Peer Evaluation 2026

The impact of the Care Leavers National Movement

Peer research led by CLNM reps to understand the impact of CLNM on individuals, Local House Projects, National House Project, and wider policy.



CARE LEAVERS NATIONAL MOVEMENT

NHP
Living connected and fulfilling lives

Partnership for Young London

Introduction

The Care Leavers National Movement (CLNM) brings together care leavers from Local House Projects (LHPs) across England and Scotland to make a difference. The rep role has grown over the years, but its purpose is unchanged: to improve the lives of all young people in and leaving care.

This is the fifth peer evaluation since 2021 and the second to look at CLNM itself. Designed, conducted and analysed by CLNM reps trained as peer researchers, it asks what difference CLNM makes to its reps and alumni, to their LHPs, to the National House Project (NHP) and to local authorities. We want to thank the peer researchers, and the 35 reps and alumni, seven interviewees and 40 LHP staff who gave their time. This report could not exist without them.

For reps, the difference is large. Almost every young person rated the experience 4 or 5 out of 5, and what they valued most was the people. Confidence is the change everyone talks about: reps who were shy or closed off when they started now speak at conference and chair meetings, and the role delivers its biggest gains for those not in employment, education or training. Alongside confidence come skills that have led directly to jobs, and a community that reps repeatedly describe as family.

Beyond individual reps, CLNM's influence is well established nationally and still developing locally. Reps feel heard by NHP and know they have made meaningful change, and CLNM's reach now runs into local authorities and the Local Offer. What reps and staff both want more of is the local loop: being consulted before decisions are made, and hearing back what happened to the ideas they raise. Those two things, along with a proper ending to the rep role, are the focus of this report's recommendations.

The 2024 evaluation asked what an alumni offer should look like, and reps designed the answer themselves. Reps now tell us they want a proper ending and an open door. Building that, giving every rep their chance at the influencing work, and making sure every idea comes back with an answer are the next steps for a movement that continues to be evaluated by the people who know it best.



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Key findings

Impact on all young people (reps and alumni) in CLNM

1 Being a CLNM rep is an overwhelmingly positive experience.

Almost all young people in CLNM (97%) rated their overall experience as 4 or 5 out of 5, with two thirds (66%) giving the top rating. What added most value to the role was the people rather than the activities. CLNM staff were rated as adding a 'lot' or 'quite a lot' (94%) by respondents, while 91% said that connecting with others made a significant contribution - both ranking higher than any individual event or activity.

2 Building confidence is the clearest and most widely recognised impact of CLNM, with young people, and staff all seeing the difference it makes

Almost nine in ten (89%) young people said that being a rep increased their confidence, with staff reporting a similarly high impact (85%). Interviews reinforced this finding, with the same story emerging repeatedly: people who described themselves as 'shy' or 'closed off' at the start had become more 'confident' and 'outgoing', with speaking at conference frequently identified as a key turning point.

3 The role of being a CLNM rep delivers its greatest impact for those not currently in employment, education, or training (EET).

Every current and former CLNM rep (100%) who was not in employment, education or training at the time of responding said that CLNM increased their confidence. This compared to 83% of those in employment, education, training or volunteering. They were also more likely to report improvements in their mental health or wellbeing (73% compared with 67%). The role appears to make the most difference for those who stand to gain most from it.

4 CLNM builds a community that young people describe as family.

More than nine in ten young people (91%) said that being a rep made them feel part of a community, with over half (54%) strongly agreeing. Attending residentials and opportunities to travel to new places appear to be key moments where this sense of belonging is created, with 89% saying that travel added a 'lot' or 'quite a lot' to their experience.

Impact of CLNM on Local House Projects (LHPs), National House Project (NHP), and beyond

5 Reps make change and recognise this and would like more opportunities for their voice to shape decision making locally.

94% of young people said that they had helped make meaningful change to the lives of others, and 89% said the role gave them a stronger sense of autonomy with them being able to influence things that matter to them. 51% of young people said their LHP team consults them 'often' or 'always' before making decisions that affect young people.

6 CLNM young people feel heard by NHP, and there is more to do to consistently embed their voice locally.

86% of young people reported that they felt listened to by NHP, 74% by their own LHP, and 51% said their LHP consults reps 'often' or 'always'. Staff responses reflect a similar picture: 65% said their LHP acts on feedback from their CLNM reps whilst fewer reported wider changes as a result. 30% said CLNM has 'noticeably' or 'significantly' changed what their LHP offers, and 12% said it has changed the way staff work. This suggests that while the CLNM rep voice is valued, its influence is not yet consistently embedded in local practice.

7 The feedback loop does not consistently close.

28% of LHP staff reported that they hear back about what is happening at CLNM from their reps 'often' or 'very often' and a further 48% of staff said that they hear back 'sometimes'. CLNM reps told us they don't always get updates on what they have reported back to their LHPs.

8 CLNM's impact is reaching beyond NHP into local authorities, the Local Offer, and wider practice.

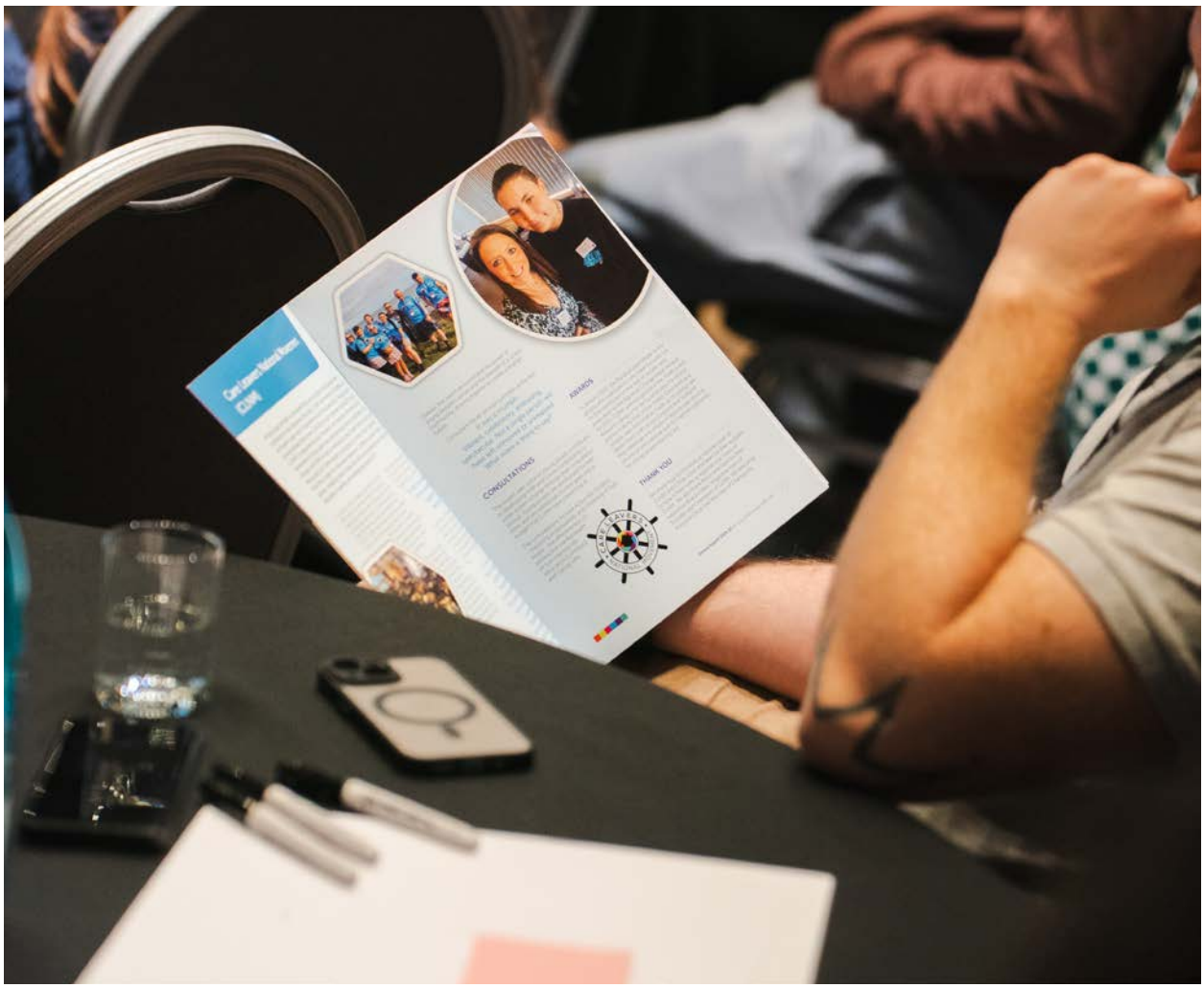
58% of LHP staff say CLNM has contributed to a change of practice at NHP. Over half of young people (54%) have had chances to get involved in wider work in their local authority, half of staff (50%) say their reps have taken part in co-production beyond their LHP, and a third of staff (32%) say CLNM or their LHP has supported change to their local authority's Local Offer for care leavers.

