

DRAFT SERVICE SPECIFICATION

.....Confidential.....

Service:	Housing Related Support: Post 16 Accommodation Support
Commissioner Lead:	Simon Harniess, Head of Commissioning for Vulnerable People
Family Operations Lead:	Sue Lancaster, Service Manager, Divisional Based Intervention Team
Period:	1 st June 2017 – 31st May 2020 with an option to extend for up to a further 2 years – thereby resulting in a maximum contractual term of 5 years

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1. Glossary , useful documents and links this will be put at the front of the document.

Term	Description
16 and 17 year olds at risk of homelessness/ or are homeless and those aged 18+ who ECC want to place and who remain in contact with ECC services	All young people who are 16 or 17 years old who are at risk of not having/ have no permanent housing and those aged 18 and over who ECC want to place and continue to be in contact with (e.g. those working with the Youth Offending Service)
External Placements and Resources Team	A team which manages Supported Lodging (not part of this contract) and Semi Independent Accommodation providers for young people aged 16 and over preparing to leave care
Care Leavers	All young people who were previously looked after for a period of 13 weeks or more, from their 14 th birthday including some time in care after their 16th birthday up to the age of 21 or 25 if in full time education
CCGs	Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) commission most of the hospital and community NHS services in the local areas for which they are responsible. Commissioning involves deciding what services are needed, and ensuring that they are provided. CCGs are overseen by NHS England . All GP practices now belong to a CCG, but groups also include other health professionals, such as nurses.
Children in Care	Children become looked after when their birth parents are unable to provide ongoing care in either a temporary or permanent capacity. Children can either be looked after as a result of a voluntary agreement by their parents or as the result of a care order. Children may be placed with family members, friends or foster carers depending on individual circumstances. Wherever possible, the local authority will work in partnership with parents. Many children and young people who become looked after keep strong links with their families and many eventually return home.
Child Sexual Exploitation and missing children arrangements (ESCB) (2015)	This policy provides details of the requisite safeguarding procedures for handling incidents whereby a child is either subject to exploitation and/or has gone missing from care, home or education. A copy of this policy can be accessed via the following link: http://www.escb.co.uk/Portals/67/Documents/CSE/Essex%20CSE%20%20Missing%20Arrangements%20Version%201.pdf
Children's Social Care (CSC)	Also known as Family Operations, this is the statutory service under which support is provided to children and their families
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service established under the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
DCLG/DfE	Department for Communities and Local Government/ Department for Education. DCLG's job is to create great places to live and work, and to give more power to local people to shape what happens in their area. https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government
District and Borough Councils	The twelve Local Authority areas of Essex
Divisional Based Intervention Team (D-BIT)	Divisional Based Intervention Team (D-BIT) is designed for young people between the ages of 8 and 17 years old and their families where the young person is considered by the local authority to be on the cusp of either entering reactive care or a custody episode. A team of skilled, quadrant based staff work intensively with young people and families using a solution focussed approach and methodology to help improve the relationships they share with each other
ECC	Essex County Council
Education, Health and Social Care (EHC) Plan	An Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan is for children and young people (aged 0-to-25 years old) who have SEN or a disability and who need a much higher level of support than education settings can deliver on their own. An EHC plan is led by the needs and aspirations of the child or young person and his or her parents working in partnership with practitioners and other supporters. further details of which can be accessed via the following link: www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk/.../one-planning-and-education-health-and-care-plan
Effective Support for children and	Multi-agency guidance document on working in partnership to help

families in Essex	children and families improve their lives http://essexpartnership.org/node/1446
Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service (EWMHS)	ECC has collaborated with all 7 CCGs and Southend and Thurrock Councils to re-commission integrated Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Services (EWMHS) for all children and young people age 0-18 (or up to 25 for those with a Special Educational Need and/or Disability) with targeted and specialist mental health needs.
Essex Safeguarding Children's Board (ESCB)	The local safeguarding children's board, further details of which can be accessed via: http://www.escb.co.uk/
Exiting Custody	Individuals who are approaching the end of a custodial sentence
Family Operations	Essex County Council renamed Children's Social Care (CSC) as Family Operations. It comprises of Children's Social Care, Family Solutions, D-bit and Youth Offending Services.
Family Solutions (FS)	Family Solutions (FS) is a multi-disciplinary team (within Family Operations) aimed at helping families with a range of issues on a voluntary basis for up to a year with a range of challenges set out in the national Troubled Families Programme. The FS Team use solution focused and motivational styles of working to help families move forwards towards achieving their goals
Generic Floating Support	A service which provides low level support with housing related issues, to help people settle and remain in their own accommodation.
Homelessness	A person without a regular place to live is classed as homeless. People who are homeless are most often unable to acquire and maintain regular, safe, secure and adequate housing, or lack "fixed, regular, and adequate" night-time residence
Homeless Youth Specialists (HYS)	Homeless Youth Specialists (HYS) are workers who are specifically trained to work with young people experiencing homelessness. They deliver enhanced mediation to young people and their families and work closely with Local Housing Authorities (LHA). Staff in these roles are currently located across D-BIT Team and Assessment and Intervention Services (A&I)
Joint Working Protocol between Essex Housing Authorities and ECC in dealing with Homelessness for 16 and 17 year olds (May 2014 reviewed January 2015)	An agreement between the Family Operation (Essex County Council) and the 12 district council housing departments to guide responses and responsibilities of Children and Young People's Services towards homeless 16 and 17 year olds and the interrelationship between duties under the Children Act 1989 and homelessness legislation. A copy of this protocol can be found at appendix 1 below.
Local Housing Authority (LHA)	One of the District or Borough Council Housing Teams which are responsible for the affected young person.
Leaving and After Care Team	These teams work to ensure good outcomes for young people aged between 16 and 25 in care or have left care. They are multi-disciplinary teams which provide opportunity for focussed work with these young people. For those individuals who remain in care, the Leaving and After-Care team work with providers, other agencies and partners to maximise the young person's potential For those individuals who have left care, the Leaving and After-Care Team continue to offer advice, information and assistance to enable young people to live independently and assist them into education, training and employment.
Looked After Child / Young Person	Any young person whom the Council is responsible for providing suitable services to meet their care needs, including individuals whose placement is subject to Local Authority funding.
Multisystemic Therapy (MST)	An intensive family and community based intervention for children and young people aged 11-17, where young people are at risk of losing access to their out of home placement and being placed either in care or custody due to their offending or severe behavioural problems
National Minimum Standards	A statement of national minimum standards published by the Secretary of State for Health under section 23 of the Care Standards Act 2000
Peer Mentoring	Mentoring provided by young people who have experienced the service to those new to the service
Provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year old young people who may be homeless and/or require accommodation (DCLG/DfE)	This guidance can be found via the following link: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/8260/Provision_20of_20accommodation.pdf

Guidance 2010	
Quality Assessment Framework	This is the quality measurement tool which contains the applicable standards which the Council utilises in order to measure the provider's performance of the service.
SEND Strategy 2014-19	Special Educational Needs and Disability strategy which can be accessed via the following link: http://www.essex.gov.uk/Education-Schools/Schools/Special-Education-Needs/Documents/SEND_Strategy.pdf
SET Procedures (Children)	Southend Essex and Thurrock safeguarding procedures and child protection procedures which can be accessed via the following link: http://www.escb.co.uk/Portals/67/Documents/Local%20Practices/SET%20Procedures%202015%20-%20Version%202%20August%202015.pdf
SET Procedures (Adults)	Southend Essex and Thurrock safeguarding Adult guidelines which can be accessed via the following link: http://www.essexsab.org.uk/Portals/68/Professionals/SET%20Safeguarding%20Guidelines%20-%20V4.1a%20Aug%202015.pdf
Staying Put Policy (April 2015)	This policy sets out the conditions that are required to extend a former fostering arrangement beyond a young person's 18th birthday and up until their 21st birthday with its associated financial implications for social care, the young person and the foster carer. A copy of this policy can be found at appendix 2 below.
Sufficiency and Commissioning Strategy for Children in Care in Essex 2015	This Strategy analyses the needs of children and young people in care that are not currently being met within Essex. It explores the likely changes in the overall care population between the current need and the projected demands in 2020 whilst considering the ECC's ambitions to improve preventative services and increase the number of children for whom legal permanency through adoption and other legal orders is secured. This strategy can be accessed via the following link: https://www.essex.gov.uk/Publications/Documents/Sufficiency_and_Commissioning%20Strategy_for_Children_in_Care_in_Essex.pdf
Supported Housing Needs Assessment (SHNA)	An ECC assessment of a young person's housing needs. A copy of the assessment criteria for this support can be found at appendix 4 below.
The Service	The new provider for the Housing Related Support Service for Post 16 Accommodation Support.
Youth Offending Service (YOS)	Statutory service for young people who have offended and have a court order or Youth Conditional Caution and works to prevent further offending.
Vulnerable parents as referred to in this document	Vulnerable young parents up to the age of 21 years old with additional support needs and are open to Adult Social Care or whose children are identified as Children in Need or subject to Child Protection Plans or where it has been agreed there are significant concerns or risks to alternatives
'Working together to safeguard children' (2013)	A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children which can be accessed via the following link: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/Working%20Together%202013.pdf
Wraparound Support	This flexible and fluid support follows the young person's journey, ensuring that the young person receives a suitable level and type of support according to the young person's assessed needs and delivered at their current residence.

2. Introduction

Essex County Council (ECC) is one of the largest County Councils in England in one of the most populous, complex and diverse counties of the country. It comprises of 12 district councils within 4 quadrants:

- Mid Essex – Braintree, Chelmsford and Maldon
- North Essex – Colchester and Tendring
- South Essex – Basildon, Castle Point & Rochford
- West Essex – Brentwood, Epping Forest, Harlow, Uttlesford

Essex County Council is dedicated to improving services to Essex and the lives of our residents. Our ambition is for Essex to deliver the best quality of life for our young people. We will achieve this by providing high-quality, targeted services that deliver real value for money. ECC is committed to commissioning services that will improve outcomes for young people in a way that helps them to become more resilient and independent as they move into adulthood. In February 2014 ECC adopted a new corporate outcomes framework which includes seven outcome focused commissioning strategies as depicted within the following diagram, which illustrates the authority's priorities in delivering services to the community. ECC is reliant on the continued support of its public sector partners, businesses, Voluntary Community Services and collaboration with local communities to successfully deliver these outcomes. The wider partnership is a key driver to effective delivery of this specification and includes: Schools/ Colleges/ Alternative Education/ District Councils/ Voluntary and Community Sector Providers/ Health and Police.

Seven Commissioning Outcome Strategies



Commissioning strategies will set out the actions that ECC will take to make progress towards these outcomes. This includes where existing services play a role.

HRS Post 16 accommodation support will contribute to the following outcomes within ECC's Corporate Framework:

- People in Essex enjoy good health and wellbeing
- People have aspirations and achieve their ambitions through education, training and life-long learning
- People in Essex can live independently and exercise choice and control over their lives
- People in Essex live in safe communities and are protected from harm.

This specification is for the Housing Related Support (HRS): Post 16 accommodation support for young people who are either:

- Aged 16 and 17 years old at risk of homelessness
- Additional young people aged 18 to 21 years old at risk of homelessness and are assessed as having specific vulnerabilities which will be agreed by the quadrant Gateway Manager. These may include but will not be limited to Mental Health, Substance Misuse, subject to SEND/ EHC Plan or young people in transitions and where no other suitable accommodation is available
- Leaving Care (all young people who were previously looked after for a period of 13 weeks or more, from their

14th birthday including some time in care after their 16th birthday up to the age of 21 or 25 if in full time education)

- Vulnerable young parents up to the age of 21 years old with additional support needs and are open to Adult Social Care or whose children are identified as Children in Need or subject to Child Protection Plans or where it has been agreed there are significant concerns or risks to alternatives

Unaccompanied asylums seeking young people and families with no recourse to public funds are not supported through this Service.

Candidates are advised that for the purposes of this specification, these above cohorts will be referred to as either young persons or young people unless otherwise stated, and the new provider of this service will be referred to as 'The Service'.

In addition, candidates should note that ECC is only offering funding in respect of the provision of the support element, whereas external funding will be utilised to pay for the actual accommodation. However, please note that young people who require accommodation, must also have an identified support need in order to be eligible for this service. The latter requirement will be determined via a SHNA to verify an individual's support levels.

The Service will build relationships with and work with Commissioners and assume responsibility for a range of accommodation and support including, but not limited to the generic floating support service to ensure every opportunity is identified to support these young people with accommodation needs as they get older.

The total budget for this Service across all four quadrants is £2,500,000 per annum. The following tables provide the indicative figures for the projected future demand for this Service, based on 25% high, 50% medium and 25% low level of support required (as determined by the SHNA). Table 1 shows the indicative numbers of young people in provision at the start of the new service and Table 2 shows the predicted change in the cohorts.

