

Joint Housing Protocol for Young People Leaving Care

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1. Introduction

1.1 Bradford District Council Leaving Care and Housing Joint Protocol to Support Care Leavers is written with young people at the heart of all we do. The protocol should be read in conjunction with;

- [Bradford Care Leavers Local Offer](#)
- Bradford Staying Put Policy
- [Youth Homeless Protocol](#)
- [Child First Migrant Second Guide](#)

We understand the journey through care and into adulthood is an important milestone that needs our attention and support. We recognise the successes of our care leavers, we also recognise that reaching the chronological age of adulthood does not always align with the readiness for adult responsibilities.

The Children and Social Work Act (2017) sets out corporate parenting principles for the council as a whole to be the best parent it can be to children in its care. Local authorities are required to publish their local offer to care leavers. Significantly, the legislation requires local authorities to appoint personal advisers to provide support to care leavers up to the age of 25, except where the young person no longer wants a personal adviser. Such support should be based on the needs of the young people as per their statutory Pathway Plan.

When exercising our functions in relation to children in care and care leavers, Bradford District Council recognise and have regard to the seven Corporate Parenting principles identified In the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

These are:

- (a) to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people;*
- (b) to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings;*
- (c) to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people;*
- (d) to help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners;*
- (e) to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people;*
- (f) for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work;*
- (g) to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.*

Further information can be found at; Corporate Parenting Pledge for Children in Care and Care Leavers [Corporate Parenting Panel](#).

1.2 Our Joint Protocol promotes and raises the expectation that our care leavers will have;

- **support** into adulthood to navigate pressures; as would be expected of a good parent
- **support** to access affordable, suitable and good quality accommodation in which they will know they can call home
- **help** when life might be tough, or mistakes are made so that our young people have opportunities to learn without imminent threat of homelessness.

- **confidence** in their corporate parent that important services (including private and public sector partners) will work together in ensuring sufficient emergency accommodation, and specialist accommodation for young people with higher support needs (see Appendix A)
- **quality** and tailored practical support including settling into new communities, where this is needed, encouraging connections, building self-belief, and empowering our care leavers to live confidently in their homes
- **prevented** the need and use of the Homelessness Process

- 1.3 We know that having a home, that is affordable is a foundation to finding success or progressing in other aspects of life; including feeling safe to explore life experiences, being able to study, train or move into employment.
- 1.4 All Bradford Care Leavers will have a personalised and purposeful Pathway Plan; assessing and planning for living arrangement needs both in preparation for Leaving Care, and into adulthood. The Pathway Plan will set out the different roles and interventions that are both statutory requirements and where young people will need to take lead responsibility, for example in maintaining a Housing Benefit claim (with support if necessary); this includes contingency planning in respect of living arrangements in which both the Leaving Care Service and Bradford Housing will have duties.

2. Aims of the Protocol

- 2.1 This Joint Protocol is an agreement between Children's Social Care, Housing Services and Revenues and Benefits to ensure effective discharge of corporate responsibilities by jointly addressing the diverse accommodation needs of young people leaving care in the Bradford District.
- 2.2 Set out our commitment to developing services (our local offer) to young people leaving care
- 2.3 Establish the roles and responsibilities towards young people leaving care and define the roles of the statutory agencies within the legislative framework.
- 2.4 Demonstrate our corporate parenting approach towards young people leaving care, providing a shared commitment from Children's Social Care, Housing Services and Revenues and Benefits* to ensure our young people achieve the best outcomes possible.

* [Department for Work and Pensions: Care Leaver Covenant offer - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/care-leaver-covenant)

- 2.5 Identify how Children's Social Care, Housing Services and Revenues and Benefits can, by working together, meet the needs of young people leaving care, effectively discharge our duties in line with government guidance and benchmarked good practice, ensuring that there are no gaps in services and that resources are effectively used
- 2.6 Ensure all officers using this protocol are mindful of the roles and responsibilities of organisations working with young people and the need for multi-agency working to secure positive outcomes
- 2.7 To prevent young people leaving care from becoming homeless, thereby avoiding the need for young people leaving care to enter the homelessness system
- 2.8 To support young people to become responsible and successful tenants
- 2.9 To recognise the diverse needs of care leavers and the way in which these will change over time, a range of accommodation options will be required. These may include the following:
- Enabling young people to remain living with former foster carers through conversion of these placements to Staying Put arrangements;
 - Other supported lodgings placements;

- Other transitional accommodation with varying degrees of support such as trainer flats or supported accommodation with onsite support;
- Specialist accommodation for young people with particular support needs (e.g. disabled young people, young parents);
- Self-contained accommodation with housing related support;
- Independent tenancies

The protocol will therefore work at a number of levels:

- Monitoring and reviewing the accommodation needs of care leavers;
- Undertaking Pathway Plans; ensuring assessments of individual housing need and including expertise and advice from partners in Housing;
- Developing a joint commissioning strategy to meet needs;
- Recognising that Housing services (including Registered Providers) have a role as a resource provider, releasing accommodation for use by care leavers, including assured tenancies where appropriate;
- To ensure that there is minimal use of bed and breakfast accommodation for care leavers aged 18+ in crisis situations;
- Joint work to ensure that young people are accommodated in safe environments which meet health and safety requirements.

3. Objectives

- 3.1 To jointly assess and meet the diverse housing and support needs of young people leaving care.
- 3.2 To work closely together to establish a common database of housing resources and service provision for young people.
- 3.3 To ensure care leavers achieve a successful transition into independent living through support, preparation and provision of suitable accommodation.
- 3.4 To ensure young people are awarded care leaver banding priority status on Bradfordhomes to prevent the need to go through the homeless route. *

*under Part 6 of the Housing Act (Housing Allocations) and not part 7 (homelessness – Priority Need)

- 3.5 To identify gaps in service provision for young people and to work together with other agencies to address these gaps, feeding information into the relevant strategies.
- 3.6 To ensure that young people's priority need status is addressed within the allocation policy, so that care leavers are placed in the same banding as priority need homeless. *

*Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) England Order (statutory Instrument Number 2051, 2002)

- 3.7 To jointly ensure that all staff are aware of the housing needs of young people leaving care and the obligations of each agency to address these needs. Strategies include implementing joint training, including supporting induction into respective services, and shadowing.
- 3.8 To ensure that Registered Providers (RP's) fulfil their statutory duty to assist the local authority to provide suitable accommodation for care leavers via the fair allocation of properties using the joint housing register.
- 3.9 To ensure that the accommodation needs of young people entering and discharged from custody are robustly planned for.

