

LONG TERM SUPPORTED LODGINGS

HOST INFORMATION PACK



DEPAUL

Homelessness has no place

WHAT IS SUPPORTED LODGINGS?

Supported Lodgings offers young people between the ages of 16 - 21 who are at risk of, or experiencing homelessness, the opportunity to fulfil their potential and move towards an independent and positive future. Supported Lodgings prevents homelessness through community hosting. It helps people who are in immediate housing crisis by providing safe accommodation in the homes of trained, vetted, and paid hosts.

Depaul UK manages a range of accommodation for homeless young people, as well as providing resettlement, pre-employment training, and other support services for homeless and socially disadvantaged young people. This document aims to answer some frequently asked questions about one particular type of accommodation, Supported Lodgings.



How does it work?

The long term Supported Lodgings scheme offers at risk young people a steppingstone until they acquire the skills they need to live independently. The scheme has a register of individuals called 'hosts' who will offer the young person a room in their own home and will ensure that there is provision of breakfast for them.

The host could be a single person, part of a couple, or live in a family environment with one or more children. All the accommodation is in Lambeth and the surrounding London boroughs.

All young people and providers will undergo a 'matching' process to ensure that both parties are comfortable with the arrangements prior to the young person moving in with them. This can involve several meetings and is facilitated and fully supported by staff to ensure that the placement is the right one for all concerned.

Every young person accessing accommodation through Supported Lodgings is allocated a support worker who will assist them to work through a Changes plan (a type of support plan); setting goals, working toward finding their own accommodation, and helping the young person to acquire all the skills they need to make a success of living independently. The scheme is funded by Lambeth Council.



ROLE DESCRIPTION

Main Requirements of the Role

Supported Lodgings hosts will:

- Provide a safe, clean environment for a young person to live where they can be safe from harm
- Have a spare room for a young person to use exclusively as their own during their stay
- Have a strong interest in the welfare of young people and a desire to help homeless and disadvantaged young people in particular
- Provide basic emotional support through listening and talking with a young person
- Provide basic practical support through helping a young person with household duties if required
- Liaise effectively with Supported Lodgings project staff to provide holistic support to the young person



Skills and Knowledge

Supported Lodgings hosts will be:

- Approachable, friendly, accommodating and be able to relate well to young people on a one-to-one basis
- Non-judgmental and able to treat young people with respect
- Have a commitment to attending initial and ongoing training and meetings with the Supported Lodgings team in order to consolidate the role

- Able to deal with challenging situations and be able to react calmly and appropriately in emergency situations
- Aware of the importance of maintaining appropriate boundaries and sharing information as required with the staff team
- Able to integrate a young person into the household and engage them in routines and activities
- Supported Lodgings hosts do not need to own their own home and it is not necessary that they have had previous experience. All applications will be considered with regards to the personal qualities of the applicant and their attitude toward young people.

Support and Supervision

Supported Lodgings hosts will be provided with support as follows:

- All new hosts will be required to complete a training programme prior to commencement of the role (approximately 6 hours, depending upon the size of the group)
- Monthly face-to-face supervision sessions and regular telephone contact provided by the project staff
- Quarterly placement reviews are conducted by project staff jointly with the young person
- Additional training opportunities on young people's issues will be offered regularly
- Social activities and consultation events with other hosts
- Access to an out-of-hours emergency on call service
- Regular mail outs to keep hosts informed of project developments and news.
- Invitation to the Depaul UK annual staff conference
- Options to become involved in fundraising activities, local publicity events, and peer support
- Participation in the development of the project through consultation activities and events
- Presentations and training sessions on relevant subjects
- A weekly payment averaging £270

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

Depaul UK, as an organisation with a Vincentian ethos, believes that it is essential to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity.

"For people considering signing up as a host, I'd say do it! I don't think you will regret it."

Leslie, host



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who can be a host?