Table 1

CURRENT	Essex		Mid		North		South		West	
Category	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High
All	332	353	100	106	100	106	66	71	66	71
16/17 HYS	105	112	22	23	14	15	8	8	5	6
Care Leavers	68	72	15	16	24	25	12	13	13	13
Vulnerable Parents	47	50	18	19	19	20	19	20	9	10
18/21 year olds	112	119	44	47	43	45	28	29	40	42
Annual Budget	£2,500,000.00		£750,000.00		£750,000.00		£500,000.00		£500,000.00	

Table 2

FORWARD	Essex		Mid		North		South		West	
Category	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High
All	332	353	100	106	100	106	66	71	66	71
16/17 HYS	167	177	50	53	50	53	33	35	33	35
Care Leavers	91	97	27	29	27	29	18	19	18	19
Vuln Parents	38	40	11	12	11	12	8	8	8	8
18/21 Yrs	36	39	11	12	11	12	7	8	7	8
Annual Budget	£2,500,000.00		£750,000.00		£750,000.00		£500,000.00		£500,000.00	

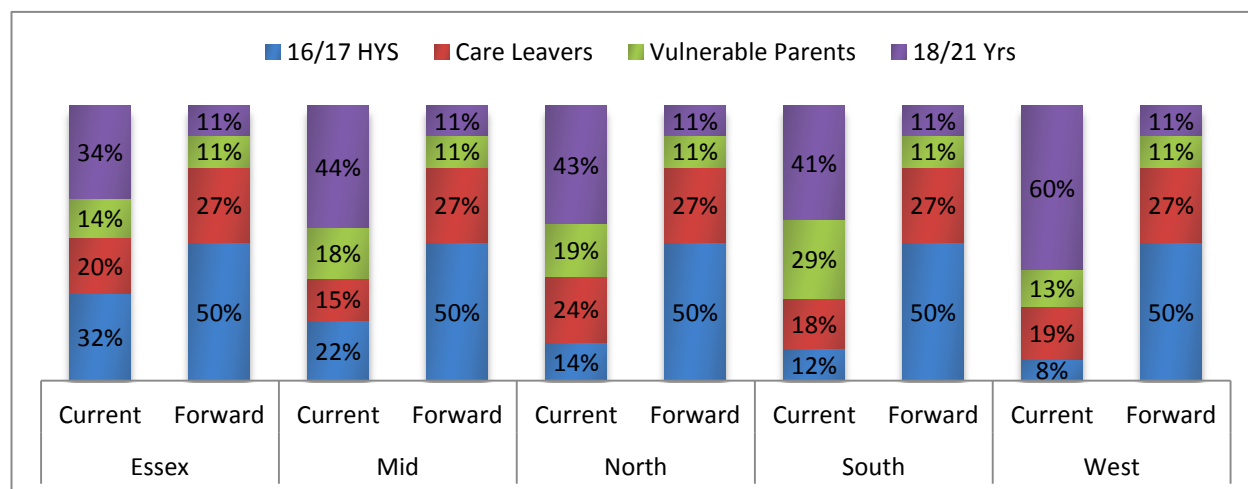
Table 3 shows the current and forward percentage of young people in quadrants across Essex:

Table 3

	Essex		Mid		North		South		West	
Category	Current	Forward	Current	Forward	Current	Forward	Current	Forward	Current	Forward
16/17 HYS	32%	50%	22%	50%	14%	50%	12%	50%	8%	50%
Care Leavers	20%	27%	15%	27%	24%	27%	18%	27%	19%	27%

Vulnerable Parents	14%	11%	18%	11%	19%	11%	29%	11%	13%	11%
18/21 Yrs	34%	11%	44%	11%	43%	11%	41%	11%	60%	11%

The graph below shows the current and forward percentage of cohorts of young people in quadrants across Essex:



The Service will put in place appropriate occupancy agreements, including licences, to ensure that tenancies are accessible and can be managed effectively and will work towards young people being able to transition into longer term tenancies. All emergency provision should be on the basis of licence agreements.

This Service forms part of a wider system of care and support including ECC's statutory duties:

- Assessment and Intervention Services (A&I)
- Leaving & Aftercare services
- External Placements and Resources Service
- Divisional Based Intervention Team (D-BIT)
- Youth Offending Service (YOS) and
- Education, Training and Employment (ETE) settings.

3. Background, National and Local context

Background

The current HRS Post 16 Accommodation Support provision is based on legacy agreements developed as part of the Supporting People service which utilised ring-fenced funding. When the funding arrangements for the Supporting People service changed, Essex County Council decided to maintain dedicated funding for Housing Related Support and resultantly the agreements were transferred onto contracts in 2011.

National context

The primary legislation and guidance, and subsequent amendments, which drives the commissioning of HRS Post 16 accommodation support are:

- The Children Act 1989, as amended in 2004
- Part 3 of the Children Act 1989/Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000
- Children (leaving care) ACT 2000 and Care Leavers(England) Regulations 2010
- Housing Act 1996 part 6 and 7
- Mental Health Act - services for young people
- Southwark Judgement 2009
- Children and Families Act 2014

In addition to these legislative requirements the Service must respond to any forthcoming new legislation or subsequent amendments to the statutory requirements for this service in order to ensure continuity of safe service

delivery is maintained and compliant with the current regulations. Candidates are advised that in addition to the aforementioned legislative requirements, the Service must also adhere to the following guidelines:

- 'Working together to safeguard children' (2013)
- Joint working Protocol between Essex Housing Authorities and Essex County Council in dealing with homeless 16 and 17 year olds
- Provision of accommodation for 16 and 17 year old young people who may be homeless and/or require accommodation (DCLG/DfE) 2010
- The Homelessness Code of Guidance
- Relevant Case Law
- Local Homeless District Strategies (12 in Essex)
- Local Housing District Strategies (12 in Essex)

Local context

A Needs Assessment has been undertaken as part of a robust review of the current HRS Post 16 Accommodation Support Services which included analysing data and collating information from young people who informed us of their experience of receiving this service. This review highlighted that a significant proportion of young people have more complex needs and issues than is currently recognised. In order to meet these needs, the providers will need to adopt a workforce with the skills and experience to support younger people with these higher needs and challenges.

Many young people who require this type of service lack a stable family life/unit that enables them to develop communication skills and mechanisms and helps them to be more able to regulate emotional responses. These young people will require support to help them develop more age appropriate life skills including shopping, cooking, cleaning and improving self-care, physical and sexual health, setting up bank account, managing money on a low income, arranging national insurance, passport and securing appropriate benefits.

These complexities and issues may include, but are not limited to:

- Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health issues
- Substance Misuse
- Challenging behaviours (including threats of violence to family members)
- Involvement with the criminal justice system
- Having been in the care system
- Vulnerability to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)
- Being more vulnerable to being bullied, coerced into negative behaviours and violence from peers
- Difficulty gaining access to education, training and employment (ETE) opportunities
- Ability to manage their own budget and financially sustain accommodation

Over a number of years, the number of young people entering care has reduced due to the development of a range of early help and targeted support services such as Family Solutions, Divisional Based Intervention Team (D- BIT), Multi Systemic Therapy (MST), Homeless Youth Specialists and other targeted support services.

The Local Government Act 2003 required all Local Authorities to have a Housing Strategy, which set out 'its vision for housing in its area and objectives and targets and policies'. The Homelessness Act 2002 and the Localism Act 2011 have placed a requirement on Local Authorities to adopt a strategic approach to managing and preventing homelessness. As Essex is a two-tier authority, this duty sits with the twelve district councils.

Local guidance and practice

Essex County Council (ECC) and the twelve district local housing authorities (LHA's) are committed to meeting the social and housing needs of young people who are at risk of homelessness and who are unable to live with their (wider) family or suitable friends. The following documents are adhered to:

- Joint Working Protocol between Essex Housing Authorities and ECC in dealing with Homelessness for 16 and 17 year olds (May 2014 reviewed January 2015) Sufficiency and Commissioning Strategy for Children in Care in Essex (2015 -2018)
- Staying Put Policy (April 2015)
- Children in Care and Leaving Care Partnership Strategy 2013 – 2018 (revised May 2015)

- SEND Strategy (2014-1019)
- Essex Safeguarding Children's Board (ESCB) Child Sexual Exploitation and missing children arrangements (2015)
- ESCB Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex Guidance (2013 reviewed June 2015)
- Local Homeless District Strategies (1 per district)
- Local Housing District Strategies (1 per district)

Engagement with District Councils, providers and young people

A number of surveys and events have been conducted with District Councils, Local Authority assessment and homelessness teams, current providers and young people to understand and inform the current and future demand for this Service which includes:

- The current types of provision
- Young people's experiences with current accommodation support and what they would like it to look like in the future
- Actual delivery of provision in the future.

Candidates are advised to consult Appendix 3 for further details of the feedback from these surveys.

Current provider data

Two snapshot surveys were undertaken in October 2015 and again in September 2016. Providers gave details of the people in HRS Post 16 accommodation support provision and the findings can be found in table 4.

Table 4

Quadrant	District	Teenage Parents				Young people at risk of homelessness				Young people leaving care			
		16 -17 yr. olds		18-21 yr. olds		16 -17 yr. olds		18-21 yr. olds		16 -17 yr. olds		18-21 yr. olds	
		2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016	2015	2016
Mid Essex	Braintree	7	4	27	5	1	7	7	38	6	0	5	8
	Chelmsford	3	1	8	14	3	8	4	25	1	1	9	11
	Maldon	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0
North Essex	Colchester	3	7	11	9	10	13	44	52	0	3	9	5
	Tendring	4	5	6	1	1	7	3	9	0	2	0	0
South Essex	Basildon	5	3	21	17	4	9	26	35	0	1	6	21
	Castle Point	0	0	2	4	2	1	0	2	0	0	1	1
	Rochford	0	0	1	3	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	1
West Essex	Brentwood	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	18	0	2	0	4
	Epping Forest	2	1	3	11	0	2	0	21	0	2	0	1
	Harlow	0	0	0	0	0	3	1	14	0	10	7	15
	Uttlesford	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		24	21	82	64	21	53	87	216	7	22	38	67

Additional information: There are a number of care leavers who are supported in at risk provision:

4 in Colchester

6 in Braintree

1 in Chelmsford

Activity

Table 5 shows the HYS data for 2015/16

Table 5

	The number of young people presenting with homelessness issues who have become known to Homeless Youth Specialist staff within D-BIT Service during 2015/16 <i>This cohort includes young people where:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mediation is required from HYS • the young person is on a waiting list for supported accommodation • the young person has been declined by providers due to need level or suitability due to complexity 	The number of young people who have received a dedicated service from Homeless Youth Specialist staff within D-BIT Service during 2015/16
Mid Essex		
Braintree	57	39
Chelmsford	50	39
Maldon	2	2
North Essex		
Colchester	111	82
Tendring	56	39
South Essex		
Basildon	48	29
Castle Point	22	17
Rochford	9	8
West Essex		
Brentwood	17	11
Epping Forest	7	7
Harlow	69	56
Uttlesford	16	9
Total	464	338

Candidates are advised that this data is provided for indicative purposes only and does not take into account those individuals who have not undertaken joint assessment and have applied directly to the JRP for supported accommodation.

Table 6 shows the Indicative numbers of young people currently in care to Essex County Council who will be reaching 18 years of age up to 2018 by district. It should be recognised that this is a fluctuating cohort of young people and the Service will work with Essex County Council to obtain ongoing information updates.

Table 6

District	Q4 2015/16	Q1 2016/17	Q2 2016/17	Q3 2016/17	Q4 2016/17	Q1 2017/18	Q2 2017/18	Q3 2017/18
Braintree	3	2	2	1	5	2	1	2
Chelmsford	3	1	3	3	1	1	1	2
Maldon	2	1	1	0	2	1	0	0
Colchester	7	5	8	3	5	5	3	2
Tendring	3	6	6	4	2	6	5	3
Basildon	1	3	4	7	16	3	3	6
Castle Point	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	2
Rochford	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0
Brentwood	2	0	0	0	3	0	0	1
Epping Forest	1	0	2	1	0	2	1	2
Harlow	5	4	5	2	3	1	1	0
Uttlesford	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0

4. Scope

The specific outcomes this service will aim to deliver are:

Accommodated:

- Support the wider system to prevent young people presenting as homeless
- Support young people to find suitable longer term accommodation through proactive move-on activity with partners
- Improve outcomes for Children in Care and care leavers and improve support to children and young people on the edge of care

Healthy

- People in Essex enjoy good health and wellbeing
- Young people have good or improving emotional wellbeing and mental health
- Supporting the young person to have improved mental/ physical health and/or reduced substance misuse by engaging with specialist provision where appropriate
- Promote good health for children and young people and reduce health inequalities

In ETE

- People have aspirations and achieve their ambitions through education, training and life-long learning
- Proactive engagement with young people to support and direct them to re-engage and maintain their education up to the age of 18 years or 21 where they want to.
- Proactive engagement in order to direct and support young people to access training and employment opportunities
- High levels of engagement of young people in Education, Employment and Training

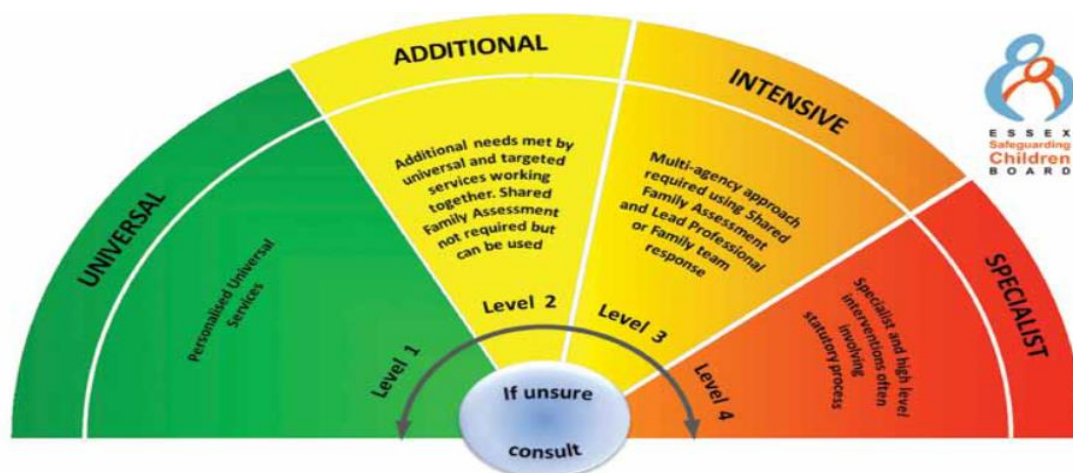
Resilient/Supported

- People in Essex can live independently and exercise choice and control over their lives
- Young people improve their resilience
- Young people improve their independence; they have their own bank account, national insurance number, passport, access to appropriate benefits and have adequate skills to managing their own budget effectively
- Develop resilience in families to help reduce dependency on public services by enhancing their capacity to resolve their own problems
- Young people remain in a family environment where possible
- Young people are proactively engaged and supported to enable them to keep safe and make good choices
- Young people have positive and supportive family/friendship networks that are maintained and/or developed

Safe

- People in Essex live in safe communities and are protected from harm
- Young people feel safe
- Protect young people from harm and neglect

Essex County Council has designed the model of delivery of this service to align with the Effective Support Windscreen as illustrated in the following diagram. This model was predicated upon the ESCB's Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex Guidance document which was designed to facilitate and promote partnership working to put the child/young person and their family at the centre of service provision, facilitating individuals to improve their personal circumstances and gain independence and control over their lives.



