

Reimagining Secure Care



Interim Report – November 2023



DARTINGTON
SERVICE
DESIGN LAB



Children and Young People's
Centre for Justice

Introduction and Background

Listening to children and young people as part of the [Independent Care Review](#) highlighted the need for Scotland to think more radically in relation to secure care and community alternatives to meet the needs and uphold the rights of children and young people. [The Promise Scotland](#) subsequently highlighted a need to transform secure care in Scotland by 2030 and for children to be removed from Young Offender Institutions (YOI) by 2024. The [Children \(Care and Justice\) \(Scotland\) Bill](#) proposes an end to children being remanded or sentenced to a YOI, and is a priority in the Scottish Government Programmes for Government [2022](#) and [2023](#).

The [Children and Young People's Centre for Justice \(CYCJ\)](#) were commissioned by the Scottish Government to explore potential options as to what radical transformation of secure care could look and feel like for children who will be placed there, aligning with legislative changes and in keeping the longer term aims of [the Promise](#).

The CYCJ project team chose to take a [service design approach](#) which acknowledges the recommendations of historical reviews and the ongoing development work to date in relation to secure care and its position within the continuum of care. This is being combined with the opinions, knowledge, and experience of **all** those involved to create a comprehensive portrait of effective, sustainable provision for children deprived of their liberty.

The aim of the project is to work collaboratively with children and young people in, and with experience of secure care, their families/carers to gather their views, and with **all** relevant stakeholders who contribute to supporting children before, during and after secure care or alternatives to secure care, through a four-phased process:

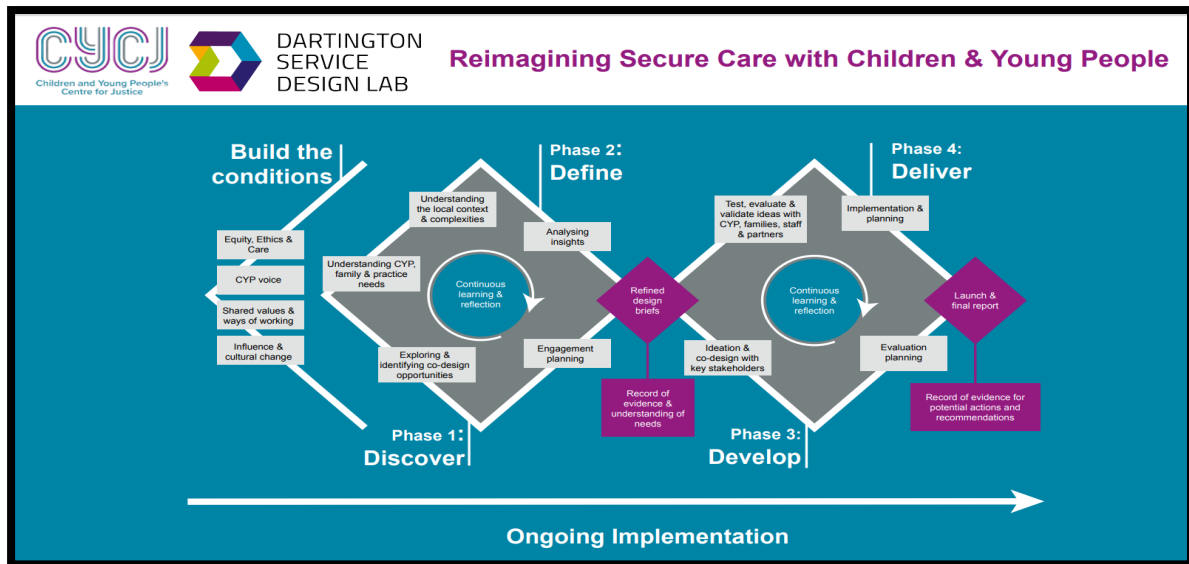
Phase 1 Discovery This phase is important to the development of relationships and creating a shared appreciation of the iterative nature of the design process. We will facilitate safe spaces to explore the needs of children, young people, and their parents/carers, wherein key stakeholders are comfortable sharing their views.

