

Agenda

Corporate Parenting Board

Tuesday, 29 November 2022, 2.00 pm

**Worcestershire Children First Board
Room, (F2:08),
County Hall, Worcester**

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Corporate Parenting Board
Tuesday, 29 November 2022, 2.00 pm, County Hall, Worcester

Membership:

Cllr Andy Roberts (Chairman)	Worcestershire County Council
Cllr Rob Adams	Wychavon District Council
Cllr Caroline Baldwin	Malvern District Council
Cllr Lynn Denham	Worcestershire County Council
Cllr Matt Jenkins	Worcestershire County Council
Cllr Matthew Lamb	Worcester City Council
Cllr Steve Mackay	Worcestershire County Council
Cllr Nyear Nazir	Redditch Borough Council
Cllr Fran Oborski	Wyre Forest District Council
Cllr Margaret Sherrey	Bromsgrove District Council

Agenda

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KGriffiths@worcestershire.gov.uk

All the above reports and supporting information can be accessed via the Council's website
Date of Issue: Monday 21 November 2022

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	<p data-bbox="328 172 488 203">Dates 2023</p> <ul data-bbox="328 241 810 416" style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="328 241 735 273">• Tuesday 31 January 2023<li data-bbox="328 277 692 309">• Thursday 11 May 2023<li data-bbox="328 313 679 344">• Tuesday 11 July 2023<li data-bbox="328 349 762 380">• Wednesday 4 October 2023<li data-bbox="328 385 810 416">• Wednesday 29 November 2023	

Minutes of the Corporate Parenting Board

County Hall, Worcester

Wednesday, 5 October 2022, 2.00 pm

Present:

Cllr Andy Roberts (Chairman), Cllr Lynn Denham, Cllr Matt Jenkins, Matthew Lamb, Cllr Steve Mackay and Cllr Caroline Baldwin

Also attended:

Thomas Bourne, Rebecca Haywood-Tibbetts, Adam Johnston, Dr David Lewis, Tom Mountford, Celena Rossano, Tina Russell and Debbie Stokes.

298 Apologies

Apologies had been received from Cllr Rob Adams, Cllr Nyear Nazir, Cllr Fran Oborski, Cllr Margaret Sherrey and Beverley Downing.

299 Confirmation of the Minutes

The minutes were agreed to be a correct record of the last meeting and were signed by the chairman.

300 Corporate Parenting Board Annual Report

Adam Johnston gave an overview of the Annual Report, explaining that the report and the associated films were available in the agenda. The annual report had been produced after considering the pledges to looked after children and care leavers and it was hoped that it could be used as a tool to promote champion leads and CPB aspirations for young people in the various arenas and environments CPB members attend.

Some points which were emphasised included;

- it was WCF's aim that all in children in care received a family caring experience and secure a kinship care placement where possible, as they were generally more stable
- Permanency was always the aim and the figure of 31% permanency achieved within 12 months compared well to the national average and previous years' performance

- Worcestershire Children First Fostering, after receiving a 'requires improvement' rating in September 2021 were making good progress with their improvement plan
- Contact with care leavers was good and the Local Offer was considered comprehensive
- Areas for further focus included retaining and recruiting foster carers, and the rising number of young people in residential care
- There needed to be clearer information available about what mental health services were available to looked after children and care leavers and the ability to access such support in a timely manner. The Connect scheme was being developed to combat social isolation.

In the following discussion various questions were answered:

In response to a query about whether the quality of information which moved with a child could be responsible for placement breakdowns, it was explained that the stability figures which gave the numbers of placements included moves which were planned. It was only when the numbers of placements were higher than 3 there was some concern. Each looked after child would have a pen picture which gave details about the child and this needed to be positive but as accurate as possible. Consolidation meetings which worked to help keep placements successful and reduce the need for new placements were 66% successful. A crisis placement was also being developed, using Department for Education funding, to be used rather than having to place children in unregulated placements.

When asked how WCF could be confident that kinship placements did not allow children to have contact with unsuitable people the Board were reassured that there were checks made on kinship carers and as a child social worker and kinship fostering social worker would be involved in each case there were two people making checks. Checks were also made by speaking directly to the child. If a potential kinship carer did not fully appreciate the risks from the unsuitable person, the placement would not go ahead.

Each social work assessment looked at pressures caused by cost of living pressures as part of the normal assessments which looked at financial issues. The Supporting Family First team employed money mentors as it was understood that financial pressures can increase pressures in other areas of family life. Assessments looked at helping people to look for work opportunities and apply for benefits and there was some funding available to help families with particular financial issues.

301 2022-23 Q1 Datasheet

Data on care leavers and looked after children, by district, was presented in the annual report.

302 District Updates / Reports

There were no updates from District Members.

303 General Updates

Crisis Placement

A unit was being developed to provide a single young person at any one time with a regulated placement in an emergency when no other placement could be identified, or where the only alternative was to use an unregulated placement.

A Board Member mentioned a recent news story about WCF using unregulated placements. It was clarified that although there were a few children in unregulated children's homes they were only used when there was absolutely no alternative and most other Authorities were in the same situation. This is due to a lack of external provision at short notice and the need remaining for children's services to ensure any applicable child was provided with immediate accommodation. Commonly children placed in such arrangements had challenging behaviour and complex needs. Ofsted were always notified directly of any such arrangement. WCF carefully track any such arrangement and report directly to lead members, WCC Chief Executive and Ofsted.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC)

At a previous CPB meeting when UASC were discussed, the numbers had been at around 30; they were now 60, with a further 69 now becoming care leavers. It was clarified that Worcestershire had agreed to take UASC up to a level of 0.7% of the normal population. The current figures were at 0.5% of the population.

A group of 'assessed' adult asylum seekers had been placed at Fownes Hotel in Worcester and it had subsequently been found that 22 of them were actually children. The Board were assured that WCF had gone back to the Home Office to question the quality of age assessments which were taking place by the Border Authority. Praise was given to the Through Care Team who worked well with other agencies to resolve the situation quickly and ensured that the 22 identified children were appropriately placed in foster care or supported living arrangements dependent on their age.

Celebrating Foster Carers

At the FosterTalk Awards, Janice Finnie of Worcestershire Children First Fostering was awarded Foster Carer of the Year 2022.

The Chairman had attended the Foster Care Conference on 3 October

Complex Health needs National Review

Doncaster had carried out a rapid learning review after serious safeguarding concerns were found in three care homes owned by the same provider, regarding the care of children with complex disabilities. The concerns were raised nationally and WCF were currently identifying any applicable children with complex disabilities to comprehensively check on their quality of care and triangulate with all involved agencies.

It was agreed a summary of findings would be presented at the next meeting.

Future Agenda Items

A Board member requested that two issues be considered at future meetings:

1. the experiences of LGBTQ+ children in social care, and:
2. the contact that looked after children have with their families; either being forced to make contact when they did not want to or being blocked from seeing someone they did wish to see.

304 Future Meeting Dates

The next meeting would be held on 29 November 2022, at 2pm.

The meeting ended at 3.30pm

Chairman



WCF's contact and family time service.

Alice Gillett
Group Manager
Through Care

The Contact service/ Family Time team.

Who are we?

Group Manager – Alice Gillett

Team Manager - Jemma Neale

Business Support Officer - Adrienne Thomas

15 permanent contact workers (full and part time)

3 Sessional workers

What we do

- Currently working with 280 families (some with more than one parent or family member).
- Per week average - 175 contacts (half term week is busier)
- Per month - 680 contacts

Where we do it

Our own venues –

- Bromsgrove - The Birches and The Firs
- Redditch – Downsell Road
- Worcester – Cranham and Green Gardens
- Kidderminster – Radford Avenue although will be moving to 2 different venues in 2023
- Malvern – Poolbrook

Others-

- Hire out venues in Evesham - Wallace house or the library
- Schools
- Independent Fostering Agency buildings.

Our duty to promote contact/family time.

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of children are on a Care Order (this may be interim or final), Worcestershire Children's First share Parental Responsibility with their birth parents and within court proceedings the plans for contact between children and their parents/family is a key part of care planning.

- **Under section 34 (1) Children Act 1989, Children's Services must allow the child reasonable contact with:**
- his parents;
- any guardian;
- any person who held a Residence Order or Child Arrangements Order for residence immediately before the Care Order was made; and
- any person who had care of the child under wardship immediately before the Care Order was made.

When we don't promote contact/family time.

There are examples whereby we do not promote contact between children and their family for a variety of reasons, despite our legal duty.

Section 34 (4) of The Children Act 1989 covers this; *On an application made by the authority or the child, the court may make an order authorising the authority to refuse to allow contact between the child and any person who is mentioned within the order.*

Examples where this may apply

- An ongoing criminal trial.
- Child's voice.
- Evidence where seeing family triggers previous trauma in children.

Some children may be very clear in their wish for family contact and a decision be made that this is harmful for them, this is based upon social work assessment and the involvement of the team around the child.

A section 34 (4) order is permissive in that permission is given to stop all contact but it can be re-introduced when safe.

- Virtual contact can be a starting point ~ letters or video calls.
- A child is always represented in court where such decisions are made, by a Children's guardian and a solicitor – all about the child and not for the local authority or family.

Supporting children to feel safe seeing their family.

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Promoting family connections.

- Children and young people often re-connect with their families as young adults even after separation.
- Safely managing contact, even when there are risks, is a key part of supporting a child who is Looked After.
- Identity and life story; aids how a child makes sense of things when they are adult or a parent themselves.
- Some children will feel confused/ conflicted/ uncertain. Emotional support.
- Carers may struggle with children returning to the source of harm. They are supported to promote this by their own supervising social workers.

Supervised family time – the benefit.

- Safe and neutral venue.
- Observations of interactions – inform assessments.
- Staff ensure physical and emotional safety. Can be more than one staff member if required.
- If family members/ parents are in an unsafe state e.g intoxicated, the contact may not start – minimise harm.
- Contact/family time can be stopped if the child is distressed or uncomfortable.
- Where safe, in community, with supervision.
- Where possible, family or safe adults can supervise.

The role of the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO)

Every Looked After Child has a Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) who works to ensure that their care plan is meeting their needs.

Family time and contact is key.

At a review meeting, every six months, the IRO may agree a change to the frequency or duration.

Child's needs and wishes change as they grow or settle.

Often becomes more natural, relaxed or less supervised.

IRO may agree to a reduction to the level agreed at court.

Care Order - gives the Local Authority the right to make these decisions without a return to court.

Any questions or
queries?

WORCESTERSHIRE
CHILDREN FIRST



CPB November 2022 'Illegal Placements'

Principle

Regulation came into force September 2021 banning placement of children under 16 years in unregulated provision

WCF does not support the use of unregistered children's homes or unregulated provision for children under the age of 16 years.

Definition

Any child under 16 years placed in an unregistered children's home

Any child under 16 years placed in an unregulated provision

Any child over 16 years placed in an unregulated/unregistered provision and subject to a Deprivation of Liberty Order (DOLs)

Data

- Since April 2021 WCF has placed a total of 11 children ranging from 8 to 15 years in unregulated provision
- Currently there are 2 children under 16 years in unregulated provision
- There are 2 children over 16 years subject to Deprivation of Liberty Orders placed in unregulated provision

Why WCF utilise illegal placements

- Placement breakdown with immediate notice being served on placement arrangement
- Challenging and complex behaviour of child, usually having experienced multiple placement breakdowns
- External market factors
- Impact of Ofsted residential inspection regime

Assurances and Notification

- Immediate notification made to Ofsted with rationale
- Increased visiting frequency via Social Worker and IRO
- Placements Team quality assurance visit and report
- Encourage and support fast track Ofsted registration of provider
- Weekly monitoring, reporting and senior management scrutiny

Case Examples

- Tom: placement breakdown following inspection of home after 2 year settled period at placement and school
- Aliesha: awaiting secure bed and subject to DOLs Order, subject to multiple placement breakdowns
- Tyler: settled for the first time since being looked after in unregulated provision; previously subject to DOLs and Secretary of State approved Secure Order

Prevention is the best remedy

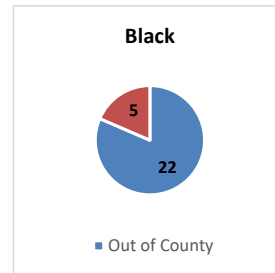
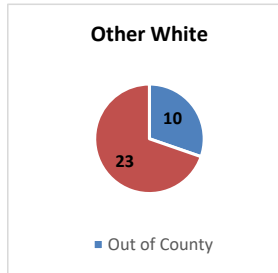
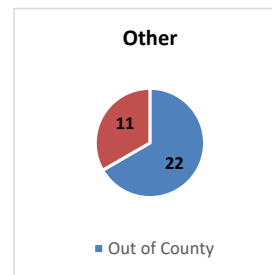
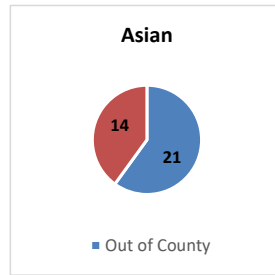
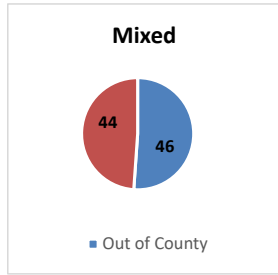
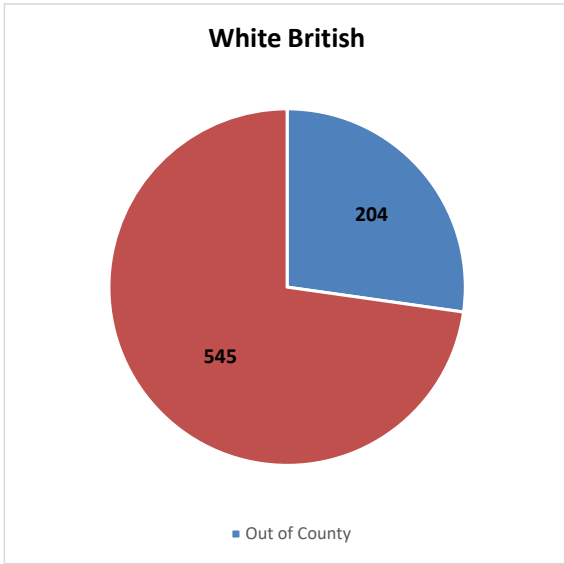
- Continued focus on SFF model
- Place and support within family network wherever appropriate
- Ensure placement search profile is contextualised and rounded
- Continued proactive approach of Placements Team
- Consolidation meetings and support to existing providers
- Development of crisis unit

