

THE JOHN LEWIS PARTNERSHIP AND YOUR OWN PLACE CIC

FINAL IMPACT REPORT

August 2023 - March 2024

your own place

funded by the
John Lewis
Partnership
#Building
Happier
Futures

INTRODUCTION

Your Own Place, the **John Lewis Partnership** and the **Norfolk Virtual School** have been working in partnership to improve the life chances of **care-experienced young people**. As part of John Lewis' **Building Happier Futures programme**, Your Own Place CIC delivered Money, Housing and Tenancy workshops and support, to prevent homelessness and improve employability. The John Lewis store in Norwich offered ten care-experienced young people work experience opportunities at their Norwich store. To compliment this, they were offered support with Your Own Place to **increase** their **confidence gaining** and **sustaining tenancies**, with the aim of reducing homelessness. The partnership acknowledges how entwined safe and secure housing, money management and wellbeing are to sustaining employment.

THE PLAN

August 23
to
March 24



2

Engagement
drop-in
sessions



6

Two-hour AQA
accredited
workshops



40

One-to-one
sessions



Up to

8

trainees

alongside work experience opportunities at the Norwich John Lewis store

GROUP AND 1-2-1 WORKSHOP CONTENT

Your Own Place's Tenancy, Housing, Money and Cost of Living workshops focus on a range of content to support people looking to gain and sustain a home. The workshops are designed to **maximise interaction through fun** and include activities to **build on trainees' knowledge and confidence** with all aspects of maintaining their own place. These topics include managing **money, where to go for help and support**, as well as conversations around **wellbeing and looking after themselves**.



Setting the
scene



Skills and
Strengths



Building
Networks



Bills and
Budgeting



Housing
Options



Benefits



Getting
Help



Next Steps
and
Priorities



In August 2023, Your Own Place facilitators **attended two John Lewis Building Happier Futures drop-in sessions** to present **our support offer** using our interactive **PinPoint delivery style**. This allowed the **young people to meet the Your Own Place team**, see the style of our workshops, and ask **any questions**. Our facilitators spent the rest of the drop-in session **building rapport with the young people**, so they felt familiar and an initial relationship was built. It also had the added benefit that the Your Own Place team could **meet the Personal Advisors, Social Workers, support workers, foster parents and John Lewis staff** supporting the young people.



2

Engagement
drop-in sessions



10

young people
attended



9

expressed
interest

ONE-TO-ONE SESSIONS

HOW IT WENT

SEP 23 - MAR 24



6

Trainees



5*

Attended One-
to-One Sessions



45

One-to-One
Sessions



55

Hours of
delivery

Of the nine young people to express initial interest, six decided they wanted to work with us. The first one-to-one session focused on getting to know each other and discuss what the young people wanted to get out of sessions. This included discussing their **goals**, their **money** and **housing focus topics**, their **learning style**, where they felt most **comfortable meeting**, and anything else that could **support them**.

**One trainee declined one-to-one sessions*



HOW IT WENT

NOV 23 - JAN 24



6

Trainees



5*

Attended group workshops



6

Two-hour AQA accredited workshops



12

Hours of delivery



32

AQA certificates achieved



4

of the trainees **attended at least four of the six groups alongside balancing college, work, appointments, and other life commitments.** Trainees were **given the option to cover the missed units** within their one-to-one sessions **which they all opted for.**

5

trainees completed all six AQA units



**One trainee was unable to attend groups due to college commitments. See Page 6.*

OUTCOMES

Trainees are asked to **self-assess their knowledge, skills and confidence** at their first and last 1-2-1 session via a start and end questionnaire, rating themselves **1 to 5**. One equates to disagree and five to agree.

One trainee attended only two workshops and declined one-to-one sessions, therefore the below **numbers are out of 5 trainees.**

- Some trainees **scored themselves 5/5** at the start, so there was **no room for improvement**
- This is common. During some of the workshops young people realised that they didn't know as much as they initially thought, and scored themselves down at the end to reflect what they had learned.
- **People don't always know what they don't know!**

4 / 5

reported increased knowledge about **managing their money**

5 / 5

reported increased knowledge of how to **manage their bills**

4 / 5

reported increased understanding of **how debt works**

5 / 5

reported improved **understanding of housing options** available to them

4 / 5

reported feeling better about **finding solutions** to problems they might face

1 / 5

reported increased confidence **looking for information**

5 / 5

reported increased **confidence getting help**

5 / 5

reported increased confidence about **keeping their own home**

CASE STUDY: JAKOB'S JOURNEY



Jakob, an insightful, bright, and ambitious young man who just started living in semi-independent accommodation shared his reasons for wanting to work with us:

"I wanted to learn how to manage my money and start budgeting so I can start saving and travel. I was often in minus at end of month causing stress of not knowing if I could buy dinner for the next week."

