Digital Resilience, Inclusion & Wellbeing

For Looked After Children & Young People

Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership

SNOOK™

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CHANGING MINDS • CHANGING LIVES

Foreword

Digital already plays a central role in the everyday life of many young people across the UK, impacting everything from education and employment to entertainment and public services. This impact will only intensify in the years ahead.

The advantages and opportunities that the digital world bring are well documented and are extraordinary. However, the opportunity to access and ability to utilise the online world safety, productively and enjoyably is by no means guaranteed for all. The public narrative that all young people are competent and confident online, obscures the experiences of many. This ‘blind spot’ in our understanding of young people and technology serves to deepen rather than eradicate the ‘digital divide’ and compounds many other forms of social, financial and cultural exclusion.

So how do we ensure all young people are equipped with the appropriate access, skills and motivation to navigate the myriad of online challenges and to make the most of the opportunities that the digital world has to offer?

The Carnegie UK Trust has been delighted to support Glasgow City HSCP as part of the Digital Resilience Group over the last 18 months, to explore the current digital experiences of looked after and accommodated young people. We are particularly pleased that this research has been driven by the young people themselves and hope they too will be satisfied with the outcomes. We have valued the expert understanding provided by Snook who produced this research, which contributes valuable qualitative data to inform the suite of actions undertaken by the Digital Resilience Group, and provides necessary independent insight into the reality of digital life for young people across Glasgow.

This work provides a number of thoughtful reflections, not just about the role of technology, but also around the types of technology utilised, the importance of implementation processes and the challenges of upskilling. Underlying many of the barriers and enablers of success in an ever evolving digital context is the issue of training and support. While the question of how to most effectively empower staff with the knowledge and skills to feel confidence and capable online is not a unique challenge to social care, it one which is growing in significance and requires sector-wide attention. What is both clear and reassuring from the research, is the need to focus on the human aspect of technology and the positive impact of informed and open conversations.

Notably, given the numerous, and potentially significant, risks that can be experienced by young people online, it is also reassuring that the young people understood that clear parameters and restrictions are both necessary and valuable.
Importantly this work also highlights and considers a number of the unintended consequences of limited digital access for young people, from the impact on education, the potential to increase physical risk, further isolation and exclusion.
The intention of this research was not to deliver absolutes or a robustly representative picture of the experiences of every young person, but to provide a context for change and highlight key themes for consideration.

We hope this report provides useful insights for other local authorities and organisations supporting looked after young people, to take a critical review of their own digital provision including the full range of risks and opportunities.

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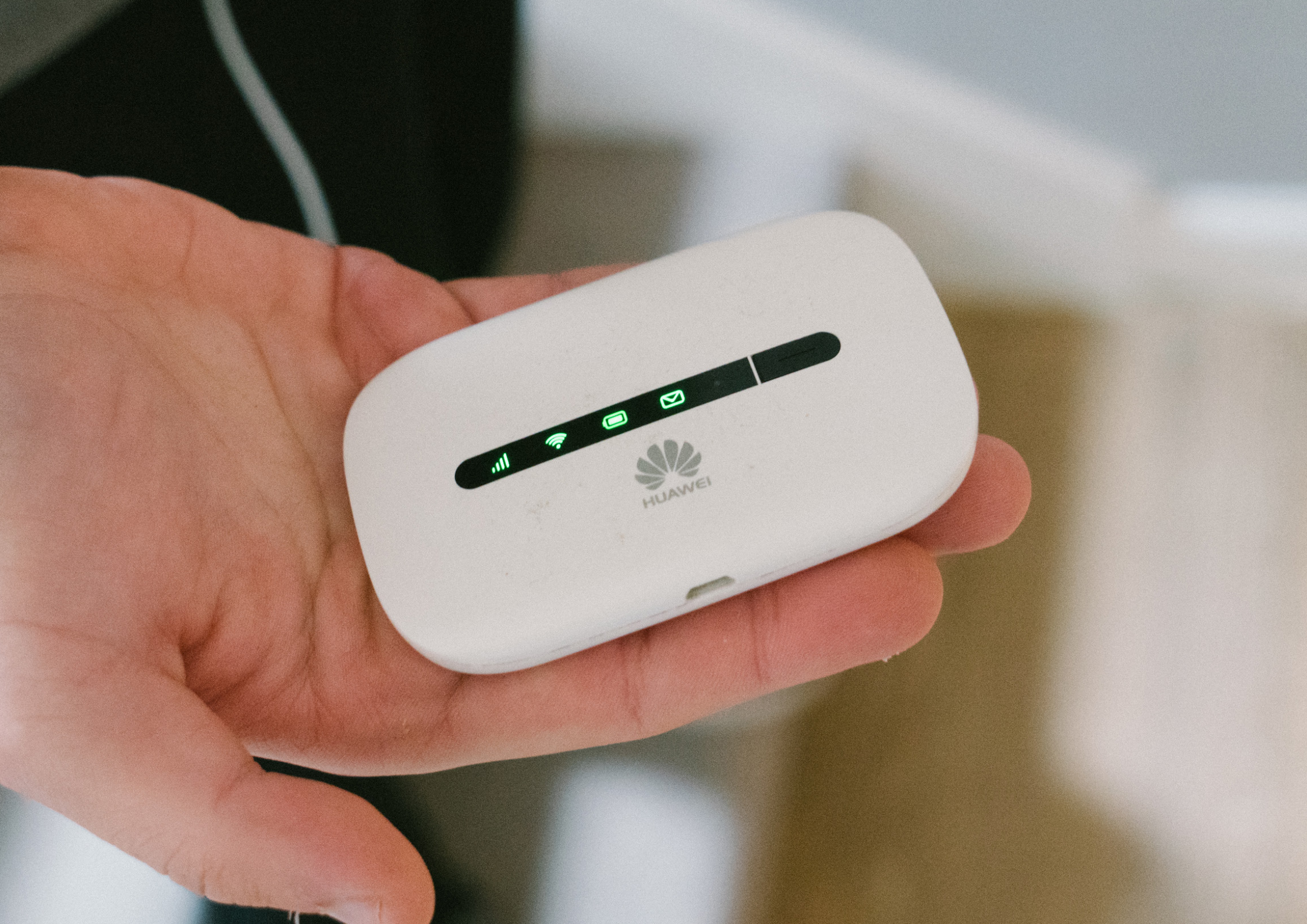
Please note