Corporate Parenting Board Dataset

Measure	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Target	Eng 20/21	Stat Nbrs 20/21
1 Number of Looked After Children	892	887	898	902	904	894	898	892	912	923	947	967		{800}	{639}
2 Percentage of Looked After Children subject to s20	11%	11%	11%	11%	11%	11%	11%	11%	12.5%	13%	16%	15%		15%	22%
3 Number of Looked After Children who are Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers	28	29	29	29	31	30	32	32	34	34	52	62			
4 Number of Looked After Children open to Children with Disability teams	30	30	32	32	32	34	32	32	32	32	32	33			
5 Number of Looked After Children placed outside the County	270	269	271	276	275	276	278	292	302	303	317	325 (34%)		42%	33%
6 Number of Looked After Children placed more than 20 miles from home, outside the County	133	132	130	131	132	126	126	144	147	145	150	152 (18%)		16%	18%
7 Number of Looked After Children placed more than 20 miles from home, total	156	153	152	152	151	143	144	158	163	163	170	168 (20%)		21%	26%
8 Percentage of Looked After Children with 3 or more placements in previous 12 months	8.7%	8.3%	7.8%	8.1%	7.9%	6.2%	6.5%	7.1%	7.7%	7.8%	8.7%	8.1%	10%	11%	11%
9 Number of Looked After Children placed in Foster Care/ with a Relative or Friend	656	663	670	679	688	664	664	653	667	673	681	687 (71%)	75%	71%	70%
10 Number of Looked After Children placed for Adoption	19	15	16	15	12	21	23	29	32	26	24	24 (2.5%)		3%	4%
11 Number of Looked After Children placed with parents	39	32	34	37	41	41	43	38	32	33	33	38 (3.9%)		7%	5%
12 Number of Looked After Children in Independent/Supported Living	64	62	63	56	55	57	62	66	65	76	96	105 (11%)			
13 Number of Looked After Children in Children's Homes	100	104	104	106	100	100	100	101	106	105	103	108 (11%)	10%	14%	18%
14 Number of Looked After Children in Secure Accommodation	4	4	3	3	3	3	1	1	1	1	1	1 (<1%)			
15 Number of Looked After Children in Other	10	7	8	6	5	8	5	4	9	9	9	8 (<1%)		4%	5%
16 Number of Looked After Children in Bed and Breakfast	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			
17 Number of repeat Looked After Children within 12 months	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	0	0	0	1%		
18 Percentage of Looked After Children with an up to date Care Plan or Pathway Plan	99.2%	99.1%	99.4%	99.3%	99.6%	98.9%	98.8%	98.8%	98.6%	98.6%	98.1%	98.4%	100%		
19 Percentage of Looked After Children with an up to date health assessment	76%	75%	73%	73%	73%	75%	75%	77%	76%	72%	70%	67%	90%	91%	88%
20 Percentage of looked after children of school age with an up to date Personal Education Plan at term end			100%				100%			100%			95%		
21 Number of Children in care of WCC aged 16/17 that are Not in Education/Employment/Training - (placed in or out of county)	33	34	32	37	34	36	35	32	31	29	27				
22 Number of Looked After Children who went missing	13	15	12	11	12	17	9	13	13	20	10	15			
23 Number of "missing" incidents involving Looked After Children	18	28	25	26	18	31	18	19	20	34	16	25			
24 Number of Looked after Children recorded as vulnerable to Child Sexual Exploitation	10	10	9	11	10	12	16	15	17	16	14	13			
25 Number of Looked after Children recorded as experiencing Child Sexual Exploitation	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	1			
26 Number of council foster carers - households			121			117			113			115			
27 Number of care leavers open for services - all ages	379	389	386	398	390	390	392	397	402	404	406	402			
28 Number of care leavers open for services - age 18-20	286	293	278	289	283	284	281	276	275	275	277	279			
29 Number of care leavers open for services - age 21- 25	93	96	108	109	107	106	111	121	127	129	129	123			
30 Percentage of care leavers open for services "in touch" - all ages	93%	90%	91%	91%	91%	90%	89%	92%	91%	94%	93%	95%	95%	{91%}	{91%}
31 Percentage of care leavers open for services in suitable accommodation - all ages	96%	97%	97%	96%	95%	95%	94%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	{88%}	{90%}
32 Number of care leavers open for services in Bed and Breakfast (all ages)	4	1	1	3	3	4	5	5	4	3	2	2			
33 Percentage of care leavers open for services that are in Education/Employment/Training - all ages	54%	53%	53%	55%	56%	55%	53%	56%	57%	57%	57%	55%	85%	{52%}	{50%}
34 Percentage of care leavers open for services with an up-to-date Pathway Plan - age 18-20	69%	74%	72%	65%	65%	72%	61%	59%	62%	71%	64%	61%	95%		

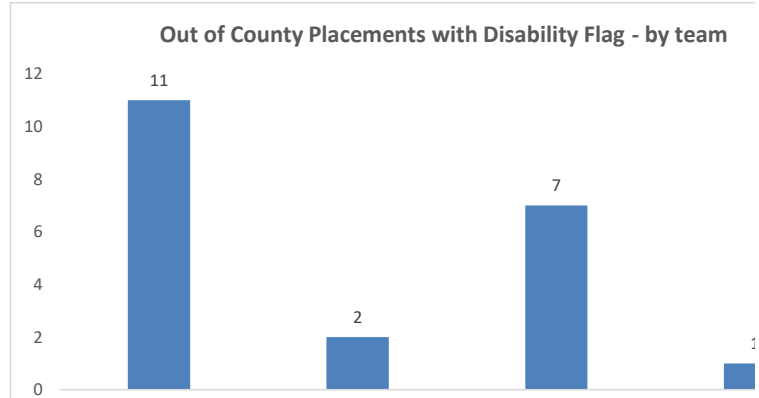
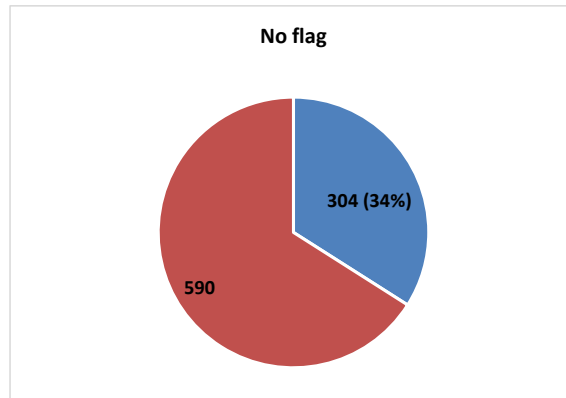
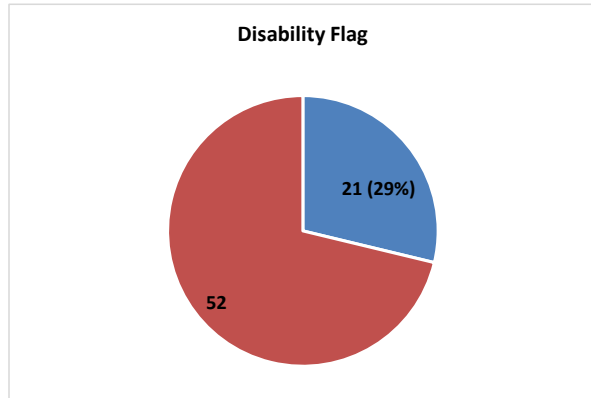
Out of County placements - by ethnic grouping

September 2022



Out of County placements - by disability

September 2022



District Profiles

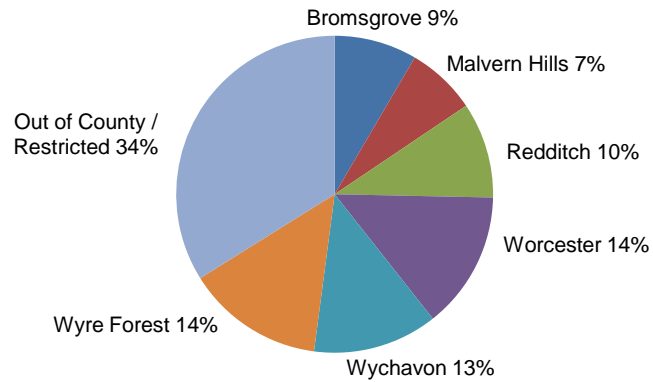
Looked After Children

(Children who are in the care of the Local Authority and for whom the Council has corporate parent responsibility)

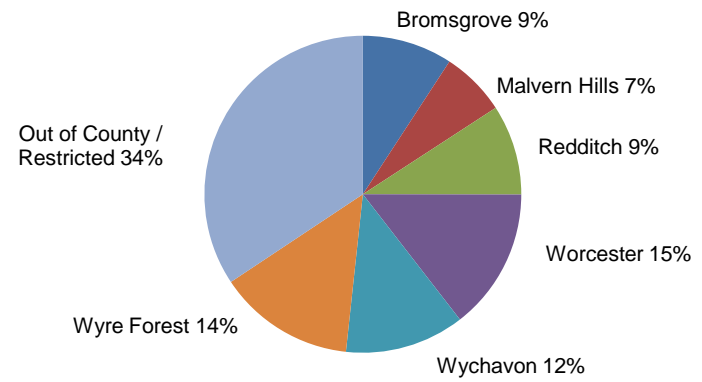
Looked After Children by District of Placement Postcode



Jun 2022

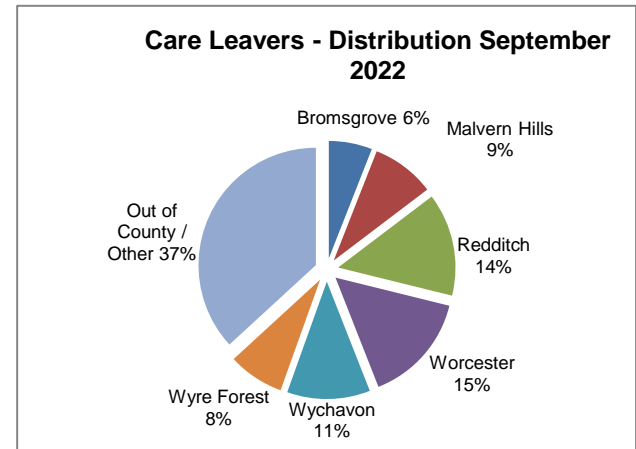
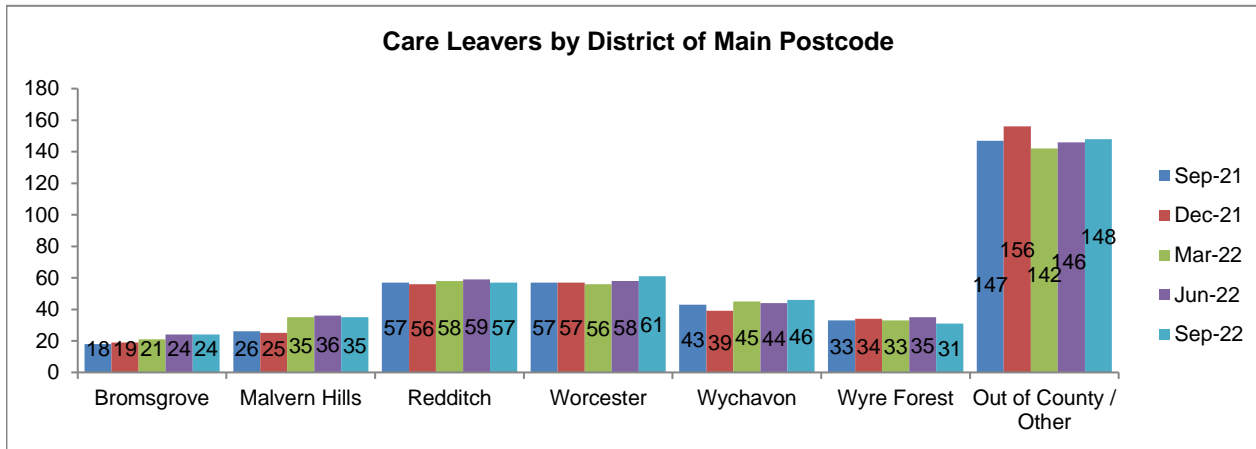


