**Kent Supported Homes Statement of Purpose
Supported Lodgings for**

**Young People**

**Aged 16-24**

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# Contents

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Subject** | **Page** |
| [Aims](#_Aims) | 4 |
| [Context](#_Context) | 5 |
| [Section 1 – Service Standards](#_Section_1_-) | 6 |
| [Legislative & Policy Framework](#_Legislative_&_Policy) | 6 |
| [Policies and Procedures](#_Policies_and_Procedures) | 6 |
| [Services Provided by Kent Support Homes](#_Services_pProvided_by) | 7 |
| [Section 2 – Structure of Kent Supported Homes](#_Section_2_-) | 7 |
| [Section 3 – Accommodation](#_Section_3_-) | 8 |
| [Suitable Accommodation](#_Suitable_Accommodation) | 8 |
| [Accessing a Young Person’s Room](#_Accessing_a_Young) | 9 |
| [In Respect of Communal Areas](#_In_rRespect_of) | 10 |
| [Access to Communal Areas](#_Access_to_Communal) | 10 |
| [Conditions of the Accommodation](#_Conditions_of_the) | 11 |
| [Use of CCTV](#_Use_of_CCTV) | 11 |
| [Annexes](#_Annexes) | 12 |
| [Mobile and Non-permanent Settings](#_Mobile_and_Non-Permanent) | 12 |
| [Suitable Locations & Assessments](#_Suitable_Locations_&) | 13 |
| [Licensing of the Property / Landlord Responsibilities to Those Young People Aged 18+](#_Licensing_of_the) | 13 |
| [Section 4 – Support to Young People](#_Section_4_-) | 14 |
| [Kent Pledge](#_Kent_Pledge) | 14 |
| [Working in a Trauma-Informed Way](#_Working_in_a) | 15 |
| [Support Planning](#_Support_Planning) | 15 |
| [Support from a Host would not Include](#_Support_from_a) | 16 |
| [Socialisation and Relationship Support](#_Socialisation_and_Relationship) | 17 |
| [Equality and Diversity Training and Policy](#_Equality_and_dDiversity) | 17 |
| [Levels of Support](#_Levels_of_Support) | 17 |
| [Expectations of a Home for a Parent & Child](#_Expectations_of_a) | 18 |
| [Transport and Travel](#_Transport_and_Travel) | 18 |
| [Variation of Support](#_Variation_of_Support) | 18 |
| [Support to Prepare for Independent Living](#_Support_to_Prepare) | 19 |
| [Liaison with Professionals](#_Liaison_with_Professionals) | 21 |
| [Holidays and Time Away from the Home](#_Holidays_and_Time) | 22 |
| [Confidentiality & GDPR](#_Confidentiality_&_GDPR) | 22 |
| [Complaints/Allegations](#_Complaints_/_Allegations) | 22 |
| [Out of Hours and When to Use to Record Absence/Missing Episode](#_Out_of_Hours) | 22 |
| [Section 5 – Service Requirements – Referrals & Matching](#_Section_5_-) | 23 |
| [Planned Moves to Kent Supported Homes](#_Planned_mMoves_to) | 23 |
| [Emergency Moves](#_Emergency_Mmoves) | 23 |
| [Staying Put Referrals (In-house and IFA)](#_Staying_Put_Referrals) | 24 |
| [Termination of Arrangement](#_Termination_of_Arrangement) | 25 |
| [Section 6 – Service Requirements – Management of Hosts – Guidance for Accommodation Officer, Fostering Social Worker, Social Worker & Personal Adviser](#_Section_6_–) | 25 |
| [KSH Hosts, KSH Connected Hosts, IFA Staying Put & KCC In-House Staying Put](#_KSH_Hosts,_KSH) | 25 |
| [Support from the Social Worker or Personal Adviser](#_Support_from_the) | 25 |
| [Documents Required](#_Documents_Required) | 26 |
| [Supported Homes Set Up Meeting Process](#_Supported_Homes_Set) | 26 |
| [The Support Plan](#_The_Support_Plan) | 27 |
| [Support Plan Review Meetings/Pathway Planning Meetings](#_Support_Plan_Review) | 27 |
| [Sporadic Support Plan Review Meetings](#_Sporadic_Support_Plan) | 28 |
| [Supervision](#_Supervision) | 28 |
| [Annual Reviews](#_Annual_Reviews) | 28 |
| [License Agreement for Young People over the Age of 18](#_License_Agreement_for) | 28 |
| [Universal Credit/Housing Payments (Rent) Claim Process](#_Universal_Credit/Housing_pPayments) | 29 |
| [Young People Living Out of County](#_Young_Ppeople_Lliving) | 29 |
| [Appeal Process for Step-Down in Support Level](#_Appeal_Process_for) | 29 |
| [Arrangement Breakdown – Stability Meeting Process](#_Arrangement_bBreakdown_–) | 29 |
| [Removal of Belongings Payment Process](#_Removal_of_Belongings) | 30 |
| [Rent/Utilities Debt Process (Maximum Payment for Host to be Reimbursed)](#_Rent/Utilities_Debt_Process) | 30 |
| [Holiday/Respite Process Including Relief Hosts](#_Holiday/Respite_Process_iIncluding) | 30 |
| [Young Person’s Friends Staying Overnight](#_Young_Person’s_Friends) | 31 |
| [Safeguarding and Incident Reporting Process](#_Safeguarding_and_Incident) | 32 |
| [Claim for Damages/Loss Process](#_Claim_for_Damages/Loss) | 32 |
| [Support Groups and Forums](#_Support_Groups_and) | 32 |
| [Young People’s Voice](#_Young_People’s_Voice) | 32 |
| [Outreach Support](#_Outreach_Support) | 32 |
| [Termination of Hosts under Kent Supported Homes](#_Termination_of_Hosts) | 33 |
| [Section 7 – Service Requirements – Host Payments](#_Section_7_–) | 33 |
| [Annual Payment Review](#_Annual_pPayment_Review) | 34 |
| [Responsibility for Payments](#_Responsibility_for_pPayments) | 34 |
| [Changes to Costs Excluding Suspensions](#_Change_to_cCosts) | 35 |
| [Change to Host Placement or Accommodation Type](#_Change_to_Host) | 36 |
| [Emergency Placement](#_Emergency_Pplacement) | 36 |
| [Suspensions](#_Suspensions) | 37 |
| [Overpayments](#_Overpayments) | 37 |
| [18+ Transition Payments](#_18+_Transition_Payments) | 37 |
| [Change of Bank Details](#_Change_of_Bank) | 38 |
| [Change of Name or Address](#_Change_of_nName) | 38 |
| [Retainers](#_Retainers) | 38 |
| [Section 8 - Service Requirements – Data](#_Section_8_-) | 38 |
| [Appendix A – Stability Meeting Flowchart](#_Appendix_A_–) | 40 |

# Aims

The service is for the ringfenced provision of accommodation and support within a private residence (supported lodgings) to:

* Older Children in Care (aged 16/17 years) of any gender.
* Young people who are Care Leavers aged 18-21 (or up to 25 if in further education) of any gender.
* Staying Put arrangements to enable young people to remain in their foster home.

This is ‘Category 4’ type accommodation, as per Regulation 2(1), para (d) of The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2021.

The organisation and Local Authority responsible for this provision; hereby referred to as Kent Supported Homes (KSH), Kent County Council.

Kent Supported Homes is supported accommodation for vulnerable young people who are not yet ready to live independently for a variety of reasons. Young people placed in this accommodation will have their own room in a family home and be given support by the adult or adults that live in the home. It is a requirement that Hosts offering a supported home have the capacity to offer each young person a bedroom of their own that is furnished and maintained to a good standard and access to, and use of a kitchen and bathroom facilities.

No more than three young people should be offered this accommodation at any one time (excluding the children of the Host/s) in a family home. The Host will be defined as a private individual (or individuals) who accommodates a young person/s in their home, offering support and guidance as appropriate, to help them on their pathway to independence. For those young people over the age of 18 within this provision, the Host will also hold the legal status and responsibilities of a resident landlord.

The service will enable these young people to develop confidence, emotional resilience and independent living skills in a safe and supportive setting, which will allow them to move onto living independently in a timely way. This will be by the time the young person is 21 or earlier (or 25 years old if the young person is in further education).

Achieving the outcomes outlined below will be key to the delivery of the service. The service aims to ensure young people:

* Thrive in the Supported Home setting and experience feeling safe, supported and that their accommodation is their home.
* Are accommodated in appropriate and suitable accommodation in line with Section 22 of the 1989 Children Act or Regulation 9 of the Care Leavers 2010 regulations & Care Standards Act 2000 amendments for 16 and 17 year olds in 2023.
* Aspire to work towards self-supporting independence and are supported to achieve this by:
	+ Knowing how to access housing, maintain a tenancy and apply for relevant benefits.
	+ Knowing how to budget, make difficult decisions about money and deal with debts.
	+ Being able to build positive relationships and social networks and participate positively in the community and make use of resources.
	+ Being able to maintain emotional and physical health and well-being.
	+ Are confident, build resilience and behave appropriately, knowing when and who to ask for help when it is needed.
	+ Managing difficult situations and relationships appropriately.
	+ Being engaged with Education, Employment or Training and demonstrating capabilities to maintain this long term.
	+ Overcoming any concerns regarding living independently.
	+ Developing the necessary Independent Living Skills to move into independent accommodation.