Housing Related Support Post 16 Accommodation Support sits within the additional needs section of this windscreen. However, the provider of this service will need to work closely with professionals and services who are depicted work within the intensive section of this diagram to prevent escalation of support and potential care needs.

Aims and Objectives

The Service will operate in innovative and flexible ways to improve efficiency, quality and effectiveness of support.

Candidates are advised that this Service is provided for a finite time limited provision (up to 18 months) and move-on accommodation not self-contained or of infinite duration.

The Service will:

- Ensure young people have a safe place to live and access appropriate support based on identified needs with the understanding that for the majority of young people the best place for them to live is within the family unit
- Promote and support the importance of developing and maintaining healthy family, carer and friendship networks
- Work with the young people, their families and carers where appropriate to encourage and support them to understand the young person and build a relationship with them to explore a range of resolutions including returning home
- Where appropriate, promote the culture that the family or caring home environment is best for young people
- Where appropriate provide ways for young people to make arrangements to access affordable shared houses with suitable 'flat mates' to reduce reliance on unsustainable solo units of accommodation
- Reduce the number of evictions across the service area by intervening early and working with multiple partners to support appropriately
- Support the development and delivery of a mentoring service or other such peer/service user or volunteer involvement participation model to enable former and/or current service users to share their knowledge with existing service users in or in accommodation at the point of move on. The Service will have policies and procedures in place to support and safeguard peer mentors
- Be outcome focussed and will work with ECC internal provision to set out the pattern of services that sustains improved outcomes delivered within the budget specified
- Ensure services are planned in a way that sustains improved outcomes
- Support young people to have a voice and be involved at each level of service delivery and for the organisation to be proactive when feedback is received
- Develop and review robust action plans that are aligned to the young person's pathway plans to ensure assessed/identified needs are met flexibly and responsively
- Jointly develop and agree clear and effective pathways with the young person:
 - By agreeing and regularly review protocols for care leavers and 16 & 17 year olds who may be homeless and/or require support as well as accommodation
 - Aged 18 to 21 years old who meet the criteria
 - These action plans must include relevant help and support to enable young people to make the transition from requiring intensive support through to independent living and to access specialist services relevant to individual identified needs accessing the right support and accommodation at the right time (e.g. emotional wellbeing and mental health, sexual health, primary care, maternity and substance misuse)
- Provide a timely response to all referrals coming through the Single Point Of Access and work in partnership with ECC and the wider partnership to highlight issues of concern
- Ensure that high quality, accessible information about the service is readily available to potential service users, and other stakeholders
- Work collaboratively with a wide range of organisations and stakeholders (including advocacy groups, community groups and other provider organisations) to promote the ongoing development of high quality services for vulnerable young people and children in care in the most cost efficient and effective accommodation
- Commitment to working towards parity of access to provision across all quadrants of Essex in line with the authority's section 106 agreements

Service Model

Joint Working Protocols – The Service will demonstrate a robust commitment to working with key partners/services and an understanding of how to enhance outcomes via effective and timely collaboration. The Service will agree to work within the parameters and principles set out in the Essex Information Sharing Framework including an

Information Sharing Protocol. Entry to the Service will be through a Single Point of Access and managed by four new quadrant Gateway Manager posts within ECC which will ensure that access is given to those who meet the criteria priority need. The Posts will:

- Work closely with Operational Teams and also work with district partners to take a strategic partnership approach to improving the accommodation support system for young people
- Work closely with the leaving and after care teams to ensure referrals are made and there is a smooth transition for people leaving care
- Ensure all assessments are complete and comprehensive to enable good understanding and ability to match accommodation and support needs
- Offer emergency accommodation and prevent delays in young people being placed in appropriate accommodation and linked with support
- Work with referrers to ensure young people's expectations are managed
- Oversee and better influence the management of empty units to prevent them standing empty for too long and accruing increased costs.

Referral Pathway

The Service will accept referrals from the Gateway Managers who will have prioritised them using the Supported Housing Needs Assessment and other prioritisation criteria now being developed.

Supported Housing Needs Assessment (SHNA)

Essex Family Operations Service has developed, and piloted an approach to the assessment of young peoples' housing needs. This is initially for 16-17 year olds, but will be extended to cover all young people in scope of this service. The aim is that each individual young person's housing needs will be carefully explored and understood within a consistent framework. The process is central to both accessing supported accommodation and the development and review of plans established with young people to promote identified outcomes.

The SHNA

- Initial findings evidence approximately half of those assessed to-date are understood to have medium level needs followed by a quarter having high level needs (at the point of presentation to services)
- Informs work with the young person and provides an informed 'starting point' for the development of an individualised plan. It is intended that SHNA outcomes and the plan will be reviewed ongoing at regular intervals with the young person, evolving as required in keeping with the young person's changing/developing needs/independence skills.

The SHNA will:

- Be used within the application process for HRS Post 16 Accommodation Support provision and will be managed by the Single Point of Access within ECC
- Continue to be developed to encompass the assessment requirements for the 18 – 21 year old group and vulnerable young parents
- Assess the following areas of need:
 - Emotional development, identity and maturity
 - Physical, emotional, mental health and wellbeing
 - Young people's practical skills and financial management
 - Education, training and employment
 - Young person's continuing need for support and accommodation
 - Young person's networks and knowledge of where to find support in the community
 - Family and personal issues
 - Other (issues pertinent to the individual that are in addition to the domains above)
 - Young people who are either homeless or are threatened with the prospect of becoming homeless

The Service will:

- Support ECC to continue to promote and review the SHNA across Essex as required
- Work with Family Operations Team over the first 12 months of contract to provide further analysis of the SHNA and trends
- Manage the young person's expectations, for example where a young person is in crisis a more intensive type of support will be provided followed by lower level support as the crisis subsides
- Adapt provision according to individual outcomes of regular reviews of the SHNA with the young person

ECC will develop the method to allow for the prioritisation of referrals. An overall decision on referrals will be based

on consideration of the SHNA; definitions of vulnerability, and any additional prioritisation tool or mechanism. In principle, the provider will be obliged to accept all referrals where assessment has demonstrated that support and accommodation is needed. However, refusals will be permissible in exceptional circumstances and decisions will be made by the Gateway Manager, Service and referrer to ensure alternative arrangements can be found.

Key Components

The Service will include the following main components as a minimum:

- **Information, Advice and Guidance**

The Service will provide accurate and current advice, guidance and information to young people, professionals and families who make contact. The Service will demonstrate good local knowledge and understanding of how to signpost to other appropriate organisations/ services. The advice and information will be provided in such a way that takes into consideration the demographic of the county and the individual needs of the young person.

A different approach will be considered where a young person is already living in a supported accommodation placement. The service will have extensive knowledge and understanding of individuals and with additional information from the SHNA a different level of Information, Advice and Guidance will be provided.

- **Prevention and Intervening Early**

At referral and prior to a young person accessing accommodation the provider will receive the SHNA information to inform the support planning.

When young people enter accommodation and start to receive support the Service will focus resources on planning for young people to return to their family, kin or within friendship networks which is recognised as the preferred living arrangements for young people to achieve the best outcomes. Continued engagement with family/support networks should be encouraged and maintained.

The Service will take a holistic approach when working with young people to ensure that the needs of young people and their families are met.

The Service will encourage a culture of prevention throughout the teams; support to young people will be given dependant on assessed needs which may mean that their approach to supporting an individual changes from day to day.

Continual assessment of need and risk will provide the service with the requisite evidence to support a referral onto other services.

The Service will work with young people, the Gateway Manager and other relevant professionals where there is a risk of placement breakdown which may lead to eviction/ending the placement.

- **Assessment and Support Planning**

The Service will receive a copy of the SHNA which will be used to inform what, when and how resources are used and put in place for young people. All planning will be carried out and agreed directly with the young person.

Services must be organised around the assessed needs of these young people and families and take account of their views. The Service will need to evidence how the service users have contributed to the direction and development of the service on an annual basis.

- **Risk Assessment and ongoing Management**

Young people in need of these services may have a range of behaviours that pose a risk to themselves and in some cases others; therefore the Service/practitioners will identify any risks and will work with the young person to develop a management plan which is reviewed on a minimum of 3 months basis.

The Service will have the internal processes to manage the range of safeguarding issues/challenges that young people have.

The Service will have the skills and process in place to record appropriate behaviours/patterns on an individual basis that may be used as evidence to influence individual decisions.

The Service will conduct the appropriate action to escalate any issues which need to be referred onto the relevant operational manager and the commissioners.

- **Integrated Working/Partnership Working**

Young people may have multiple challenges and issues so it is important that the provider is aware of and establishes links with local organisations in order to develop strong pathways and partnerships. It is also important that relevant information is shared with secondary services where additional safeguarding or risk factors are identified. The young person will be made aware of the applicable information which needs to be shared and the purpose which it will be used for to enable them to provide informed consent to provide these details where it is safe to do so.

The Service will agree and sign up to an information sharing protocol that provides the opportunity to share appropriate information that will help best support young people at the right level/s of support needed.

- **Wraparound Support**

This aspect of support will operate flexibly to 'wrap around' the individual. This will include versatile use of support hours in building based services; outreach to those young people who may be about to enter the service; and resettlement to those moving on to more independent accommodation. The Service will ensure support is available to:

- the cohort of young people wherever they are living
- prepare the cohort of young people for independent living
- support the cohort through transitions out of supported accommodation until they are able to successfully live independently
- Link with partnership organisations to support young people

Key workers will ensure a smooth handover and/or transition to the next accommodation setting which may include returning home.

The Service will plan to provide a period of continuity of support and guidance. Where possible, young people should be supported by the same worker as they understand them well, are aware of their history and will have established a rapport and developed a system of interaction and support which suit the young person. However, where it is not possible to maintain this working relationship between the support worker and young person, the provider will implement a process which ensures that an appropriate new support worker is identified and a robust handover system is undertaken to ensure the continuity of support for each young person.

The on-going support needs to be provided wherever the young person is living and will continue to prepare them for independent living. It should support them to transition successfully into adulthood until they are able to live independently – this may be more stable accommodation after they leave supported accommodation.

The Service will work with specialist housing providers for adults and other services to ensure that as young people become adults (and their needs continue) a planned transition can be put in place.

- **Support/interventions**

The Service will directly deliver (or organise for the young person) structured support/interventions which are outcome focused, have clear goals which have been identified with the young person. These may include but are not exhaustive:

- Building Resilience
- Living and functioning (including budget management)
- Emotional wellbeing Interventions
- Healthy Relationships
- Risk Behaviours

- **Access to and maintenance of ETE/peer/mentoring support/volunteering**

The Service will need to take a practical approach to encourage young people to get up in the mornings in time to get them to school, college, work clubs, and other appointments. They will explore ways and agree with young people strategies for doing this that will be included in the support plan.

The Service will build relationships and working agreements to strengthen joint working opportunities with Job Centres, local businesses, schools and colleges etc. to better understand and gain accessibility to ETE type provision.

Young people who are in need of this type of service often are not accessing education, training or employment. The Service will proactively work with each young person when they first enter accommodation to identify the opportunities available to them based on their aspirations.

This element of the Service will be incorporated into the individual's support plan. It is expected that the Service will support the young person to access education, training or employment through the application process, interview techniques and practice and getting to appointments.

Young people who are also care leavers will have access to Targeted Youth Advisors and employability workers to directly support them to access education, training and employment. The Service will promote this service where appropriate and work with them to support the work that is already in place.

The Service will encourage young people to share their experiences within their peer group.

The Service will support young people to access appropriate volunteering opportunities.

- **Move-on**

Move-on is a pivotal element to the service model as the Service will plan to move young people on to suitable longer term accommodation. Consideration of this element of the scheme needs to commence as soon as the young person enters the accommodation. In some cases, this support will be conducted in order to assist the young person to return home. However, the overarching aim of the Service is to ensure that young people are able to move on to more long term accommodation within 18 months.

Move-on accommodation will be identified through a planned pathway approach and a range of accommodation solutions may be identified dependent on circumstances and local practices / provision on offer across the twelve districts. It will include both social housing and private-rented options.

The Service is responsible for moving people on and must work closely with the Local Housing Authority and any other private or Registered Social Landlords in the area to find suitable independent or shared accommodation for move on when the young person is ready to do so. The Service will manage young people's move on expectations and will match young people that are suitable to live together in shared accommodation.

All the services will work together to ensure that voids across the county are used effectively and efficiently irrespective of where a young person is currently placed.

Resettlement support must be provided for young people, through wrap around support when they are moving on from supported to unsupported accommodation according to the needs of the young person as identified through the SHNA review process. It is anticipated that support will taper off in response to the young person's growing independence. There are no specific time restrictions placed upon this, rather, the provider will work with each young person to promote exit from services in line with their changing needs and developing independence skills.

- **Emergency Placements**

The Service will:

- Ensure 16 and 17 year olds at risk of homelessness/ or are homeless where the kinship network option is not available, are offered an emergency placement with time for the social care assessment and intervention team to complete an assessment and homelessness investigations
- Provide emergency placements/accommodation and support for up to 6 weeks

- The Service will provide an appropriate level of Information, Advice and Guidance to ensure most impact on the young person's individual needs and situations
- Utilise emergency accommodation where a crisis occurs over a weekend or cannot be resolved by mediation within a working day
- The Service will show a commitment to developing independence and resilience in young people, reducing their need for higher level support and supporting the step down in to less intensive but appropriate support.