Sep 2022



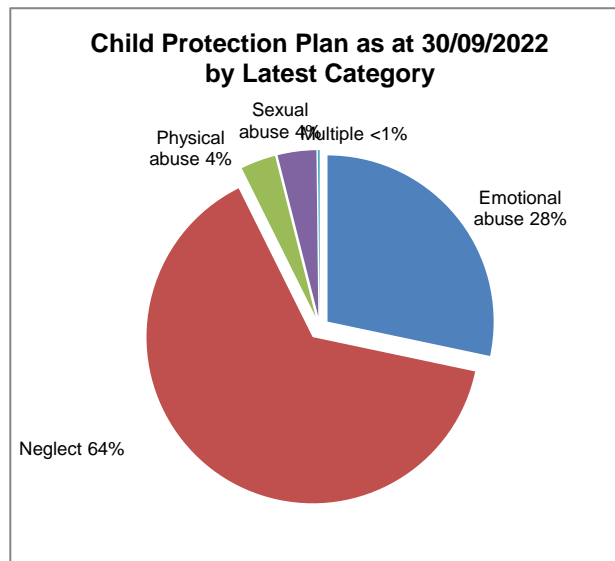
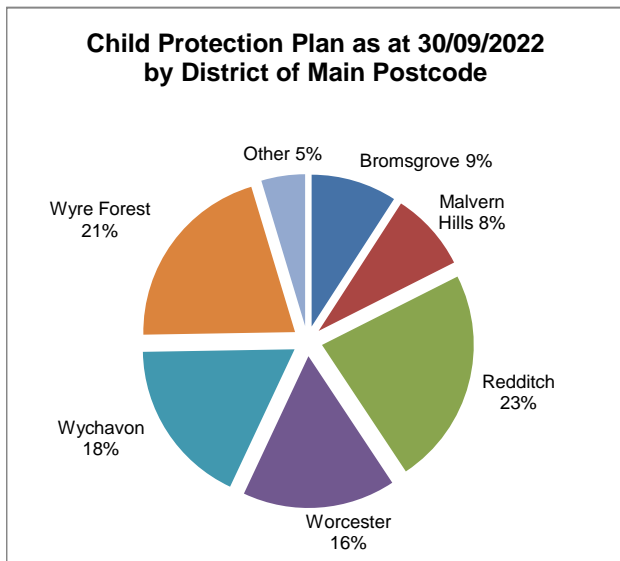
N.B. Numbers below 10 have been suppressed in charts

Care Leavers



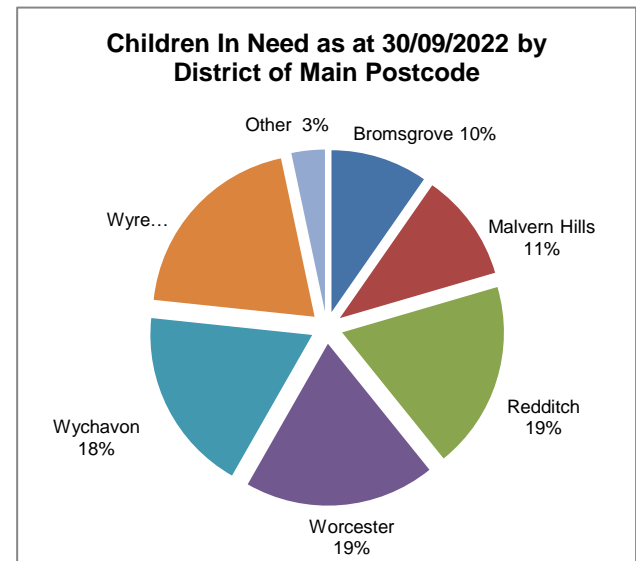
Child Protection

(Children who meet the threshold for significant harm and are subject to a Child Protection Plan)

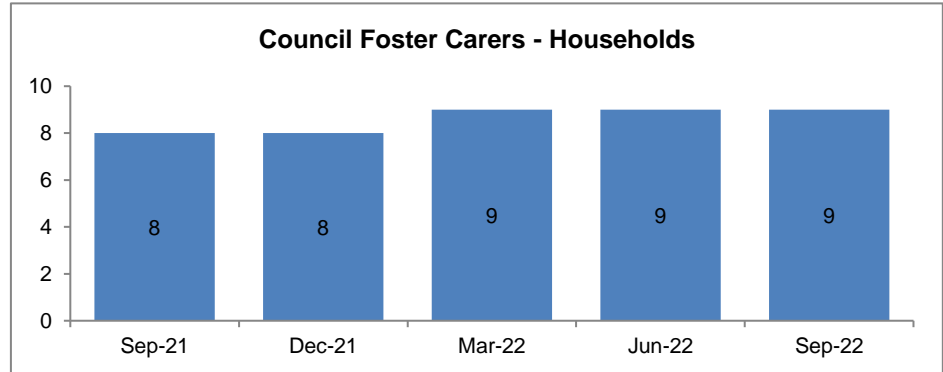
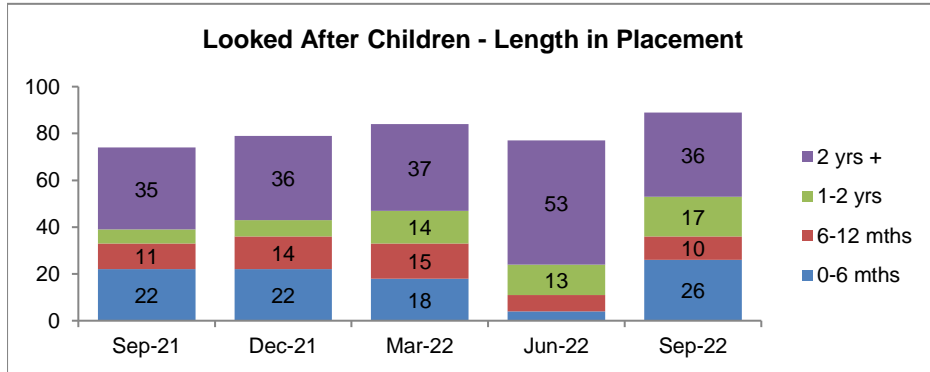
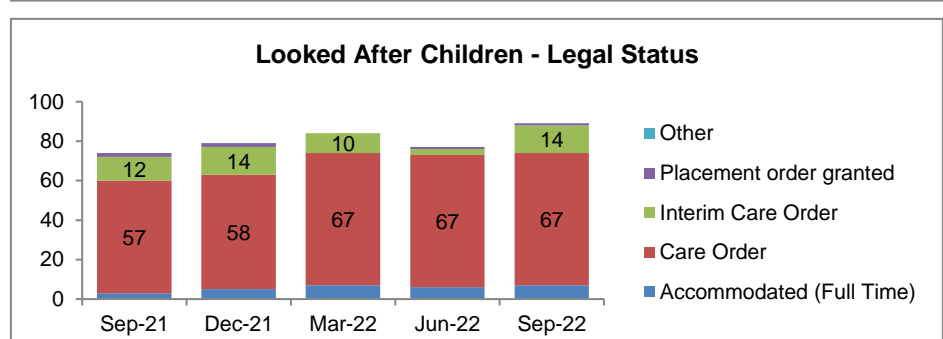
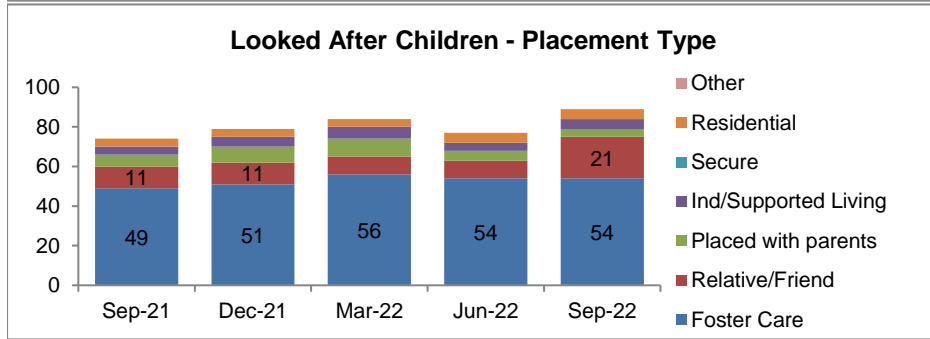
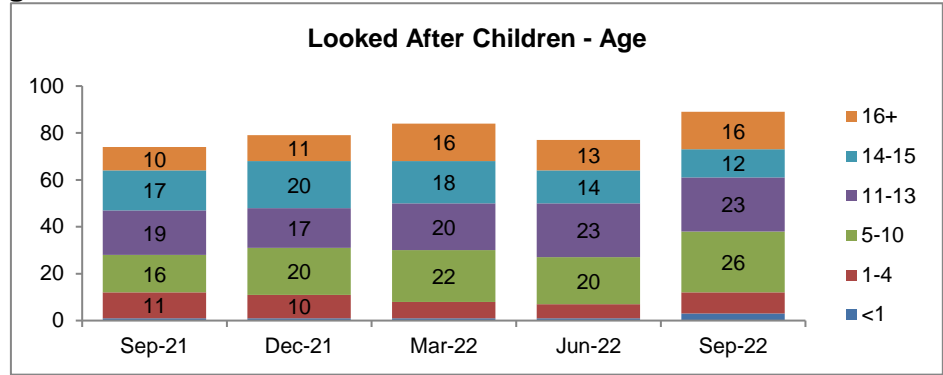
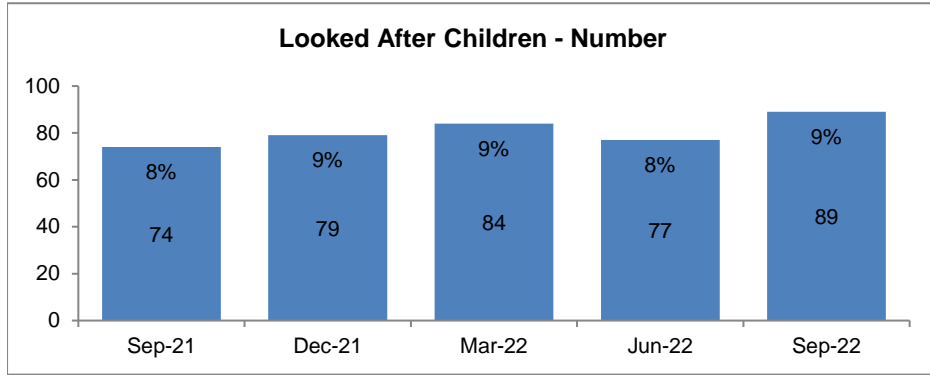


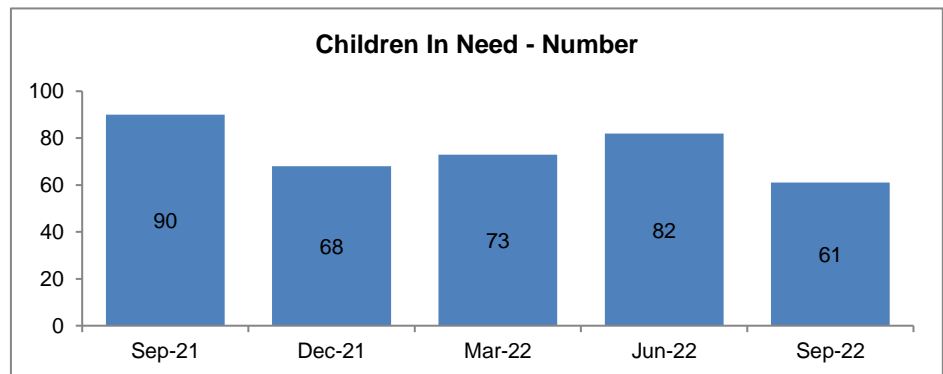
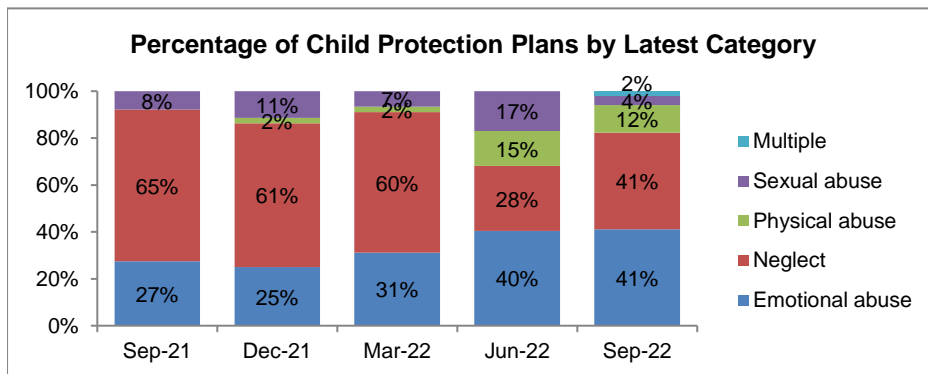
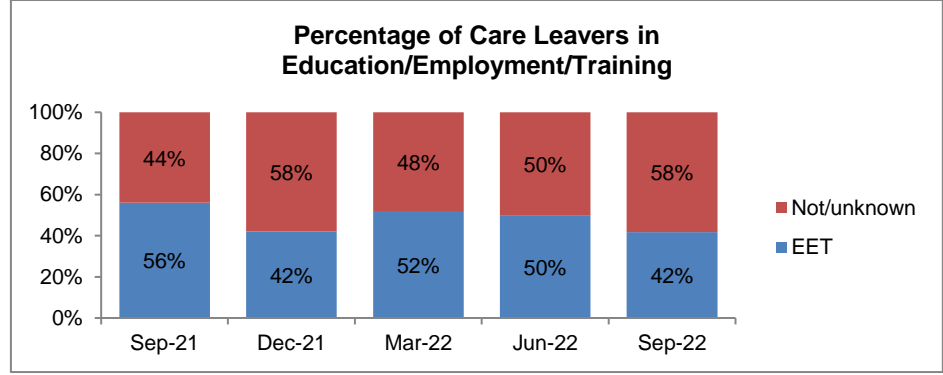
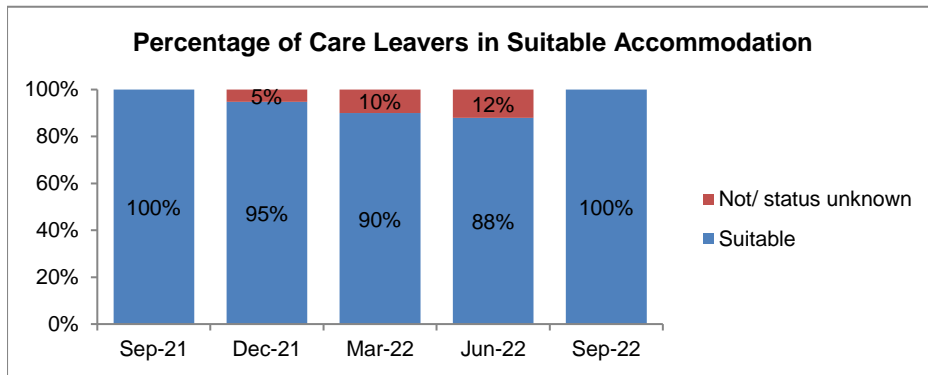
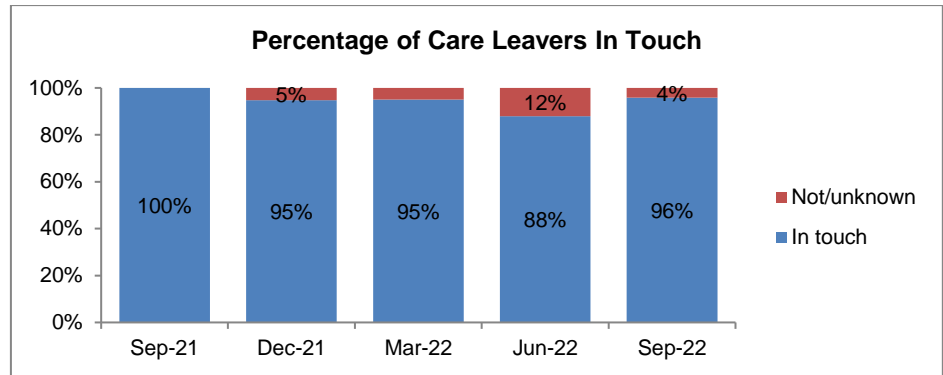
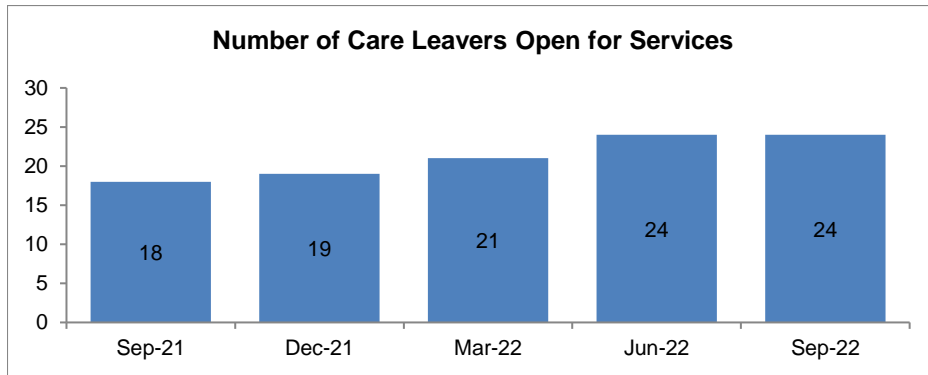
Children in Need