# Context

KCC has a statutory duty to provide suitable and safe accommodation that has an appropriate level of support for children in care up to the age of 18 years in accordance with the Children’s Act 1989. The 2010 (revised January 2015) regulations set out under Volume 3 of the Children Act 1989 (Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers) strengthened an emphasis on leaving care as being a transitional period rather than something that occurs at a particular point in time. Care leavers are expected to receive support from their responsible authority (the Local Authority that last looked after them) up to their 25th birthday if they so wish and are eligible. The aim of such continuing support is to ensure that young people who are care leavers are provided with comprehensive personal support so that they achieve their potential as they make the transition to adulthood.

Applying corporate parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers (February 2018): This guidance is for local authorities and their ‘relevant partners’ (as defined in section 10 of the Children Act 2004) and others who contribute to services provided to looked-after children and care leavers. It promotes young people being safe and having stability which includes the need to maintain, as far as possible, consistency in the home environment, relationships with carers and professionals and education placement including further education. For some care leavers, it may involve supporting a Staying Put arrangement where care leavers and their former foster carers wish to remain living together after the young person reaches the age of 18. It may also mean wider support to help care leavers navigate the inevitable challenges of moving to independence through early preparation, good planning, securing a range of housing options and maintaining relationships with those whose continued support they might want or need during their transition to adulthood.

Following the introduction of regulation of all accommodation for those young people aged 16 & 17, this Statement of Purpose has been revised to ensure that all key principles and standards in these new regulations are considered and met by this service and its delivery of support and accommodation for these young people across the Kent Supported Homes Service.

The service will support the delivery of KCC’s regulatory requirements and offer a range of Supported Accommodation with tailored support to enable young people to develop the life skills needed when they are in their own accommodation.

# Section 1 - Service Standards

For the Kent Supported Homes Service, the following standards apply:

## Legislative & Policy Framework

* The Children Act 1989 [Guidance and Regulations Volume 2: Care Planning, Placement and Review](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/274155/The_Children_%20Act_1989_Care_planning_placement_case_review.pdf)
* The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations [Volume 3: Planning transition to adulthood for Care Leavers](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/61f81624d3bf7f78df30b359/CA1989_Transitions_Guidance.pdf)
* The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
* Care Standards Act 2000
* The Supported Accommodation (England) Regulations 2023
* Guide to the Supported Accommodation Regulations including Quality Standards 2023
* The Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010
* The Children and Families Act 2014
* The Children and Social Work Act 2017
* Transition to Adulthood Guidance (2010) including Staying Put
* The Housing Act 1988
* The Protection from Eviction Act 1977
* The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
* Surveillance Camera Code of Conduct (Home Office 2013)

## Policies and Procedures

* Kent & Medway Adults and Children’s Safeguarding Procedures/Policy
* KCC Staying Put Policy
* Kent Supported Homes, Complaints, Resolution, Whistleblowing and Escalation Policy
* KCC Exploitation toolkit
* Prevent Agenda
* Equality & Diversity
* Health & Safety
* GDPR
* Privacy Notice

## Services Provided by Kent Supported Homes

* Safe hosted homes for young people aged 16 – 25 (as eligible)
* Emergency hosted homes
* Respite for those young people already within the provision
* Connected Persons hosted homes
* Outreach support (as required)

# **Section 2 - Structure of Kent Supported Homes** (see Workforce Plan Appendix 1 for structure chart)

Kent Supported Homes has one Head of Service; Mark Weinel with Caroline Smith, Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting as the Registered Manager.

It contains one team supporting and supervising Hosts, located within the structure of the 18+ service and overseen in regard to operations, by the 18+ Accommodation Team manager. This team oversees the support of all Hosts who are not providing Staying Put for young people and who are also KCC Foster Carers, with support of a KCC Fostering Social Worker.

Support for the Hosts not supported by Accommodation Officers within the 18+ Accommodation Team (those who remain registered with KCC for provision of Foster Care) is provided by Fostering Social Workers within the Kent Fostering Service. The Kent Fostering Service has five area Fostering Support Teams, two Assessment and Panel Teams, a Fostering Review Team, a Disabled Children’s Fostering Team and a Placement Stability Team.

The Kent Fostering Service has two Heads of Service, Mark Vening, Head of Fostering West and Maria Cordrey, Head of Fostering East.

Within this service and in respect of Kent Supported Homes, training and development, initial enquiries and the recruitment of Hosts are managed by the Kent Fostering and Supported Homes Development Team. The Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting and the Heads of Fostering are responsible for decision making on all new approvals including Connected Persons.

The 18+ Care Leavers Service (in which the Accommodation Team and Kent Supported Homes provision sit) has two Heads of Service, Mark Weinel, Head of Service for South and East and Nimesh Patel, Head of Service for North and West. Mark Weinel is the relevant service manager for Kent Supported Homes, with support provided by his counterpart when absence occurs.

The Accommodation Team Manager, Sebastian Blythe, oversees the recruitment, training and operations of the Accommodation Officers, within the 18+ Accommodation Team. The Accommodation officer in-turn, provide the supervision and support to Hosts, overseeing their operations, training and development.

This structure is designed to promote joint working and support to Hosts, children and young people. The Accommodation Officers and Fostering Support Teams supervise Hosts, promote training for Hosts and facilitate support groups.

The Total Placement Service identify all new homes for children who are looked after and undertake matching considerations to ensure that all children live with appropriately skilled Hosts. The Fostering Teams are responsible for the completion of placement plan arrangements and ensuring safe care plans and delegated authority are completed.

# Section 3 - Accommodation

It is imperative that all Host Homes within Kent Supported Homes are safe places where children and young people are protected from harm and where their individual needs are met. Kent Supported Homes will offer stability and consistency, enable continuous access to local services including education and healthcare, and will facilitate the development of strong relationships within the local community.

The accommodation provided by Kent Supported Homes Hosts will be in line with the Accommodation Standards contained within the Ofsted regulations for 16 & 17 years olds published in 2023.

## Suitable Accommodation

In respect of the bedroom Supported Homes Hosts will provide:

* A physically secure private bedroom for sole use by the young person.
* OR Exceptionally (and only with the Host’s prior agreement) A physically secure private bedroom for sole use by the young person with their baby for their sole use.
	+ Hosts will ensure that where a lock is not provided, or where it might be considered good safeguarding, that there is an agreed process for entering young people’s bedrooms and that this is communicated from the outset to all young people. Young people will have a separate, spacious bedroom and will not share a bedroom with an adult or another child, unless they are their partner, sibling or child/children. However, siblings who are both accommodated in Host Homes will not be expected to share a bedroom unless that is their choice.
* Appropriate furniture, including a wardrobe, chest of drawers, a bedside table and adequate bedding and lighting as well as a lockable cabinet or drawers to securely store personal items, including any personal information.
	+ Where the young person in situ is engaged in education, consideration should be given as to how to accommodate necessary furniture such as a writing / computer desk & chair
* Access to the internet or sufficient telephone reception from their bedroom, to enable them to maintain relationships and feel connected (subject to risk assessment of Childrens Social Work Team and individual case management issues).
	+ Where the young person has their own access to the internet or a phone connection, this is sufficient. Should this cease to be the case however, the Host will be expected to access & provide such as soon as is possible.
* Young people’s views, wishes and feelings will be considered with regard to their personal space and they will be given a choice about how their personal space is decorated.

## Accessing a Young Person’s Room

A young person’s bedroom should not generally be entered without their permission or advance notice, such as for a facilities inspection where relevant. In most instances, Hosts should inform the young person in advance of a check or inspection and agree a time for the Host to gain access to the bedroom. Immediate searching without permission may be necessary where there are reasonable grounds for believing that there is a safety risk to the young person or another person. If Hosts need to enter the young person’s bedroom without permission or advance notice, they should inform the young person that they are entering the room and explain the purposes for entering immediately.

Should the young person’s room be accessed, the assigned AO will need to be notified as to the time/date and reason for this (16 & 17 year olds only).