The scope of the research project involved engagement with 14 care experienced young people and 5 staff members who were present during interviews. Whilst this level of engagement has enabled us to detect trends, challenges and opportunities, the limitations of the scope of the project mean that these findings are not necessarily representative of all levels of support, or organisational policy. The research did not have the capacity to verify all information provided by participants.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1. Introduction and Purpose of the Report

1.1 The Problem

Through its Digital Resilience Group (DRG), the Glasgow City HSCP has been exploring a range of issues and needs for children and young people in the looked after setting. This includes;

- Online safety; both in residential settings and in areas like foster care.
- Effective access to appropriate online resources as part of normal daily life and development.
- Enhanced support for health and well-being.

Through informal discussion with young people and staff it was clear that current provision in these areas could be further developed. The DRG developed and launched a set of questionnaires for young people, carers and staff to better understand what is needed. There was a significant appetite from young people in the accommodated setting to be actively involved in some joint development work in this area.

Why Snook?

Snook are a Service Design and Digital agency, working across the UK. Our approach is underpinned by three key foundations; Research, Design and Strategy. We use agile approaches, design methods and tools to support organisations to co-design and co-produce new service models that a) make services function more efficiently: considering end-to-end interactions, and integrating digital as an integral part of a wider offline service b) make services more effective by improving the experience of those seeking, receiving and delivering services and the resultant impact of services.

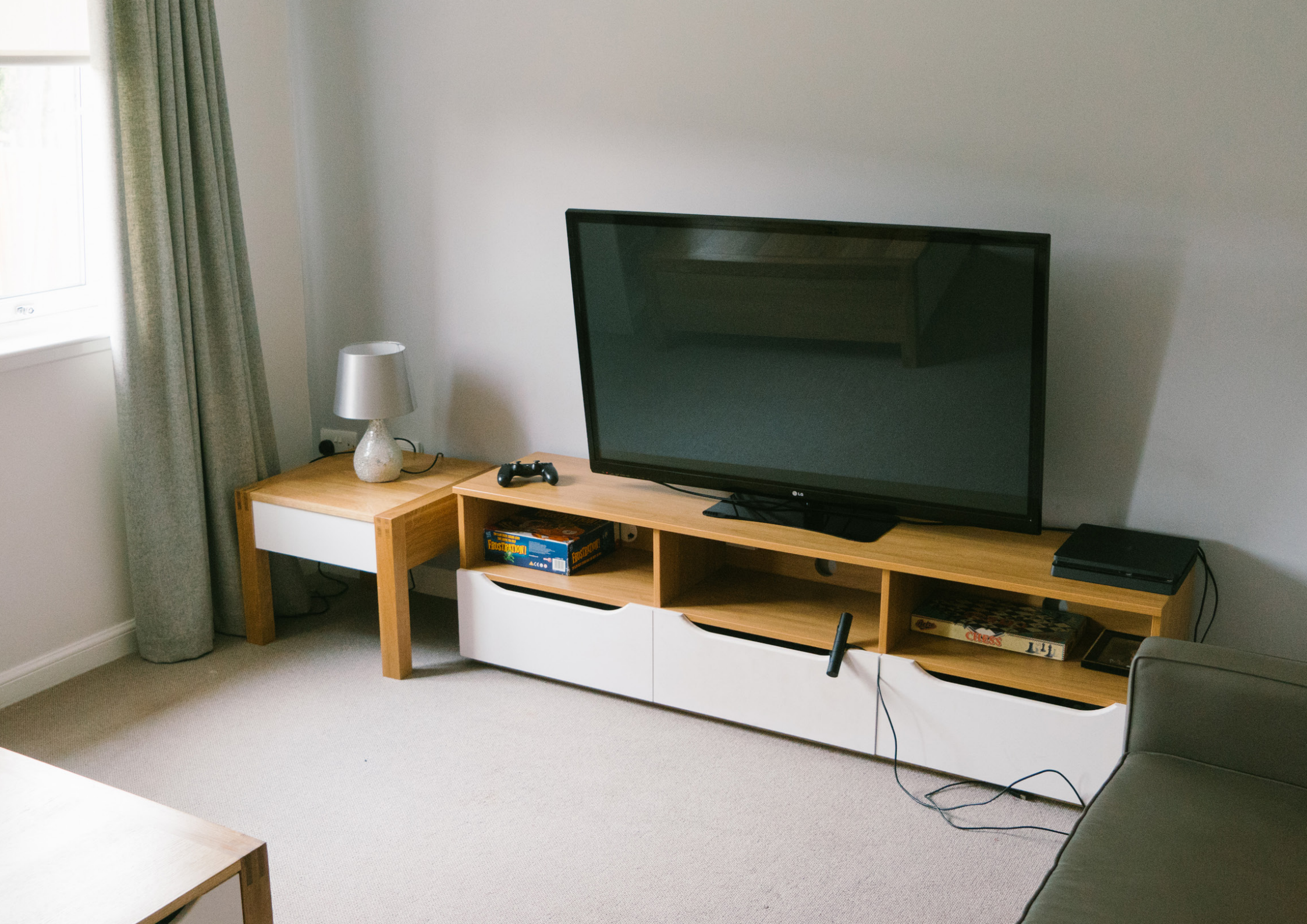
The Brief

With young people, staff and the Digital Resilience Group, co-produce a framework that supports safe and appropriate access to digital and online services.