(Children who are open to Social Work intervention and are not Looked After or on a Child Protection Plan)

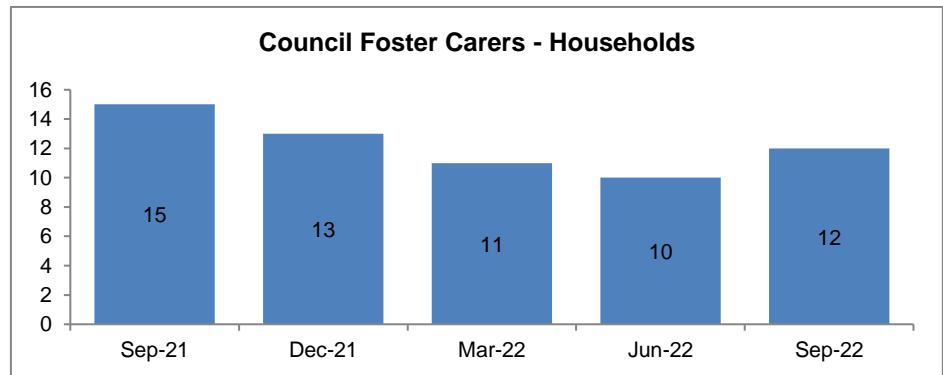
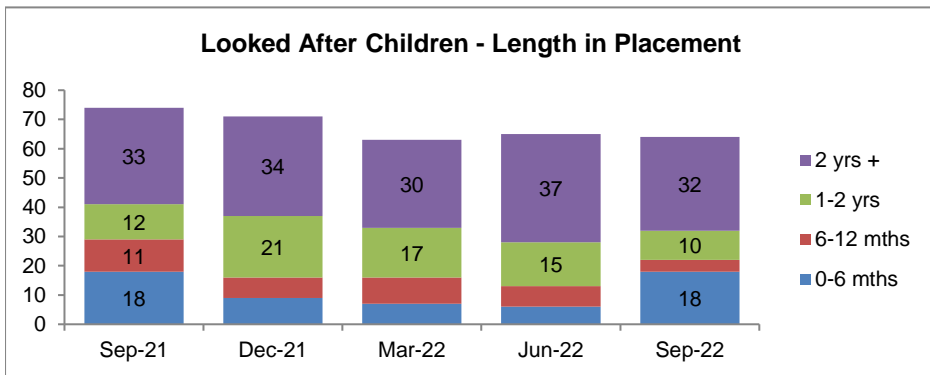
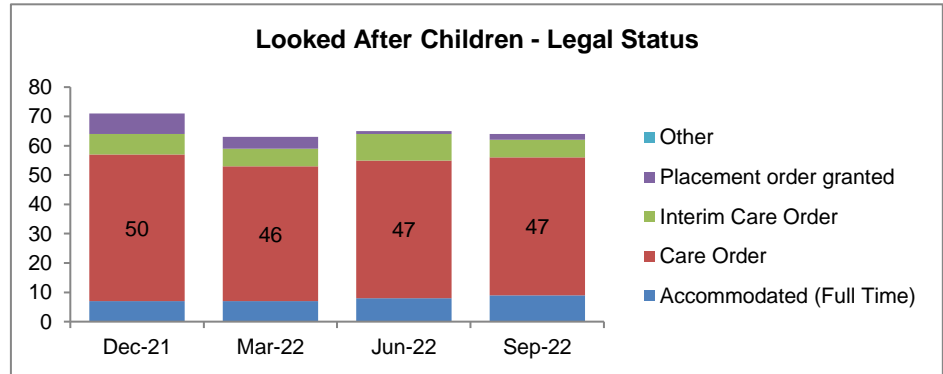
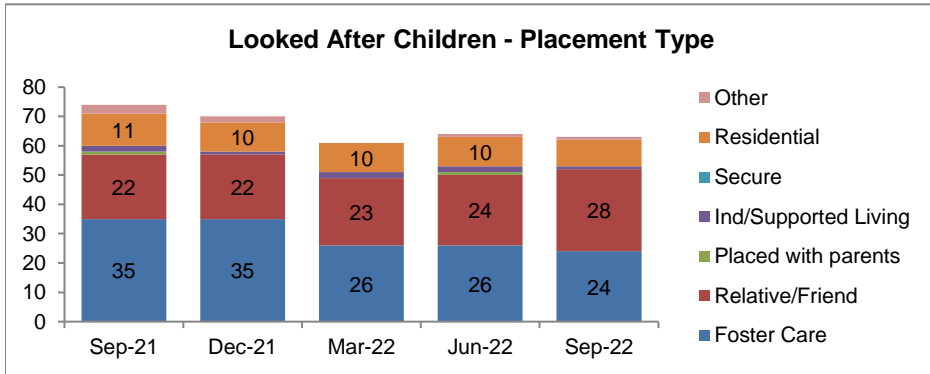
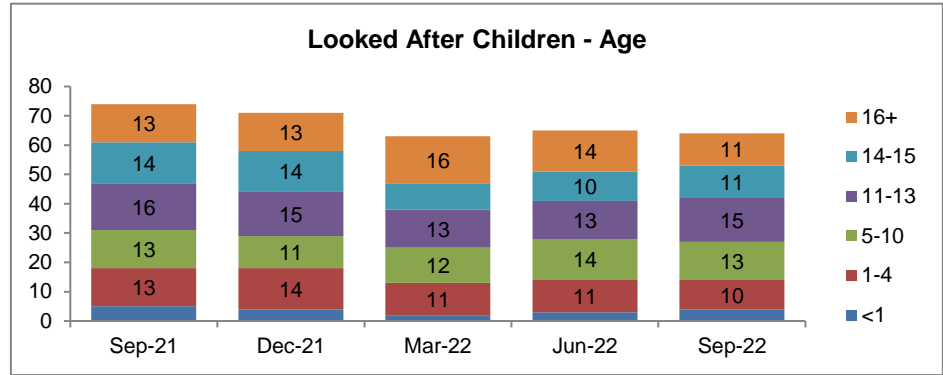
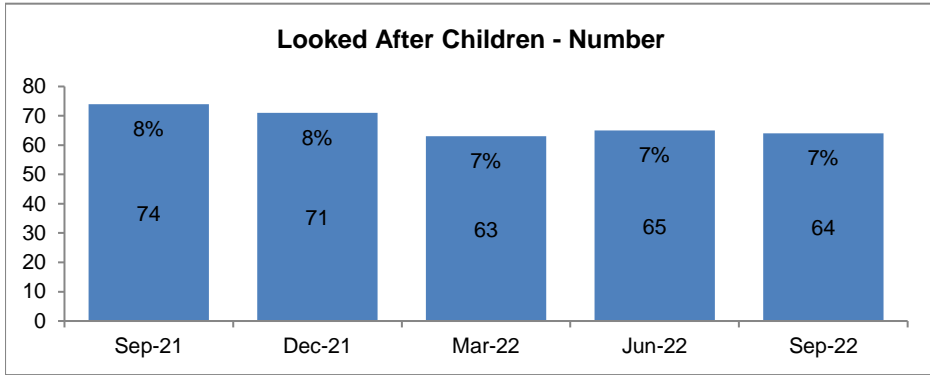


Bromsgrove

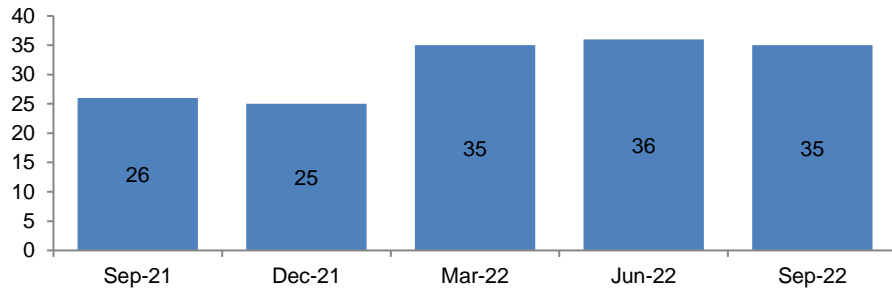




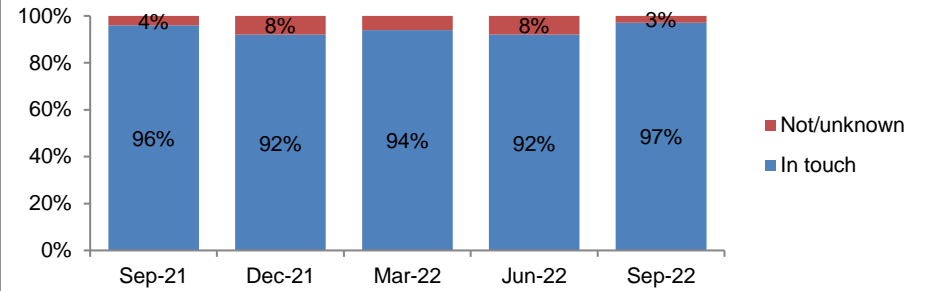
Malvern



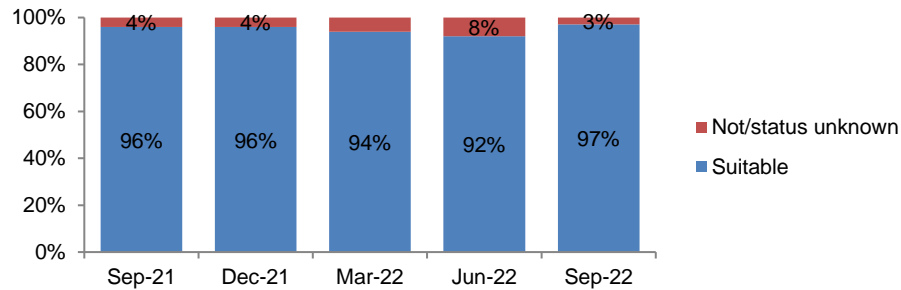
Number of Care Leavers Open for Services