4. Who does this Protocol Apply to?

- 4.1 The local authority is the corporate parent of Children in Care and therefore has a legal and moral duty to 'provide the kind of support that any good parent would provide to their own children'.
- 4.2 This is a legal responsibility which extends to all departments within the council.
- 4.3 All local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure all eligible and relevant young people leaving care are placed in suitable accommodation. This protocol applies to this cohort of young people.
- 4.4 The definitions are:

- 4.4.1 Eligible young person

A young person aged 16 and 17 who have been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and who are still looked after

- 4.4.2 Relevant young person

A young person aged 16 and 17 who have been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and who have left care. This also includes young people who were detained (e.g. in a youth offending institution or hospital) when they turned 16 but immediately before that were looked after.

- 4.4.3 Former relevant young person

A young person over 18 who was previously 'eligible' or 'relevant'. Local authorities support this group at least until age 21, or up to the age of 25 years if there are continued support needs.

- 4.4.4 Qualifying Young Person

A young person aged between 16 and up to their 21st birthday (up to 25 if in education) and was in care for less than 13 weeks on or after their 16th birthday but no longer looked after.

A young person who was looked after immediately prior to the making of a special guardianship order and are now 16- 21 years old.

A young person aged 16 or 17, and been living at home with their parents for a period of 6 months, (and still under the age of 18 years).

There is a duty to advise and assist and for the purposes of meeting housing needs their status is as that applied to any other young person seeking assistance. That said; individual needs and circumstances should be assessed by the Leaving Care Personal Adviser and in working together with housing partners ensure that efforts are made to ensure access to suitable accommodation.

- 4.4.5 Separated Migrant Children

[See Appendix B](#)

- 4.4.6 Children from with the European Economic Area

[See Appendix C](#)

5. Legislative Frameworks

- 5.1 The Joint Protocol should be read in conjunction with:
 - [The Homelessness Code of Guidance 2018](#)
 - [The Children Act 1989 \(particularly Section 23, 24 and 27\)](#)
 - [The Children and Social Work Act 2017](#)

- [Children \(Leaving Care\) Act 2000](#)

The following is a list of statutory guidance that the document refers to:

- [Homelessness code of guidance](#)
- [Applying corporate parenting principles to looked after children and care leavers](#)
- [Children Act 1989: care planning, placement and case review](#)
- [Children Act 1989: transition to adulthood for care leavers](#)
- [Extending Personal Adviser support for all care leavers to age 25](#)
- [Local offer guidance](#)

6. Helping Care Leavers to Prepare for Independent Living

- 6.1. All young people aged 16 to 21 (or up to 25 in some cases) leaving care who are eligible, relevant or former relevant will have an assessment of need and pathway plan. These are legal documents and the method by which their needs are identified and addressed. The pathway plan is reviewed at least every six months, and there is an expectation that housing will make a contribution to this plan. The pathway plan will detail accommodation needs and the type of housing related support that the young person may require in order to successfully maintain a tenancy. All pathway plans must include a contingency plan.

Assessing readiness for increasing responsibilities and living independently needs to be a natural part of young people's care planning before reaching 16 years. When young people are 16 and 17 years the team around the young person including and not limited to; Social Workers, Personal Advisers, Foster Carers, Residential Staff, accommodation providers, will use a range of tools to assess readiness and support transition planning. These include; referral to Jumpstart (Centrepoint) for intensive and accredited tenancy ready programme, locally developed independence training (unique to the provider), Smooth It Out Group (led by the Children in Care and Leaving Care Service), access to the [Stepladder of Achievement Programme](#); which 'provides both life skills and financial resources in order to enhance the capability and prospects of children and young people in care, who are likely to have experienced an unpredictable education.'

- 6.2. Eligible young people who are aged 16 and 17 will continue to have an independent reviewing officer (IRO) to ensure that preparation and planning is robust with a focus on transition to adulthood. All young people should be offered the option of independent advocacy via [NYAS](#) as part of their planning and preparation for adulthood.
- 6.3. The Registered Provider housing officer will be included in the support plan put in place on commencement of the tenancy, ensuring joint meetings take place regularly, between the Registered Provider, leaving care and the young person, at least quarterly within the first year.
- 6.4. The success of tenancies will be monitored by each service and potential difficulties dealt with promptly involving the young person. If there is evidence that a tenancy is unlikely to be sustained, prompt communication between agencies is essential and a review of the pathway plan will be undertaken identifying current and future need.
- 6.5. Young people leaving care will have different levels of support needs. This may range from intensive support from a number of agencies, to minimum advice and guidance from a leaving care Personal Adviser
- 6.6. The Registered Provider/Supported Housing Provider and the Leaving Care Service must ensure that young people understand fully what is required of them as a tenant, who is to support them, and what they should do in a crisis.

- 6.7 The prompt sharing of information between agencies is essential in order to support young people and address tenancy issues. General Data Protection regulations (2018) requires that young people should give their written consent ([See Appendix D](#)) before any information about them can be shared.

7. Joining Bradfordhomes Housing Needs Register

- 7.1 All young people who are looked after and reaching the age of 16 should be supported to join Bradfordhomes, the councils Housing Allocations List as soon as possible after their 16th birthday and within 3 months at the latest.
- 7.2 Where a young person becomes looked after following their 16th birthday they should join the register within 3 months of becoming looked after at the latest.
- 7.3 The responsibility for undertaking this task rests with the case holding Social Worker.
- 7.4 Young People who are looked after and placed outside of Bradford may choose to continue to reside in the placed area. Young people may have developed support networks and links to the area and the social worker and/or personal adviser will advocate with the housing provider to seek agreement of priority status and submit an application.
- 7.5 An application will also be made to Bradfordhomes to ensure contingency planning. Applications need to be made via [Household Registration Form](#)

Documents required to complete the Housing Needs Register

- One form of photographic identification (Passport, Driving License, Identity Card, Biometric Card);
- One form of identification (Birth Certificate, National Insurance Number, Bank Statement);
- Proof of immigration eligibility (Biometric Card, Home Office Letter, Residency Card) –

If Applicable;

- Proof of leaving care status and eligibility ([Appendix E](#). A Letter from Local Authority);
- The young person will also need an e-mail address.

The documents listed above must be collected in advance of completing the Housing Needs Register process and must be able to provide proof ahead of offer of a tenancy.

In circumstances where the young person does not have a National Insurance Number they should still complete a Housing Needs Register application however this needs to be done via the Contact Team by contacting **01274 435999**.

Once the NINO is issued, it should be sent to the housing authority to be added to the application or can be done directly on Bradfordhomes account.

Authorised copies of the documents should be submitted with the application and can also be taken to Britannia House or Keighley Town Hall between 10:00-12:00 and 14:00-16:00 Monday to Friday.

Once the Housing Needs Register Application has been submitted, social workers/personal advisers must ensure the application has been completed, an email will be received to confirm.

Once validated, the reference number and application date should be recorded on the Young Person's LCS (Liquid Logic) record.

Housing Register Renewals and Change of Circumstances

Once an applicant has been accepted onto the Housing Needs Register, their application will remain live, with the person having a duty to inform the housing authority of any change of circumstances.

Bradfordhomes will share bidding information on a quarterly basis with the Leaving Care Service; in April, July, October, and January.

