



# Care Experienced 16-23 years olds - Supported Lodgings Policy 2024

Supported lodgings is when you share your home with a young person. You provide a safe home and help them learn to live on their own. Young people who need supported lodgings are aged 16 to 23 and care experienced.

## Children's Social Care

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## Policy Governance

<b>Title</b>	<b>Care Experienced 16-23 year olds – Supported Lodgings Policy</b>
<b>Purpose/scope</b>	Arrangements for Supported Lodgings for care leavers. aged 16 to 23 years of age.
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<b>Approver</b>	Darren Knibbs Director: Children’s Safeguarding & Family Support

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**Purpose/Scope:**

Arrangements for Supported Lodgings for care leavers. aged sixteen to twenty-three.

**Introduction:**

“To provide young people with a safe and nurturing environment, one that promotes, independence and choice, while enhancing their core living skills, and the ability to move across the care continuum into fully independent living.”

**The Telford & Wrekin Supported Lodgings service:**

Has been designed to ensure that young people, and Supported Lodgings carers are provided with information, practical support, and financial support to enable young people to make a successful transition to adulthood.

**Ofsted Registered Supported Lodgings 16- & 17-Year Olds Service Category 4 (Regulation 2 (1), para (d)):**

Regulation 9 of The Supported Accommodation Regulations.

The Ofsted Registered Supported Lodgings Service 16- & 17-year-olds aims to provide young people using our service with the opportunity to be part of the family and community of an Ofsted Registered Supported Lodgings 16- & 17-Year Olds Service Carer, carers will in turn provide friendship and support and/or care.

These are the things we believe are important for all young people using or Ofsted Registered Supported Lodgings 16- & 17-Year Olds Service:

- Being part of the carer(s) family or household.
- They feel safe and secure where they live and in my wider community.
- They are learning and using new skills to develop their independence.
- Doing as much as they can for themselves and being as independent as possible.
- Having privacy in their home and life.
- Being treated with consideration and respect.
- Being given choices and making their own decisions.
- Leading the kind of life, they want and achieving the things that are important to them.
- Recognising people as equal human beings who all have the same rights.

The people who can make use of our Ofsted Registered Supported Lodgings 16- & 17-Year Olds Service can have a range of needs. All our young people will be treated as individuals and their needs met on a one-one basis. Carers will be matched to the individual young person and be appropriate for their circumstances. Carers will have mandatory training on Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity, First Aid at Work Emergency, Fire Safety, Protecting Personal Information, Child Protection, Adult Safeguarding, Child protection, Safeguarding, Health and Safety Introduction, Food Safety Level 1 and 2, Mental Capacity Act Awareness, Manual Handling of Loads, Managing Medicines, and Care Certificate Training. They will also have training relevant to the young person's individual needs and as part of carers supervision training or support needs will be we will look at their training and support needs and this will then be actioned.

### **Telford & Wrekin - Supported Lodgings Service Care Experienced 18–23-year-olds:**

Supported Lodgings promotes a gradual transition from care to adulthood and independent living that recognises that many young people in care often experience delayed maturity, and that their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday is likely to be an inappropriate point to leave a familial supported lodgings household. Therefore, the Telford & Wrekin Supported Lodgings service is designed to ensure young people do not experience a sudden disruption to their living arrangements, that educational and training achievement and continuity is promoted and that all young people can make a gradual transition from care to independence or to an Adult Social Care service.

The Telford & Wrekin Supported Lodgings Service enables a supported lodgings placement to be extended from the care experienced young person's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday until:

1. The young person will be supported in a planned way to move on to suitable accommodation in advance of their 23<sup>rd</sup> birthday.
2. The young person decides to leave and move to independent living.
3. The young person attends university or higher education out of county with accommodation opportunities.

## Philosophy of care:

We aim to provide a high-quality service for vulnerable young people, where they will be able to say:

- I feel safe and secure where I live and in my wider community.
- I have my own space that I feel proud of and live in a comfortable, well maintained, and stable accommodation.
- I am treated with compassion, dignity, and respect and have high-quality tailored support that sustains my health and wellbeing.
- I have confidence that the adults who support me understand me, are skilled and work effectively to meet my needs.
- I feel supported to learn and apply skills for independent adult living.
- I have strong, trusting, and meaningful relationships with my support system and can rely on the adults around me.
- I am protected from avoidable harm, but also have the freedom to take my own risks.
- My voice is respected, heard, and advocated for so that I can make decisions about the care I receive.