Recommendations

1. **Collect impact stories and use them to recruit new CLNM reps.** 58% of staff could name a specific moment of impact, and reps described encouraging siblings and friends to get involved after seeing the value of the role first-hand. Collecting these stories and sharing them with every new LHP cohort would give LHPs the most persuasive recruitment material there is: real stories from people who have done the role.
2. **Communicate CLNM's impact.** Update the CLNM guide so it sets out the impact CLNM has for reps, LHPs, NHP and the wider sector, and add an 'our impact' page to the CLNM website, refreshed after each evaluation. This would also be the natural place to keep the stories collected under recommendation 1.
3. **Finish building the ending of the rep role, and measure it.** This work has begun: end-of-year celebrations, alumni WhatsApp communities and the alumni summer celebration are now in place. The findings in chapter 1 (Endings and moving on) point to two specific next steps: build a planned handover between each outgoing rep and their successor into the CLNM year, and ask every rep as they leave how, and how often, they want to be contacted as an alumni, so the offer reaches those who want it. The reps' survey should track awareness and take-up of the alumni offer each year.
4. **Capture and share the ideas that are naturally shared between LHPs.** Reps already have examples of good practice from LHPs that are shared at regional meetings. Capturing ideas after each meeting and sharing them with every LHP would make sure good ideas reach every LHP, not just the ones whose reps happened to be in the room. These insights should also be brought into Community of Practice (CoP) with more consistent rep attendance alongside LHP staff, so that lived experience directly informs shared learning and service development.
5. **Develop an additional dedicated induction session for LHP staff.** To support a shared understanding of the CLNM role and how LHPs and, more specifically, participation champions support them.
6. **Make consultation before decisions routine at LHPs.** NHP will facilitate a CoP to look at how best practice works across LHPs and to scale this across the community. CoP to focus on feedback loops.
7. **Close the loop.** Every idea, piece of feedback or recommendation a rep carries into CLNM or their LHP should come back to them with an answer: what happened, what changed, or why it could not. LHPs and NHP should introduce a co-produced feedback process which will add to the work completed following recommendation 3 from the 2024 evaluation.
8. **Send LHP staff a regular CLNM update.** Staff rated their knowledge of what CLNM is doing nationally at 3.7 out of 5, below their 4.3 understanding of what CLNM is, and one project lead asked directly for a one-to-one with a rep to learn more. A short,

regular update from CLNM to every LHP team, alongside time for reps to feed back in person would address this.

9. **Grow the Local Offer work.** A third of staff (32%) say CLNM or their LHP has already supported change to the Local Offer, citing Wi-Fi and digital poverty offers, financial support reviews and accommodation routes. Creating stronger links between every LHP and its local authority participation team, with reps involved from the start, would help scale the approaches already being demonstrated by a third of LHPs.
10. **Each representative has the opportunity to lead or contribute to relevant workstreams.** Reps know they make change: 94% said they had helped make meaningful change to others' lives, and 89% that the role gave them a stronger sense they can influence what matters to them. That influence should continue and expand at every level. This means continuing to support CLNM reps to get involved across NHP and LHP, either in peer evaluation, consultations, or decision-making. Beyond the House Project, where reps already sit on corporate parenting boards and shape the Local Offer, NHP should keep opening routes for reps to influence the wider conversation about what it means to be care experienced.



Five evaluations, one body of work

This is the fifth peer evaluation in a programme that began in 2021, and the second to turn the lens on CLNM itself. Each evaluation has been designed, conducted and analysed by CLNM reps trained as peer researchers. Together they build up a picture of CLNM over time, written by the people who have done the role.

2021

The first peer evaluation, looking at Community, Independence, Responsibility and Sense of Direction across LHPs. 70 young people completed the survey and over 25 took part in more than 15 interviews and 3 focus groups. Its recommendation for more peer support led directly to the development of a peer mentoring programme.

2023

The second evaluation, covering the remaining ORCHIDS aspects of Ownership, Sense of Wellbeing and Home. 150 young people took part: 115 through the survey and 35 through interviews across all 13 LHPs. It reported the peer mentoring programme built from the 2021 recommendation.

2024

The first evaluation of CLNM itself, covering its work, its impact on reps, and what an alumni offer should look like. 35 reps and alumni took part: 26 through the survey and 9 through interviews. The findings helped shape the development of the CLNM alumni offer, and this 2026 evaluation uses 2024 as its baseline wherever questions repeat.

2025

The third evaluation of the house project approach focusing on Interdependence across the House Project community. 225 young people took part through the survey and 57 interviews (43 young people and 14 members of staff.) were undertaken. The recommendations focused on developing understanding of interdependence and different aspects of community.

2026

This evaluation: the impact CLNM makes at four levels. 35 CLNM reps and alumni and 40 LHP staff completed surveys, and peer researchers conducted 7 interviews with current and former reps.


2021
Our Community:
A peer evaluation of our Local House Projects
THE NATIONAL HOUSE PROJECT
Partnership for Young London
2023
Peer Evaluation 2023:
Ownership, Home, and Sense of Wellbeing
CARE LEAVERS NATIONAL MOVEMENT
NHP
Living connected and fulfilling lives
2024
Care Leavers National Movement
Peer research into the impact of CLNM, and the benefits for the young people involved.
CARE LEAVERS NATIONAL MOVEMENT
NHP
Living connected and fulfilling lives
Partnership for Young London
2025
Peer Evaluation 2025
Peer research into interdependence, and how this works across the House Project community
CARE LEAVERS NATIONAL MOVEMENT
NHP
Living connected and fulfilling lives
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Peer Evaluation 2026
The impact of the Care Leavers National Movement
Peer research led by CLNM reps to understand the impact of CLNM on individuals, Local House Projects, National House Project, and wider policy.
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Our approach

This evaluation follows the same participatory approach as its four predecessors, guided by the four principles established in 2023: power sharing, mutual respect for experience and expertise, informed decision making, and maximum involvement. CLNM reps designed the research questions, conducted the interviews, and analysed the findings.

What we did

Two surveys ran online in summer 2026. The first was completed by 35 CLNM reps and alumni; the second by 40 members of LHP staff. Alongside the surveys, peer researchers conducted seven interviews with current and former CLNM reps. The interviews included a range of experiences, from a first-year rep to a founding member with more than eight years' involvement and took place both online and in-person. Together, they captured more than two hours of conversation. All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and anonymised to support accurate analysis while protecting participants' identities.

Analysis took place at a workshop where five peer researchers decided the structure of this report. They sorted the survey findings into groups, compared the staff findings against them, and matched the interview themes to each group. Those groups became the chapters of this report.

Where a 2026 survey question repeats or closely mirrors a question from the 2024 CLNM evaluation, we report the 2024 figure as a baseline. These comparisons are indicative rather than exact: the samples overlap but are not identical (35 respondents in 2026 against 26 in 2024), and question wording occasionally differs. The full matched-pairs table is in the appendix.

Quotes are reproduced with light cleaning only: filler words, false starts and transcription artefacts are removed and compressed speech is marked with ellipses, with no words added and no meaning changed.



Who took part

35

CLNM reps and alumni
survey

- 35 CLNM reps and alumni completed the survey: 21 current reps and 14 alumni.
- Current reps ranged from under six months in the role (8 people) to more than two years (3 people).
- Respondents were aged 17 to 27, with an average age of 20.
- 19 identified as female and 16 as male. 2 are parents.
- 24 of 35 identified as White British, with respondents also identifying as Black African, Asian Indian, Arab, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, and Mixed heritage.
- They came from 15 LHPs from England and Scotland.
- 11 of the 35 were not in employment, education or training at the time of the survey. This group comes up again later in the report, because they gained most from the role.

40

LHP staff
survey

- 40 members of staff completed the staff survey: 27 facilitators (with 6 also being the LHPs participation champion) and 13 project leads
- They came from fifteen LHPs, thirteen of which also appear in the 2024 Evaluation, so the two surveys describe largely the same LHPs.
- 26 of the 40 staff work in LHPs where young people have been involved as CLNM reps for more than two years.

7

CLNM reps and alumni
interviews

- Seven current and former CLNM reps were interviewed by peer researchers.
- Their time in the role ranged from a first-year rep to a founding member of more than eight years and included a current and former CLNM Chair.
- Quotes marked as interviews are drawn from these seven interviews. Quotes marked as survey are written answers from the surveys, reproduced as given.



1. The impact of CLNM on reps and alumni

How being a CLNM rep changes the young people who take it on: their experience of the role, their confidence, skills and wellbeing, the community they find, and their sense that they can make change.

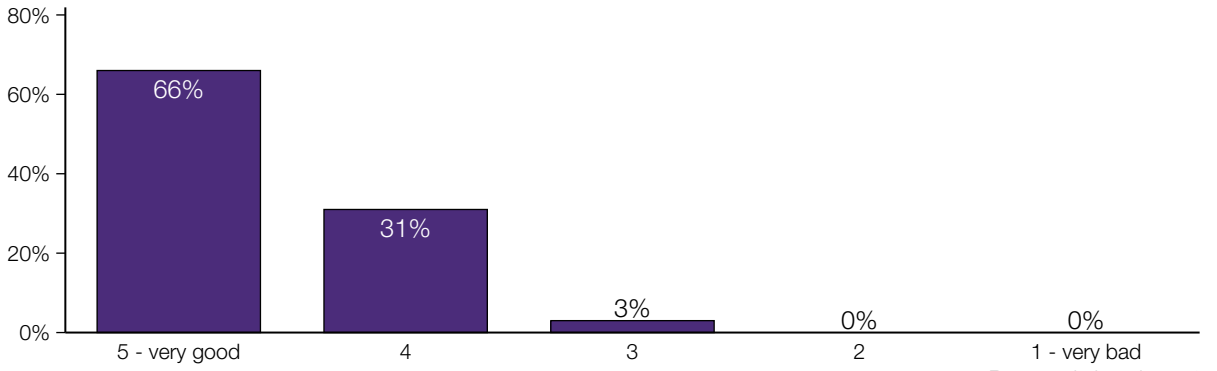
1. The rep experience, start to finish

The top line

Asked to rate their overall experience as a CLNM rep from 1 to 5, almost every young person (97%) chose 4 or 5, and two thirds (66%) chose 5. Nobody chose 1 or 2. The average was 4.6 out of 5.

When we asked what the role had meant to them, current reps and alumni gave two kinds of answer: what it had done for them personally, and what it had made them part of.

