



Achieving **more** for Children  
**Strategic Plan**  
2024-2029



achieving  
for children

# Contents

Let's start at the beginning	1
Our strategic priorities	3
How we work	5
Our values	7
<b>Priority programmes</b>	<b>8</b>
Introduction	9
Strategic priorities	10
Monitoring and reporting progress	24
<b>Who we are</b>	<b>25</b>
A little bit about us and what we do	26
Key information about Achieving for Children	27
Our services	28
The way we work in practice with children, young people and families	30
Listening to children, young people and families	31
Come and join us	32
Useful information	33

# Let's start at the beginning

Since the creation of Achieving for Children (AfC) in 2014, our objective has been to support children and young people to achieve the best possible outcomes and this drives everything that we do. We want children and young people to have the best start in life and to live safe and fulfilled lives.

We are owned by and commissioned to deliver children's services across three local authorities: the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames (RBK), the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames (LBR), and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM).

We deliver services to more than 120,000 children and young people aged 0 to 25, including early help, social care, education, health, special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and youth services, including youth offending.

We are an organisation of over 1,400 employees. We employ colleagues across a wide variety of professions, including social work, teaching, nursing, occupational therapy, physiotherapy and clinical psychology. Our support services work alongside our frontline teams and specialise in finance, IT and data, communications, commissioning, programme management and human resources.

We are a multi-disciplined organisation of talented professionals who are focused on working together, and with partners, to provide the best possible support to children, young people and their families, driven by the core principles and outcomes set out in the National Framework for Children's Social Care.



# Setting the scene

We aim to offer a mix of universal, targeted and statutory services that support and enrich the lives of children and young people who live and learn in our boroughs.

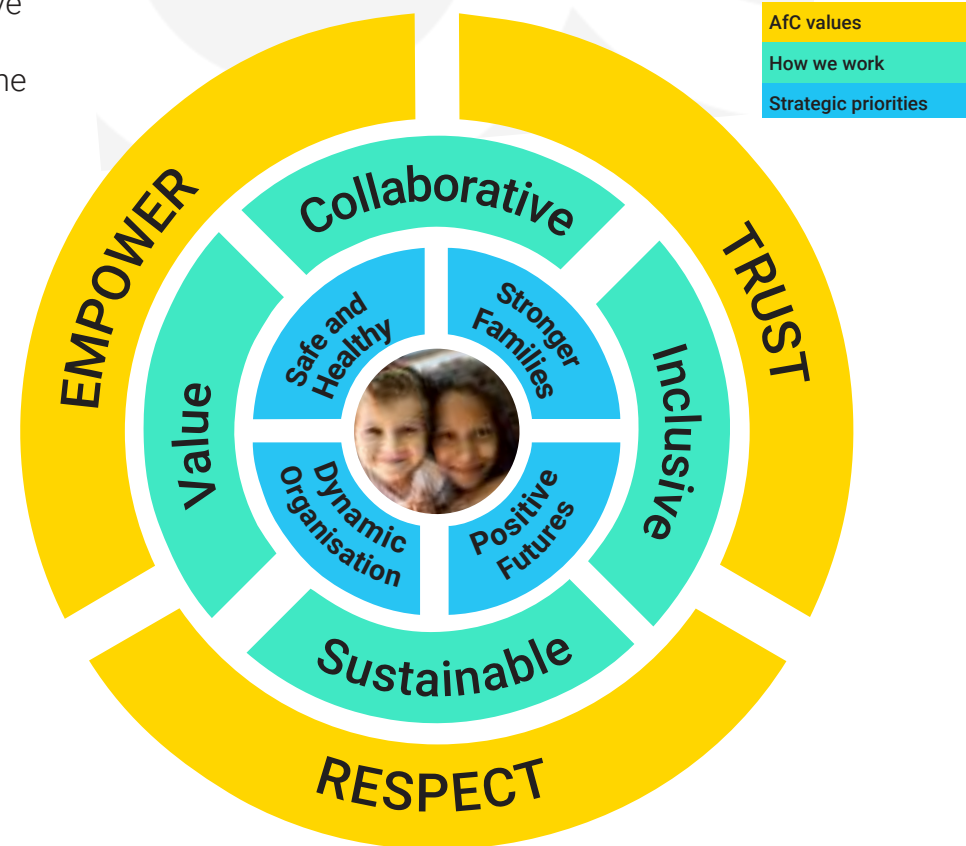
We regularly review our service offer to make sure that we are aligning the resources we have with what we know young people, families and partners want and need.

Planning our services has become more difficult in recent years, as money to fund essential children’s services has become tighter. At the same time, more children, young people and their families need our support. The complexity of their needs and the type of support they require is also changing.

Our Strategic Plan will shape how we work and prioritise resources over the next five years. In developing the plan and our strategic priorities, we have reflected on what we know about our communities, and what has worked well or not so well during the term of our previous plan. We have sought feedback from children, young people, parents, carers and the different professionals working within and alongside AfC, as well as from the three local authorities that own and commission us to deliver children’s services.

Our strategy includes three interconnecting components:

<b>Strategic priorities:</b>	These four priorities will set out the main themes of what we do and how we seek to have a positive impact on the lives of children and young people in our boroughs
<b>Principles for how we work:</b>	These four principles will guide how we approach and plan our work
<b>AfC behavioural values:</b>	These three values will shape how we interact with each other, services users and partners



# Our strategic priorities

## Safe and healthy

**Supporting children and young people to live safe and healthy lives.**

Supporting young people to be safe and healthy is at the core of what we do. Our aspiration is that every child in our boroughs is supported to be safe, happy and access the care that they need, when they need it.

Working with partners, we will seek to facilitate a joined-up local offer that identifies needs early. We will support young people and families to help avoid their needs escalating, where possible, and will encourage partners to do the same.

We will champion the safety and wellbeing of children, nurture safe and caring family environments and, where needed, step in to support the safety and wellbeing of children living in our boroughs.

