

# BEST PRACTICE BRIEFINGS: PEMBROKESHIRE VLE & QR CODE



The Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is an online platform designed with, by and for young people. It provides information, support and learning resources in order to aid a successful transition to living independently and help avert homelessness.

It uses the experiences of young people to inform content and ensure their needs are addressed. The site hosts seven interactive skills development modules covering a range of topics including;

- Budgeting
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Tasks involved in running a new homes
- Items required for a new home
- Tenancy Administration
- Housing Options
- Consequences of a tenancy failure

These feature activities, videos and resources which are co-designed and produced by young people. The platform also hosts a 'Voices' element; a library of audio clips featuring young people talking about their own experiences of related matters. Whilst the primary aim of this is to afford users an opportunity to learn from others, it also provides those with lived experiences a chance to express their views and opinions; which are presented to associated sectors and organisations to help shape their services. Finally, a 'Big Blue Button' facility enables young people to access youth workers live via video conferencing, or a messenger provision from within the actual portal.

As part of the VLE, the Pembrokeshire Youth Service have also developed the QR Code Project. According to the Office for National Statistics, 100% of young people aged 16-25 have a smart device that they access for on average 2 hours and 34 minutes a day. The QR Code Project looks to utilise these devices and aims to give young people clearer guidance and advice on housing issues affecting them by providing it in a format they find easy to access and understand. Presenting the information in a straightforward way, avoiding any legal jargon.

Working with young people, housing providers and support services, the team create videos and other materials that can be easily accessed via the QR code on smart devices. The QR codes are included on a range of materials sent out to young people, including local authority letters, information cards and infographics.

## What does the scheme hope to achieve?

By providing information in this way, the QR Code Project hopes to reduce the level of anxiety experienced by young people when they receive correspondence do to with housing. This project aims to help deal with certain housing issues affecting young people, especially the factors which contribute to youth tenancy breakdowns and homelessness. Furthermore, by involving this age demographic in every aspect of the project, the project not only looks to inform, educate and guide young people, but also use the lived experiences to benefit others.

## Location

The VLE and the QR Code Project both currently take place in Pembrokeshire, and are run by the Pembrokeshire Youth Service in partnership with other teams in the local authority such as Housing. Given the quality of the service provided to young people through the VLE and the QR Code Project, at EYHC we would like both services available to young people across the breadth of the country, available in every Local Authority.



## Implementation

The QR Code project relies on a positive youth work relationship with young people who are empowered to design and produce the content, which is linked to the QR code. Examples of videos produced collaboratively and informed by young people include; what to do if you find yourself homeless, explaining the recycling system in Pembrokeshire and what to do if you are a council tenant and receive a noise abatement letter. A joined up approach with relevant agencies can provide more opportunities to display the QR codes where they are accessible to young people.

As the videos are recorded on smartphones, edited with basic free software and linked with a free QR Code generator, the project has a minimal cost and can easily be replicated across the country by Youth Services.

The VLE is evolving as more young people benefit from the project. All young people who work through the course are asked for feedback and are invited to work with us to develop any suggestions for improvements they may have. Engagement with young people continues when they have completed the course.

## Results

By upskilling as many young people as possible through a Youth Work approach, both virtually and face to face, the project is aiming to make a positive impact on the numbers of young people reaching a crisis point with their housing situation. Through early intervention and education, we will contribute towards homelessness prevention for young people and relieve some pressure on statutory services.

So far, 87 individual young people have registered for Tenancy Skills on the VLE completing 137 Units with 1808 separate interactive activities. One young person said "...I'm 23 now and knew most of the answers... but I wouldn't have known them when I first moved in on my own at 18. The course should be made available for all school children".

The quality of the service provided to young people is such that, last year, the QR Code Project was recognized at the Welsh Government's Youth Excellence award, winning the Digital Innovation Award Category.

“ The course should be made available for all school children. ”  
Young person

## More Information

At EYHC, we will offer any help or support for Local Authorities to understand more about the QR Code Project. If you'd like to get in touch please contact:

**Bill Rowlands**  
Project Manager,  
End Youth Homelessness Cymru  
[billrowlands@llamau.org.uk](mailto:billrowlands@llamau.org.uk)

If you would like to make contact with the Pembrokeshire Youth Service Team directly please contact:

**David Walker** Youth Support Team Manager  
[david.walker@pembrokeshire.gov.uk](mailto:david.walker@pembrokeshire.gov.uk)

**Nick Hudd** Senior Youth Worker  
[nick.hudd@pembrokeshire.gov.uk](mailto:nick.hudd@pembrokeshire.gov.uk)

**Tim Ramsey** Senior Youth Worker  
[tim.ramsey@pembrokeshire.gov.uk](mailto:tim.ramsey@pembrokeshire.gov.uk)