I feel positive about my future and opportunities because of the support I receive.

## What about religious and spiritual needs?

Carers come from a wide variety of social, cultural, linguistic, religious, and ethnic backgrounds and will therefore have different expectations, needs and experiences. These experiences influence styles of upbringing and the things that young people and their carers view as important. We aim to ensure that the service is responsive and appropriate for our constantly changing multi-racial community, and that the different experiences, needs and expectations of young people and their families are met.

The Team will ensure that the young person's religious, cultural, emotional, and spiritual needs are identified through the support plan and location assessment and that they are given appropriate support by cares to meet these needs. Please see our Equalities Policy for more guidance on how religious and spiritual needs.

## **Is there contact with relatives, friends, and advocates?**

The service is committed to working closely with Individual's, their relatives, friends, and advocates to ensure that the service is responsive to the individual's needs and wishes. co-production, openness, honesty, and transparency is something we pride ourselves on.

## **Who will support me and monitor my care?**

Each young person has a carer and their family. The registered service manager will monitor the care being provided by the carer. The young person will have a social worker until the age of 18 and a personal adviser(PA) until the age of 25, and the carer and registered manager will be invited to child in care meetings up to the age of 18 and then contact with the PA and invitations to the pathway plan reviews every six months to monitor the care provided and assess pathway plans to make sure they remain relevant to the young person. Carers will support the young person to participate in the process of reviews etc. The carer and manager are also named contact point for others such as families, health staff, etc., who may wish to discuss the welfare of the young person or to make known any concerns. Young people are encouraged and supported to maintain regular contact with their family, friends and advocates, and arrangements to support this contact are identified through the young person's support plan. The service is committed to working closely with young people, their relatives, friends, and professionals to ensure that the service is responsive to the individual's needs and wishes. The service also seeks to obtain independent advocates for the young person wherever possible and will always seek this support for the individual when necessary. We have a Young Person's Guide for information for young people.

## **How are carers recruited?**

Fitness of staff: Regulation 17 of The Supported Accommodation (England) Regulations 2023.

Employment of Staff: Regulation 18 of The Supported Accommodation (England) Regulations 2023.

All carers are recruited through a vigorous vetting process. This includes enhanced DBS checks and references.

Carers also go to panel where they are asked questions and the panel then decide whether they are competent and fit to be Ofsted Registered Supported Lodgings care experienced 16- & 17-Year Olds Service Carers. Panel is made up of previous supported lodgings young people, previous carers, social worker, safeguarding and a staff member from another supported lodgings service.

We try to match our carers to the young people's needs and interests, so that the young person feels connected in some way to the carer before they move in. Our Workforce Plan sets out the process from application to appointment for carers and how they will support young people using the service.

### **How are young people referred to the service?**

Referrals come from Children's Social Care. All referrals are considered individually and in discussion with the Manager to determine the suitability of the service for meeting the needs of the young person.

Young people will be involved in the process and their views and wishes considered. They will receive information about carers that can offer them lodgings, they will have visits to carers homes to help them decide if this placement is right for them prior to any formal agreement by either party to make this a permanent placement.

Transition from place to place will adhere to the same process and no change will happen until all parties agree.

Carers and social workers will meet regularly with the young people to determine if the provision is still the right placement type to support the young person.

### **The Telford & Wrekin Supported Lodgings Service has four pay scales:**

1. **Level one 16- & 17-year-olds:** Ofsted Registered. Young people who are looked after, stepping down from foster care or a residential provision. Young people who need intensive support due to vulnerabilities and who can be supported in a family setting. Young people who present as homeless and a more in-depth assessment is needed and who do not want to become Section 20 of children's act 1989 and who can be supported under Section 17 of children's act 1989.



<b>Supported Lodgings Long Term Placement Costings age 16 &amp; 17</b>		
<b>Service:</b>	<b>Cost Per Week:</b>	<b>Funded By:</b>
Personal support and guidance	£295.00	<b>Telford &amp; Wrekin</b>
Rent	£75.00	<b>Telford &amp; Wrekin</b>
Food/utility Contribution	£25.00	<b>Young Person's Contribution</b>
<b>Total payment to Carers</b>	<b>£395.00</b>	
<b>Cost to Telford &amp; Wrekin</b>		
Personal support and guidance	£295.00	<b>Telford &amp; Wrekin</b>
Rent	£75.00	<b>Telford &amp; Wrekin</b>
Management Fee	£60.00	<b>Telford &amp; Wrekin</b>
<b>Total Cost to T &amp; W</b>	<b>£430.00</b>	
<p><b>+ 2 weeks paid holiday a year £295 a week.</b>  <b>Telford and Wrekin will provide an allowance for Birthday and Christmas/ chosen festival as per the Telford and Wrekin finance policy</b></p>		

### **Supported Lodgings Costings – T & W 24/25**

- Level Two 18-year-olds.** young people who are care leavers, making the transition from having support and care to preparing them for independent living. Young people stepping down from residential or fostering at age 18, who require extra support to transition to adulthood.