The Personal Adviser will promote review or regular bidding with the young person.

Young people's pathway plans should always set out which Housing Needs Register, or, Registers the young person's application is logged on, if there are any renewal arrangements relating to that authority and who will inform housing if/when the young person's circumstances change.

8. Young People Placed Outside of Bradford Prior to the age of 16

A young person placed out of area will have a local connection to that authority if they were normally resident there; defined as, a continuous period of 2 years; at least some of which applied before their 16th birthday; and as a result of being looked after by Bradford Childrens Services. This connection will last until their 21st Birthday.

Individual authorities can vary in respect of their rules regarding local connection when deciding whether someone can join their housing register, and in the first instance the Social Worker and/or Personal Adviser will;

- When the Young Person reaches their 16th birthday; liaise with the housing authority and seek to join the local Housing Needs Register and honour priority status
- Liaise with the relevant authority and Leaving Care Service to request details of housing options including; Supported Lodgings Schemes, mainstream supported housing (such as Foyers) and Private Accommodation
- Ensure early consideration and planning commences to prepare for realistic options when the young person reaches 18 years.

In some circumstances; the final option may include a homelessness application which can only commence at the of 18 years and thereafter. At this stage should the young person become threatened with homelessness/homeless the authority should accept an application.

Wherever possible, part 7 homelessness applications should be avoided, planning and contingency planning should include consideration of local supported accommodation and private sector options, returning to Bradford in addition to a homelessness application.

Note: If an authority refuses to accept a homeless application for a care leaver who fits the local connection criteria, please seek advice from Housing Options Team Leader (01274 435999).

9. Accommodation and Support Options for Care Leavers

As a general rule; young people's Pathway Plan will incorporate opportunities to experience some time in semi-independent private sector/registered landlord supported accommodation in order to demonstrate they have developed the skills to manage an independent tenancy. This could include supported accommodation provided by a Registered Provider, Supported Accommodation Provider or Private Sector.

The Leaving Care Service and the Supported Accommodation providers have access to a range of life skills activities and groups and have a variety of materials that can be used to evidence the life skills the young person has acquired. In addition, and in order to ensure that young people can sustain

independent accommodation Registered Providers will undertake a suitability assessment including affordability checks prior to offering a property.

When placing young people looked after or care leavers on the housing needs register, consideration should also be given to which independence/supported accommodation options would benefit the young person and what may be available. The accommodation section of the Pathway Plan, particularly for 16 & 17 year olds should always consider semi-independence planning, including Staying Put, Supported Lodgings, training flats and Supported Accommodation.

Where a young person's needs are such that they are complex but not eligible for Adult Social Care, it is critical that a referral is made to the 'All Age Panel' to explore how the Personal Adviser might be assisted by partner agencies ([see appendix F](#)).

Accommodation options for care leavers aged 16 and 17:

Semi-independent and independent 'unregulated' accommodation: Young people age 16 and 17 may have experienced living in semi-independent provision. A range of commissioned options are available:

- Group living accommodation comprised of a room only with shared kitchen and bathroom.
- Group Living accommodation comprised of a room with en-suite bathroom and shared kitchen.
- Group Living accommodation comprised of a self-contained flat with kitchenette and en-suite bathroom.
- Individual support living accommodation 1 or 2 bed house, flat or apartment.
- Crash pad (flat attached to a group living accommodation) used for emergencies due to an urgent or unforeseen need. To be used overnight or weekends for emergencies only.

Training flats: Short term training flats for care leavers can help care leavers to gain a sense of the responsibilities that comes with independent living, and also experience the reality of living alone, which may identify other challenges such as loneliness, isolation and accessing support. Young people aged 16 and 17 years only may access purpose commissioned trainer flats with Centrepont to support transition planning and preparation for adulthood for a period of two weeks.

Supported Accommodation options for care leavers aged 18+ in Bradford include:

Staying Put: This enables care leavers to remain with their former foster carer when they leave care. Where both the young person and their former carer wish to continue living together, the local authority is under a duty to support this arrangement, including financially. This options may continue up to the young person's 21st birthday. Staying Put needs to be explored routinely at least from the first Pathway Plan to be satisfied that expectations are known, understood and planned for.

Staying Close: Staying Close is a scheme that enables care leavers to live independently in accommodation close to their residential home. The young person will continue to have support of familiar and trusted adult from their previous home and could visit their former home frequently. Accommodation is in close proximity (within 6 miles) to their former residential home. The young person/people will live in the Staying Close property and have the opportunity to be a part of the providers' family thus 'Staying Close' to family life. The scheme is available to young people leaving residential care at a time that is right for them and may continue to reside in the property until the age of 25.

Supported Lodgings: The scheme is available to young people aged 16-21 years. The young person will reside in the home with the Supported Lodgings provider, with support given to help the young person develop skills for independent living.

Living with family: Some care leavers choose to return to live with immediate or extended family when they leave care. The Social Worker and/or Personal Adviser will support around relationship building and mediation with family members to ensure living with family is the most appropriate choice for the young person. Joint planning will take place with a support network and direct visits will take place to

establish suitability. Family member's views will also be incorporated within the Pathway Plan which will capture what family life looks like for the young person. The social worker and/or Personal Advisor will work with our Family Group Conference team where direct work/advice and guidance will be offered; opportunities will be given to each family member within the household to share their views in a safe manner which will result in a successful transition. Direct visits to the family home will continue once the move is completed.

Support for young parents: Young people, aged 16 and 17 years, who are also parents may be supported to reside within a foster home as they develop parenting skills, sometimes this will also be the right option to continue under a Staying Put arrangement when the young person reaches 18 years.

Young people who are single parents and aged 18+ may be supported to access Parent+ ([Bradford Cyrenians - parent-plus](#)) .

The eligibility criteria for the service is as follows;

- Lone Parents in need of housing related support. This includes floating support in the community in order to prevent homelessness and also accommodation based support.
- Be aged 18 plus
- Have a vulnerability which renders them in need of housing related support services.
- Must have support needs rather than care needs.
- Must be able and willing engage with the service and with the support offered.
- Must be willing to work towards tenancy ready framework
- Must be eligible to claim personal and Housing Benefits (accommodation service)

Support for young people with disabilities: Young people able to live independently can identify specific needs within their Bradfordhomes application for example; requirement for ground floor property. When matched to a property, accessible adaptations should be discussed with the Occupational Therapist (Adult Services).

