Guide to Supported Lodgings
Giving young people a stepping stone to independence
What is Supported Lodgings?
Supported Lodgings is an accommodation scheme for young people aged 16 plus who are unable to live at home but are not ready to live independently.

Supported Lodgings placements are seen as a ‘stepping stone’. They aim to provide young people with practical and emotional assistance, whilst in the safety and security of a family environment. The scheme enables them to develop their independence skills so they can eventually live on their own.

What am I expected to provide?
You are expected to provide support, a room, meals, access to a bathroom, kitchen and laundry facilities.

Why become a Supported Lodgings carer?
Supported Lodgings carers gain a sense of achievement by knowing that they have equipped a young person with essential life skills and helped them to reach their full potential by developing into a confident and successful adult.

What is the role of a Supported Lodgings carer?
As a Supported Lodgings carer, you will be expected to create a safe and supportive environment where the young person can develop their confidence and life skills to eventually enable them to live independently. This will include helping them to budget, cook, clean, do their washing, complete forms, make and attend appointments and interviews etc.

As a carer you will need to be sensitive to the needs of the young person, who may have experienced trauma and difficulties in their lives and who in some cases may also have some level of learning difficulty.

A carer will be expected to work closely with the Education and relevant departments, attend relevant meetings concerning the young person and keep records on their progress and any particular concerns.
Why do young people need a Supported Lodgings Placement?

The young people who we place in Supported Lodgings may have been in foster care or their family may have been offered on-going support.

They may have had some challenging life experiences such as these young people come from diverse backgrounds, a different country and some may present challenging behaviour or have learning difficulties. They may not have had a positive role model who has taught them the life skills that they need. These young people are usually in contact with their birth families but are unable to live with them for different reasons.

Who can be a Supported Lodgings Carer?

We are looking for carers from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds and religions in order to reflect the diversity of the young people in Stockton-on-Tees needing accommodation.

You can be:

• single, married or divorced
• have a disability
• gay or lesbian
• renting or owning your home
• a parent with your own children
• at home or in full time employment

Carers will be assessed on an individual basis and there is no upper age limit, as long as you are fit and healthy. You will need to have a spare room and be willing to share your house with a young person.

It is advisable to inform your landlord or mortgage lender that you intend to offer a supported lodgings placement although, in most cases, this is not a problem. We also advise that you inform your insurance company.
What types of Supported Lodgings placements are required?

- **Crisis placements** - when an emergency arises and a young person urgently needs accommodation for a few days or at short notice.

- **Short-term placements** - up to three months, usually to provide intermediate accommodation leading to a planned move.

- **Long-term placements** - a stepping stone to living independently for an agreed period, no longer than 2 years unless specific circumstances apply.

- **Special needs placements** - we occasionally require placements for young people with physical or learning difficulties.

- **Mother and baby placements** - when a mother is under eighteen years of age or receives support from the Leaving Care Service. In most cases the baby remains the sole responsibility of the mother.
What skills does a Supported Lodgings Carer need?

You will need:

• to have an understanding of young people and their needs (experience of raising your own children or working with other young people is desirable)

• to be committed to preparing young people with the skills necessary to live independently in the future and an ability to stand back to allow the young person to practice these skills on their own

• to be able to listen to young people without being judgemental, offer advice and guidance when necessary, and have reasonable expectations of young people’s capabilities and limitations

• to have patience and tolerance, with skills in managing a young person who may not always conform, and to develop ways of being able to work together

• to be a confident and secure person yourself in order to assist a young person to develop their confidence and self-esteem. You will need to be a positive role model for the young person

• to promote and support a young person’s identity, respecting their ethnicity, sexuality and religion

• to help a young person develop positive relationships and identify their own support network, interests and hobbies. It is helpful for you and the young person if you have a good support network around you
**8 Steps to becoming a Supported Lodgings carer**

The whole process of becoming a Supported Lodgings carer could take up to six months. This gives potential carers the opportunity to reflect on the role and discuss the situation fully with family, friends, relevant departments and other Supported Lodgings carers.

**Please note that applicants will be assessed at each stage of the process in order to proceed to the next step.**

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**Step 1**

**Enquiry** - If you would like to take your interest further after reading this information pack, please contact the Supported Lodgings Team as detailed on page 11.

