



# Children and Young People in Care - Supported Lodgings Scheme

*Information for Hosts*



Thank you for requesting information about our Supported Lodgings Scheme. We hope this information pack will provide answers to any questions you may have. If anything is unclear or if you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact us by emailing [supportedlodgings@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:supportedlodgings@wolverhampton.gov.uk)

If having read the information, you are still interested in becoming a supported lodgings host, please fill in the enclosed application form and send it back to us at:

*By post to:* **Priory Green Buildings**  
Whitburn Close  
Pendeford  
Wolverhampton  
WV9 5NJ

*By email to:* **[supportedlodgings@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:supportedlodgings@wolverhampton.gov.uk)**

## About the service

The Children and Young People in Care's Supported Lodgings Service aims to help Young People In Care develop the practical skills and emotional stability they will need to make the transition into adulthood and make a success of living independently.

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## How does it work?

Supported Lodging is shared accommodation where the Providers (hosts) technically rent a room in their home to young people leaving care and give them the support, encouragement and guidance they need to develop their skills and confidence to live independently. The young person renting the room becomes part of the household and shares the home facilities.

The hosts work in partnership with the young person and the Children and Young People in Care's Supported Lodgings Team, to provide a programme of support that meets the young person's individual needs. Some may need help with practical tasks such as cooking, budgeting or shopping economically, others may need more emotional support. Many will need both. The purpose of supported lodgings is that the young person gradually takes on more responsibility for looking after themselves until they reach a point where they feel confident enough to cope on their own.



## Who can be a host?

We need people from all walks of life, all kinds of cultural backgrounds and all with different life experiences to act as hosts for our young people. Our young people also come from diverse backgrounds and it is imperative that this is reflected in the host placements that are available. As a host you could be a family, a single person, same sex relationship or a couple living together. You do not have to be a parent, you can still work and there are no age barriers.

Being a host is not about having particular qualifications it is about having the special skills and qualities we are looking for to encourage and support our young people in their journey to independence.

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## What kind of accommodation is required?

Accommodation is required in Wolverhampton and the surrounding areas. The young person will need his or her own room with a bed and storage for clothing and other possessions. They will also need access to a kitchen and bathroom, and the living area, though these can be shared with other members of the household.

The young person should feel “at home” in the accommodation, and should be able to invite friends/family at reasonable times agreed and pre-arranged with hosts. The lodgings host must provide the young person with his or her own front door key.

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## How long will a placement last?

This can vary but most placements are expected to last from six months to two years. When a placement ends, you may like to take a break, or you may wish to become immediately available for a new placement.

## What kind of support do young people require?

Support requirements will vary between young people. It is useful to keep in mind that the long-term aim of support is to enable the personal development of the young person and to prepare them for independent living. The supported lodgings host will work with the Children and Young People in Care Team in the best interests of the young person in line with his or her 'pathway plan.'

### *Typical support needs include:*

- Advice with budgeting and benefits
- Advice and assistance with food shopping and cooking
- Instruction in the safe use of household appliances
- Assistance with arranging and keeping appointments
- Assistance with maintaining attendance at training, college or work
- Support in maintaining and building relationships with family/friends/neighbours
- Support in managing visitors
- Assistance with maintaining the security of the house
- Encouragement to comply with "house rules"
- Chatting and providing a "listening ear"
- Participation in occasional "review" meetings
- Encouragement to transit to independence

Support does not need to be formally structured or timetabled, but it is important for the young person to know that support is there when needed. Support needs are likely to be highest in the early weeks, when the young person and host are getting to know one another.



## What can you expect from the young person?

- The young person should participate in planning and discussions about the placement so that a contract about house rules and agreed standards of behaviour can be negotiated before the young person moves in
- The young person should respect “house rules” as agreed
- The young person should treat the property and its contents with respect and should have regard for the security of the property
- The young person should take responsibility for his or her behaviour both inside and outside the host’s home
- If the young person experiences difficulties in the placement they should let the host or Supported Lodgings Co-ordinator know.

## What can you expect from the Children and Young People in Care Team?

Before asking you to take a young person into your home, we will carry out an assessment during which you will have the opportunity to explore the kind of young person that would fit into your household (i.e. smoker, age, gender, etc.). We will also advise you of any areas of risk to your family at this stage. The choice whether to accommodate the young person is yours.

After the young person has moved in, he or she will have a Social Worker and/or Young Person's Adviser from Children and Young Person in Care Team. This worker will make appointments to meet the young person regularly.

The Supported Lodgings Team is your support and is there to answer any queries you may have. You will get to know the young person well and if you have concerns about them you should discuss these with the team who will then liaise with the young person's social worker or Young Persons Adviser.

