



A Bed or a Cooker? Choice for Care Leavers.

A Report by the Care Leavers' Foundation on Setting up Home Grants for children leaving public care.

October 2011

Background

In 2009 the Care Leavers' Foundation with Children and Young People Now (CYPNow) magazine published a survey of Setting up Home Grants which showed enormous inconsistencies across different local authorities, with only a handful providing anything like the amount needed to purchase the basic essentials of setting up a first home.

Our full 2009 report can be read at

<http://www.thecareleaversfoundation.org/documents/APlacetoCallHome-ASurveyonLeavingCareGrants.pdf>

Shopping basket revisited

In October 2011 we took our shopping basket back to the till and found that the list of basic items checks out at between £2786.93 and £2,900. We began with the list of basic items identified in an earlier survey by campaigning charity A National Voice and modified this using up to date lists from three local authority areas. In the 2009 survey shoppers from across the country took to the High Street to give us price comparisons and come up with recommendations based on the most frugal shopping strategies. Our revised survey was desk based using the internet to source price information from budget/discount merchants. Although one or two items seemed a bit costly, others were 'cheap as chips' and as low as could be got anywhere; it isn't realistic to think that every care leaver will manage to access every single item at the lowest available price so we think this new list gives a fair indication of what is needed. We are assuming that everything is the cheapest available, also there are no replacement costs allowed and we know that if you pay under a tenner for a duvet set in a supermarket or discount store it is not going to last as long as one you pay five times the price for in John Lewis. So care leavers have to make things last, as there is no access to 'second time around' support.

This in itself is a problem as many care leavers experience instability in their early lives as young householders. We have not made any provision for transport or moving costs which is another thing we believe as corporate parents local authorities should be making some allowance for. If a sensible setting home grant allowance was standardised across the country, local authorities could retain a small amount to assist with future moves. It appears that there is a huge variation in practice between authorities when it comes to supporting and planning the move too. Some care leavers report having a great deal of help to shop around and get their first flat ready, however we found one borough that arbitrarily spends all of the allowance on white goods, leaving their care leavers no resource to purchase anything else!

Statutory provision called for

The Care Leavers' Foundation believes that it is now time that the Government took a lead and set a statutory minimum Setting up Home allowance of £3,000. The introduction of a statutory Higher Education Bursary has been effective in ensuring the least generous local authorities are no longer

able refuse support for care leavers wishing to go to university. This affects only a small number of care leavers. The Setting up Home grant is something that every care leaver will need at some stage in their life; it is only fair that care leavers have access to the same resources regardless of where they live. A local authority might spend between £166,000 and £1,100,000 to keep a child in care for four years. It makes no sense at all, given this level of investment in taking children into the care of the state which is intended to reduce suffering and improve life chances, to then abandon children leaving care into physical environments that are under resourced.

Local Variations

In September 2011 CYPNow sent a freedom of information request sent to all 152 councils in England which was answered by 114 of them. Returns showed that at the bottom end of provision Slough, Nottingham City and Essex councils offer maximum leaving care grants of just £750, £784 and £850 respectively. More realistically, City of London and Halton councils give care leavers up to £2,500, Milton Keynes up to £2,464.50 and Richmond upon Thames up to £2,274. The maximum leaving care grant is set at £1,000 in 17 councils and stands between just £1,100 and £1,500 in 56. Only 24 councils offer a maximum setting up home grant of £2,000 or more to children leaving care.

CYPNow also claim that the actual amount young people receive is often much less. They also asked local authorities to state the actual average grant paid to care leavers in the last twelve months, as well as the amount set by policy. These ranged from £145 in one local authority to £2,274 in the most generous.




















Whilst it must be acknowledged that there are legitimate circumstances where a local authority must have discretion to release Leaving Grants in a phased way (so for example we could speculate that the amount of £145 was for bedding and towels for a young person moving into a furnished room in a hostel and the rest was yet to come) there is clear evidence that too many local authorities are simply making inadequate provision for youngsters starting out in their independent lives. What is most depressing speaking to leaving care workers on the front line is that they too often feel powerless and depressed about the situations they have to put their care leavers in and for too many it really is a simple matter of choice : would you like a cooker or a bed?























