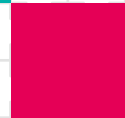


# Mockingbird Impact Report 2022



# Mockingbird Impact Report 2022

## About the Mockingbird Programme

Mockingbird, a global award winning and pioneering programme led by The Fostering Network in the UK, delivers sustainable foster care. It is an evidence-based model structured around the support and relationships an extended family provides.

The model nurtures the relationships between children, young people and foster families, supporting them to build a resilient and caring community. Led by a hub home carer and liaison worker, with the support of their fostering service, the constellation community offers vital peer support and guidance alongside social activities and sleepovers to strengthen relationships and permanence.

**Watch 'Mockingbird: A really big family' to hear from those involved in the programme.**

## Welcome to the 2022 Mockingbird Impact Report!

This report details a time of change, from April 2021 to March 2022, as the country and the Mockingbird community transitioned from long periods of national lockdown, to returning to new and old ways of 'normal'.

It was with great excitement and some trepidation that we reignited our national Mockingbird events programme in person again. Starting in autumn with creative workshops for children and young people who were part of our film production team and Nest group, throughout the year we were able to bring foster carers, service staff and the Mockingbird Team together for shared learning and development events across the UK.

We welcomed 21 new fostering services and saw over 25 new constellations launch between 2021 and 2022. We now work with 62 services, sustaining nearly 120 constellations.

The following report gives more details on the figures as well as the stories behind them. However, it is with huge credit to the over 3,000 adults and children and young people that are part of Mockingbird constellations, as well as the team at The Fostering Network, that Mockingbird not only survived, but thrived during the pandemic. We are able to continue to report on the ever-increasing reach of Mockingbird outcomes across the UK, amongst them; stability, support, creativity, fun, love and an overriding sense of hope.

## Timeline

**Running throughout this update is a timeline of quotes taken from monthly returns to show how constellations experienced this year.**

**APR**  
2021

We had children from two satellite homes for a sleep over together this month – the children previously lived in a home together and it was really lovely to have an over night time together following a long time of not seeing each other due to covid restrictions. Hub Home Carer

# Mockingbird Map

These maps show the distribution of 62 Mockingbird partners with 119 constellations as of January 2023, click the regional circle to zoom in.



	Established Partners	Constellations	
NORTH	29 Barnardo's Scotland Fostering, Edinburgh	1	
	50 Darlington Borough Council	1	
	51 Durham County Council	1	
	52 Hartlepool Borough Council	1	
	53 Metropolitan Borough of Gateshead	1	
	54 Middlesbrough Council	1	
	56 North Tyneside Council	1	
	11 North Yorkshire County Council	2	
	57 Northumberland County Council	1	
	58 Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council	1	
	27 South Tyneside Council	3	
	35 Together for Children Sunderland	2	
	CENTRAL	31 Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council	3
		30 Cheshire East Council	2
		15 Bradford Children and Families Trust	1
2 Doncaster Council		4	
23 Flintshire County Council		3	
8 Fostering People		1	
40 Hull City Council		1	
34 Kirklees Council		1	
1 Leeds City Council		10	
38 Rochdale Borough Council		1	
20 Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council		3	
28 Sheffield City Council		2	
7 Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council		3	
12 Suffolk County Council		3	
37 Together4Children Regional Permanency Partnership		4	
32 Wakefield Council	3		
13 Walsall Council	5		
26 Warrington Borough Council	3		
14 Wigan Council	2		

	Established Partners	Constellations
SOUTH	42 Buckinghamshire Council	1
	44 Devon County Council	1
	45 Dorset Council	1
	9 Hertfordshire County Council	6
	10 London Borough of Barking & Dagenham Council	6
	16 London Borough of Hackney Council	3
	33 London Borough of Haringey Council	1
	25 London Borough of Merton Council	1
	3 London Borough of Tower Hamlets Council	2
	17 London Borough of Waltham Forest Council	2
	4 (NFG) Heath Farm	5
	19 NFG London & South East	1
	21 North Somerset Council	4
	5 Oxfordshire County Council	2
	39 Portsmouth City Council	4
	6 Royal Borough of Greenwich	4
	18 Slough Children First	1
	22 Surrey County Council	2
48 West Sussex County Council	1	

