

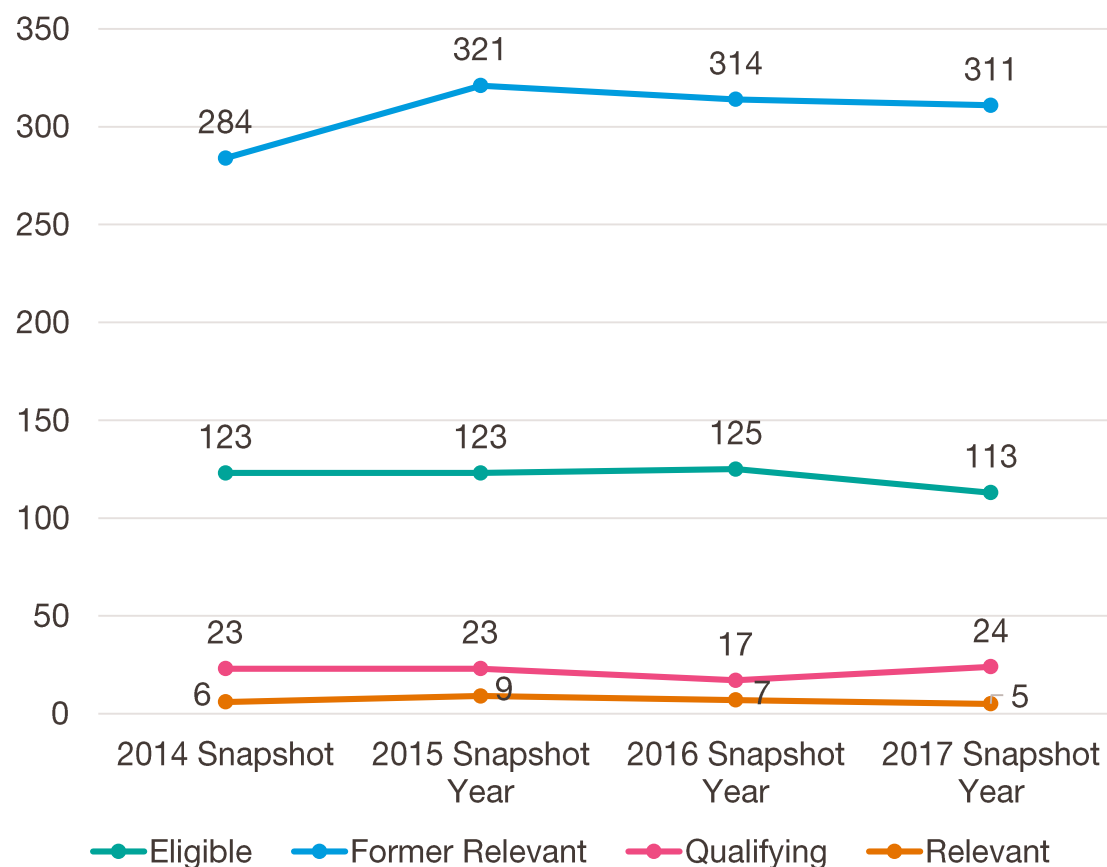
# Leaving Care redesign

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Summary of findings & proposals