Overall experience as a rep (1 to 5)



Reps and alumni, n = 35

"Gave me the confidence to be the person I am today and be the best Mum possible"
Alumni, survey

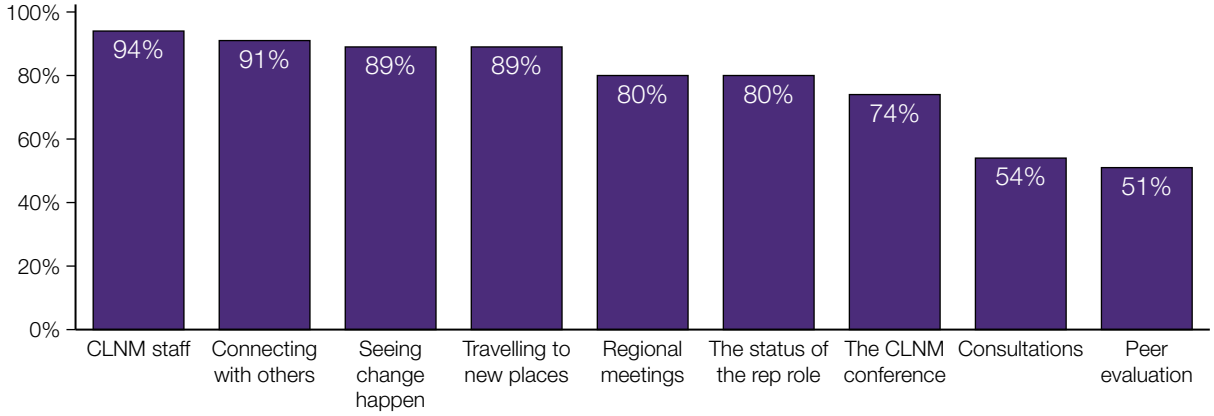
"Great experience, amazing opportunities, part of something very important"
Current rep, survey



What made the role

We asked how much each part of CLNM added to the experience. People mattered more than events: CLNM staff came first (94% said they added ‘a lot’ or ‘quite a lot’), then connecting with others (91%), then seeing change happen and travelling to new places (both 89%). The named activities all mattered: regional meetings (80%), conference (74%), consultations (54%) and peer evaluation (51%), and so did the status of the rep role itself (80%). Staff agree: they rated their understanding of what CLNM is and does at 4.3 out of 5, and their confidence in supporting a new rep into CLNM at 4.1 out of 5.

How much did each of these add to your experience? (a lot or quite a lot)



CLNM reps and alumni survey, n = 35

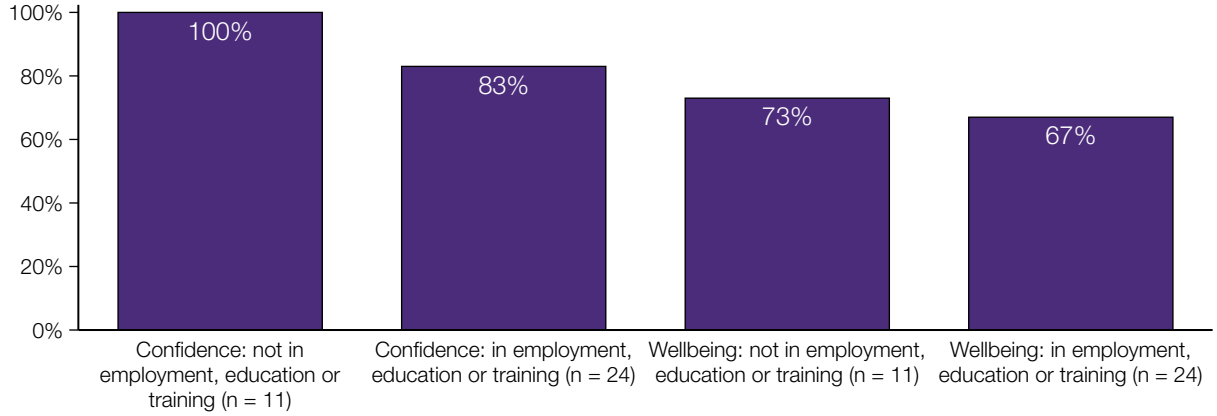
The lower figures for consultations and peer evaluation need reading with the CLNM year in mind. One in three respondents (11 of 35) said there was at least one part of CLNM they had never had the chance to do. For conference, this is timing rather than access: all five who had not been to conference were in their first year as reps. For consultations the picture is mostly the same, although two alumni completed their whole term without taking part in one. Peer evaluation is different: of the ten who had never taken part, five had more than a year in the role or had finished it altogether, including two reps of more than two years. So access to this part of the role is uneven, and time in the role does not fully explain it. Reps value this work and can see it making a difference, which is why recommendation 10 asks NHP and LHPs to keep supporting reps into peer evaluation, consultations and decision-making, and to keep widening the routes to influence beyond the House Project.



Who gains most

Eleven of the thirty-five respondents were not in employment, education or training. The survey options covered full-time and part-time employment, full-time and part-time education or training; the eleven had none of these. On the questions about confidence and wellbeing, they reported the biggest gains: every one of them (100%) said CLNM increased their confidence, against 83% of those in employment, education or training, and 73% said it improved their mental health or wellbeing, against 67%. The role is reaching people at a point in their lives when confidence and wellbeing matter most, and it is working for them.

Agreement by employment, education and training status



CLNM reps and alumni survey, n = 35

A role that fits around life

Reps described a role that fits around jobs, childcare, college and distance, with staff working around their commitments.

> *"The facilitator works around my work hours and stuff like that."*
>
> **Rep, first year, interview**

> *"This year I have struggled to make some of the meetings, obviously due to childcare."*
>
> **Founding rep, interview**

Taking on responsibility

Those who took on more responsibility saw it as part of what they got out of the role. Four of the seven interviews talked about chairing, sitting on boards and panels, and helping to run the movement, and described what the responsibility gave them:

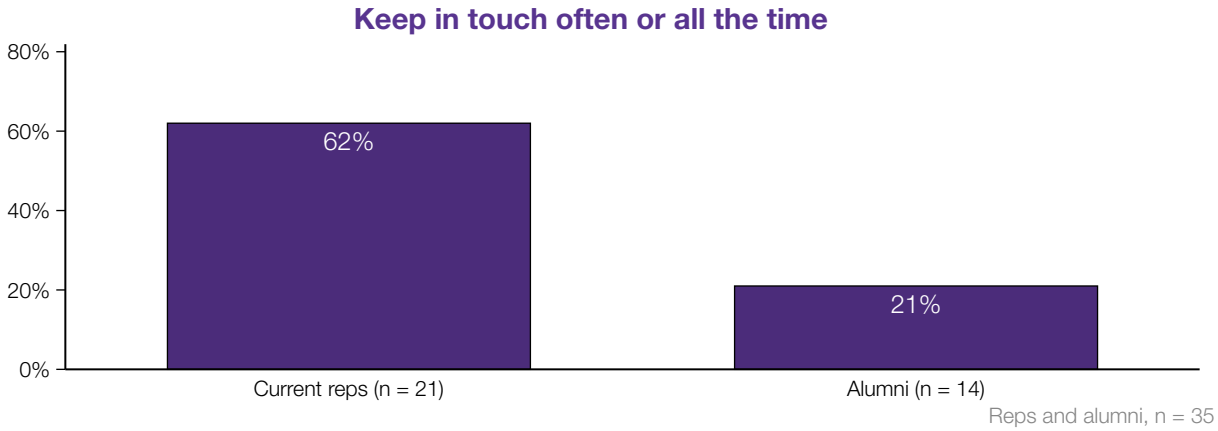
> *"When I was Chair, it became quite a lot of a workload. Being able to delegate, being able to ask for help... it was a lot, but I learned how to do it. And that's invaluable, because a lot of people don't learn that until later on in life."*
>
> **Alumni and former CLNM Chair, interview**

> *“I am part of the panel for the aspirational awards... and consultations and interviewing, which again is another opportunity I’ve been grateful to do.”*
> **Founding rep, interview**



Endings and moving on

Reps move on, and they should: it is how the next rep gets in, and moving on with life after the role is a good thing. Among alumni, one in five (21%) still keep in touch with CLNM friends often or all the time, years after their role ended, and half keep in touch sometimes. For friendships that started through a role, that says something about how real they are.



Reps were not asking for people to stay forever. They wanted a proper ending, and an open door for those who want to stay in touch. Some described the goodbye as the hardest part of a role they loved:

> *"You kind of build like a family system, a relationship system with everyone... You become an alumni after, which is great, but I feel like that active role stops, and obviously everyone needs to move on with their lives, so it's fair enough, but that's quite sad."*
>
> **Rep, 18 months in role, interview**

A rep in their final year echoed the same feeling, alongside their confidence in what comes next:

> *"Really sad that it's actually my last year, but I know that the reps we've got right now will carry on the work that's been happening through the past couple of years."*
>
> **Rep, third year, interview**

And some described their own LHP having less contact with them while they were still in the role. Three of the seven interviews touched on it, from different directions:

> *"I don't really see much of a change anymore. My house project doesn't really keep in touch with me much since I became a rep."*
>
> **Rep, third year in role, interview**

Asked whether they would like that to change, they said yes, and that people at CLNM were already helping, by speaking to their LHP. A founding rep described something similar:

> *"I don't see my house project as often as I could, due to the distance of where I live... I don't really have that one-to-one connection anymore."*
> **Founding rep, over eight years, interview**

And a former Chair described how hard it is to get contact with alumni right:

> *"It's really hard to tell when someone does and doesn't want to be contacted, because I think that changes every day."*
> **Alumni and former Chair, interview**

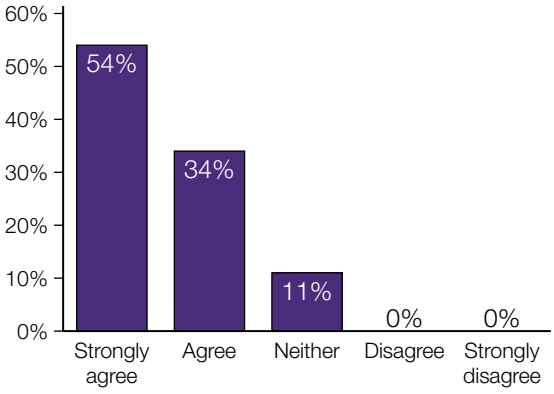
The 2024 evaluation heard the same, and reps designed the answer themselves: an active alumni offer, with opportunities to meet up and socialise and keep in touch with staff and other CLNM members.



