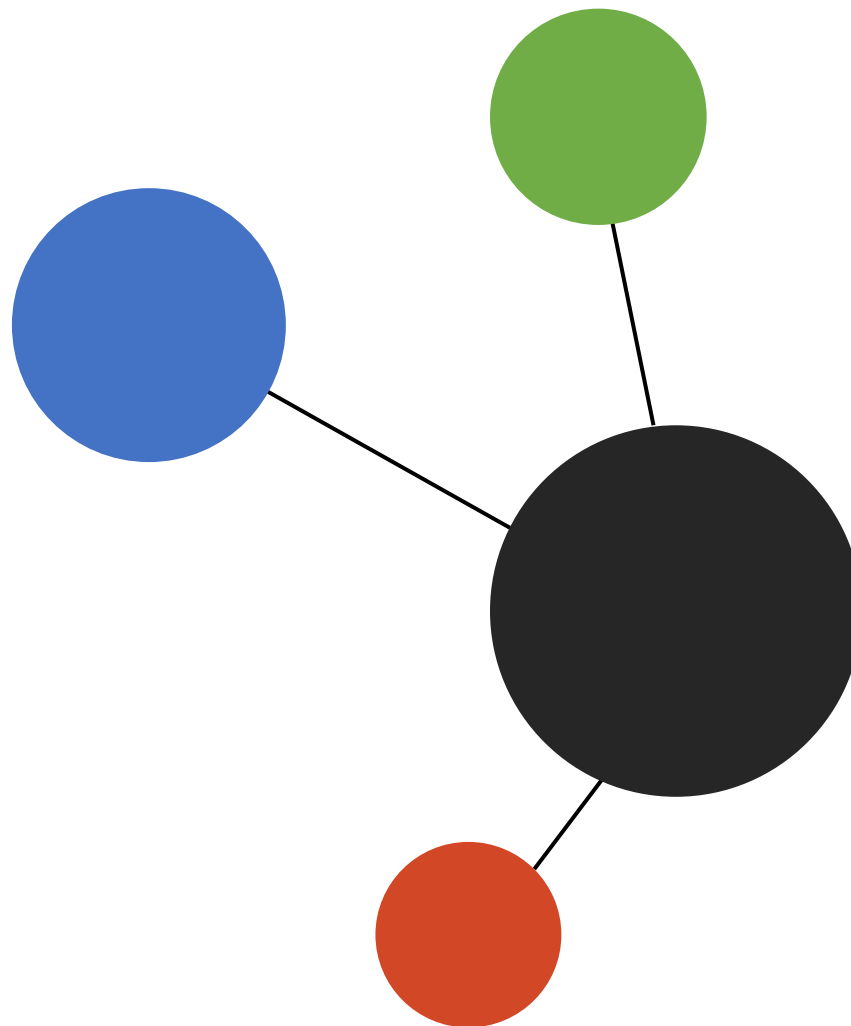


# The DfE Reform Programme and current & future TfC transformative work.

March 2024

Kevin Brown – Strategic Programme Manager



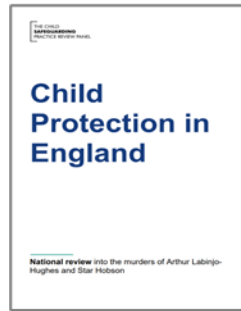
# Background

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Three reviews published last year provided a catalyst and vision to transform children's social care.