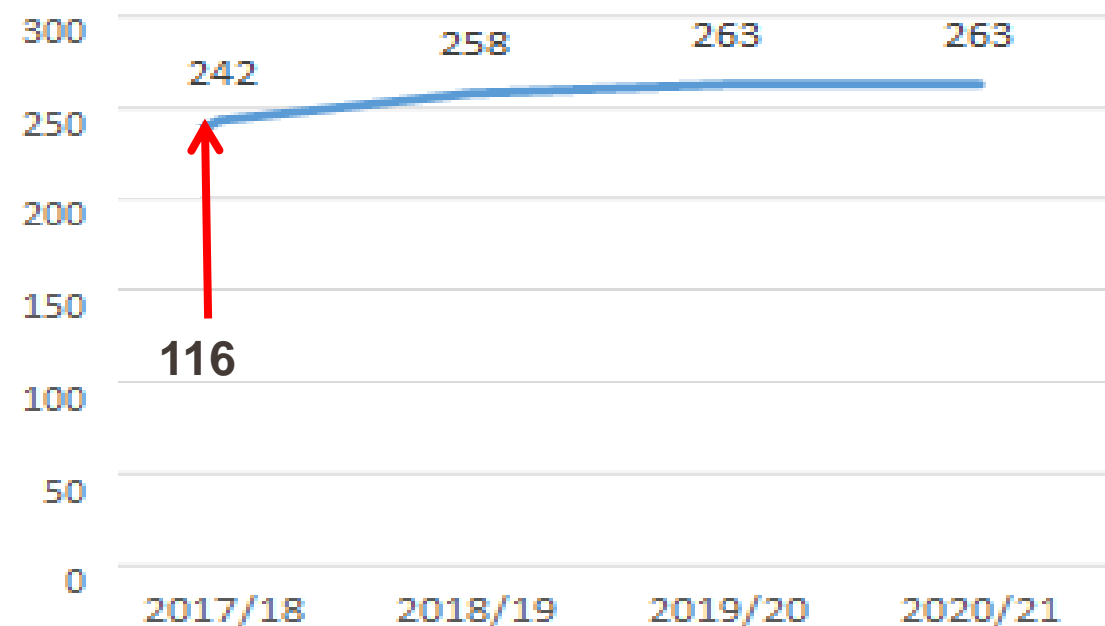
# The challenge

Count of Care Leavers per year, by type



*The number of care leavers in the service is high relative to the number of children in care and these numbers are stable, with small reductions over the last three years.*