*"The children's centre is without doubt our happy place. Thank you for being my safe space. Thank you for being a safe, stable, strong place for my children."*

## Positive futures

**Supporting children and young people to achieve meaningful outcomes from birth until they transition to adulthood and enable them to live, learn and thrive locally.**

Our aspiration is to have good quality and inclusive provision so that children and young people can live, learn and access the support they need locally. We want the majority of young people to be able to stay within their home community and close to established and familiar support networks.

We will invest in services, and work with partners, to support young people to prepare for adulthood, and work with our councils to ensure that our boroughs are places where young people have opportunities to go on to become successful adults.

We will continuously evaluate what provision is needed locally and work with partners to build a strong and attractive local offer. This will include education, employment, social care and health services.

*"Excellent support from AfC organising work experience and discussing post-16 career options with my daughter."*

## Stronger families

### **Supporting young people and families to develop resilience and independence.**

We will work to equip families and young people with the tools, skills, knowledge and confidence they need to navigate challenges and lead independent and fulfilled lives at all ages and into adulthood.

Our services will consistently use reflective, collaborative and strengths-based approaches to work with the whole family. We will work with families to build on what works well in their lives, so that parents are able to make positive and lasting changes to the care they provide to their children.

*"I feel prepared to be an adult and move into the next phase of my life."*

*"You have consistently supported my children and me. You have always made allocations and allowances for us, and you have done this with so much patience and understanding and respect."*

## Dynamic organisation

### **Developing a workforce and organisation that is tailored to the needs of children, young people and families of our boroughs.**

We want AfC to be an adaptable, inspiring and inclusive organisation that is able to meet the changing needs of the children, young people and families living in our boroughs.

We will create an efficient and supportive work environment, underpinned by a stable and talented workforce, where teams have the support, technology and equipment they need to make a positive impact on the lives of children and young people.

*"We need a support system that is not just limited to appointments - we can't put a time on when we will have a panic attack or a breakdown. A support system that cares."*

# How we work

In our approach to every aspect of our work, we will demonstrate four essential qualities:

## Collaborative ~ Sustainable ~ Value for money ~ Inclusive

These qualities serve as our guiding principles, influencing how we work and make decisions.



### Collaborative

Relationships, collaboration and partnership working are essential to our success as an organisation. We recognise the positive impact on the experience of children, young people and their families when we work

alongside them and join up our services with the other organisations that support them. We will support and promote strong, effective and respectful partnership working, not only with other agencies such as schools, the police, health, adult social care, and the voluntary sector, but also with our children, young people and families.

It is our responsibility, when working collaboratively with other organisations, to respectfully hold them to account for their role in ensuring that decisions made are in the best interests of children and young people. We will champion the voices of children, young people and families in all forums.



### Value for money

We will maximise the impact of the money and resources we have by being transparent about what money is available, how it is being spent, and will regularly review whether it is aligned to our priorities. We will seek to

maximise the amount of money that is spent directly on supporting children and young people and ensure that spending decisions reflect the best use of funds.

We will agree budgets with our local authorities and take all reasonable steps to implement solutions that support the delivery of services within affordable financial envelopes.

We will benchmark against comparable organisations and be open to developing ever more efficient delivery models based on best practice.

We will seek to maximise the amount of funding available to support children's services by seeking out income generation opportunities and by working collaboratively with partners to pool budgets.



## Sustainable

As an organisation that works with children and young people every day, we feel that we have an important role to play in raising awareness of environmental issues, as well as in leading by example in the way we deliver and commission services. We are committed

to ensuring that we are proactive in minimising the environmental footprint of our own activities, to promote a sustainable environment for future generations to enjoy.

Our commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2030 reflects a shared conviction with many of the young people we work with, and with our owning councils.

We will embed environmental considerations into our policies, practice and commissioning intentions and proactively support the voice of children and young people in this area.



## Inclusive

We will continue to develop and invest in a culture where everyone feels valued and included. Our commitment to inclusion ensures that every member of our staff has an equal opportunity to thrive, and use their diverse perspectives and experiences, to enrich the work we do with children, young people and families.

We will seek to understand and always respect the unique backgrounds and needs of our children, young people and families, and tailor our support and advice to their individual needs.

Embracing inclusion and diversity is not just a checkbox exercise for us: it's a conscious effort to create an inclusive space that celebrates differences, promotes innovation, and empowers people to reach their full potential.



# Our values

Our organisational values aim to express our shared understanding of what we believe are our most important ways of working, how we aim to behave and what we aspire to be as an organisation.

	<b>Trust</b>	<b>Empower</b>	<b>Respect</b>
<b>How we work with you</b> (children, young people and families)	<p>We build strong and consistent relationships with you.</p> <p>We are honest with you so that you understand our worries, the things that are working well and our next steps.</p>	<p>We help you to realise your potential.</p> <p>We recognise the strengths that are present in every family and help you to develop your own solutions.</p> <p>We encourage you to express your views, wishes and feelings.</p>	<p>We listen to you in a non-judgemental way and take into account your wishes and feelings.</p>
<b>How we work together</b> (our partners)	<p>We are reliable: you can count on us to undertake tasks and deliver on what was agreed – we will do what we say we will do.</p>	<p>We work with you to ensure services are accessible, equitable and inclusive.</p> <p>We are responsive when issues are raised.</p>	<p>We listen to and value your priorities and perspectives, and work with you to find solutions.</p>
<b>How we work with each other</b> (our AfC colleagues)	<p>We encourage open and honest communication, and model clear and fair professional boundaries.</p>	<p>We show appropriate and respectful use of the power given to us in our jobs or positions.</p>	<p>We use respectful language and tones.</p>

Achieving **more** for Children

# Priority programmes



**achieving  
for children**

# Introduction

## Strategic priorities 2026/27

Over the past year, we have made real progress for children, young people and families. We have strengthened our early help services so families can get the right support at the right time, before challenges grow. Through our family hubs, more parents have been able to access practical advice, parenting programmes and community support close to home.

