



# YOUNG PERSON'S **G**UIDE

## Stephen's House

# Welcome to YMCA St Paul's Group

We warmly welcome you to **Walthamstow Young Persons Project – Stephen's House!**

This handbook contains lots of useful information so please take time to read it.

We also have a web site: [www.ymcastpaulsgroup.org](http://www.ymcastpaulsgroup.org) where you can find lots of other information about YMCA SPG services.

**Stephen's House** is a homely 17 bedroom property (15 rooms with shared bathrooms and 2 flats with their own bathroom). All rooms are fully furnished. The service is designed to provide safe accommodation for young people like yourself.

In addition to your room, you have access to shared facilities such as a kitchen, a lounge, IT facility and communal garden.

You will be pleased to hear that there is Wifi throughout the house and there is access to a computer should you need it.

Support is available 24hrs a day/ 7 days a week.

Your new address is: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

If you need to speak to a member of staff at any time, come and see us in the office or ring: **020 8509 1090**

**TIP:** save this number into your phone now so you can ring us when you are out an about and you have an emergency.

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## 1. LIVING @ STEPHEN'S HOUSE

### 1.1 Facilities

There is a communal lounge for all residents to use which includes a TV and computer, plus we have kitchens for your use.

We also have a large communal garden space for your use.

#### CCTV

CCTV cameras are situated on the external building monitoring the driveway, and also throughout the building in communal areas only (never in bedrooms, which are private areas for residents). CCTV monitors are located in the staff office and are there for the safety of residents and staff. Staff are able to monitor or view any situation that are deemed as risk to residents or staff for the purpose of keeping everyone in the building safe.

#### Laundry Room

All residents have access to the laundry room which is open daily. There is 2 washing machines and 2 tumble dryers which are provided for your use. If you require support to use the machines, please ask a member of staff. We are happy to support you, as with any aspect of your stay with us.

A vacuum cleaner is available for your use. Please ask a member of staff at reception.

#### Storage

We have very little storage and therefore permission should be sought from management for any additional personal furniture. You must remove all personal possessions and rubbish and

leave the accommodation and our fixtures, fittings, and furnishings in good lettable condition and repair when moving out.

Stephen's House is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days per year.

Staff are usually found in the office just by reception. Please see them with any queries or in an emergency.

## 1.2 Maintenance & Housekeeping

The safety and upkeep of the building is a collective responsibility. You should therefore report any repairs, strange items or occurrences noticed on the premises to reception.

Wherever possible residents will be consulted about decoration and furnishing of communal areas.

We are responsible for any repairs to your room/flat, so it is important that you report anything that is not working or needs fixing to a member of staff as soon as possible. This includes broken furniture if we provided the furniture to you.

We want to provide and maintain a welcoming, clean, and tidy environment for you to reside in.

We do employ cleaning and maintenance staff, however, we want to encourage healthy participation in promoting good overall housekeeping.

We believe that good housekeeping is an essential skill, and part of the life skills programme that we provide is to support you to learn and develop skills of good personal and collective hygiene.

This involves keeping yourself and your environment clean and tidy.

The cleaning staff clean all communal facilities Monday to Friday. Residents must always keep their flats clean and tidy so that you have a healthy environment in which to stay.

If you are struggling to keep on top of your cleaning and housekeeping, or need some tips on how to best keep your flat in a good condition, please speak to a member of staff.

### 1.3 Staff accessing your room

We carry out monthly health & safety and regular welfare checks. These are conducted by a member of our staff team, and you will be notified in advance of when staff will require access to your room/flat.

Staff will not enter your room/ flat without your consent unless there is cause for concern regarding your safety or we suspect illegal activity. In such cases, staff may decide that its within best interests to enter your room and will knock and state clearly that they are about to enter.

If staff are conducting health and safety checks, they will always knock on your bedroom door/ front door and wait for your authorisation to enter.

### 1.4 Fire alarm

If the fire alarm sounds, you must evacuate the building immediately. A copy of the fire alarm procedure is located in all bedrooms. Please read this carefully, and familiarise yourself with the location of the fire exits.

In the event of the fire alarm sounding, you must leave the building immediately and assemble at the assembly point. Be careful not to obstruct the fire brigade or other emergency services!

Please note that whilst not only seriously dangerous, it is also a breach of your Licence Agreement not to evacuate, which means we will have to take appropriate action if you do not comply.

It is also very dangerous (and in breach of your licence agreement) to tamper with the smoke detectors. Don't cover them, or remove them – it not only puts you at risk, but the whole building!

Fire alarm testing takes place every Tuesday at 11am lasting no longer than 60 seconds. You do not need to evacuate the building during a fire alarm test, however if it goes on longer than 60 seconds it is best to come out of your room and see if it is a real fire.

Fire Drills are held every six months and unannounced. All residents must leave the accommodation immediately when they hear the alarm and wait at the assembly point for further instructions.

## 1.5 License fee/rent

In order for someone to stay in our accommodation, we charge a weekly licence fee (we also call it rent). If you are under 18, social services are likely to be paying for your rent. When you turn 18, social services might no longer pay for your rent and you will need to apply for housing benefit (if you are entitled) or



start paying the charge through your earnings (if in work). Your support worker will support you with making a housing benefit claim if you are eligible.