Phase 2 Define This phase determines the areas deemed most important by children, young people, their parents/carers, and key stakeholders. These areas will then be explored further.

Phase 3 Develop

This could include areas that might need adapted and those that are likely to require additional time and investment. Developments will be sense checked with design session participants. They will then be refined, adapted, or discarded in response to feedback, to ensure proposed changes meet the needs and address the problems identified through the Discovery and Define phases.

Phase 4 Deliver The final phase will be to **deliver** redesigned secure care provision to meet the needs of all children, meeting the requirements of legislation and a rights-upholding approach to justice for children in Scotland.



Purpose of Interim Report

This interim report will provide an update on the progress of the *Reimagining Secure Care* Project to date, including:

- Project Progress to Date
- Emergent themes
- Limitations
- Reflections
- Next steps.

Project Progress to Date

Phase 1 Discovery (Dec 2022 – May 2023)

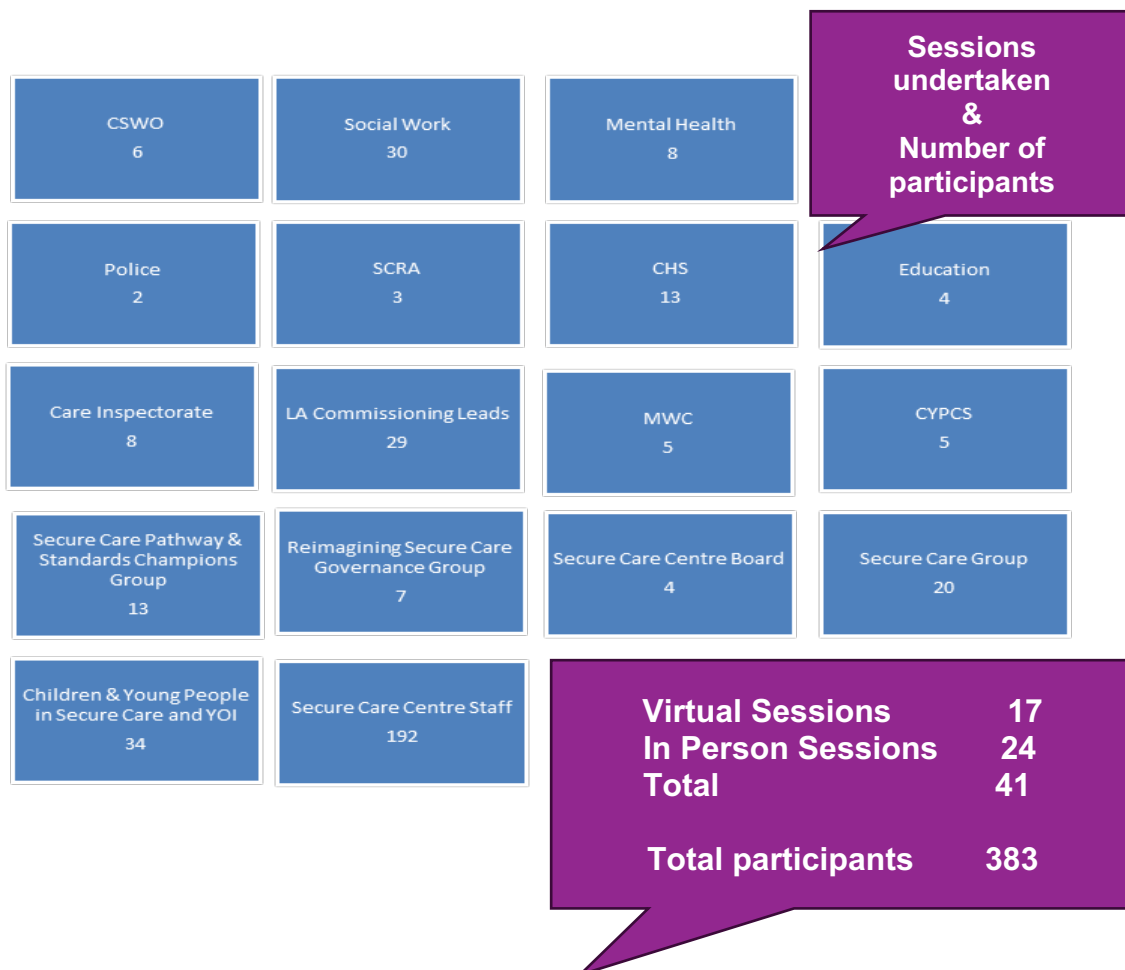
- Established Reimagining Secure Care Team and commissioned [Dartington Service Design Lab](#) to support with service design
- Established Reimagining Secure Care Governance Group
- Stakeholder mapping
- Introductions with stakeholders and visits to secure care providers and Liliac Centre in Glasgow
- Synthesised desk research and met with academics working on a similar project in England
- Commenced stakeholder sessions