• **Population/geographical coverage:**

The Service will cover the Essex County Council area and excludes Southend and Thurrock. Appropriate levels of supported accommodation and services will be made available across all 12 districts with provision being set up in quadrants which follows the ECC Family Operations delivery model.

The majority of young people will reside within the ECC boundary; however a small proportion of Care Leavers, vulnerable teenage parents and young people at risk of homelessness may reside outside the boundary, but still may be eligible for a service as set out in their pathway plan. The Service will be expected to evidence how they are working with their partners and private rented sector to promote and support young people to move on or access safe accommodation. The Service will understand the allocation policies of each district council within their quadrant and contribute to change.

Criteria

Group
Young people aged 16 and 17 years old at risk of homelessness
Young people aged 18 to 21 years old at risk of homelessness and assessed as having specific vulnerabilities which will be agreed by the Gateway Managers. These may include but will not be limited to Mental Health, Substance Misuse, subject to SEND/ EHC Plan or young people in transitions and where no other suitable supported accommodation is available (e.g. other HRS-funded schemes).
Leaving Care (all young people who were previously looked after for a period of 13 weeks or more, from their 14 th birthday including some time in care after their 16 th birthday up to the age of 21 or 15 if in full time education
Vulnerable young parents up to the age of 21 years old with additional support needs and are open to Adult Social Care or whose children are identified as Children in Need or subject to Child Protection Plans or where it has been agreed there are significant concerns or risks to alternatives

Exclusion criteria

Those young people that do not fit into the above criteria and age restrictions. Unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people and families with no recourse to public funds are not supported through this Service.

Service Availability

The Service will be made available for up to 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The Service will be able to accept and act on referrals into accommodation as it is safe to do so.

NB: The out of hours process for managing access to supported accommodation is being developed by ECC and the Single Point of Access Gateway Managers and will be agreed and shared with providers as part of the implementation phase once contracts have been awarded.

Workforce

The Service will have access to a workforce to deliver the specification to the highest quality by having consistent staff with the right combination of skills, knowledge, experience and qualifications to work in a person centre way with individuals and families of which will include:

- A robust induction programme
- Commitment to providing on-going and suitable/ appropriate training for staff employed pertinent to the types of support being delivered
- Regular supervision, annual appraisal and consultation
- The correct reporting and case management procedures in place

Staff will have:

- Good interpersonal skills and ability to work flexibly and sensitively around the young person
- Excellent communication skills
- Skills, knowledge and other attributes that are matched to the young person's needs and preferences (including a range of skills relevant to engaging with people from different backgrounds and circumstances)
- The workforce will be expected to have an understanding of substance misuse and mental health issues and recognise when a young person would benefit from a specialist service and they would actively work with both parties to ensure engagement has been established
- Current enhanced DBS Checks

The Service will have working relationships with local specialist provision to jointly plan and support the young person even if the young person does not want to engage.

Child and Adult Protection Safeguarding requirements; Serious Untoward Incident (SUI); near misses

Child protection and wider safeguarding requirements will always be taken seriously and managed according to Southend Essex and Thurrock (SET) procedures (see Glossary for links).

- The Service will be expected to respond to the learning and recommendations from Serious Case Reviews (SCR)s, Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) and Serious Incidents (SI) where it affects delivery of this contract
- The Service will be expected to support and provide any information (written and verbally) required as part of SCR)s, DHRs and child protection enquires.
- The Service will be required to have their own safeguarding policies and guidance in place, manage all crises as set out in their own safeguarding policies and guidance, linked to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board with staff trained at appropriate levels and will notify ECC Commissioners and Children's Social Care Family Operations Team as appropriate once the emergency has been managed or resolved
- The Service will ensure that they have the appropriate response to missing young people, including the need to recognise the difference between young people who are missing and those who are absent
- The Service will notify the ECC Commissioners and Children's Social Care, Family Operations Team if there are any near misses
- The Service will also make themselves familiar with the Effective Support for children and families in Essex document (see Glossary for links)

5. Performance Monitoring Framework

Introduction

This section sets out how Essex County Council will manage the contract, the expectation is that the Service and Essex County Council will work in a collaborative way to report on the performance of the contract, resolve any issues and implement improvements to the service, whilst also supporting the Service to work in an innovative way.

Contract Management Meetings

There will be scheduled contract management meetings between the Service, the Commissioner and/or a Commercial Contract Manager and internal operational officers. These meetings will take place on a quarterly basis.

The Service will be expected to attend the Contract Meetings as well as any other meetings with ECC as reasonably requested.

These meetings will be used by ECC to manage the performance of the contract, review Key Performance Indicators and for the Service to have the opportunity to report on delivery and work through any issues with ECC in a collaborative way.

The information that the Service is required to submit ahead of each Contract Meeting will include:

- Report as agreed to Organisational Intelligence on award of contract
- Performance Monitoring Report
- Information necessary for calculating Key Performance Indicators
- Data, statistics or further information in relation to the delivery of the contract

- Any agreed upon finance reports

Performance Monitoring Report (PMR)

Each quarter the Service will submit the Performance Monitoring Report to ECC, the format of this report will be decided upon by ECC in conjunction with the provider during the contract initiation phase.

Key Performance Indicators

The Key Performance Indicators (KPI) as detailed on pages 21 -22 below will be one of the main measures to judge how effectively the contract is being delivered by the Service.

The Service must submit quarterly monitoring data to the Council, in order to enable ECC to calculate if each KPI is being met. The actual data to be returned will be agreed between the Service and ECC during the contract implementation phase.

KPI's are the one of the principle ways that ECC will use to assess that the Service is being delivered according to this contract. If the Service consistently fails to meet one or more of the KPI's, this may lead to a Breach of Contract or other actions, such as ECC requiring the Service to meet actions outlined in a Service Improvement Plan.

Data, statistics or further information in relation to the delivery of the contract

The provider will also be required to provide additional data, statistics and further information to ECC as part of their quarterly Performance Monitoring Report, which will be used to determine how well the contract is functioning and provide an overview of the service activity.

The type of data, statistic or further information will be informed by the Key Performance Indicators in the Performance Framework as well as any other information requested by ECC with the agreement of the Service, who will provide all reasonable requests for information.

Quality Assurance and Contract Compliance Audits

To enable the carrying out of Quality Assurance and Contract Compliance Audits, ECC with reasonable notice may request the following:

- A copy of the Services latest audited accounts
- Information to allow a contract compliance audit to be carried out
- Access to the Service to enable an inspection of the building and service delivery
- Access to files and documents related to the delivery of the service
- Any other reasonable request to enable a Quality Assurance / Audit to take place

Any quality issues identified may lead to a Service Improvement Plan being prepared by ECC, which will outline the areas which require improvement, the Service is expected to carry out the actions identified in the Service Improvement Plan.

GROUP REF	OUTCOME GROUP	OUTCOME SUMMARY	Grp	KPI ref	KPI title	KPI Type	KPI Purpose	Good is (Target example)
Grp 1	SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION	Priority groups access quality accommodation and plan a pathway that secures long term accommodation in the future.	Grp 1	1.1	% of young people who received support in fewer than <target days> since referral	Quality	Most young people do not wait too long before receiving support since referral	Good is HIGH (e.g. 80% per year in under 10 days)
			Grp 1	1.2	% of young people who received support in fewer than <target days> since referral	Quality	NO young person waits over <target days> before receiving support since referral	Good is HIGH (e.g. 98% per year in under 30 days)
			Grp 1	1.3	% of young people in crisis who received support within 24hrs of referral	Quality	Most young people in crisis wait less than 24hrs to receive support since referral	Good is HIGH (e.g. 80% per year in under 24 hours)
			Grp 1	2	% of young people who were evicted	Quantity	Evictions are prevented / kept low	Good is LOW (e.g. under 10% per year)
			Grp 1	3	% of young people who were 'moved-on' (types to be agreed - has to indicate positive progression)	Effect	Young people are benefiting from planned "move-on" activities are	Good is HIGH (e.g. 75% per year)
			Grp 1	4	% of young people who disengage	Quantity	Disengagements are prevented / kept low	Good is LOW (e.g. under 10% per year)
			Grp 1	5	% Occupancy (per provider)	Quantity	HRS being optimally utilised	Good is HIGH (e.g. 80% per year)
Grp 2	HEALTH/ WELLBEING	Young people achieve good mental and physical health via specialist provision where appropriate to reduce substance misuse in particular.	Grp 2	6	% of young people self-reporting goodand/or improved EWMH	Effect	Yp needs supported (e.g. Substance misuse, E.T.E. , Emotional / Mental / Physcial Health and Wellbeing)	Good is HIGH (e.g. 85% per year)
			Grp 2	7	% of young people who have received specialist support	Quantity	Yp needs supported (e.g. Substance misuse, E.T.E. , Emotional / Mental / Physical Health and Wellbeing)	Good is HIGH (e.g. 85% per year)
Grp 3	IN ETE	Young people are proactively engaged with to help them achieve their aspirations and ambitions; accessing and maintainig Education up to 18 years of age and then life-long Training and Employment.	Grp 3	8.1	% of young people (18 years of age or younger) currently in education (excluding those in training/employment).	Quantity	Yp (18 or under) supported in Education (e.g. encouraged to remain in education)	Good is HIGH (e.g. 85% per year)
			Grp 3	8.2	% of young people (18 years of age or younger) who were not in education at referral but are in education now (excluding those already in training/employment).	Quantity	Yp (18 or under) encouraged to access education (who were not in education at referral)	Good is HIGH (e.g. 65% per year)
			Grp 3	9.1	% of young people (over 18 years of age) in education, training and/or employment (ETE)	Quantity	Yp (over 18) supported in training/employment (e.g. encouraged to remain in education)	Good is HIGH (e.g. 85% per year)
			Grp 3	9.2	% of young people (over 18 years of age) who were not in ETE at referral but are in ETE now	Quantity	Yp (over 18) encouraged to access training/employment (who were not involved at referral)	Good is HIGH (e.g. 65% per year)

Grp 4	RESILIENT / SUPPORTED	Young people have good and/or improved resilience and independence. They have financial stability, a passport, a National Insurance number and access to appropriate benefits. They have supportive friend and/or family networks and can exercise control over their lives to resolve their own problems.	Grp 4	10	% of planned moves to lower levels of support (from high to medium / medium to low)	Effect	Improving YPs situations and demand of HRS reduced	Good is HIGH (e.g. 65% per year)
			Grp 4	11	% of young people self-reporting good and/or improved friends/family networks for positive and supporting help/advice	Effect	YP can resolve own issues and get non-HRS support, less service return/demand	Good is HIGH (e.g. 90% per year)
			Grp 4	12	% of cases which are re-referrals	Quantity	Re-referrals are reduced / kept low (taking into account wrap-around service).	Good is LOW (e.g. under 10% per year)
Grp 5	SAFETY	Young people report that they feel safe, they live in safe communities and are protected from harm and neglect.	Grp 5	13	% of young people who receive HRS reviews within 90 days	Quality	All Young people being supported receive quarterly reviews	Good is HIGH (e.g. 95% per year)
			Grp 5	14	% of yp who self-report feeling safe	Effect	YP feel safe	Good is HIGH (e.g. 90% per year)

Appendix 1

Joint working protocol between Essex Housing Authorities and Essex County Council in dealing with homeless 16 and 17 year olds



Essex County Council



Tendring
District Council



Basildon Council
BASILDON • BELLFRICAY • WICKFORD



Harlow
Council
Working together for Harlow

Introduction

This protocol recognises that the welfare of the child is paramount and all parties will work together to ensure young people are safe and have their needs met. This protocol takes account of the House of Lords judgement of May 2009 in the case of G v LB Southwark and the subsequent statutory guidance issued by the department for Children, Schools and Families, and Communities and Local Government department in April 2010. These clarified the legal responsibilities of Children and Young People's Services towards homeless 16 and 17 year olds and the interrelationship between duties under the Children Act 1989 and homelessness legislation.

Essex County Council (ECC) and the twelve district local housing authorities (LHA's) are committed to meeting the social and housing needs of young people who are at risk of homelessness and who are unable to live with their (wider) family or suitable friends.

ECC and the LHAs will work together with supported housing providers to deliver the most effective options for young people, ensuring they have appropriate advice and guidance, and that the young person continues to take responsibility for the decisions they take about their lives and the subsequent consequences of these. In working with young people aged 16 and 17 we seek to build their resilience and independence so they are equipped for adult life. Both agencies have responsibilities to ensure young people are safeguarded.

ECC and LHA's have a responsibility to make best use of public money, therefore we are committed to working together to find the most effective solutions to prevent homelessness, to offer appropriate support to young people and where necessary to find the best housing solution for them.

Services should be jointly planned and secured and include: homelessness prevention services (provision of advice and guidance to young people), supported accommodation schemes, relevant support services and more specialised supported housing provision for more vulnerable young people.

This protocol specifically guides the joint working of ECC and LHA's in respect of young people aged 16 and 17 who are at risk of homelessness or who are homeless. It does not cover care leavers aged 16-21 moving to independent living.

Children's Social Care (CSC) Family Operations is the lead agency in assessing young people at risk of homelessness. This service has been renamed as Family Operations in ECC however the term CSC will be used within this protocol.

Development of this protocol

This protocol has been developed by Essex Children's Social Care (CSC) Family Operations on behalf of ECC), District Council Housing Services,(LHA) Essex Youth Offending Service (EYOS) and ECC Housing Related Support (HRS). There is a determination and commitment

from these services to work together to promote better outcomes for young people and to improve consistency of services across the county.

'Effective Support for children and families in Essex' (2013) provides guidance for all practitioners in working together with children and families to provide early help and targeted and specialist support.