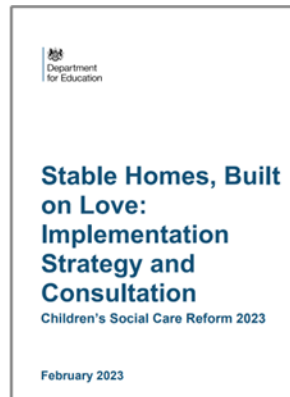
The Independent Review of Children's Social Care



National Review into the murders of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson



The Competition and Markets Authority study into Children's Social Care Placements



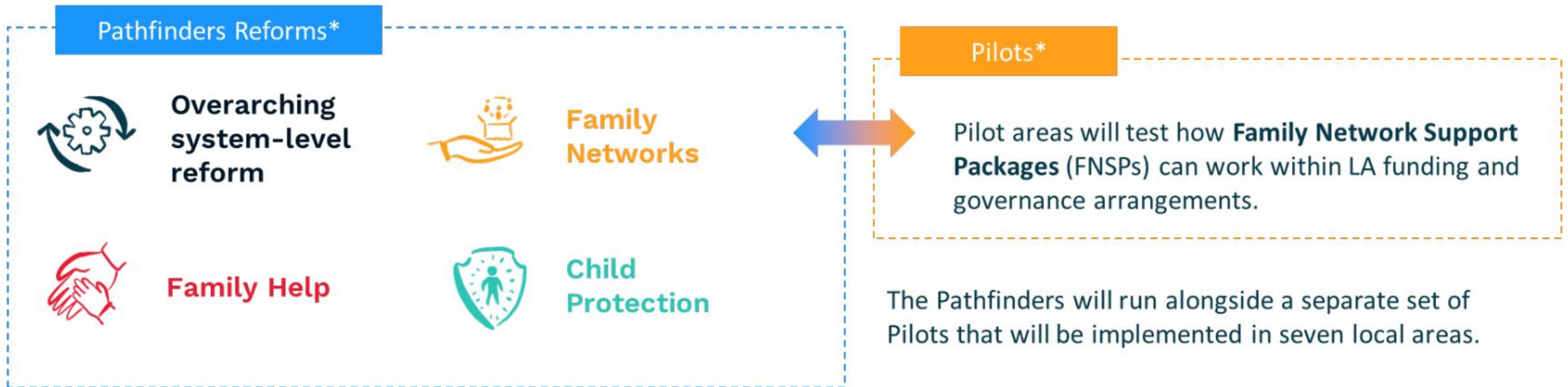
**In February 2023, the DfE published Stable Homes, Built on Love** strategy and consultation, backed by £200m. The strategy sets out a vision to rebalance children's social care away from costly crisis intervention to more meaningful and effective early support.

It included a **£45m commitment** for DfE to establish a pathfinder programme which will **design and test major reforms to children's services** from family help to the edge of care. Pathfinders will be used to work through key questions with multi-agency partners and establish how reforms could work best on the ground.

The DfE are concurrently running a **family network pilot** in 7 local authorities. This will test providing flexible funding for family networks to help keep families together and children out of care where appropriate.

# Families First for Children Pathfinder Programme

The FFCP Pathfinder programme will enable government to understand the impact that reforms to multi-agency response, family support and child protection have on the different sectors involved, at a smaller scale, before making decisions on further roll out.



*\*A Pathfinder differs from a Pilot: A Pathfinder is not seeking to prove that reform works, but to test how reform should be delivered most effectively on the frontline. This programme includes both a Pathfinder across all reforms and a Pilot focussing specifically on FNSPs.*

# Key reform strands

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There are four key reform strands to the FFCP Pathfinder that will be delivered as a whole system transformation.

## Overarching system reform and multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (MASA)



Establishing a system-wide, 'families first' culture, underpinned by clear and shared MASA and effective information-sharing. Strengthening the role of education at strategic level.

## Family networks



Greater use of family networks, with earlier use of family group decision-making throughout family help and child protection, facilitated by targeted funding to enable more children to live safely at home or support a transition into kinship care.

## Family help



Ensuring families can access the right support at the right time. Locally based, multi-disciplinary family help services providing welcoming, seamless support tailored to the needs of children and families.

## Child protection



Dedicated and skilled multi-agency child protection teams, including: social workers with greater child protection expertise and experience, working closely with family help to protect children suffering or at risk of significant harm; and Parental representation and family network engagement in child protection processes.