Method

Over one week and with the support of Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership, Snook held workshops and interviews with twelve young people. Two other young people participated remotely through worksheets. For the purposes of this research, we spoke only to young people living in residential settings.
Our research focused on the following:

- Use Cases: What young people use the internet for.
- Current Landscape: How young people in residential settings access the internet today.
- What young people's needs are from the internet in the place where they live.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1.2 Summary of Key Insights

1. Digital literacy & skills

Digital literacy and skills of young people;

- Access to the internet increases digital skills and understanding.
- Ownership of devices has an effect on computer/device skills and literacy.

Digital literacy & skills of staff;

- There are varying levels of digital literacy amongst staff.
- Staff have varied opinions towards providing wifi.

2. Keeping young people safe

How staff access the safeguarding service;

- The use and understanding of the Online Safeguarding System (OSS) varies between houses.

Privacy, ethics, transparency & trust;

- Young people feel that their privacy is not respected, however they understood the difficult balance there is for staff to enable young people to benefit from internet access whilst maintaining safety

3. Digital Divide & Inequalities

- Inequalities exist between young people in and out of care settings.
- There are inequalities of experience between houses.
- Lack of access has social cost.

4. Provision of Hardware & Services

Provision of hardware;

- Enterprise grade technology isn't suitable for a domestic setting.
- Hardware in houses does not meet the needs of young people.
- Use of personal devices is limited due to lack of wifi
- Similar problems exist when using public hardware.

Provision of services;

- The current system has on occasions restricted access to legitimate services
- Young people access services at personal cost
- Lack of access has social cost.

1.3 Summary of Key Principles

These principles are intended to ensure that measures are put in place which are holistic and responsive to the needs of young people, without restricting them from legitimate activities which they have reasonable expectation to be able to undertake.

1. Digital Literacy & Skills

- Provide young people with the opportunity to gain digital skills and experiences which parallel or exceed those of their peers.
- Provide staff with regular opportunities for continuing professional development in digital skills and literacy to match that of young people.

2. Keeping young people safe.

- Provide staff with a service for control measures which is intuitive, accessible regardless of digital confidence and does not require training to use.
- Discuss with young people the use of the internet and implementation of reasonable restrictions as an integral part of their care plan.
- Provide staff with flexible restriction measures.
- Where possible, be transparent about restrictions and monitoring in place to protect vulnerable young people.
- Set a standard which promotes ethical and fair use of the system by staff and young people.
- Respect young people's privacy whilst keeping them safe.

3. Digital Divide & Inequalities

- Close the digital divide between looked after and accommodated young people and their peers
- Close the digital divide and inequalities across the service

4. Provision of Hardware & Services

- Provide hardware which is compatible with the needs of young people today and into the future. This should be measured against what is available to peers.
- Provide internet access which is fit for the needs of young people today and into the future.

2. The Current Landscape

2.1 Use Cases

Young people gave a variety of reasons for wanting to access the Internet. For many young people the internet is omnipresent; most, if not all, of their communication, entertainment and socialising happens on, or with the assistance of, the internet. Outlined below are the most common reasons for using the internet, as highlighted by young people:

Socialising.

Online interactions are intrinsic to how many young people socialise. The most common 'social' apps were;

- **Snapchat** - An instant messaging and picture messaging app. A feature of Snapchat is the 'Streak', a number given to the amount of days in a row that you and a friend have sent each other at least one snap in a 24 hour period. Some young people we spoke to had streaks of 500 days+, clearly demonstrating the importance of the app to them. The significance of individual relationships on snapchat was hard to measure as for many it seemed to be an important legitimate method of communication while for others it appeared to be more of a game where they were simply trying to increase their "snapchat score".
- **Facebook Messenger** - This is a standalone app for the instant messaging feature of Facebook and was more popular amongst young people than Facebook itself. For many young people, this is their main messaging platform and surpassed texting. Unlike standard texts, As it is an internet based service, Messenger requires an internet connection to send and receive messages, unlike standard texts. To message someone you must be friends on Facebook, rather than having their phone number.
- **Instagram** - A photo sharing and editing social media platform.
- **Facebook** - The largest social media platform in the world, but not as popular among young people as it once was.

- **WhatsApp** - Another Facebook owned instant messaging app with the ability to send media over data such as pictures, videos and voice notes. Seemingly the most popular use of WhatsApp is for group messaging.

- **iMessage** - However not a standalone app but rather a feature of the apple iOS ecosystem, iMessage, an internet based messaging system that supports the sharing of pictures, video, voice and other media, was important to a smaller number of young people. This was also the decision to use an iPhone as opposed to an android based smartphone for some young people. SMS texting wasn't discussed by a single young person.

2.1 Use Cases Cont.

Gaming.

Most popular games played by young people require an internet connection. This is to either download the game, update it, or for the game to function i.e. multiplayer online games.

TV & other media.

Young people tend to consume the majority of their media content online. This is from services like; Netflix, YouTube, NowTV, BBC iPlayer or ITV Hub. The content that is available on these sites is also part of the narrative of a lot of young people's conversations. Access to and availability of these services was very important to young people. The separation between traditional television media and the internet seems to be lost on many of the young people we spoke to. Any form of screen based content was deemed to be 'online'.

School work & college work.

School work and homework were talked about occasionally however this was mainly for research purposes. Any computer based tasks that were required to be completed for homework were generally done on school computers. College work much more frequently required access to the internet.

Researching.

A number of young people explained how they use the internet to research and learn for personal benefit. For example using YouTube to watch tutorials about how to fix or repair personal items and electronics. Also for learning about the world on websites like National Geographic and Wikipedia.