Jakob balanced three days a week **at college** and two days working **at John Lewis** alongside the **workshops and 1-2-1s**. In the 1-2-1 sessions, **Jakob** explored his questions on understanding **payslips**, what **taxation** to expect, how work pay days were **affecting his benefits**, and **considering income needs** for his **next housing steps**.

The most important topic for Jakob was finding budgeting methods that work for him. He shared **"now I'm getting a wage I want to use it effectively"**. Together, we worked through a visual annual budget calendar to mark incoming and outgoing expenses. Jakob now uses it to plan all his expenses instead of relying solely on his direct debit list. This has resulted in him starting to save money!

"I actually had money left over this month! I'm budgeting much better. I now check I have enough for the bills I kept forgetting about like food and bus fare."

Jakob highlighted the group workshops helped him **"become more open minded and tolerant of others"**, a **key skill towards his customer facing role** at John Lewis. He received valuable encouragement and suggestions from the group with facing bills he was putting off sorting out.

After a 1-2-1 session discussing how and when to contact places that fitted with his schedule, he **contacted his utility company** to adjust a monthly payment date to better suit his budgeting needs and now **feels more confident in approaching other suppliers**. He also shared how discussing bill priorities has given him the confidence to make decisions on what he needs to do: **"I had to make a choice between gas or wifi and was able to make the choice of gas and delay the wifi as that felt the right priority."** Jakob also shared the value of finding out the support available to him as he moves forward: **"I didn't know anything about MAP, CA or Shelter before this."**

Jakob's Next Steps:

- Start saving money ready for independent living
- Plan what is needed for next housing steps such as moving in with friends
- Work out next career move which focuses on what matters to him

9
one-to-one
sessions

4
groups
attended

6
AQA
certificates
achieved

I know how to manage my money

I know how to manage my bills

I understand how debt works

I understand the housing options available to me

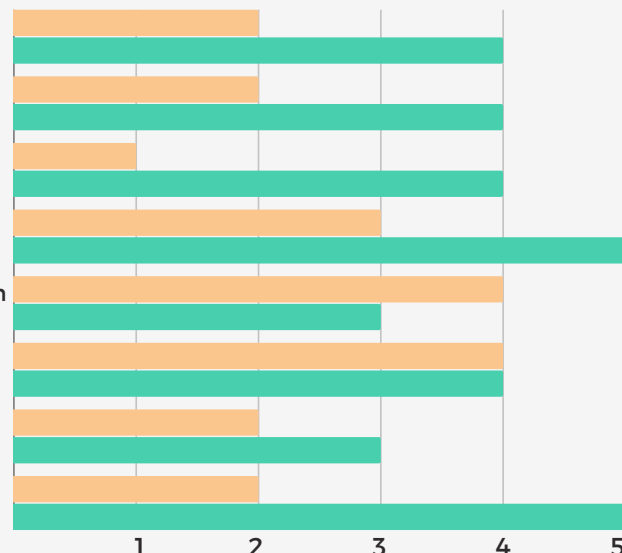
I am good at finding my own solutions to problems I face

I feel confident about looking for information

I feel confident about getting help

I feel confident about keeping my home

Start Score End Score



CASE STUDY: MASON'S JOURNEY

Mason, a **smart, resourceful** and **ambitious** young man **who has lived independently for a few years** shared his reasons for wanting to work with Your Own Place:

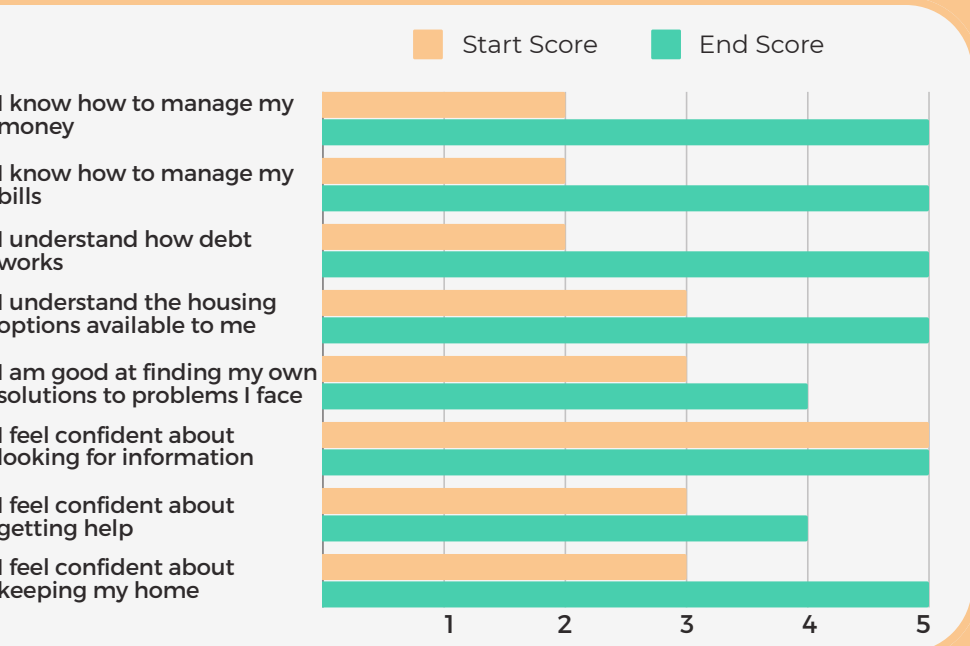
"I probably wouldn't have said yes if I'd not been to your other workshops. But I knew what you was about and there could be more to learn. I like to keep private but I also wanna take every opportunity to get somewhere in life."

Mason balanced working five days a week at John Lewis with attending group workshops and 1-2-1 sessions. In the 1-2-1s we explored Mason's concerns **communicating with his manager**, getting a **bank account**, how **work pay** would **affect benefits**, and **dealing with current debts**.



In previous workshops, Mason gained **confidence communicating** with his landlord, which we reflected on to draft an email to his manager requesting pay day information. Despite initial discomfort, Mason highlighted the importance of this for budgeting and planning for benefit changes. Throughout 1-2-1 sessions and group workshops, Mason discussed accruing debt and avoiding opening his mail. Towards the end of our time together, he **opened his post!** This enabled us to **organise paperwork** for the appointments we had arranged with a Debt Advisor, address landlord visits, and notify TV licensing. He shared **"The 1-2-1s allowed me to talk more freely about the debts I've got. Then I could start getting them sorted."**

Additionally, Mason focused on his career and housing goals. We covered what and how to achieve the steps needed for a mutual exchange, including repairing his property and paying his debts, and what how to communicate his career aims to John Lewis.



9
one-to-one
sessions

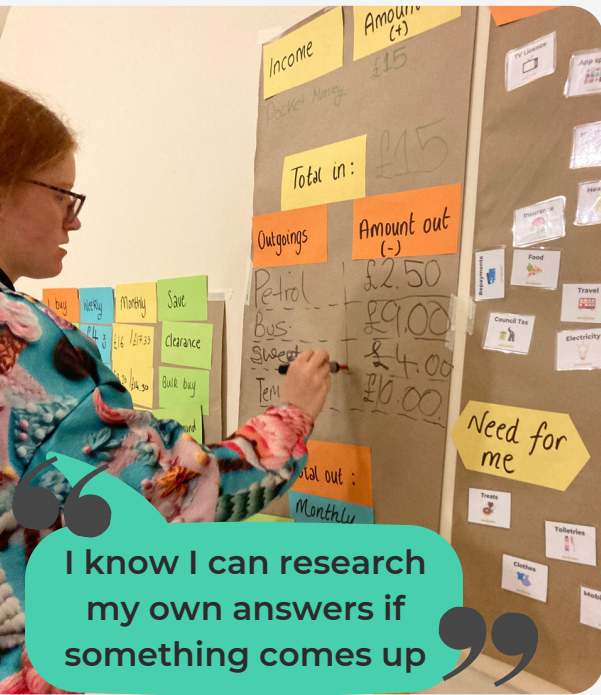
4
groups
attended

6
AQA
certificates
achieved

Mason's Next Steps:

