

SUPPORTED LODGINGS `

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Supported Lodgings?

Supported Lodgings is shared accommodation where the landlord/lady (known as Supported Lodgings Provider) provides a Young Person (Lodger) with practical and emotional support with a view to increasing their confidence and readiness to move into their own home.

From the age of 16 some Young People decide that they want to leave the care of the Local Authority but yet are apprehensive about living alone as they may not have the skills or awareness to successfully live independently. Supported Lodgings therefore offers the Young Person the opportunity to leave care and experience elements of independence in a supportive and encouraging environment.

Supported Lodgings is semi-independent accommodation, which provides a stepping stone between leaving care and living independently.

Who are the Lodgers?

Young People aged 16 and above (25 at the eldest), who were previously in foster or residential care.

They may be leaving foster care, residential care or have been in homeless accommodation. These Young People come from a range of backgrounds and therefore have varying practical and emotional support needs. It is recommended that Lodgers are in education, training or employment and are therefore occupied through the day but this may not always be the case.

Who can offer Supported Lodgings?

Some experience of having teenagers would certainly be useful but most of all we need Supported Lodgings Providers who can appreciate the difficulties, which these Young People have encountered. As a result of their experiences, some Young People can present quite challenging behaviour and therefore Supported Lodging Providers need to be able to offer commitment, patience and a sympathetic ear.

We are looking for people who:

- Live in various locations in Highland
- Have a Spare Bedroom

- Have a genuine interest in supporting Young People and are able to dedicate time to do this.
- Are willing to undertake training
- Are willing to support Young People alongside Barnardo's and Social Work Services
- Are willing to adopt and reflect on Barnardo's Values and Principles, the SSSC Code of conduct (copies of which will be supplied).

It does not matter whether the Prospective Supported Lodgings Provider is working or unemployed. They can either be single, married with or without children.

Prospective Supported Lodgings Providers must be willing to open the rest of their home to a Lodger, including the kitchen, bathroom, living room and laundry facilities. They must also be willing to provide the Lodger with a key to the property.

What type of support will I be expected to offer?

Emotional, practical and the provision of meals where appropriate.

Prior to any Supported Lodgings Placement, as a Supported Lodgings Provider you will receive relevant information regarding the needs of the Young Person and the support that you will be required to provide. This will enable you to determine if this is an appropriate Supported Lodgings Placement for you to support. It is envisaged that more support will be needed within the early stage of each Supported Lodgings Placement, decreasing once the Young Person becomes more confident and is managing more independently.

The provision of meals may be required under exceptional circumstances i.e. due to a Lodger being ill. Lodgers will require access to cooking facilities to prepare their own meals, while receiving support from the Supported Lodgings Provider in undertaking this.

You will be required to offer your Lodger direct support and contact each week. This can vary from cooking a meal together, budgeting for their shopping, supervising and encouraging them to maintain their room, to having a chat over a cup of tea. The emotional support offered throughout the Supported Lodgings Placement is vital to the Supported Lodgings Placement's success. The type and level of support required will be specified in the Placement Agreement.

The Supported Lodgings Placement Agreement is a statement committed to by all parties, which outlines everyone's responsibilities prior to the Lodger being placed. The overall aim is to help your Lodger develop the life skills necessary for taking responsibility for their own future accommodation.

You will be expected to maintain regular contact with your Lodger's Barnardo's Project Worker and/or Social Worker. You are also required to attend and participate in relevant meetings and training.

How long will a Lodger stay with me?

Supported Lodgings is a short-term accommodation arrangement, as its emphasis is to prepare a Young Person to move-on. Supported Lodgings Placements therefore tend to last a minimum of three to a maximum of two years.

What support will I receive?

You will be allocated a Supported Lodgings Link Worker, who will maintain regular contact with you (minimum 4 weekly direct contact visits). It is envisaged that contact with your Supported Lodgings Link Worker will vary according to the stage of the Supported Lodgings Placement and the Young Person. Any issues related to your role as a Supported Lodging Provider can be discussed with your Supported Lodgings Link Worker. In times of crisis a Supported Lodgings Link Worker should be available to discuss problems within 24 hours. In emergencies outwith normal working hours, you can contact the Barnardo's Springboard Out of Hours Service.

You will undertake a 'Supported Lodgings Induction'. This is designed to provide you with relevant information, and to develop your confidence in providing Supported Lodgings Placements.

You will have a yearly appraisal with your Supported Lodgings Link Worker and you will be offered ongoing training, some of which we will expect you to attend as part of your responsibilities. To keep up your Supported Lodgings Approval you are asked to complete 4 days training per year.

As well as receiving support from you, the Young Person will continue to receive support from their Barnardo's Project Worker and/or Social Worker, who will help with difficulties and issues that may arise.

What am I required to do before I can offer a Supported Lodgings Placement?

Arrange to meet with a Supported Lodgings link worker to find out more about the Supported Lodgings Service and to determine whether this is something that you and your household could offer. If you decide that you wish to proceed, the Supported Lodgings Link Worker will meet with you over a period of time with a view to them undertaking a Supported Lodgings Provider Assessment. During this time, you may have the opportunity to meet with another Supported Lodgings Provider and an Ex-Lodger, to gather different perspectives on the requirements of the service.

To enable us to ensure that Supported Lodgings Providers are appropriately assessed, recruited and familiarised with their role, it is necessary that those applying and their household members are prepared to share information about themselves. This familiarisation and assessment process can therefore take, at most, up to 6 months and will involve a number of visits to your home by the assessing Supported Lodgings Link Worker.