2.2 Access to the internet

Despite the provision of internet through house owned PC's protected by an Online Safeguarding (which provides a filtering system and monitors content to ensure only appropriate materials can be accessed) System, every young person we spoke accessed the internet unrestricted through another means. These 'alternative methods', or 'workarounds' vary between houses and are often spread by word of mouth. We are using the term workaround to describe any method for accessing the internet not provided by the houses. This does not mean that this is how the young people felt about these methods. For the young people, use of data for example is simply how you use a smartphone and not considered anything out of the ordinary. On the other hand the use of data in the form of hotspots was considered a workaround by the young people.

The reasons for adopting these workarounds include;

- Accessing the internet on a personal devices such as smartphones, tablets and laptops.
- Making use of internet reliant devices such as PS4s and Chrome Casts.
- Accessing the internet outwith houses.
- Avoiding the Online Safeguarding System's monitoring and restrictions.

In houses where young people were open about the workarounds, or alternative ways of accessing the internet that they employ, and staff accepted that they had access to unrestricted internet, more conversations happened between the young people and staff regarding safety and the use of the internet.

Wifi

Wifi is the most common method of connecting to broadband internet for the majority of the population. It generally works via a wired connection to an ISP (internet service provider), either by phone line, cable or fibre-optic which is converted by a modem and then distributed by a router over a wireless network that nearly all devices can connect to. These networks are generally protected by a secure password that makes it difficult for anyone without it to see the connection traffic, keeping the data being shared safe.

- **Public wifi (bus, McDonalds etc).** An easily accessible and widely available means of accessing the internet is to use public wifi networks. These are available in city and town centres, shopping centres, McDonalds and other fast food restaurants, public transport such as buses, trains and the subway etc. The levels of restriction on these networks

vary. Most will block adult content, some will not allow streaming, some limit the amount of time you can access it and some have no restrictions whatsoever.

- **Nearby wifi.** Some young people expressed that they are able to access unprotected wifi networks that originate from somewhere near their house. This can be a private network belonging to a neighbouring family or business or a public entity such as a library. Some young people told us of times when they would walk out onto the street to get better signal for open wifi networks.

LAN

LAN or Local Access Networks are wired networks that are used to provide hardwired internet access to multiple computers around a building and was the main way of accessing the internet prior to wifi becoming prevalent. A LAN network is used to supply network access to the house PC's in the newly built houses.

- In the newly built houses that we visited a number of young people explained to us how they managed to get unrestricted access to the internet by utilising the network in place for the desktop PC's provided. By unplugging the ethernet cable from the back of the desktop PC and plugging it into a laptop or a games console, these young people were able to access unrestricted internet. According to the the young people that we spoke to, the internet speeds capable of being achieved by using this method were much higher than that of what the Online Safeguarding System protected PC's could provide.

Data

Mobile data networks were the most common workaround for unrestricted (although monitored/ supported by staff whilst in the children's houses) internet access amongst the young people we spoke to. These young people confirmed that nearly every young person in their houses has some amount of mobile data each month. Alternatively, for those don't have access, data is often shared between young people.

- **On mobile/tablet.** The most common way of accessing mobile data networks was through smartphones or cellular capable tablets.

  Cost. The data plans and packages that the young people we spoke to are using vary between person and on average were between £20 - £35 a month, however, some light users managed to spend around £10 and one instance of an extremely heavy user spending upwards of £100 a month. For the most part young people with data had unlimited usage with providers such as Giffgaff or Three.

  Security & safety. Some mobile networks block adult content on their networks as standard. To unlock this, a user must provide evidence of being over 18. However, it is not a requirement of all mobile network providers.

- **Hotspots/tethering.** These are the methods of sharing the mobile data connection from one device, generally a smartphone, to another by creating a temporary wifi network or by wired connection.

  Sharing. We found many instances of young people providing internet to each other. This was either done when a young person ran out of data or was not on a mobile data plan.

  Power imbalance. Due to the control over these temporary networks falling to one young person, there is a severe power imbalance. A young person can begin to rely on the connection and without warning can have their access removed by the young person who is supplying the hotspot. One young person we spoke to charged other young people in the house a small fee for access their network.

Security. Similarly to mobile networks, hotspots are generally completely unrestricted. Allowing for no monitoring or control by staff.

- **Mobile modem.** Similar to a hotspot, a mobile modem uses a mobile data connection to create a wifi network. Mobile modems are however stand alone, portable devices that allow continuous access and have a slightly larger range than smartphone hotspots.

Cost. We were only made aware of mobile modems in one of the houses we visited. In this instance the device itself had a £60 initial cost and then a further £35 a month contract for unlimited 4G data. This cost was being covered by the young person.

Security. The same security risks that are present with mobile data usage also apply to mobile modems. The connection reaches further, meaning that more young people can connect to one device.

Sharing. Similar to hotspots, the young people we spoke to that owned mobile modems also shared the connection with other young people in the house. It appeared to be that whereas a mobile hotspot would be shared with one or two other young people, a mobile modem can be shared between three to five.

Power imbalance. With more young people generally connected to the mobile modem, the power imbalance is even greater than that of hotspots. If the young person who owns the modem decides that they want to turn it off or bring it out of the house it cuts access for many more young people. The young people we spoke to who owned these devices were aware that they had a level of control over the other young people in the house and told us of times when they would restrict access to particular young people at their discretion.

Online Safeguarding System

A minority of young people we spoke to utilise the Online Safeguarding System protected computers that are provided in their house, preferring to use other devices.

- **Proxy servers** Proxy servers are a way to hide your internet usage from anyone trying to view it. You connect to the proxy server which then connects to the intended website, masking the address and making monitoring very difficult. The existence of working proxies spreads by word of mouth; we were made aware of a “russian one” that is currently most popular.
- **Avoidance of keywords.** Even though some of the young people we spoke with were unaware of the monitoring of keywords, most were aware, and most also knew ways of avoiding the terms that they knew would result in the house manager speaking to them. These ranged from speaking in foreign languages, spelling keywords backwards, intentional misspelling etc. For many young people, if a conversation was going to contain a keyword, they would simply have the conversation on another platform i.e. Facebook Messenger on mobile data.

