

VOLUNTEERING MATTERS



Grandmentors Annual Impact Report 2025/26

This report highlights the impact of Grandmentors, showing how consistent, one-to-one support helps care-experienced young people build confidence, navigate challenges and move towards greater independence.

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About Grandmentors

For many care-experienced young people, the move into adulthood comes without the steady, consistent support that others might take for granted. Grandmentors exists to change that. Grandmentors is an intergenerational mentoring programme, matching care-experienced young people aged 16–25 with trained volunteer mentors, typically aged 50+, who offer one-to-one support during this transition.

Through these relationships, young people have a trusted adult alongside them, someone who offers time, encouragement and practical support as they navigate an often uncertain and isolating period. Mentoring is shaped by each young person, developing at a pace that works for them and focusing on what matters most.

Across 2025/26, we have seen the impact of these relationships in the confidence young people build, the steps they take towards independence, and the stability they begin to create. Volunteers play a vital role, bringing experience, patience and consistency to support young people to move forward.

This report shares the stories behind that progress, alongside key insights from across the programme, showing what can happen when young people have someone alongside them who is consistent, non-judgemental and there for the long term.

“Having Deb as a mentor has equipped me for life. Its given me life skills and built my maturity and also given me a friend.”

Our strategy

2025-2030

In 2025, we launched our new 5-Year Strategy. Find out more about where we are now, our plans and how you can partner with us [here >](#)

Our ecosystem of volunteering

There's no one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to volunteering. People come to it with different motivations, life experiences and levels of confidence – and their engagement often fluctuates and changes over time.

Our ecosystem of volunteering recognises this. It identifies the diverse ways in which people contribute to society. Every approach is valuable. Together they represent a dynamic ecosystem of social action that reflects and respects people's lives, skills and passions.



Our five areas of change

Our vision is of connected, inclusive communities where everyone can thrive through the transformative power of volunteering, in all its forms.



Combat loneliness

No one should feel alone. Volunteering builds friendships and belonging.

Improve health and wellbeing

Good health starts with community. Volunteering supports everyone's wellbeing.



Break down barriers

Talent is everywhere but opportunity is not. Volunteering opens doors.



Equip and enable communities

Communities know best what they need. We work with them, not for them.



Create social cohesion

Volunteering unites people. Many who are helped go on to help others.



Look for these icons which will feature on our projects later in the report

The impact

Grandmentors is transforming outcomes for care-experienced young people across the UK. By providing trusted, consistent adult relationships, the programme helps young people build confidence, resilience and independence during a critical transition. By strengthening protective relationships and reducing isolation, Grandmentors supports more stable transitions from care, eases pressure on statutory services and contributes to stronger, more connected communities.

Key outcomes include:

- **Improved wellbeing and emotional resilience:** Regular, trusted mentoring relationships help reduce loneliness, build self-esteem and support better emotional wellbeing for care-experienced young people as they transition to adulthood.
- **Greater independence:** Through practical guidance, encouragement and consistent support, young people develop the confidence, life skills and self-belief needed to navigate housing, education, employment and everyday decision-making.
- **Stronger social connections:** One-to-one mentoring provides young people with a reliable adult relationship outside the care system, strengthening social networks and helping them feel valued, supported and less isolated.
- **Volunteer empowerment:** Grandmentors gain a strong sense of purpose by using their life experience to support young people, developing meaningful relationships that foster mutual respect, learning and community contribution.

During the 2025-26 financial year:

339

care-experienced
young people
supported.



169

new mentoring
relationships made.



184

New volunteer
mentors recruited



74%

of young people
were stable in their
housing (↑10%).



76%
of young people
were stable in their
health and
wellbeing (↑6%).





Jay's Story

Jay was matched with his mentor, Steve, in February 2025. At the time, he was looking for support with time management, finances and finding a job.

One of the first challenges they worked through was rent arrears and outstanding bills. With Steve's support, Jay negotiated a payment plan with the housing authority and has since cleared his backlogs. Jay said: "I didn't think this was possible" when the plan was agreed, a real shift towards stability.

Despite earlier reports suggesting he wasn't ready for education, Jay, with encouragement from Steve, began exploring his options. They attended open days together and worked through the application process, leading to Jay securing a university place on a course he wants to study.

Jay has also built greater consistency in his day-to-day life. He now keeps appointments reliably and is on time, showing growing confidence and independence.

Reflecting on the mentoring relationship, Steve shared:

"I have been mentoring a young man for the last year and have found it very rewarding. The chance to help him understand his goals and to work with him to achieve them has been really good. He has a number of areas where he has not had the support or need to understand how to achieve things and by working to help him do them rather than doing them for him I believe has really helped him develop his skills which has been great to see"

With steady support, Jay has overcome challenges, achieved important goals and is moving forward with greater confidence.

The **National** Picture

Expanding Reach

Across 2025/26, we supported young people in 13 local authorities, including 7 across London. With new contracts planned for 2026/27, we are continuing to grow our reach and support more young people in the year ahead.



- ✓ Strong Local Authority partnerships
- ✓ Growing referral demand
- ✓ Flexible, needs-led delivery
- ✓ Long-term, relationship-based support

By supporting Volunteering Matters, you enable care-experienced young people to access consistent, trusted relationships at a critical point in their lives.

- One-to-one mentoring that builds confidence, independence and emotional wellbeing
- Practical support with education, employment, housing and everyday life skills
- Opportunities to connect with peers, reducing isolation and building a sense of belonging

As one social worker shared, “The Grand Mentors are truly amazing and make a huge difference in the lives of young people... they feel supported and valued.”



When I first met Kathryn I had this view of her and did not want to trust her (I'm like that with everyone.) I didn't realise how far I would come from then to now. She has helped me improve my self esteem and confidence where I can meet new people.

Young people receive consistent, trusted support that helps them build confidence, stability and a sense of belonging.



**Building a better
future for
care-experienced
young people**

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