even more opportunities visit [Medway Monke](http://www.apple.com)**y** for an up to date list of societies and awards available to you.

There are also a variety of religious communities you can get involved with as well, see at the end of this section for a [map of the different places of worship in Medway](https://www.google.com/maps/search/places+of+worship+medway/@51.4100864,0.433726,12.46z).

## Getting Around

Whether you can drive or not there are lots of easy ways to get around Medway and beyond:

There are many [taxi services around Medway](https://www.google.com/maps?client=safari&rls=en&oe=UTF-8&q=taxi+medway&um=1&ie=UTF-8&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjsjbuZpbzcAhWDecAKHd7RDjQQ_AUICigB). If you need to get somewhere in an emergency, or you have a disability and cannot access other forms of transport, you may be entitled to having your travel reimbursed, contact your PA about this.

If you want to **learn to drive** we may be able to split the cost of a driver’s license. There are quite a few **places to learn in Medway**, ask your PA for advice on where would be best to go.

[Arriva Bus](https://www.arrivabus.co.uk) is our local bus service, with cheap single and return tickets, as well as annual and seasonal passes. Check out their website and keep an eye out for discounts on passes.

[Trainline](https://www.railcard.co.uk/?gclid=CjwKCAjw4uXaBRAcEiwAuAUz8FnOs8Xg6zn4Rq7HDgTrPDdtcUck6GrxkcNVYSTjLXIeVSFOWOnB7hoCZ-IQAvD_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds) offer passes for 16-24 year olds and disabled people which allow discounts and exclusive deals on tickets for trains across the country.



**Medway Council: Events**

<https://www.medway.gov.uk/events>

**Medway Council: Medway Youth Pass**

<https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200161/travel/351/medway_youth_pass>

**Medway Council: Sports Centres**

<https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200180/sport_centres>

**Medway Council: Youth Programs and Activities in Medway**

<https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200142/leisure_and_libraries/318/youth_programmes_and_activities_in_medway/1>

**Medway Family Information Services**

<http://medwayfisd.com/kb5/medway/fis/home.page>

**Medway Hobbies and Pastimes: Find a Hobby or Pastime in Medway**

<https://www.locallife.co.uk/medway/hobbies-pastimes.asp>

**Medway Open Awards Centre: The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award**

<http://medwayoac.co.uk/>

**Medway Towns Music Centre**

<https://www.kent-music.com/music-centres/medway-towns-music-centre/>

**Nucleus Arts, Events courses and the Arts Award**

<http://www.nucleusarts.com/>

**Relate: the Relationship people**

<https://www.relate.org.uk>

**The Three Towns Theatre Company**

<https://www.threetownstheatrecompany.co.uk>

**THINK U KNOW: guidance on staying safe on the internet.**

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/14_plus/>

**Train line: 16-24 Pass and Disabled Pass**

<https://www.railcard.co.uk/?gclid=CjwKCAjw4uXaBRAcEiwAuAUz8FnOs8Xg6zn4Rq7HDgTrPDdtcUck6GrxkcNVYSTjLXIeVSFOWOnB7hoCZ-IQAvD_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds>

**Visit Medway: What’s On**

<https://www.visitmedway.org/whats-on/>

**A Map of Places of Worship in Medway**

1. <https://www.google.com/maps/search/places+of+worship+medway/@51.4100864,0.433726,12.46z>

**A Map of Sports Facilities in Medway**

<https://www.google.com/maps?client=safari&rls=en&q=sports+centres+medway&oe=UTF-8&um=1&ie=UTF-8&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjLxYT1rrrcAhXDgVwKHTU_AxAQ_AUICigB>

**A Map of Taxi Services in Medway**

<https://www.google.com/maps?client=safari&rls=en&oe=UTF-8&q=taxi+medway&um=1&ie=UTF-8&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjsjbuZpbzcAhWDecAKHd7RDjQQ_AUICigB>

**AllGen Gaming: Video Gaming Hub based in Rochester**

<http://www.allgengaming.co.uk>

**Arriva Bus**

<https://www.arrivabus.co.uk>

**Bullying UK**

<https://www.bullying.co.uk>

**Domestic Abuse Support in Kent and Medway**

<http://www.domesticabuseservices.org.uk/search/area-search.asp?areasearch=medway#advice-and-support>

**EnjoyMedway: Events**

<http://www.enjoymedway.org/events-medway>

**Greenwich and Kent Student’s Unions Together: Societies**

<https://www.gkunions.co.uk/>

**Hobbies and Societies: Medway Monkey, For everything in Medway**

<http://medwaymonkey.com/>

**Kent Police: Online Safety**

<https://www.kent.police.uk/advice/online-safety/>

**Medway Council: Community Safety in Medway**

<https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200219/community_safety/386/community_safety_in_medway>