<http://www.escb.co.uk/Portals/15/Documents/Local%20Practices/Effective%20Support%20for%20Children%20and%20Families%20in%20Essex%20April%202013.pdf>

'Working together to safeguard children' (2013) provides a guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/Working%20Together%202013.pdf>

Services provided to prevent 16 and 17 year olds from becoming homeless (ECC)

ECC believes that children and young people are best cared for by their own families and has developed a range of support services in pursuit of this aim. These include:

Divisional Based Intervention (D-BIT)

These teams offer intensive services to families to improve family functioning and with a key aim of reducing the likelihood of them needing to be cared for outside of their family (such as becoming a child in care).

Homelessness Youth Specialist D-BIT team

A new role of Homelessness Youth Specialist has been created and these workers are part of the CSC D-BIT team. These specialist workers deliver enhanced mediation to young people and their families and work closely with LHA and CSC Assessment and Intervention Team (A&I) and other relevant CSC teams. This role will enable improved co-ordination of responses to potentially or actually homeless 16 and 17 year olds and may deliver additional support to young people in supported housing projects alongside key workers in these projects.

Multi Systemic Therapy (MST)

A highly structured service delivered by a third sector provider to families and young people experiencing significant family relationship breakdown.

Prevention Services Provided by Essex District Councils (LHA's)

All Essex District Councils will seek to prevent 16-17 year olds from becoming homeless by working in partnership with the HYS, however other forms of mediation will be considered. If homelessness cannot be prevented an option to be considered would be a placement within ECC funded supported housing schemes.

Where prevention work undertaken by LHA or ECC has not prevented homelessness the following operational protocol should be followed by LHA and ECC

Where young people are unable or unwilling to return to their immediate families, or it is not safe for them to do so CSC and LHA should support young people to explore wider family members and community options where their needs can be met.

Where a young person is assessed as homeless and is unable to return home, the Southwark Judgement and subsequent guidance makes it clear that Children and Young People's Services of the Local Authority are the lead agency in such cases and the primary legislation is the Children Act 1989.

However, there is joint responsibility for meeting the needs of these young people, and it is therefore essential that Children and Young People's Services, the Local Housing Authorities, the Youth Offending Service and Housing Related Support Services and any commissioned provision work closely and collaboratively in meeting the needs of young people across the twelve districts in Essex.

In this operational protocol the following abbreviations are used:

Children's Social Care (CSC)

Initial Response team (IRT) Part of CSC

Divisional Based Intervention (D-BIT) -Part of CSC

Homelessness Youth Specialist (HYS) These workers are within locality D-BIT team

Assessment and Intervention team (A&I) Part of CSC

Protocol CSC data base.

Local Housing Authority (LHA)

Looked after Child (CLA)

Children Act 1989 Section 20 S.20

Children Act 1989 Section 17 S.17

Housing Act 1996 Section 184 S.184

Housing Act 1996 Section 188 S. 188

Housing Act 1996 Section 193 S. 193

Youth Offending Service YOS (ECC)

Housing Related Support HRS (ECC) part of People / Place Commissioning ECC

Joint Operational Protocol for 16 & 17 year olds at risk of homelessness

The protocol has 6 elements. These elements are not mutually exclusive or necessarily sequential.

Element 1 Initial presentation

(This is the point at which a young person identifies themselves as homeless to either CSC or the LHA)

A young person who presents as homeless may make contact with either

- Children's Social Care (CSC) Family Operations
- Local Housing Authority (LHA)

On presentation by a young person aged 16-17 to either service (CSC or LHA) both agencies should consider their duties to ensure the immediate safety and welfare of the young person and liaise with each other to arrange a joint meeting with the LHA and CSC (HYS) where this is appropriate.

If the young person makes Initial Contact with the LHA: The LHA will make initial enquiries and arrange to meet the young person in order to consider if there is a duty to provide interim accommodation (S188). If interim accommodation is offered a homelessness application will be commenced. The LHA will offer prevention services as appropriate. Support from HYS can be requested and HYS will attend Joint Housing meetings to undertake a joint contact and information gathering meeting. HYS will support the LHA in making a formal referral to IRT who will refer to A&I

Where housing provides interim accommodation a formal referral to CSC should be made by LHA for an assessment of needs. A referral may be made if interim accommodation is not provided

If the young person makes initial Contact with CSC: CSC will make initial enquiries and consider their duties under the Children Act .CSC may refer to the LHA where the young person declines CSC support or assessment. The young person can be supported by HYS in attending the LHA in order to undertake a joint contact and information gathering appointment .This will support a decision on whether to instigate Element 2.

Element 1 may involve advice, mediation or other intervention provided by the LHA and CSC in order to resolve the immediate accommodation needs and hopefully negotiate a return home.

Where the young person has presented to CSC as homeless an assessment under S17 and S20 must be undertaken by CSC. This needs to consider their immediate needs for accommodation.

The joint contact and information gathering appointment by LHA and HYS will support the LHA and CSC in instigating their respective enquiry's/assessments.

LHA instigate enquiry under S184

On presentation The LHA may instigate an initial enquiry with the young person under S184 to determine if the young person is homeless and whether the young person can be supported to return home or be accommodated by wider family / friends. However it may be appropriate to instigate enquiries under the LHA remit of offering services to prevent homelessness before instigating an enquiry under s184.

The LHA assessment will consider: The current situation – i.e. why is the young person presenting as homeless?

Background history – family make up, accommodation history and whether, previously known to CSC or other agencies. (HYS will review the CSC Data base (Protocol) and will be aware of whether the YP has any current or previous involvement with CSC. It may be difficult for LHA to confirm CSC involvement

Support networks – family members / extended family, friends that can offer support.

Vulnerability – determine if there are immediate concerns re vulnerability of the young person – e.g. learning disabilities, mental health issues, child protection / safeguarding concerns.

The young person's views – what is the young person saying about the need for accommodation.

Views of person with parental responsibility – What is a parent with PR saying? Can the young person return home?

The LHA will provide CSC with a written copy of any Homeless investigation and decision or copies of any written advice that has been provided (permission will be sought from young people)

LHA will contact HYS to agree a joint initial contact and information gathering meeting. This meeting will support the referral process into social care – ensuring sufficient information is available to make informed decisions.

The initial contact and information gathering meeting will determine whether there is a realistic prospect of the young person returning home or to wider family or friends. Whilst this is determined, or further negotiated the LHA may provide interim accommodation. The LHA may have a duty to provide interim accommodation whilst they conduct their investigations under S188 Housing Act 1996.

If the LHA or CSC (HYS) can resolve the young person's accommodation issues at this stage the LHA may treat the case as a "homeless prevention case". HYS and the LHA will record their involvement and outcome. Both CSC and LHA will consider whether any further intervention is required from either CSC or the LHA.

If the 'homelessness' decision is adverse the LHA duty to provide interim accommodation ceases when the LHA S193 "homelessness decision" is made and notified to the applicant. The LHA may use their discretion to provide accommodation during any review of the decision. The LHA will discuss ceasing accommodation before doing so with the relevant CSC team. CSC team will provide information to the LHA and the young person regarding S20 and if deemed necessary re-assess.

Element 2 (Enquiries / mediation / intervention by CSC under S17 Children Act)

On conclusion of the joint initial contact and information gathering meeting, HYS will check CSC system (protocol) to see if the young person is an open CSC case. If so, they will liaise with the relevant CSC team and record details of the Joint initial contact on the protocol data base.

If the LHA or CSC workers believe there is an on-going role for CSC involvement, on closed cases a referral will be made with relevant information (in the agreed format) to IRT and IRT will refer to A&I.

A&I supported by HYS (D-BIT) will undertake interim enquiries / mediation (S17). Unless another CSC team is holding the case).

A&I will become the primary team and will undertake further enquiries with the young person, parents and wider family. The aim will be to mediate and provide support to enable the young person to: remain in their current accommodation, to return home or to arrange for the young person to stay with wider family and friends. They may also be supported by the HYS workers.

A&I will communicate the outcome of their intervention to LHA via letter and will email this to a named contact. Outcomes will be:

- Young person returns home. No support needs.
- Young person returns home with on-going section 17 support (A&I, D-BIT, HYS, another resource)
- Young person remains homeless – proceed to element 3 children and families assessment commenced by CSC primarily under S17 and S20.

Element 3 (Assessment and CIN Plan under S17 Children Act and decision on becoming a looked after child (CLA) S20 by CSC)

The allocated CSC team will undertake a children and families assessment and may develop a CIN Plan (S17). They will also consider whether a duty is owed under S20 having regard for the Essex Effective Support Windscreen (Effective Support for Children and Families in Essex April 2013)

The assessment will build on the information provided by the LHA and from the HYS workers to form a judgement. This assessment should be completed within 30 working days and will address amongst other things the following questions:

Is the applicant a child?

Is the applicant a child in need?

Is the child within the Local Authority's area?

Is the need for accommodation the result of one of the criterion in S20

- There being no person who has parental responsibility for the child
- The child is lost or abandoned
- The person who has been caring for the child being prevented (whether permanently and for whatever reason) from providing the child with suitable accommodation or care

What are the child's wishes and feelings regarding the provision of accommodation?

What consideration (having regard to age and understanding) is to be given to the young person's wishes and feelings?

Does any person with PR who is willing to provide accommodation for that child object to the CSC intervention?

Even if there is objection does the child agree to being accommodated?

The HYS worker will continue to explore the possibility of the young person remaining at home (if initial support has mediated a return), returning to family, wider family or to friends, and where this is an option, HYS or other D-BIT workers will undertake work with the family and positively support this.

Element 4: S20 Decision – and consideration if the young person will accept S20 services.

The young person's needs will be assessed and consideration given to the best and most appropriate support and accommodation provision. This social work assessment will have regard to the Southwark judgement

Outcomes

If a young person's needs' can best be met through a referral to a supported accommodation project. CSC (the HYS worker) will refer to the joint referral panel (JRP) to access supported housing. This referral will include the young person's support needs and will inform best matching to be achieved with supported accommodation projects. (Referrals to the JRP's should ideally be joint referrals by CSC and LHA) or other local arrangements for accessing supported housing.

- Where the S20 criteria **is met** and the young person agrees to be accommodated. A&I will transfer the case to the 16+ ART team who will be responsible for the funding and provision of accommodation and will follow CSC internal processes.
- Where the S20 criteria **is not met** and the young person requires accommodation, or where the young person does not accept this offer, A&I will refer the young person back to LHA for further assessment and appropriate action.
- The relevant CSC team will be responsible for the S20 decision and will communicate the outcome of the decision to the LHA. (CSC will seek authorisation from young people to enable the sharing of information with LHA.)

Young people, who are homeless, are assessed as being a child in need of accommodation, but state that they do not wish to become looked after will not be deemed to be intentionally homeless on the basis of their decision.

Element 5: LHA Homelessness Assessment S184 / consider duty under S193

If a homeless application and investigation is not in progression then it will now formally commence if requested by the young person.

LHA Homelessness Investigation may already have begun and interim accommodation (S188) may have been provided whilst the CSC assessment is undertaken and completed and/or until completion of Homelessness enquiries. This duty ceases when written notification of decision (S184) and duties owed (S193) is given.

When the LHA has all relevant information they must make a decision whether there is a duty to provide accommodation under S193. The LHA may offer services under prevention of homelessness or to relieve homelessness.

The LHA will give written notification of its decision to a homeless applicant under S184 and this will be shared with the relevant CSC team.. This will set out reasons for an adverse decision such as intentionality. (LHA will seek authorisation from young people to enable the sharing of information with CSC)

- An applicant can request a review of this decision within 21 days of notification. The LHA has a power but not a duty to provide interim accommodation pending a review.
- The outcome of the part 7 assessment will be communicated to the relevant CSC team by the LHA. When the LHA has concluded its investigation it must notify the young person of its decision in writing S184.
- Where it is satisfied the YP is homeless it will confirm the following:
 - if the young person is in in priority need,
 - whether they have become homeless intentionally,
 - if they have a local connection,
 - and if the LHA has a duty to provide suitable accommodation under S193.

There will be liaison with the relevant CSC team about the ending of interim accommodation and LHA will give reasonable notice before ceasing accommodation to allow for alternative accommodation or arrangements to be put in place. .

Element 6 (If young person is in need of accommodation but does not meet the criteria for S20 - accessing supported housing accommodation.

Referral to (HRS/ ECC) funded supported accommodation projects with HYS support via the locality Joint referral panels or other local arrangement.

Young people whose needs have been assessed and the assessment is that they **do not** need to be accommodated under the Children Act by CSC or where young people do not agree to this will be referred (by LHA and / or CSC) into supported accommodation via the Joint Referral Panel. Where possible this will be a joint referral between CSC and LHA.

Specific support needs will be identified and a support plan will be coordinated and / or delivered by workers who can provide additional support.

Where a young persons' case remains open to CSC HYS workers will be proactive in support planning and provisions. Where the young persons' case is closed to CSC and HYS workers are present and proactive in the housing environment Ad hoc support and advice may be offered.

New role of Homeless Youth Specialist within the D-BIT Service

The HYS worker role will provide continuous support to young people from when they are identified as at risk of becoming homeless. HYS will attend JRP panels, support referrals at the JRP (where these exist) and receive feedback on panel outcomes and also the outcomes of provider interviews and decisions.

HYS workers can provide support as required until young people are settled into supported accommodation projects. HYS may continue to work toward reunification between the young person and their family whilst the young person resides at the supported housing provider.

Support plans will set out specific goals and support young people to develop key “life skills”, and will detail the roles and responsibilities of different workers within the overall plan. This assessment will include what risks the young person poses to themselves and to others and a risk management plan where necessary.

Joint Referral Panels

Joint referral panels have an important role to play in ensuring young people receive prompt consistent effective and fair access to supported housing providers.

Where possible LHA and CSC will jointly refer young people to local JRP's. Decisions will be communicated in writing to both applicant and referring agencies. Some areas do not currently have a JRP and therefore direct joint referrals will be made to the supported housing providers.