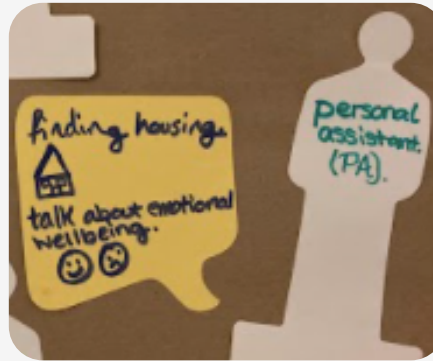
- Start repayments and home repairs to open up the option of a mutual exchange
- Continue working at John Lewis and communicate with them the career route that he wants
- Continue working with Shelter to manage debts

CASE STUDY: ROSIE'S JOURNEY



Rosie is a **creative, observant, and, self-assured** person, who currently lives with her foster carers. Rosie shared that she had **not yet considered her housing options or financial responsibilities** in preparation for when she turns 18.

Rosie chose not to share her reasons for attending our 1-2-1s, but we know they allowed her a **safe space** to be introduced to the topics for her journey to independent living.



Due to attending college full time, Rosie chose to meet us on **weekday evenings** after college.

We used familiar aspects of Rosie's life to guide her understanding of independent living considerations. For example, we tailored a **budget sheet** to her weekly allowance, focusing on priorities like food and travel to college, and discussed its **relevance** to her **future living situation**.

Drawing on Rosie's insights from friends and family, we examined **housing options**, expected **bills**, and **tenancy responsibilities**. Rosie evaluated the pros, cons, and consequences of independent living decisions, considering **where to seek support** when needed. During our final session, Rosie outlined her support network and specifically considered topics she wants to **discuss** with her **Personal Advisor**.



Rosie's Next Steps:

- Meet with Personal Advisor to explore next housing steps
- Reflect on work or education options at the end of college

14
delivery
hours

Our
commitment
to supporting
Rosie

10
return trips
from Norwich
to Great
Yarmouth

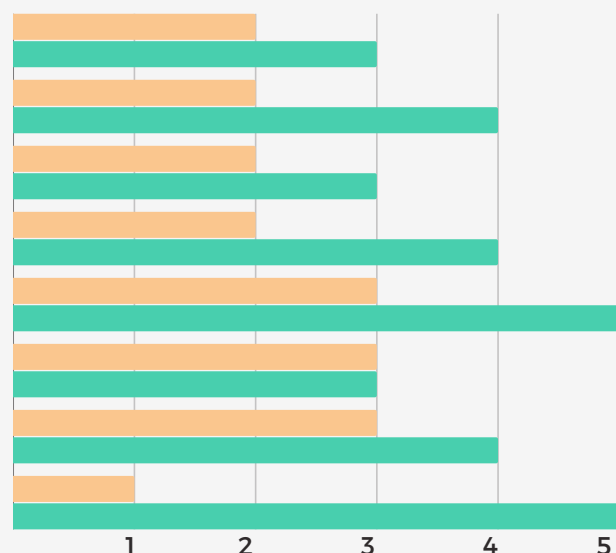
10
one-to-one
sessions

22
hours
travelling to
and from
sessions

6
AQA
certificates
achieved

I know how to manage my money
I know how to manage my bills
I understand how debt works
I understand the housing options available to me
I am good at finding my own solutions to problems I face
I feel confident about looking for information
I feel confident about getting help
I feel confident about keeping my home

Start Score End Score



CASE STUDY: LIZZIE'S JOURNEY

Lizzie is a **motivated, open-minded** and **curious** person who enjoys getting involved. Lizzie wanted to learn about bill payments, managing a tenancy, and to boost her confidence for living independently in the future.

Lizzie successfully completed all six AQA units via group and 1-2-1 sessions. She particularly enjoyed visually **customising budget sheets** and discussing the advantages and disadvantages of ways to earn money. Lizzie highlighted that loans and credit cards can serve as **emergency funds**, but that budgeting income and outgoings allows you to **plan effectively**.