Support for young people attending the University of Bradford: The University of Bradford has pledged to support care leavers (irrespective of parent authority) as part of the [Care Leaver Covenant](#) ; specifically accommodation; *'in addition to the standard 42-week contract available to all students, the University can support [young people] in securing year-long accommodation, if needed.'*

Support for young people interested or attending Bradford College: Bradford College has pledged to support care leavers (irrespective of parent authority) as part of the care leaver covenant [Opportunities - Bradford College](#) specifically accommodation; *'Bradford College offers accommodation through UNIPOL and has an arrangement for Care Leavers to access year round accommodation. Emergency accommodation is also available.'*

Temporary Supported Accommodation can be used as step-down accommodation from a more supported setting to allow Young People to further develop their tenancy ready skills and confidence in managing their own home. This accommodation is classed as semi-permanent and would be offered on an Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST) or Licence Agreement. Supported accommodation includes self-contained houses/flats within the Bradford District in a hostel or cluster setting. They are managed by commissioned supported housing providers and are fully furnished. Young people will have key work support and may bridge a period from 6 months up to 2 years.

Access to commissioned supported accommodation is only via the Single Gateway (operated by Housing Options housingoptions@bradford.gov.uk), unless self-referral is indicated. The support services available are listed below:

Centrepoint (Foyer provision): The organisation has two supported provisions with onsite supports within the Bradford area, one is the Foyer located at 1 Coates Street and the other is at Owlet Grange, Shipley. Supported accommodation is provided to young people from the age of 18 up to the age of 25 (16 and 17 year olds in exceptional circumstances when not looked after – [Youth](#)

Homeless Protocol) who may not be ready to manage their own home and need additional support. The accommodation is a room with shared facilities such as bathroom and kitchen.

CentrePoint Parent and Child Support: This organisation provides low to medium support to young parents / young expectant parents (16-25 yrs old) in our accommodation based service in Keighley. Accommodation is based at Salisbury Road Keighley and comprises of 5, self-contained, 1 bedroom flats each with their own front door. Staff available from 9-5, Monday to Friday at the onsite office with on call service evenings and weekends.

CentrePoint Outreach Support: This organisation is specialist in providing support to people aged between 18 and 25 years old, upon receipt of a referral via the Housing Options Gateway, CentrePoint will undertake an assessment with the young person assessed and allocate a floating support worker within 2 weeks. Support includes; managing bills and navigating benefits, social integration, and routines in running a home. Support can be from 3-6 months.

Horton Housing Stay at Home: the 'Stay at Home Team' provide floating support to people in their homes, the age criteria for this service is 18 and above. Applications should be made in a planned way (wait list 2-3 months) to allow for assessment and allocation of a support worker. Support includes; setting up bills, applying for relevant benefits, financial support and social integration and is available for up to 6 months. Floating Support may benefit young people who move directly into an independent tenancy in either the social housing or private rented sector.

Horton Housing Multiple Needs: Horton Housing are the main provider of multiple needs supported accommodation provision for people aged 18-65 years old with multiple needs such as substance misuse, mental health, physical needs etc. Accommodation is available in either a Hostel environment with staff on site (Grattan Studios, Boldshay, Asisi/Clare House, Willowdene) or a Dispersed in the community (Round Street, etc) but remain clustered.

Horton Housing New Start: NewStart provides support and accommodation for people aged 16 and over who are experiencing or are threatened with homelessness and have a criminal conviction.

The team can work alongside young people to help achieve housing, health and wellbeing, and employment goals. Referrals can be made via Bradford Council Housing Options, the Leaving Care service (or other agency), self-referrals are also accepted.

<https://hortonhousing.co.uk/services-directory/bradford-newstart/>

Concept Housing Intensive Housing Management: Concept Housing provide and manage self-contained houses/flats within the Bradford District. Young people are allocated a key worker and 1 hour key work session each week. There is no upper age limit in respect of access to the service.

Note: When referring young people to generic multiple needs/high risk supported provision, it is essential that referrals are discussed with the supported accommodation assessor before a move is agreed to ensure suitability.

10. The Moving on Accommodation Options in Bradford

There are two primary move-on accommodation in Bradford for long term independent living; social housing via a Registered Provider or Private Landlord letting.

Registered Provider: Bradford RP's include;

Incommunities Group Ltd; Most properties are advertised on the Council's online Social Housing Register. Tenancies tend to be offered on a 1-year introductory tenancy agreement, converting to an Assured Tenancy upon successful completion of the introductory period.

Accent Housing; Young People are required to register with the provider using their online system and once in place bidding for property can commence. Care Leavers are prioritised with the highest banding.

Manningham Housing; registration is required for bidding to take place. Starter tenancies are offered as Assured Short-hold Tenancies. Successful starter tenancies will be converted to a full Assured Tenancy after 12 months.

Sanctuary Housing; properties are advertised via the Council's online Social Housing Register. After a successful bid, a tenancy will be offered

Private Rented: Private Rented landlords offer Assured Shorthold Tenancy (AST). These can vary between the minimum required 6 months or 1 year. After the contracted period the landlord could either offer a new AST or let it run into a Statutory Periodic Tenancy.

Care Leaver's are entitled to the 1-bedroom rate for Housing benefits until their 25th Birthday. In Bradford the 1-bedroom rate is £80.55 weekly or £346.05 monthly. Private rented properties are more readily available on the market. They can be advertised online, local store windows, newspapers and magazines etc. The council also has a Private Rented Sector Lettings Team (PSLS) they work with landlords who are willing to offer their properties to people on a lower income. These properties are advertised on Bradfordhomes site. Unlike social housing properties; private rented homes are often let in a decorated state including furnishings to some degree.

Young people may apply for the [Discretionary Housing Payment \(DHP\)](#) for purposes such as; being affected by the benefit cap, removal of the spare room subsidy in the social rented sector, affected by the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates. DHP may also cover; a rent shortfall, rent deposits, and rent in advance to move home which may be required with some RP's and Private Landlords.

If an application needs to be considered urgently; for example, to prevent a young person from losing the opportunity of a tenancy, the Social Worker or Personal Adviser can call **01274 432772** and ask for urgent consideration to be made to the specific application.

Emergency Accommodation for Care Leavers who are Homeless aged 18-21 years

Note: Whilst the emergency accommodation options (under Part 7, Housing Act 1996) listed may be accessed by young people aged 16 and 17; Children's Services will access commissioned services for Eligible and Relevant care leavers.

All Temporary Accommodation provided under Part 7, Housing Act 1996 is on a first come first served basis in Bradford.

When young people present to Housing Options as homeless; this triggers an Interim Duty for accommodation under s188 Housing Act 1996. The following types of accommodation options are available dependant on the needs of the young person:

Nightstop: a non-profit organisation with volunteer hosts that are trained to provide safe accommodation for young people in the hosts own home or Culture Fusion [Bradford Nightstop](#)

Assessment Centre: young people will have their own bedroom but will be required to share facilities such as kitchen and wash rooms. The assessment Centres have security presence 24/7 and during the daytime, support staff are available to assist with housing related needs.

Supported accommodation with onsite support: accommodation may be a self-contained fully furnished flat or a room in a House of Multiple Occupancy (HMO) depending on

availability. The accommodation is supported and the young person would be expected to attend planned support sessions with their allocated support worker.