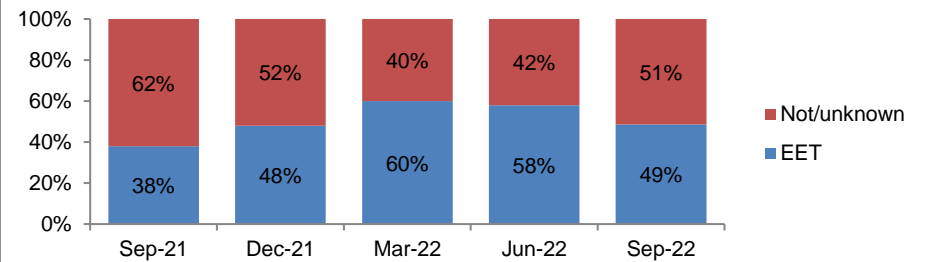
Percentage of Care Leavers In Touch



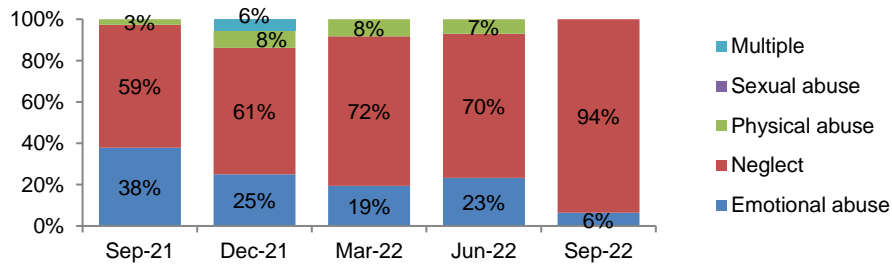
Percentage of Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation



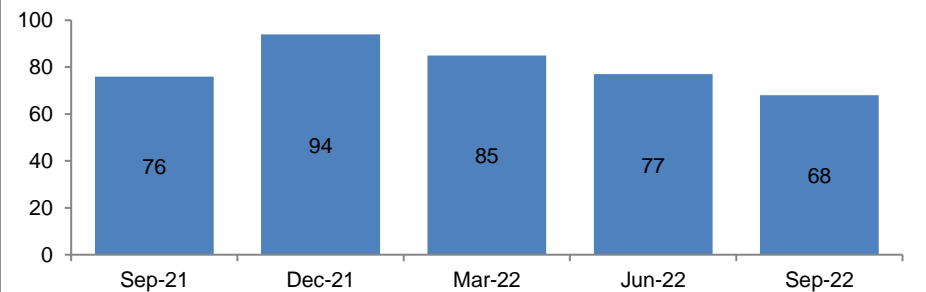
Percentage of Care Leavers in Education/Employment/Training



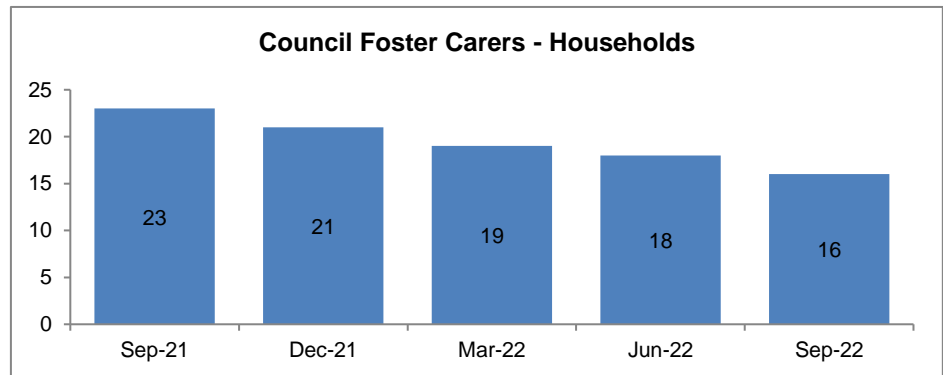
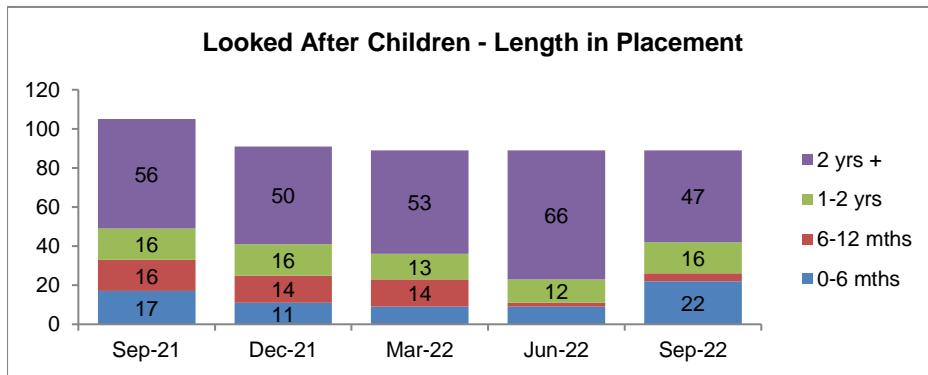
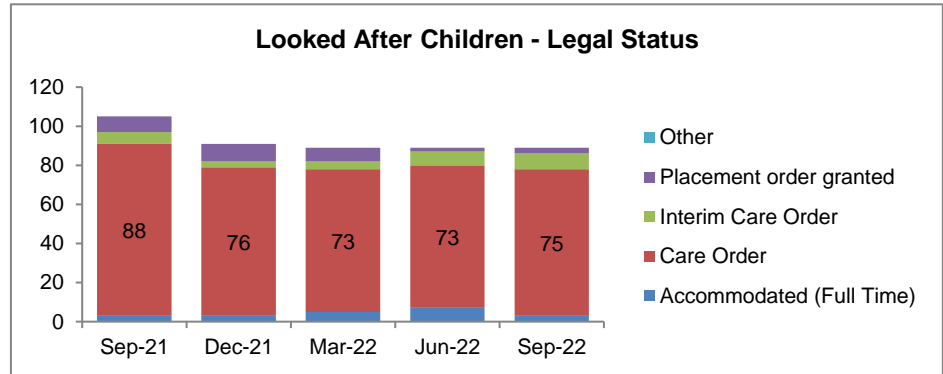
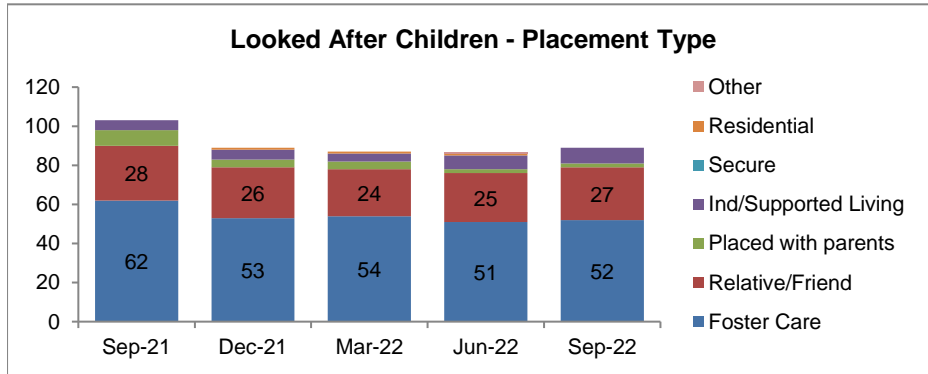
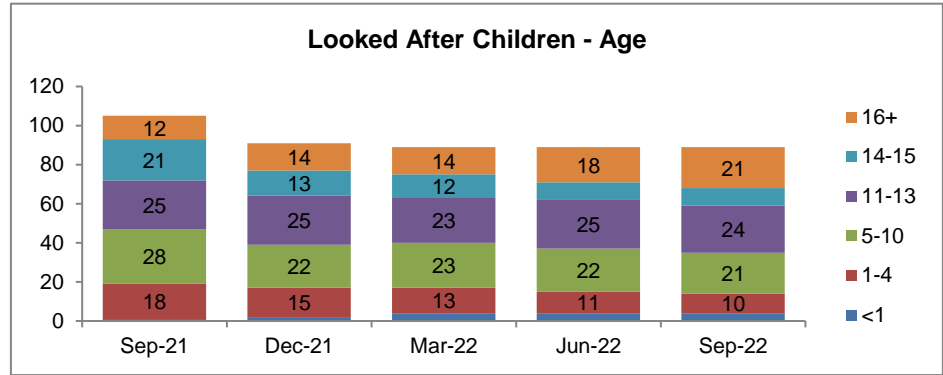
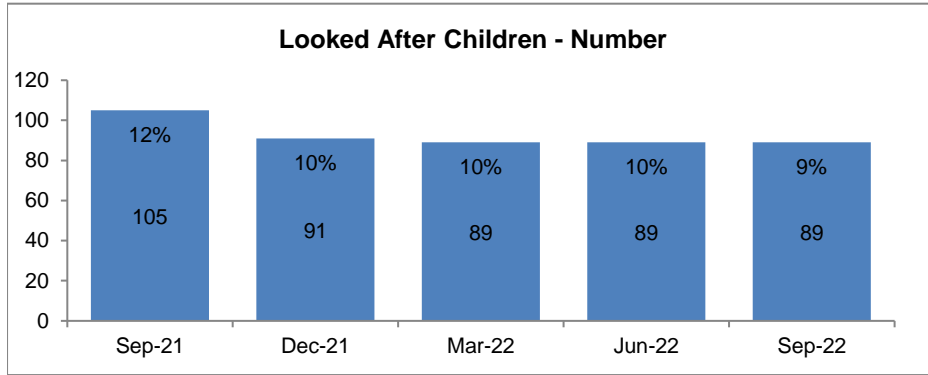
Percentage of Child Protection Plans by Latest Category

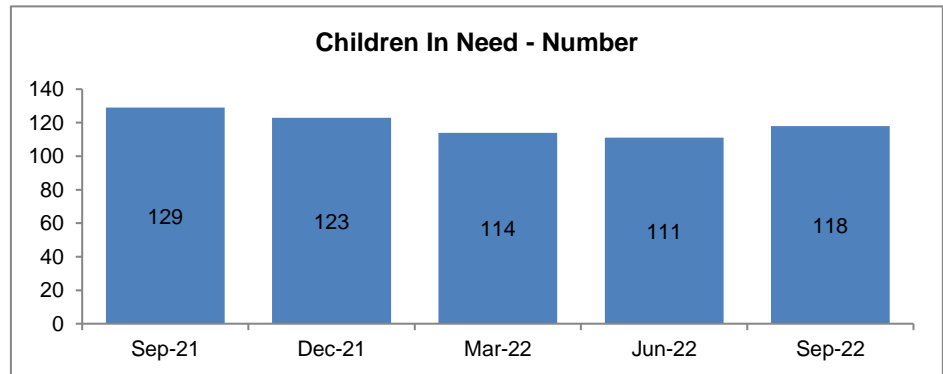
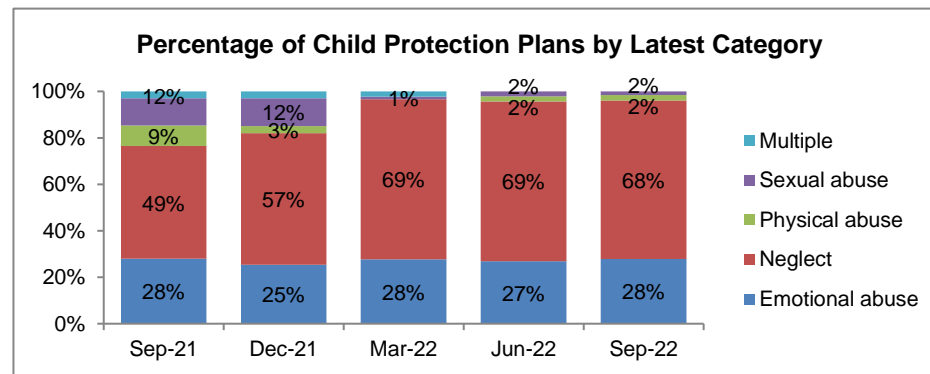
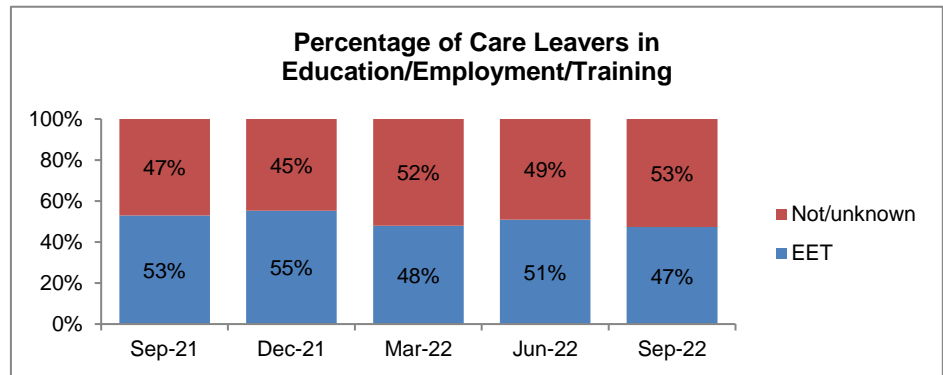
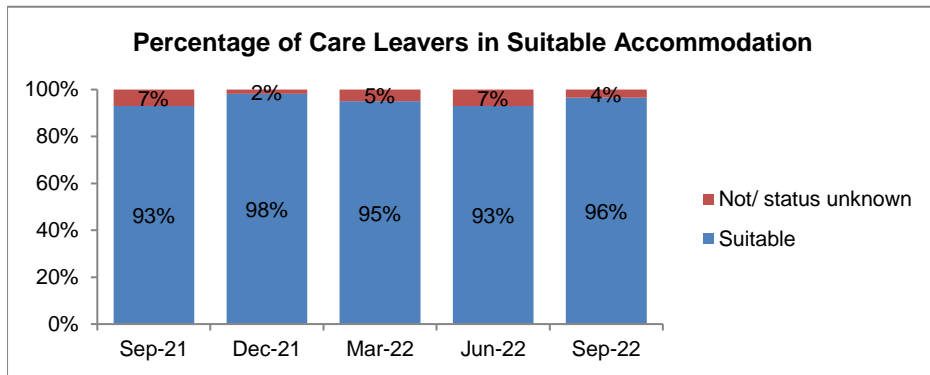
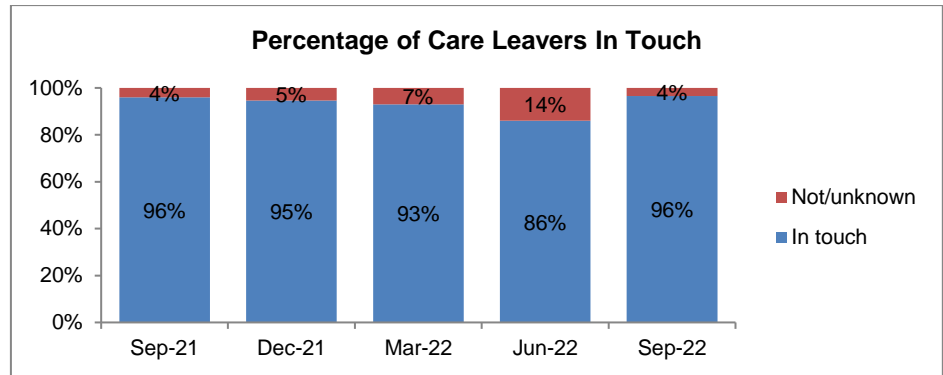
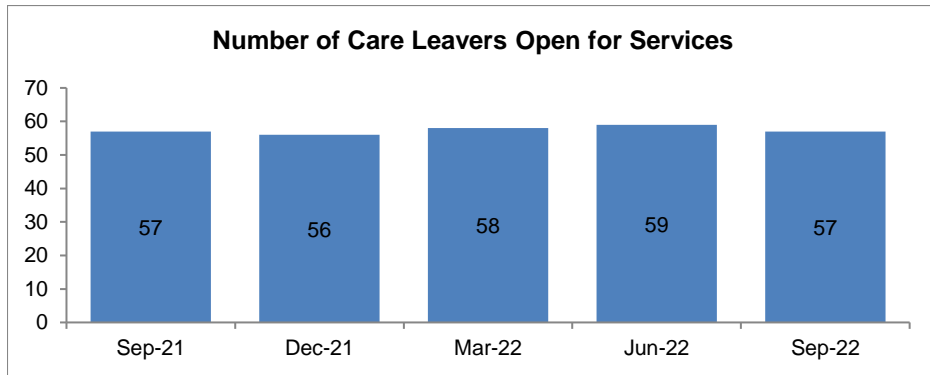