We have continued to improve support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), helping families navigate services more easily and supporting young people to move successfully into adulthood.

We have also strengthened the way our education, health, and social care teams work together, making sure children and families experience joined-up, coordinated support.

For children in care, our focus has been on keeping children close to their local communities and support networks wherever possible. We have expanded local care options, recruited more foster carers and improved support for care leavers to help them build stable, independent futures.

Our recent Ofsted inspections in each of our boroughs ([Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames](#), [London Borough of Richmond upon Thames](#), and [Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead](#)) recognised this progress, highlighting areas of good practice and the commitment of our workforce to improving outcomes for children and families. A more detailed review of what we have achieved in 2025/26 and the difference it has made is set out in [AfC's Annual Impact Report](#).

## National reforms and our direction of travel

As we look ahead to the next 12 months, we are taking account of several national reforms published by the government that are shaping children's services across the country and the work we do locally. These include changes to children's social care, early help, SEND, early years and youth services.

Across all of these reforms, there are clear and consistent messages:

- families should receive the right help at the earliest point to prevent challenges from escalating, multi-agency partners need to work together to deliver services in a joined up way, including co-locating
- we should be equipping families and their networks to build resilience to support children and young people and keep them safe

The programmes of work we have identified for 2026/27 reflect this national direction. They do not change our overall strategic priorities. Instead, they build on what we already do well and strengthen our long-term commitment to early help, prevention and partnership working. This means continuing to focus on:

- helping families build confidence and resilience, with practical tools, advice and support
- spotting when families might need help early, so support can be offered sooner
- making sure support is easy to find, easy to understand and available when it's needed
- working closely with partners to help keep children and young people safe and well
- making sure our children coming in to care are supported in the right placement for their needs, where they feel safe, stable and cared for

Alongside national reforms, we continue to put families at the centre of what we do, listening carefully to feedback and using this to shape our planning and priorities. This provides a clear focus on what will make the greatest difference for children, young people and families in 2026/27 and beyond.

### Abbreviations:

RBK - Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames  
LBR - London Borough of Richmond upon Thames  
RBWM - Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

## Strategic priority: Safe and healthy

Supporting children and young people to live safe and healthy lives.

We will	Action summary	Action	Lead	Borough priority		
				Kingston	Richmond	Windsor & Maidenhead
Have a universal early help offer in our family hubs and youth centres so that families and young people can seek information, advice and help at an early stage and in a welcoming environment. In practice, this offer will look different between Kingston, Richmond, and Windsor and Maidenhead.	Universal early help offer	Deliver a range of integrated universal services with local and community services that support children, young people and families at the earliest point. We will expand our services in local settings such as family hubs and improve how they are accessed, including digitally and through outreach.	Associate Director Community and Partnerships (LBR and RBK) Associate Director Early Help and Family Support (RBWM)	✓	✓	✓
Provide targeted support to those children and young people who are vulnerable to protect them from harm.	Edge of care	Develop targeted outreach support for adolescents and their families so that young people's needs can be safely met at home or in their communities rather than needing residential care.	Associate Director for Specialist Child and Adolescent Services (LBR and RBK)	✓	✓	
	Multi-disciplinary Family Help Service (Families First Programme)	Deliver on the Social Care and Early Help reforms by developing a Multi-disciplinary Family Help Service, that brings together social work teams and other suitably qualified workers into a single team, providing a whole-family approach across targeted and statutory services. This will include developing the family lead practitioner role so that families experience minimal disruption when moving between different levels of support within Family Help.	Director of Family Help and Social Care, Associate Director Family Help (LBR and RBK) Deputy Director Children's Social Care and Early Help (RBWM)	✓	✓	✓
	Multi-agency Child Protection Team (Families First Programme)	Work with partners to establish expert-led multi-agency safeguarding teams (police, health, social care, education) to support the local authority's duty to investigate potential significant harm to children or young people (Section 47)	Director of Family Help and Social Care, Associate Director Family Help (LBR and RBK) Deputy Director Children's Social Care and Early Help (RBWM)	✓	✓	✓

## Strategic priority: Safe and healthy

Supporting children and young people to live safe and healthy lives.

We will	Action summary	Action	Lead	Borough priority		
				Kingston	Richmond	Windsor & Maidenhead
Provide targeted support to those children and young people who are vulnerable to protect them from harm (continued).	Temporary accommodation	Integrate housing and children's services policies to protect children in temporary accommodation and work with partners to ensure a range of pastoral and practice support is in place for children when they are placed in temporary accommodation.	Director of Family Help and Social Care, Associate Director Family Help (LBR and RBK) Deputy Director Children's Social Care and Early Help (RBWM)	✓	✓	✓
	Crisis resilience fund for families in need	Implement the new crisis resilience fund to provide immediate crisis support to households while investing in local financial resilience.	Director of Family Help and Social Care (LBR and RBK) Deputy Director Children's Social Care and Early Help (RBWM)	✓	✓	✓
Support mental health and wellbeing, and champion its importance in our communities.	Mental health access for most vulnerable children and young people	Strengthen our mental health and wellbeing offer for our most vulnerable families, including early help, children with special educational needs and disabilities, children with a social worker and our children in care  Kingston and Richmond: this will cover the development of the new Emotional Health Service and establishment of our own in-house systemic family therapy year one training.  Windsor and Maidenhead: this will cover the updates that are included within the council's deliverables about systemic and community practices to children in care and care leavers, as well as strengthening the Families Together Team's therapeutic support services.	Director of Family Help and Social Care (LBR and RBK) Deputy Director Children's Social Care and Early Help (RBWM)	✓	✓	✓

## Strategic priority: Safe and healthy

Supporting children and young people to live safe and healthy lives.