Partners in development		
NORTH	36 Isle of Man Government	
	55 Newcastle City Council	
	59 Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council	
CENTRAL	24 Manchester City Council	
	62 Bury Council	
SOUTH	60 Achieving for Children Windsor and Maidenhead	
	61 Gloucestershire County Council	
	41 London Borough of Lambeth	
	46 Southampton City Council	
	43 Southend-on-Sea City Council	
47 South Gloucestershire Council		
49 Wokingham Borough Council		

# North



Established Partners	Constellations
29 Barnardo's Scotland Fostering, Edinburgh	1
50 Darlington Borough Council	1
51 Durham County Council	1
52 Hartlepool Borough Council	1
53 Metropolitan Borough of Gateshead	1
54 Middlesbrough Council	1
56 North Tyneside Council	1
11 North Yorkshire County Council	2
57 Northumberland County Council	1
58 Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council	1
27 South Tyneside Council	3
35 Together for Children Sunderland	2

Partners in development
36 Isle of Man Government
55 Newcastle City Council
59 Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council



Established Partners	Constellations	
31	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council	3
30	Cheshire East Council	2
15	Bradford Children and Families Trust	1
2	Doncaster Council	4
23	Flintshire County Council	3
8	Fostering People	1
40	Hull City Council	1
34	Kirklees Council	1
1	Leeds City Council	10
38	Rochdale Borough Council	1
20	Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council	3
28	Sheffield City Council	2
7	Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council	3
12	Suffolk County Council	3
37	Together4Children Regional Permanency Partnership	4
32	Wakefield Council	3
13	Walsall Council	5
26	Warrington Borough Council	3
14	Wigan Council	2