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See below for details of the 'shopping basket' for our recent mini survey and CYPNow findings from Councils.




















	Tesco/Tesco Direct	Wilkinson Plus
Bin	 <p>45l Plastic Touch Open Bin £12.00</p>	 <p>Bin Lift Lid Silver 25ltr £6.50</p>
Cutlery	 <p>Eclipse 32 piece Cutlery Set £18.00</p>	 <p>Wilkinson Cutlery Set Stainless Steel 20 Piece £30.00</p>
Bread bin	 <p>Tesco Stainless Steel Bread bin £8.50</p>	 <p>Bread Bin Roll Top Stainless Steel £9.99</p>
Crockery/dinner set	 <p>Tesco Matt Dinner Set 12pce Cream £13.50</p>	 <p>Wilko Everyday Value Porcelain Dining Set White 12 Piece £4.56</p>
Crockery/mugs		 <p>Mug Set Porcelain 4 Piece £4.50</p>
Kitchen utensils	 <p>Brabantia Kitchen Utensil Set £20.00</p>	 <p>£35.00 approx (NB these items are examples of what is included within the price)</p>
Pan set	 <p>Tesco Aluminium Non Stick Black 3 Piece Sauce pan set £18.00</p>	 <p>Wilko Saucepan Set Easy Clean 5 Piece £10.00</p>
Airer for clothes	 <p>Metaltex concertina airer £15.00</p>	 <p>Wilko Airer 3 Fold 6.06m £6.48</p>
Frying pan	 <p>Tesco Aluminium Non Stick Frypan 25.5cm Black £5.00</p>	 <p>Wilko Everyday value Fry Pan Non Stick Aluminium Metallic Grey 24cm £2.75</p>
Oven dishes	 <p>Pyrex Ceramic Rect Roaster 35X23cm Blue £12.00</p>	 <p>Wilko Kitchen Roaster Non Stick Rectangular £7.50</p>

Cooker	 Beko D532S 50cm Double Cavity electric Cooker £199.97	 Indesit Cooker K3E1AIR £175.00
Larder fridge Fridge freezer	 Frigidaire FRE216A Fridge Freezer £189.97	 Indesit Fridge Freezer BAAN12S £296.00
Glasses	 Tesco mixer glass, 4 pack £3.00	 Right Price Hi-ball Glasses x 4 £0.77
Table and chairs	 Chicago 4 Seat Compact Living Set, Oak Effect £99.00	 Breakfast Set 3 Piece £28.00
Storage containers	 17 pc food storage set £5.00	 Wilko Food Storage Containers £2.00 (2 x £1.00)
Washing machine	 Candy GO292 Washing Machine £299.97	 Indesit Washing Machine IWD7145S £330.00
Tea towels	 * Tesco butchers stripe tea towels, 3 pack £4.25	 Wilko Kitchen Tea Towel Black x 3 £3.50
Mop	 Tesco Wringing Cloth Mop £3.00	 Wilko Strip Mop £2.12
Broom	 Tesco rubber bristle broom £6.00	 Right Price Broom Soft £1.94
Dustpan and brush	 Tesco Dustpan and Brush £2.00	 Wilko Dustpan Set Pearlised Blue £0.84
Vacuum cleaner	 Russell Hobbs 18154 1600w Simply Clean Upright £50.00	 Zanussi Vacuum La Vita e Bella Bagged 1800w Zan3322 £49.50

Washing up bowl	 Tesco Value Bowl £2.00	 Wham Bowl Square Silver 38cm £1.50
Dishcloths/sponges	 Tesco Value Dish Cloths £0.75	 Wilko Cellulose Sponge Cloths x 4 £1.06
Bucket	 Minky floorcare Bundle Set £15.00	 Bucket General Purpose Black 14.5ltr £0.97
Mop bucket		 Wilko Everyday Value Mop Bucket Silver £2.18
Microwave	 Tesco MM08 Value Microwave £29.97	 Wilko Everyday Value Microwave Manual White 700w 17ltr £32.00
Draining rack	 Tesco Value Draining Rack No image available £3.00	 Addis Essentials Draining Rack Teal £2.86
Kettle	 Casdon Breakfast Set £9.97	 Wilko Everyday Value Cordless Kettle 1.7ltr £5.49
Toaster		 Fine Elements Toaster 2 Slice £4.99
Iron	 Tesco IRSS1611 1700W Steam Iron £6.97	 Fine Elements Iron Steam 1400w £5.98
Ironing Board	 Tesco Slim Ironing Board 110x30cm £11.99	 Wilko Board Ironing Sleeve £5.50
Double bed	 Lincoln Double Bed Frame, Cream £99.00	 Faux Leather Double Bed Brown £80.00





