

Independence and Transitions (IAT) Gateway

**Terms of Reference**

**Contents**

[1. Introduction 2](#_Toc169513970)

[2. Objectives 2](#_Toc169513971)

[3. Scope 3](#_Toc169513972)

[4. Governance and Accountability 3](#_Toc169513973)

[5. Membership 4](#_Toc169513974)

[6. Identification Process and Agenda Setting 4](#_Toc169513975)

[7. Gateway Frequency and Attendance 4](#_Toc169513976)

[8. IAT Decision Making and Recording 5](#_Toc169513977)

[9. Approval, review, and variation of Terms of Reference 5](#_Toc169513978)

# Introduction

BCP Independence and Transitions (IAT) Gateway is the key forum for oversight and planning for the accommodation and support needs of young people in care and care leavers, including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and care leavers, to support a successful transition to adulthood.

The IAT is a multi-disciplinary forum which collaborates across Children’s Social Care, Housing, Education and where appropriate Adult Social Care, to ensure that young people’s needs are proactively planned for and met. Its purpose is to provide a structure and process whereby accommodation needs are assessed and fully understood to ensure that young people can access the right accommodation for their assessed needs in a timely way. Additionally, regulatory, and budgetary aspects will be determined and monitored via the membership of this panel.

These Terms of Reference should be read in conjunction with:

* The Young People Accommodation and Support Offer
* The Joint Housing Protocol for Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People
* The Local Offer for Young People Leaving Our Care

# Objectives

BCP Council’s Care Leaver Offer sets out our corporate commitment to the accommodation and housing of care experienced young people. Utilising the range of housing and support options available and a person-centred approach to planning, the IAT considers and endorses young people’s assessed needs, as reflected in their Pathway Plan and Personal Housing Plan.

The objectives of the IAT are:

1. To ensure that every young person who is in care or is care experienced has accommodation and support needs jointly assessed between Children’s Social Care and Housing Services, as per the Joint Housing Protocol
2. To ensure that accommodation and housing needs are assessed in a timely way, starting at the age of 16.5 years
3. To optimise the use of all available accommodation resources as per the Young People Accommodation and Support Offer
4. To scrutinise Pathway Plans to ensure they promote independence and life skills development for young people to enable them to progress towards more independent and less supported accommodation options in a planned way
5. To consider Pathway Plans and Personal Housing Plans and make decisions about how best to meet each young person’s accommodation and support needs to ensure a successful transition to adulthood, and following best value principles
6. To scrutinise and where necessary challenge providers to ensure young people’s Support Plans promote independence and life skills development for young people to enable them to progress towards more independent and less supported accommodation options in a planned way
7. To ensure that processes are in place and being followed for young people to utilise benefits entitlements, including Housing Benefit
8. To ensure that processes are in place and being followed for former UASC to apply for Indefinite Leave to Remain
9. To record, monitor and report on expenditure in relation to placement costs for all young people under the Gateway’s remit

# Scope

The Gateway is responsible for ensuring the progression of planning for:

* All children in care, including UASC over the age of 16.5 years (eligible child)
* All care experienced young people aged 18-21 years (former relevant)
* All care experienced young people aged 21-25 years where the full care leaver Offer applies
* All UASC care experienced young people without Indefinite Leave to Remain
* All UASC care experienced young people with Indefinite Leave to Remain but without an appropriate accommodation solution

The Gateway continues to review unmet accommodation and support needs for every young person within the Gateway’s remit until the Gateway determines that the needs have been met. Young people are re-referred to the Gateway for further consideration if their circumstances significantly change.

# Governance and Accountability

The IAT Gateway authorises the use of the full range of accommodation as set out in the Young People Accommodation and Support Offer.

The IAT Gateway authorises the use of placements for all children and young people within its remit, where this is required.

The IAT Gateway records, monitors and reports on all placements expenditure which arises from its decision making, reporting to QAG on a quarterly basis.

The QAG will determine whether the data and its analysis require further scrutiny and discussion in another, multi-disciplinary forum (e.g. Youth Homelessness Board; Corporate Parenting Board; Homelessness Reduction Board.

# Membership

The membership of the IAT Gateway will consist of:

* Service Manager for Children in Care and Care Experienced Young People (co-Chair)
* Head of Service Placements and Resources, Children’s Commissioning (co-Chair)
* Housing representative
* ART Placements representative
* Fostering Service representative
* Virtual School 16+ Education Officer
* Preparing for Adulthood Lead for SEND
* Gateway Coordinator

Representatives from CHAD and the Preparing for Adulthood Team (Adult Social Care) will be invited as necessary on a case by case basis.

Where the nominated individual is unable to attend it is expected that they identify a suitable representative to attend in their place.

# Identification Process and Agenda Setting

The agenda is formulated and circulated two weeks in advance of each Gateway. The agenda is circulated to all standing members and all relevant social workers / personal advisors and their team managers.

The IAT Gateway considers young peoples’ needs via two datasets which are used to develop each weekly Gateway agenda:

* Young people aged over 18 years identified as requiring review due to their current placement type and cost;
* Young people aged over 16.5 years, following completion of their first Pathway Plan.

There is no referral process or requirement, and the agenda will be entirely led by the data. The Pathway Plan and Personal Housing Plan should be available on Mosaic for the Gateway to review if required.

# Gateway Frequency and Attendance

The IAT Gateway takes place on a Wednesday afternoon every week.

If the social worker / personal advisor is unable to attend the Gateway, an Assistant Team Manager or Team Manager should attend in their place and hold sufficient knowledge of the young person’s needs to be able to contribute to the discussion.

# IAT Decision Making and Recording

All decisions made by the Gateway that have a direct cost implication will be recorded in the Gateway Dashboard.

A concise record of the decisions made and agreed actions, including timescales and responsibilities, will be noted by the Gateway Coordinator and added to the young person’s case notes in Mosaic within three working days of the Gateway. Decisions and actions will be recorded on the IAT Gateway Decision and Action Record.

Multi-disciplinary panel members are expected to note actions attributable to them and record these on their relevant case management system.

Social workers, personal advisors and housing officers are expected to amend Pathway Plans, Joint Housing Assessments and Personal Housing Plans following IAT Gateway decision making, as appropriate, within two weeks of the Gateway.

# Approval, review, and variation of Terms of Reference

The IAT terms of reference will be reviewed, updated as required and approved by group members at least annually. Any required changes to process or approach will then be communicated as appropriate.

Nicole Mills

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