## In Respect of the Communal Areas

* A kitchen with cooking utensils & brown goods, as well as continuous access to drinking water & hot water.
* Other basic utilities / appliances / white goods such as a washing machine, iron & ironing board for meeting the basic needs of the young people in the home.
* Bathroom / Toilet facilities including typical relevant amenities for ablution and toileting needs, as well as relevant toiletries (specifically toilet paper, soap and toothpaste) and products including towels, should the young person/people not already have these in their possession.
	+ If there are specific needs of the young person in relation to toileting or toiletry requirements beyond those consider ‘typical,’ these should be communicated to the Host for knowledge and these needs met either by the young person or supporting Child in Care Service.
	+ If the Host provides these to avoid impact on the young person in the interim, they can seek reimbursement form the Children’s Social Work Team.
* Where a Host is providing a home for a young person who is a parent and wherein the parent’s child will be living with them (referred to as a Parent and Child placement) it is expected that the Host will ensure that the communal areas of the home are safe and suitable for such and that the parent and supporting Child in Care Service will ensure the required items (such as crib, bottles, food and other items) for the wellbeing of the parent’s child are provided.

## Access to Communal Areas

* To foster a homely environment, young people should be able to access all shared areas of the Host home unless there are specific reasons why this would not be the case. Given the typically high level of independence of the young people who live in supported accommodation, it is not expected that Hosts impose limits on privacy and access, unless confronted with an exceptional circumstance that means these limits are needed temporarily to safeguard the young person or other young people in the Host home.
* Any decisions to limit a young person’s access to any area of the home and any modifications to the environment of the home, will be short term and made only where this is intended to safeguard the welfare of a young person or any other person.
* All decisions will be informed by an assessment of that individual young person’s needs, be properly recorded and be kept under regular review.

## Conditions of the Accommodation

For Host’s homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of young people, they will always be homely and welcoming.

KCC should be assured and Hosts able to evidence that all accommodation is in a reasonable state of repair and decoration and should also regularly ensure that accommodation is clean, tidy, and safe.

Host homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislation (alarms, fire, food storage and hygiene etc.)

The Accommodation Officer (Accommodation Officer) or Fostering Social Worker (Fostering Social Worker) will undertake checks, no less than annually, to assess provision is meeting the standards set in the applicable Acts, Regulations and Guidance. Specifically, this should ensure that placements of children in care and care leavers in “Other Arrangements” meet Suitable Accommodation requirements as detailed in national guidance. These will be recorded in the Hosts’ ‘Annual Reviews’.

## Use of CCTV

Use of CCTV is not permitted within the living areas of a Kent Supported Homes setting. Kent Supported Homes are, as much as possible, expected to mirror that which is found within a ‘typical’ familial home and as such, CCTV is generally considered ‘atypical’. Where it is felt that CCTV is required, it can only be so for the purposes of safeguarding the property and its residents. Any surveillance devices / cameras etc must be directed towards entrances or exits (including windows) of the property and in place to ensure security of the property only.

Any use of CCTV will be no more intrusive than is needed and will respect the privacy of young people. Surveillance equipment therefore, should not capture any part of the daily public, or personal activities of the young people within the home.

Kent County Council will ensure that the Kent Supported Homes supported lodgings provision is compliant with data protection law, protects young people’s privacy and personal data, and inform young people of the use of any surveillance or monitoring equipment and the purpose of its use. The Host must gain consent from Kent County Council in respect of any monitoring or surveillance equipment and practises in writing at the time of placement. The use of CCTV is regulated by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and the [Home Office Surveillance Camera Code of Practice.](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/update-to-surveillance-camera-code)

## Annexes

The use of annexes is acceptable within this provision of supported accommodation, only where this annex forms part of the main dwelling of the Host family. This is because supported accommodation makes the promise of resident support in the home of the young person supported and operates on the provision of an ‘excluded license’ for occupation, possible only where there is a resident landlord. This will be determined by the local authority definition in your area, but usually requires that the annex shares one or more facilities with the main building and does not require a separate council tax payment to be made for it. No young people will be liable for council tax within this provision of supported accommodation. Where the owner of the annex is unsure of whether there is such a requirement or definition of the annex as a separate dwelling, it is their responsibility to provide proof of suitability for its use in this provision.

In addition to this, the resident landlord (Host) will be required to regularly enter the annex to provide support to the young person as it is required by them and may also need to enter to consider the condition of the property, including the young person’s bedroom, to ensure its continued suitability and provide support in this area where it is required. When entering the young person’s room, notification should be provided in advance to the young person, if possible. If it is not possible to speak to the young person before entering, it is expected that the landlord/Host communicates this in another form, so that the young person is aware of this occurring and the reason for it at the earliest possible time i.e. sending a text message, leaving a voicemail etc.

## Mobile and Non-Permanent Settings

Mobile or non-permanent settings such as motorised caravans, barges and boats are unlikely to be able to meet the Regulations and Quality Standards, other than in very exceptional individual circumstances. As with every form of supported accommodation, settings must comply with the Regulations, meet the needs of the young people accommodated, be appropriately secure and not isolated from important local services.

For KCC and Kent Supported Homes to ensure that they meet the highest level of regulatory compliance, such non-permanent settings will not be used by this service, except in exceptional situations where it is felt that the needs of a specific young person require it and the home is able to meet the regulatory standards.

## Suitable Locations & Assessments

* Locations used as homes within this provision must ensure that the young people accessing them remain able to live and act independently and avoid social exclusion and negative impacts on their wellbeing through lack of local resources or the ability to access such.
* The Initial Assessment of any prospective Host’s home will include reference to the accessibility and availability of such resources, including general local amenities, community resources and primary healthcare services.
* Due to the requirement for a location to be able to meet the needs of the young person living within it, were there to be a noted lack of resources and of means to access such, should they be required, it is likely that prospective applicants’ home would not be successful in being assessed as ‘suitable’ to provide a Hosted home for young people under this provision.
* Regular review of the Hosts’ homes will ensure that locations assessed as suitable at the point of initial assessment, remain so throughout the period in which the Host is providing support under this provision. Should there be any reduction or cessation of suitability, this may require ending the use of the Host’s home under this provision.
* Should staff within KSH become aware of any significant contextual safeguarding risks being identified within the location; either by Police or other agencies involved in monitoring and or managing such risks, there will need to be an updated assessment of risk relating to the location in order to ensure the safeguarding of young people within any affected Hosts’ homes. If management of these risks is not possible, or it is not possible to put in plans to reduce any risk to an acceptable level, this may require the cessation of use of the affected homes under KSH.
* The health and safety standards are reviewed annually within the Host’s annual review to ensure that the conditions and safety of the property have not decreased or to ensure that where this has happened, effective plans are put into place for expedient remedy.

## Licensing of the Property / Landlord Responsibilities to Those Young People Aged 18+

* Young people aged 18+ years & receiving accommodation from Hosts are considered as ‘excluded license’ holders as per the definition within the relevant legislation (Protection from Evictions Act 1977).
* An appropriate license agreement for the young person to live in the accommodation, will be provided by the Host, who is also a resident landlord according to the same legislation, to the young person once they become 18, or at the point of moving into the Hosted home, whichever is first to occur.
* It remains the Host/Resident Landlord’s responsibility to remain aware of relevant legislative responsibilities and changes under the applicable legislation.
* Kent County Council are not liable for providing legal advice or defence nor resolution of legal disputes, or challenges in this regard and any breaches of the required legislative demands remain the sole responsibility of the Host/Resident Landlords.

# Section 4 - Support to Young People

This provision of Supported Accommodation is intended for the use of those young people who it has been assessed will have the capacity, following their time in this provision, to live independently and without ongoing support from Kent County Council, in respect of further provision of accommodation with support. All those young people in the cohort for whom this assessment has been made, should have a provision of support by which their needs can be met.

## Kent Pledge

The Fostering Service and Kent Supported Homes support the Kent Pledge to Children in Care.

‘The Kent Fostering Service understands that being in care and leaving care is not always easy and that it can bring extra challenges and pressures for you. If we are going to get it right for you, we need to make a real difference to help you do your best and have success in your life. Our pledge includes a number of things we will do that will help make sure that your time in care is a positive experience.’

These are based around six themes:

* A sense of belonging.
* An adult who is always there for you while you are in care.
* A good education.
* Good memories for the future.
* Getting ready for being an adult.
* Championing your needs and interests.

## Working in a Trauma-Informed Way

Young people within Kent Supported Homes will have experienced a variety of negative factors prior to coming into the care of the local authority. Much will relate to trauma, neglect and abuse. Hosts will be prepared and able to listen to young people who want to talk about who they are and where they come from, including their past experiences and relationships, and support young people to access relevant services where this is required, for example, mental health services. What communication the Hosts and young person have in this respect is in large part, the decision of the young person, based on their own sense of self and relationship with the Host. Hosts may find that some of these conversations have an impact on their own wellbeing and it is a role of the Accommodation Officer, to encourage Hosts to engage in regular discussion around any impacting conversations between the Host and young person, to ensure Host wellbeing is supported, enabling them to continue to support young people with their experiences of trauma and mental health needs. Hosts will also be encouraged to speak to in a confidential way, to others they feel can be of support to their wellbeing, such as paid therapists, or specialist psychological professionals.

Accommodation Officers will receive regular supervision from their Team Manager, providing them with an opportunity to discuss and disclose anything which they feel they need to discuss in order to protect and sustain their own emotional and mental wellbeing.