Partners in development	
24	Manchester City Council
62	Bury Council

Central

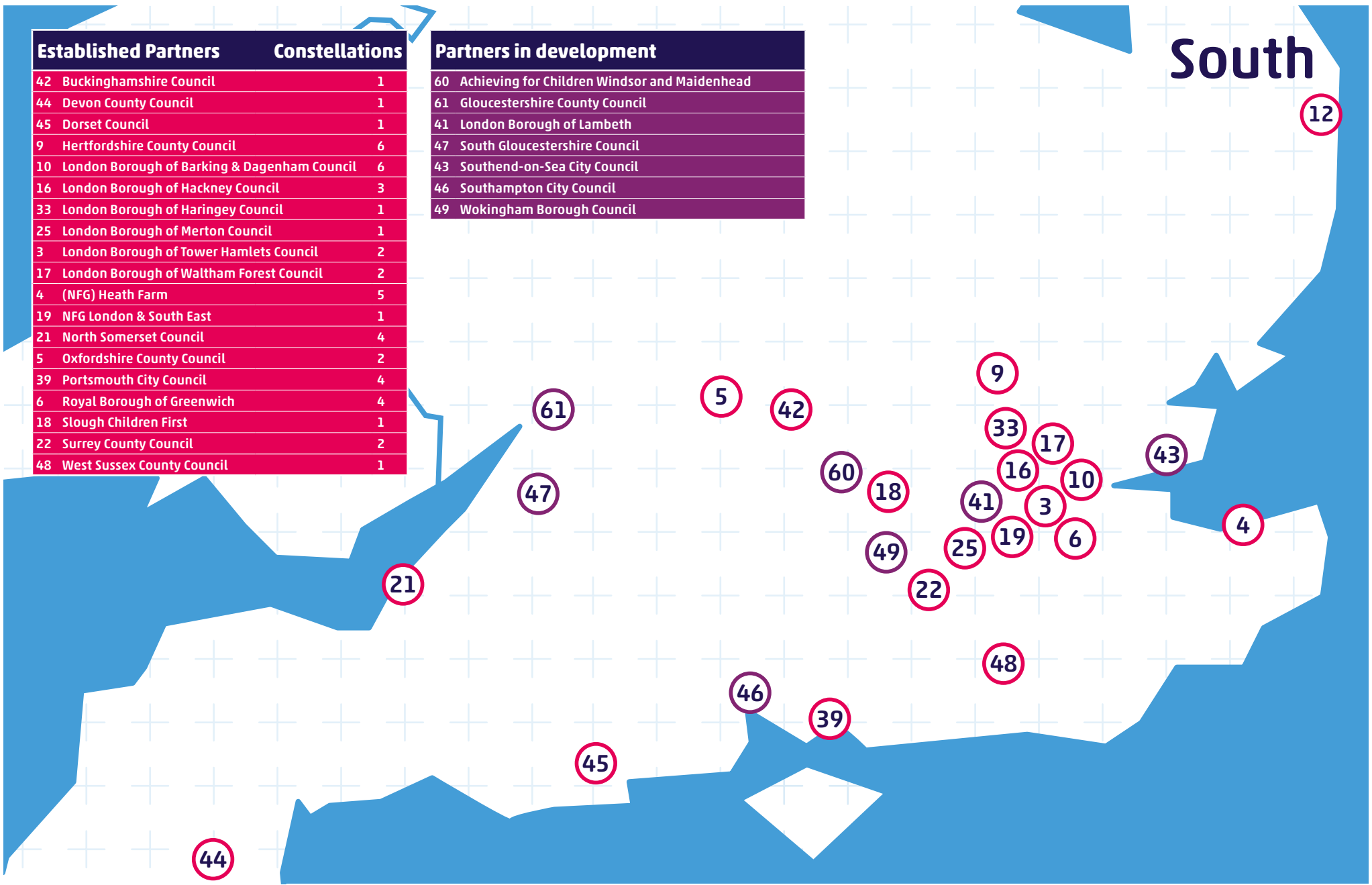
# South

## Established Partners Constellations

42	Buckinghamshire Council	1
44	Devon County Council	1
45	Dorset Council	1
9	Hertfordshire County Council	6
10	London Borough of Barking & Dagenham Council	6
16	London Borough of Hackney Council	3
33	London Borough of Haringey Council	1
25	London Borough of Merton Council	1
3	London Borough of Tower Hamlets Council	2
17	London Borough of Waltham Forest Council	2
4	(NFG) Heath Farm	5
19	NFG London & South East	1
21	North Somerset Council	4
5	Oxfordshire County Council	2
39	Portsmouth City Council	4
6	Royal Borough of Greenwich	4
18	Slough Children First	1
22	Surrey County Council	2
48	West Sussex County Council	1

## Partners in development

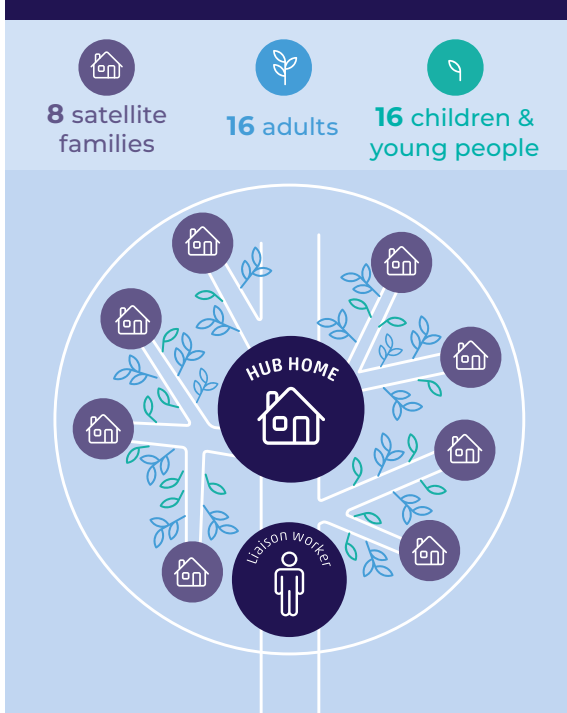
60	Achieving for Children Windsor and Maidenhead
61	Gloucestershire County Council
41	London Borough of Lambeth
47	South Gloucestershire Council
43	Southend-on-Sea City Council
46	Southampton City Council
49	Wokingham Borough Council



# Mockingbird Population

This page shows point in time programme population from 89 active constellations in 36 partners in March 2022. Data collected from those constellations is summarised on the following pages.

## The average Mockingbird constellation



**89 constellations**  
an average of  
2.5 per service

**2,973 people**  
involved in or  
benefiting from  
Mockingbird

**674 satellite families**

**519 siblings**  
supported by  
Mockingbird

**1,448 children & young people**

- 910** mainstream fostering
- 283** birth
- 91** family & friends
- 54** staying put
- 52** adoption
- 49** special guardianship order
- 9** residential

**1,525 adults**

- 1074** satellite carers
- 233** other adults
- 155** hub carers
- 63** liaison workers

## MAY 2021

We had our first meeting since lockdown! It was an Eid Party at the hub home. Everyone bought food and it was lovely to be together again. Liaison Worker

Six of the 11 young people in the constellation are from an Eastern European background and none of the carers share their first languages. To support our constellation we are building a library of CDs, books, magazines, games and are searching for comics and books in the young peoples first languages. The aim is that over time the whole constellation will add to the library and get involved in exchanging and sharing ideas, activities, and joint experiences. Hub home carer

# Community support

As the country moved beyond social distancing restrictions, constellations grasped opportunities to connect and have fun together again, with 1,190 social activities taking place in 2021-2022, well over double the number that took place in the previous year.