**Supported Lodgings Costings – T & W 24/25**

<b>Supported Lodgings Long Term Placement Costings age 18</b>		
<b>Service:</b>	<b>Cost Per Week:</b>	<b>Funded By:</b>
Personal support and guidance	£230.00	<b>Telford &amp; Wrekin</b>
Rent	£75.00	<b>UC Claim; YP earnings</b>
Food/utility Contribution	£25.00	<b>Young Person's Contribution</b>
<b>Total payment to Carers</b>	<b>£330.00</b>	
<b>Cost to Telford &amp; Wrekin</b>		
Personal support and guidance	£230.00	<b>Telford &amp; Wrekin</b>
Management Fee	£60.00	<b>Telford &amp; Wrekin</b>
<b>Total Cost to T &amp; W</b>	<b>£290</b>	
<b>Telford and Wrekin will provide an allowance for Birthday and Christmas/ chosen festival as per the Telford and Wrekin finance policy.</b>		

3. **Level Three 19-year-olds.** young people who are care leavers, making the transition from having support and care to preparing them for independent living. Young people stepping down from residential or fostering at age 19, who require extra support to transition to adulthood.

### Supported Lodgings Costings – T & W 24/25

<b>Supported Lodgings Long Term Placement Costings age 19</b>		
<b>Service:</b>	<b>Cost Per Week:</b>	<b>Funded By:</b>
Personal support and guidance	£190.00	<b>Telford &amp; Wrekin</b>
Rent	£75.00	<b>UC Claim or YP earnings</b>
Food/utility Contribution	£25.00	<b>Young Person's Contribution</b>
<b>Total payment to Carers</b>	<b>£290.00</b>	
<b>Cost to Telford &amp; Wrekin</b>		
Personal support and guidance	£190.00	<b>Telford &amp; Wrekin</b>
Management Fee	£60.00	<b>Telford &amp; Wrekin</b>
<b>Total Cost to T &amp; W</b>	<b>£250.00</b>	

**Telford and Wrekin will provide an allowance for Birthday and Christmas/ chosen festival as per the Telford and Wrekin finance policy.**

4. **Level Four 20-23 Years Old:** care experienced young people 20-23 who need enablement support to transition into independent living and adulthood.

### Supported Lodgings Costings – T & W 24/25

<b>Supported Lodgings Long Term Placement Costings age 20-23</b>		
<b>Service:</b>	<b>Cost Per Week:</b>	<b>Funded By:</b>
Personal support and guidance	£166.00	<b>Telford &amp; Wrekin</b>
Rent	£75.00	<b>UC Claim or YP earnings</b>
Food/utility Contribution	£25.00	<b>Young Person's Contribution</b>
<b>Total payment to Carers</b>	<b>£266.00</b>	
<b>Cost to Telford &amp; Wrekin</b>		
Personal support and guidance	£166.00	<b>Telford &amp; Wrekin</b>
Management Fee	£60.00	<b>Telford &amp; Wrekin</b>
<b>Total Cost to T &amp; W</b>	<b>£226.00</b>	

**Telford and Wrekin will provide an allowance for Birthday and Christmas/ chosen festival as per the Telford and Wrekin finance policy.**

The weekly rent is the responsibility of the young person, this should be paid directly to the "Supported Lodgings" provider, either from earnings or the housing element of Universal Credit (or a combination). Where young people are claiming Universal Credit the housing costs element should be paid directly to the "Supported lodgings" provider through an Alternative Payment Arrangement (APA), young people will need to request an APA via a UC47 on-line form. The rent forms an element of the overall "Supported Lodgings" rate and allowance and is the responsibility of

the young person. The Housing Element of Universal Credit is paid in arrears and the first payment will arrive 5 weeks after the Young Person turns 18.

In situations where young people do not pay their rent, either by not making the required payment or by not claiming the housing element of Universal Credit they may be subject to an eviction process. In all situations where a young person owes four weeks rent (£300.00) a “Supported Lodgings” Stability Meeting will be held. The Meeting will decide on the action required by the young person to address the rent arrears. Young people will be given every opportunity to repay any arrears and eviction will only take place as an absolute last resort in situations of rent arrears.