There will be a "review" meeting every 4 weeks where you, the young person, the Supported Lodgings Team and the support worker can talk together about the way things are going, change 'house rules', set new goals. In addition, adequate out-of-hours professional support is made available and will be easily accessible.

**Training will also be provided.**



## Financial Arrangements

You will receive a sum of £200.00 per week when you have a young person staying with you. Part of this will come from the Housing Benefit or Universal Credit received by the young person. This payment will reflect the cost of accommodating and supporting a young person. A placement cannot be guaranteed and therefore it is not appropriate to rely on this income.

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## Insurance and Income Tax

The allowance you will receive includes the provision for you to upgrade your household insurance. It is important for you to inform your insurers what the scheme entails. Supported Lodgings hosts need to register with HMRC as self-employed and may have to pay tax on income received through this scheme. You need to phone your local Inland Revenue Office to explain what the scheme entails or check HMRC website to clarify your tax position.

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## Benefits and Council Tax

If you are claiming Income-based state benefits such as Jobseeker's Allowance, Income Support, ESA, Housing Benefit, Universal Credit etc., some may be affected by income received through this scheme. To clarify your individual circumstances, you need to discuss with the DWP, the Citizens Advice Bureau, or check the DWP website for further advice. If your council tax is discounted for single occupancy, you will also need to contact Council Tax to see if this will be affected.

In both of the above The City of Wolverhampton's Welfare Rights officer can support you individually, with a referral made by The supported Lodgings Coordinator.

# What makes a good host?

**Someone who:**

- Can get on with young people and has some understanding of the problems they experience
- Will be able to support a young person in their efforts to change
- Will be sympathetic and not make judgements about a young person
- Knows where their own boundaries lie and can be clear and 'up-front' about types of behaviour they want / do not want in their home.
- Is able to respect the confidentiality and privacy of any young person living in their home
- Will treat all young people equally and not discriminate against them on any grounds



## The recruitment and assessment process

Anyone can come forward with an offer of supported lodgings. No one will be discriminated against on grounds of race, gender, sexual orientation or age. However, you may not be considered if the following apply:

- If you have been convicted of an offence against a child
- If you have recently had a child removed from your care by order of any court
- If you have had a registration as a childminder, or other host of day care, cancelled due to misconduct
- If you have recently had your rights and duties with respect to any child investigated by a local authority

*The Supported Lodgings Co-ordinator will visit you to:*

- Assess the accommodation
- Complete assessment documentation

- Discuss with you what it would be like to have a young person living in your home

Additional visits will usually be made. All the members of the household will need to be visited and where appropriate assessment documentation completed for each of them.

DBS checks will also be completed on all adults living in the household. You will be asked to provide two referees to provide references. The referees must know you well and are willing to say there is no known reason why you might not be suited to support a young person in your own home. When assessment and security checks have been completed and references received, your name will be put forward for approval by the selection panel. We estimate that the entire recruitment process may take up to 2 months to be completed. As soon as you are approved, young people can be placed with you.



## Training and Support

Continuous and on-going support will be available from the Supported Lodgings Team. During the assessment process any training needs will be identified, and a plan put in place to meet these. On-going and additional training will also be made available to you.



# Recruitment Process for SUPPORTED LODGINGS HOST

Initial enquiry to the **City of Wolverhampton** by potential lodgings host to discuss scheme or online registration of interest

Initial information pack forwarded with application form  
Initial application form returned to the Supported Lodgings Co-ordinator  
Those who have not returned forms will be telephoned to ascertain whether or not they are interested in proceeding.

## If Yes

Applicant is visited by the Supported Lodgings Co-ordinator who will discuss the scheme further

## If No

No further contact.

Telephone call to the **City of Wolverhampton** by potential lodgings host to discuss scheme or online registration of interest

## Home visits by Supported Lodgings team to carry out

**Assessment** - Assessment report shared with Applicant(s) including recommendations

**Assessment report taken to approval panel**

## Approve

Monitoring introductory visits

## Not Approved

Appeals process

**Annual review** (*Training – Care training compulsory*)  
Access to Foster Care Training

# Get in touch

We'd love to hear from you...

If you would like to find out more about becoming a host, please email:

**[supportedlodgings@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:supportedlodgings@wolverhampton.gov.uk)**

or visit:

**[www.fosteringforwolverhampton.com](http://www.fosteringforwolverhampton.com)**

/supported-lodgings

You can get this information in large print, braille, audio or in another language by calling 01902 551155

**wolverhampton.gov.uk 01902 551155**

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City of Wolverhampton Council, Civic Centre, St. Peter's Square,  
Wolverhampton WV1 1SH