Nationally, we saw 347 training sessions taking place in constellations and hub home carers providing 321 mentoring and coaching sessions.

The number of sleepovers nearly doubled to 6,596 overnights in 2021-2022.

When comparing instances of planned sleepovers, emergency sleepovers and daytime support in 2021-2022, 55% of all instances were daytime support, 41% were planned sleepovers and 4% were emergency sleepovers.



**over 14,000 instances of one-to-one support**

In addition to sleepovers and daytime support, this year we captured data on one-to-one support in person or via phone call, video call or text message. There were over 14,000 instances of one-to-one support recorded across the national programme.

This year also saw an increase in the number of birth family and sibling visits supported through Mockingbird, with 226 recorded.

“My children and I are really enjoying seeing each other at Sali’s house! Our last visit was lovely as we all felt we could finally be ourselves without someone constantly watching us in a clinical environment.

Sali’s house gives us somewhere where we can feel more at home and relaxed. The children and I didn’t stop laughing at our last visit.... we all had so much fun!

Sali and her partner are very welcoming and put us all at our ease. I’m really looking forward to seeing my children there again. It’s amazing how much better we all feel going to Sali’s. I’m very grateful to Mockingbird for giving us this lovely space where my children and I can have far better-quality time together!”

**Birth mum’s feedback after having family time supported by a Mockingbird hub home carer at their home.**

**JUN**  
2021

I am really enjoying being a part of Mockingbird and can’t sing its praises any higher! Every foster carer should have this in place, not only is it fantastic for the children to be a part of but also the support and reassurance it provides for the carers too. Satellite Carer

School Bubbles keep ‘bursting’ which means carers and children are isolating and have missed out on events and visits. We try to find other ways to do things online so everyone is supported, it’s not the same but it helps. Liaison Worker

I can’t believe all these kids are in care like me. It’s amazing, I thought it was just me. Young Person



# A really big family

**With nearly 1,500 children and young people in Mockingbird constellations, there are thousands of stories of individuals and communities providing each other with support, love, guidance and new opportunities.**

Being part of a national community also offers young people the opportunity to try new things, meet new people and make their voices heard.

During the long winter 2021 lockdown, six young people: Intisa, Hawau, Liam, Lilly, Mariam and Tom who were part of Mockingbird constellations across the country, came together online to form a production team and collaborate on an animated film to share their stories and experiences of being part of Mockingbird.

**Watch the finished film here [Mockingbird: A really big family](#)**



**AUG**  
2021

There are a few year six children going up to secondary school next month so the hub home carer invited them for tea at his house with Sam, one of our teenagers who could share his experiences of going up to high school. Sam is happy to look out for the younger ones as they settle in. This is not only brilliant for those moving up but also for the self esteem of the older child. Liaison Worker

**SEP**  
2021

The fuel shortage cancelled our trip to seaside, but we planned Sunday lunch instead. It felt like an extended family with everyone getting along and the young people making an effort too. Home Hub Carer

# Mockingbird Nest

Since 2019, young people from Mockingbird constellations across the UK have been joining together for a series of creative activities and projects supported by professional guest artists and theatre practitioners.

Young people joining the Nest programme have co-designed and taken part in a wide range of workshops, including: animation, jewellery-making, drumming, rap, filmmaking, painting, print-making, graffiti-writing, glass painting, cake making, collage, mad science and more.

Lockdowns and social distancing meant Nest sessions had moved online in 2020 with art materials sent to members at home. In October 2021 everyone was finally able to get back together in real life and attendees took part in a collaborative painting workshop at Midlands Art Centre (MAC) in Birmingham.

Since then, a blended approach has been taken with both online and

in person sessions offered. We are excited that from 2023, Nest will be offered regionally to give more young people the opportunity to be involved.