Dispersed Accommodation: fully furnished houses/flats located across the Bradford area. The young person will have full access to the accommodation on a sole occupancy basis. These are supported in respect of provision of an allocated support worker and requirement to participate in planned key work sessions relating to housing needs

Accommodation options for 21-25 year old Care Leavers

Care experienced young people aged 21- 25 years will have the same access to the temporary accommodation as highlighted earlier within the protocol.

Automatic priority status in respect of care leaver status ceases at 21 years and the young person . However, Bradford Council must consider whether or not a person is vulnerable as a result of having being looked after, accommodation or fostered. This relates to all applicants not just the 21 -25 yr old group.

Suitability of Accommodation

The suitability of accommodation for care leavers is provided in the Children Act 1989: care planning guidance – [volume 2 \(pages 74 – 80\)](#) and [volume 3 \(7.12 – 7.18\)](#).

Where a young person is homeless, a housing authority must have regard to suitability of accommodation provided for them as set out in the Homelessness code of guidance – [chapter 17](#) and in [sections 22.24 to 22.29](#).

The use of bed and breakfasts (B&Bs), which is privately owned accommodation in which residents share facilities with other individuals or households, is not suitable accommodation for care leavers.

B&Bs should only be used in exceptional circumstances as a last resort for care leavers aged 18+. In the event B&B accommodation is accessed this should be for the minimum period necessary. The Personal Adviser should undertake increase Keeping-In-Touch (this may be in the community or the office base) with pro-active and evidenced attempts to ensure alternative arrangements are progressed.

Young people who are not satisfied that the Temporary Accommodation being provided under Homelessness Legislation is suitable may request a review or seek judicial review. They should liaise with their Housing Options Officer and will be supported by their Social Worker/ Personal Adviser and the Team Manager/ Move on Team.

The young person may also be supported to access independent advocacy via [NYAS](#).

11. Joint Contingency Planning

Personal Advisers within the Leaving Care service will work closely alongside partners to minimise and manage crises including;

- Preventing Eviction from Accommodation
- Negotiating resolutions with Providers

Complex Needs Young People will be discussed at the High Cost Placement Panel which is led by Children's Services and attended by colleagues in Placement Co-Ordination, Adult Social Care and Access to Housing.

Young people who leave care and move into their own accommodation and then experience difficulties may be referred to the All Age Panel ([Appendix F](#)) which involves partners across a spectrum of services including police, health and housing.

12. Care Leavers Leaving Custody

When a young person is sentenced to custody; the Pathway Plan should be updated given the significant change. This is the first stage of pre-release planning regardless of the duration of sentencing. Efforts should be made from the offset to gather information alongside the young person's views to allow for sufficient time to plan and explore likelihood of the options; for example, friends and family, in addition to supported or social housing.

Personal Advisers will be a key link for the young person through the gate in assessing suitability of proposed arrangements including safety planning and potential impact on other householders. Conversations with Bradfordhomes should be included in pre-release planning.

Social Workers and Youth Justice Case Managers are responsible for ensuring preparation for resettlement for young people aged 16 and 17 years at least one month in advance of their release date and adhere to the agreed standards (see Appendix J).

Personal Advisers will promote accounts being set up with Bradfordhomes and ensure Housing Options are informed of Leaving Care eligibility and Band 1 is applied.

Where suitable accommodation is not in place 56 days prior to release the Young Person there is a duty to refer to Housing Options this is currently being met by the Offender Pathway (see Appendix G and Appendix H).

Personal Adviser will progress an IHM referral if this is appropriate at the earliest opportunity of a release date becoming known. Inside the gate the young person will have access to Shelter for advice and guidance.

13. Support to Prevent and Relieve Homelessness

When a young person may be identified as threatened with homelessness the Social Worker and/or Personal Adviser will work with the young person in making contact with Housing Options.

Local processes and/or practices should not involve care leavers routinely being treated as homeless when care placements come to an end in order to place the housing authority under an obligation to secure accommodation under Part 7 of the 1996 Act (See Appendix H).

14. Main Housing Duty

The main housing duty is a duty to provide temporary accommodation under s193 Housing act 1996 until such time as the duty is ended, either by an offer of settled accommodation or for another specified reason (See Appendix I).

15. Dispute Resolution

Where a concern is raised about an individual case, the two respective parties (social worker/personal adviser and housing officer) should seek to resolve the issue.

If this does not address the specific issue, it should be escalated to the respective managers.

If this does not address the specific issue, it should be escalated to the respective Named Service Representatives.

In the event that this cannot be resolved the concern should be escalated for attention of the commissioning manager in phoning **01274 435999**.

A list of Managers within Housing Options are listed below: -

• Dimitris Tolios	01274 436635	dimitris.tolios@bradford.gov.uk
• Nermina Dizdarevic	01274 43 6601	nermina.dizdarevic@bradford.gov.uk
• Olivia Shute	01274 43 6605	olivia.shute@bradford.gov.uk
• Robert Taylor	01274 43 6628	robert.taylor@bradford.gov.uk
• Sayeed Patel	01274 43 4540	s.patel@bradford.gov.uk

16 Training and Development

Training and development of practitioners across all services within Bradford District Council is a priority to ensure both consistency and depth of knowledge and understanding amongst the workforce. The beneficiaries being our care leavers.

This protocol and any future amendments will be accessed via Tri-X and embedded in learning across services through;

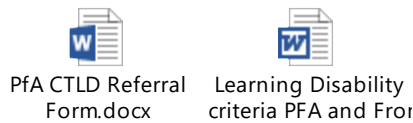
- Team Meetings
- Service Events
- Newsletters
- Individual supervision and annual appraisals

The protocol is a live document with an associated action plan where respective services will have continued responsibilities in ensuring we work together in meeting the needs of care leavers.

The action plan will identify responsible persons (role and service). It will be reviewed on a quarterly basis and the protocol amendments on an annual basis.

17. Appendix

A Preparation for Adulthood (PFA) Referral Form and Learning Disability Criteria PFA



B Separated Migrant Children

Under the Children Act 1989, asylum applicants below the age of 18 who arrive in the UK without close adult family members, either accompanying them or already in the UK who they can join, may be provided a service by the local authority children's services, regardless of immigration status. If there is any possibility that the person could be a child (or under 25), Bradford Children's Services will accommodate without prejudice with a view to completing a full Merton compliant age assessment if required.

Separated Migrant young people who have former relevant status and awaiting asylum application decisions may not be eligible for public funds. Bradford Leaving Care Service will assist to the extent that welfare requires it, including the provision of suitable accommodation.

Asylum seekers or those with failed asylum applications are not eligible for homelessness assistance from the Local Authority under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996. Young People with the following immigration status are eligible for assistance;

- Refugee Status
- Humanitarian Protection
- Indefinite Leave to Remain
- UASC Leave
- Section 67 Leave
- Calais Leave
- Pre-settled status
- Settled status

In assessing the need for accommodation, the Local Authority cannot take account any accommodation that could be provided by the UK Border Agency (UKBA) as the UKBA are not required to provide accommodation if the asylum seeker (or failed asylum seeker) is entitled to accommodation under another statutory regime.