# Policy Landscape



Programme	Description	2023	2024	2025
Foster Carer Recruitment & Retention	Putting in place end-to-end improvements in foster care through a recruitment and retention programme, on a regional footprint. North East pathfinder, 'Foster with North East' went live September 2023. 9 other programmes will go live summer 2024.		Pilot	Wider rollout
Regional Care Cooperatives Pathfinders	Co-designing and testing regional commissioning model, in partnership with the sector		Stage 2	
Families First for Children Pathfinder	Testing reform delivery across: Family Help, Child Protection and Family Networks, before considering wider roll out. Applications for wave 2 now closed.		Wave 1	Wave 2
Family Network Support Packages Pilot	Test the impact of introducing new Family Network Support Packages (FNSPs) that enable the network to step in and provide support where there is a financial barrier to them doing so, and allows children to live safely within their family networks, when it is in their best interests.		Wave 1	Wave 2
Kinship Carers Training & Support	Bespoke offer available to all kinship carers to be developed and rolled out. Training to be offered to all LAs, so there will not be an LA bidding process.			Delivery
Early Career Framework	To support and develop social workers in the first years in practice and then enable them to develop expert level skills and knowledge. Expert Writing Group led by Laura Eden developing the framework document which will form the basis for the programme.		Design with early adopters	
Data and Digital Solutions Fund	Funding to work in partnership with LAs to gain a thorough understanding of some of the data and digital problems they face and where LAs have developed good practice which can be shared with others.	Delivery		

# Snapshot of TfC Transformative Activity.



# Family Network Pilot (FNP)– Key achievements to date

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- We carried out a review of our current practice, to identify how we could meet the criteria of the pilot whilst minimising the impact of any changes to our current PLO and FGC processes.
- We went live with the FNP on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sept 2023.
- Involvement in Communities of Practice with DfE and other LAs in tranche 1 and 2.
- Work is currently being undertaken with the DfE's evaluation partners and interviews and focus groups are taking place.

## **Family network member:**

I appreciate greatly the support and financial assistance that I have received through these very difficult times

## **DfE:**

Sunderland are seen as the trailblazers of the pilot, and your willingness to share your experience is really helpful for other LAs.



# Family Hubs – Key achievements

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Three out of five of the hubs have formally launched – the remaining two are operating as hubs. Winnibell will launch this month, and Thorney Close is awaiting improvement work

We have grown and strengthened our partnerships across the city over the last two years and strive to continue this good work:

- We have community grant opportunities
- We are building a relationship with Sunderland College for work experience opportunities in the hubs
- Our relationships with maternity and the 0-19 services continue to develop

Overall, the programme delivery is compliant with all DfE requests, and we continue to meet our milestones.





# Family Hubs – what comes next

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The next steps for delivery of our Family Hubs are to

- Embed our Workforce Strategy
- Finalise our Year 3 commitments
- Work with colleagues across the partnership to develop an outcomes framework
- Implement the Groupwork Case Management system
- Begin to think about what additionality is needed aside from the core offer
- Launch the Winnibell and Thorney Close hubs
- Work with our partners to keep up to date with identified needs of the families in Sunderland and respond appropriately
- Further roll out our community engagement ideas



