



## **Media Release**

### **23rd November 2015**

#### **£190,000 funding to support young people in Greater Glasgow**

Two new projects supporting care experienced young people in and around Glasgow have been given the go-ahead thanks to a funding windfall of £190,000.

Both projects will use the award to provide a peer mentoring service for young people who have experience of being in care, offering them support, advice and guidance from someone who has been there too.

The first project, run by charity Ypeople, will provide a community based service, aimed at building safe and trusting relationships for young people using peer mentoring.

Peer mentors have a deep awareness of the emotional impact of being 'looked after', and for many looked after young people, being able to connect with someone who has faced similar challenges helps them feel less alone and in a safe space to be themselves.

The long-term impact of this type of guidance and encouragement can be transformational for a young person, helping them to realise their full potential.

The second project will be run by Up-2-US, and will offer a range of peer mentoring for particularly vulnerable care experienced young people who can benefit from contact with an adult who has 'walked in their shoes'.

The mentoring process is designed to have a positive influence on young people's aspirations, building their skills and developing their confidence and resilience.

This can have a significant impact on the long term outcomes for care experienced young people, whose life chances are all too often adversely affected by their circumstances.

Both projects will operate in Glasgow city and neighbouring local areas, including North Lanarkshire, Dumbarton, North Ayrshire, and Renfrewshire.

Mentors are generally recruited from the local community and will have been in care themselves or have other relevant life experience.

Funding has come from the Life Changes Trust, an independent charity set up with a Big Lottery Fund endowment of £50 million to improve the lives of two key groups in Scotland: people affected by dementia and care experienced young people. The Trust will invest over half a million pounds in peer mentoring initiatives for care experienced young people over the next two years.

**Ypeople have already helped care experienced young people access mentoring – one fifteen year old young woman said** "When I first started working with Ypeople my head was all over the place. I was drinking, taking drugs and running away for days. I had no respect for anyone. When I started to work with my Mentor I had just finished my first period of secure accommodation. I clicked straight away with her and knew I could trust her and she helped me work through my problems"

**Olive Arens, Manager of Up-2-U's said:** "This is a wonderful opportunity to learn other ways of helping extremely vulnerable young people to achieve their goals. Too often we have failed those who need our help most. Now Up-2-us are just keen to hear from individuals who have experienced care away from home or their family, and now feel they can offer something to others.'

**Heather Coady, Director of the Life Changes Trust care experienced young people programme said:** "Care experienced young people tell us that, above all else, relationships matter to them. They tell us how important the support is of someone "who has been there" – someone who can genuinely walk beside them. We are particularly pleased to support these two charities, who both have a lot of experience working with vulnerable young people, and a deep understanding of the challenges they face. Peer mentoring is a key strand of the work we are doing to improve and transform the lives - and outcomes - of care experienced young people. "

**ENDS**

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#### **EDITORS NOTES:**

The Life Changes Trust was established by the Big Lottery Fund in April 2013 with a ten year endowment of £50 million to support transformational improvements in the quality of life, well-being, empowerment and inclusion of people affected by dementia and young people with experience of being in care.

As of 31 July 2014, there were 15,580 looked after children and young people in Scotland.

There are several types of placements that looked after children or young people could be in, including being at home (subject to a Supervision Requirement), or away from home - in foster care, in residential care or in a kinship placement, where they are placed with friends or relatives.

We are committed to working with care experienced young people, care leavers, practitioners and other professionals in Scotland so that when young people leave care, they have positive life chances and outcomes just like other young people.

Peer mentoring: by this the Trust means providing a means of both giving and receiving support in the context of a voluntary relationship where the people involved have shared experience.

Ypeople is a registered Scottish charity offering support to vulnerable groups and individuals within 17 services across Scotland. Ypeople delivers support services to vulnerable people including people whose lives have been affected by homelessness and youth services for young people in need of care.

Up-2-Us is a third sector organisation and registered charity whose primary beneficiaries are children and young people up to 25 years. Their current services are for referred children, young people and their families or carers who live in West Central Scotland. They provide accommodation, care and housing support services to vulnerable and high risk children and young people in the care and justice systems. They offer bespoke services based on maintaining core values and holistic care, working in partnership with other service providers to create an integrated and continuous care system. Up-2-Us was set up in 2008 by an experienced group of professionals from social work and social care, health, academic research, policy and the business world.