Out of Hours Services

Where young people present as homeless outside of office hours, the priority must be the safety and well-being of the young person, initial enquiries to support and return home or to stay with family or friends will be undertaken by the Emergency Duty Service (EDS) team. This team will assess the situation and intervene / offer services if appropriate within their remit. The young person will then be referred to IRT the next working day for an initial interview under Element 1 of this protocol.

Ordinary Residence

If an applicant is immediately homeless and considered in priority need but may be from another area, the LHA has a duty to provide interim accommodation whilst completing their enquiries and making a decision under s184. They will then be referred to the relevant LHA who will have to abide by that decision s198 and accommodation will continue to be provided until the referral is completed.

(This may be more complex in some cases, Local support networks may actually be more relevant than the local connections under PtVII Housing Act)

Advocacy Services

Services should be made available to assist the young person with advocacy where they are unhappy with decisions and their situation remains un-resolved. Essex County Council currently has a contract with Barnardos for young people who are receiving a service from CSC. Some LHA areas have specialist young people services that can support advocacy. LHAs that do not have access to a specific advocacy service may refer young people to Citizens Advice Bureaux or other local services.

Implementation of this Protocol, Review and Dispute Resolution.

The parties to this joint protocol recognise that some young people may, by virtue of their actions, make themselves intentionally homeless. It is understood by the parties to this protocol

that homeless 16/17 year olds, are by virtue of their age and their situation, are often not mature enough to understand fully the impact of their actions.

Housing Authorities are mindful of the DCLG 2006 Homelessness Code of Guidance and will consider each case and will not pre-define the circumstances in which a young person may be considered to be intentionally homeless

Housing Authorities are mindful of the age and vulnerability of this group and will work with Children's Services to avoid making such decisions where this can be avoided

It is everybody's responsibility, to work together to implement this protocol for the benefit of the young people concerned. However, it is recognised that from time to time it may not be possible to resolve issues between different services and problems may need to be escalated through the appropriate line management arrangements.

In situations where it has not been possible to resolve a dispute at a LHA and CSC team manager level the dispute should be resolved by the relevant LHA Manager and the Service Manager of the relevant CSC team and / or and the Project lead for D-BIT/HYS.

EHOG will monitor the operational impact of the protocol with local LHA's. All EHOG members will support the aims of this protocol and this will be reflected in each LHA's Homelessness Strategy.

ECC 16-18 Homelessness Strategy group will monitor the operational impact within ECC. Unresolved issues, and/or learning will be brought to the ECC wider steering group and EHOG.

This protocol will be reviewed within 6 months and thereafter annually by relevant representatives from ECC and the LHA. Proposals for change / amendment will be sent to the EHOG and the ECC 16 – 18 Homelessness Strategy group to agree.

Approval

Approved at Family operations Senior Leadership Team – 11th June

Approved at Essex Housing Officer group -18th June

Approved at Essex Housing Officer – 19th June

Review

As requested at EHOG chief officer Group - undertake an initial review at 3 months

Review – 6 months (as set out in protocol)

Implementation Date

From 20th June 2014



Staying Put Policy

Document last updated: April 2015

Document review due: April 2018

About this document

Title	Staying Put Policy for Fostering Services
Purpose	To provide guidance for foster carers who continue to look after young people post 18 years
Updated by	Alison Braden Service Manager/ Julie Bridger Service Manager
Approved by	Family Operations Leadership Team
Date	April 2015
Version number	2
Status	Draft
Review frequency	Three years
Next review date	April 2018

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(Please note that the page numbers have changed from the original document, however, the content has not changed)

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Policy and Legal Framework

Foster carers who look after young people approaching adulthood are expected to support them to develop the appropriate skills that they need to be more independent, this includes emotional support as well as financial and practical skills. Young people who are looked after should receive the same kind of support that their non-looked after peers would receive from their parents.

This policy sets out the conditions that are required to extend a former fostering arrangement beyond a young person's 18th birthday and up until their 21st birthday with its associated financial implications for social care, the young person and the foster carer.

The Children and Families Act 2014 states:

The benefits of a staying put arrangement for a young person are primarily about extending a familial relationship where the young person continues to experience security and stability. Young people who are in foster care should be able to benefit from staying put arrangements, regardless of whether they are in education, employment or training before turning 18. The principles for transition as stated in The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations: Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers state:

"1.10 Research and practice shows that young people who have been looked after will have the best chance of success as adults if those providing transitional care and other support take the following principles into account in talking to the young person and when making any decision:

- Is this good enough for my own child?
- Providing a second chance if things don't go as expected.
- Is this tailored to their individual needs, particularly if they are more vulnerable than other young people?

1.11 No young person should be made to feel that they should "leave care" before they are ready. The role of the young person's IRO will be crucial in making sure that the care plan considers the young person's views. Before any move can take place, the young person's statutory review meeting, chaired by their IRO, will evaluate the quality of the assessment of the young person's readiness and preparation for any move. The young person and the professionals responsible for contributing to the plan and the review must concur that they have developed the skills necessary to manage any transition to more "independent living" where, as a result, less support will be provided.

1.12 Local authority provision of continuing leaving care support must ensure that throughout the period that each care leaver is provided with leaving care services, his/her needs are subject to ongoing assessment and review, so that the authority's intervention puts them on the pathway to success as they make their transition to adulthood."

Appendix C of the Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers Guidance is about planning suitable accommodation for care leavers and within this it states the following about the placement of young people with former foster carers (Staying Put Care)

C.3 Whilst staying put offers the young person the opportunity to continue to live with their foster family, significant changes take place in the transition from foster care; principally the basis on which the young person occupies the property and how the placement is funded. *(it is important to note here that following a young person's eighteenth birthday, the legal basis on which they occupy the property (former foster care home) changes and they become an 'excluded licensee' who is effectively lodging in the "Staying Put" carer/s home. Whilst the term 'excluded licensee' is a legal one, it should not necessarily denote that the young person will be treated differently than they were as a fostered child).*

C.4 The associated change from foster child to young adult "lodger" in the foster home, and for the carer from foster carer to supported accommodator and legal "landlord", should be carefully and sensitively planned in order to ensure that both young people and carers understand the nature of the arrangement and that the positive aspects of being in foster care are not diminished by the new legal and financial arrangements. Procedures should be agreed at the outset regarding how any wish by the carer to bring the arrangement to an end will be managed.

C.5 Whilst fostering regulations will no longer legally apply, key standards should continue to govern the expectations of the placement when a young person reaches the age of 18. These may be:

- yearly reviews of the carer/s;
- re-assessment and re-registration every three years;
- new Criminal Records Bureau checks every three years on all adult members of the household, regular visitors and children of the carers aged 16 and older;
- health and safety checks;
- regular supervision from the supervising social worker;
- attending required training.

C.6 The application of all of the above checks will only need to be considered where fostered children remain in the placement. Local authorities will need to assess individual circumstances and consider the appropriateness of all of these checks; particularly where the young person is the only person placed/living with their carer/s and it is not envisaged that further young people will be placed.

Social workers and personal advisors should be particularly mindful of the potential dangers of sexual and other forms of exploitation in respect of care leavers. Please refer to Family Operations policies, procedures and practice guidance for safeguarding policies.

The National Minimum Standards for Fostering (2011) standard 12; Promoting independence and moves to adulthood and leaving care re-iterates that children and young people should be supported towards independence in all areas of their lives. The outcome that fostering services are aiming to achieve is that "children are prepared for, and supported into, adulthood so that they can reach their potential and achieve economic wellbeing".

12.3 and 12.4 of these standards states:

"The fostering service ensures there are comprehensive arrangements for preparing and supporting young people to make the transition to independence. This includes appropriate training and support to foster carers caring for young people who are approaching adulthood.

Arrangements are consistent with the young person's care plan, including their placement plan, pathway plan and transition plan for children with disabilities and special educational needs.

The fostering service has a policy and practical arrangements which enable children to remain with their foster carer(s) into legal adulthood, for example so that s/he may develop appropriate life skills before being required to move to more independent accommodation. Any such decisions are agreed with foster carers at a placement meeting and are detailed in a child's placement plan."

This document should be read in conjunction with the Leaving and After Care Service Transition to Adulthood Policy and the Leaving and After Care Service Finance Handbook, both of which are available on the children's social care Family Operations policy website.

Procedure for the transition to a Staying Put arrangement

A Pathway Plan for all eligible young people and continued for all relevant and former relevant children should be started on or before the young person is 16 years of age. The plan should remain a "live document" setting out the different services and how they will be provided to meet the full range of the young person's ongoing needs. Pathway plans should be based on up to date assessments of the young person's needs and agreed by the Independent Reviewing Officer of the young person. The areas that should be covered as part of this assessment are included in the "Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers" Guidance (Volume 3: Chapter 3: Pathway Planning and Personal Advisors).

Part of the assessment necessary for the Pathway Plan is consideration of the young person's continuing need for care, accommodation and support. It is at this stage that initial discussions should take place as to whether a young person wishes to remain in a "staying put" arrangement when they reach their 18th birthday. Through the pathway planning process discussions will take place and consideration be given to the wishes and feelings of the young person and foster carer.

The pathway planning process would need to assess how appropriate such an arrangement would be for the young person.

Should both parties agree and this is deemed an appropriate arrangement, the local authority will provide advice, assistance and support to establish a staying put arrangement.

Some young people who have disabilities will have a Transitional Pathway Plan. The purpose of this is similar to the Pathway Plan as it is a document which will consider future planning for the young person beyond the age of 18 years and how best to support the young person and provide for their ongoing needs. Part of this assessment includes their future accommodation needs and there may be some situations where a young person's needs would be most appropriately met by their former foster carers beyond that age of 18 years.

Within 3 months of the young person reaching 16 years as part of the Pathway Plan or Transitional Pathway Plan consideration should have been given as to whether the arrangement should continue as a staying put arrangement.

The criteria for young people to stay with the foster carers beyond the age of 18 years as part of a 'Staying Put' arrangement are:

- a) The young person wishes to remain in the arrangement
- b) The foster carer agrees to the arrangement continuing
- c) The arrangement is deemed by the local authority to be the most appropriate arrangement for the young person
- d) The pathway plan clearly addresses the need to continue to develop a range of skills for the young person including; relationships, emotional resilience, financial and budgeting, cooking, washing and ironing and applying for jobs.

If the criteria above are met and staying put is a positive option for the young person the Pathway Planning meeting should endorse the staying put arrangement at 18 years of age. This meeting should be arranged to include the young person, social worker, foster carer, supervising social worker and benefits advisor. If the young person is likely to meet the criteria to be transferred to adult social care they should also be involved with this meeting as they will have financial responsibility.

The Pathway Planning meeting should identify all key tasks and the roles and responsibilities of the relevant parties in considering the viability of the young person 'staying put'. The pathway planning process should ensure that the personal advisor and other leaving care professionals support the young person in a staying put arrangement so that they receive the support they require to develop their independent life skills. The following areas must be discussed:

- Plan for how long the young person is likely to be 'staying put'
- Likely benefits available for the young person
- Likely benefits available for the foster carer
- Implication of claiming benefits on the foster carers income, including tax, national insurance etc
- Implications for foster carer's continuing career e.g. will they continue fostering and what training they will need to support the young person.
- Whether it is appropriate for the foster carer to transfer to alternative accommodation schemes e.g. Shared Lives Scheme
- Whether additional funding will be required, if so this should be requested from the local resource panel by the time the young person is 17 ½ years old.

Continuing monitoring of these arrangements should be considered as part of the young person's looked after review and monitored by the I.R.O to ensure that tasks have been completed and any changes that may occur (see ongoing support and reviews below).

The Pathway Planning meeting should meet again when the young person is 17 ½ years old and if this confirms that the plan is for the young person to 'stay put' then final arrangements should be put in place regarding plans and funding so that this is all in place prior to the young person becoming 18 years of age.

In very exceptional circumstances and in an emergency if a plan changes and the young person is nearly 18 years of age and needs to 'stay put' the social worker must book in an emergency slot into the local resource and care panel and report on why the staying put placement is now required and the appropriate funding that is being requested.

Transition for children and young people with disabilities

The process for planning for staying put arrangements for young people currently receiving a service from children with disabilities teams should start when the young person is 15 years of age, taking into account the individual needs of the young person and their wishes and feelings.

Foster carers who have been providing long term support to a disabled young person would be eligible to transfer to the Shared Lives Scheme. This is a scheme which allows an individual the opportunity to be supported and live within a family setting in the home of an approved Shared Lives Carer as part of their family, sharing everyday life. The scheme can provide short or long term placements and/or respite. Former foster carers joining this scheme would be paid a fixed amount for care and support services. This would be assessed depending on the level of support that the young person will require.

Private Arrangements

If an assessment has been completed and the local authority does not feel that it would be appropriate, or consistent with the welfare of the young person, the local authority will not support a staying put arrangement. In this case if a young person and their carer wish to extend the arrangement this will be a private arrangement. Family Operations will cease to fund the placement and the young person and their carer(s) will need to agree both the level of payment and the practical arrangements. Assistance would be available from the leaving and after care service that may be able to help all parties come to an agreement but the responsibility of this arrangement would be with the former foster carer(s) and the young person.

Former carers may be eligible for the 'Rent- a-Room' tax benefits. More information on this is available at www.hmrc.gov.uk/manuals/PIMMANUAL/pim4001.htm

Funding and Allowances

In Essex we are committed to ensuring that foster carers retain their fostering fee when offering 'staying put' arrangements for young people they have been looking after prior to their 18th birthday. Therefore the equivalent of the foster carer's fee will continue be paid as the staying put allowance (as defined by legislation). This is in line with the guidance in the Children and Families Act 2014 which states that local authorities should pay foster carers an allowance to support the care leaver to continue to live with them. The level of fostering fee will vary according to the level of the fee currently paid to the foster carer. As the young person is over 18 they are no longer entitled to an allowance as such things as clothing, food and utilities are covered by alternative benefits, other leaving care entitlements or by earned income.

