

Accommodation Provision for Care Leavers

In-House Provision

Oldham Council has an established partnership with Great Places Housing Group to provide supported accommodation for Care Leavers, this provision currently sits under the After Care Team. The current provision has expanded since it was originally set up and we are now able to offer Care Leavers accommodation at two Semi-independence projects, Hawthorn Crescent and Suffolk Street. We also offer supported housing at our projects at Ripponden Road, Clyde Street and Goddard Street. The semi independence units are subject to rent and young people are expected to commit themselves to the terms of the tenancy agreement.

The purpose of the semi-independent provision is to provide stable and supported accommodation for Looked After young people and Care Leavers age 16 plus. The young people are referred by their After Care Social Workers when they feel ready to leave care and progress into a more independent setting. The units are staffed 24 hrs. The staff provide emotional, practical support and advice to enable young people to develop independence skills and confidence in their abilities.

There are two staff teams spanning across the two semi-independence projects at Hawthorn Crescent and Suffolk Street comprising:

- 1 Full time Manager
- 2 Full time Senior Supported Accommodation Workers
- 13 Supported Accommodation Workers

Training element

The reality of living alone can be difficult for young people to manage emotionally as well as practically. The benefit of having good support networks and a gradual planned transition to living independently is vital for young people.

Young people are encouraged to develop the life skills needed to live independently by learning to budget, understand utility bills, claiming benefits, form filling, cooking, cleaning, being a positive neighbour and developing support networks in the community.

Whilst the young people are in supported housing they have their own tenancy, the aim of this is to provide them with a realistic experience of managing independently. They are encouraged to utilise and engage in the support available to them in to develop the necessary life skills needed for when they move on. The young people are encouraged and supported to follow the tenancy agreement.

Referral into Service

The accommodation is for Looked After young people and Care Leavers. A referral is completed by the After Care social worker or Personal Advisor when they feel the young person is ready for more independent accommodation. The referral outlines details about the young person's current abilities and support needs in relation to their independence skills.

Appendix A

Admissions are on a planned basis following a visit from the young person and their Social Worker, a planning meeting to discuss time scales for the move and preparations to minimise any concerns the young person may have and to answer any questions.

Places are allocated from a waiting list, when a vacancy arises. Young people are expected to sign a support plan/agreement and also a tenancy agreement for the semi-independence units, and a shorthold assured tenancy for the supported accommodation at Clyde Street, Ripponden Road and Goddard Street.

Semi-independence Provision

Hawthorn Crescent

A five bedded unit with lounge, office, kitchen, two upstairs bathrooms and a downstairs shower/toilet. The unit is set within a residential community in Oldham and is a ten minute bus journey from the centre of Oldham. The unit has 4 semi independence beds and 1 emergency bed (e-bed).

Suffolk Street

A six bedded unit, with lounge, office, kitchen downstairs toilet. The bedrooms have shower facilities and there are two communal toilets upstairs. The property is owned by Great Places and is managed by the Oldham After Care Team with 24 hours staffing. 5 beds are for planned admissions and 1 bed (e-bed) is for emergency accommodation

Both properties are owned by Great Places and the young people are expected to agree to a plan of support.

Supported Housing

Oldham After Care have three supported housing projects that are all situated within communities that are within easy reach of the town centre.

These properties which are managed by the After Care Team. The majority of young people who are accepted for a tenancy here have previously lived at our semi-independence units and the move to Supported Housing is planned in line with the young person's Pathway Plan. Young people are expected to sign a shorthold assured tenancy for an agreed length of time.

Ripponden Road

Four one bedroom flats, two ground floor and two first floor. Each flat has a lounge, kitchen, bedroom and bathroom.

Goddard Street

Six one bedroom flats, three ground level and three first floor. Each flat has lounge, kitchen and bathroom.

Clyde St

Three one bedroom flats, one ground floor and two first floor. Each flat has lounge, kitchen and bathroom. One of the flats is currently an office and was originally set up

Appendix A

with co-location funding. The purpose of this provision is to provide drop in facilities for the tenants of the projects. The office also provides a base for training and support sessions for all Care leavers.

Purchased External Provision

In addition to our in-house provision, Oldham Council may purchase alternative accommodation for group living/floating support for young people aged 16-18 through the North West Leaving Care Framework. The framework is hosted by Tameside Council and can be accessed by 22 North West and Merseyside local authorities.

Commissioned Provision for Vulnerable Young People

Oldham Council commissions additional supported and emergency provision from De Paul for young people aged 16-25. This offers a Short-Term Accommodation Pathway across Health, Housing and Social Care according to the level of need, and provides opportunities for step-up/step-down in response to changing levels of need. Young people access the Pathway via the One Point Housing Access and the Central Access Point (CAP), both based at First Choice Housing Options (FCHO). Provision is as follows:

Low Support

Family Mediation to support young people to rebuild their relationships with family members and prevent homelessness.

Medium Support

Visiting support – 18 bed spaces across several projects Napier Street, Werneth Hall Road and shared houses; and Supported Lodgings – 5 bed spaces in family homes across the Borough.

High Support

9 bed spaces at Porter Street (individual tenancies).

Emergency Provision

1 bed space at Porter Street and Nightstop (5 hosts).

Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC)

Additional provision is commissioned from De Paul to meet the needs of UASC young people. Statham House is an innovative Tri-borough project involving Bury, Oldham and Rochdale Councils and was developed in response to the Dublin III Agreement and Transfer Scheme. Statham House offers semi-supported accommodation to 10 young people.

Future Commissioning Intent

An assessment of the sufficiency of supported accommodation options for Care Leavers will be included in the revised Sufficiency and Commissioning Strategy.

In addition work is underway to consult with multi-agency services with regard to Oldham Council's future commissioning intent for provision across the Short-Term Accommodation Pathway. This is particularly acute given the increase in demand and impact of the welfare reform agenda.

Appendix A

Current Use of Supported Accommodation Options (as at 31 December 2018)

	Accommodation Type	Provision	Number of Young People
In-House Provision	Previous Foster Family	Staying Put	24
	Semi Independence	Hawthorne St	4 (+1 e-bed)
		Suffolk St	5 (+1 e-bed)
	Supported Housing	Ripponden Rd	4
		Goddard St	6
Clyde St		3	
Purchased External Provision	Semi-Independence	Various	4
Short-Term Accommodation Pathway	Medium Support	Napier	2
		Werneth	0
	Shared Housing	Various	2
	High Support	Porter Street	4
Tri-Borough Project	Semi-Independence	Statham House	2
Total			60 (62 incl e-beds)