Due to some of these traumatic experiences, some young people may suffer from behavioural or emotional challenges and such challenges should be noted and shared through their relevant plans, with the Hosts and Accommodation Officers.

This sharing of information in relation to trauma and ongoing related struggles for the young person will mean that each are informed and able to support one another in understanding the best way to manage situations where these might affect the young person’s wellbeing, presentation or presenting risk. Any concerns noted by Hosts around behaviours or presentation relating to trauma, should be raised with the Accommodation Officer or Fostering Social Worker and Social Worker or Personal Adviser as soon as possible, to enable effective planning.

Should behaviours manifest themselves as significant risks to anyone in the home, Hosts are to ensure that they and anyone else in the home, vacate the address/location as swiftly as possible and contact the Police. Under no circumstances should the Host try to physically engage with or restrain the young person.

## Support Planning

The Host provides informal advice; guidance and practical support to help the young person to develop their confidence and independent living skills in a safe and supportive setting and to move on to living independently. This will include ensuring that the young person maintains their bedroom to a clean and acceptable standard.

Hosts will, with the support of the Accommodation Officer or Fostering Social Worker, the child’s Social worker or young person’s Personal Adviser and the young person, provide input into the relevant bespoke planning for the support of the young person. This will be based on their Pathway Plan (for those over 18 years) or the child’s Care Plan (for those under 18 years) and this will be agreed with the young person. The views of the young person must be central to the formation of successful, meaningful planning wherever possible and they will be encouraged and empowered to participate as fully as possible in all aspects of the service and their support planning.

This support may include, but may not be limited to helping the young person develop skills and competencies in the six key areas of:

• Accommodation

• Finance

• Social

• Health

• Emotional

• Health / Education

Assessment of additional support needs is often dynamic and the knowledge of the need for learning in some areas is only discerned at the point of needing to undertake specific tasks or experiencing specific moments in day-to-day life. Role-modelling behaviours and demonstrating skills, such as negotiation, problem-solving and regulating emotions, as well as the more practical such as cooking, cleaning and applying for service access, are all examples of important aspects of support which young people might reasonably expect their Host to support them with and deliver to them as required for their progression towards independence, regardless of whether or not these have been specifically stated in the young person’s formalised plans. Hosts must remain aware of and responsive to the dynamic needs of the young people as they are identified.

## Support from a Host would not Include

* Administering, or controlling of medication to the young person as it is required and expected that they should be able to administer their own medication.
* Providing support that could be classified as “care or therapy” by a regulated provision (e.g. CQC or Ofsted)
* Providing written or verbal information to legal representatives acting on behalf of a young person. Should a Host be approached for information pertaining to a young person’s age or circumstances, the enquiry should be referred to the young person’s Social Worker, Personal Adviser or Team Manager.
* Behaviour management including any physical contact with the young person, including restraint.

It is the responsibility of the Accommodation Officers or Fostering Social Workers to ensure the Hosts adhere to these principles.

## Socialisation and Relationship Support

It is the job of all KCC staff and Hosts to ensure that no young person experiences discrimination, marginalisation or bullying from their peers by virtue of their age, religion or belief, race, disability, ethnicity, cultural and linguistic background, nationality, sex, gender reassignment, gender identity, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, mental or physical health, or for any other reason, whilst in Kent Supported Homes and as it lies within their power to prevent it.

## Equality and Diversity Training and Policy

Hosts will be expected to foster supportive, positive, meaningful relationships with the young people. KCC staff and Hosts should promote appropriate and safe relationships with other professionals involved in the young person’s support, as well as family and friends if appropriate, taking consideration of the young person’s individual background and experiences. Those identified positive relationships and individuals in the young peoples’ lives should be welcomed to attend the Host’s home, at appropriate times, in order to build these relationships and encourage socialisation for the young people. Where it is KCC’s perspective that there are individuals or relationships of concern for the wellbeing of the young people, these should not be permitted into the ‘safe space’ of the Host’s home and the young people should be actively discouraged from engaging with them. This should be supported by KCC staff and Hosts.

## Levels of Support

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Level of Support** | **Hours** |  |
| Standard | Up to 15 hours per week |  |
| Enhanced | Up to 25 hours per week | Young Person assessed by the SW/PA as having more complex support needs |

To support young people to progress to independence in the most timely and appropriate manner, it is expected that Hosts will consistently provide the weekly hours of support detailed above, which should be recorded in the relevant section of the monthly report (excluding KCC In-House Staying Put Hosts) submitted by the Host. It is the responsibility of the Accommodation Officer or Fostering Social Worker to ensure Hosts can evidence the hours of support they are providing to each young person they are accommodating. Where Hosts are not able to evidence that they are providing the hours of support that they are being paid for, the Accommodation Officer or Fostering Social Worker will address this during their regular visits.

## Expectations of a Home for a Parent & Child

This service will support young people who have a child where there are no concerns or minimal concerns around the safeguarding of the child. The Host will provide support with independent living skills to the young person, as opposed to supervising the parenting of the child.

Please note that this service is not able to accommodate a parent and child arrangement where the child is under the care of KCC Social Services.

If you have any safeguarding concerns about the child’s safety or welfare you must report this in accordance with KCC’s Safeguarding policy.

Provision of utilities and items necessary for the care and wellbeing of a baby remain the responsibility of the primary care giver for the baby and support to meet this needs may be provided by the service of the main supporting professionals (Child in Care / Care Leavers Team) if this forms part of the agreed Care Plan.

## Transport and Travel

It is generally accepted that young people within Kent Supported Homes will have and be encouraged to use the skills required to travel independently. However, it is also imperative that Hosts understand that as is the case with many skills, the level of confidence in one’s own ability to undertaken such things can fluctuate and that at times, young people will lack confidence to undertake these without any support. It is therefore, the expectation that Hosts will help young people to acquire relevant passes and support them to use navigation tools to map their routes. Where appropriate, Hosts should support young people regarding transport or may provide transport, for example, to accompany them to their first day at college or a new job or in emergency cases so the young person can access further help.

In exceptional circumstances, transporting young people to planned appointments or other locations is acceptable but must be specifically agreed in advance and in writing by the relevant Team Manager, unless in an emergency e.g. taking/collecting a young person from hospital where prior notice cannot be reasonably expected.

## Variation of Support

As mentioned, the needs of young people change over time and in response to a range of changing circumstances. It is expected that support will be reviewed and refocused as required to continue to support young people’s progression to independent living. It is expected that the level of support received by a young person will decrease as they become more independent.

It is expected that any enhanced arrangements be reviewed at six-month intervals, in line with the Pathway Planning / Care Planning process to assess the suitability of the support being offered. Step-down to a standard support level should be considered in line with the young person’s needs. It is accepted that a proportion of young people will require significant support throughout their time in the Kent Supported Homes service. However, it is expected that a proportion of Enhanced arrangements will be stepped down to a standard level of support after six months.

Under no circumstances should levels of support, and the associated changes in payments, be changed without prior written agreement from a Service Manager (for under 18 years) or Team Manager (for over 18 years) and any such changes will need to be communicated to the Accommodation Finance Officer, in the 18+ Accommodation Team for all Hosts.

In exceptional cases, arrangements may need to go from Standard to Enhanced with appropriate Service Manager agreement based on an evidenced, needs-led recommendation and decision. The Accommodation Officer will support the Host to ensure they have correct understanding of the needs and support delivered and how best to evidence this within the Host Monthly Report.

If it becomes apparent that the young person’s needs are such that they require, on a longer-term basis, high levels of support or care from their placement as opposed to the support that can be delivered in Kent Supported Homes, KCC will consider whether the young person’s placement in Kent Supported Homes is right for them. Young people should be included in these discussions and should be encouraged to express their views, wishes, and feelings, taking a lead role in shaping their support.

## Support to Prepare for Independent Living

An important focus for the support for young people within this provision is preparation for living independently as adults, once they leave the Host’s home. Much of this preparation will be planned within the aforementioned Pathway Plans (for those over 18 years), but it may be the case that those who are under 18 years of age, wish to move on at the point of, or shortly after turning 18 years old. This means that all young people should be receiving support to understand what it means to live independently and how to access support to meet their needs when doing so, regardless of age or stage of development. Any such transition plans will be developed and discussed with the Personal Adviser or Social Worker.