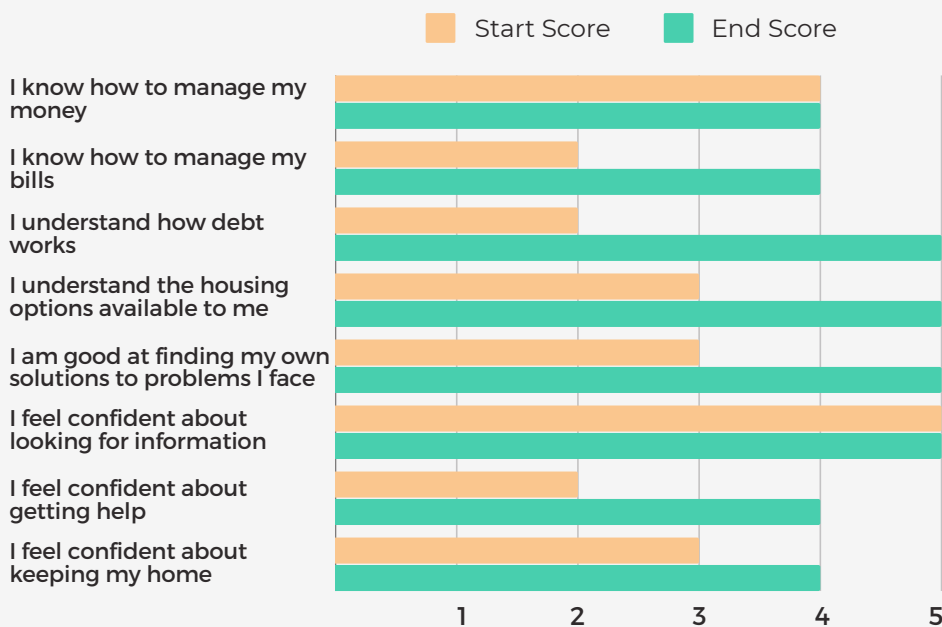
“I’m more confident [managing money], there’s things I won’t know until I do it in my own place”

Discussing **bill management** was really beneficial; “**I never discussed this in school.**” Lizzie’s main takeaway was the complexity of managing bills and how to track them using a budget sheet. We also explored taking into account other’s expectations and **communication styles**, for example the pros and cons of **communicating with a landlord** via email versus text.

We discussed various places for support and Lizzie **researched where she could find help** with managing her tenancy and money advice, widening her pool of support. She feels assured about seeking help in future; “**I’m more confident with my next steps because of the support I have**”.

? Lizzie is aware that there is still more to know, but feels confident asking for help and information; she said:

“I know who I can go to for help.”



9
one-to-one
sessions

4
groups
attended

6
AQA
certificates
achieved

Lizzie's Next Steps:

- Conquering Snowden in North Wales
- Completing CSCS card training
- Finding her own place

CASE STUDY: ANDREW'S JOURNEY



Andrew is an **energetic** and honest person, who was starting to explore his **housing options** as he approaches his 18th birthday. Andrew acknowledged that he had limited knowledge about managing his own tenancy and was just starting to discuss **moving to independence** with his support system.

Andrew completed all six AQA units via the group workshops and via 1-2-1s held in meeting rooms at his accommodation. We focused on **his next steps** moving into independent living and joined the dots between **wellbeing, employment** and **sustaining a tenancy**.

In the group housing workshop, Andrew actively **identified housing options** and shared his future preferences. He said he enjoyed the group workshops, "having a laugh" and "doing activities together." Andrew appreciated "**being treated like adults, not like kids**. [It's] one of my pet peeves".

A key takeaway from one of the group activities was Andrew's **perseverance with personal goals**, such as learning to drive. He also **reflected on his confidence**, he said "I know I know them, it's just recalling them and telling myself I know it."

Andrew said that through working with Your Own Place he's "**learnt about knowing what to expect when I'm older**". He said "I didn't understand half the stuff, tenancy agreements, who to talk to for support, but now I know you can ask for help at places like Citizens Advice and your water company."

"You'll learn things you'll keep for life."