Number who were in care on 18th birthday who will be aged 21-25 in the year

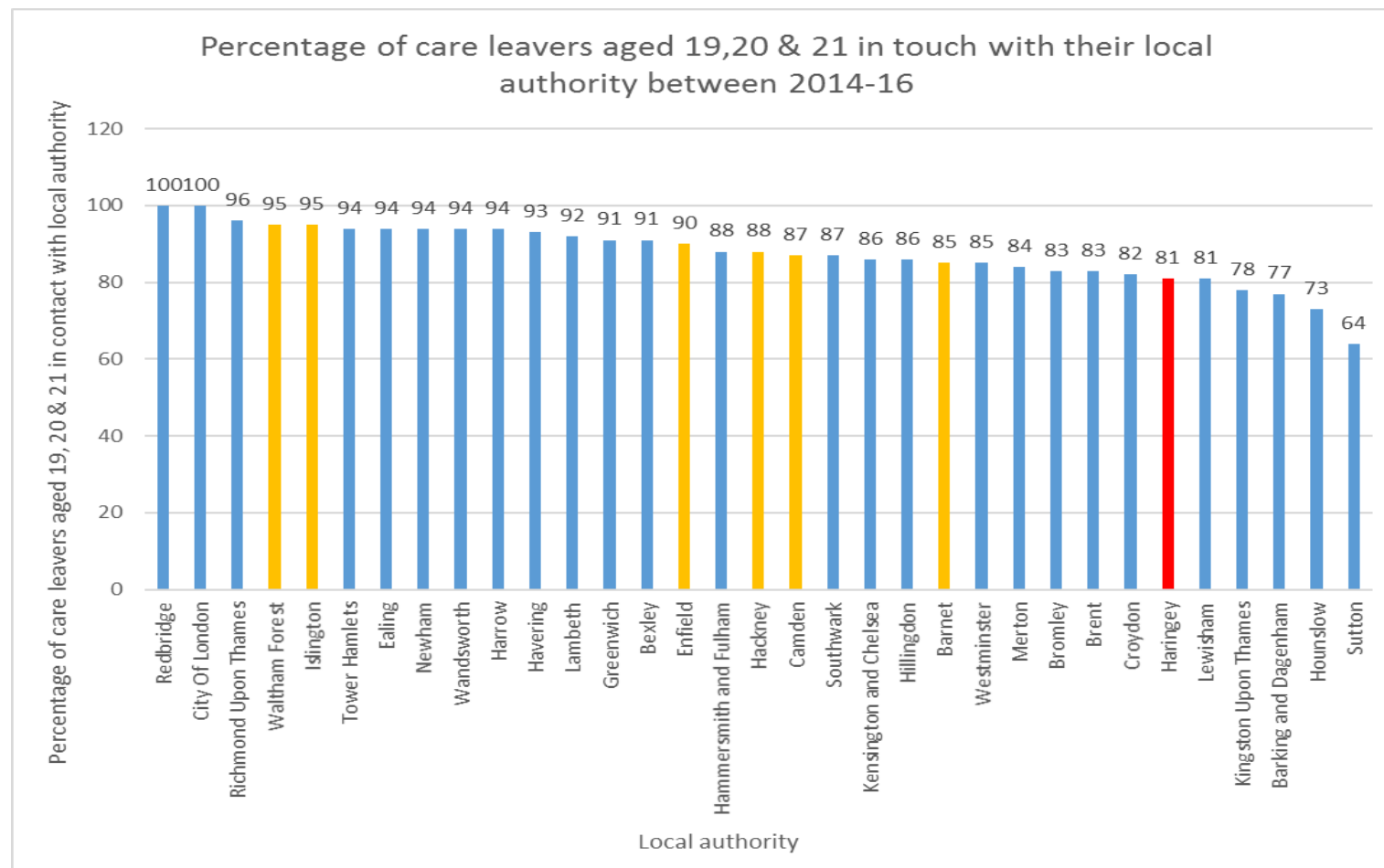


*The Children & Social Work Act 2017 will extend our duty to all former relevant care leavers to 25, which would increase the size of our cohort between 21-24 from 116 to 242 if all young people take up services*

# The challenge

	Age 19	Age 20	Age 21	LBH total	National data
LA in touch	72%	72%	63%	70%	87%
EET	49%	36%	39%	42%	40%
Suitable accommodation	68%	68%	61%	67%	83%

*While there are limitations to the data, Haringey reports below-average outcomes for our care leavers and there are concerns about the long-term success of our care leavers despite good GCSEs and university take-up.*



*The ability to be in touch with our care leavers and complete our statutory returns impacts upon this picture, and Haringey is below all statistical neighbours on this measure.*

# The leaving care cohort – need

Through case-level tracking data provided by YAS workers, we have identified the prevalence of needs within the care leaver cohort. Based on a snapshot of our care leaver cohort in May of **419 individuals**:

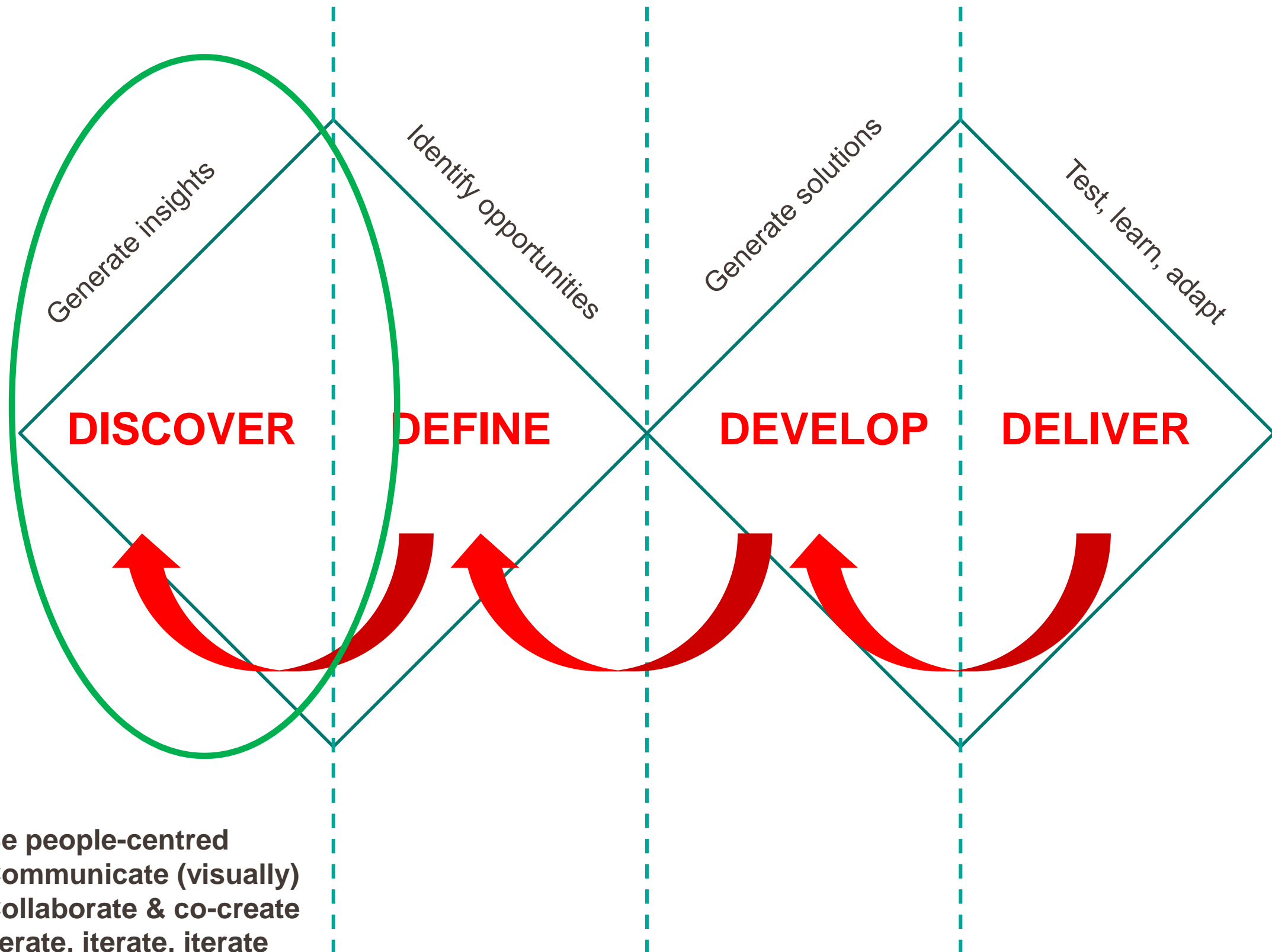
- **Geographic spread:** a minority of care leavers 18+ live outside of Haringey (28%) and fewer outside of London (7%) but these numbers are higher for Children in Care aged 16/17
- **Gender:** 59% of care leavers are male, 41% female
- **Ethnicity:** 41% black; 32% white; 12% mixed race; 8% other; 6% Asian
- **UASC:** 17% of care leavers are Asylum Seekers, of which 90% are male
- **Gang affiliation:** 49 care leavers estimated to be gang affiliated
- **Prison:** 23 care leavers are in prison, 100% of which are male and 2/3 are 19 or older
- **Substance Misuse:** 83 care leavers with substance misuse issues, of which over 3/4 are male
- **Parents:** 59 care leavers are parents, of which 1/3 are fathers
- **Emotional & Behavioural & Mental Health:** 141 estimated to have behavioural difficulties and 173 with emotional difficulties; 53 have a diagnosed mental health condition
- **Hard to engage:** 108 care leavers are described by their workers as 'hard to engage', of which 70% are male