Mattress	 Airsprung Melbourne Sprung Small Double Mattress £90.00	 Keswick Mattress Rolled Double £90.00
Wardrobe	 Hatton Beech Effect 2 Door Wardrobe £85.00	 Santa Monica Wardrobe 2 Doors £95.00
Chest of Drawers	 Fresno 4 Drawer Chest, Oak Effect £70.00	 Storage Unit Light Frame 4 Drawer £40.00
Bedside locker	 Fresno 2 Drawer Bedside, Oak Effect £25.00	 Storage Box Faux Leather 3 Drawer £23.00
Bedside lamp	 Tesco ceramic pebble lamp £7.00	 Wilko Opus Table Lamp Berry £4.96
Clock	 Tesco Value wall clock £2.50	 Wilko Clock Wall Round Black £2.50
Mirror	 Basic Mirror - Black 30x40cm £10.00	 Wilko Mirror Nordic Pine Effect 48inx12in £15.00
Mattress protector	 Tesco waterproof mattress protector, double £3.00	 Wilko Luxury Mattress Protector Quilted Double £7.00
Bedset x 2	 Tesco Herringbone Print Duvet Set Double, Dark Natural £12.00 (£6.00 each)	 Wilko Everyday Value Reversible Duvet Set Chocolate Double £13.96 (£6.98 each)
Duvet	Value Double Duvet, 13.5tog No image available £7.78	 Supersoft Polycotton Duvet 13.5 Tog Double £12.00
Pillows	 Tesco Pillow & Protectors Twinpack £8.81	 Wilko Everyday Value Pillows 2 Pack £2.97

Mirror	 Tesco Extendable Mirror £8.00	 Everyday Value Shaving Mirror £2.50
Sofa	 Stanza Small Suede Effect Sofa, Paprika £99.00	 Serena Sofa Faux Leather Black 2 Seat £195.00
TV stand/unit	 Tesco Premium TV Stand For Up to 32 inch Screen TV's £49.97	 Levv High Gloss TV Stand For Up to 32 inch Screens Black £48.00
Coffee table	 Nico Coffee Table, Walnut £35.00	 Cara Coffee Table Black Glass Split Lower Shelf £48.00
Towels	 Tesco Towel Bale red £22.00	 Wilko Bath Towel Classic Pink £8.94 (£4.47 each)
Toilet Brush	Tesco Chrome Toilet Brush No image available £5.00	 Wilko Everyday Value Bathroom Toilet Brush & Holder £0.50
Bathmat	 Finest Towelling Bathmat Charcoal £10.00	 Wilko Bath Mat Clear Transparent PVC £3.75
Bin	 Tesco 3L pedal bin £5.00	 Right Price Pedal Bin Round White £2.75
Laundry bin/basket	 Laundry basket, plum £7.00	 Wilko Pop Up Laundry Bin White 35cm x 50cm £5.00
5 x bulbs	 Tesco Lights £4.00	 Wilko Clear Round Bulbs Small Edison Screw 40w £1.97