We will	Action summary	Action	Lead	Borough priority		
				Kingston	Richmond	Windsor & Maidenhead
Support mental health and wellbeing, and champion its importance in our communities. (Continued)	Early support for all neurodivergent children and young people	Implement and embed the neurodivergent strengths and needs toolkit across social care, health, and education - the toolkit has been developed in partnership with Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and the Integrated Care Board. The toolkit will allow practitioners to strengthen early identification and support for neurodivergent children and young people without the need for a clinical diagnosis.	Associate Director Educational Psychology and Wellbeing (RBMW)			✓
Encourage and facilitate joined-up thinking and working across education, social care, and health services to provide better-coordinated support to children and young people with multiple and complex needs.	Deliver on the national reform SEND School White Paper	Ensure that our local SEND priorities and projects align with the legislation and guidance outlined in the guidance outlined in the schools white paper, <a href="#">Every Child Achieving and Thriving</a> , and SEND reforms to transform the experiences of children and young people with SEND and their families, so that local, high-quality education, health, and social care provision meets children's assessed needs.	Director for Education Services (LBR and RBK) Deputy Director for Education (RBWM)	✓	✓	✓

## Strategic priority: Positive futures

Supporting children and young people to achieve meaningful outcomes from birth until they transition to adulthood and enable them to live, learn and thrive locally.

We will	Action summary	Action		Borough priority		
				Kingston	Richmond	Windsor & Maidenhead
Develop local and good quality accommodation and support options for those children and young people who cannot continue to live with their birth families. These will comprise independent and in-house options, which include a mix of foster care, residential children's homes, supported accommodation, and independent housing.	Foster care recruitment	Increase the number of in-house foster carers, which includes working with the South East Regional Recruitment Hub to strengthen recruitment activity. Prospective carers will have access to a central platform for enquiries and support at the start of their fostering journey	Associate Director Provider Services (LBR, RBK, RBWM)			✓
	Regional Care Cooperative	Partake in the Regional Care Cooperative, which aims to bring together and improve governance around commissioning fostering, residential and secure care placements, so that local authorities can ensure fair practice and value for money when commissioning placements for young people.	Associate Director Provider Services (LBR, RBK, RBWM)	✓	✓	✓
	Supporting children in care to remain and live locally	Identify and develop options to expand local provision for children in care and care leavers, informed by local need and sufficiency analysis. This will include exploring models of supported accommodation and other step-down options to ensure young people's care and support needs can be met safely and locally, while promoting independence and stability as they transition to adulthood.	Associate Director Provider Services (LBR, RBK, RBWM)	✓	✓	✓
	Family networks and family group decision making	Convene family network meetings and family group conferences to promote viable alternatives to foster and residential care and enhance support to kinship and connected carers, as part of the children's social care reforms, particularly pre-court proceedings.	Associate Director for Multi-Agency Safeguarding (LBR and RBK)	✓	✓	✓

## Strategic priority: Positive futures

Supporting children and young people to achieve meaningful outcomes from birth until they transition to adulthood and enable them to live, learn and thrive locally.

We will	Action summary	Action	Lead	Borough priority		
				Kingston	Richmond	Windsor & Maidenhead
Develop local and good quality accommodation and support options for those children and young people who cannot continue to live with their birth families. These will comprise independent and in-house options, which include a mix of foster care, residential children's homes, supported accommodation, and independent housing. (Continued)	Kinship offer	Create a 'local offer' for all kinship arrangements. This will reduce placement breakdown for existing 'at-risk' placements and attract new kinship arrangements so that more children can remain in family environments.	Director of Family Help and Social Care (LBR and RBK) Deputy Director Children's Social Care and Early Help (RBWM)	✓	✓	✓
	Care leaver independence	Enable care leavers to successfully access and sustain independent housing by broadening accommodation options and strengthening preparation for independence, including financial responsibility and tenancy readiness, supported by an established rent guarantor scheme.	Associate Director for Corporate Parenting (LBR and RBK) Associate Director for Corporate Parenting (RBWM)	✓	✓	✓
	Placement review and transitions	Review placement arrangements to ensure children and young people are supported in the most appropriate setting for their needs	Director for Family Help and Social Care (LBR and RBK) Deputy Director for Early Help and Social Care (RBWM)	✓	✓	✓
	Social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) provision	Develop alternative education provision to better support the educational progress, achievement, and wellbeing of children and young people with challenging behaviours who have been permanently excluded or are at risk of exclusion from school.	Associate Director for Pupil Support (LBR and RBK) Deputy Director for Education (RBWM)	✓	✓	✓
	School place planning (SEND)	Provide additional school places for those with special educational needs and disabilities within the allocated grant.	Associate Director for School Place Planning (LBR and RBK) Deputy Director for Education (RBWM)	✓	✓	✓

## Strategic priority: Positive futures

Supporting children and young people to achieve meaningful outcomes from birth until they transition to adulthood and enable them to live, learn and thrive locally.

We will	Action summary	Action	Lead	Borough priority		
				Kingston	Richmond	Windsor & Maidenhead
<p>Develop local and good quality accommodation and support options for those children and young people who cannot continue to live with their birth families. These will be independent and in-house options and include a mix of foster care, residential children's homes, supported accommodation and independent housing. (Continued)</p>	Children in care starts	<p>Analyse data and underlying factors that lead to children entering care to inform earlier identification and targeted support. This work will bring together insights from social care, education, and early help to identify patterns, trends, and opportunities for earlier intervention. Findings will be used to shape practice, commissioning, and service design to reduce the need for children to come into care and improve family outcomes. In Richmond, this insight work is being led by Newton consultants. They are seeking to identify the reasons that children and young people come into care. The analysis will support future work planning to determine the interventions that should be put in place to minimise or reduce care starts.</p>	<p>Director of Family Help and Social Care (Richmond and Kingston)</p> <p>Deputy Director for Early Help and Social Care (RBWM)</p>		✓	✓
<p>Work with schools to support inclusion and invest in educational models that support children and young people to learn in mainstream settings where this is appropriate.</p>	Inclusion in mainstream settings	<p>Develop more readily available and inclusive provision within mainstream education settings. For 2026/27 in RBWM, this includes the opening of the Forest Bridge Sixth Form.</p> <p>Further work will be informed by the recently published schools white paper and SEND reforms, which are expected to provide greater national direction around inclusion.</p>	<p>Associate Director for Pupil Support (LBR and RBK)</p> <p>Deputy Director for Education (RBWM)</p>	✓	✓	✓

## Strategic priority: Positive futures

Supporting children and young people to achieve meaningful outcomes from birth until they transition to adulthood and enable them to live, learn and thrive locally.