# The leaving care cohort – need

There is a particular need to consider how we can develop more targeted pathways for the following groups:

- **Late entrants into care** – whereas for children who are in care from an earlier age being looked after can provide a degree of stability and support, for instance around education, those coming into care later often have more complex needs and are harder to engage in Pathway Planning and preparing for independence; this group often includes those who have been involved in the criminal justice system and would particularly benefit from a more assertive and specialist response to keep them out of care or meet their needs.
- **Young parents** – we have a significant number of both mothers and fathers and these young people can be concerned about their own ability to parent successfully or how ‘professionals’ view their choice to have children or their choice of partner; alongside practical support around budgeting and accommodation, help with parenting and maintaining social networks, training or employment are required.
- **Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children** – for these young people, barriers to accessing employment, training and other forms of support make it difficult to ensure their outcomes are positive and they are over-represented in the group of care leavers with whom we are not in touch.

# The service design approach



- 1) Be people-centred
- 2) Communicate (visually)
- 3) Collaborate & co-create
- 4) Iterate, iterate, iterate

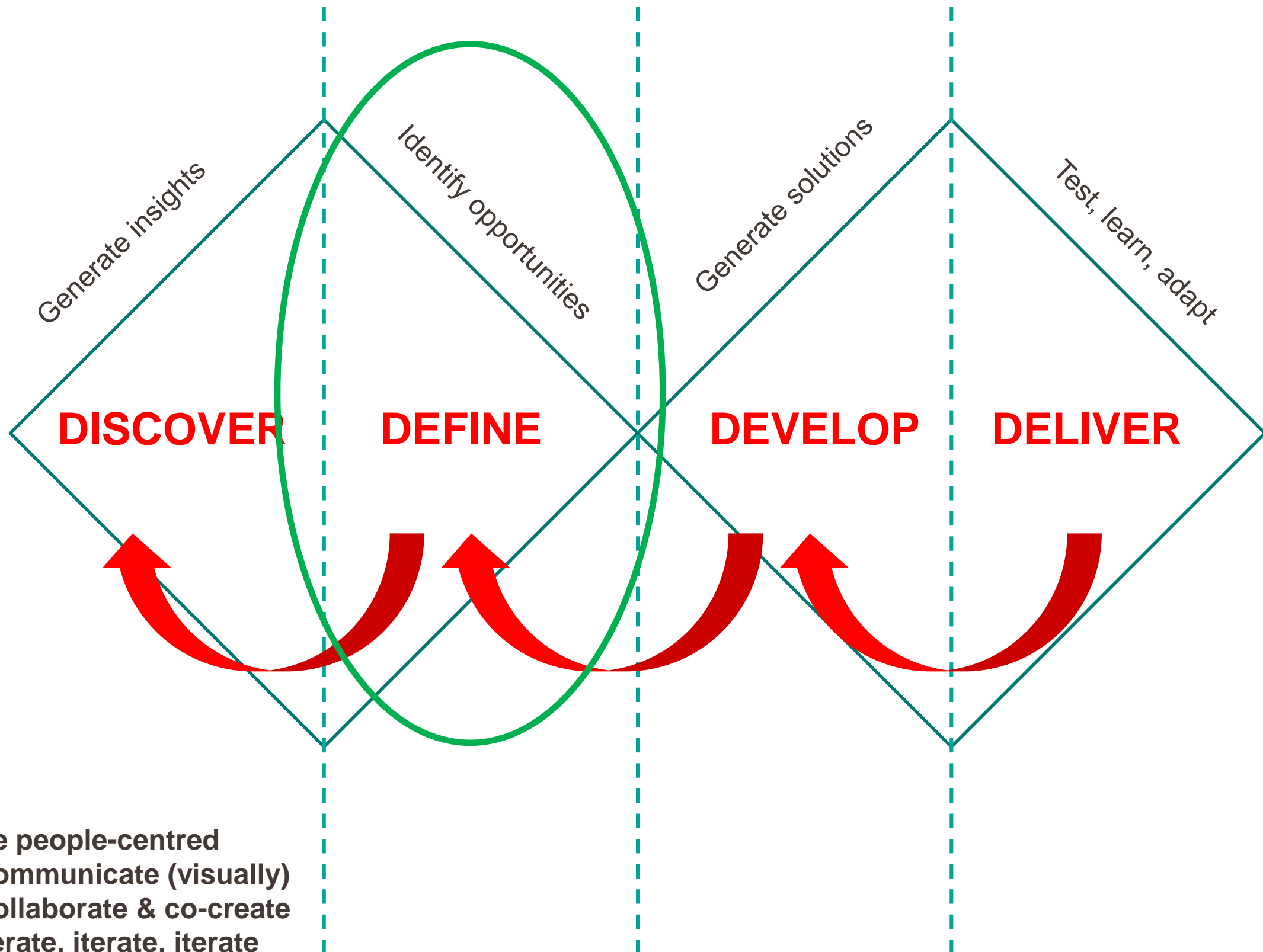
# The 'discovery' phase

## Gathering & analysing data

- **Care leaver interviews** – 20 care leavers volunteered to take part in a 1hour, semi-structured interview – answering questions around their experience of being in care, their current living situation and their mental health status
- **YAS staff interviews** – 6 staff were happy to answer questions on their experience of the service, what they feel works well and what could be improved
- **Stakeholder workshops** – 3 workshops were organised on the 3 main themes that kept arising
  - Education, Employment & Training
  - Housing & Life Skills
  - Mental Health



# The service design approach



- 1) Be people-centred
- 2) Communicate (visually)
- 3) Collaborate & co-create
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# Priorities for new model of Leaving Care



1. A trusting and stable relationship with a worker who can support a young person from an earlier stage and provide continuity as they leave care
2. A specialist and targeted offer that combines careers coaching, mental health and substance misuse, supporting vulnerable young adults flexibly across services
3. A more digitally engaged service that helps young people to access information and advice when they need it and makes it easier and more flexible to 'keep in touch'
4. A streamlined Pathway Plan that is centred on the needs of the young person, connects with other plans they might have and is supported by tools for direct work
5. A coherent and targeted approach to developing life skills that starts earlier in the care journey and is integral to planning with the young person about their future housing options
6. A coordinated approach to maintaining contact with former care leavers who can act as role models and peer mentors to young people in care

# 1. A trusting and stable relationship with a worker who can support a young person from an earlier stage and provide continuity as they leave care

## Key messages

- There are some strong relationships between workers and care leavers and the impact of these can be seen in young people with more stable and successful experiences
- Frequent changes of worker throughout the care journey erodes trust and makes it harder for young people to develop relationships with new professionals
- The handover at 18 too often feels abrupt for the young person and comes at a time when there is significant change due to formally 'leaving care'
- Too much of the practical and emotional preparation for independence starts at 18, so young people feel they are not always ready for the changes that take place

## Design questions

- How can services begin the process of preparing children in care for independence from an earlier age and at a pace that works for them?
- How can we minimise the disruption of handovers for the young person and ensure they always feel supported and know who to turn to?