# My Best Life

## Progress so far



### My Best Life – Family Hubs

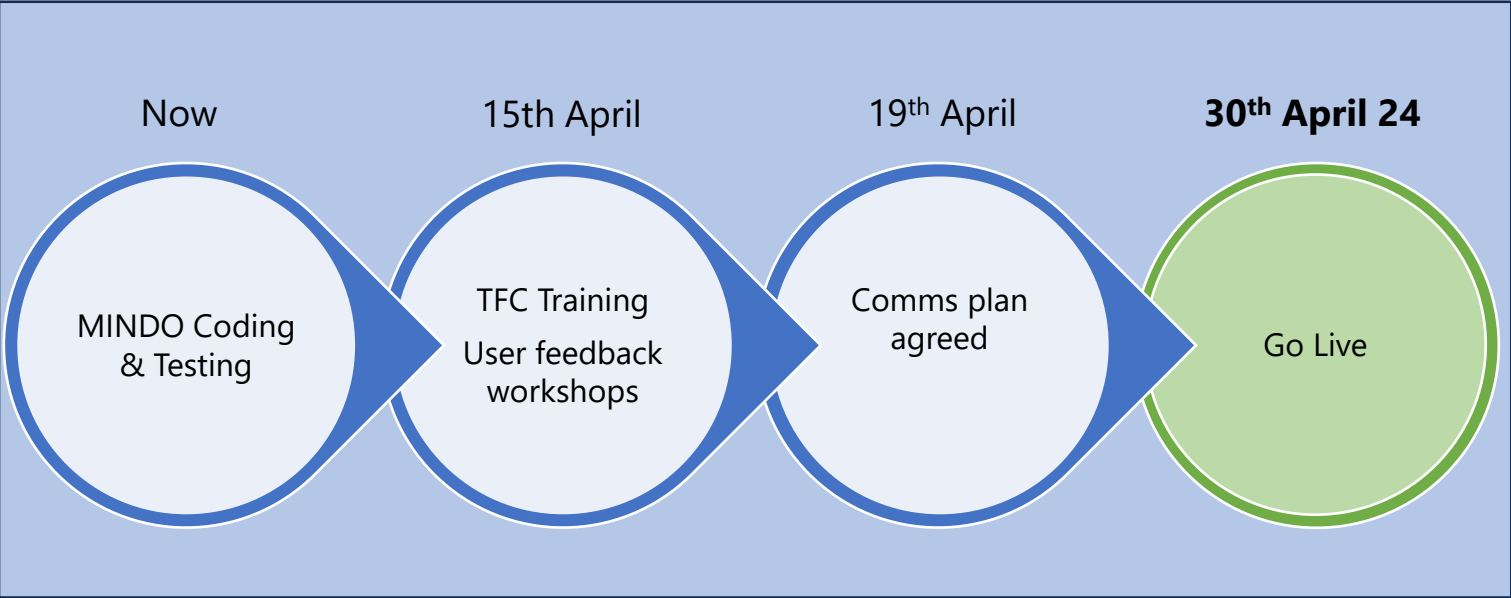
- Single **online** location for families to access high quality, **up to date information**, advice and guidance about services and support available to them launched on 18<sup>th</sup> December.
- **Digital front door** for Family Hubs. Average 1,173 visitors in February.
- **External providers** advertising events on the site
- **Co-production** with SEND STARS, PCF and Parent Panel

### My Best Life – SEND Local Offer/FIS

- **Scope agreed** for the updated SEND Local offer & FIS
- Improved experience** for parent carers

# My Best Life

## Next 6 months



The screenshot shows the My Best Life Sunderland website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the logo, 'Sunderland', and links for 'Key Services', 'Activities & Events', 'Information & Guidance', and 'Directory of Services'. Below the navigation is a search bar with the text 'Choose another City/Area/Organisation' and a 'Read Page' button. The main content area features a 'Welcome to Sunderland' section with a placeholder image of a city street. Below this are two featured activity cards: 'Dance workshops for kids - Spring Holiday Activity' and 'Toddlers play time and nursery rhymes - Family hub'. To the right of these is a 'Featured Activities & Events' section titled 'Sunderland Family Hubs'. At the bottom, there is a 'Featured Information & Guidance' section titled 'Start for Life offer' and two more activity cards: 'Supporting children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities age 0-25' and 'Support for children and young people mental health'.

### My Best Life – Family Hubs

- Continued changes following feedback (language, accessibility, attendance recording)



Thoughts ... / Questions ? / Final Comments ...

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