Independent Living requires a multitude of skills and each of these should form part of any young person’s planning and support to achieve their potential. This means that dependent on the needs identified by the young people themselves and those professionals supporting the, a range of focus in support is likely to required. This could include but may not be limited to:

* Budgeting advice.
* Keeping safe in the community / Assessing and managing risk.
* Being a ‘good’ tenant.
* Understanding the rights and responsibilities of the individual in independent accommodation.
* Asking for and engaging with support as and when it is needed.
* Keeping themselves and their environment clean and safe.
* Using public services e.g. Public transport

For all young people in Kent Supported Homes, key resources in this area of support will come from:

* The Host, who can share the benefits of their own lived experiences and life-learning as well as support the young person to engage with the other identified resources.
* The Accommodation Officer, who can support the Host to provide the above-stated support to the young person and identify other resources which they might be eligible and wish to access.
* The Local Housing Authority, with whom there exists a Joint Working Protocol to deliver important information and support alongside that provided by the County Council / Specialist Childrens Services.
* External agencies and charities, whose focus is relevant to this area of personal development and independence
* Advocacy Services, such as Young Lives Foundation.
* Access KCC ‘Tenancy Training’; an online resource which young people can access in their own time and in accessible parts for the provision of key information, ‘myth-busting’ and understanding relevant terminology and processes in respect of Private Rented Sector accommodation and Social Housing.
* Specialist planning and support from the Housing Pathways Team within the 18+ Care Leavers Service, upon request from the Social Worker or Personal Adviser of the young person.
* All support provided to the young people within KHS will be provided in line with the Support Standards in the relevant regulation of previously unregulated accommodation, published by Ofsted.

\* NOTE: The KCC Care Leaver Local Offer is also available to those eligible Care Leavers aged 18 or older, which sets out additional financial support which can be accessed when moving into independence, which includes the Setting Up Home Allowance, Rent in Advance and Deposit, as well as the Corporate Rent Guarantor Scheme, which requires stable paid employment to be in place. All information from this can be found in the Local Offer and accessed via the Young Person’s Personal Adviser.

## Liaison with Professionals

It is expected that the Host and Accommodation Officer/Fostering Social Worker supports all professionals’ efforts to support the young people in their respective work to improve their support of the young person and where required, makes themselves available to provide evidence in this respect. Professionals should be expected to work as a ‘team’ to support one another’s desired outcomes where these are in the best interests of the young people.

The Hosts will:

1. Work with the young person’s Social Worker or Personal Adviser to support the young person’s development and eventual move-on to living independently in a timely way.
2. Work with staff supporting the young person to apply for and be successful in securing independent accommodation.
3. Work with staff supporting the young person to ensure all appropriate benefits are applied for and maintained.
4. Work with their Youth Offending Team worker or Probation Officer if a young person has been involved with offending behaviour.
5. Record and report on the support they provide to the young person living with them, via a monthly report (excluding KCC In-House Staying Put Hosts) to their Accommodation Officer/Fostering Social Worker. This will assist the Social Worker or Personal Adviser to remain updated on the young person’s changing support needs.
6. The Hosts will also be required to report to KCC if:
* Contact and communication with the young person are significantly breaking down and they are concerned the arrangement may come to an end unless action is taken.
* The young person refuses to engage with any support provided by the Host.
* The Host becomes aware that the young person is refusing to engage with support by other professionals, as is required to benefit their wellbeing or progression towards independence.
* The young person goes missing, ensuring that KCC’s guidance and policy is followed.
* They have concerns about the young person’s safety or welfare in accordance with KCC’s Safeguarding and Child Sexual Exploitation policies.
* Requested to provide information relating to or in support of any Planning or reviews including Child in Care Reviews and 18+ Pathway Plans.

## Holidays and Time Away from the Home

The Accommodation Officer or Fostering Social Worker will ensure that Hosts are home overnight and available to give the young person support as required. If the Host needs to be away from home overnight, or for a weekend away or a planned holiday they must notify the Accommodation Officer or Fostering Social Worker and young person’s Social Worker or Personal Adviser, ideally by using the Holiday Form, a minimum of one month in advance, in order to arrange respite. Respective Team Managers must be made aware of any respite plans that are in place to ensure that they are adequate.

Hosts will be entitled to 14 nights payment each year for periods of respite. If they do not take the holiday, they will not get paid the holiday time, nor can this be carried forward to the next financial year.

It is expected that no Hosts should agree to take into their home, any young person, if they have a period of respite planned for any time in the following six weeks, unless this is felt to be in the young person’s best interests.

## Confidentiality & GDPR

KCC will be aware that specific personal information about a young person may be shared with a Host securely in order that they can support them with their support needs and health. Hosts must maintain this information confidentially and not share it with other people. GDPR requirements are outlined in the Host Agreement.

## Complaints / Allegations

KCC’s Complaints procedure can be [accessed online](https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/complaints-and-compliments).

This is for use by anyone receiving any service or support from KCC about any aspect of that service or support, or individuals involved in the provision of it.

Where Hosts wish to make complaints in respect of the service, one of its staff or its processes, the procedures within the KSH Host Complaints, Whistleblowing and Escalation Policy can be utilised to achieve resolution to issues either informally, or if not achievable via an informal approach, formally through said process, following the correct escalation process contained within.

## Out of Hours and When to Use to Record Absence/Missing Episode

The KCC Out of Hours Duty System operates 7 days a week and Hosts can access the service from 5.00pm - 8.30am on weekdays and throughout weekends and bank holidays. In the event of an emergency, accident or unauthorised absence by a young person from the home or any other significant events, the Host must contact the Out of Hours Duty System on **03000 419191** for advice, assistance, and support (16 & 17 years only). For KCC In-house Staying Put Hosts they can contact the Out of Hours Foster Social Worker as per current arrangement. If there is specific concern for the safety or wellbeing of the missing young person, beyond that which is typical of a less vulnerable young person, the Host may choose to or be advised by KCC OoH Team to contact the Police. For those young adults over 18 years who go missing, the relevant supporting professions should be informed via email and/or other method for their knowledge once back at work and the Police called, where their whereabouts is unknown and specific concern for their wellbeing is felt, as mentioned above.

Hosts are expected to respond to KCC Communications, if required, within five working days.

# Section 5 - Service Requirements - Referrals & Matching

KCC will move a young person with a Host if satisfied that the arrangement will safeguard and promote the welfare of the young person and is the most suitable match with the Host and any other young person in the home. KCC will provide essential information to Hosts, on every young person who they are providing a home, to ensure they can support their individual needs.

All referrals for a home for older children in care (Placement Plan Referral) and care leavers (18+ Accommodation Form Referral) will come via the Total Placement Service (TPS). TPS will liaise directly with the Hosts, and where appropriate, the Accommodation Officer and the relevant Social Worker or Personal Adviser to make a good match. TPS will oversee and record the details on both the search and the matching elements of the home for the young person.

TPS must ensure that they inform the 18+ Accommodation Team Manager and the Accommodation Finance Officer when a match is approved and arranged for Supported Homes referrals.

## Planned Moves to Kent Supported Homes

The young person’s Social Worker or Personal Adviser will provide detailed information on the young person, and specifics regarding the required home, to TPS via a referral form. The Social Worker or Personal Adviser will be responsible for ensuring that, wherever practical, each young person will be consulted about the options available and have an introductory visit to the Host prior to moving, if possible.

Once the match has been agreed, TPS will update Liberi, which will update the ContrOCC system, accordingly and ensure payments to the Host are initiated.

## Emergency Moves

TPS will endeavour to provide the Host with sufficient information necessary to enable the Host to consider accommodating the young person. However, where this is not possible the most recent assessment and a written overview from the Personal Adviser or Social Worker will be provided to the Host to support them in their decision making. A conversation between the Host and the Personal Adviser or Social Worker must also take place to ensure key information is shared to minimise any risk to or from the young person.

In making an emergency move, the Host will enter into a written agreement with the Local Authority to carry out the following duties:

1. To support the young person as if they were a member of the Host’s family.
2. To permit any person authorised by the Local Authority to visit the young person.
3. To allow contact with the young person in accordance with any arrangement made by the Local Authority or the terms of any court order.
4. To ensure that any information relating to the young person, his/her/their family or any other person, which has been given to them in confidence in connection with the match, is kept confidential and is not disclosed to any person without the consent of the Local Authority.

Please note all emergency referrals will be paid at the Enhanced rate until the initial set-up meeting takes place where the Support Plan will be agreed, which will outline the required support level for that young person.

## Staying Put Referrals (In-house and IFA)

The relevant Social Worker will submit a Staying Put referral via the 18+ Accommodation form to TPS, providing at least 3 months’ notice before the young person’s 18th Birthday, where possible. TPS will process the Staying Put referral. The relevant Social Worker and Personal Adviser, that the young person is transferred to, when they turn 18 years old, will have liaised with the Host so that they understand the change in payment and processes, where applicable, with the support of the Accommodation Officer or Fostering Social Worker. Any Staying Put payments where the young person is in further education at A-level or equivalent, as outlined in the Staying Put Policy, must be agreed by the Head of Service for the 18+ Care Leavers Service.

Please note that IFA Staying Put Hosts will be paid directly and not via their IFA provider. All KCC contracts with fostering agencies end on the night before the young person’s 18th birthday. Should the IFA Host not continue to be registered with the agency, the Host will have to go through the process with KCC to become approved specifically for their young person staying put in their placement.