The success of the online Nest sessions inspired us to offer a series of adult creative wellbeing sessions called Mockingbird Chorus, between December 2020 – March 2021 76 carers and liaison workers attended sessions.



**OCT**  
2021

This month saw the return of Nest in real life. It was lovely to take two of the children from the hub and we had so many firsts. First time on a train, first time on a day trip to Birmingham and the first time they took part in Nest. At first they were unsure, but both had a fantastic time. They both enjoyed the art workshops and produced some interesting paintings. They have also formed a lovely friendship and I am hoping they continue to be a positive influence to each other. Hub home carer

# Growing up in Mockingbird

**When I joined Mockingbird, I was 15. At that point I did not know what to expect from it. I was very nervous. The first person that I met was my hub carer Judith – she is amazing and loves everybody equally. She makes me feel welcome and I enjoy being in her presence. She makes me feel at home.**

When I met the rest of the constellation of Mockingbird it was unusual, but it was very exciting to meet new people who were just like me. All the adults and children were accepting of everyone no matter who you were or what you looked like, this is because of us all being in the same boat.

Over time I have made relationships with more and more people and have met new friends. From my point of view Mockingbird is more than family: it is a collection of likeminded people all sharing ideas and thoughts and making amazing things happen. I have become more confident with groups of people and have explored new things such as performing with the Nest group.

Our constellation do activities together and I get support from all the carers, including my carer. We go all over the country to explore, for example day trips out sightseeing in London or going to stay at Castleton for the week and going on walks to see the amazing surroundings with all your friends that you have made from being within Mockingbird. So, from my point of view Mockingbird is amazing.

I'm at university currently, Mockingbird has improved my relationships with people and boosted my confidence. I thank the Mockingbird team for making a difference.



**OCT**  
2021

One of our children told his carer that he “feels like he has a friend now”. He’d requested a play date with hub home carer’s grandson, and they went to the cinema together. It is lovely to see.  
Home Hub Carer

Our hub home carer supported a planned return home for a mother and baby. Without Mockingbird the level of support to allow them home together would not have been available.  
Liaison worker

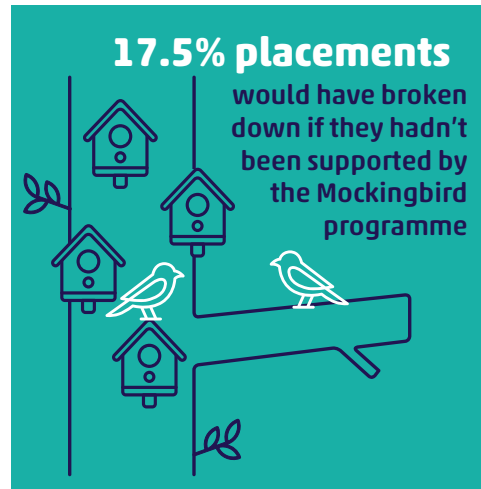
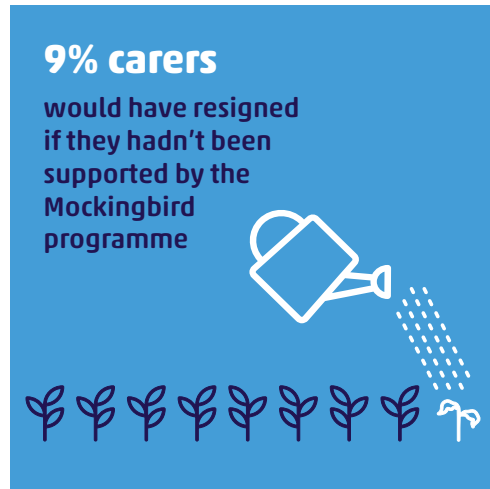
# Retention and stability

Relationships formed in Mockingbird constellations offer countless opportunities for supportive and restorative interventions led by the hub home carer and liaison worker with the aim of maintaining stability in satellite families.

Key data is captured to allow an understanding of how Mockingbird activity contributes to the stabilisation of relationships and therefore placements that may have otherwise resulted in a young person moving or a carer giving notice.

Of the 1,775 satellite carers participating in the programme between May 2018 and March 2022, services reported 162 would have resigned without the support provided by the Mockingbird programme.