- Recruited Advisory Group of young people with secure care and justice experience to co-produce materials for sessions with children and young people.

Phase 2 Define (June - September 2023)

- Attended Children (Care and Justice) Bill Implementation Group meetings to further consider views of partners regarding YOI and Secure Care provisions
- Participated in a seminar in the Netherlands and visited secure care and non-secure centres in the Hague
- Met with Kate Crowe, Churchill Fellow, regarding her international research of alternatives to secure care
- Sessions undertaken with children in secure care and young people in YOI
- Online questionnaire launched to obtain the views of parents/carers
- Stakeholder sessions completed (see below)
- Analysed and synthesised information from sessions into overarching themes culminating in **three final design briefs**
- Invited key stakeholders to online co-design sessions with objective of forming co-design groups progress to next phase.



What children and young people told us during Phase 2 (Define):

Before Secure Care

- A lack of alternative support in local communities' results in disengagement and that secure care was inevitable
- Feelings of disconnectedness from local communities and a sense of not belonging/and actively being excluded

During Secure Care

- Improvements are needed to ensure transfer and arrival processes are trauma- and developmentally informed
- Importance of maintaining relationships with family and friends
- Enjoyed positive relationships with staff
- Some found the structure of the day helpful
- Some children assessed the need for more opportunities for privacy and access to quiet spaces for some children
- Improvements to accessing recreational opportunities and outdoor spaces
- Support from staff should be individualised and consistent in terms of processes associated with risk, safety and routines
- Support is needed for drug and alcohol use, and smoking
- Most children felt a separate provision was needed for children requiring care and protection on mental health grounds, as secure care was deemed inappropriate and insufficient for the support they needed
- Some children on remand, especially boys, felt that if they were convicted of an offence, "they deserved to go to Polmont to be punished"
- No child expressed feeling unsafe or had any concerns relating to a potential increase in the number of 16- and 17-year-olds being placed in secure care

After Secure Care

- Children highlighted that more options are needed for further education, training and employment experiences in secure care
- Many children believed that YOI offers more opportunities to support preparation for the future

What stakeholders told us during Phase 2 (Define):

- We need to provide pathways of care that children, young people, and families need to be meaningfully and therapeutically supported in their communities.

- We need to ensure that no child in Scotland is deprived of their liberty due to inaccessibility, or limitations in provisions of resources, or arbitrary decision making.
- We need to tackle stigma and negative perceptions within and of the system.

Strengths/Positives highlighted across stakeholder sessions:

- Policy and practice changes – GIRFEC, The Promise, Child Protection/Care and Risk Management (CARM)
- Shared commitment to better outcomes for children
- Workforce skills, knowledge, and compassion
- Whole System Approach
- Examples of good collaborative working
- Impending legislative reform - Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Bill, UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill, Bail and Release from Custody (Scotland) Bill.