All IFA Staying Put arrangements will need to be assessed (not via the Panel) in the form of a visit to the Host to explain changes in payments and to explain what the service entails and what support they will receive and to answer any questions that the Host has about the service. This will be the task of the assigned Accommodation Officer. A DBS check will need to be arranged as soon as the Staying Put referral is agreed and the Accommodation Officer is assigned.

## Termination of Arrangement

where a Host chooses to terminate an arrangement, they must provide KCC with 14 days’ notice, in the first instance. KCC will ensure that a stability meeting takes place prior to any termination, if required. **(please see Appendix A stability meeting flowchart).**

For young people over 18 years, written notice may be required from the Host in support of moving on into private rented or Local Housing Authority accommodation and the Host will be expected to provide this.

The Host shall allow any young person placed with them to be moved by KCC if KCC decides that the continuation of the arrangement is no longer suitable in fulfilling its duty to the young person, or that the continuation of the arrangement would be detrimental to the welfare of the young person. KCC will provide 14 days’ notice unless it is a serious incident or safeguarding issue, in which case no notice period may be given.

# Section 6 – Service Requirements - Management of Hosts – Guidance for Accommodation Officer, Fostering Social Worker, Social Worker & Personal Adviser

## KSH Hosts, KSH Connected Hosts, IFA Staying Put & KCC In-House Staying Put

The Host will be allocated a member of KCC staff, as their main point of contact, who will provide the support and guidance, required by the Host, and supervision at regular intervals. Where this is a Staying Put arrangement with a KCC foster carer they will have an allocated Fostering Social Worker from the KCC in house fostering teams. For a foster carer registered with an Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) or a Host who provides a KSH Host or KSH Connected Host, they will be allocated an Accommodation Officer (Accommodation Officer) from the 18+ Accommodation Team.

## Support from the Social Worker or Personal Adviser

The young person’s Personal Adviser or Social Worker will visit the Host’s home every 6-8 weeks (as a minimum), and by appointment, to support the young person.

They may also undertake an unannounced visit at any time.

## Documents Required

Prior to the Host’s first young person being placed with them, the Host will contact their local fire safety officer and request that a Fire Safety Check is completed, Tel: 0800 923 7000.

Hosts will ensure that they have a Fire Safety Plan and will have discussed this with every young person that is in their home (including short stays as a respite arrangement). Foster Carers will already have one in place.

It will be the responsibility of the Accommodation Officer or Fostering Social Worker to make certain that the Host is aware of the requirement that there is an in-date Gas Safety Certificate and a Fire Safety Plan for each Host that they support. Record will be required to be uploaded onto the relevant Host file and the ongoing review of these will be the combined responsibility of the Host, to seek the necessary updates, and the Accommodation Officer or Fostering Social Worker to record that this has been achieved. For any newly approved Hosts, these documents will form part of the assessment process.

## Supported Homes Set Up Meeting Process

A set up meeting will be convened either before or within five working days of the young person’s move or before their 18th birthday if they are an IFA Staying Put arrangement or KCC In-House Staying Put arrangement. The meeting will include the Social Worker and/or Personal Adviser for the young person, the Accommodation Officer or Fostering Social Worker, the Host, the young person, and the young person’s parents, if applicable. All parties will read and sign a Move-In Agreement.

At this meeting, the young person’s Pathway Plan will identify the aims, tasks and timescales and the young person’s support needs, to develop independent living skills, which will then form a Supported Homes Support Plan. The required level of support will be assessed at regular intervals.

An arrangement review to take place at an agreed date (4-6 weeks after the set-up meeting).

The initial plan is to be completed within five working days of the young person moving in or after the young person’s 18th Birthday if an IFA Staying Put arrangement or a KCC In-House Staying Put arrangement. Hosts will be trained in safe care practice and a specific support plan will be drawn up for each young person accommodated with the Host. This will include consideration of how other members of the family and household can contribute to the plan.

The Host should submit a monthly Supported Homes Report (excluding KCC In-House Staying Put Hosts) outlining what outcomes have been achieved and recording any issues raised. **This report will need to be uploaded to the young person’s Liberi record by the relevant Social Worker or Personal Adviser**

**Move-In Agreement**

The Move-In Agreement is a statement of the commitments and undertakings agreed between the Host, the young person, the Social Worker or Personal Adviser and the Accommodation Officer or Fostering Social Worker which includes practical standards and general rules of the home and expectations.

## The Support Plan

* Sits within the Pathway Plan (over 18s) or separately if required (for 16 & 17s) and is structured to address the young person’s development needs identified within said plans.
* Provides clarity, with time-bound targets for progression, to focus on independent living skills in relation to accommodation, finance, relationships, health, emotions, behaviour and education training or employment.
* Is created in conjunction with the young person, the young person’s Social Worker or Personal Adviser, the Host, and the Hosts Accommodation Officer or Fostering Social Worker.
* Is monitored and tracked by the Accommodation Officer or Fostering Social Worker to ensure suitable progress is being made by the young person living within the home.

## Support Plan Review Meetings / Pathway Planning Meetings

The Accommodation Officer/Fostering Social Worker will visit the Host every six months, and wherever possible, in conjunction with the young person’s Pathway Plan or Care Plan review, which Hosts, and Accommodation Officer/Fostering Social Worker’s should expect to contribute to in line with the young person’s Pathway Plan meeting, to review the Supported Homes Support Plan goals and outcomes that were agreed at the set-up meeting, to ensure that they are meeting the outcomes required.

The Support Plan will be reviewed collaboratively by the Accommodation Officer/Fostering Social Worker and other key staff including the young person’s Personal Adviser or Social Worker and the young person.

Hosts need to raise any issues/concerns in relation to the young person with the relevant Social Workers or Personal Advisers, when required. The information will then need to be entered into the Support Plan form on the Host record on Liberi.

Accommodation Officer/Fostering Social Worker’s will also be invited to support the move on meetings regarding young people moving on from the Supported Homes service.

## Sporadic Support Plan Review Meetings

Following supervision or at any other time the Host raises concerns/issues with their Accommodation Officer/Fostering Social Worker, if additional support needs are identified then a review meeting to inform the Support Plan (under goals/outcomes), can be held. This will include the Accommodation Officer/Fostering Social Worker, the Host, the relevant Personal Adviser or Social Worker and the young person. Any identified tasks will be added to the relevant plan.

## Supervision

The Accommodation Officer/Fostering Social Worker will visit the Host every six weeks to undertake supervision, recording this on the Supervision Form on the Host record on Liberi, where various topics will be discussed. This can be recorded either at the time of the supervision, or post.

## Annual Reviews

This is to be carried out by the Accommodation Officer or Fostering Social Worker.

The Accommodation Officer will undertake checks, on an annual basis, to assess that the Hosts home environment is meeting the standards set in the Acts, Regulations and Guidance listed in this document, including Health & Safety Regulations. Specifically, this should ensure that arrangements for Children in Care and Care Leavers in meet Suitable Accommodation requirements as detailed in national guidance.

The Annual Review will need to be completed on the Annual Review form (for KSH Hosts, KSH Connected Hosts and IFA Staying Put Hosts) held on the Host Liberi record.

The Fostering Social Worker will undertake an annual review in line with the current Foster Carer annual review for those Hosts who are current KCC Foster Carers.

## License Agreement for Young People over the Age of 18

The young person is the licensee in receipt of support and will need to be provided with a License Agreement, to enable them to claim Universal Credit Housing payments (rent), where eligible, by the relevant Accommodation Officer or Fostering Social Worker. This will also be discussed at the initial set up meeting. It will also allow those young people who are working to pay an agreed amount for their accommodation.

An updated license reflecting the revised annual Local Housing Authority Rate needs to be issued by the Accommodation Officer/Fostering Social Worker’s to their Hosts in April each year **if** the Local Housing Authority Rate changes.

## Universal Credit/Housing Payments (Rent) Claims Process

For those young people who are 16 or 17, Social Workers will help them to apply to claim Universal Credit and housing payments via the DWP before they reach 18 years old, where eligible. As per KCC internal transfer protocols, this should be actioned by the Social Worker four weeks prior to the young person’s 18th birthday. For those over 18 who have not submitted a claim, the Host is expected to support the young person to claim as part of the support they will be providing. Housing payments (rent) of Universal Credit payments to Hosts will be supported by the Accommodation Officer/Fostering Social Worker, as well as the 18+ Specialist Benefits Adviser, who can provide guidance, oversight and checking and/or PAs who will have overall responsibility for making sure this is done.

This process should commence before the young person’s 18th Birthday to ensure that claims can be processed on their 18th Birthday, if the young person will be eligible to claim, to avoid late rental payments being made to the Hosts, which will result in rent arrears.

## Young People Living Out of County

All Hosts will receive the same support, including those living out of county. Direct visits can be alternated with remote virtual support visits using video calls where required. Staff will receive travel and subsistence expenses and overnight accommodation when appropriate. Any issues arising, for example, from reasonable adjustments or caring responsibilities can be discussed on an individual basis.