C Children from with the European Economic Area

Children from EU/EEA/Switzerland

Since the end of the transition period (31 December 2020) and the Grace Period 2021, different rules around eligibility could apply to different cohorts of EU/EEA/Swiss nationals.

Living in the UK by 31 December 2020

Irish nationals – are eligible.

Full Settled Status – Full EUSS is ILR (Indefinite Leave to Remain). People with ILR are generally eligible for public funds subject to HRT (Habitual Residency Test). They will also have a continuing 'right to rent'.

Pre Settled Status – People with pre EUSS will still have the old rules applied to them with regards to eligibility. They will be asked to evidence their employment history and may be eligible if they are working, have worked and have retained their worker status or are temporarily unable to work due to health conditions. This also applies to self-employed people. People with Pre EUSS have the ‘right to rent’.

Grace Period Cohort – These are people who were legally residing in the UK prior to 31 December 2020 but applied for EUSS after that date but by 30 June 2021. They need to be able to evidence that they have applied and are awaiting a decision. The Home Office will have issued them with evidence of their application. Until they receive a decision, they have the right to live, work and ‘the right to rent’ in the UK but if they are applying for anything classed as public funds, they would have to evidence that they are also eligible.

People who have not applied by 30 June 2021 – the Home Office may allow late application where there are ‘reasonable grounds’ for missing the deadline. People who have not applied should be referred to OISC registered advisers. Those who apply late will not be eligible for housing or benefits whilst waiting for their application to be resolved. a ‘right to rent’.

Family members – family members have the same rights as EU/EEA/Swiss citizens in some cases but only if they made an application for EUSS before 1 July 2021. This may also apply to people born in N. Ireland who have chosen to be an Irish citizen.

Family member may be entitled to the same housing, homelessness assistance and housing benefits as they person they accompany without any further conditions if:

- They are a family member of a worker of self-employed person (including somebody who has retained their worker status).
- They are a family member or extended family member and the person they accompany has a permanent right to reside as a retired worker or self-employed person or
- They are a family member who has acquired a permanent right to reside in their own right.

More information about family member and eligibility can be found here: [Housing Rights Information](#)

However, of particular interest for young people is that they could have rights that mirror the person they accompany if they are a direct descendent (child, grandchild etc.) of that person or their spouse of civil partner and either:

- They are under 21
- They are a dependent of him/her or on their spouse or civil partner

People who arrived from 1 January 2021 who do not have rights as family members

Irish citizens are eligible for assistance.

Generally, people from EU/EEA/Switzerland and their family member who arrived after this date and do not fall under the Grace Period Cohort are not eligible for housing and homelessness assistance. They will have the ‘right to rent’ provided they can provide evidence that they have the correct paperwork to live in the UK. Housing eligibility is complex and an assessment should be carried out by Housing Options.

[Housing Rights Information for Housing Advisers](#)

D Consent Form



Leaving Care
Consent Form.pptx

E Priority Status Request Template Letter:



priority request
letter.doc

F All Age Panel Terms of Reference



Core
PrincipalsModel AllA

G Offender Pathway



Offender
Pathway.docx

H Support to Prevent and Relieve Homelessness

Referral route

Social Worker/Personal Adviser to refer young person to Housing Options via the Duty to Refer route 56 days prior to the young person requiring to leave their accommodation. Housing Options Administration will create a case on CIVICA and allocate the case to a Housing Options Officer.

For those Care Leavers who are identified as rough sleeping or are at any risk of becoming homeless, additional support will be provided to the Young Person/Social Worker/ Personal Advisor from the DfE homeless prevention funded worker.

No second night out Bradford can also offer additional support for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Support can be offered via an online referral form or by contacting the organisation directly

Bradford no Second Night Out

Assessment

Housing Options Officer (HOO) will contact the young person, usually via telephone, and conduct a homelessness assessment. The assessment is detailed to capture the clients housing needs, and will including previous housing history, current financial situation as well as important vulnerabilities including mental health needs and difficulties with substances. It is important that where possible the young person is informed in advance as to what information is necessary for the assessment and is supported by their social worker or personal adviser.

Duties and assistance

After the assessment has been completed the HOO will be able to establish if any homelessness duties are owed.

The criteria they will be assessing is whether the young person is:

Eligible for assistance: You are usually eligible for help if you're a British or Irish citizen living in the UK. If you're a British or Irish citizen recently returned to the UK, the rules can be complex, if you are a person from abroad refugee status, indefinite leave to remain or settled status from the EU Settlement Scheme would make you eligible you can get further advice on this from Citizens Advice Bureau.

Threatened with Homelessness: You will need to be legally threatened with homelessness within 56 days for the council to accept a duty towards you. You are legally homeless if you;

- have nowhere to live in the UK or abroad
- you have a home but can't access it
- it would be unreasonable for you to continue occupying your accommodation due to abuse or poor conditions of the home
- you have been served valid notice to terminate your tenancy agreement.
- If the young person meets the above two criteria, then the Council will accept a Prevention duty.
- If the young person fails to meet the above criteria the Council would still have a duty to provide advice and assistance, for example referring to relevant services that may be able to assist.

Prevention Duty

Prevention Duty is a period of up to 56 days where the HOO will work with the young person to try and prevent them from becoming homeless. The HOO will create a Personalised Housing Plan (PHP) that suits the young person's individual housing needs and will be tailored to maximise the chances to get rehoused. The PHP will highlight tasks that both the young person and the HOO have to complete in order for the young person to get rehoused. The prevention duty can come to an end if:

- Suitable accommodation has become available for occupation and there is a reasonable prospect that it will continue to be available for at least six months.
- A period of 56 days has elapsed; from the date the duty was accepted.
- Young person become homeless (in which case the relief duty applies)
- Young person refuses a suitable offer of accommodation and there is a reasonable prospect that the accommodation would have been available for occupation for a period of at least six months.
- Young person has become homeless intentionally from any accommodation which the Council has made available as a result of the functions under Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- Young person is no longer eligible for homelessness assistance.
- Young person withdraws application for homelessness assistance.
- Young person has been notified that they have deliberately and unreasonably refused to cooperate with the council or have deliberately and unreasonably refused to undertake one or more of the actions agreed within the personal housing plan.
- If the young person becomes roofless when this duty ends, then your prevention duty will end and a new Relief Duty will be triggered.

Relief Duty

Relief Duty is a period of up to 56 days where the HOO will work with the young person to relieve homelessness, like the prevention duty the officer will work with the young person via the PHP. This could be a new one or updated one from the previous Prevention Duty.