5x lampshades	 Tesco counter shade, 23cm £16.00 (£3.20 each)	 Right Price Coolie Shade Non Electrical Cream 12in £13.75 (£2.75 each)
Smoke alarms (if not fitted)	 Fire Angel Mk2 10 Year Sealed Smoke Alarm £14.00	 E I Electronics Smoke Alarm Smart £19.97
Fire extinguisher and fire blanket	 Fire Angel Super Foam Fire Extinguisher £13.00  Fire Angel Fire Blanket £17.00	 E I Home Safety Kit £27.48
1 x rug for hallway	 Universal Non Slip Rug Grip £12.00	 Wilko Rug Shaggy Red 67cmx130cm £18.50
Doormats (one inside one outside)	 Jumbo thick coir outdoor mat £20.00  Decorative Home Doormat £15.00	 Wilko Door Mat Rubber Scraper 60cmx40cm £2.74  Wilko Mat Coir 40cmx60cm £3.00
4 sets of curtains	 Tesco Plain canvas Unlined Belt Top Curtains W229xL183cm (W90xL72in) – Pink £28.00 (£7.00 each)	 Java Curtains Lined With Tiebacks Chocolate 46inx54in £60.00 (£15.00 each)
4 curtain rail sets	 23mm Value Wood Curtain Pole, White 120cm £32.00 (£8.00 each)	 Wilko Arezzo Curtain Pole Extendable Silver Effect 150cm-280cm £41.88 (£10.47 each)
Calculator	 Casio Fxgrplus Calculator £6.87	 Wilko Calculator Pocket £1.32

File for bills	 Silver Mesh Stackable Lettertray £4.00	 Wilko Box File with Index Files x 6 £3.80
Ornaments/Vases	 Tesco Conical Tank Vase 25cm £10.00	 Wilko Flare Vase Glass Clear Small £3.00
Pictures	N/A	 Wilko Wall Art Rose Canvas Cream 48cmx48cm £8.00
Cushions	 Tesco Basic Cushion, Chocolate 40X40cm £8.00 (£4.00 each)	 Pleated Cushion Red 43cmx43cm £8.00 (£4.00 each)
Throws	 Tesco feather faux fur throw grey £15.00 (£7.50 each)	 Wilko Popcorn Throw Red 127cmx152cm £30.00 (£15.00 each)
TOTAL COST	£1934.77	£2013.72

Additional Costs

	Argos	Currys
TV	 Alba 16 Inch HD Ready LED TV - Black. £89.99	 ESSENTIALS C16LDIB11 16" HD Ready LED TV £89.99
CD Radio/Stereo	 Bush Portable CD/MP3 Radio Player - Black. £24.99	 LOGIK LCD CRDB10 DAB Clock Radio with CD Player £34.97
	Tv Licensing UK	
TV Licence	£145.50	
	Moneysupermarket.com	
Basic home insurance	This item is specific to individuals, based on where they live, please visit the above website to find the best quote.	

	B&Q	Carpet Right
Flooring	 B&Q Value Vinyl Plank £5.98 per m ²	 Balterio Senator Brushed Oak £15.99 per m ²
Carpet for 2 rooms 10x12ft (3.05x3.66m approx.) 9 x 12ft (2.7x3.66m approx.)	 Value Cord Carpet Blue (W)4m £111.44 (£3.99 per m ²)	 Jubilee Twist Doeskin £391.72 (£13.99 per m ²)
Vinyl for kitchen and bathroom 8x 9ft (2.4x2.7m approx.) & 9 x 12ft (2.7x3.66m approx.)	 B&Q Value Vinyl Plank £125.58 (£5.98 m ²)	 Traditions Ophelia £587.79 (£27.99 per m ²)
	Comet	Currys
Fitting of cooker	£79.49	£85.00
	Garden Centres	
Plants	From 50p - £20.00	
	Argos	Littlewoods
Bag(s) or suitcase(s)	 Go Explore Set of 2 Suitcases - Navy £24.99	 2 Piece Black Spinner Set £89.00

As an estimate of the above costs, the minimum amount they would equate to is approximately £800, therefore a care leaver would be looking at this sum on top of the comparisons offered through Tesco/TescoDirect and Wilkinsons, thus the final costs would be between £2734.77 and £2813.72.

STOP PRESS

We added home insurance quoted at £52.16 from MoreThan for a first floor Housing Association flat at a Midlands post code in a 'decent' area and a Council Property in the Northwest came out at £86.68, both monthly paid policies for an 18 year old male taking out first time insurance. Ironically the lowest amount you can get contents insurance for is £5,000!

THIS TAKES OUR NEW MINIMUM AMOUNT REVISED FOR 2011 PRICES TO £2786.93 and £2,900.40 for basic essential items.