We will	Action summary	Action	Lead	Borough priority		
				Kingston	Richmond	Windsor & Maidenhead
Reduce attainment gaps to enable children and young people to reach their full potential.	Reducing gaps in attainment	Work to reduce attainment gaps in reading, writing and mathematics between children in receipt of the pupil premium grant and their peers to provide the foundation for all children to achieve well and have positive choices for their future learning.	Associate Director for School Improvement (LBR and RBK) Deputy Director for Education (RBWM)	✓	✓	✓
	Best Start in Life	We will develop and implement comprehensive Best Start in Life local plans to drive significant improvements in outcomes for children from pregnancy to age five, aligning with the national ambition for 75% of children to achieve a good level of development by 2028.	Associate Director Community and Partnerships (LBR and RBK) Associate Director Early Help and Family Support (RBWM)	✓	✓	✓
Prepare children and young people for life transitions and support them to take opportunities to be more independent.	Transitions and pathways (SEND)	Work with adult social care and housing providers to improve pathway and transition planning for young people with SEND so that services and support are in place to meet their needs, promote independence and enable a positive experience of early adulthood.	Associate Director for SEND (LBR and RBK) Associate Director for Corporate Parenting (RBWM)	✓	✓	✓

## Strategic priority: Positive futures

Supporting children and young people to achieve meaningful outcomes from birth until they transition to adulthood and enable them to live, learn and thrive locally.

We will	Action summary	Action	Lead	Borough priority		
				Kingston	Richmond	Windsor & Maidenhead
Implementing the National Youth Strategy to develop opportunities for skills and employment, the establishment of young futures hubs, increasing the places to go and promotion of extracurricular activities. This includes those that reduce the participation gap, prevent crime, improve digital literacy and online safety, and support mental health and inclusion.	National Youth Strategy	Implement actions in line with the government's national youth strategy, including the establishment of young future hubs which will offer integrated support for mental health, wellbeing, career development, and crime prevention for young people.	Associate Director Community and Partnerships (LBR and RBK) Associate Director Early Help and Family Support (RBWM)	✓	✓	✓

## Strategic priority: Stronger families

Supporting young people and families to develop resilience and independence.

We will	Action summary	Action	Lead	Borough priority		
				Kingston	Richmond	Windsor & Maidenhead
Work with children, young people and families in a strengths-based way, using our practice framework to build resilience and overcome obstacles.	Practice framework	Continue to build on the Signs of Safety model by developing a consistent practice framework across the organisation and with our partners.	Associate Director for Practice Development (LBR and RBK) Associate Director for Quality Assurance (RBWM)	✓	✓	✓
Ask children and young people what is important and what is good in their lives and work with them to build strong support networks that promote their resilience.	Co-production (SEND)	Active co-production with parents or carers and children and young people to ensure that the deliverables in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy (RBWM) and SEND Futures Plan (LBR and RBK) are achieved. This will be attained by ensuring that the parent or carer forums are active participants in the board and workstreams.	Associate Director for SEND (LBR and RBK) Associate Director for Corporate Parenting (RBWM)	✓	✓	✓
Work closely with our partners to make sure our services are joined-up and more accessible to children, young people and their families, and that our local offer is better understood, especially by those families who are least engaged.	Government child poverty strategy	Implement actions in line with the government's child poverty strategy, working with councils and partners to reduce the impact of poverty on children and families. Through this work, we will contribute to reducing inequality and improving long-term outcomes for children and young people across our boroughs.	Associate Director Community and Partnerships (LBR and RBK) Associate Director Early Help and Family Support (RBWM)	✓	✓	✓

## Strategic priority: Stronger families

Supporting young people and families to develop resilience and independence.

We will	Action summary	Action	Lead	Borough priority		
				Kingston	Richmond	Windsor & Maidenhead
Work closely with our partners to make sure our services are joined-up and more accessible to children, young people and their families, and that our local offer is better understood especially by those families who are least engaged. (Continued)	Family hubs	Develop family hubs to bring together the support that children, young people and families need from different services into a single accessible location in their local communities, so that families only need to explain their stories and the support they need once, rather than having to tell many different practitioners.	Associate Director Community and Partnerships (LBR and RBK) Associate Director Early Help and Family Support (RBWM)	✓	✓	✓
	Short breaks	Transform the delivery of the short break service for children and young people by increasing the number and variety of activities and the support on offer in the community.	Associate Director for Corporate Parenting (RBWM)			✓
Provide families with the information, advice and guidance they need to make choices about childcare and early education.	School-age childcare (local authority capacity funding)	Implement the national reforms to childcare so that all eligible working parents have choices about affordable childcare and early education for their children, including children with SEND.	Associate Director for School Improvement (LBR and RBK) Deputy Director for Education (RBWM)	✓	✓	✓

## Strategic priority: Dynamic organisation

Developing a workforce and organisation that is tailored to the needs of children, young people and families of our boroughs.

We will	Action summary	Action	Lead	Borough priority		
				Kingston	Richmond	Windsor & Maidenhead
Listen to our workforce and work together to shape our workplace.	Workforce feedback	Regularly communicate with our workforce on how AfC is working, conduct regular pulse surveys to collect current feedback, develop and implement a plan to improve satisfaction rates over time and feedback on progress made.	Associate Director for People Services	✓	✓	✓
	Decision making accountability (DMA) review	Implement the agreed principles of the Local Government Association (LGA) decision making accountability review to ensure AfC works in the most efficient and effective way.	Chief Finance and Operating Officer	✓	✓	✓
	Support to the workforce, including recruitment and retention of hard-to-fill posts	Build a stable and skilled workforce, reducing reliance on agency staff and improving continuity of support for children and families. This will include developing targeted recruitment activity, promoting professional development opportunities, and embedding a supportive culture that enhances retention.	Associate Director for People Services	✓	✓	✓
	AfC Academy	Continue to embed the AfC Academy which supports continual professional development	Associate Director for Practice Development (LBR, RBK, RBWM)	✓	✓	✓

## Strategic priority: Dynamic organisation

Developing a workforce and organisation that is tailored to the needs of children, young people and families of our boroughs.