Our hosts come from all walks of life. As a host, you could be:

- A family, single person, or couple
- From any racial, cultural or ethnic background
- Heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender
- Disabled or non-disabled
- Working full or part-time, or not working
- A homeowner or tenant

Being a host is not about having particular qualifications – it's about having the skills and qualities to help someone reach their full potential. These could be gained through your work, because you have had children and a family of your own, or from many other life experiences.

What does a host need?

- A spare room
- An understanding and respect for young people
- An ability to interact with young people fairly, honestly, openly and objectively
- A calm, relaxed and friendly attitude
- A good sense of humour
- An ability to work with other professionals as part of a team
- To be able to keep information concerning a young person confidential
- To believe in equality of opportunity, regardless of difference
- To be committed to ongoing training and development provided by Supported Lodgings

How long will a young person stay?

This will depend on the needs and abilities of each young person and how quickly they develop their independent living skills while living in Supported Lodgings. For some this may be a few months, while others will require support for longer. Generally, the maximum period a young person can stay with a Supported Lodgings host is one year.

Throughout this period the host and young person will work alongside Supported Lodgings staff to achieve all the goals set within the young person's Changes plan. We aim to ensure that moving on from Supported Lodgings is a positive and planned process.

There are infrequent occasions where placements don't work out. However, if this does happen, we will support the young person and provider to hopefully address the issues. This could include stepping up the support or using other services such as mediation.

Failing that and respecting the wishes of the host/young person, we will end the placement and help support the young person to access alternative accommodation.



What kind of support will I provide?

Support needs vary from person to person, they will be discussed before a young person moves in. Each young person will have a changes plan, which details their needs and how they can be addressed. Changes plans are reviewed regularly. Some examples of support you might provide are:

- Help with budgeting
- Help maintaining attendance at college, work, or training
- Support to attend and keep appointments
- Support to meet friends or build and maintain relationships with friends or family
- Support to ensure and understand personal safety
- Learning essential practical skills to maintain a home - cooking, cleaning, laundry etc.

What are the young persons responsibilities?

Young people are expected to engage fully with the support that is available and attend regular review meetings with their provider and Supported Lodgings project staff.

Young people must adhere to the terms of their Licence Agreement and their Living Together Agreement (a document which outlines expectations for both young people and providers, sometimes termed "House Rules"). They must show respect for their host property and possessions, as well as having regard for the security of the property.

We expect young people to engage in some form of positive activity - this could be training, education, work or voluntary work, and they must keep up to date with their contributions towards their accommodation charge (similar to rent), utilities and food.

What training and support is provided?

You will receive training to help you learn about and deal with some of the issues facing young people. We believe that training and support must be made available for people to carry out their role and develop their skills as a host. Whilst preparing to be a host you will be required to complete initial training as part of the assessment process. This will cover areas such as young people's issues, confidentiality, safeguarding, boundaries and communication.

To support the hosts, we have quarterly Supported Lodging Host Forums. At these, all the hosts get together, and there is also representation from the Supported Lodgings Coordinator to discuss the service and its development. It can be really helpful to share any difficulties or problems with other hosts who may be able to offer support.



You can contact Supported Lodgings staff if you need any advice or support with the young person. We will also provide you with details of an out-of-hours number, in case there are any serious incidents outside our usual working hours.

If you have a placement, you can expect telephone contact with Supported Lodgings Staff at least weekly and a monthly face-to-face supervision meeting. This gives hosts the opportunity to discuss any issues that have arisen, training needs etc.

What payment will I receive?

Supporting young people in this way is an exciting and rewarding experience in itself, but we will, of course, pay you for your services. In return for providing accommodation and support to a young person, Lambeth Supported Lodgings will pay you an allowance of around £270 each week, which includes an accommodation fee payable by the young person and an amount to recognise the support you provide.

The young person will also make another weekly contribution of £10 per week, to cover utilities and the provision of a basic breakfast each day. This is intended to help young people get used to budgeting.

Some young people may also need additional support with shopping, preparation, and cooking of meals. Therefore, these young people may pay a further £20 per week to cover three meals per day. Throughout their time with Support Lodgings, we hope the young person's cooking and budgeting skills will develop to a level where they can shop and cook for themselves.

