

Looked after children

A holistic strategy

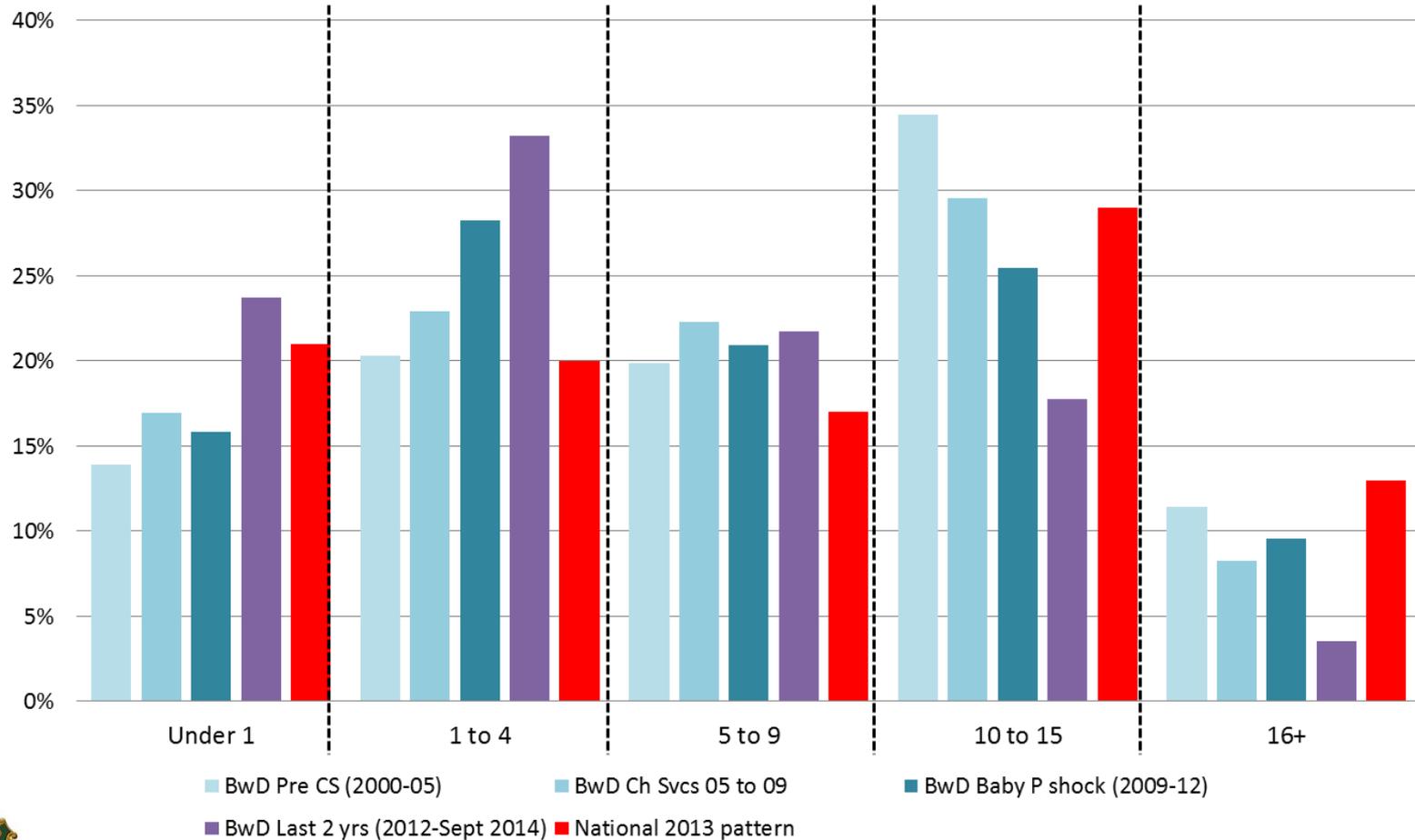
What constitutes an holistic strategy?



The BwD journey

- Lower than average and falling LAC population (360 – 319)
- Higher than average proportions of both under 1 and 1-4 year old LAC
- Lowest use of residential placements in the region (significantly less teenagers coming into care – 48 to 19 per year)

Analysis of the Age Profile of Children entering care since 2000



Strategy underpinning the data

- Edge of care provision – ASU
- Good quality assessments done early predicting ability to sustain change
- Focus on neglect and strategy around neglect
- Weekly data !

What is ASU?

- Short break and outreach for 8+
- Skilled staff
- 24/7 service
- Emergency beds available
- Meets needs of young people suffering neglect, CSE, behavioural issues and school problems.
- Builds relationships / provides young people with skills for life
- Builds resilience and confidence
- Supports families

Adolescent Support Unit

- ASU costs £400,000 per year to run.
- 28 less young people in care in 2013/14 = savings of around £1,248,000. Less £400,000 spend on ASU = £848,000 saving in year.
- Year on year savings.

Permanence planning

- Higher than average percentage of children placed for adoption and subject to SGO
- Higher than average proportion of Placement Orders
- Fewer children at home on care orders

Commissioning strategy

- Lower than average and reducing reliance on IFA placements, with lower than average costs

Commissioning placements in BwD – the central issues

- Relationship management
- The payment process
- Sensitive but professional handling of delicate matters
- Budget monitoring

- My feedback in terms of relationship management would be that you areExcellent at it!
- Very fair and will be upfront at the outset.
- You are realistic in that you can see both sides.
- You always advocate and try to get the best deal for Blackburn however you are still intent on securing quality.
- You go and see services and mediate really well when difficulties in relationships occur.
- You have positive understanding of the independent sector.
- You communicate well, and quickly. You give fair feedback, honest but constructive.



- *I have been Placements manager at Northern Care for over 7 years and Blackburn with Darwen local authority is one of the most professional authorities I deal with. They are excellent at supplying information at point of referral and are both approachable and amenable. They are open in their communication and genuinely appear to put the needs of the Young person first.*
- *The commissioner is very approachable and understanding when it comes to issues that may have developed in a particular placement. It is very much an approach around how the issue, or issues, can be resolved with minimum impact on the Young person rather than looking to apportion blame or absolve responsibility... It's how partnership working should be.*



Better outcomes for young people

- Better than average and improving placement stability
- Participation of young people greatly improved