2. Confidence, skills and wellbeing

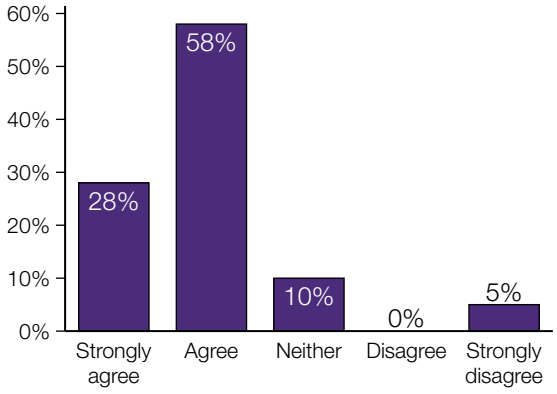
Ask what CLNM changes in a person and the same answer comes from reps, alumni and staff: confidence. 89% of reps and alumni agreed or strongly agreed that being a CLNM rep increased their confidence. Staff put it at almost the same level: 85% agreed that young people who take on rep roles tend to grow in confidence.

Being a rep has increased my confidence



Reps and alumni, n = 35

Reps tend to grow in confidence (staff)



Staff, n = 40

The interviews show how it happens. Six of the seven people interviewed described the same journey: shy, anxious or closed off at the start, confident and outgoing now.

> *"When I first started... I was very, very closed off. I wouldn't speak to anybody. I sat in a corner with my headphones on... From the first day of me becoming a rep, you could see I started to open up, I was more bubbly, more confident... It's just brought me out of my shell."*
>
> **Rep, third year in role, interview**

"At my first meeting, I was very quiet, didn't really say much, and now I'm quite a bubbly person."

Rep, second year in role, interview

Many pointed at the same turning point: standing up to speak at conference.

> *"There has been a stark difference in people who are willing to speak. Everybody wants to speak now... That's a lot of confidence; that's a lot of courage that's built up in that time."*
> **Alumni, three years a rep, interview**

> *"Speaking at the conference in 2024 in Manchester. This was the first time I had ever planned a speech and then voiced my experiences. This gave me loads of confidence and since then I have been able to speak at more events publicly."*
> **Current rep, survey**

The 2024 evaluation found the same thing: opportunities outside reps' comfort zones, especially conference and travel, built their confidence, and 84.6% rated CLNM's support for their confidence as 'good' or 'very good'.

Why it happens

Part of what builds that confidence is something no training course can offer: finding out you are not the only one. Three of the seven interviews described what it means to be in a room where everybody shares care experience and nothing needs explaining.

> *"I used to have a very negative mentality, thinking that I was the only person who goes through hardship during care. But after meeting so many people and listening to so many stories, I know I'm not the only person... so I know I'm not alone."*
> **Rep, 18 months in role, interview**

> *"It's changed me so I know what other young people have gone through, and everyone's story is different."*
> **Rep, first year, interview**

> *"Being able to share my experiences without anyone else judging"*
> **Current rep, survey**

From label to expertise

For some, this goes further. Two of the seven interviews described how CLNM had changed what being care experienced meant to them: from a label they carried to expertise they could offer.

"It kind of stopped being a label... Just because you are in care doesn't mean that you can't excel in life and doesn't mean that you can't grow as a person. It doesn't have to be held over your head forever... It really made me value myself more as a person."

Rep, 18 months in role, interview

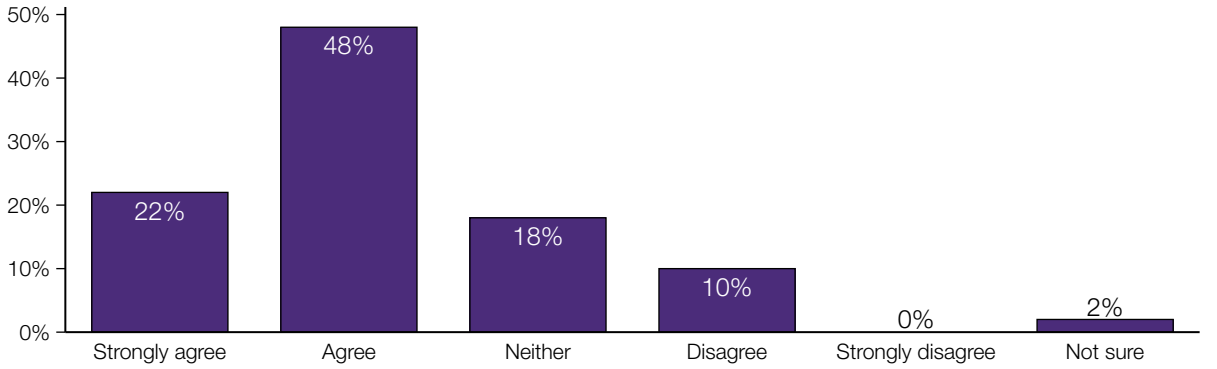
"The stereotypes around care leavers, some people don't like them. I'm one of the people that don't like the label. So it's just finding ways to prevent those stereotypes becoming stereotypes... it just gives more dignity to the young person."

Chair, second year in role, interview

Skills

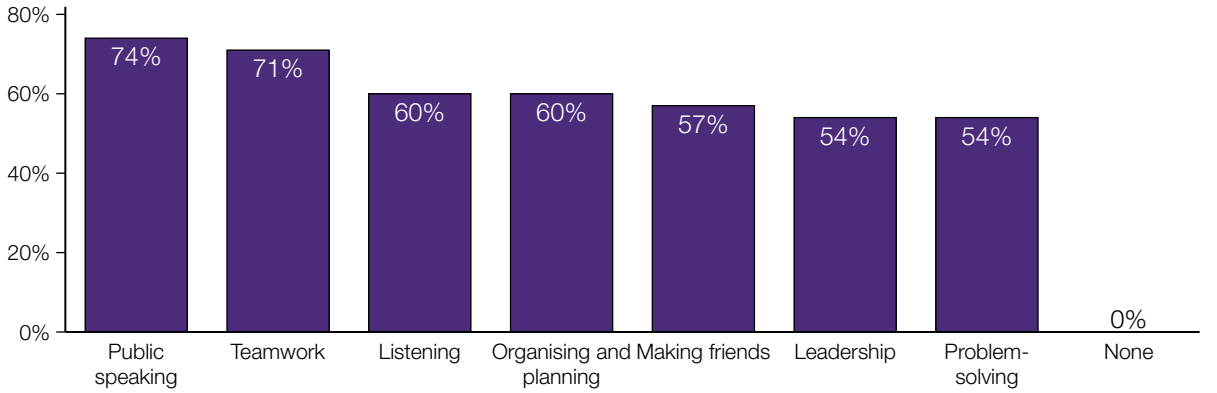
Alongside confidence come skills. Not a single respondent said they had gained no skills from CLNM. Public speaking led (74%), then teamwork (71%), listening and organising and planning (60% each), making friends (57%), and leadership and problem-solving (54% each). LHP staff agree these skills transfer: 70% agreed that being a rep supports skills for work, education or training.

Rep role supports skills for work or education (staff)



Staff, n = 40

Which skills have you gained from being a CLNM rep? (percentage who ticked each)



CLNM reps and alumni survey, n = 35

In interviews, reps recognised the positive impact of being a CLNM rep on other aspects of their lives. This included interview skills that led to actual jobs, and in some cases CLNM changing the direction of their education or career.

"I've been interview trained... it's helped me actually acquire jobs outside, because I kind of know what certain questions I'll be asked."
Rep, 18 months in role, interview

"Smart Works, we go and we pick an outfit out for conference, which I have actually used when I've had interviews this year. I've worn it about three times this year for all my interviews."
Founding rep, interview

"I never wanted to go to uni. It was never my thing... but I got the chance of getting a degree apprenticeship, and I would have never applied to that degree apprenticeship if I didn't have the confidence to."
Alumni, three years a rep, interview

"I've recently just started a new job, which is really good because it's part of what CLNM has helped me realise what I want to do in the future... I want to be an advocate for young people."
Rep, third year in role, interview

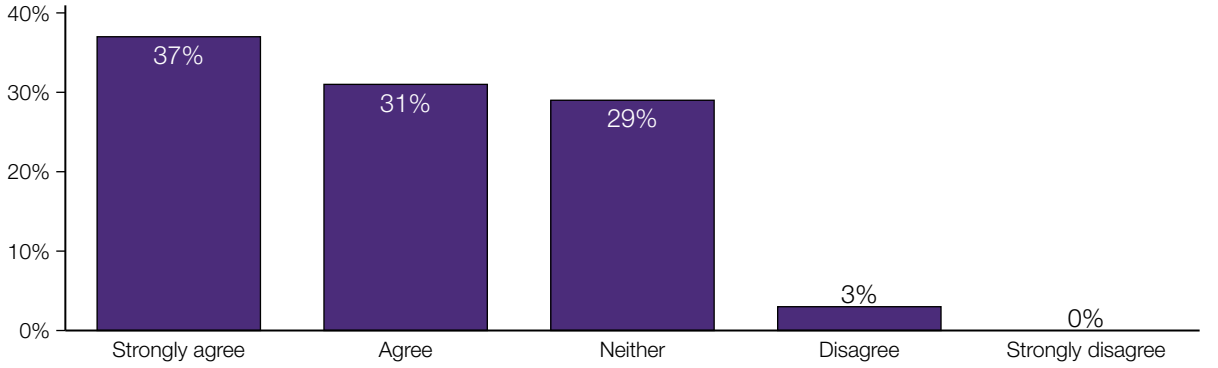
One alumni's written answer sums up the journey from CLNM to a permanent job:

> *"In my role as a CLNM Rep, I became the first Care Leavers apprentice in the Leaving Care team, and later won [my local] Apprentice of the Year Award. I attended the Queen's Garden Party. Went to Northern Ireland to help set up a Social Enterprise. Won an award for the best public speaker with another organisation. Gained a full-time, permanent job."*
> **Alumni, survey**

Wellbeing

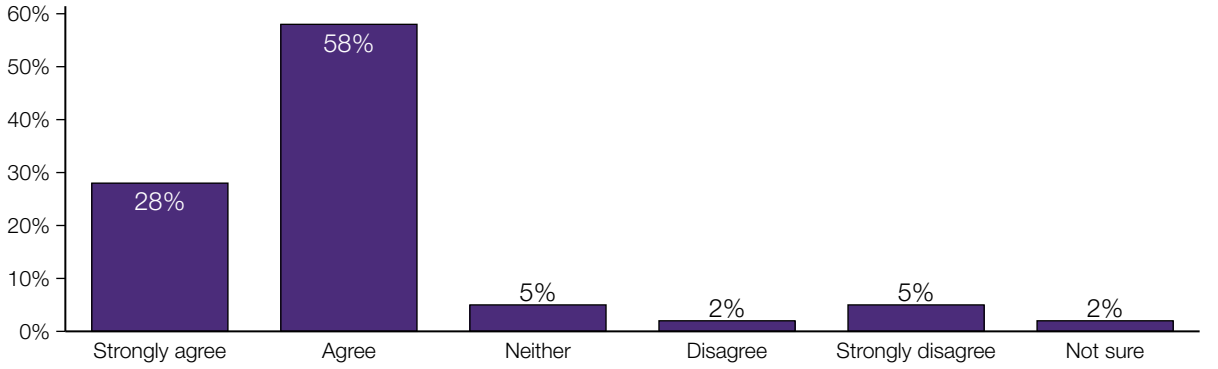
Being a CLNM rep is good for wellbeing, with 69% of reps and alumni agreed the role improved their mental health or wellbeing, with 37% strongly agreeing.

Being a rep has improved my mental health or wellbeing



Reps and alumni, n = 35

Rep role has a positive effect on wellbeing (staff)



Staff, n = 40

For a voluntary role, taken on alongside work, education and everything else, that is a strong result. The interviews suggest why: anxiety eases with each journey and each new person met, and reps have somewhere to belong and something they have chosen to put themselves into. For context, the wider evaluations found the LHP itself improved mental health for 78% of young people in 2021 and 76% in 2023.

> *"It's helped my anxiety, obviously, with like travelling long distances, meeting new people... It's made me feel a bit more calmer when I go out on a day-to-day basis now."*
>
> **Rep, second year in role, interview**

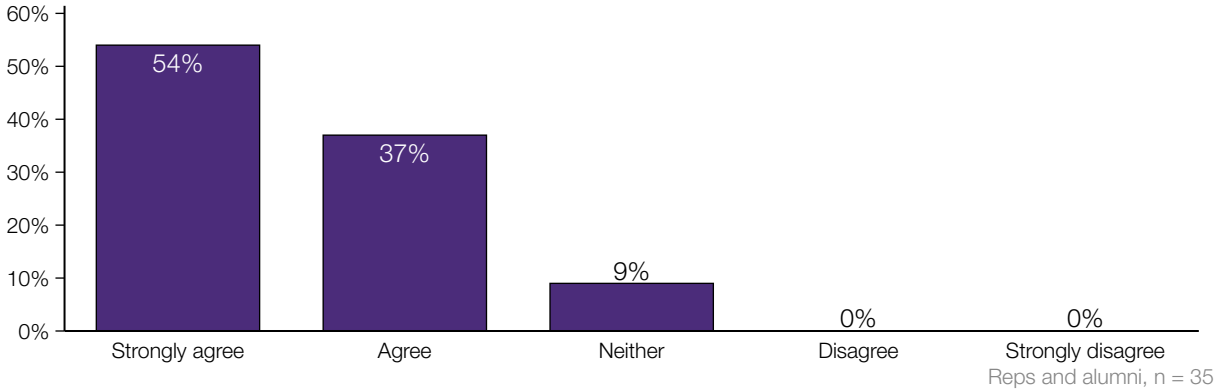
It is worth noting that staff rate the wellbeing effect higher still, at 85% and level with their assessment of confidence, while three in ten reps sat in the middle rather than agreeing. That gap makes sense: confidence shows in a meeting, wellbeing does not. Taken together, the results show that CLNM improves wellbeing for most reps, while for around three in ten the role makes less difference, which is to be expected: a voluntary role is one part of a person's life.

3. Community, belonging and new places

A community that feels like family

Confidence is what CLNM builds in each rep. Community is what it builds between them. 91% of reps and alumni agreed that being a CLNM rep made them feel part of a community, and 54% strongly agreed. In 2024 the same question found 84%. That has held steady, and the word people reach for is stronger than community: family. In 2024 a rep called CLNM "like my second family". In 2026, unprompted, the same word came back across the survey and the interviews:

Being a rep has made me feel part of a community



Reps and alumni, n = 35

> *"CLNM is not just like a community, it's a family. Everybody has their difference, people have their arguments and everything, but we all come together when life is most needed."*
>
> **Rep, third year in role, interview**

"I feel like I have finally found a family"

Current rep, survey

"Whenever I meet with CLNM or ……. my House Project I feel like I meet with my family. I'm from Afghanistan and I haven't seen my family six years. These people they give me a lot of love, a lot of respect, and they teach me a lot of life rules."

Current rep, survey

Back Dane and travelling

That community is largely built away from home. Travelling to new places added a ‘lot’ or ‘quite a lot’ for 89% of reps and alumni, and when we asked for a specific moment when being a rep made a difference, the residentials at Back Dane came back again and again.

> *“My first time at Back Dane. It helped me make friends and actually made me realise that I fit in somewhere finally”*
> **Current rep, survey**

> *“The trips to Back Dane will always be my highlight of my time as a rep. Being away from our phones made it more easy to get things done and get to work with each other”*
> **Current rep, survey**

Four of the seven interviews also talked about travel itself as part of what the role gave them, including people who started with real travel anxiety:

> *“Before I became a rep, I was quite a shy, anxious person. I wouldn’t really go out my way to travel anywhere or really meet new people. But since becoming a rep, I’ve made quite a few good friendships... I’m travelling to Wales basically every other week.”*
> **Rep, second year in role, interview**

> *“Just travel anxiety, really, but that’s basically just gone out the window... Travelling is just not for me, but since becoming a rep, it’s just been something that I really wanted to do. Because I know if I travel, what I’ll be going to do will make that difference that I want to see.”*
> **Rep, third year in role, interview**

Residentials and travel are where the community behind all the other findings in this report gets built. LHP staff told us travel budgets are under pressure: one wrote that funding train fares for reps is a struggle. If travel is squeezed, so is everything else.

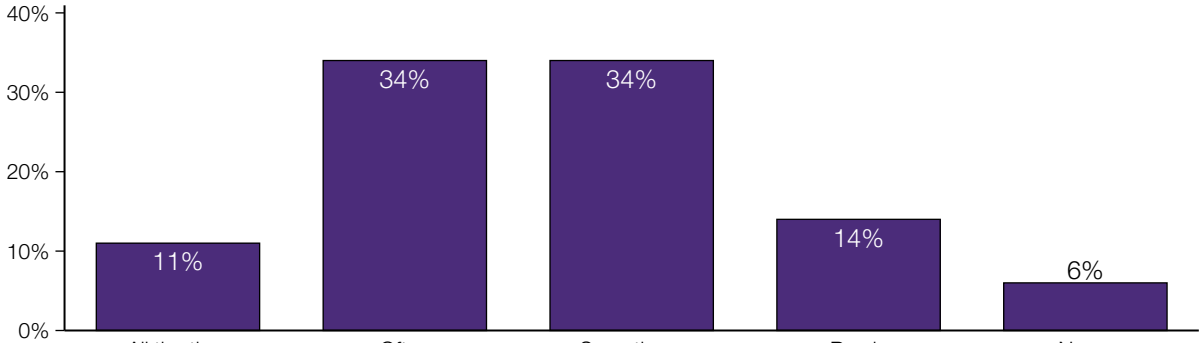


Friendships that last

"Definitely meeting new people and having people that I can call long-lasting friends. There have been a lot of people that I don't think I would have met otherwise."

Rep, 18 months in role, interview

Keeping in touch with CLNM friends



Reps and alumni, n = 35

46% of all reps and alumni keep in touch with the friends they made at CLNM 'often' or 'all the time', up from 37.5% in 2024, and a further 34% keep in touch sometimes. As chapter 1 set out, alumni naturally settle into looser contact as their lives move on, and the friendships that continue years later are a mark of how real they were.

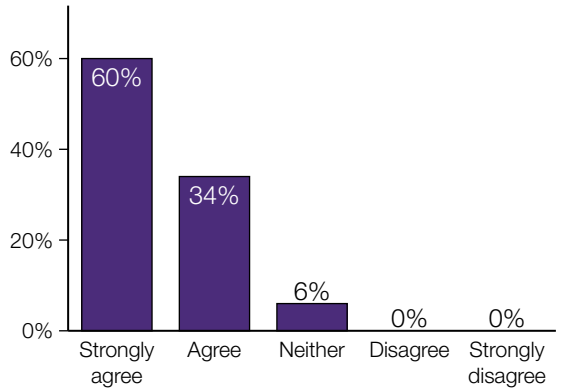
The 2025 evaluation of the wider House Project community found the same principle at LHP level: belonging that lasts after people move on is what interdependence looks like in practice. CLNM shows the same thing at a national level.