## Appeal Process for Step-Down in Support Level

Any Host that does not agree with a step down in support level, when this is reviewed, the relevant Social Worker or Personal Adviser, must outline their reasons and evidence why they feel this decision is not justified. The relevant Service Manager (for 16 and 17 year olds) or Team Manager (for 18+) will then make a decision based on the evidence provided. Monthly reports will be used as a primary source of evidence for any challenge, so it is important that these include a breakdown of hours of support wherever possible, as well as detailed information as to how this support is related to the young person’s Pathway Plan or Care Plan.

## Arrangement Breakdown – Stability Meeting Process

KCC will hold a stability meeting, to ensure that the young person’s home is maintained, if the Host raises any concerns requiring such. Should KCC or the Host decide that the arrangement is not sustainable due to immediate concerns about the health, safety, or other risks then an urgent stability meeting should be called, where applicable **(please see Appendix A for the Stability flowchart)**

## Removal of Belongings Payment Process

The young person’s belongings should be removed from the Host’s property on the day the young person moves out but in exceptional circumstances, KCC will pay up to seven days to the Host, from the date the young person moves out, if the belongings have not been removed. The Social Worker or Personal Adviser should support the young person in arranging belongings to be removed. Any belongings that are not removed on the day of move out will be reported to the relevant Team Manager so that they can monitor and understand why belongings are not being removed on the day the young person moves out. If the seven days starts before the end of the notice period, KCC will only pay the additional days after the notice period ends i.e. if the young person left on day ten, KCC would only pay three additional days if the belongings are not removed within the seven day period.

## Rent/Utilities Debt Process (Maximum Payment for Host to be Reimbursed)

The Accommodation Officer/Fostering Social Worker to ensure that any under payments of rent or utilities is communicated to the relevant Personal Adviser or Social Worker to help resolve the problem as soon as possible. There is a process in the 18+ service where outstanding rent can be deducted, with the young person’s agreement, from their Setting up Home Allowance up to a maximum of £500 for young people over 18 years old.

Early intervention is necessary and if the Host does not inform the Accommodation Officer/Fostering Social Worker or Personal Adviser immediately, the 18+ service cannot guarantee the Host will be fully reimbursed. This will also form the discussions at the Host supervision visits every six weeks.

The young person is to pay £10 per week for their utilities, paid directly to the Host.

If the young person is not capable of going shopping and cooking their own food, then they must pay the Host £20 a week for the Host do their shopping and cooking. This must be agreed at the initial set-up meeting and a plan must be put into place, as part of the young person’s Support Plan, for the young person to take responsibility for doing these tasks at an agreed date.

## Holiday/Respite Process Including Relief Hosts

Hosts should provide as much notice as possible, ideally one month, of any holiday they wish to take so that the Accommodation Officer/Fostering Social Worker can work with the Personal Adviser or Social Worker to find a respite Supported Home for the duration of the holiday, if the Host does not have an approved Relief Host. This may entail the Accommodation Officer and Fostering Social Worker’s liaising with each other to identify a Host that would be available to cover the respite. Once identified, the relevant payment instruction needs to be provided to the 18+ Accommodation Finance Officer, in the 18+ Accommodation Team for KSH Hosts, KSH Connected Hosts and IFA Staying Put Hosts to add the respite payment to the respite Host identified in Liberi (support cost and rent at £70 per week). TPS referrals will need to be informed of the respite arrangement so that they can add a temporary Placement Plan referral (for 16/17-year-olds) or Accommodation Form referral (18+) onto the system for that young person.

If another Host cannot be identified, then the Personal Adviser or Social Worker will need to complete a referral form for TPS to find alternative accommodation, such as Shared Accommodation, for the respite period.

If a relief Host, that is approved for the Host that is taking holiday, is supporting the young person while the Host is on holiday within their home, or at the relief Hosts home if approved by the 18+ Accommodation Manager or Fostering Manager, then the relevant payment instruction needs to be provided to the Placement & Accommodation Finance Officer, in the 18+ Accommodation Team for KSH Hosts, KSH Connected Hosts and IFA Staying Put Hosts. The additional costs that will be paid to the relief Host, via their Host who is taking holiday, will be uploaded against the Host taking respite as they will pay their relief Host directly. Alternatively, the Relief Host can be created as such on the relevant payment system and receive payment directly from KCC, which will be actioned by the 18+ Accommodation Finance Officer. For KCC in-house Staying Put Hosts that have a relief Host, the instruction will need to be actioned by the Fostering Social Worker.

The Accommodation Officer/Fostering Social Worker will need to keep a record of holiday taken to ensure that a maximum of 14 nights is taken. Please note that Hosts will not get paid the 14 nights if they chose not to take the holiday time. KCC actively encourages the Hosts to take this time for their own rest and recouperation.

If additional nights above the 14 nights allowance are requested, the Social Care Payments Team will need to be notified so that they can suspend payment to the Host requesting the additional time. This should be arranged via the 18+ Accommodation Finance Officer for all Hosts.

If the Host agrees for the young person to stay at their property unsupervised overnight (or whilst they are on holiday) and they are over 18 years old, then a risk assessment needs to be carried out by the Personal Adviser, Accommodation Officer/Fostering Social Worker and the Host. This can be discussed as part of the Move-In Agreement or agreed on an ad hoc basis by relevant parties, as the need arises.

## Young Person’s Friends Staying Overnight

This will be on a case-by-case basis and will form part of the Supported Homes Support Plan discussions.

## Safeguarding and Incident Reporting Process

The Accommodation Officer/Fostering Social Worker will complete the relevant Safeguarding Incident Report with the support of the Host and action accordingly, escalating the incident, where applicable, to the appropriate department or person.

All incidents will need to be recorded on Liberi against the young person’s file by the young person’s supporting professional.

## Claim for Damages/Loss Process

If intentional damage/loss is caused by a young person then the Host must seek approval to claim, up to £250, via their Accommodation Officer or Fostering Social Worker to the relevant Children in Care Service Manager or 18+ Service Manager before any damages can be rectified. If the Host rectifies the damages without prior budgetary approval there is a chance that the Host will not be reimbursed.

Any claims over the £250 threshold will need to be made, as outlined in the Host Handbook, under their own Insurance.

## Support Groups and Forums

Support groups exist as to provide meaningful networking and information sharing opportunities between Hosts, as well as a forum to discuss themes and points of learning and development with their Accommodation Officer. The Accommodation Officer’s role is to facilitate meaningful discussion between the other attendees. Support group attendance is not compulsory but is actively encouraged so as to foster a sense of community and sense of peer support between Hosts. Foster Carers are also welcome to attend should they wish to do so, to learn about the differences between the roles of Foster Carer and Host and the work undertaken by the latter. The Accommodation Officer should actively promote these support groups in supervision and annual reviews.

## Young People’s Voice

The 18+ Accommodation Team should ensure that Service User involvement forms a key element of ongoing service review and quality assurance. The 18+ Accommodation Team should work with the relevant Personal Advisers or Social Workers to provide the relevant platforms to ensure that the views of young people utilising the service are heard and documented in the young person’s Host’s annual review and that they are supported to contribute their views.

## Outreach Support

Hosts are able to deliver, upon request and agreement from the relevant service manager, outreach support to young people in other forms of accommodation. A specific scenario in which this might be sourced includes, but is not limited to the transition between Kent Supported Homes and Private Rented accommodation. Young people sustaining new truly independent accommodation are at risk of factors including financial difficulty, organisational difficulties and loneliness, to name but three and use of Outreach Support by their former Host, or another, can be used for up to 12 weeks to ‘bridge the gap’ between semi-supported and truly independent accommodation.

All arrangements will be limited to 12 weeks as referred to above and any agreement for Outreach Support from a Host must take into account the requirement for said Host to provide support to any other young person living with them, to ensure that this is manageable and does not negatively impact on that young person’s support.

 This will be paid at an hourly rate – See Section 7 below.

## Termination of Hosts under Kent Supported Homes

On rare occasions KCC may also wish to terminate a Hosts approval. Grounds for termination of approval include:

* Consistently poor support, or a pattern of poor support affecting a number of children
* Conviction for any offence which indicates that a person could be at risk if supported by or in the presence of the Host
* Evidence that a Host has neglected or emotionally, physically, or sexually abused anyone they support
* Consistent and significant failure to comply with Kent County Council policies and procedures, including completion of required training
* Financial misconduct in relation to any Host payments made or financial support provided for a young person’s benefit
* Serious physical or psychological ill-health of a Host that prevents them being able to support a young appropriately
* Lack of availability to receive referrals or provide support to young people for a period of 6 months out of 12.

Where there is an allegation against a Host which is unfounded or unsubstantiated the local authority reserve the right to consider the implications for children and young people and its reputation in the eyes of the public, should the Host continue to provide support.

# Section 7 – Service Requirements - Host Payments

Payments will be made to Hosts on a weekly pay run via the Childrens Payment Team. The pay run will be on Monday of each week for them to receive payment on **Thursday** of each week.