2.3 User Experiences

The following experiences are fictitious, but are inspired by the real experiences of young people we spoke to. These serve to illustrate some of the barriers young people face towards digital resilience and inclusion in looked after settings and the impact of these on their lives.

Dylan

Who are they?

Dylan is a 17 year old from Glasgow attends college where he is studying an *IT course.*

Dylan is very IT literate and internet savvy. He sees himself working with computers in the future but doesn't know how yet.

What do they use the internet for?

In his spare time Dylan loves to game online *on his PS4 in his room.* Occasionally he will play offline in the communal area with other young people from the house but doesn't enjoy it as much because of the lack of online features.

Dylan spends a lot of time playing games on his PS4 in his room as he has managed to find a way to play online. He says that the lack of wifi forces him to spend more time by himself.

He mainly uses his phone to chat with his friends on Facebook, *talk in gaming forums,* browse Instagram or watch *YouTube videos.*

Dylan watches a lot of YouTube videos about how to fix computer problems because he finds it interesting and it helps him with his college work.

How do they get access to the internet?

To play games online, Dylan uses the LAN cable. By unplugging it from the desktop in his room and plugging it into his PS4 he gets free unregulated internet access to play games and watch Netflix, YouTube and other online streaming services.

Because Dylan used to move around he has made a lot of good friends online that he keeps in contact with in various chat rooms. He talks to them about everything from games to his college work.

Because Dylan wants to be able to access the internet from his phone and tablet he has a Three portable *wifi modem and contract.*

Dylan uses his college bursary to pay for this contract. This means that he often goes without supplies and materials he needs. Even though the internet is important for elements of his course work he uses it more frequently to socialise or relax. He values the internet more than other items he needs for college.

As there are other Young people in the house who don't have access to the internet he allows them to connect to his *personal wifi* network*. He has control* over who can access his network and kicks different people off at certain times at night. This can result in falling out amongst the young people.

The mobile network that Dylan has set up is unrestricted and staff do not know what the young people are looking at when they connect to it.

By Dylan having control over the wifi it creates a power imbalance in the house that the staff are not always able to monitor or control.

Sophie

Who are they?

Sophie is a 16 year old from Glasgow. *She is currently not in education, employment or training*.

Sophie spends a lot of her time in the house, on her phone on social media

What do they use the internet for?

Sophie is looking to go to college or get an apprenticeship, however she has *not been able to access* some websites on the provided pc.

Even though she has mobile data on her smartphone a lot of college websites and application forms only work on PC's. She has not spent enough time looking at her options and as a result doesn't think she'll be starting a course in September

As Sophie doesn't see her friends in school every day she keeps in touch over Snapchat and Facebook messenger which she uses almost constantly. She does this using an iPhone that was a hand-me-down from a family member.

In the evenings she *watches Netflix on her own on her phone* as her friends love talking about the latest *trending series.*

Many series offer the opportunity to discuss difficult topics such as mental health, suicide, drug use etc. Many series may also not be appropriate for younger viewers which can't be monitored on personal devices.

How do they get access to the internet?

Sophie uses a lot of data and spends almost all of her allowance on *this*.

Without access to sufficient wifi provision Sophie ends up spending a considerable amount of money per month on her phone plan.

Because the houses have no way of streaming internet services to communal TV's many young people retreat to their rooms and watch on personal devices. This behaviour can be very isolating.

She has some fast data which tends to run out very quickly and some which is slow. The 'slow' network is much faster after 12 o'clock at night so Sophie often *stays up to watch shows in bed.*

As Sophie has no regular education, employment or training to attend she often stays up very late and sleeps in. This has been negatively affecting her mental health.

Some of the younger children in the house don't have any data and Sophie occasionally allows them to *tether to her phone's hotspot* to use her data.

This creates a power imbalance and is also a security risk as this internet access is completely unprotected content.

Sophie has gotten in trouble from the staff for letting other people use her data but she doesn't care as she thinks that it's not fair they don't have wifi.

Ali

Who are they?

Ali is 15 and recently moved to Scotland.

What do they use the internet for?

He recently started in a new school and is keen to make friends, however, because he doesn't have a smartphone and can't access social media, he has struggled to connect with anyone outside of school hours.