4. Agency, influence and change

Making change

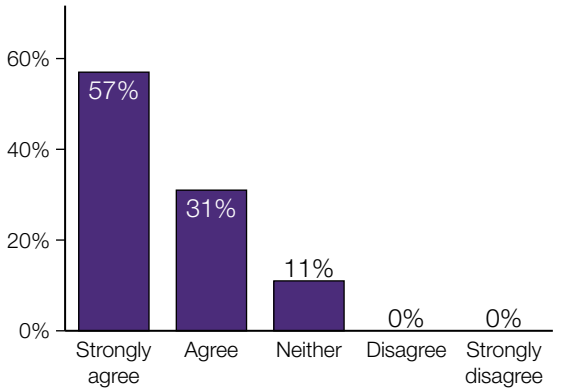
Confidence and community would be reason enough for CLNM. But its purpose is change, and reps can see themselves making it. 94% of reps and alumni agreed they had helped make meaningful change to the lives of others, with 60% strongly agreeing. 89% said being a rep gave them a stronger sense they can influence things that matter to them.

Helped me make meaningful change to others' lives



Reps and alumni, n = 35

Stronger sense I can influence things that matter



Reps and alumni, n = 35

Four of the seven interviews described a specific moment of raising something and seeing it change. Raising something and seeing it change is an experience many care leavers are rarely given.

> *"Anytime we got feedback and we'd bring that to meetings, CLNM would take action quite quickly... you would kind of see it instantly change. And the next session, or a couple of sessions down, everyone would have a lot more clarity."*
>
> **Rep, 18 months in role, interview**

"Last year I was part of the discussions for the community events. I saw that kickstart, and the fact that we've gone from none to one and now up to two a year. So I've seen that grow."

Rep, third year in role, interview

What reps are proud of

Asked what work they were proudest of, the answers covered every part of the role:

> *"Being able to talk on behalf of those who are having issues, to help prevent more issues happening"*
> **Current rep, survey**

> *"Conferences. Speaking to so many different local authorities, getting them to listen and open the opportunity for other care leavers to have a place to go to"*
> **Alumni, survey**

> *"Meeting the Children and Families Minister"*
> **Alumni, survey**

> *"Helping start up CLNM as a whole. Seeing it go from just an idea that was created by a few people in a room to something that has grown to what it is now has been unreal"*
> **Alumni, survey**





2. The change CLNM makes

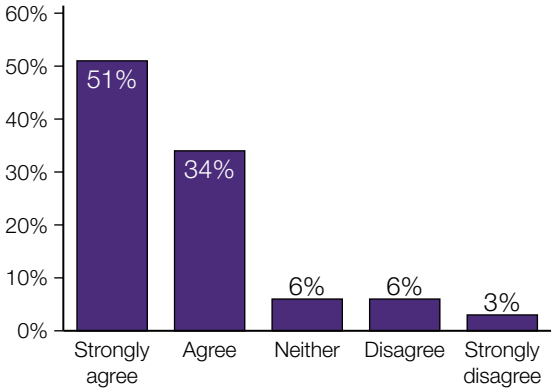
What CLNM changes beyond its reps: how far young people feel heard nationally and locally, the reach into local authorities and the Local Offer, and what LHP staff know and hear back.

5. Being heard: national and local

Listened to nationally

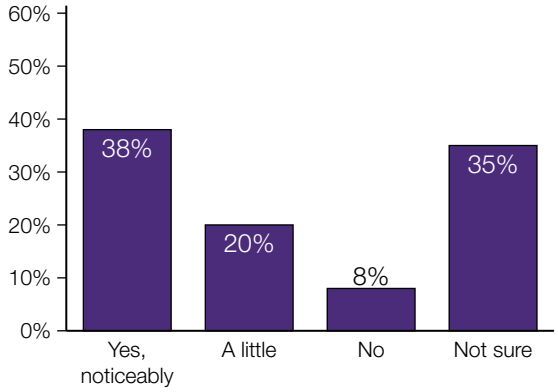
At the national end, the relationship is strong. 86% of young people felt listened to by NHP, with 51% strongly agreeing. That listening leads to change: 58% of LHP staff say CLNM has contributed to a change of practice at NHP, with 38% saying 'noticeably', though a third of staff simply do not know.

Felt listened to by the National House Project



Reps and alumni, n = 35

Has CLNM changed practice at NHP?



Staff, n = 40

One staff answer suggests how deep co-production now runs at NHP:

> *"Where I have answered not sure to questions about changes at NHP due to CLNM, this is more because young people are always involved in everything NHP does through co-production."*
>
> **LHP staff, survey**

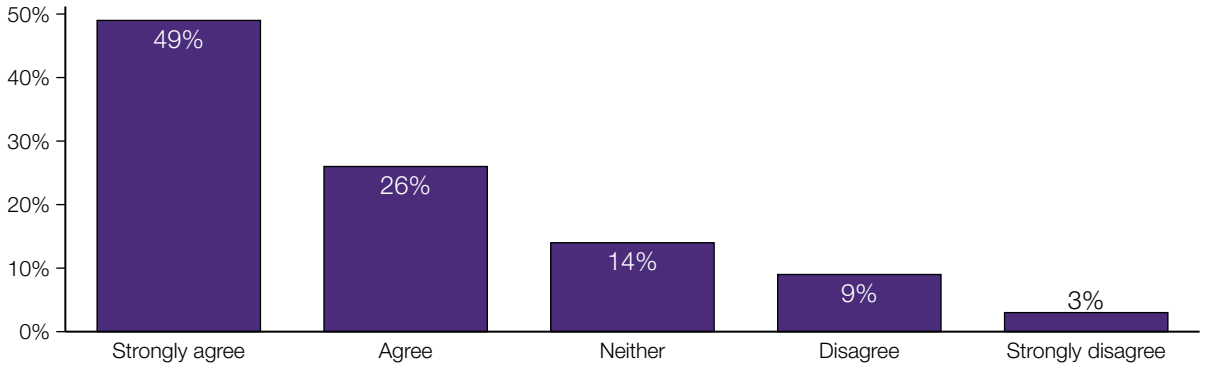
The peer evaluations are part of this story too. The 2021 evaluation recommended more peer support, and by 2023 CLNM had co-designed peer mentoring. And the recommendations travel beyond NHP: one former Chair described what happened after a peer recommendation from a previous evaluation, no conversation about me without me, was launched at conference:

> *"At the end of the conference we did a pledge, and we were going to go back to local authorities and ask: what have all these local authorities done to improve this recommendation... People were sending feedback saying, I was invited to this meeting and I have the choice to say whether I want to go or not. And that's the bit that matters."*
>
> **Alumni and former Chair, interview**

Listened to locally

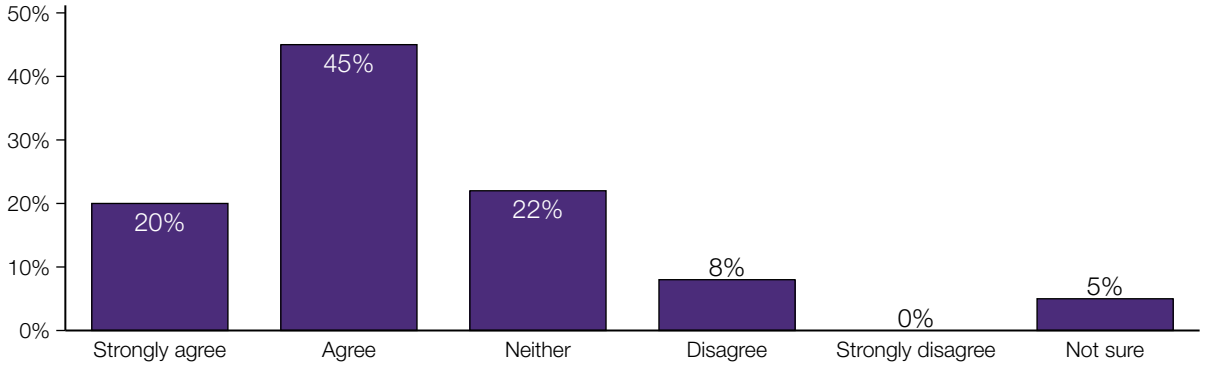
At the local level the picture is still positive. 74% felt listened to by their own LHP. Staff agree: 65% say their LHP actively acts on the feedback and recommendations that come from CLNM reps, and 68% agree reps become more involved in their LHP. Reps held a similar view with 63% saying the role made them more engaged in their LHP and a third neither agreeing nor disagreeing.

Felt listened to by my Local House Project



Reps and alumni, n = 35

Our LHP acts on feedback from reps (staff)

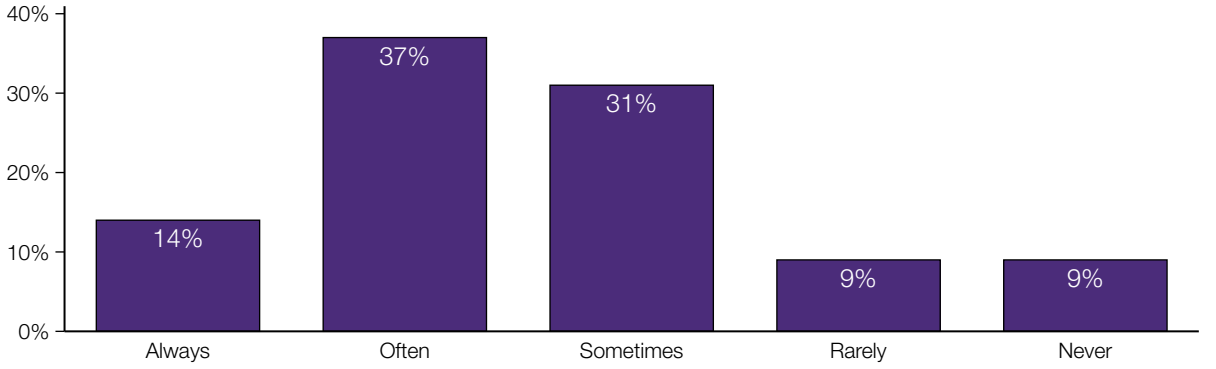


Staff, n = 40

Consultation before decisions

Being listened to when you speak is different from being asked before decisions are made. 51% of reps and alumni said their LHP team consults CLNM reps ‘often’ or ‘always’ before making decisions that affect young people. 31% said ‘sometimes’, and six people said ‘rarely’ or ‘never’.