Emergent Themes

From our knowledge and understanding of previous and current reviews, policy, legislation, and research pertaining to secure care, combined with our analysis of the vast amount of information gathered from sessions the following themes emerged:

Stakeholders:

1. Trauma Informed Systems
2. Alternatives to Deprivation of Liberty
3. Funding/Commissioning
4. Legislation and Regulation
5. Models of Care
6. Mindsets and Culture
7. Importance of Families/Carers

Children and Young People:

1. Alternatives
2. Transport and Arrival
3. Space and Environment
4. Everyday Life
5. Care and Support
6. Mental Health
7. Education

The emergent themes above reiterated that secure care forms part of a continuum considering a child's journey and experiences before, during and after secure care, as with the [Secure Care Pathways and Standards](#).

The service design process involves the development of **design briefs** compiled from the emergent themes, consisting of an overarching guiding question and then high-level expectations of need based on what children, and young people and other stakeholders shared during sessions.

It became apparent during this process that there was significant overlap across themes. For example, any proposed model of care would need to be trauma informed and families/carers are often important in preventing a child being deprived of their

liberty. Subsequently, the initial 7 themes, with similarities to those prioritised in the Care Inspectorate [Secure Care Pathway Review](#), were refined to 3 design briefs:

1. **Model of Care**
2. **Preventing Children being Deprived of their Liberty**
3. **Mindsets and Culture.**

From the information gathered across all the sessions, there are **golden threads** we expect will cut across all our activities and efforts to explore, and interrogate in developing our response to each design brief:

- Children's Rights across the continuum of before, during and after secure care
- General and Mental Health - sessions highlighted a disconnect around health and particularly mental health provision for children who are deprived of their liberty
- Role and importance of families and wider support network
- Funding/Commissioning model
- Resources and capacity
- Continuous learning and development
- Workforce recruitment, retention, and development
- Partnership working
- Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Bill – thresholds criteria and decision making.

Limitations

Engagement of parents/carers

- Despite our best efforts and support from various organisations we continue to have difficulty engaging with parents/carers who have experienced their child being in secure care. We have launched an online survey in the absence of being able to connect with individual parents/carers although with limited response.
- [Families Outside](#) are currently supporting us to engage with parents/carers; this continues to be a limitation despite the role and importance of families across the continuum of secure care.

Time constraints and capacity

- Stakeholders have fed back that they are limited in terms of their capacity to engage with design sessions, due to time constraints.
- We are considering other ways of engaging those who are unable to attend planned sessions. This could be developing update videos and briefs to be shared in between sessions and leaving virtual MIRO boards open to allow

participation outwith planned sessions. Access could potentially be shared across teams. This ensures transparency and engagement across the project and allows greater participation across the sector.

Reflections

- Engaging with strategic leads prior to commencing the consultation sessions was beneficial as this supported recruitment and participation in sessions and co-design phase.
- The project team have been flexible to stakeholder demands and have shared tasks to ensure timescales have been met.
- Given prevalence of mental health disconnect prioritised across all sessions – Scottish Government Mental Health representative is now a member of the Reimagining Secure Care Governance Group.

Next Steps

Phase 3 Develop (Oct 2023 – January 2024)

The next phase of the project involves collaborating with a range of stakeholders, from different disciplines and roles within the current system to co-create innovative ideas and opportunities to better meet the needs of children, young people, and their families.

Online co-design sessions will explore and generate ideas of what secure care could look like, with a series of co-design groups planned for senior level professionals and practitioners where each theme will be explored. Running alongside these sessions will be similar workshops for children and young people in secure care, YOI and their parents/carers. The team will ensure that information and ideas are shared across and in between each cohort as sessions progress.

Potential testing and prototyping of change options will be sense checked with co-design teams and refined, adapted, or discarded in response to feedback to ensure proposed changes meet the needs and address those issues identified through the discovery and define phases.

A blueprint will be developed to inform the immediate and longer term aims of legislation and the Promise until 2030, culminating in a report with options for the Scottish Government to consider in terms of what a reimagined secure care system should look like in Scotland.

Completion of this report in March 2024 will result in the *Reimagining Secure Care* project ending.

Phase 4 Deliver (April 2024 - 2030)

The final phase will require the Scottish Government to decide how Scotland should **deliver** a radical transformation of secure care to meet the needs and uphold the rights of all children and young people.