Children In Need - Number

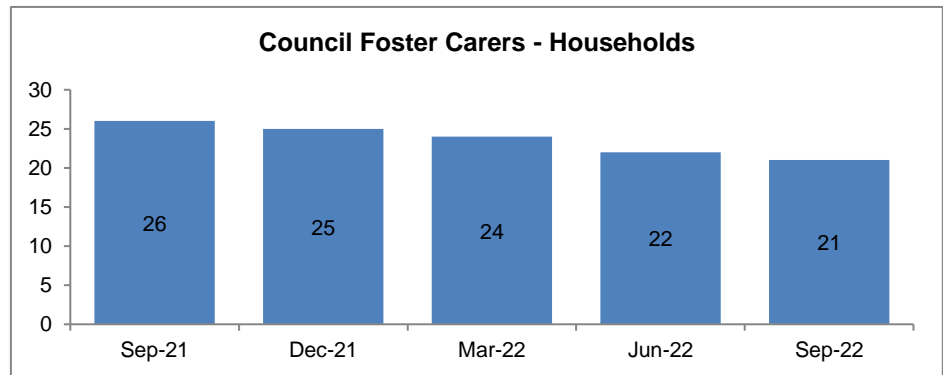
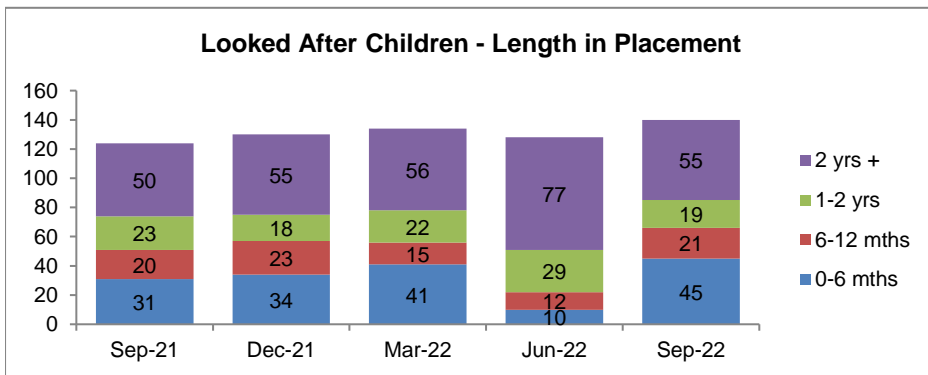
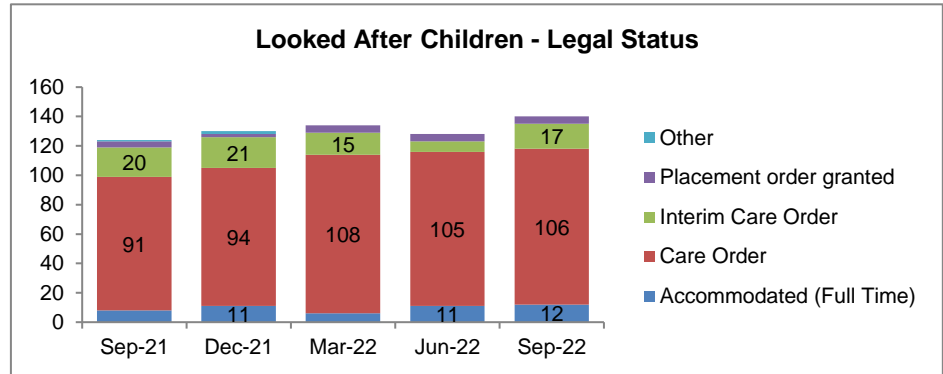
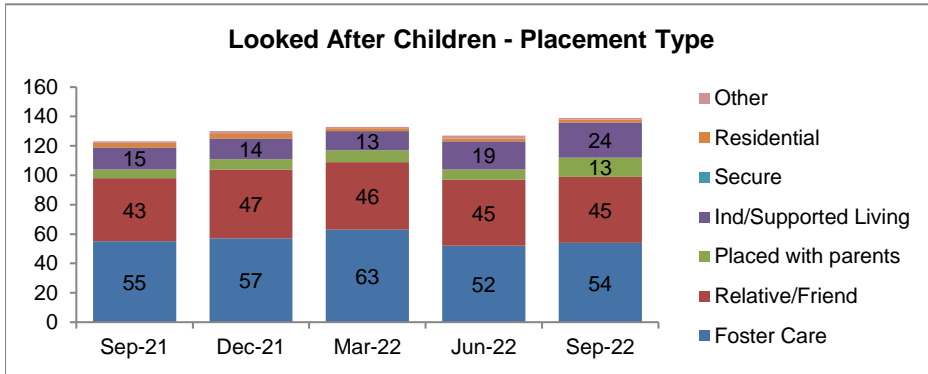
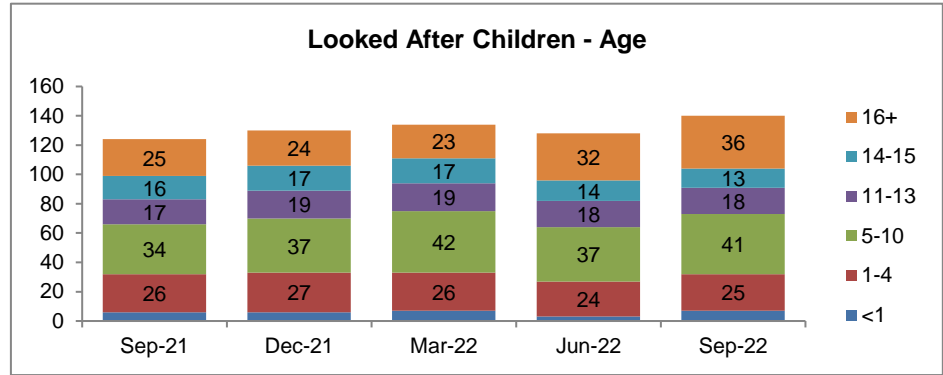
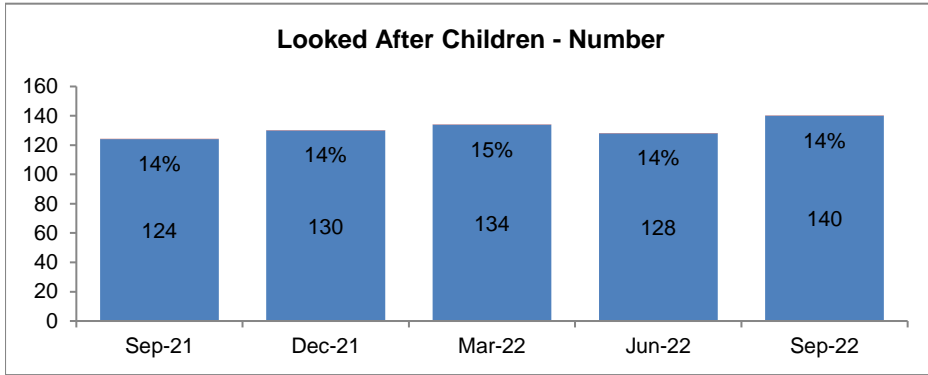


Redditch

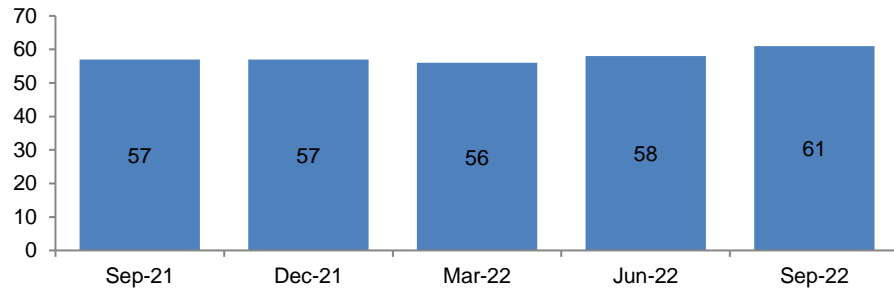




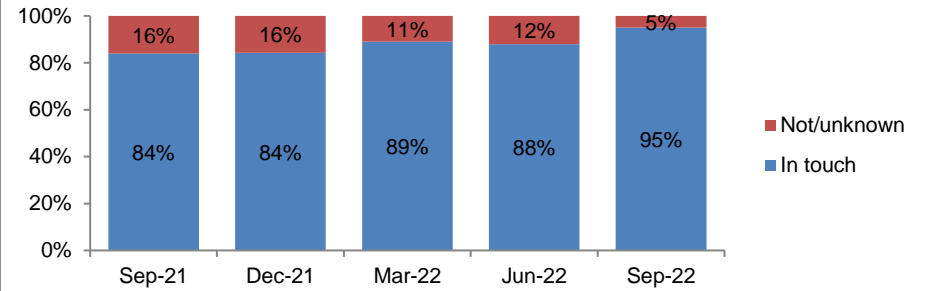
Worcester



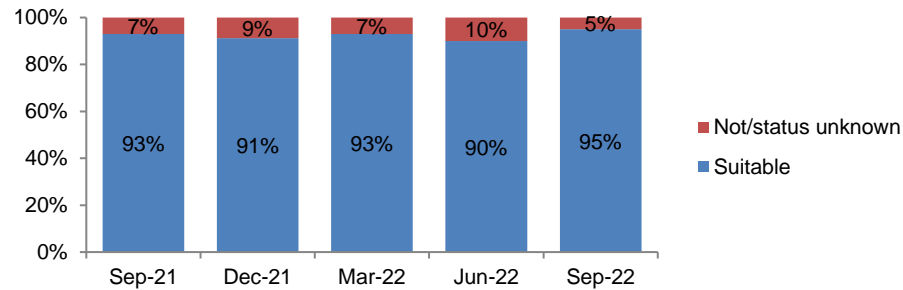
Number of Care Leavers Open for Services



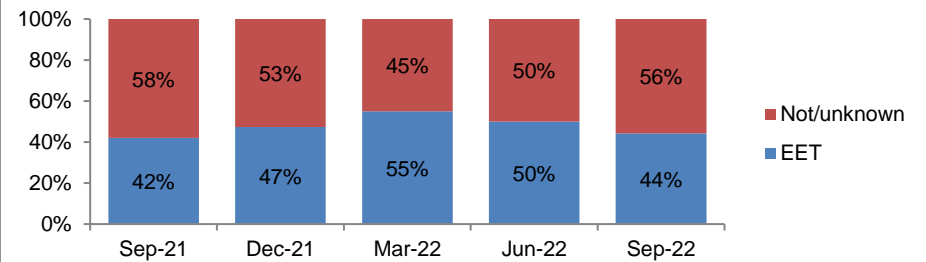
Percentage of Care Leavers In Touch



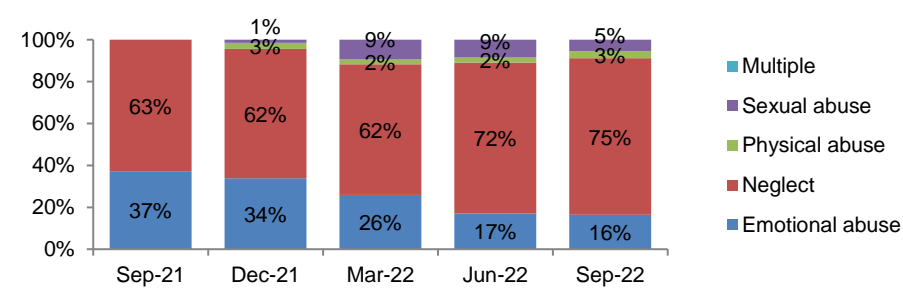
Percentage of Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation



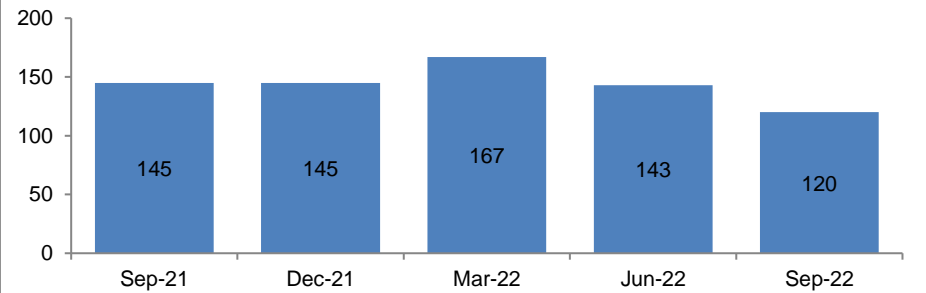
Percentage of Care Leavers in Education/Employment/Training



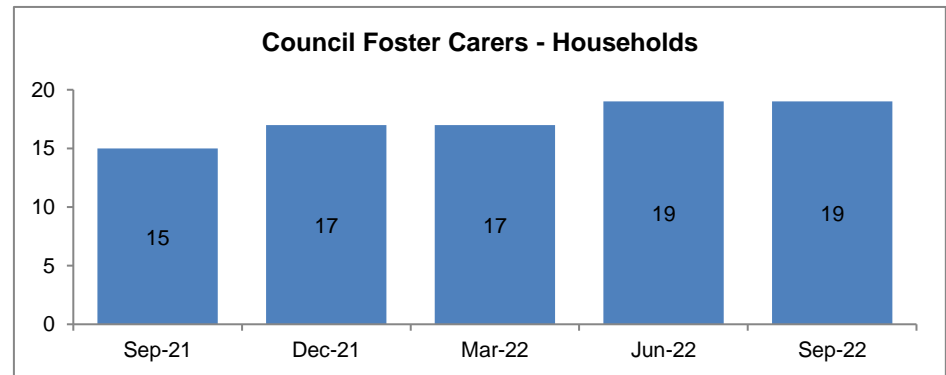
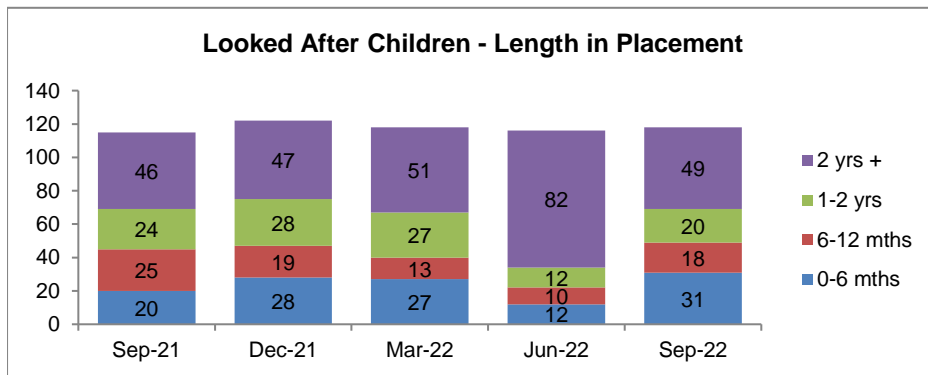
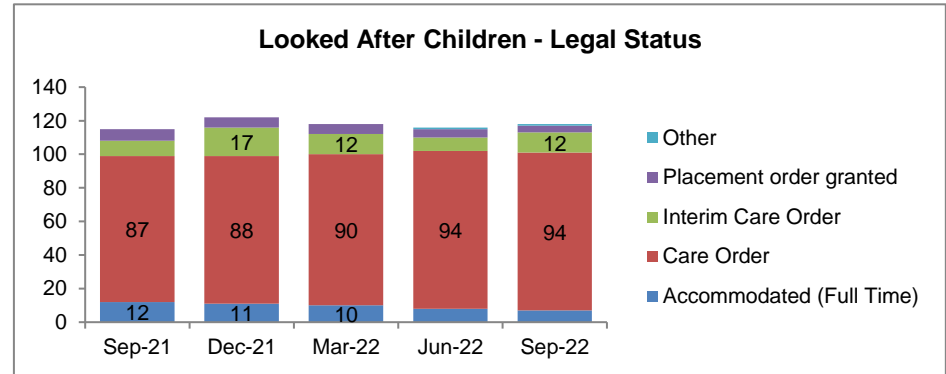
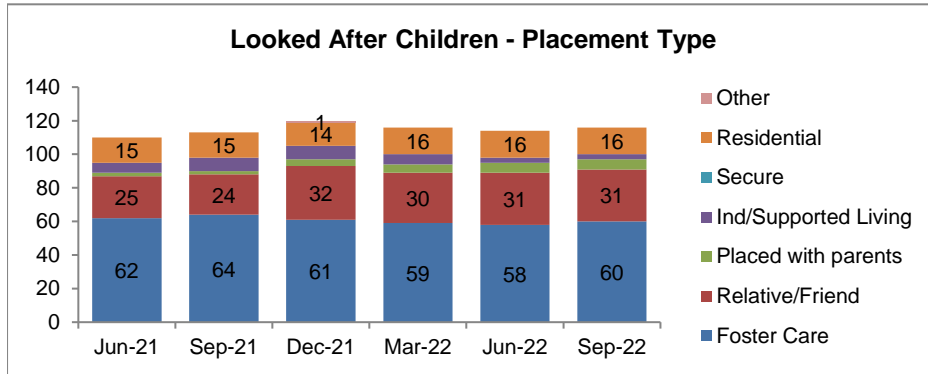
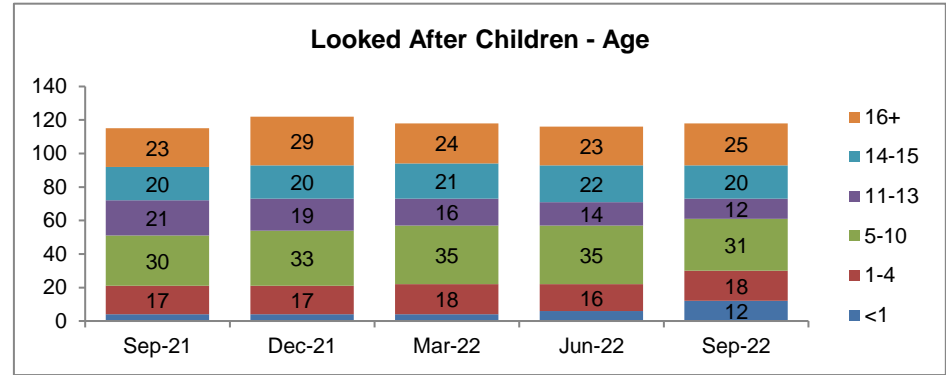
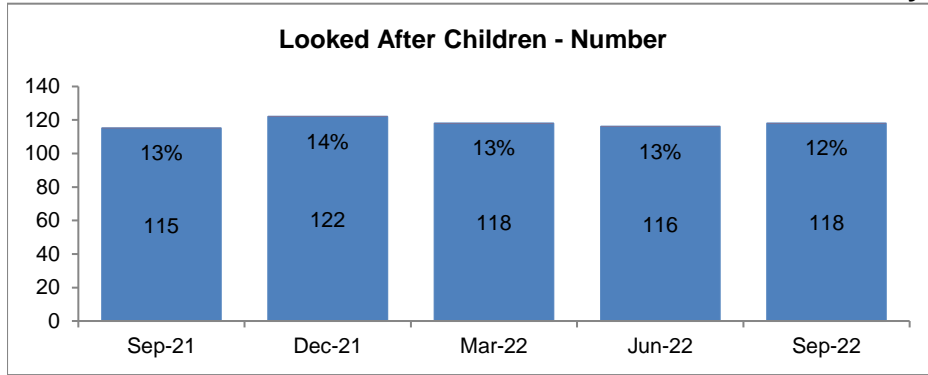
Percentage of Child Protection Plans by Latest Category

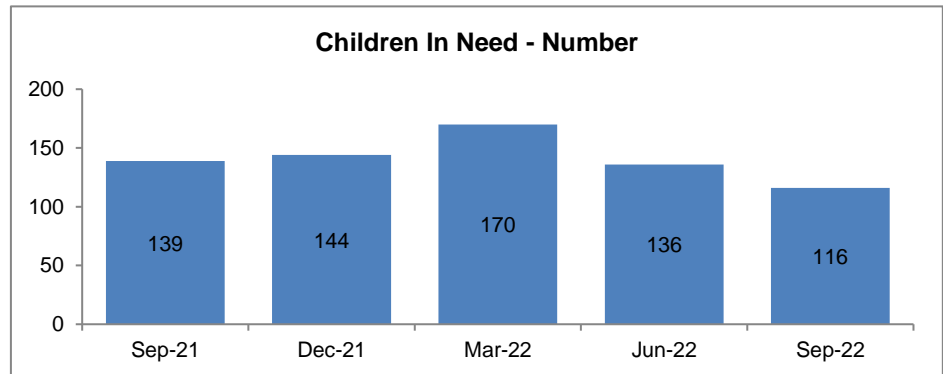
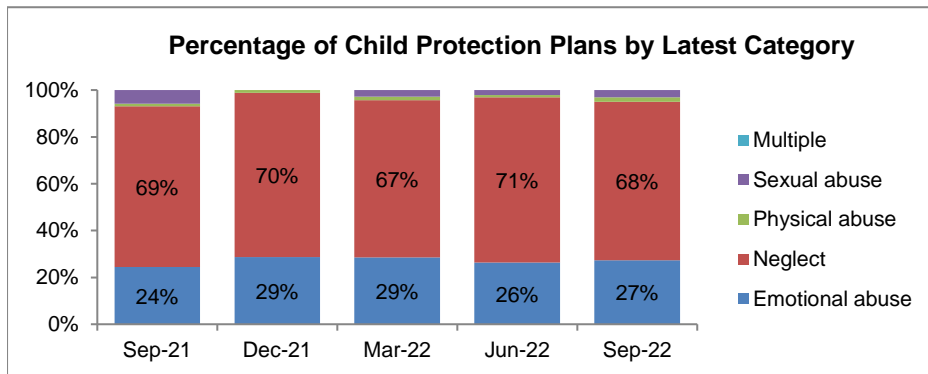
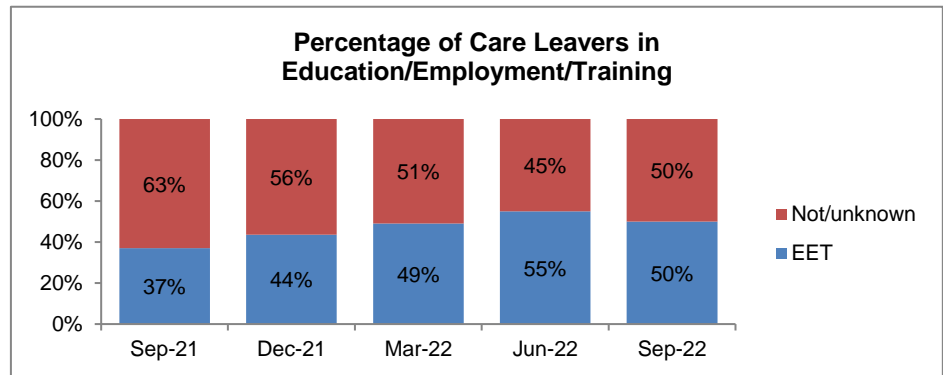
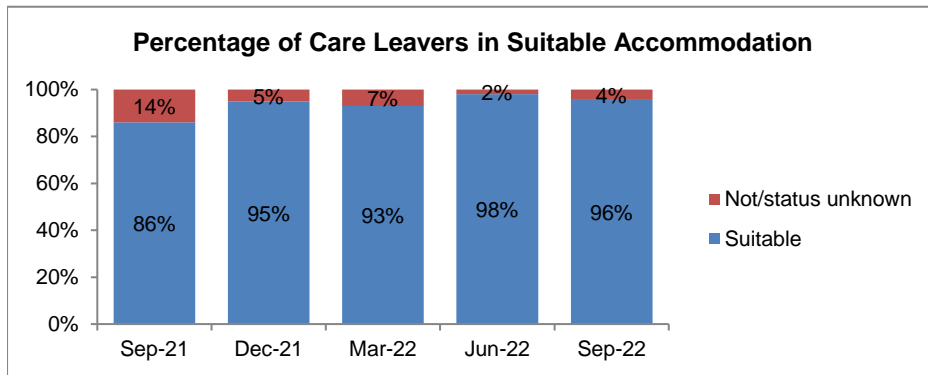
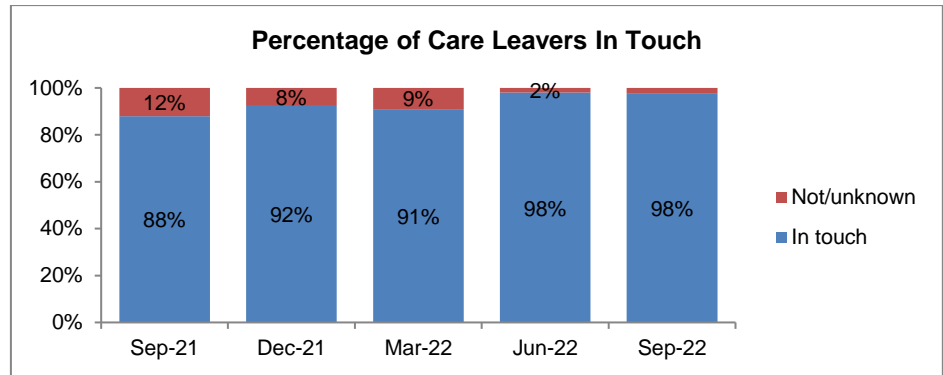
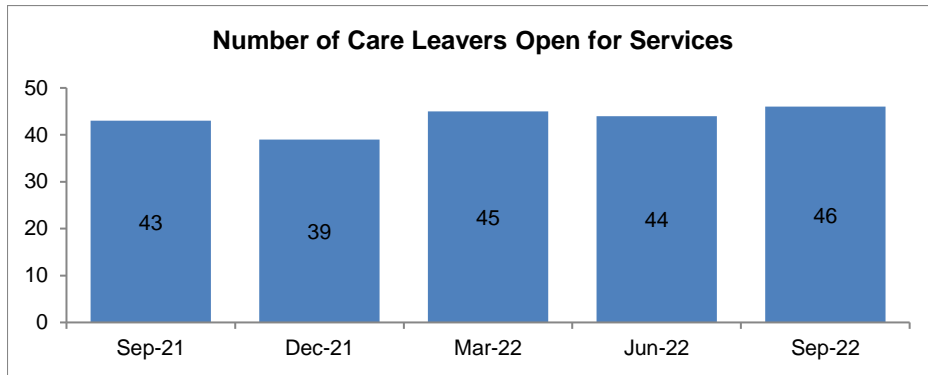