We will	Action summary	Action	Lead	Borough priority		
				Kingston	Richmond	Windsor & Maidenhead
Listen to our workforce and work together to shape our workplace. (Continued)	Workforce development plan, family help lead practitioner (FHLP) and lead child protection practitioner (LCPP)	Develop a multi-agency workforce development plan outlining the training, knowledge and skill levels for the family help workforce, including the FHLP and LCPP roles.	Associate Director for People Services	✓	✓	✓
Invest in a modern infrastructure of systems, processes and resources that support efficient, compliant and high-quality services.	Case management systems	Ensure all social care and SEND case management systems are fit for the future, including implementing the new ways of working from the Families First Programme and SEND reforms, eg single unique identifiers, single assessments, and portals .	Associate Director for Digital, Technology and Commissioning			✓
	IT and digital strategy	Deliver the key priorities as laid out in the AfC IT and digital strategy, which includes improving data and joining up systems; enhancing accessibility of digital tools; improving information and reducing the level of admin through the use of digital tools	Associate Director for Digital, Technology and Commissioning	✓	✓	✓
	Cyber resilience	Ensure that there are effective cyber resilience activities in place eg, governance, technical arrangements, training, business continuity plans to protect AfC from cyber attacks	Associate Director for Digital, Technology and Commissioning	✓	✓	✓

## Strategic priority: Dynamic organisation

Developing a workforce and organisation that is tailored to the needs of children, young people and families of our boroughs.

We will	Action	What will success look like?	Lead	Borough priority		
				Kingston	Richmond	Windsor & Maidenhead
Invest in a modern infrastructure of systems, processes and resources that support efficient, compliant and high-quality services. (Continued)	Information sharing with partners	Improve information sharing between those agencies providing early help to families. This will be achieved through system development work	Associate Director for Digital, Technology and Commissioning	✓	✓	✓
	Commissioning arrangements	Review and strengthen capacity and arrangements for commissioning, procurement and contract management. This includes the joint commissioning of services with the Integrated Care Board, and placement commissioning to achieve good quality, good value and improved outcomes for children, young people and their families.	Associate Director for Digital, Technology and Commissioning	✓	✓	✓
Provide a consistent way to track performance against key national priorities by focusing on outcomes, not just activities, to drive system-wide improvement, reduce bureaucracy, and support local innovation through data and focused support.	National outcomes framework	Implement the children's element of the Local Government National Outcomes Framework and social care dashboard and new performance reporting relating to reforms to ensure effective outcomes-based reporting.	Associate Director for Strategy and Insights	✓	✓	✓

## Strategic priority: Dynamic organisation

Developing a workforce and organisation that is tailored to the needs of children, young people and families of our boroughs.

We will	Action Strategy	Action	Lead	Borough priority		
				Kingston	Richmond	Windsor & Maidenhead
Provide a consistent way to track performance against key national priorities by focusing on outcomes, not just activities, to drive system-wide improvement, reduce bureaucracy, and support local innovation through data and focused support. (Continued)	School organisation	To address the impact of falling pupil rolls, we will be working with our schools to identify school organisation options that will ensure we are able to support the long-term sustainability of the local education system.	Associate Director for School Place Planning (LBR and RBK)	✓	✓	
	Managing the marketplace (children in care and care leavers)	We will review our approach to placement brokerage and develop a proactive strategy that outlines how we will develop local placements and manage the placement marketplace.	Director for Family Help and Social Care (LBR and RBK) Associate Director for Digital, Technology and Commissioning (RBWM)	✓	✓	✓

# Monitoring and reporting progress

Achieving for Children's Board of Directors and senior leaders will review progress against this plan on a quarterly basis. We will report publicly on progress as part of our suite of annual reports, as well as through priority programme updates to our owning councils.

A set of key performance indicators and quality measures is reported as part of our commissioned arrangements with each local authority. These have been set by the councils as part of our contract with them and by our Board of Directors to ensure the continuous development of the organisation and the services we deliver.

## Annual review

Each year the priority programmes will be reviewed and updated, capturing any new work that is planned. The annual review will provide a self-assessment of our progress in implementing our priorities in the previous year, as well as refreshing our priorities and activities for the year ahead.



# Achieving **more** for Children **Who we are**



# A little bit about us and what we do

Achieving for Children (AfC) is a not-for-profit, community interest company, originally established in 2014. We are owned and commissioned by the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames, the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead to deliver their children's services.

We are an organisation of 1,400 children's services practitioners and are dedicated to putting children and young people at the heart of everything that we do. Our delivery model supports integrated services across education, health, and social care to achieve positive outcomes for the families that we work with. We actively seek the views of children and young people when shaping services and believe that we have a responsibility to make sure that their voices are heard, not only in AfC, but also by partners and across our communities too.

We work closely with local partners, including our local authorities, schools, colleges, early years providers, health, adult social care, the police and the voluntary sector to support and champion a joined-up experience for children, young people and families who live and learn in our boroughs.