Carers are paid every four weeks by Telford and Wrekin Council.

### **Food & Utilities Contribution:**

Young people will receive an allowance equal to the current universal credit rate. This will be paid until the young person receives universal credit. Young people are expected to contribute £25 per week for food/meals and utilities/services from the start of their Supported Lodgings arrangement from this allowance.

### **The Rent Contribution:**

Is applied from the start of the supported lodgings arrangement and the young person is responsible for this cost once they receive universal credit. Until the young person receives universal credit the rent element will be paid by Telford and Wrekin Council or other Authorities if the young person comes from out of area, until the young person receives universal credit payments. This should be applied for just before the young person’s 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday. The housing costs – Housing Element of Universal Credit should be paid directly to the Supported Lodgings carer.

Young people living in supported lodgings arrangements are liable for their rent which is set by the council. This should be paid per week from their earnings or Universal Credit (housing element), or a combination of both.

Failure of the young person to pay rent from their earnings and/or via a claim for the housing element of Universal Credit may result in a young person being required to leave the Supported Lodgings arrangement (i.e., being evicted).

## **Financial Requirements, Universal Credit and Personal Benefits for Young People:**

Young people remaining in a Supported Lodgings arrangement are expected to be in employment and have earnings or claim Universal Credit for their personal needs from their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday (from the age of 16, if claiming based on having limited capability for work or estranged from family). These earnings or Universal Credit should be used for Clothing, Personal items, food, and rent etc.

### **Council Tax:**

Supported Lodgings carers should inform Telford & Wrekin council tax office of any changes in their circumstances and get advice around their individual situation.

## **Income Tax and National Insurance Issues for Supported Lodgings Arrangements:**

Supported Lodgings carers can consult their local HMRC office for guidance on their individual circumstances and liabilities.

HMRC is aware that a few supported lodgings carers may not have registered for Class 2 National Insurance Contributions because they make little or no taxable profit. Supported lodgings carers are deemed as self-employment and as such carers should register as self-employed. All self-employed people aged 16 and over who are below State Pension age are liable and must register to pay Class 2 National Insurance Contributions. Failure to do this may affect their entitlement to Employment and Support Allowance, Maternity Benefit, State Pension and Bereavement Benefit. If carers have not previously registered as Self-Employed, they can obtain further information by calling the Newly Self-employed Helpline on **0300 200 3504**.

If they are currently registered to pay Class 2 National Insurance Contributions, they can obtain further information by calling the Self-Employed Helpline on **0845 915 4655** instead.

Supported Lodgings carers should always inform the DWP and HMRC if their circumstances change and should always check with the DWP and HMRC regarding their personal circumstances and how payments for supported lodgings care may affect their means tested benefits/Universal Credit, Working Tax Credits or any Income Tax or National Insurance liability.

## **Support for Supported Lodgings Carers:**

- All Supported Lodgings Carers will be supported by the Supported Lodgings staff.
- Social Worker for the young person.

- PA for the young person.
- Supported Lodgings carers will receive 6 weekly supervisions from Supported Lodgings staff.
- Annual reviews completed by supported lodgings staff.
- There will be carers meetings and activities throughout the year.

### **Recording Information – Supported Lodgings Carers:**

Supported Lodgings carers should keep a monthly log for the young people in their care. They should log any significant events with dates and times and email to the supported lodgings manager. Information being recorded should be shared with the young person. Young people should also be informed that the log/diary/information will only be shared with other professionals on a 'need to know' basis.

### **Safeguarding:**

The safer caring arrangements for each household will depend on the make-up of the household and the level of 'vulnerability' of the young people. Supported Lodgings carers will be fully involved in formulating safer caring arrangements, which in part will depend on any risk and 'vulnerability' issues associated with young people and adults in the household. Supported Lodgings carers will attend safeguarding training and be expected to write detailed reports of any concerns using the correct form and email these concerns to the supported lodgings manager within an hour of the concern being raised.

### **Conclusion**

The information in this policy and guidance is advice for Supported Lodgings carers and young people if they have any concerns, they should contact the registered manager for supported lodgings or the appropriate department they have concerns about.

Supported Lodgings carers must ensure that they inform the Department for Work and Pensions, Council Tax and HM Revenue and Customs of any change of circumstance in their family, or with their supported lodgings arrangement.