We acknowledge that claiming benefits can be a stressful time for young people and this may put some pressure on the proposed arrangement whilst carers are waiting for benefits to be paid. Where required, ECC can pay a returnable advance payment to the Staying Put carer at the beginning of a new Staying Put arrangement. The amount of this payment will be a maximum of 6 weeks rental payments, and is intended to ease any financial burden on the carer during the transition from a foster placement to a Staying Put arrangement. This can be repaid to ECC by the carer once the young person's claim for Housing Benefit or Universal Credit housing costs has been processed.

There is an expectation that the carer will take all reasonable steps to support the young person in making and maintaining their claim for Housing Benefit / Universal Credit.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Leaving and After Care Handbook. The 2014/15 version is embedded below.



Leaving and After
Care Finance Handbo

When a 'staying put' arrangement is being considered the foster carers should seek benefits advice to consider how their own personal situation should be affected. The Leaving and After Care Benefits Advisor is contactable by email on lisa.goodman@essex.gov.uk.

Council Tax

When young people reach 18 years, they do become liable to register for Council Tax. Some young people may be disregarded for Council Tax purposes (see the Leaving and After Care Service Finance Handbook). If a foster carer receives the single person's discount this could be affected by having another over 18 year old in the household. Advice for this should be sought from the Benefits Advisor.

If the foster carer is going to be out-of-pocket with regards to the paying of Council Tax as a result of having a young person 'staying put' with them consideration should be given to a payment being given to the former foster carer to make up for this amount. However, this should be in exceptional circumstances and only after other options have been explored e.g. second adult rebate.

Income Tax and National Insurance Issues (Qualifying Care Relief)

Foster carers including those who provide 'Staying Put' care are eligible for qualifying care relief. Help sheet 236 from HM Revenue & Customs provides more information regarding this. The latest amounts relate to the tax year 2013/14 and the help sheet is embedded below:



hs236.pdf

Foster carers and Staying Put carers may also be able to claim Working Tax Credit and more information regarding this would be available from the HMRC, they have a helpline for tax credits only on 0345 300 3900 or information is available on their website www.hmrc.gov.uk/taxcredits

Insurance and Mortgage Arrangements

Foster carers are advised that they should inform their insurance and mortgage companies about any change of arrangements which includes if any 'staying put' arrangements are in place.

Staying Put arrangements with Independent Fostering Agencies

1. Requests to extend a placement for young people who are placed with Independent Fostering Agencies should be considered in the same way as it would be for young people who are placed with Essex Foster Carers.

2. Planning is of paramount importance and should be completed through the use of assessed need and stated in the pathway plan. This should further be agreed by the Independent Reviewing Officer of the young person.
3. If 'staying put' is possibly an option the social worker should explore this with the agency and the foster carer, this will need to include the financial implications.
4. If the arrangement is considered to be appropriate for staying put as outlined above, the young person should claim housing benefit if eligible providing that by doing this it does not affect any benefits that the carers are claiming. If the carers are receiving benefits and would be adversely affected by this social care should pay the amount of housing benefit to the carer based on the locality where the carer is living (as it would be for Essex former foster carers).
5. An independent fostering agency's fees will not be paid beyond the young person's 18th birthday. The payment following their 18th birthday will be payable directly to the carer and would be a maximum of £250 a week with no further payments to the agency for these placements. These arrangements will be agreed at the local quadrant resource panels Independent agency carers who are prepared to offer these placements beyond the initial 3 month period will be supported by Essex ART 16+ team as supported lodgings carers.

Ongoing Support and Reviews

There are different situations that staying put carers may find themselves in and this may affect where the carers would get support from.

1. Staying Put carers who continue to foster other children or young people under the Fostering Regulations 2011

'Staying put' carers will continue to be supported and monitored by the fostering team. The supervising social worker should include the young person 'staying put' as part of the usual support and monitoring that takes place with others in the placement. The annual household review should include the staying put arrangements and should include feedback from the young person as well as the personal advisor/social worker from the leaving and after care teams. Safeguard checks regarding DBS and health for the carers should continue in the same way as they do within the fostering regulations and fostering policies and procedures. The young person 'staying put' will also need to also have a DBS check which should be processed in the same way as others in the household's DBS checks and if a DBS is returned with a trace a risk assessment needs to be undertaken. This should be arranged before the young person's 18th birthday so that it is in place by the time the young person is 18, this is in line with the Fostering Regulations 2011.

2. Staying Put carers who do not have other children or young people placed and who are unlikely to foster again under the Fostering Regulations 2011

In this situation the foster carers should resign as foster carers and their continued support should be from the Supported Lodgings/Placements Team. As stated in the Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers, key standards should continue to govern the expectation of the placement when a young person reaches the age of 18.

3. Staying Put carers who do not currently have any other young people placed with them but who are expected to continue to be a foster carer once the young person 'staying put' has moved on

Support for these carers should remain within the fostering team. Supervising Social Workers should continue to provide supervision on a regular basis and carers should continue to have annual household reviews, annual health and safety checklists and updated DBS checks. Carers can continue to access the Foster Carers Training Programme.

Foster carers who are intending to continue to foster once the young person who is 'staying put' moves on do not need to resign as foster carers if it is anticipated that the staying put arrangement will not continue for more than 12 months. When the young person moves on the foster carers should have a household review of approval to consider any changes which may have occurred and future recommended approval. Any changes of approval should be processed in the usual way.

If a foster carer has resigned as a carer and then decides that they will return to fostering after the young person staying put has moved on an updated form F should be undertaken. The carer's previous experience, knowledge and training should be taken into account when consideration is given to the appropriate fee paid level the carer should be on.

Staying Put Agreement

This is an agreement that should be made between the former foster carer and the young person who is 'staying put' and should be agreed prior to the young person becoming 18 years. This agreement should also include the Supervising Social Worker (if applicable) and the Personal Advisor of the young person. The agreement should be incorporated as part of the young person's pathway plan.

The agreement should cover the following:

- 1 The purpose and expected time frame for the arrangement;
- 2 Finance, including the young person having credit cards, loan agreements, mobile phone contracts registered at the former foster carers address. What the 'staying put' carer is paying for and what the young person should be paying for e.g. food, phone bills etc;
- 3 Income and benefits claims;
- 4 Plan for preparation for independence tasks;
- 5 Friends and partners visiting and staying at the address;
- 6 Staying away for nights/weekends and informing the carers of movements
- 7 Education, training and employment activities;

- 8 Health arrangements
- 9 Move-on arrangements
- 10 Any issues that may be relating to other children and young people in the placement (if applicable) for example, role modelling, time keeping, safe care issues etc.

Challenging decisions by local authority

If a young person feels his/her wish to remain with their former carer has not been taken into account by the local authority and they are not happy with the way the local authority has acted, they may wish to speak to the Independent Reviewing Officer. They can also contact a national advisory service such as NYAS or VOICE and/or use the Essex County Council complaints procedure Have Your Say which can be found on the Essex County Council website.

Appendix 1

Funding and Allowances for Staying Put Arrangements

The accompanying document includes information regarding the criteria, process for consideration of financial situation of both carers and young people and ongoing support. Information is also included about how this policy could be applied to IFA where young people are placed.

Foster Carers Fees

All foster carers in Essex receive a fee in addition to the allowance for the child or young person in placement. If agreement is made for the young person to remain with the foster carer and the foster carer does not have any other child or young person in placement, the fee that the carer was being paid prior to the young person becoming 18 years will continue to be paid by the local authority and funding for this must be agreed via the local resource panels. On some rare occasions where a foster carer does continue to foster, but has to reduce their number of children in placement in order to provide a room for the young person staying put, their fee may be reduced. In this scenario funding should be obtained to enable the foster carer's fee to be topped up to the previous fee figure prior to the young person becoming 18 years. This again should be agreed through the local resource panel. The fee would not continue to be paid to former carers when the young person has gone to university even if the plan is for them to return during the holiday periods.

However if a young person wishes to remain with their former carer whilst attending a local University on a daily basis then the foster carer's fee would be paid. The young person will be unable to claim Housing Benefit as they will be receiving loans and grants. In this instance the young person is responsible for paying a rent allowance to the former carer. The only exception to this would be a young person who has a disability or is a lone parent in which case housing benefit may be available.

If a young person wishes to attend a University outside of the local area and live in the local area of the University the local authority will continue under leaving care legislation to pay the rent element outside of term time to the former carer if the young person is returning there for the holiday periods.

A retainer will not be paid to the former carer.

If a young person is in employment whilst in a staying put arrangement and they cannot claim housing benefit due to the high level of their earnings, the young person is required to negotiate a rent payment to the carer.

Benefits

In most circumstances young people reaching the age of 18 years should apply for housing benefit to assist them in paying rent to their former carer. The amount of Housing Benefit will vary depending on the local housing allowance rate for that area. It is expected that this money should be paid direct to the foster carer and will replace any allowances that the foster carer received prior to the young person reaching 18 years. The amount of housing benefit in the year 2015/16 ranges from approximately £100 to £130 a week.

The amount can be checked by logging into <https://lha-direct.voa.gov.uk/search.aspx> and putting in the appropriate postcode of the carer. Young people leaving care are entitled to Housing Benefit up to the rate of a one-bedroomed self-contained property. Housing Benefit is means tested against the young person's income and savings. The Leaving Care Benefits Adviser can give individual advice on this.

If the young person is not working they should also be entitled to income replacement benefits. This should be used for the young person's main living needs e.g. clothing, leisure activities, and travel. It is not expected that the carers provide for this out of their fee or the rental income that they receive from the young person / or via Housing Benefit. The young person's own income (wages or benefits) is also supposed to cover the costs of food. When planning for 'staying put' it should be clear how the arrangements are going to work when the young person is 18 years old. Although the young person is still living as part of a family, the young person may have to learn to budget on a very limited income and paying for food is part of this. It would be expected as part of the foster carer's role to help them to do this. While some foster carers may wish to continue to provide some meals, this should be negotiated regarding payment and the young person should be encouraged to do some of their own shopping and cooking.

If the foster carer is receiving means tested benefits and, as a result of offering a 'staying put' placement these would be affected by the young person paying them rent at 18 years old, an alternative arrangement can be considered. In this situation funding for the placement should be provided by social care via application to the local resource panel, under section 23 C of the Children Act 1989 at the appropriate Local Housing Allowance rate for that area.

Appendix 3

- **Post 16 Accommodation /Summary of Research Evidence**
<http://www.essexinsight.org.uk/Resource.aspx?ResourceID=1274>
- **Experiences of young people accessing housing related support (December 2016)**



Experiences of
Young People Accessi

Appendix 4:ACCOMMODATION Standard

- Accommodation will be provided, where possible within the borough/district, unless specified by ECC.
- The accommodation will be of a required standard and will be inspected by the officers of ECC to ensure it meets and continues to meet the required standard.
- The accommodation will be maintained in accordance with the regulatory safety standards for housing and environmental health requirements and assist the young person in maintaining the required standard of hygiene and cleanliness. Any difficulties in maintaining the required standard will be reported to the Gateway Manager in the first instance.
- The accommodation will be fully furnished with suitable furniture and fitments and equipped for independent living. All furnishing will meet with fire resistance regulations specified in the regulations.
- At all times, the Service will ensure that the accommodation will comply with the requirements of the Housing Acts, Public Health Act, Fire Precautions Act 1971, Furniture and Furnishings Fire Safety Regulations 1988 and as amended 1989 and 1993, and any other national and local regulations as to the safety and standards of housing.
- The accommodation will have a satisfactory up to date NICEIC electrical safety certificates and CORGI gas safety certificates where appropriate.
- A copy of the certificates will be available for inspection purposes.
- Risk assessments of premises and service delivery mechanisms are conducted periodically, at least annually, to identify health and safety and security risks to staff and service users. There are records of the inspections, the participants, key findings and actions taken. Where staff works alone, the assessment specifically addresses the risks faced by lone workers.
- Health and safety inspections of shared housing and common areas of other services are conducted at appropriate intervals. There are records of these inspections, the participants, key findings and actions taken.
- Young people are made aware of the health, safety and security policies and understand how to report concerns. Young People's handbooks, welcome packs will be made available.
- Each property will have displayed in prominent positions or have supplied the young person with;
 - Full address of the property and post code
 - The Service's address and contact details
 - The Service's out of hours emergency contact details
 - What to do in case of fire
 - General house rules
 - The Service is required to adhere to all Health and Safety Regulations and Guidelines and place smoke and carbon monoxide detectors (for gas appliances) in the accommodation. Additionally providers will provide fire doors, extinguishers, smoke blankets and fire exit signs. Regular inspection by the Fire Officer will be certified for inspection where appropriate.
- First Aid kits will be kept in the kitchen and will be fully stocked and regularly checked.

Appendix 5a

Supported Housing Needs Assessment

Supported Housing Needs (SHN) Assessment: for Young People 16&17*(Template for collation of information during SHN Assessment process)*

Name of Young Person:			DoB:	
PRN:			Total Score:	
Level of Need:				
(See matrix for detail)	Score 0-4	Strengths	Areas where support required	Key Actions
Emotional development, identity and maturity				
Physical, emotional and mental health				
Young person's practical skills and financial management				
Education, training and employment				
Young person's continuing need for support and accommodation				
Young person's networks and knowledge of where to find support in the community				
Family / Personal relationships				
Other Needs				
Name of worker:			Date of Housing Needs Assessment:	
Signature of Young Person:			Date signed:	

Did the young person return home?

Did the young person make other arrangements?

Did the young person become s20?

Tracking if referred via JRP

Referral to JRP?	
Date of JRP?	
Outcome of JRP	
Interview offered by provider (s)?	
Outcome of interview(s)?	
Accommodation issue resolved (Yes/No)?	
Accommodation outcome:	
Did JR Panel agree with outcome of SHNA?	