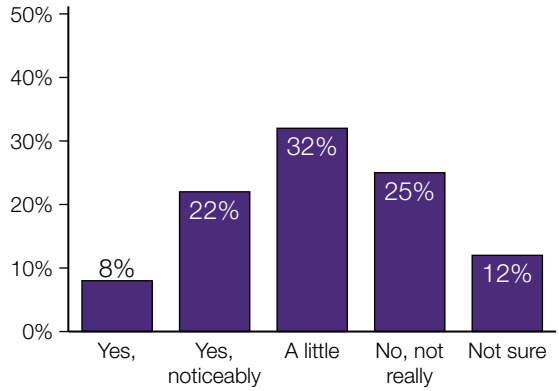
How often has your LHP consulted reps before decisions?



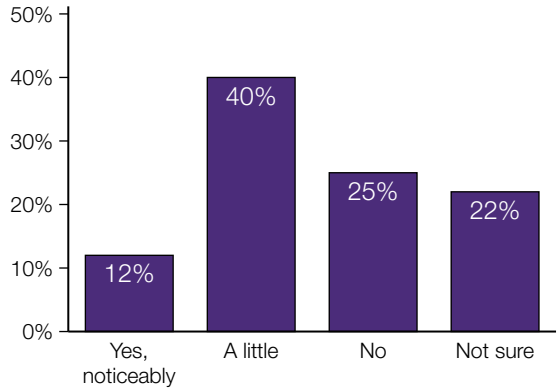
Reps and alumni, n = 35

When we asked staff whether CLNM has changed what their LHP offers or how staff work, the numbers fall further: 30% said CLNM had ‘noticeably’ or ‘significantly’ influenced what their LHP offers, and 12% said the way staff work with young people had noticeably changed (a further 40% said a little).

Have reps influenced what your LHP offers?



Has the way staff work changed because of CLNM?



Staff, n = 40

Staff, n = 40

How ideas travel

The interviews show one way local change happens: reps carrying ideas from one LHP to another. Five of the seven interviews described hearing how another LHP does something, at a regional meeting or a residential, and taking it home.

"The way I've seen it in cohort 2, they've had an even better experience than we did. They're getting all these different companies that are helping them out, getting jobs... more funding. And I feel like that's because of the things we've discussed in the regional meetings."

Chair, second year, interview

"Coming from [my LHP], you have a lot of positives... those positives, when shared at regional meetings, help other people as well."

Alumni and former Chair, interview

"Seeing and hearing what other people's house projects are doing made me realise that not all house projects are the same. Everyone and everything is different compared to my house project. The more I spend time with CLNM made me think that I can make a change to support young people."

Current rep, survey

An evaluation of a single LHP would never see this. It is one of the main advantages of a national movement: ideas that work in one of fifteen or more LHPs travel through the reps to the others. LHPs that consult their reps are connected to that network. Those that do not are missing out on it.



6. Reach beyond the House Project

The 2024 evaluation documented CLNM's national reach in stories: meeting the Children's Minister and the National Implementation Adviser for Care Leavers, speaking with CEOs, building partnerships. Two years on, this evaluation can put numbers on how far that reach extends into local authorities.

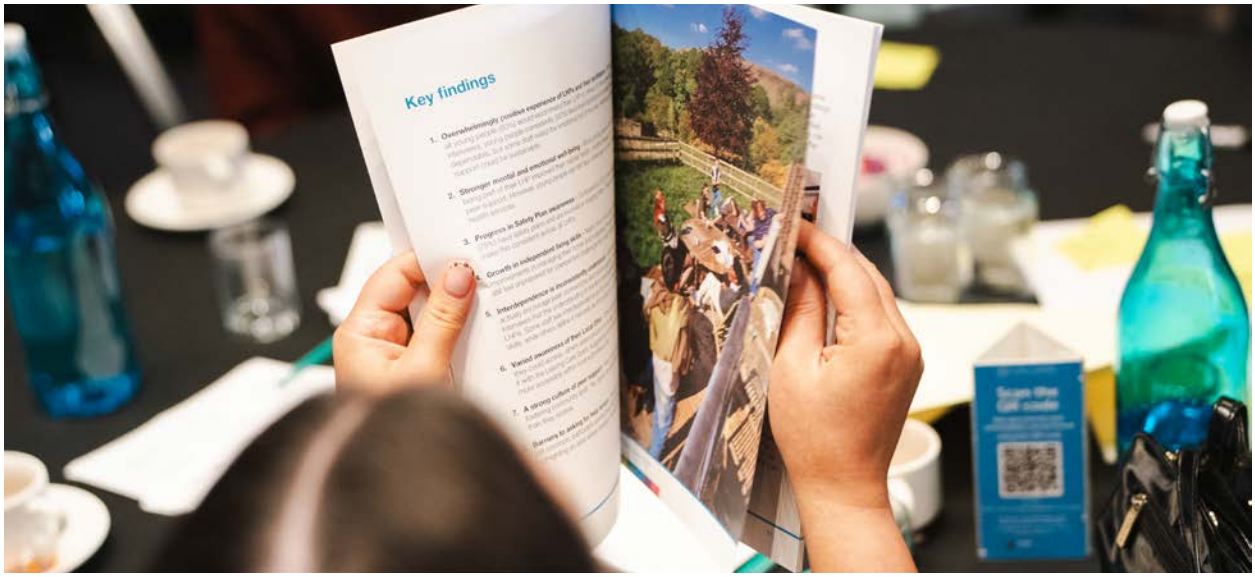
In the local authority

54% of young people in CLNM said they had chances to get involved in other work in their local authority, and half of staff (50%) said young people from their LHP had taken part in co-production beyond the House Project, with the local authority, regionally or nationally.

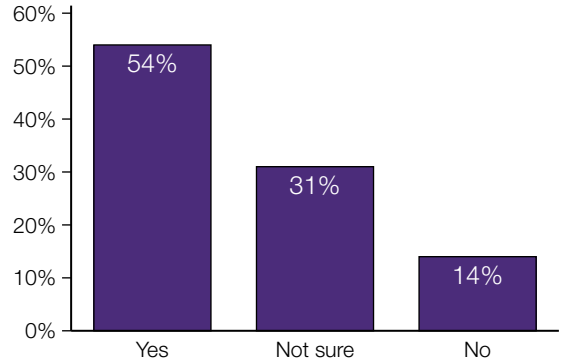
> *"Recently we worked on changing the age for taxes and it got approved."*
> **Current rep, survey**

> *"I've been a part of council board meetings, I've been a part of the corporate parenting board meetings, where I've spoke up about what's happening in my local authority, what needs to change."*
> **Rep, third year in role, interview**

The examples both groups gave range from local to national: chairing a local care forum, working alongside a city council, meetings with elected members, corporate parenting boards, interview panels for staff recruitment, research collaborations with universities, podcast interviews, and in one case a successful change to local tax policy for care leavers.

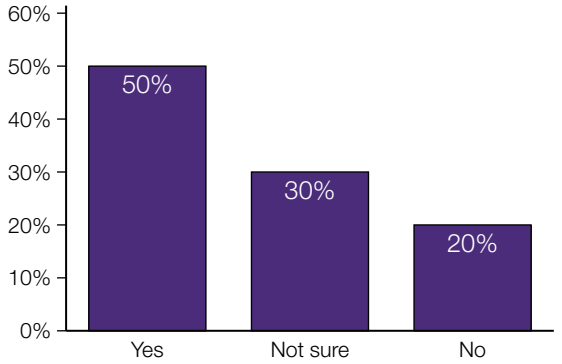


Chances in other local authority work?



Reps and alumni, n = 35

Co-production beyond the House Project?

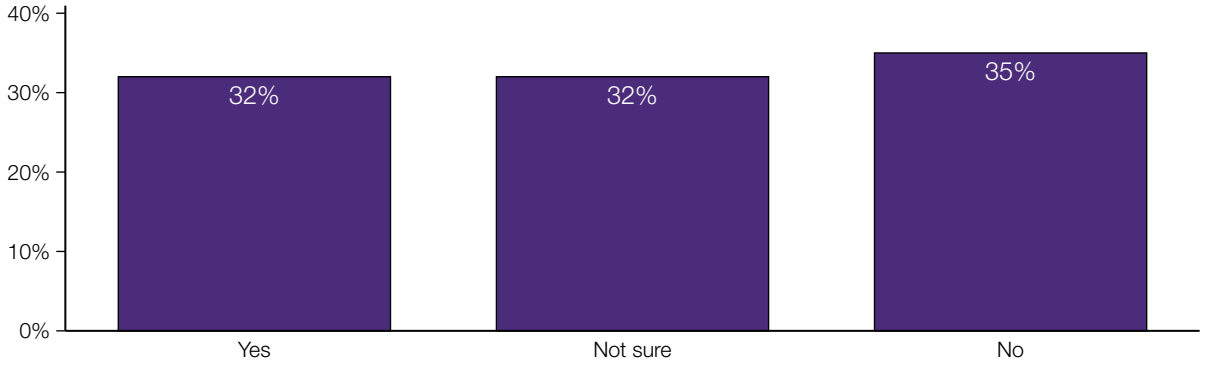


Staff, n = 40

The Local Offer

The Local Offer is the statutory promise every local authority makes to its care leavers, and it is where local policy for care leavers is set. A third of staff (32%) said CLNM or their LHP had supported change to it, citing digital poverty and Wi-Fi offers, financial support reviews and accommodation routes. A third said no, and a third did not know. A third of LHPs influencing statutory local policy is a real achievement, and it shows how much room there is to grow.