The Relief Duty can come to an end if:

- Suitable accommodation has become available for occupation and there is a reasonable prospect that it will continue to be available to you for at least six months.
- A period of 56 days has elapsed, from the date The Relief Duty was accepted
- Young person refuses a suitable offer of accommodation and there is a reasonable prospect that the accommodation would have been available for occupation for a period of at least six months.
- Young person has become homeless intentionally from any accommodation which the Council has made available as a result of functions under Homeless reduction act 2017.
- Young person is no longer eligible for homelessness assistance.
- Young person has withdrawn application for homelessness assistance.
- Young person has been notified that they have deliberately and unreasonably refused to cooperate with the council and have deliberately and unreasonably refused to undertake one or more of the actions agreed within the personal housing plan.
- Young person refuses a final accommodation offer of suitable accommodation or a final offer of suitable accommodation made under Part 6 Housing Act 1996.

At this stage the young person is deemed roofless the Council would have a duty to provide temporary accommodation, this is because as a Care Leaver there is automatic “priority need” for temporary accommodation up until the 21st birthday.

The young person will be offered temporary accommodation under s188 Housing Act 1996. There will only be one offer of accommodation and this will be to whatever accommodation will be available on that day. If this is rejected the Council will not offer any further temporary accommodation. If the young person loses their temporary accommodation for any reason the Council may not offer any further temporary accommodation.

If the young person is still homeless after the relief duty has come to an end the council would have to determine if any further duty is owed.

I Main Housing Duty

The Council will owe young people the main housing duty when the relief duty has come to an end and Housing Options are satisfied that the young person is:

Eligible for assistance: You are usually eligible for help if you're a British or Irish citizen living in the UK. If you're a British or Irish citizen recently returned to the UK, the rules can be complex, if you're a person from abroad refugee status, indefinite leave to remain or settled status from the EU Settlement Scheme would make you eligible you can get further advice on this from Citizens Advice Bureau.

In priority need: Care leavers are automatically priority need up until their 21st birthday, after their 21st birthday the Council would have to assess if the young person is more vulnerable than the average person as a result of being in care or due to other reasons e.g. physical/mental health illness, being threatened with abuse or violence.

Homeless: You are legally homeless if you have nowhere to live in the UK or abroad, you have a home but can't access it, it would be unreasonable for you to continue occupying your accommodation due to abuse or poor conditions of the home, you have been served valid notice to terminate your tenancy agreement.

Not intentionally homeless: You can be made intentionally homeless if your homelessness was caused by a deliberate act or omission. Examples of these could be being evicted for failure to pay rent or displaying antisocial behaviour. For further guidance on intentional homelessness see [Chapter 9](#). It will be a matter for the housing authority to determine whether or not a care leaver

has become homeless intentionally, taking into account all relevant facts. To inform this assessment, housing authorities should consult with the relevant children's services authority and obtain advice and information as to the young person's emotional and mental well-being, maturity and general ability to understand the impact of their actions.

Have a local connection to Bradford: to have a local connection to Bradford you need to have lived here for 6 of the last 12 months or 3 of the last 5 years. You can also have a connection on the grounds of family association normal residence, employment, special circumstances and leaving care.

[Section 199\(8\) to \(11\)](#) makes specific provisions relating to local connection for care leavers.

Where a care leaver is placed outside of Bradford District Council prior to their 16th birthday, has lived in the same housing authority area for at least 2 years and is homeless or will become homeless within 56 days, they will also have a 'local connection' (under part 7) and are eligible to make a homelessness application in that area (part 7) as well as an application in Bradford. For further guidance on Local Connection see Chapter 10 of the Homelessness Code of Guidance.

The main duty does not apply where you:

1. turned down a suitable final accommodation or final Part 6 offer made by the authority in pursuance of its duty to relieve homelessness.
2. been served a notice of 'deliberate and unreasonable refusal to cooperate' with a step in her/his PHP. In this case, the authority must ensure that accommodation is available to the applicant until such time as either a final accommodation offer or a final Part 6 offer of suitable accommodation is made, or the duty comes to an end in another way. This provides an unintentionally homeless applicant who is in priority need with a 'safety net'

The Main Housing Duty can come to an end when:

1. You cease to be eligible for assistance.
2. You become homeless intentionally from accommodation made available for your occupation
3. You accept an offer of accommodation under Part 6 (allocation of housing)
4. You voluntarily cease to occupy as your only principle home the accommodation made available for your occupation. (This means that if you do not stay or you voluntarily leave accommodation provided the Council will have no duty to provide you with further accommodation).
5. The Council arranges for a private landlord to make you an offer of an assured shorthold tenancy in the private rented sector for a period of at least 12 months.

Briefing note for DCS on proposed accommodation standards for children leaving custody

Purpose: Agree support for accommodation standards for children leaving custody

Actions to be considered by Directors of Children's Services in South and West Yorkshire: to support the proposed accommodation standards for children leaving custody

1. Background

- 1.1 A resettlement consortium was established in South and West Yorkshire in November 2014 to improve the outcomes for 10-17 year olds sentenced to custody, as two thirds were known to reoffend within 12 months. The number of young people in custody is reducing, and those who are sentenced are a high risk and vulnerable group with complex needs. Children in Care are approximately a third of the custodial population. The cost benefits of effective resettlement provide savings to local authority budgets including youth offending, social care and housing. In addition, there are cost savings for other public sector budgets including custodial establishments, the police; welfare benefits; and health. There are also broader benefits of reduced re-offending, which as well as improving the life chances for those young people, also reduces the number of victims of crime. Compared to other Local Authorities the consortium is located close to the secure estate establishments, and should therefore be able to offer a more personal service with face-to-face involvement of accommodation and other professionals.
- 1.2 The consortium strategic group is chaired by Tony Tweedy, Sheffield City Council Director of Lifelong Learning, Skills & Communities, and includes attendance by the Governor at Wetherby YOI, the Police and Crime Commissioners for South and West Yorkshire, and Youth Offending Team managers. Following analysis of national and local evidence, one of the resettlement priorities agreed was accommodation.
- 1.3 The OASys pilot study (Home Office, 2001) considered those with severe accommodation problems up to one year after release and this research identified that stable accommodation can make a difference of over 20 per cent in terms of reduction in reconviction. The Offender Assessment System: an evaluation of the second pilot, (Home Office, 2006) found that 69% of adult & young offenders with accommodation needs reoffend within 2 years compared to 40% in suitable accommodation.
- 1.4 In addition to the potential positive impact on re-offending a Barnardo's study (No Fixed Abode, The housing struggle for young people leaving custody in England, 2011) found that appropriate placement into supported accommodation post-custody can save the taxpayer £67,000 over a 3 year period.
- 1.5 A briefing note came to DCS in September 2015 to highlight accommodation difficulties faced by a small minority of children leaving custody. An analysis of young people sentenced to custody in South and West Yorkshire found that the largest proportion has been resident in the family home and would return there on release. However, in the same six month period, 14 young people from across the consortium area who were not returning to the family home were given a month's notice or less of the address to which they would be released amplifying the stress and anxiety that the majority of young people experience as a release date approaches and inhibiting the chances of a successful resettlement. The majority of these young people were Children in Care. At the DCS meeting it was agreed to support further work to improve the accommodation outcomes and that a report would come back to the meeting.
- 1.6 A timeline of key national and local activity relating to the accommodation priority, and the development of the standards, is provided on page 2, and the proposed standards are provided on page 3.