# Key information about **Achieving for Children** and the children and families we help

## General



**165**

Schools across three boroughs



**114,547**

Children and young people aged 1 to 17



**28,220**

Children and young people from Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic backgrounds

## SEND



**4,813**

Children with education, health and care plans

## Education



**Kingston**  
**100%**

**Richmond**  
**100%**

**RBWM**  
**92%**

of schools 'Good' or 'Outstanding'



**78,869**

Children attending school

## Children's social care



**61**

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children

## Children's social care



**885**

Children and families receiving early help support



**428**

Children subject to child protection plans



**371**

Children in care



**498**

Young people leaving care (18 to 25)

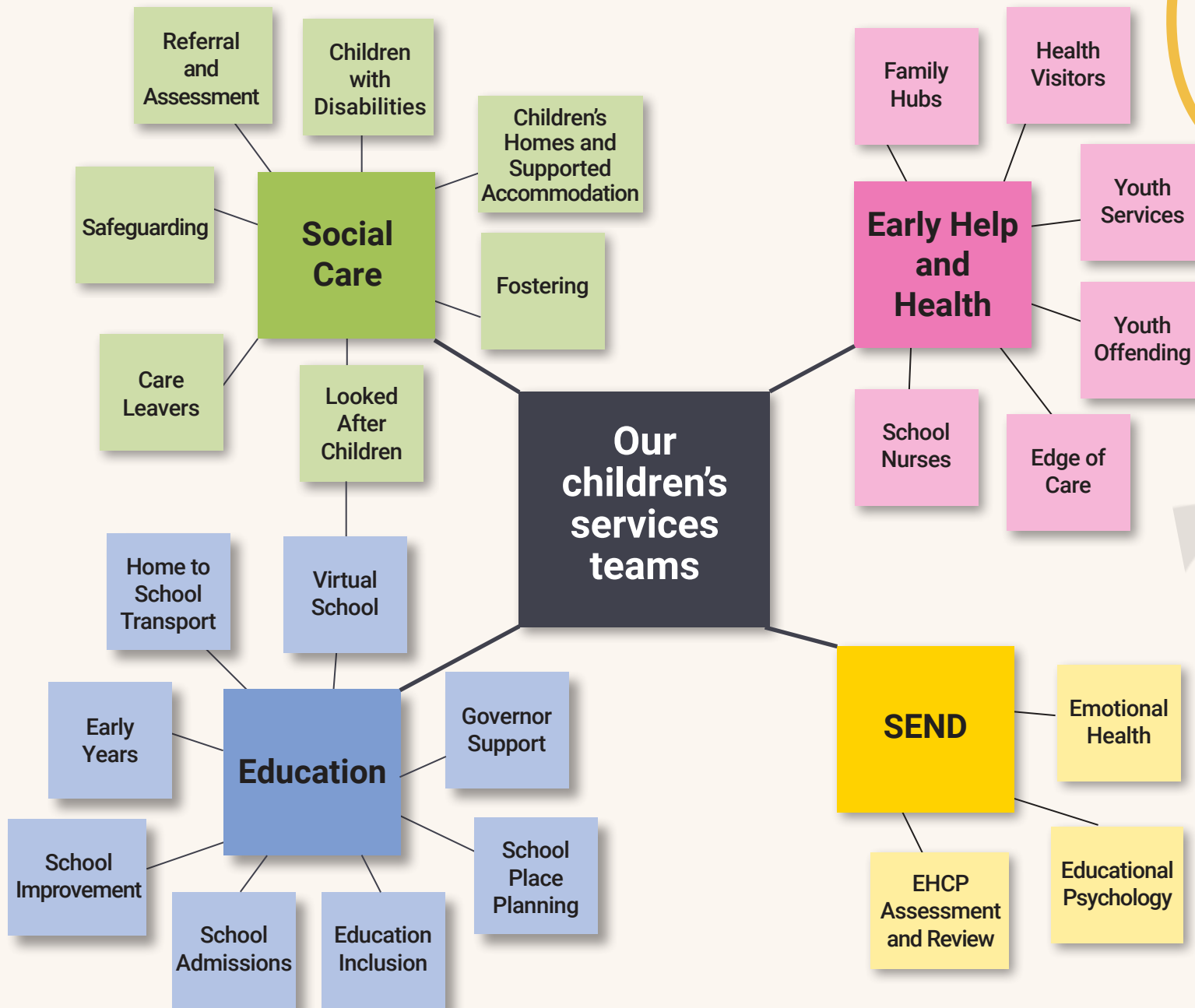
Data included was correct at end of December 2023

# Our services

We support young people from birth up to the age of 25 years. Our service offer is rooted in strong universal and targeted early help provision. We aim to support families and young people at the earliest opportunity to prevent needs from escalating and to support independence and resilience.

Services are delivered in person and digitally, and we regularly review them to ensure they can be accessed in a way that is convenient and engaging. We host services online and in community-based buildings, including youth centres, family hubs, children's centres, family contact centres and offices across all three of our boroughs. We encourage partner agencies to co-locate services in our buildings, or on our web platforms, to support an integrated experience.