Supported change to the Local Offer?



Staff, n = 40

> *"Our young people from the LHP have been involved in co-producing the local offer, attend corporate parenting board and worked with participation teams to gather information on the local offer."*
>
> **LHP staff, survey**

Raising money and running events

Three of the seven interviews described reps raising money and running community events themselves:

> *"I participated in a fundraising dinner... I was going around with a card machine, some raffle tickets... I think we got £24,000 out of that."*
>
> **Chair, second year in role, interview**

"I've gone to our local community events and raised money... We've done a park run... it's gone really well... I've heard good feedback about it."
Rep, first year, interview

Bringing the next rep in

CLNM also recruits its own successors. Four of the seven interviews described bringing the next rep in: recruiting, reassuring and training their successors, and in one case helping a whole new area choose to open a House Project.

"I've had a conversation with one of my younger siblings about this, because she's just turned 18 recently. And I told her a bit about what I've done... and she's going to be joining our third cohort in October."
Rep, second year in role, interview

> *"They ended up choosing to have a House Project. And that's probably one of my proudest achievements, being able to sit on a video call with young people and having them say: I really want that, I want what you've got, and I want the House Project."*
> **Alumni and former Chair, interview**

"Conference is a huge thing where most of our reps actually decide they want to become a rep."
Rep, third year in role, interview

"I'm really proud of young people who are joining CLNM to make changes. One of the reps who joined said to me: "the reason why I joined CLNM is to make changes and make everything easier than before"."
Current rep, survey

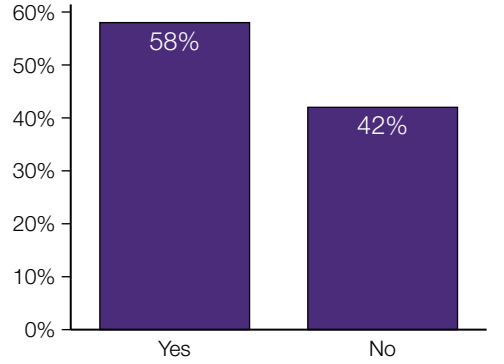
CLNM's reach extends into councils and government, and into the next generation of reps.

7. What staff know, and what comes back

What staff know

Staff understand CLNM. They rated their understanding of what it is, and what it does at 4.3 out of 5, and their confidence in supporting a young person into the role at 4.1.

Seen a specific moment of impact?



Staff, n = 40

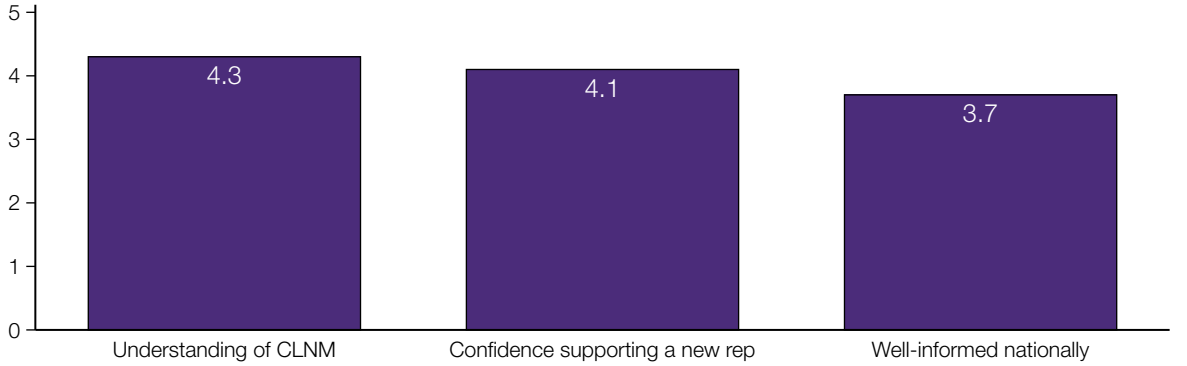
> *"Our reps have asked the group for feedback about being a care leaver. I've seen since then our group have more confidence to be open and honest. They've also learnt the group have similar perspectives and connect well."*
>
> **LHP staff, survey**

> *"First Aid training for young people within our LHP and for CLNM, following conversations in a meeting about young people with epilepsy. This is not something that was offered before."*
>
> **LHP staff, survey**

> *"One of our young people stayed in a hotel for the first time and felt very responsible, important and valued to be part of recruiting a new practice lead for NHP."*
>
> **LHP staff, survey**

Staff believe in CLNM: the earlier chapters showed them matching or exceeding reps' own assessments of the role's impact. And 58% of staff could name a specific change or moment of impact they would put down to CLNM, big or small:

Staff self-ratings (average out of 5)

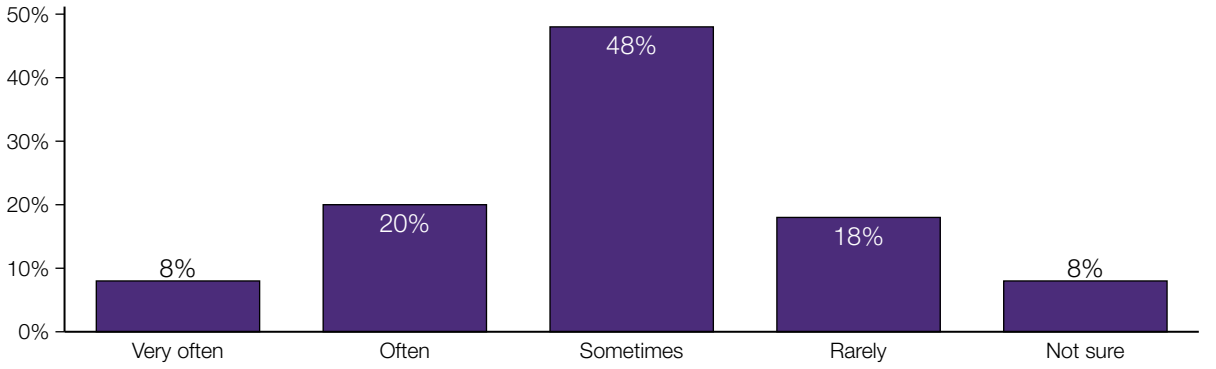


Staff, n = 40

What comes back

28% of staff hear back consistently about what is happening at CLNM from their reps ‘often’ or ‘very often’. Nearly half (48%) hear back sometimes, and a quarter ‘rarely’ or are ‘not sure’. Staff rated how well-informed they feel about what CLNM is doing nationally at 3.7 out of 5, noticeably below their 4.3 understanding of what CLNM is. Staff know what CLNM is, but they do not consistently hear what it is doing.

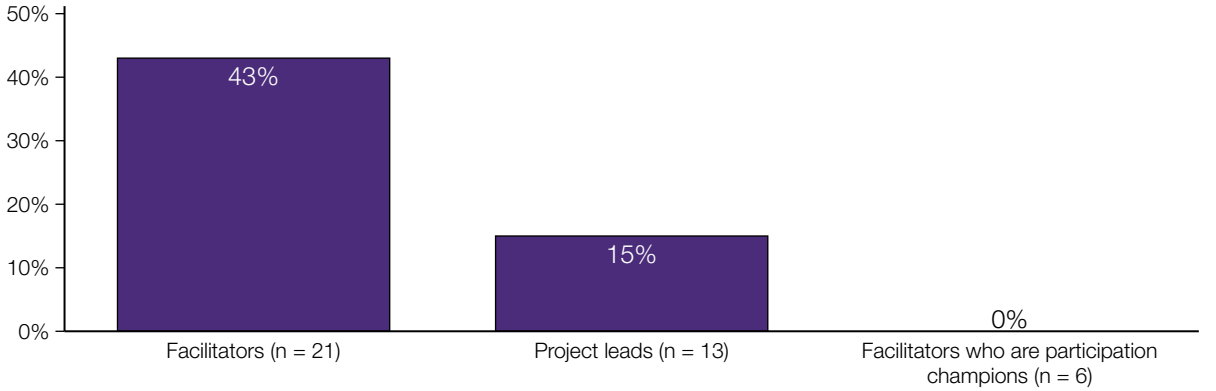
How often do you hear back about CLNM?



Staff, n = 40

Looking at this by role makes the point more sharply. 43% of facilitators hear back often or very often, compared with 15% of project leads and none of the six facilitators who are also participation champions. The staff whose job is participation are the least likely to hear what their reps are doing. One project lead’s comment shows there is appetite for more:

Hear back often or very often, by staff role



LHP staff survey, n = 40

> *“Would be good to have a 1:1 with a rep so I can learn more about the Movement and how we can have an impact locally.”*
>
> **LHP staff, survey**



The rep perspective

The reps' perspective shows up in the interviews. One second-year rep described giving ideas in consultations and conference planning and seeing them acted on:

> *"It makes me feel quite proud of myself, actually."*
> **Rep, second year in role, interview**

Then, asked whether he knew what the outcome was after his idea was put in: "No, I don't think so." So reps can miss out on seeing their own impact, and staff can miss the stories that would help them make the case for CLNM locally.

We know from experience that gathering feedback can be the most difficult part of the rep role, and feeding back to reps on action taken can be a challenge to LHP staff, which is why recommendation 7 proposes a co-produced feedback process. It is clear that impact is happening (58% of LHP staff can name it) and we need to be better at collecting, sharing and feeding back on it.



CARE LEAVERS NATIONAL MOVEMENT

NHP
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Partnership for Young London