- 1.7 Future progress on the implementation of these standards will be monitored through the consortium and its data collection tool (Resettlement Tracker). The existing operational links with youth custody providers and youth offending teams will be maintained to ensure every effort is made to achieve the standards.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the regional meeting of the Association of Directors of Children's Services support the standards.

3. Timeline of development of standards

Date	Action
16 Jan 2015	Gap and needs analysis presented to the resettlement consortium strategic group identified the importance of timely and suitable accommodation for young people
26 Mar 2015	Lord McNally, Chair of the Youth Justice Board, wrote to Chief Executives of Local Authorities outlining the benefits of investing in suitable accommodation for young people leaving custody, and asking for action
10 Apr 2015	Lin Hinnigan, Chief Executive of the Youth Justice Board, wrote to Chairs of YOT Management Boards, further to Lord McNally's letter, asking them to pursue responsibilities around accommodation for young people leaving custody
Mar 2015	Joint Thematic Inspection of Resettlement Services published, undertaken jointly by HM Inspectorate for Probation, the Care Quality Commission and Ofsted recommended that local authorities should seek to ensure that young people not returning to the family home have their accommodation confirmed by their responsible YOT at least two months in advance of their release date
19 Jun 2015	Specific research on accommodation issues, including analysis of a year's local data, was presented to the resettlement consortium strategic group. It identified the need locally for the consortium to support the earlier identification of accommodation for young people leaving custody who will not return to the family home. The national context was provided by St Basils, a charity commissioned by the Department of Communities and Local Government and the Youth Justice Board, to work on homelessness.
25 Jun 2015	Information presented to Regional Directors of Children's Services, who agree to support further work on the issue
Jul-Dec 2015	Individual discussions with nine areas on accommodation provision
10 Feb 2016	Workshop with representatives from all nine local authorities and the secure estate problem solving around accommodation issues
8 Mar 2016	Findings of workshop discussed at resettlement consortium strategic group and agreement to draw up and consult on a set of standards as well as discussion of a range of other actions
13 Jun 2016	St Basils run a workshop on positive housing pathway, policy and legal provisions, and developing a specific criminal justice pathway
Jul-Aug 2016	E-mail consultation on standards
Sep 2016	Agreement of standards by the resettlement consortium strategic group

**South and West Yorkshire Resettlement Consortium
Effective Accommodation Planning for Resettlement**

Ensuring timely knowledge of address on release for all young people

Key standards

1. *Young people in custody should know a month in advance of their release date where they will be living on release.*
2. *Escalation should take place as soon as a difficulty in obtaining suitable accommodation is identified, and at a minimum a month before release.*
3. *Heads of Service should raise issues with the Director of Children's Services as soon as a difficulty is identified and no later than 7 days prior to release.*
4. *The social worker and YOT case manager must liaise to ensure that their plans are aligned, and arrange joint visits a minimum of once a month to ensure this aligned plan is jointly reviewed. Visits should be facilitated by the secure estate, and may include accommodation providers.*
5. *No young person should be released to present as homeless or to temporary accommodation for assessment.*
6. *Following the initial sentence planning meeting the young person's accommodation situation and plans should be referred to a local planning panel with senior management representation from Housing, Social Care and Youth Offending - either a meeting or a virtual e-mail group.*
7. *Temporary release to support successful accommodation placement should be scheduled for all young people as part of sentence planning.*
8. *Consideration should be given to the young person's support package to maintain their accommodation.*

1. Background

- 1.1 Nationally and locally accommodation has been identified as a key issue for resettlement. The Youth Justice Board wrote in 2015 to Chief Executives and YOT Board Chairs asking them to review and improve the situation for those being released. The HMIP / CQC / Ofsted inspection on resettlement also highlighted accommodation as a key factor, and suggested young people should be aware of their address on release two months beforehand. Research shows that the success of all other resettlement pathway depends on having suitable accommodation available well before the pre-release period.
- 1.2 The South and West Yorkshire Resettlement Consortium undertook some analysis of young people leaving custody and found that in nearly half of cases young people did not know the address they would be returning to a month in advance of release. A small number of these are young people returning to family where issues were being resolved until late in sentence. However, the majority are aged 16-17, and Children in Care. These standards have been developed to support this small number of young people who are not returning to the family home, although they have relevance beyond that.
- 1.3 The number of young people in custody is reducing. Those within the cohort are a high risk and vulnerable group with complex needs. The cost benefits for longer term savings on custody, mental health interventions and harm to the community justifies an investment in accommodation for resettlement.
- 1.4 The Standards have been developed through discussions at two accommodation workshops by representatives from Social Care, Housing and Youth Offending Teams across South and West Yorkshire. Cross cutting all the standards should be the importance of including the young person's views in decision-making.

2. Legislation, judgements, guidance and interpretation

Children's Act 1989 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/part/III/crossheading/provision-of-accommodation-for-children>

Section 20(1)

Every local authority shall provide accommodation for **any child in need** within their area who appears to them **to require accommodation** as a result of:

- a) there being no person who has parental responsibility for him;
- b) his being lost or having been abandoned;
- c) the person who has been caring for him is being prevented from providing him with **suitable** accommodation or care.

Section 20(3)

Every local authority shall provide accommodation for any child in need within their area who has reached the **age of sixteen and whose welfare the authority consider is likely to be seriously prejudiced if they do not provide him with accommodation**.

Section 20 (4) A local authority may provide accommodation for any child within their area (even though a person who has parental responsibility for him is able to provide him with accommodation) if they consider that to do so would safeguard or promote the child's welfare.

All of these are separate provisions, not a combined test

Following the Southwark judgement, the key question is does the child in need require accommodation, *not* do they need to be looked after?

Housing Act 1996

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/52/part/VII>

S183 - Reason to believe homeless or threatened with homelessness within 28 days

S184 – if reason to believe, then duty to investigate

4 statutory tests: Eligible, homeless, priority need, intentionally homeless and 1 other test - not statutory - local connection

S188 – interim suitable accommodation

S193 – homeless decision – ‘accepting’ the main homelessness duty

Existing YJB guidance: Custody and resettlement: section 7 case management guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/custody-and-resettlement/custody-and-resettlement-section-7-case-management-guidance> -the escalation timescale for our standards has been taken from existing YJB guidance

The charity St Basils offer training and support to Local Authorities <https://www.stbasils.org.uk/how-we-help/our-services> on issues relating to young people, accommodation and support.

For any further information please contact resettlement@leeds.gov.uk