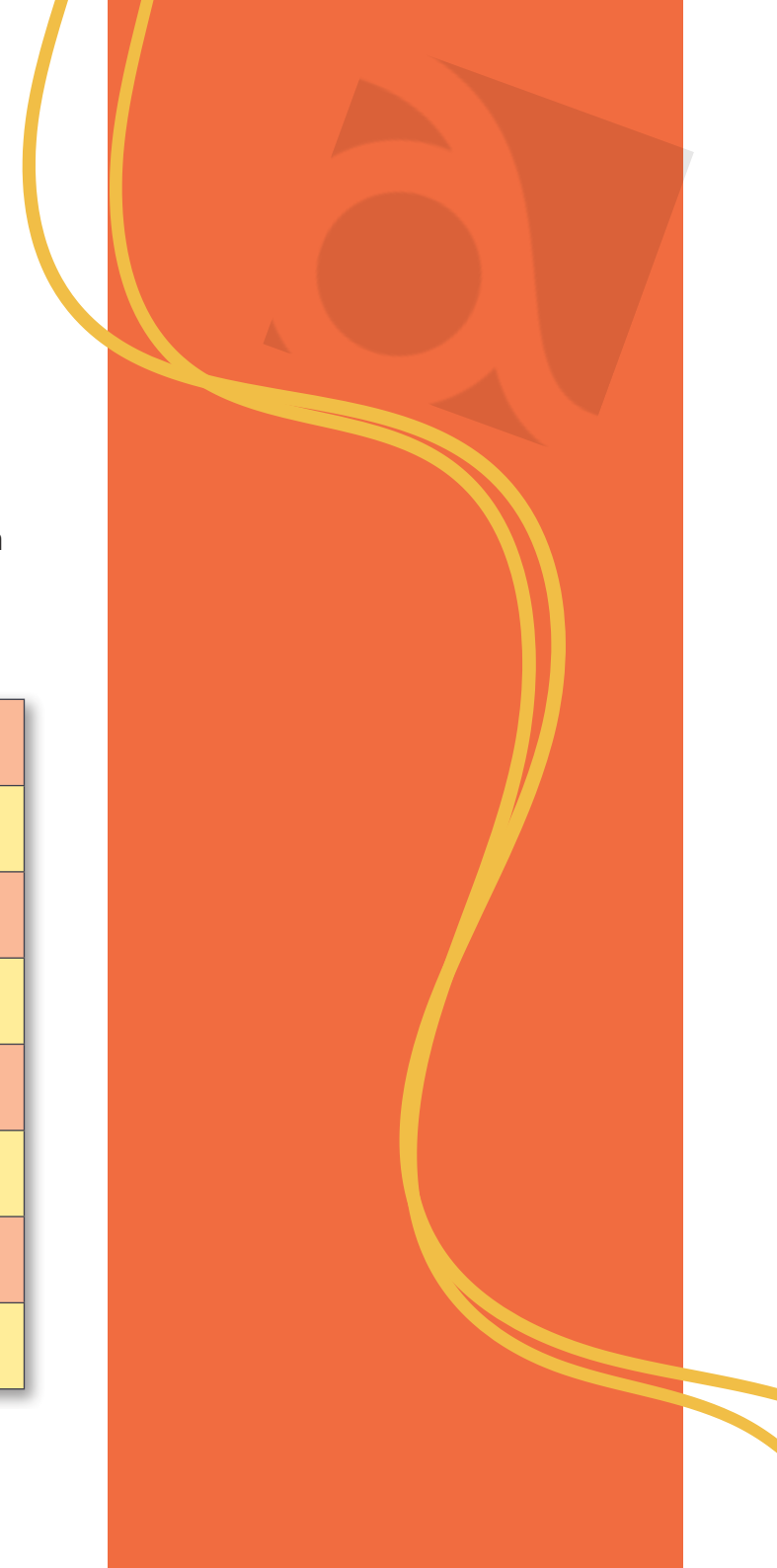
# The way we work in practice with children, young people and families

Our practitioners use the strengths-based Signs of Safety approach, which is supplemented by a range of complementary interventions and tools. This means that when working with families and young people, we agree on what we are worried about, what is working well and what needs to happen to support safety and wellbeing.

We listen to what families, children and young people tell us and work together to agree on how we can support them. We keep the best interests of children at the heart of our decision-making and create safe spaces where they are heard. Our aim is to equip families and young people with the skills and knowledge they need to lead safe and fulfilling lives.

Our eight core and cross-cutting practice standards are:

<b>Standard 1:</b>	Children and young people's best interests will be of primary consideration in all areas affecting them
<b>Standard 2:</b>	Work is carried out in partnership with a child or young person through meaningful engagement
<b>Standard 3:</b>	Work is carried out in partnership with parents and carers to enable them to meet their responsibilities and to achieve optimum outcomes for children and young people
<b>Standard 4:</b>	Work with children, young people and their families is carried out within community networks and between agencies to achieve the best outcomes
<b>Standard 5:</b>	Work with children and young people is undertaken within the legislative framework and follows best practice guidance
<b>Standard 6:</b>	Work with children, young people, parents and carers consistently promotes social inclusion
<b>Standard 7:</b>	Records and reports are accurate, complete, accessible and up-to-date, and demonstrate the decision-making process
<b>Standard 8:</b>	Work with children, young people and their families is managed and supervised to achieve the best possible outcomes



# Listening to children, young people and families

Listening to the voices of children, young people, parents and carers actively shapes who we are as an organisation. Their input informs our strategic decisions, policy development and service design so that we are able to continuously develop and improve our services.

We have a variety of methods to capture the voices and opinions of children, young people, parents and carers. These include the following.

## Participation groups

We facilitate diverse participation groups such as the children in care councils, care leavers' forums, youth councils, girls forum, parents and carers consortiums. These groups provide a platform for open dialogue and collaboration, where individuals can share their experiences and ideas.

## Feedback mechanisms

We maintain accessible and user friendly feedback mechanisms, such as surveys and suggestions boxes, to ensure that our user groups can easily express their views. We have also developed a 'My Say' app to collect the views of children and young people in an easy way.

## Consultations and engagement events

We organise regular consultation and engagement events, workshops and focus groups across the year to gather insights and ideas directly from children, young people and families.



# Come and join us

We are always looking for talented professionals who want to make a difference in the lives of children and young people. We employ staff across a range of professions, from frontline practitioners in social care, health, and education to colleagues in business support functions.

All our colleagues have access to a comprehensive package of support, including a supportive working environment, professional development opportunities and a fair benefits package. We have an embedded flexible working policy to support people in different circumstances and at all stages of life to come and work with us.

Find out more about what it's like to work at Achieving for Children and view [our current vacancies](#).



# Useful information

## Achieving for Children

### [Main website](#)

[www.achievingforchildren.org.uk](http://www.achievingforchildren.org.uk)

## Achieving for Children information for young people and families

### [Kingston and Richmond](#)

<https://kr.afcinfo.org.uk>

### [Windsor and Maidenhead](#)

<https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/>

## Achieving for Children Local Offer for children and young with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

### [Kingston and Richmond](#)

[https://kr.afcinfo.org.uk/local\\_offer](https://kr.afcinfo.org.uk/local_offer)

### [Windsor and Maidenhead](#)

[https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/local\\_offer](https://rbwm.afcinfo.org.uk/local_offer)