**Kent Supported Homes Contingency Policy**

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# Introduction

Kent Supported Homes (KSH) is committed to ensuring the effective continuation of stable and secure accommodation for young people, wherever it is possible. Kent is a county wherein young people, regardless of status, should be able to benefit from such and we as corporate parents take this responsibility seriously.

This policy outlines the steps that will be taken by Kent County Council (KCC) should the placement of young people supported within Kent Supported Homes be affected by temporary or permanent closure of their placements, or the registration of the service be adversely affected, and it be unable to continue to operate.

# Host Contingency (Relief and Respite)

Relief Hosts are those individuals who have been identified, checked and trained by KSH and who it is assessed are able to provide ‘relief’ support to mainstream Hosts, by assuming their position within the home of the Hosts, wherein they would usually be the provider of support, but are not able to be such for a fixed, brief period i.e. during a period of respite.

Relief Hosts are in place for some Hosts where identified and might be accessible upon request for those without such individuals already identified. Should a Host with an identified Relief Host need to take respite away from the home for any reason, including health and wellbeing issues, said Relief Hosts can be utilised to take their place in the main Host’s home for the required period and take all necessary actions in lieu of the main Host, avoiding any disruption to the placement of the young person/people supported.

Should no such Relief Host be available, a Respite Host in another address can be identified if required for a reasonable fixed period. The young person would be supported in this instance, to relocate to the Respite Host’s address for that period until they are able to return and plans will be put into place by the relevant supporting social work team as to how to support the young person to continue to work on any educational, employment or other goals as required.

Where there is no determined end date for the main Host who must leave their address for any period, a long-term move of the young person, following usual matching processes will be undertaken.

Should no alternative Host be available to meet the needs of the young person, it will be a management decision, within the relevant Children in Care team, as to which other form of accommodation best suits their needs and how this will be accessed. This other form of accommodation could be another registered provider of supported accommodation or potentially a suitably assessed friend or family member with the seeking of any requisite order legal order as may be required.

# Substantive Staff Contingency

Where there are substantive KCC staff absences, in the short term, another member or other members of the team will cover their responsibilities to their Hosts where reasonable and practicable. The KSH team remains embedded within the wider KCC 18+ Service and as such, they can benefit from the same ‘duty team' processes and staff support as for all others across the service. Advice will also be provided to Hosts as to which other resources or professionals might be accessed to access the support required by them, during this time.

Where there are long term absences, consideration as to how to manage this sufficiently will be undertaken by the senior management and decisions made in respect of ensuring that the absences do not impact on service delivery and quality.

# Whole Service Registration Contingency

In the event that the undertaking ceases, whether permanently or temporarily, to provide supported accommodation, as a result of closure, conditions or restrictions imposed on the registration of the undertaking, or because of a suspension or cancellation of registration of Kent Supported Homes, then any young person affected by this is be moved through referral to Kent County Council’s Total Placement Service (TPS), to another service, whether this be to a vacancy within our shared supported contracted accommodation (also applying for Ofsted registration) or to an alternative placement including potentially a fostering arrangement or other registered supported accommodation arrangement. Such referrals would be completed by the young person’s social worker, in the first instance.