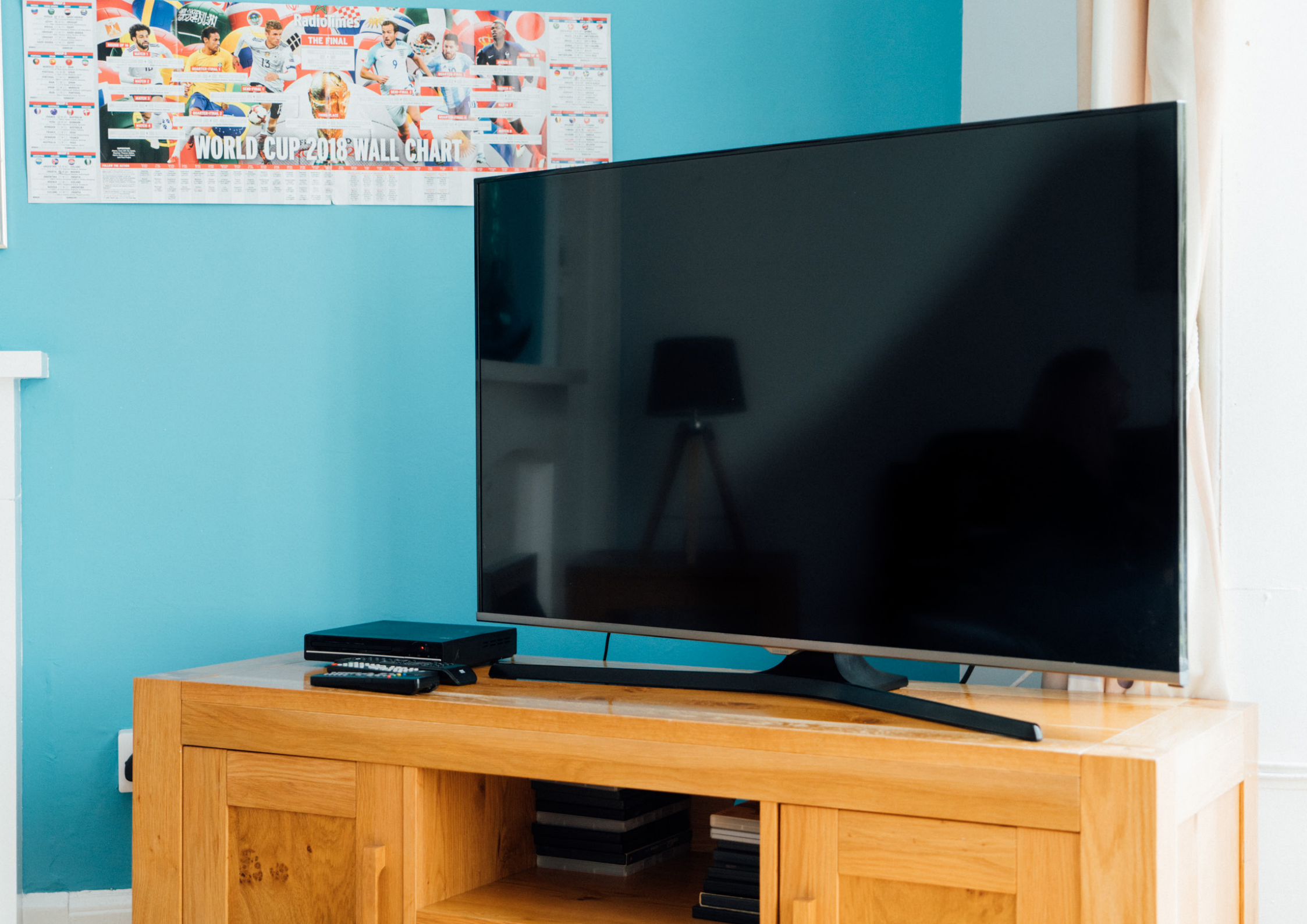
Ali likes his personal time and spends a lot of time in his bedroom, using his provided PC, trying to watch videos on YouTube. He finds that sometimes he can watch certain videos and then the next day he won't be able to watch the same thing again as *it will be blocked.*

Ali doesn't understand how decisions are made to block websites. Ali feels anxious as he might not be able to access certain sites when he needs to.

How do they get access?

Ali doesn't *understand* how the provided internet service works.

Ali agreed to a terms and conditions document when he logged in to the provided pc for the first time. All Ali wanted to do was get online and try talk to his friends who he hadn't spoken to in weeks. This document was very complicated and he didn't even try to read it, as a result Ali is unaware of what he has agreed to.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3. Insights & Principles

3.1 Digital literacy & skills of young people

When we refer to digital literacy and skills we are talking about familiarity with both digital services and hardware. In addition to this it also includes confidence in using the internet and computers to complete tasks and an understanding and awareness of the function of computers and the internet.

Digital literacy and skills also covers the ability to use connected devices such as smartphones, tablets, smart tv's etc. These skills are important however more 'traditional' IT skills, such as emailing and creating word documents and spreadsheets are still incredibly important. These are often forgotten by young people as most of their digital lives exist in an 'app culture' where these skills may not be needed or valued.

Access to the internet increases digital skills and understanding.

- Young people indicated a range of skills and understanding of technology and the internet; from those who were confident in troubleshooting problems to those who demonstrated a poor understanding of what the internet is and its potential uses.
- We became aware of two very different types of internet users amongst the young people that participated in the research. There were the very advanced who actively participated online and who were interested in the culture and community of the internet. These users are 'active users'. Conversely there were those that were more interested in the consumption of entertainment and media and who were not part of the wider online conversation and showed little interest in using the internet for any other purposes. These users are 'passive consumers'. Active users had far superior digital literacy skills compared with passive consumers.
- There was a direct correlation between young people who have limited access to appropriate hardware and services and those with limited digital skills and understanding

Ownership of devices has an affect on skills and literacy.

- Young people who owned their own devices were generally more confident in their use and capabilities. They were able to explore and customise their devices; learning in the process.
- Similarly, those who owned their own devices were more confident in troubleshooting and repair.

Principles for digital skills and literacy in young people

Must:

- Create circumstances in which young people are able to use technology in a similar way as peers.
- Ensure that children and young people have the necessary skills to protect themselves online and understand who to talk to/what to do if they feel unsafe.
- Provide internet access via wifi which is suitable for the needs of young people today and anticipates the needs of young people in the future.
- Prioritise repair/device uptime and ensure ease of access to internet.

Should:

- Enable young people to gain skills and improve outcomes.
- Encourage and build on young people helping each other to be proficient in digital literacy skills.
- Empower young people to make decisions.

Could:

- Consider how young people could be involved in or take ownership of troubleshooting and minor repairs or fixes.
- Provide a range of learning opportunities to gain more advanced skills and give credit for this.

Won't:

- Allow young people to be left behind in their development of digital and technology skills/literacy.

Digital literacy & skills of staff

There are varying levels of digital literacy amongst staff.

- Young people reported wide variations in the skills and confidence of staff. This includes their skills in using devices, hardware, Online Safeguarding System, the internet, understanding of young people's use and relationship to the internet
- Young people reported that they perceived staff to have poor digital skills. However, they also reported that staff "aren't daft" and were generally aware of what young people were doing on the internet.
- The Online Safeguarding System 'champions' system that is currently in place is not fit for purpose. Young people were unable to identify who these people were and the champions themselves were unable to provide the level of technical and emotional support required by the position.

Staff have varied opinions towards providing wifi.