Who pays the accommodation charge?

Part of the accommodation charge will either be paid by the young person (if in employment) or via Housing Benefit/Universal Credit (depending on the individual's circumstances). The other part comes from Lambeth Council funding to Depaul UK. We will administer payments by paying you on a monthly basis.

The young person's Supported Lodgings staff member will ensure that they have applied for the appropriate benefits. Please bear in mind that we cannot guarantee you will have a placement so, please do not rely on Supported Lodgings payments as household income.

Will I have to pay tax?

You will be eligible for the HMRC Rent a Room exemption scheme. This means in each financial year you can earn up to £7500 tax free from rental income. It is the responsibility of the individual host to declare these earnings as part of their tax assessment.

All Supported Lodgings hosts are required by law to register themselves with the HMRC (Her Majesties Revenue and Customs) as having 'self-employed' status and you must contact your local office directly before you embark on your first placement.

If I am on benefits, will payments affect my eligibility?

If you are receiving benefits, payment for Supported Lodgings must be declared and could be taken into account as income and therefore affect your eligibility. It is advisable to check with the relevant benefits office.

If you live in privately rented accommodation and claim Local Housing Allowance, you can only claim for the rate that applies to your immediate household, not including the young person.

For example, a single person can only claim the one-bedroom rate for LHA even if they live in a two bedroom property with a young person. This is due to government regulations and is the same for foster placements and adult placement schemes. Please contact Supported Lodgings staff if you need any further clarification of this.

Do I need to inform my landlord or mortgage provider?

We advise that you inform your mortgage lender if you are a homeowner, or your landlord if you are tenant.

Will my insurance be affected?

You will be required to advise your insurer that you have taken in a young person and what the scheme entails. You will need to ensure you have adequate insurance cover and show us proof of this.

Some insurers will not cover the letting of a room under a conventional policy. Supported Lodgings staff may be able to advise you if your current insurer cannot provide this.

Young people are entirely responsible for their own belongings.



Will my home need adjustments?

We will carry out a home assessment as part of the recruitment process to ensure the accommodation you can offer is suitable and meets the required health and safety standards.

We will require you to have a gas safety check (renewed annually) and an electrical safety check (an Electrical Installation Condition Report, renewed every 5 years) and provide us with a copy of your certificates. If you are in rented accommodation your landlord should provide this.

What does the recruitment process involve?

Lambeth Supported Lodgings has a duty to make sure that all Supported Lodgings hosts can offer young people a safe and supportive environment. The assessment process will ensure that you are committed to providing support of the highest quality.

Once you contact us to say you would like to join the Supported Lodgings scheme as a host, Supported Lodgings staff will contact you to discuss the host role, and give you an application form.

Once the application form is completed, Supported Lodgings staff will arrange to make an initial home visit to you and any other members of your household to continue the assessment process.

Generally speaking, we will be interested in finding out about:

- You, the others in your household and your home
- Any skills or experience you may have of working with young people
- What your expectations of a young person would be
- What you would be prepared to offer a young person

This will be an ideal opportunity for you to ask anything about which you are unsure. The assessment process will normally involve three visits in total, including the home assessment described above. Supported Lodgings staff will also need to speak to other members of your household (e.g., any children) to ensure that they are also on board with Supported Lodgings.



As part of the assessment process, you will be asked to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service form (DBS) for all members of your household over the age of 16, and we will ask you to provide two references. For couples applying to the scheme, you will also be asked to provide a joint reference.

Finally, you will be asked to complete/attend the initial training which also forms part of the assessment process.

Once all of the information is gathered, Supported Lodgings staff will write a report for an approval panel who will review your application and references.


Following this we will inform you of the decision within three working days. All information we receive will be treated in strictest confidence.

The purpose of the checks is not to exclude people from providing Supported Lodgings. However we may not be able to consider you if you have, for example, been convicted of an offence against a child.

STAY IN TOUCH!

If you have any more questions, we will be happy to answer them. Please contact us by phone or email.

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Lambeth

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