All initial costs of a move will be initiated by TPS.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Support level** | **Payment** | **Hours** |
| Standard Support | £168.10 per week | Up to 15 hours support per week |
| Enhanced Support | £280.16 per week | Up to 25 hours of support per week |
| Parent and Child arrangement (paid at the Enhanced rate) | £280.16 per week (paid at enhanced level)plus an additional £ 56.03 payment (paid at parent and child support level – standard or enhanced)**Total £ 336.19 per week**  |  |
| Outreach Support | £ 10.92 per hour |  |
|  |  |  |
| Complex Support (under the previous Catch22 contract)**Please note no new arrangements will be made at the complex rate**  | £200 per week  | Up to 20 hours of support per week |
|  |  |  |
| **Rent** | **Payment** |
| Rent (16/17 year old and 18+ who are not eligible to claim benefits) | £ 78.44 per week |
| Rent for young people eligible to claim benefits | Local Housing Authority rate |
| Rent - University non-term time | Local Housing Authority rate |

Hosts are entitled to 14 night’s holiday payment each year

## Annual Payment Review

This will occur in line with KCC’s annual rates and charges.

## Responsibility for Payments

Initial record set up and set up cost for:

* **New** **Kent Supported Homes (KSH) Host** – Host record will be created by Fostering recruitment when the Host is approved and set up cost will be loaded by Total Placement Service (TPS) referrals when a new placement is made to the new Host
* **IFA Staying Put Host** – the Host record will be set up by 18+ Accommodation Finance Officer (AFO) (will need to be informed by relevant Children in Care team Allocated Case Worker - Social Worker – when they know that the young person will stay put) -18+ Accommodation Officer (Accommodation Officer) will then visit and provide the relevant information to the IFA Host. The cost of the placement will then be loaded by Total Placement Service (TPS) referrals when they receive the referral (which is approved by 18+ Head of Service (HOS) re: costs)
* **Connected Host** (not including in-house connected Foster Carers) – the Host record will be created by Fostering recruitment when the Host is approved following assessment and then will need to contact the 18+ Accommodation Finance Officer so that they can set up costs on Liberi against the connected/specific Host. This would be for all 16-21 year old young people. 16/17 year old young people will need to have their Placement Plan uploaded onto Liberi when the costs are loaded.
* **In-House Staying Put Hosts** – will already have a record as a Foster Carer and will require a ContrOCC record to be created as a KCC Staying Put so they will have two records (if they are continuing as Foster carers as well as Staying Put) so when the provider is selected via Costs tab, correct service levels will be displayed. Total Placement Service (TPS) referrals will load costs when the 18+ Accommodation referral request is received and approved by 18+ Head of Service (HOS).

## Changes to Costs Excluding Suspensions

This includes support level, belongings, travel, rent, end of placement (over 18 going onto independent living inc. PRS), respite holiday, change to initial foster carer extended rate, and other:

* The 18+ Accommodation Finance Officer will change costs for ALL Hosts including KCC in-house Staying Put Hosts. This will be by way of a Kent Supported Homes (KSH) change of cost request form. The responsibility for informing the 18+ Accommodation Finance Officer will be with the 18+ Accommodation Officer (Accommodation Officer) or the Fostering Social Worker for in-house Staying Put arrangements.
* Relief Host – the 18+ Accommodation Finance Officer will either add the costs to the relevant Host to pay their Relief Host OR create the Relief Host on the system to pay directly.
* Respite Host – the 18+ Accommodation Finance Officer will need to add a temporary placement move against the respite Host so will add the costs against the respite Host (which will be support element and rent) for 18+. For 16/17-year-old young people a temporary move referral will need to go to TPS referrals from the allocated case worker (social worker)

## Change to Host Placement or Accommodation Type

Total Placement Service (TPS) referrals will action a change of Host placement as the relevant Allocated Case Worker (Social worker or Personal adviser) will need to submit a Placement Plan or 18+ Accommodation referrals form to change the Host placement. However, if the 18+ team are aware of a break down and arrange the moves/have the discussions themselves – the process will sit within the 18+ Accommodation team as it does in Fostering.

Total Placement Service (TPS) referrals will end a 16/17-year-old placement as the relevant Allocated Case Worker (Social Worker) will need to submit a referral form for a new placement to change the accommodation type which will end the placement and start a new one. The suspension will need to be sent to the Social Care Payments Team via the Liberi Finance form to stop double payment of the old and new Hosts. This form will be completed by the 18+ Placement and Finance Office (please see suspensions below). TPS Business will action suspensions to stop payment before the young person’s 18th birthday (see 18+ transition below)

* If an 18+ YP move from a Kent Supported Homes placement to another form of KCC accommodation i.e. Shared Accommodation, then Total Placement Service (TPS) referrals will end the Kent Supported Homes (KSH) placement and start the alternative accommodation placement as this will be via a 18+ Accommodation Referral form created by and submitted by the Allocated Case Worker to Total Placement Service (TPS) referrals Liberi tray. If the young person is not moving to another KCC form of accommodation, then an end of placement will need to be sent by the Accommodation officer or Fostering Social Worker to the 18+ Accommodation Finance Officer via the Kent Supported Homes Change of costs form so that they can end the placement.

## Emergency Placement

* All emergency placements made by Total Placement Service (TPS) referrals will be paid at the Enhanced level until an initial set-up meeting takes place where the support level will be discussed and agreed – any changes to this support level will need to be communicated to the 18+ AFO via the Kent Supported Homes (KSH) change of cost request form.

## Suspensions

* All suspensions i.e. for University term time dates, additional holiday above 14 nights will be actioned by the Social Care Payment Team (Cantium) as they are dealing with the weekly pay run – there is the KSH Finance form on Liberi that will need to be completed and sent to Cantium. This is co-ordinated by the 18+ AFO but the relevant PA’s need to inform the 18+ AFO as soon as possible re: dates that the YP will be at University/College/School
* The Social Care Payments team will suspend payment to Host A if the YP is moving to Host B from the last night that the YP is placed with Host A, so we need to ensure no overpayment is made to the Host. This will be via the KSH Finance form on Liberi that the 18+ Accommodation Finance officer will need to complete. This is for all 16-17 year old young people only. For 18+ young people you can just put in the end date, you do not need to suspend although a suspension may still be needed on 18+ costs if the cost is not ended and just a temporary stop in payment is required.

## Overpayments

* The Social Care Payments Team (Cantium) will suspend any overpayment but will need to be informed via the KSH Finance form on Liberi by the 18+ AFO.

## 18+ Transition Payments

* Total Placement Service (TPS) business will be responsible for the transition on the system for 17 year old young people turning 18 as there will be a change to the budget code – Total Placement Service (TPS) business will use the PowerBi report to ascertain who will be turning 18. Total Placement Service Business will suspend all costs on the young person’s 18th birthday and reload the costs from 18th birthday to take account of budget code changes and to ensure there is no delay of payment to the Host carer. Finance will raise journal transfers if required to ensure monies are attributed to the correct budget.
* 18+ Accommodation Finance Officer will reload costs for support only as rent will not be applicable due to young adult claiming housing benefit element of the universal credit claim. If a young adult is not eligible to claim housing benefit or in further education the 18+ Accommodation Finance Officer will need to load any rent cost due.

## Change of Bank Details

* Change of bank details requires a new supplier request form to be completed by the 18+ Placement and Accommodation Finance Officer

## Change of Name or Address

* These changes will be made via the KSH Finance Form on Liberi

## Retainers

A retainer can be paid to a Host to hold a place for a young person, but agreement needs to be sought from the Head of Service. TPS referrals team will arrange for the retainer to be paid once approval has been sought and they have been informed.

# Section 8 - Service Requirements - Data

The ContrOcc/Liberi systems will maintain a record of all Hosts, including their name, full address, email address and available vacancies. Power BI will be used to monitor and refer to this data.

Fostering will maintain records in relation to panels and new Hosts approved.

KSH KPI Review Meetings will take place on a quarterly basis as a minimum.

These meetings will review data relating to the performance of the service and is to include, but need not be limited to the below.

|  |
| --- |
| No. of Hosts (by type) |
| Total capacity |
| Current Vacancies |
| Under 18's in arrangement |
| Over 18's in arrangement |
| Number of new placements (by type) |
| How many enquiries in month |
| How many attended pre-panel training |
| Number of new Hosts (by type) |
| Number of Hosts under assessment |
| No. of beds approved (new providers + change of registration) |
| No of de-registered Hosts & reasons for de-registration  |
| No of beds de-registered |
| No of complaints & allegations against Hosts |
| No of complaints by Hosts |
| No of staying put conversions at month end |
| No of new Staying Put arrangements  |
| No of Staying Put arrangements ended  |
| Compliance (including Gas Safety & DBS) |
| Safeguarding incidents |

# **Appendix A – Stability Meeting Flowchart**