- Some staff expressed fear at granting open wifi and the potential consequences.
- Some staff welcomed the idea of providing wifi within houses.

Principles for digital skills and literacy in staff

Must:

- Establish a baseline of education and continuing professional development in the area of digital literacy and online awareness for all staff. This will replace the need for ‘champions’.
- Provide ongoing training and regular updates on current apps/channels/useage most popular and prevalent with young people and communicate this in an effective way.
- Provide staff with a knowledge of key online resources for wellbeing and other resources.
- Ensure that each member of staff has the confidence to recommend and demonstrate the use and access of these resources.
- Provide staff with the ability to have conversations on difficult and sensitive topics.
- Ensure that each staff member has an understanding and knowledge of both the opportunities and risks that the internet affords

Should:

- Work with young people in the education and development of staff/carers digital literacy.

Won’t:

- Place blame on staff for any lack of knowledge or skill or make them too fearful to explore new technologies.

3.2 Keeping young people safe

For all the benefits that the internet offers, there are still obvious safety concerns when it comes to children. As such certain safeguarding measures need to be put in place.

Young people aren't opposed to internet restrictions, in fact the young people we spoke with each suggested restriction measures that they feel should be imposed.

The use and understanding of the Online Safeguarding System varies between houses.

- Despite staff training there is inconsistency between houses in staff skills and usage of the Online Safeguarding System.
- Young people also displayed mixed interpretations of the Online Safeguarding System, its purpose and functions.

Principles for staff access to the safeguarding service

Must:

- Be a service which is intuitive and accessible to staff, and ensure appropriate training.
- Must be constantly updated to reflect IT innovations.
- Design a rigorous feedback loop for maintenance and updates.
- The service must treat children and young people with respect.
- Allow for a clear understanding between staff and young people of how to deal with any concerns/issues.

Should:

- Be more flexible and customisable for individual needs and circumstances and easy to use by all.

Could:

- Deploy the same system in foster households.

Won't:

- Introduce a new system to 'police' usage, however the service has a responsibility to safeguard young people.

Privacy, ethics, transparency & trust.

Young people feel that their privacy is not respected.

- Whilst young people had differing understanding of the Online Safeguarding System's functions, most felt that having their messages read was an invasion of their privacy.
- Some indicated that they weren't concerned because they wouldn't use house provided internet for anything which might be flagged by the Online Safeguarding System.
- Some indicated that they would connect to the internet in other ways (e.g. phone data, public networks etc.) if they didn't want certain messages or behaviours monitored.
- However some young people felt that monitoring message content could be helpful in some circumstances.

Young people do not agree with the ethics of some staff decisions.

- One young person told us anecdotally that private messages had been read aloud at a meeting, without their prior knowledge. They indicated that they understood that this was done for safeguarding reasons but that it was a surprising and distressing situation all the same.
- Young people indicated that denial and access to the internet is being used as incentive/ punishment for a number of behaviours.
- Young people told us that they have been denied access to the internet following minor breaches or misunderstandings.
- Most young people were comfortable with some restrictions to internet access; through blocking unsuitable pages or time limits. Some told us that they, or other young people that they live with, already hand their phones in to staff at bedtime. However any of these restrictions need to be made evident.

Principles for privacy, ethics, transparency & trust.

Must:

- Respect young people's privacy whilst keeping them safe.
- Be clear about monitoring and restrictions and explain the reasons for it.
- Include young people in the decisions around solutions, agreements, parameters and consequences.
- Be clear and communicative about what these are.
- Treat each case on its own merits.
- Only deny access for safeguarding purposes; not as part of everyday reward and punishment.
- Create a standard set of age appropriate rules and principles regarding use and misuse of the internet for all houses.
- Co-create these rules with young people
- Young people must know how to seek support if they disagree with decisions being made.
- Create a standard set of rules and principles for granting and denying access to the internet. For example, denying access where safety concerns arise or in instances of misuse or abuse of the internet and tech services.

Should:

- Have support and systems in place to help staff with breaches of terms of service.
- Have support and systems in place to help staff with breaches of security.

Won't:

- Have completely open internet; some safety restrictions must be in place and are desired by young people themselves.
- Deny access to the internet for minor breaches or misunderstandings.

3.3 Digital Divide and Inequalities

During the research we found different instances of inequalities and divides. These include inequalities between young people in looked after settings and their peers, as well as across houses. The digital divide, which is the gap between people who have free and unrestricted access to the internet and those who don't, has been shown to have impacts on social mobility, learning and education, personal development amongst many other factors. The inequalities that looked after young people currently experience in comparison with people their age not in care also creates a social divide and marks them out as "different".

Inequalities exist between young people in and out of care settings.

- Young people reported that they felt they were marked out as "different" due to their limited access to the internet, social media, popular culture and devices.
- Young people reported in particular that it was difficult to remain in touch with friends when they aren't able to access everyday services and apps such as Facebook Messenger, Snapchat and WhatsApp. One young person told us that it had been hard to make and keep friends in a new school as, without a smartphone, they could only speak to peers whilst at school.
- Some young people were blocked from completing college or school work; either because the required task included an Online Safeguarding System keyword, because whole domain names are blocked or due to unfit hardware and software.
- Many tools of modern education are incompatible with outdated software run on council hardware such as Windows 7 and Internet Explorer 7 - 11.

There are inequalities of experience between houses.

- Currently there are inequalities between houses themselves; some provide personal PCs in individual rooms, some have shared laptops or PCs in communal spaces and some have no provision at all due to breakages.
- There is an inequality in the way that young people access the internet through their smartphones and data. Some have contracts, whilst others use Pay-As-You-Go. Some young people pay for this themselves, or families make a contribution, or houses do.
- An inequality in staff digital literacy results in an inequality of experience for young people across different houses.
- An inequality in the way that staff administer and control the internet in houses results in an inequality of experience for young people across different houses.