What the Councils Pay

Of the 114 councils who responded to *CYP Now's* request in September 2011, 94 provided an average figure for the sum paid to care leavers over the past two financial years. Payments declined in 25 areas, remained static in 43 councils and rose in 26.

Grants provided by council

City of London £2,500	Derbyshire County £1,550	Wirral £1,500
Halton £2,500	Barking & Dagenham £1,500	Blackburn with Darwen £1,454.95
Milton Keynes £2,464.50	Barnsley £1,500	Northamptonshire £1,400
Richmond Upon Thames £2,274	Bath & NE Somerset £1,500	Rutland £1,400
Tower Hamlets £2,200	Bexley £1,500	Sandwell £1,400
Wandsworth £2,100	Bournemouth £1,500	Sunderland £1,400
York City £2,100	Bracknell Forest £1,500	Blackpool £1,350
Cheshire East £2,050	Bristol City £1,500	Redcar and Cleveland £1,350
Cheshire West & Chester £2,050	Calderdale £1,500	Birmingham £1,300
Barnet £2,000	Camden £1,500	Lincolnshire £1,300
Bromley £2,000	Coventry £1,500	Newham £1,300
Derby City £2,000	Darlington £1,500	Southwark £1,300
Doncaster £2,000	Gateshead £1,500	Bradford £1,200
East Sussex £2,000	Hammersmith & Fulham £1,500	Bury £1,200
Medway £2,000	Haringey £1,500	Merton £1,200
Norfolk £2,000	Harrow £1,500	North Somerset £1,200
North East Lincolnshire £2,000	Havering £1,500	Salford £1,200
Oldham £2,000	Islington £1,500	Somerset £1,200
South Gloucestershire £2,000	Kensington & Chelsea £1,500	Stoke-on-Trent £1,200
Staffordshire £2,000	Lewisham £1,500	Suffolk £1,200
Stockport £2,000	Middlesbrough £1,500	Thurrock £1,200
Surrey £2,000	North Yorkshire £1,500	Bolton £1,150
Sutton £2,000	Northumberland £1,500	Rochdale £1,125
West Berkshire £2,000	Peterborough £1,500	Buckinghamshire £1,000
Lancashire £1,950	Poole £1,500	Cornwall £1,000
Durham £1,819	Rotherham £1,500	Croydon £1,000
Trafford £1,801.60	Shropshire £1,500	Devon £1,000
Hull City £1,800	Solihull £1,500	Dudley £1,000
Stockton-on-Tees £1,800	St Helens £1,500	Ealing £1,000
Bedford Borough £1,750	Walsall £1,500	Hampshire £1,000
Gloucestershire £1,750	Waltham Forest £1,500	Herefordshire £1,000
Reading £1,750	West Sussex £1,500	Hillingdon £1,000
Liverpool £1,645.50	Westminster £1,500	Isle of Wight £1,000
Leeds £1,600	Windsor & Maidenhead £1,500	Kent £1,000
		Kingston upon Thames £1,000

Plymouth £1,000	Central Beds Council	North Lincolnshire
Swindon £1,000	Cumbria	North Tyneside
Torbay £1,000	Dorset	Nottinghamshire
Wiltshire £1,000	East Riding of Yorkshire	Oxfordshire County
Worcestershire £1,000	Enfield	Portsmouth
Essex £850	Greenwich	Redbridge
Nottingham City £784	Hackney	Sefton
Slough £750	Hartlepool	Sheffield
Cambridgeshire Needs led	Hertfordshire	South Tyneside
Southampton Needs led	Hounslow	Southend-on-Sea
Isles of Scilly Cornwall	Kirklees	Tameside
issues on behalf	Knowsley	Telford & Wrekin
Information not supplied	Lambeth	Wakefield
by following councils	Leicester City	Warrington
Brent	Leicestershire	Warwickshire
Brighton & Hove	Luton	Wigan
	Manchester	Wokingham
	Newcastle upon Tyne	Wolverhampton

Research by Children and Young People Now and Kimberly Marsh, Care Leaver PhD Candidate and Graduate Teaching Assistant in Criminology

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