Children In Need - Number

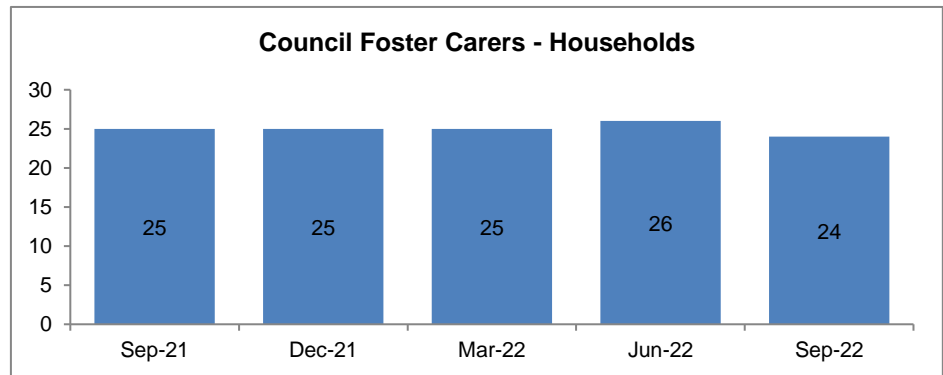
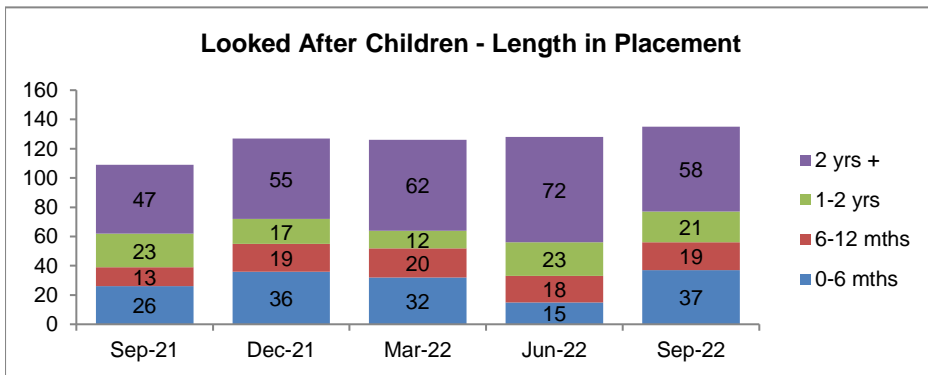
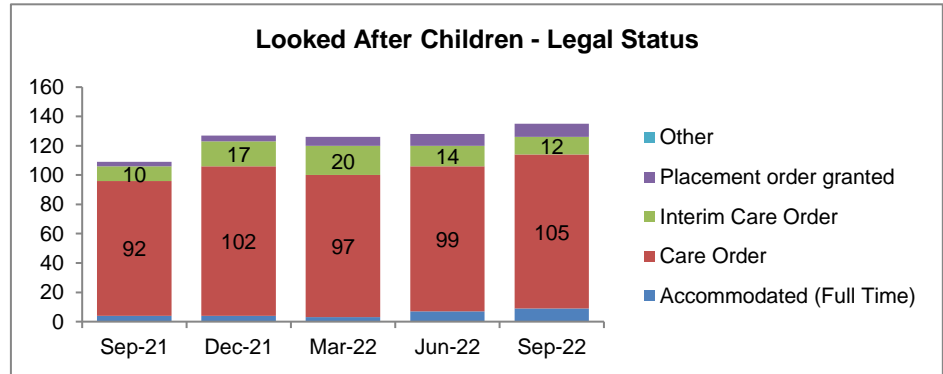
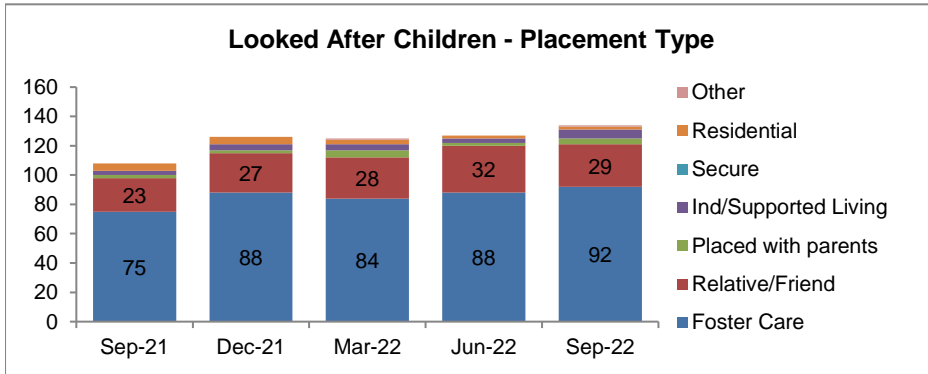
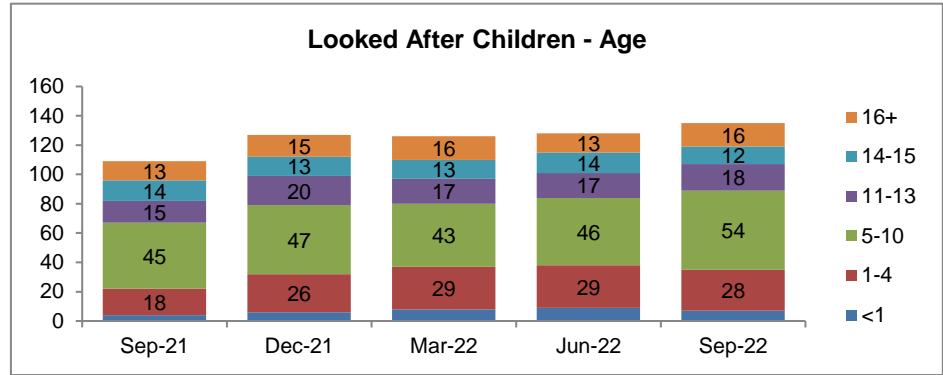
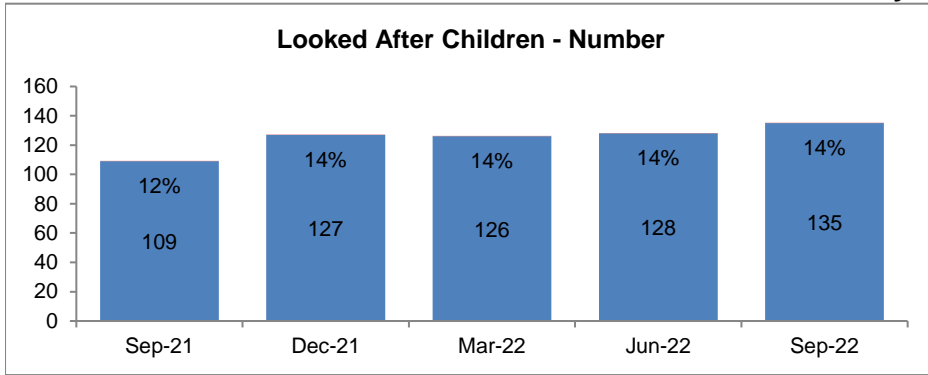


Wychavon

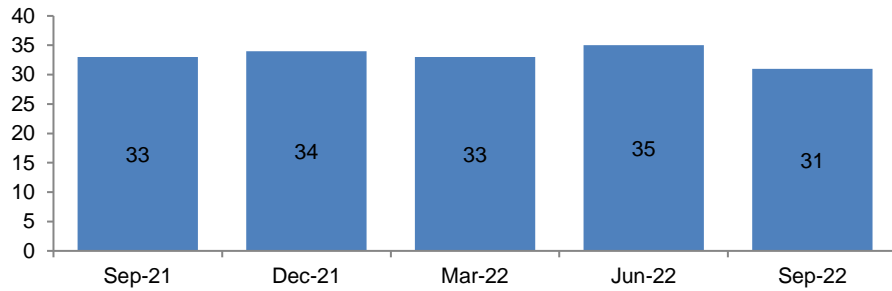




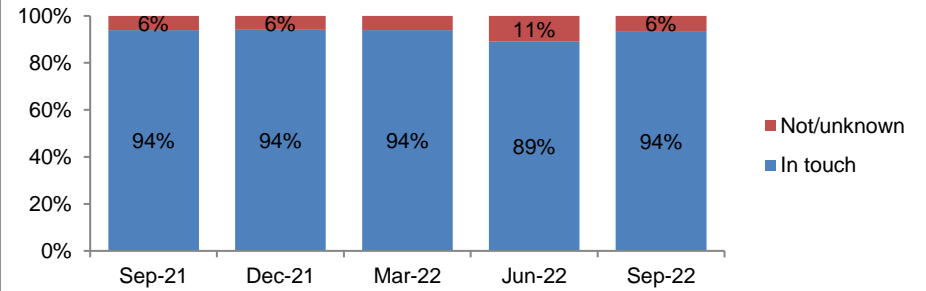
Wyre Forest



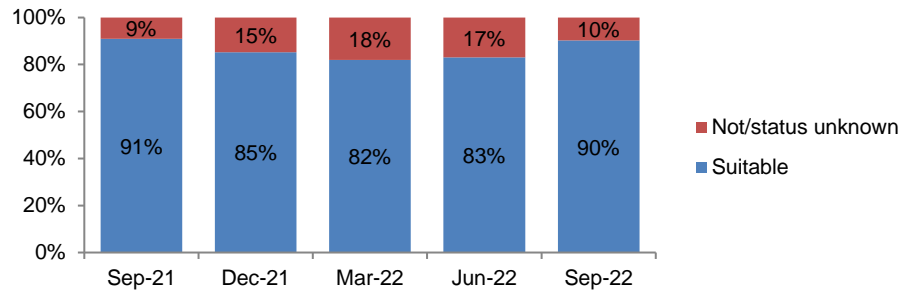
Number of Care Leavers Open for Services



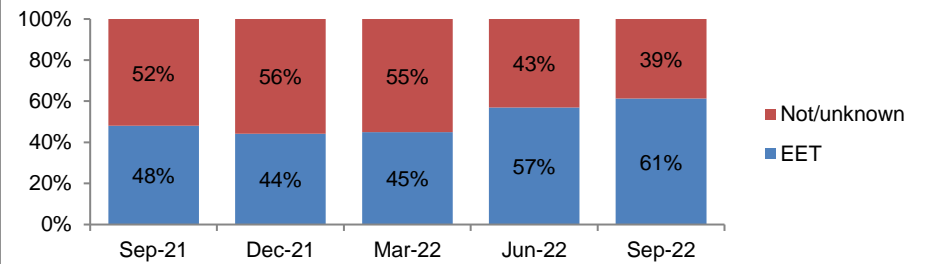
Percentage of Care Leavers In Touch



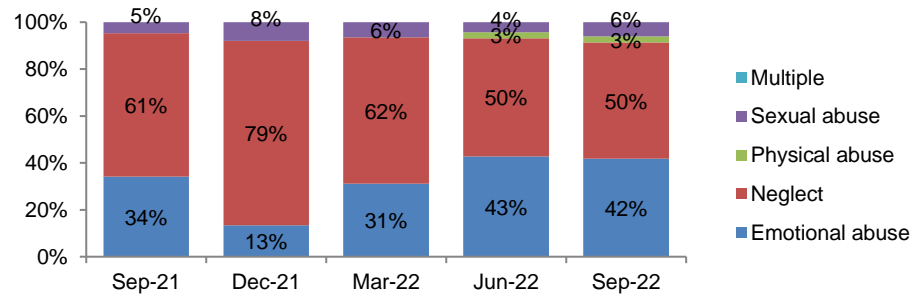
Percentage of Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation



Percentage of Care Leavers in Education/Employment/Training



Percentage of Child Protection Plans by Latest Category



Children In Need - Number