Principles to address the digital divide and inequalities

Must:

- Provide wifi across all houses which is of a suitable speed for the needs of young people.
- Establish baseline for access, provision and digital literacy for all staff and young people to ensure equity across houses.
- Include an agreement for access to the internet in young people plans.

Should:

- Employ a range of appropriate methods for educating young people and staff on the positive uses and dangers of the internet.
- Enable young people to gain skills to improve outcomes.

Won't:

- Continue to have this level of inequality in devices and services.

3.4 Provision

Even though measures have been taken to provide sufficient hardware for young people living in residential homes we found that, at the homes we visited, most of this hardware was either inoperational or not fit for purpose. The computers in the houses were sometimes broken and not repaired or replaced in a timely manner. The type of hardware supplied i.e. dell desktop pc's running windows vista, were more in line with what you would find in a workplace enterprise setting and not a young persons bedroom.

The digital services that can be accessed on this hardware are also very limited. Due to the configuration of the hardware, streaming services like Netflix can't be used, a major issue for many of the young people we spoke with. Many legitimate websites are also either blocked or unable to be used, either from the Online Safeguarding System's restrictions or as a result of the use of internet explorer 7 - 10 (an out of date browser) being mandatory.

Provision of hardware

Enterprise grade technology isn't suitable for a domestic setting.

- The PCs and laptops provided in houses are not suitable for the needs of most young people.
- Technology provision and maintenance for young people in looked after and accommodated settings is treated in the same way as all technology across the council. This business style approach is not meeting the needs of young people in the places where they live.
- When a young person logs-out of a computer which is running the Online Safeguarding System, their current session is lost. This makes using a Online Safeguarding System protected computer for anything other than casual browsing very difficult.

Hardware in houses does not meet the needs of young people.

- Young people see little value in the hardware provided to them alongside the Online Safeguarding System. As a result they do not respect it, resulting in a lot of broken hardware or people not using it at all.
- Some houses are providing hardware which does meet the needs of young people; including PS4s and Chromecasts. However, as these devices must be wifi enabled, young people are providing and paying for their own data connections in order to use these devices.
- We spoke to young people who have either been provided with smartphones or non-smartphones by their house. Sometimes they made a contribution towards the cost of a smartphone, on a case-by-case basis. Those with non-smartphones reported that they did not use them because they were embarrassed by them and they didn't meet their needs in terms of keeping in touch with friends.

Inability to use personal devices in houses.

- Some young people already own devices which they are unable to use within the place that they live without wifi.
  This includes smartphones, tablets, laptops and games consoles.
- Some young people have smartphones which are provided by or part-funded by their house.
- To combat this, young people are using mobile data, public wifi or visiting the family home to use devices there.
- Other young people have no access to devices like these.

Similar problems exist when using public hardware.

- Some young people access public computers including at school or college or at a library. As these are shared computers, they have the same restrictions as the Online Safeguarding System enabled computers in terms of work being lost at the end of a session.

Principles for the provision of services

Must:

- Provide access to devices which allow young people to access the internet.
- Provide technology which meets the needs of young people and is kept updated and well maintained.

Should:

- Involve young people in decisions about what hardware is provided.
- Enable young people to personalise their experience of technology.
- Consider how devices with an online functions (e.g. PlayStation Network) will be connected with any new internet provision.

Could:

- Provide young people with smartphones if they do not own one.
- Create a framework for devices to be owned by GCC, young people or part-owned.

Won't:

- Allow situations where young people must leave their house in order to access the internet.

Provision of services

The current system sometimes restricts access to legitimate services.

- One young person told us that the log-in they were given for the Online Safeguarding System never worked and the issue was never resolved. As a result, they had never accessed the internet through the house and instead used personal data.
- Young people reported being restricted from social media sites, entertainment sites and sites for college work or job applications.

Young people access services at personal cost

- The most commonly accessed paid-for internet services by young people were; Netflix (usually accessed through the account of a family member), Amazon Prime, Spotify and PlayStation Network.

Lack of access has social cost

- Young people have access to non-internet based TV services (Freeview) but told us that their lack of access to services such as Netflix mean that they miss out on social conversations regarding trending series that they have been unable to watch

Principles for the provision of services

Must:

- Ensure that young people do not have to pay for access to the internet within the place they live.
- Have in place safeguarding measures which are holistic and responsive to the needs of young people, without restricting them from legitimate activities.
- Provide open access on personal devices for young adults; over 18 years old. This may need to be subject to review based on individual care plans, however, the default should be open access.

Should:

- Provide reasonable and safe access to the same services as peers
- Allow young people to use pocket money for top-ups, points, subscriptions etc within reason.

Could:

- Consider pay TV subscriptions and on demand TV services.

Undertake similar interviews with staff to understand their needs for providing better internet access in houses.

- What barriers do they face within the current provision?
- What challenges do they see in providing wifi in houses?
- What skills exist amongst staff? How can we use and build on these?
- What are their fears and hopes?
- What do staff need to support them in providing safe and appropriate wifi access to young people in their care?

Undertake similar interviews with young people and carers in other settings (e.g. foster care) to understand their needs for providing better internet access:

- What barriers do they face within the current provision?
- How does internet access here compare with that in houses?
- How can we ensure that all young people have the same opportunities whilst keeping them safe?

Continue to work with young people and staff as improvements are made:

- Ensure that the needs of young people and staff drive all decisions and changes to avoid costly errors.
- Effectively communicate next steps and timescales to young people and staff.
- Ensure that young people remain in dialogue with DRG as changes are made and they have the opportunity to understand why decisions are taken.

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Prototype incrementally to understand new opportunities and challenges as they arise:

- Work smart to ensure that the right decisions are made and that we arrive at the best solution for young people and staff.

Understand how we can better communicate with young people and staff:

- Prototype and test with communication channels which are everyday in the lives of young people and staff. For example; group chat services such as Facebook Messenger or Whatsapp.
- Find opportunities for face-to-face communication about the internet.

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