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**Step 2**

**Home Visit** - An appointment is made for a member of the Supported Lodgings Team to visit you at home to discuss your enquiry. This will give you the opportunity to ask any questions that you may have (this could be held during the day or in the evening to meet your needs).

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**Step 3**

**Application** - If you wish to continue your application to become a Supported Lodgings Carer we will arrange visits to undertake an assessment.

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**Step 4**

**Preparation** - You will be invited to attend a number of group preparation and training sessions with other prospective Supported Lodgings with other prospective Supported Lodgings carers. Experienced carers will also be involved in the training sessions to share their own experiences with you and to answer questions.
**References** - We will carry out statutory checks with the Local Authority, Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), NSPCC and Probation Services. We will also ask you for the names of three people who would be willing to give you a reference. At this stage we will also contact your GP to provide us with a medical report.

**Assessment** - You will be allocated a supervising social worker/ process link worker who will undertake an assessment of your ability to become a Supported Lodgings carer. You will be required to contribute to this assessment. The assessment is completed during a number of visits over a 3-6 month period.

**Supported Lodgings** - The completed report is presented to the Scrutiny Panel which is held once a month. They will make a decision regarding your approval to become a Supported Lodgings carer.

**Approval** - If approved steps will be taken to identify and match a suitable young person for your Supported Lodgings placement. You will also receive ongoing supervision, support and training.
**Setting up the Supported Lodgings Placement**

The young person will be matched with the carer, depending on their needs. We will look at the carer’s skills, lifestyle, personal and professional commitments in making an assessment of whether they can meet a particular young person’s needs.

At the beginning of the placement a “Placement Plan” and ‘Licence Agreement” is discussed and agreed by the young person and Supported Lodgings carer. This identifies the expectations and aims of the placement and is signed by both the young person and the Supported Lodgings carer.

**Ending the Placement**

Placement reviews are held on a regular basis and the young person’s progress - as well as any problems and concerns are discussed.

Hopefully placements will end in a positive and planned way, with the young person moving into their own accommodation, or sometimes, back to their own family. However, if the young person is not keeping to the ‘Placement Plan’, then there is a system of verbal and written warnings in order to protect your rights and those of the young person. Ultimately the young person can be issued with a notice to leave if the situation does not improve.
**Practical Support**

We offer carers the opportunity to attend training events organised by the Suported Lodgings Team and Stockton Borough Council. and you will also have the opportunity to undertake the National Vocational Qualification

- We offer on-going support from the Resource Team via the young person’s key worker and your supervising social worker
- All of our carers are able to contact the Emergency Duty Team (EDT out of hours for advice
- We organise social events where carers can socialise with other carers and staff in a less formal setting

**Financial Support**

You will be paid an allowance to meet the costs of providing a placement.

The young person will be in receipt of their own money and therefore they are expected to pay for any personal expenses, clothes, toiletries and social life etc.
Your questions answered

1. What is the difference between supported lodging and fostering?

Supported Lodgings Carers are not regarded as providing a substitute family to the young person, but rather a way of providing practical and emotional assistance to help them develop independence skills so that they can eventually live on their own.

2. What if I plan to go on holiday?

The Supported Lodgings Team will work with you, the young person and their worker to agree a suitable plan to make alternative accommodation arrangements for the young person whilst you are away.

3. What if I smoke?

We would prefer that you don’t smoke, but if you do then we would expect that you would try to discourage a young person from smoking and not allow anyone under the age of 18 to smoke in your home.

What our carers enjoy about offering a placement

“Maureen Trees from Billingham has been a Supported Lodgings carer for over five years and is currently supporting Yacouba. “Having raised my own two children I felt I had a lot to offer,” said Maureen. “I have looked after a number of young people including Yacouba. We have been on a journey together – his confidence has grown immensely and I am so proud of him.”

- Maureen
Welcome to SUPPORTED LODGINGS the safer way to independence.

Safer
Understanding
Polite
Positive
Observant
Respectful
Trusting
Equality
Diversity
- The Morgan Family

The reason I like being a provider. It’s very satisfying to provide an environment for a young person that enables them to feel safe enough and gives them the self-belief and confidence to be comfortable in their own skin, to grow as a person and hopefully follow their dreams into adulthood.
- Lindsay

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Si vous souhaitez obtenir ces informations dans d’autres langues ou sous un autre format, par exemple, en qros caractères / version audio, veuillez contacter l’équipe au n° 01642 527764.

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