Surrey Young Carers make a difference

- Launch of “Making It Real for Young Carers” 5th September 2013

Young carers in Surrey have been major contributors to a new national guide for professionals on personalisation being launched nationally today in a conference held on the South Bank in London. The guide aims to help organisations check their progress and decide what they need to do to keep moving forward to deliver real change and positive outcomes for young carers.

Following on the publication of “Making it Real for Carers” by national carers charity the Carers Trust earlier this year, young carers in Surrey said that there should be a version looking specifically at their needs. So young carers from the Surrey Young Carers service worked with members of the Making it Real for Carers project team-part of the Think Local, Act Personal initiative- and a graphic designer to illustrate all the things young carers wanted to say. They used a lively presentation format to highlight the issues which young carers consider to be most important to improve the quality of their lives.

In a special interview for the event, Edward Timpson, Minister for Children and Families, said: “Young carers feel supported when there is good communication - not just in services, but in conversations. That’s how you get a really personalised approach that can give them what they need.”

The interview with the Minister was undertaken by a former young carer and will also be broadcast as part of a special programme about the launch on the internet based Carers World Radio. This will be broadcast tomorrow (6th September)

This idea of co-design, with young carers being involved right at the heart of the process, is one that Surrey Young Carers are keen to promote to all professionals who work with young carers as well as those who both commission and design services to support them.

“From the conception of 'Making It Real for Young Carers’ over 100 young carers from Surrey have been involved in the co-design, with the project team attending Surrey Young Carers events to ensure the creative ideas and views of young carers
informed the final publication. We are really proud to have been involved from start to finish and hope this national resource enables real change to the way professionals work alongside young carers", says the manager of the Surrey Young Carers service, Michelle Harper.

Russell Minns, a former young carer, now an Apprentice with Surrey Young Carers, is co-chairing the launch event of the guide, and also interviewed the Minister (see above). He comments “This is fantastic news for young carers. Hopefully now professionals working with us will understand how we feel and what they can do to help us. Even if it’s one small thing, it still would help”.

*Making it Real for Young Carers* is available to download from [www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk](http://www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk)

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**Note to editors:**

A special broadcast with highlights from the conference will be available in podcast format from 6th September onward. This will include the interview with Children and Families Minister Edward Timpson and also an exclusive interview with Care Services Minister Norman Lamb.

For more information visit: [http://carersworldradio.ihoststudio.com/radiohm.html](http://carersworldradio.ihoststudio.com/radiohm.html)

**About Surrey Young Carers**

Surrey Young Carers is a service managed by Action for Carers Surrey working with over 1300 young carers every year. We offer free impartial information and support to young carers and their families on minimising the impact of their caring role. We also offer workshops on topics to help young carers in their caring role; fun activities including residential breaks and days out; support with school or college (including working with staff to improve their understanding of young carers); an opportunity to have their say via our Young Carers Forum and our newsletter; up-to-date information via our website and Twitter.

For more information, visit [www.surrey-youngcarers.org.uk](http://www.surrey-youngcarers.org.uk)

**About Action for Carers Surrey**

Action for Carers Surrey is an independent charitable organisation led by carers, and is a Network Partner of Carers Trust. Our aim is to give carers a voice and raise awareness of carers’ needs and concerns, working in partnership with statutory and other voluntary organisations to improve services and support for carers. We also run direct services for carers: Learning and Work, GP Carer Awareness, Moving and Handling and Surrey Young Carers. Visit our website for more information [www.actionforcarers.org.uk](http://www.actionforcarers.org.uk)

For more information about our national partner **Carers Trust**, visit [http://www.carers.org](http://www.carers.org)
About Think Local Act Personal

Think Local, Act Personal (TLAP) is a sector wide commitment to moving forward with personalisation and community based support, endorsed by organisations comprising representatives from across the social care sector including local government, health, private, independent and community organisations. For a full list of partners visit www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk

Facts about young carers

- Young carers are children and young people under 18 who look after someone in their family who has an illness, a disability, or is affected by mental ill-health or substance misuse.

- There are currently an estimated 14,000 young carers aged under 18 years in Surrey

- As a whole, there are estimated to be about 700,000 young carers in the United Kingdom. Many young carers do not recognise themselves as carers and neither do their families or professionals in contact with them – this can mean they miss out on the help and support that is available.

For further information, contact:

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