Andrew's Next Steps:

- Apply for housing
- Driving lessons. Book a test.
- Apply for Universal Credit with Personal Assistant

8
one-to-one
sessions

4
groups
attended

6
AQA
certificates
achieved

I know how to manage my money

I know how to manage my bills

I understand how debt works

I understand the housing options available to me

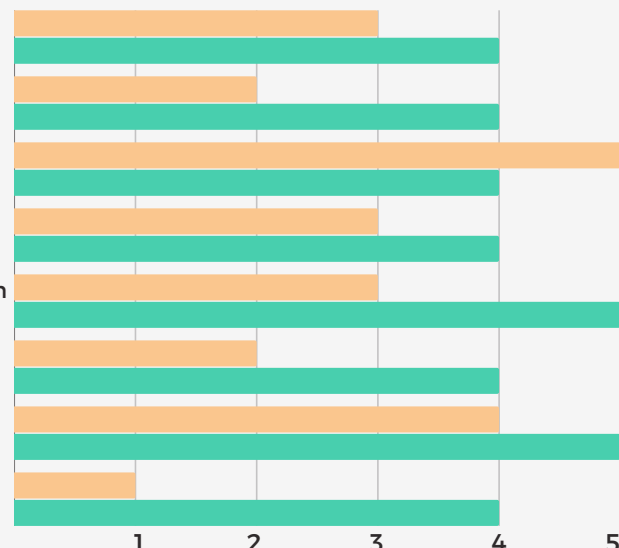
I am good at finding my own solutions to problems I face

I feel confident about looking for information

I feel confident about getting help

I feel confident about keeping my home

Start Score End Score



FURTHER FEEDBACK

"Thank you. It's been fun and I got a lot from it"

"The workshops were fun, entertaining, and engaging. I really liked the style of them. Minefield was a lot of fun!"

"I learnt something every single session. I always had questions to bring and it was good to hear others perspectives. It's not just what I know"

"Feel like people are listening to me, I learnt things, I got knowledge about things I didn't know about."

"Appreciated having breaks and a pace I could follow"

Engaging and positive. You guys listened to each and every one of us.

"Helped with my tolerance of people"

5
out of
5

trainees said the workshops and one-to-ones had increased their confidence

5
out of
5

trainees said that they would recommend the workshops and one-to-ones to someone else

SUPPORT GOING FORWARD

Trainees collaboratively built their own bank of help and support with bills, debt, money, wellbeing and tenancy related concerns

Offering care-experienced young people tailored **housing and money** support that is accessible around work or education commitments is essential. Investing in support services that work at **flexible times** and in different locations, means it can reach young people where they are. It provides them with **choices** and comfort when discussing **difficult topics** about their future or when support feels like it is reducing as they leave care.



"I know there's a lot of places for support just didn't realise before"

WHAT WENT WELL?

- **Open day buzz**

Facilitators present at the John Lewis open day to present the Building Happier Future's Project. The majority of young people who attended showed interest in the partnership with Your Own Place. Viewing it as a comprehensive package including money, housing, employment, and well-being.

- **1-2-1 flexibility**

Offering Flexibility in meeting locations for 1-2-1 sessions to cater to the convenience of young individuals, meetings were held in various locations such as their homes, workplace break rooms, cafes, and libraries. This approach ensured that each young person could fully benefit from the project.

- **Group workshop reflection**

The group workshop provided a space for young people to share their experiences and connect with others. One young person mentioned the rarity of having a space where they could openly express themselves and feel truly understood by their peers in the room.

I buy	Weekly	Monthly	Save
Vape liquid	£10	£45	£520
Coffee	£12	£52	
Vape	£15	£65	£780
Vape Stuff Dry	£30	130	1,560
baccie	£30	130	1,560

Weekly x 52 = yearly
yearly ÷ 12 = monthly

Trainees explore their weekly spending habits and ways to save

LEARNINGS

- **Group bonding**

The young people provided feedback indicating that they would appreciate more time for introductions to each other before starting the group workshops. To address this, we could include a session specifically for icebreakers and building connections at the start to establish a more of a team atmosphere.

- **Location**

Feedback from YP indicated a preference for shifting the venue to the Your Own Place training flat. They expressed discomfort at holding the sessions at their place of work, fearing they might be overheard by colleagues and managers, hindering their ability to communicate openly.

- **Workshop timings and attendance**

Attendance at group workshops was higher when they were scheduled during working hours when the young people were at John Lewis. This made it convenient for them as they were already in the city and found it easier to commit to attending the sessions.

Thank you!

a big thank you to John Lewis and the Virtual School

Your Own Place CIC

23 Johnson Place
Norwich, NR2 2SA

T 01603 611910

www.yourownplace.org.uk



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