As this is a service for vulnerable Young People, we are required to undertake Social Work and Police checks for all adults over 16 years who live or are regular visitors to the property. Each situation would be considered on its merit and only convictions that are relevant to the task would prevent us accepting an application.

As part of the Supported Lodgings Providers Assessment, you will be required to provide references including one from a GP. You will also be required to undertake a 'Supported Lodgings Induction'. This, as well as the rest of the assessment process, is designed to enable you to decide whether or not this task is right for you. It will also help us decide whether you are best suited for this service.

At the end of the assessment process, a report is compiled by the assessing Supported Lodgings Link Worker, which will be made available to you for comment. All information provided within the report is treated in strictness confidence. The report and any comments provided by you will be submitted for final approval to a Throughcare and Aftercare panel which you will be expected to attend.

How do I get allocated a Lodger?

Following approval, the Supported Lodgings Link Worker will meet with you to discuss any prospective Lodgers. You will then meet with the Young Person's Barnardo's Project Worker for further information, prior to a Supported Lodgings Placement commencing. At this stage, if you wish to continue with the Supported Lodgings Placement, initial introductions will be arranged for you to meet with the Young Person, with their Barnardo's Project Worker. It is expected that the Young Person will join you and your family for a meal and subsequent overnight visits, as part of the introduction period. An introduction period can vary per Young Person but generally it is not expected to last more than 4 weeks.

If all parties are happy to proceed, an initial Supported Lodgings Placement meeting is convened and a move in date is determined. A Placement Agreement will be drawn up, which will outline roles and responsibilities for all involved. This is designed to focus on the Young Person's supports required to progress that readiness for independent living.

What if a Supported Lodgings Placement does not work out?

Your Supported Lodgings Link Worker will be available to discuss and hopefully resolve any concerns. However, a process of verbal and written warnings will occur prior to any notice to quit being issued. In times of crisis that are out with normal working hours, an Out of Hours service is available from Barnardo's Springboard to offer you support and guidance. However, if you feel that you are unable to continue to offer a Supported Lodgings Placement, the Lodger will be found alternative accommodation as soon as possible, and when necessary, be moved immediately.

Reviewing Supported Lodgings Placements?

Supported Lodgings Placements will initially be reviewed after 4 weeks and thereafter approximately every 6-8 weeks. You will be expected to attend and contribute to review meetings. This will be the forum to discuss and agree any changes to the placement arrangements.

You will receive regular contact from your Supported Lodgings Link Worker as necessary and meet prior to each review to determine any issues which need to be raised.

Each Supported Lodgings Placement will also have an end of placement review, and Supported Lodgings Providers will also receive an Annual Appraisal. All reviews are undertaken to ensure that the appropriate supports, training etc are being provided by the Supported Lodgings Service.

How much of an income will I receive by offering a placement?

Supported Lodgings providers receive an allowance per week (paid direct into their bank account fortnightly, 2 weeks in arrears). The allowance covers rent of the accommodation and furnishings, food, insurance, support, communication and training requirements.

Full details can be obtained from the Supported Lodgings Link Worker.

You will receive payment pro-rata for any overnight stays or other costs incurred during the introduction period for each Supported Lodging Placement.

How will this income affect me if I am receiving benefits?

Supported Lodgings Providers are required to contact the Local DWP and Housing Benefit office to see how the Supported Lodgings Allowance would affect their benefit entitlement. The Supported Lodgings Link Worker will provide support as necessary and answer any queries that the agencies may have.

Will having Lodgers affect my council tax?

Lodgers under the age of 18 years are not liable for council tax.

Lodging providers who live alone and who accommodate Young People over the age of 18 will lose their single person's discount. At this time the Supported Lodgings Project is unable to compensate you for this loss.

For Supported Lodging Providers who have other occupants over the age of 18, council tax will not be affected by the arrival of a Lodger 18 years or over.

Will the Supported Lodgings allowance be affected by income tax?

Yes.

We will therefore provide you with information on how this will affect you. You will then need to confirm your own situation with the Inland Revenue.

As a Supported Lodgings Provider you are responsible for your own Tax and National Insurance Contributions.

What about insurance?

If you already have household insurance you are required to contact your insurance provider to advise them that you will be having a Young Person stay with you. The Supported Lodging Service requires a copy of relevant insurance cover, which will be requested annually. Failure to advise your insurance provider could adversely affect any claim. We therefore suggest that you increase your cover for accidental damage and consequently your allowance reflects an element to cover this.

Car owners, who will offer transportation to Lodgers, will also require to request 'business use' cover. This should not incur any cost and confirmation of this insurance will also require to be provided annually.

Do I have to seek permission from anyone, prior to offering a Supported Lodgings Placement?

If you are a Council or Housing Association Tenant, you will be required to seek permission from your landlord prior to offering a Supported Lodgings Placement.

If you are a private tenant, you will also need to check this out with your landlord/lady, prior to offering a Supported Lodgings Placement.

If you are a homeowner and have a home loan, you will need to check whether you need the lender's permission. You should make it clear that you will be sharing the accommodation with a Young Person, rather than offering a tenancy.

Acknowledgments

Barnardo's Springboard would like to thank The Moray Council's Throughcare and Aftercare, Supported Lodgings Project for sharing their documents and policies and procedures with us. Some of which we have implemented but have changed to meet the needs of our service.

We may not have answered all of your questions but we hope that this information provides you with enough information to help you determine if providing Supported Lodgings is right for you.

If you would like further information, please call the number below where a Supported Lodgings Link Worker will be available to answer any queries that you may have.

On behalf of our potential Lodgers, we look forward to hearing from you.

**Barnardo's Springboard
14 Ardross Street
Inverness
IV3 5NS**

Tel: 01463 718436

Tel: 01463 718439