## 2. A specialist and targeted offer that combines careers coaching, mental health and substance misuse, supporting vulnerable young adults flexibly across services



### Key messages

- There are a very large number of services and voluntary organisations in Haringey that are relevant to the needs of our leaving care cohort, but it is not always clear how to find out about them either as a service user or staff member
- Engagement with other services is often challenging and young people can be reluctant to work with additional services even when they acknowledge the need
- Without an embedded specialist offer for mental health and substance misuse, it is difficult for workers in YAS to develop their own skills and to provide effective 'outreach' for harder to engage young people

### Design questions

- How can we access and make the best use of specialist workers as part of a stronger 'team around' the young person with improved take-up?
- How can we create a more consistent offer that is linked to the outcomes in the young person's Pathway Plan and reflects their own understanding of their need?

### 3. A more digitally engaged service that helps young people to access information and advice when they need it and makes it easier and more flexible to ‘keep in touch’

#### Key messages

- Care Leavers often have questions that they don't feel able to bother their worker with and would often like to be able to find information themselves online
- Young people want to feel like the service is keeping in touch with them, and want this to be regular, relevant and flexible around their preferred ways of communicating
- Communicating with our cohort of care leavers about opportunities and services that they could tap into is often a very labour-intensive process and does not encourage or enable easy take-up
- Young people want information in different formats, particularly video, and want to receive it from people who have 'been in their shoes', especially older care leavers

#### Design questions

- How can we develop and maintain a better web presence for information, communication and interaction with our care leavers?
- How would we need to support more of our young people to access the web, including availability of devices and internet connection?
- How can digital tools help us to provide a more personalised offer for each YP?

## 4. A streamlined Pathway Plan that is centred on the needs of the young person, connects with other plans they might have and is supported by tools for direct work

### Key messages

- While all workers recognise the importance of the Pathway Plan, it is unwieldy and not well-liked by staff or care leavers as a means for having a useful, focused conversation about outcomes & support needs
- Young people do not play (or currently want to play) an active part in their own planning and there is little evidence of 'ownership' of plans by care leavers
- There is not enough self-assessment by care leavers of their own confidence, knowledge or skills to help them understand what they need to do next and why
- Some care leavers reported feeling like they had too many 'plans' and that it did not feel like professionals were all working to the same goals agreed with the YP

### Design questions

- How can we focus the Pathway Plan and the discussions that inform it more closely on what the young person needs to do and who is available to support them?
- How can we make the Pathway Plan a more user-friendly document that supports by more engaging ways of working with the young person?

## 5. A coherent and targeted approach to developing life skills that starts earlier in the care journey and is integral to planning with the young person about their future housing options

### Key messages

- Some children in care are ready to begin thinking about what it will be like to leave care from an earlier age and want to understand this in the context of their wider ambitions
- Young people often over-estimate their readiness to live independently but see 'getting my own place' as a top priority – they want to hear what it's really going to be like and need to connect this to steps they will need to take
- PAs provide a lot of hand-on support around life skills but often with young people that haven't much input on this before 18; there is not a consistent expectation on social workers, foster carers, providers and HfH to support independent living

### Design questions

- How can we develop a more consistent framework for developing skills for independent living that could be applied by workers, providers and the young person themselves?
- How can we build on the tenancy workshops currently on offer to reach more young people and to improve the sustainability of independent living?

## 6. A coordinated approach to maintaining contact with former care leavers who can act as role models and peer mentors to young people in care

### Key messages

- Individual workers across YAS have examples of young people they remain in touch with after their cases are closed, but this is often ad hoc
- Many of our children in care and care leavers want more opportunities to meet or hear about Haringey children in care who have made successful moves into adulthood
- Care leavers say they are more likely to listen to difficult messages about what it is like leaving care and how to prepare for independence if it comes from 'peers'
- Keeping in touch with care leavers to understand their long-term outcomes would help the service to understand what makes for sustainable positive impact

### Design questions

- How might we maintain contact with care leavers whose cases have closed in a way that is simple for us and them?
- How can we encourage/incentivise former care leavers to offer their time and experience to younger people?
- How should this fit with a wider offer of 'mentoring' or 'coaching' for care leavers?

# Taking this forward

- **Engaging with care leavers**
- **Developing ideas with staff**
- **Securing input from partners**
- **Establishing the resources required**