

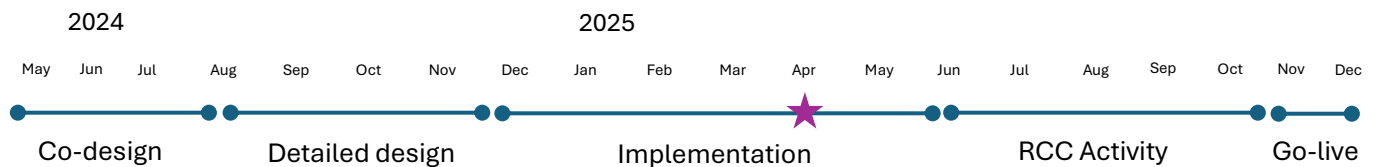


Update from Lucy Butler

Welcome to the second newsletter about the South East Regional Care Cooperative (RCC). These newsletters will update those working in or around children's social care on the RCC's progress as we get closer to go-live. It has been a busy few months since our last update. The capital projects funded by the DfE as part of the RCC are almost at completion, bringing 29 new beds for the region. Work is ongoing to plan how these will be shared among all LAs in the RCC. Please feel free to get in touch with me via the contact links at the end of the newsletter if you'd like to discuss anything RCC related.



Project timeline



Commissioning Update: Exciting Times in the South East!

Commissioning activity across the South East RCC is really taking shape. We're thrilled to share that five Local Authorities have now joined the BERRI pilot programme—fantastic news for the region! Training sessions for social workers and professionals have already started, and a small number of initial assessments have taken place. We'll share more detailed updates in the next newsletter, including our plans to develop the CANS assessment tool here in the South East. We've also been meeting with providers to talk about the RCC and our shared ambitions for the future. These sessions have been incredibly positive, with providers asking for them to continue—something we're now putting in place. It's clear there's a strong appetite to co-design the new landscape for children's services together, which is brilliant to see.

Later this month, we're bringing together commissioners and providers for a co-design and co-production session focused on cost-calculating tools—exploring how these tools need to work and connect with referral forms. It's an important step in shaping systems that are useful, transparent, and effective for everyone involved.

Finally, we recently had an inspiring day with our integrated commissioners in London. The energy in the room was palpable, with rich networking and a lot of best practice shared. We've got a series of follow-up sessions lined up, including a focus on procurement, planning, and a final session—shaped by commissioners themselves—on managing more complex integrated commissioning arrangements and risk.

These are exciting times for commissioning across the South East—and we look forward to keeping you updated as things continue to evolve!

Partner and Provider update

We are engaged with all seven ICB/ICSs and NHS England in the South East to co-design their involvement with the RCC. This includes working with their commissioners and seeking input from children with lived experience of DOLS and tier 4. Provider engagement is also ongoing. From June, we will host quarterly regional market engagement events.



Data update

Data sharing agreements have now been signed by all LAs participating in the RCC. The build of the data platform is ongoing, and we aim to begin to release functionality soon. Our regional sufficiency statement will be developed and released to the region in July. Please encourage colleagues to sign up to our mailing list by responding to this email if they'd like to receive it.

Workforce academy update

The Staff College have completed the research phase of their workforce academy design. They spoke to over 100 participants across the sector and have presented back several options to take forward in the design and implementation of the Academy. Themes include workforce development, career pathways, leadership development and cross-LA mentoring/buddying. The project team is now working to create a roadmap of how and when each initiative will be taken forward.

RCC set-up update

At our recent board meeting on the 24th March, it was agreed that the RCC will be incorporated as an independent social enterprise. The project team are now working with legal counsel to create and staff the company. We will look to fill several roles by December 2025. Keep an eye on the RCC's LinkedIn page for more details on this. We plan to open recruitment for most roles in July 2025. www.linkedin.com/company/south-east-rcc

Upcoming events

Three more workshops are planned for commissioning colleagues in Local Authorities, Health and Youth Justice. These are currently only open to colleagues in the South East RCC. See below for details and how to sign-up.

- 1) Skills workshop – Commissioning flexibilities: The new Procurement Act.
Date: Tue 29 April 2025 10:00 – 13.30. In person in central London.
Sign-up link: <https://bit.ly/Commissioningflexibilities>
- 2) Development workshop – planning homes for our children.
Date: Thu 22 May 2025 10:00 – 13:30. In person in central London.
Sign-up link: <https://bit.ly/planninghomes>
- 3) *Final theme to be announced*
Date: Wed 18 June 2025 10:00 – 15:30. In person in central London, including lunch.
Sign-up link: forthcoming in May.

Thank you for engaging with the South East RCC.

If you have any feedback or would like to discuss anything we've brought up in this newsletter, please get in touch via email: info@southeastrcc.gov.uk

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