Appendix 5b

Supported Housing Needs Assessment Scoring Matrix (16/17)

(Young people referred to supported accommodation)

	<i>Emotional Development, Identity and Maturity</i>
0 points	The young person displays positive and appropriate relationships most of the time and does not raise any concerns in this regard. They have no difficulties controlling the emotions and sustaining relationships. They respond appropriately in different and challenging situations and do not suffer with low self-esteem. They do not offend. The young person is confident in whom they are and experiences good levels of self-esteem. They access services locally that meet their cultural needs and have good contact with others from the same background as them as meets their wishes. They are comfortable with their sexuality and exploring this in a healthy way. Where appropriate they attend religious observances with confidence and know where to seek additional support. They have come to terms with their past and know about it.
1 point	The young person generally manages relationships with peers and family members well .If previously the young person experienced poor relationships, this is no longer the case and they frequently make 'boundaried decisions' with friends and family. There is no (longer any) offending behaviour or anti-social behaviour that requires any kind of intervention. They generally manage difficult situations well and resolve them without intervention. The young person may have particular needs in relation to their identity that they are happy to discuss with a worker and seek advice. They require some support when they experience problems and may benefit from talking things through with a worker. They may need signposting to services and will appreciate follow-up with this.
2 points	The young person sometimes struggles to handle relationships well and can occasionally make poor decisions. They require some support to stay on track and consider their decision-making, but once there is support available the risk is reduced. Again, with anti-social behaviour/low-level offending, the young person can be thoughtless and require reminding about what is acceptable and is able to change behaviour when this happens. Whilst they can get upset in situations this does not pose a risk to anyone and is easily managed. The young person can be prone to low self-esteem if things are not going well, but it able to pick themselves up and see positive solutions. Substance misuse may feature and require low-level intervention. The young person at times experiences a crisis of confidence, feeling alone and different. They have not entirely come to terms with who they are and require reassuring intermittently. They may require support to pursue / maintain family relationships or engage with their community. If relevant, they will benefit from ongoing support to discuss their sexuality and identity.
3 points	The young person often manages relationships and situations poorly. They lack many of the skills to pro-actively diffuse difficult situations and can find themselves easily upset. The young person is able to address the issues with a worker, but progress can be short-lived. Anti-social behaviour and offending behaviour are a common feature of his/her life and may include violence. The

	young person often feels very isolated and can struggle to articulate why. This can result in low self-esteem and becoming easily upset. They have had little contact with their culture and remain uncertain as to its role in their life. They require ongoing support to learn about themselves and may require professional intervention around their sexuality.
4 points	The young person fails to manage any relationships successfully and relationships with family are either non-existent or mutually harmful. Offending behaviour is common place and may involve violence, sexual offences and/or fire-setting. The young person has very low self-esteem and is quick to anger and lash out. Their boundaries for making friendships are such that poor decisions are often taken and result in affecting their other behaviours (criminal, substance misuse etc). The young person is very isolated and afraid to become part of their community due to a chronic lack of self-confidence. They have many un-answered questions about who they are and remain unclear as to whether they want them answered. They will engage with and shun support in equal measure and their low self-esteem can result in aggressive behaviour and inappropriate responses to certain situations

	<i>Physical, Emotional and Mental Health</i>
0 points	Any previous health-related concerns are a long time ago and no longer an issue in any way. Young person has full access to services and makes pro-active decisions and plans for health.
1 point	Previous mental and physical health concerns have been addressed or are managed. The young person has a GP and dentist and accesses sexual health services. May smoke and use alcohol appropriately. Understands risks of substance use and knows about services. Confident to access services. Knows about healthy living and able to adopt. Manages any medication without support.
2 points	Some evidence of intermittent depression and other mental health issues such as mild eating disorder, insomnia etc. May have GP and dentist and unlikely to access sexual health services. May smoke and use alcohol occasionally inappropriately. May need some reminding to attend appointments. Requires support to sustain a healthy lifestyle. Needs support to take medication.
3 points	Likely to suffer from depression, may self-harm, eating disorder etc. Unlikely to regularly access health services of any kind. Requires information on services and support accessing them. Likely to have other agency involvement (YOT etc). Requires ongoing support to take any medication and is a persistent substance misuser. May have GP and dentist and unlikely to access sexual health services
4 points	Mental health issues may include chronic depression, bi-polar disorder, self-harm, aggression etc. Does not have a GP, dentist etc. Leads an unhealthy lifestyle in relation to diet, persistent substance misuse (which may impair functioning) and risk-taking

	behaviour. Unable to manage medication without support.
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	<i>Young Person's Practical Skills and Financial Management</i>
0 points	The young person presents very well and is always clean, punctual and polite. They have a very good appreciation of what is required to keep their home clean and can confidently use household appliances etc. They communicate extremely well and can respond easily in differing social situations. They lead a healthy lifestyle and can cook a variety of meals. The young person has a bank account and manages their money well – paying their rent/top-up and prioritising expenditure. They have a good understanding of how to budget their income and good knowledge of the risks of loan sharks etc. They understand the importance of paying their bills and will cope well with paying for their utilities etc. They save part of their allowance for their future and have made plans for their leaving-care grant.
1 point	The young person presents well most of the time and requires minimal support with their self-care skills. They are confident in the home and can access support (from family, friends or professionals) when they need advice. They are a good communicator and only struggle with new situations occasionally. They are keen to lead a mostly healthy lifestyle and will benefit from being able to practice their independent living skills in a safe environment. They are good at organising their time with some support. The young person has a bank account and mostly manages their money well. They make mostly sensible decisions with their small income and have only occasionally run out of money. They understand the importance of paying bills when they move-on, but may require minimal support to get started. They mostly can budget, shop and plan and prepare healthy meals – they don't run out of food / money .
2 points	The young person requires ongoing, but minimal support to manage their self-care and improve their independent living skills. For other household tasks they require support, but can learn quite quickly and have some confidence to practice them. They communicated mostly appropriately, but their frustrations can get the better of them. They require support/tools to manage their time effectively. The young person may have a bank account and would require minimal support to open one. They mostly manage on their allowance, but a new living environment could pose new challenges to their budgeting and prioritising. They will need support to make the financial transition to new accommodation. With little experience of paying bills, a focus will be needed on this. They need help to budget , shop and plan and prepare healthy meals –so they don't run out of food / money .
3 points	The young person struggles with new situations and does not always present as clean and/or appropriate. They can struggle to manage their self-care due to low self-esteem, learning difficulties, financial difficulties and/or poor emotional health. They require ongoing and at times intensive support to ensure that they lead a healthy life i.e getting up in the morning, eating regularly etc. The

	young person has rarely had to manage their own money due not taking responsibility in earlier years. They have always struggled to budget on a low income and made poor decisions in spending their money. They do not have a bank account and are unlikely to be able to manage their money well enough to have one. They know little about the cost of living in unregulated settings or at 18+ and will need significant support to make these transitions successfully. They may well have outstanding debts.
4 points	The young person rarely presents well and can suffer with poor personal hygiene. Their accommodation is not well looked after and the young person lacks the skills not only to ensure the accommodation is clean, but also safe. They lack routine and as such have a poor diet, poor emotional health, sleep deprivation and are quick to lose their temper. The young person cannot manage their money and regularly makes very poor and risky decision in regards of their income. Their decisions can leave them hungry and without money before they are due the next instalment. They may borrow from friends/family or sell goods to maximise their income. They have no idea about the reality of independent or semi-independent living and will require considerable input and time to practice these skills before moving to independence.

	<i>Education, Training and Employment</i>
0 points	The young person is in employment, education or training and has a clear and appropriate ETE plan and pathway. Their attendance is excellent and they are committed to making progress. They understand their options and are confident in accessing Guidance Adviser services etc. With minimal support they will be job ready and have good communication skills.
1 point	The young person is already in ETE and has some idea of what they want to do. They are well motivated and seek some guidance to reassure them and help them make decisions. They understand the positives of being employed/in education and are trying hard to sustain it. They need minimal support to access Guidance Adviser services and will continue to do so.
2 points	The young person is in ETE, but it may be coming to an end or temporary. They have some motivation to continue, but need support to continue to focus and make all their appointments etc. The young person may have learning difficulties. They will benefit from some support to make applications and be successful in interviews. They do not have long-term ETE plans and will need ongoing support.
3 points	The young person has completed most of their schooling, but attended little education or training since then. They have varying ideas of what they would like to do, but this can change. When enrolled on a course they struggle to complete it, making excuses and dropping out early. They have some skills for the workplace, but these need to be worked on to sustain a job. The young person cannot always see the benefit of working and can be reluctant to engage. They may have specific learning difficulties which

	affect their success and therefore their motivation to enter ETE.
4 points	The young person is probably NEET and probably left statutory schooling early. They have little idea of what they would like to do and would prefer not to work or attend college. They have learning needs that seriously hamper their efforts and their self-esteem means they are reluctant to try anything. They disengage with efforts to enrol them in course and routinely fail to turn up. They require significant support to identify their strengths and build their ETE motivation.

	<i>Young Person's Continuing Need for Support and Accommodation</i>
0 points	The young person has a clear pathway to full independence. They understand fully the ramifications of their choices and have made plans to ensure they can reach their chosen goal. They have no debts and have full appreciation of the costs of independent living and have planned the appropriate expenditure of their leaving-care grant. They understand their rights as a tenant and are unlikely to require support when they move to independence.
1 point	The young person has move-on plans and understands most of what is required to achieve them. They may require some support to follow them through and complete the necessary paperwork etc. They are well motivated to move-on and have started to plan what they need to buy and do. They are unlikely to have any rent debts, but can struggle to pay their rent at times. There is ongoing work to do with understanding the rights and responsibilities of being a tenant, but they are keen to engage in this process. The young person may benefit from minimal support in the future.
2 points	The young person has some idea of their future accommodation options, but requires ongoing support to fully understand them and bring them to fruition. They have concerns about moving on, but want to without always understanding what they need to do. They require more work to understand their rights and responsibilities as a tenant, possibly attending a course or some intensive intervention. On-going support will be beneficial
3 points	The young person is struggling in their current accommodation and is not making plans to move on. They are keen to have their own flat, but unable to complete all the tasks required to make the transition. They have minimal skills to manage their current accommodation and may have already experienced eviction already. They do not fully understand all the rights and responsibilities for move-on and will require significant ongoing support when they move out.
4 points	The young person has had multiple placements and fails to understand and implement the behaviour necessary to sustain a tenancy. They may be in debt with their rent and their behaviour and lack of independent living skills has impacted on their

	likelihood of getting on the housing register or having other housing options. Previous regulated placements have broken down and they require a period of stability and high levels of support before being ready to move on.
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	<i>Young Person's Support networks / support in the Community</i>
0 points	Overall the young person has experienced stable home life / placements that have prepared them well to move on to semi-independence and they have all the skills to make a success of this. They have, NI number and birth certificate and take ownership of these. They understand their rights as a citizen and are keen to play an active role in their community as a young adult. They attend all their appointments, access services confidently and have back-up plans if things don't work out.
1 point	The young person has mostly experienced stable home-life / placements and have most of the skills required to move on prior to independence at 18. They have an understanding of their rights and are keen to be a part of the community, though may at times lack the confidence. They attend almost all of their appointments and only need minimal support to access other support services and make plans.
2 points	The young person has had some changes of home-life /placements and due to this unsettled way of life, will benefit from a settled environment. In this environment they will be able to progress towards be a member of their community with some support from professionals to keep them on track. They are good at keeping appointments with some support and only need signposting to other services and agencies.
3 points	The young person has experienced many placements, although some for a period of time. They have some skills required to live semi-independently, but will need ongoing support to become part of their community and feel that they belong. They have little understanding of their rights and responsibilities as a citizen and will struggle to engage with these. They don't have a plan B, and will need ongoing support to minimise crisis.
4 points	The young person has had a very unsettled way of life so far and as such has never felt they belonged in an area and is reluctant to invest their time in feeling a part of a community. Their behaviour can in fact damage their environment and they will require considerable support to keep any appointments. The current plans are chaotic and events happen in crisis.

	<i>Family and Personal relationships</i>
0 points	The young person has positive family relationships providing appropriate and boundaried support. The young person benefits from this regularly. Other relationships with friends and partners are also healthy and reciprocal. They have all the skills required to manage all these relationships and rarely require any support or suffer from deteriorating networks of friends. Has pro-social family / peers / attitudes.
1 point	The young person has relationships with some members of their family, choosing to have no relationships with others. These are thought-through decisions of their own making that they feel confident in re-visiting if necessary. The young person has a close network of friends who are mutually supportive, also in a crisis. They can be suspicious of people they don't know and welcome a second opinion – not always having confidence in their own judgement. The young person shows good empathy and this helps to manage friendships positively. Has some pro-social family / peers / attitudes
2 points	The young person experiences little family support with intermittent relationships with family members. Due to their history, the relationships can be fraught and the young person often opts out for periods of time. They have a small number of close friends, but these relationships can also come and go, depending on the at times changeable behaviour and demands of the young person. Inconsistent mixture of pro-social family / peers / attitudes
3 points	This young person has almost no family support and when family contact is present, it is rarely helpful or supportive. The young person may have inappropriate sexual relationships that can leave the young person depressed and suffering with low self-esteem. Relationships in the wider community can also be fraught with the young person either misreading situations or failing to respond appropriately and therefore jeopardising relationships with many people. To a degree lacks pro-social family / peers / attitudes
4 points	The young person has no family support and very little contact with wider family. This leaves the young person extremely isolated, vulnerable and unable to practice or develop social skills. Poor decision making and a lack of empathy lead to new and fleeting relationships that are inappropriate, end quickly and are damaging. This approach to relationships impacts on all areas of the young person's relationships, including with professionals, ETE opportunities and their self-esteem. Lacks pro-social family / peers / attitudes