Of the 2,175 children and young people in placements participating in the programme between May 2018 and March 2022, services reported 382 placement breakdowns have been avoided



11 year old Lewis and his long-term foster carer of six years joined our constellation last year. Lewis has learning difficulties and during repeated COVID lockdowns Lewis and his carer became incredibly isolated and lonely. The carer was clearly burned out but had refused respite prior to joining Mockingbird as they were worried that Lewis would have not be able to form a relationship with another carer or cope well away from them.

We began spending time with Lewis at home to get to know him and learn about his needs and what he enjoys. Last week Lewis came on his first Mockingbird sleepover, we had his favourite film to watch and followed his bedtime routine, it went very well! The foster carer has told us they feel less stressed after a day to themselves and were reassured that Lewis was being cared for by people he knew, and had enjoyed himself on the sleepover.

Hub home carer

**NOV**  
2021

It was my first Mockingbird social this month. It's so reassuring to know that there is support, help and advice on hand, if needed. Particularly as I am a single carer and family can't always support us. Thank you so much everyone. Satellite Carer

I love the forums they are really informative with brilliant ideas from other hub carers. It is great to be able to share experiences and talk to others about various issues including the activities hub home carers run and engage young people. Hub home carer

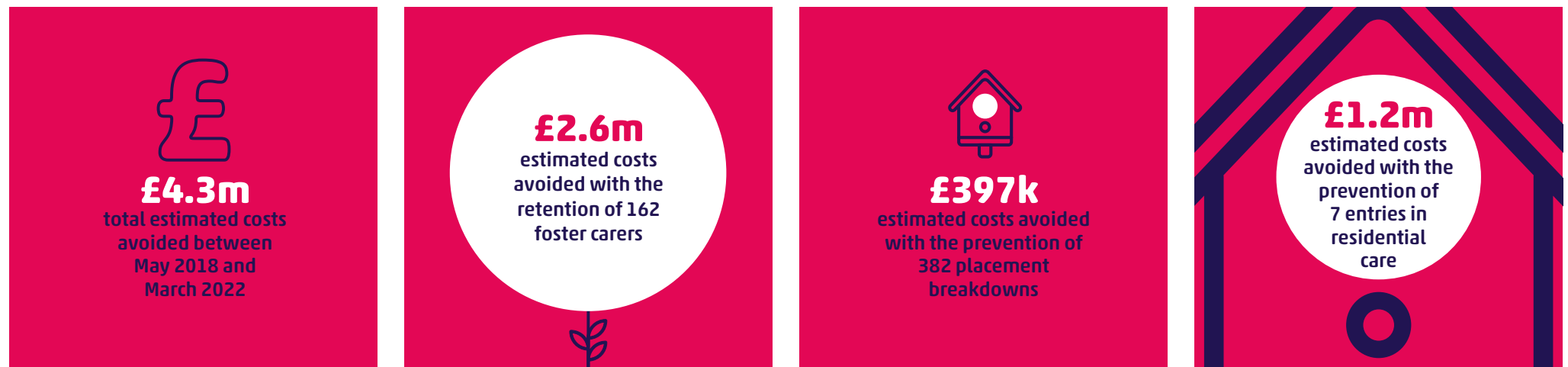
The friendships our children are making are priceless, these will be constant throughout their young lives. Hub home carer

# A Sustainable System

Mockingbird is an invest to save model. Independent evaluation of 12 services between 2017-2020 found that for every £1 invested in the programme by a fostering service there has been a saving of 99 pence.

[Read the full independent evaluation 2017-2020 here.](#)

The infographics below show cumulative estimated costs avoided using data collected 2018 – 2022. The programme has grown each year and some satellite carers and children and young people will have joined or left in a particular year, or continued participating through multiple years.



**DEC**  
2021

I love going to the hub house. We get to have sleepovers and make things, play games this week I got to pick our dinner. We have parties too. My favourite was at Christmas we got to see Santa and had lots of party food. The hub is amazing. I have made friends there too and like them. Young Person



**JAN**  
2022

This month our hub home carers came down with Covid. It was wonderful to see how the whole constellation rallied around, offering both practical and emotional support to the hub home carers and each other, just like an extended family should. Liason Worker



**The Fostering Network is the UK's leading fostering charity. We are the essential network for fostering, bringing together everyone who is involved in foster care.**

We support foster carers to transform children's lives and we work with fostering services and the wider sector to develop and share best practice.

We work to ensure all fostered children and young people experience stable family life and we are passionate about the difference foster care makes. We champion fostering and seek to create vital change so that foster care is the very best it can be.

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