Regardless of whether you are entitled to housing benefit or not or whether social services continue to pay your licence fee or not, when you turn 18, you will need to start paying a personal contribution towards the licence fee. How much this is will depend on your benefit entitlements.

At that point payment of any fees you need to pay us directly is required weekly and in advance. Our charge period runs from Monday to Sunday.

This may all sound a bit complicated and overwhelming right now. Don't worry, your Support Worker will talk you through this bit in detail and explain when things are likely to change for you.

They can also help you with budgeting once you start becoming responsible for some of these things yourself.

## 1.7 Visitors & Overnight Guests

We encourage involvement with family and friends and residents are welcome to entertain up to 1 visitor at a time in their own room.

For health and safety reasons visitors need to be signed in with a member of staff. Visitors must provide photo ID in order to be signed in. Children under 16 may be entertained in the communal areas. Please remember that you are responsible for your visitors at all times. Any guests or visitors that display any cause for concern will be asked to leave immediately and if necessary, the police called. As much as we encourage you to

receive visitors, we must ensure the safety of all our residents, staff, and guests. With view to this, we ask that you do not invite persons that you **don't** know well into the house.

All visitors must be signed in and out of the building, in the visitors' book held by the staff office.

### Overnight Guests

You will not be permitted to an overnight guest.

### 1.8 Car Parking/ Bicycles/ E-Scooters

There is car parking available for residents on the road outside of the service.

You must obtain a residents permit from the council to park on the road. Please speak to a member of staff who will assist you to obtain a residents parking permit. Please be aware that if you park without a permit, you are likely to be served a penalty notice fine. In order to get a permit, cars must have MOT and valid insurance and road tax.

Bicycles should be parked in the bicycle racks provided (at your own risk). Bicycles (including e-bikes) and electric scooters are not permitted inside the hostel building.

## 2. LOCAL SERVICES

### 2.1 Local transport

Transport for London  
[www.journeyplanner.tfl.gov.uk](http://www.journeyplanner.tfl.gov.uk)

020 7222 1234

#### Buses

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

#### Trains

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

### 2.2 Leisure Centres & Cinema

#### Leisure Centres

YMCA Walthamstow Health & Wellbeing Centre  
642 Forest Road, E17 3EF

020 8509 4602

Walthamstow Leisure Centre  
243 Markhouse Road, E17 8RN

020 8520 7464

Waltham Forest Feel Good Centre  
170 Chingford Road, E17 5AA 020 3859 1055

Leyton Leisure Lagoon  
763 High Road, E10 5AB 020 8558 8858

### Cinemas

Odeon, South Woodford  
<https://www.odeon.co.uk/cinemas/south-woodford/>

Vue, Stratford Westfield  
<https://www.myvue.com/cinema/westfield-stratford-city/>

### 2.3 Libraries

Walthamstow Library  
High Street, E17 7JN 020 8496 3000

Wood Street Library  
1 Troubridge Square, Wood St, E17 3HB 020 8496 3000

### 2.4 Places of Worship

St Marys Church  
8 Church End E17 9RJ

Masjid E Umar Mosque  
79 Queens Road, E17 8QP

Ghousia Grove Road Mosque

119 Grove Road, E17 9BU

Leyton Gudwara (Sikh)  
67 Francis Road, E10 6PN

## 2.5 Housing & Social Services

Waltham Forest Council Housing  
Cedar Wood House

2d Fulbourne Road, E17 4GG 020 8469 3000

<https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk>

Waltham Forest Housing Benefit 020 8469 3000

Job Centre Plus Westbury Road 0800 169 0190

## 2.6 Health Services

GP:

Addison Road Medical Practice  
46 Ravenswood Road, London, E17 9LY 020 8176 9110

Dentist:

Abbey Dental Practice  
25 St James Street, Walthamstow, E17 7PJ 020 8521 2816

Access assessment and brief intervention team:

The Jane Atkinson Health and Wellbeing Centre  
714 Forest Road  
Walthamstow  
E17 3HP

Tel: 0300 300 1570 - Opt 4

Enquiries email: [WFMHSPAEnquiries@nelft.nhs.uk](mailto:WFMHSPAEnquiries@nelft.nhs.uk)  
Opening times: 9am - 5pm, Monday to Friday

For out of hours, please contact their  
Mental Health Direct service on 0800 995 1000

## 2.7 Other Useful Contacts

Citizens Advice Bureau	0808 223 1133
CGL (drug and alcohol support)	020 3826 9600
Mind – Mental Health Advice	0208 985 4239
Law for all	020 8810 1212
Waltham Forest College	020 8501 8000

If you would like further information on any of the services listed or on other services in the area please see a member of staff.

## 3. SUPPORT

### 3.1 Supporting You

Our team at Stephen's House wants to achieve amazing things with this project and with you.

We are determined to provide and promote a positive impact in your lives. We believe in the young people we house and support, and we want to give you the best chance to succeed and be happy in your life, and we hope the support we offer gives you the greatest chance to achieve this.

Our service aims to provide accessible accommodation, training, personal development, job searching facilities and other essential services, together with community involvement and resettlement opportunities.

Where appropriate, other professional agencies will be asked to provide any specialist support that may be needed.

### 3.2 Support Plans

As part of your stay, we will provide you with a Support Worker who will help you to put together your own personal support plan. This plan will help you to identify goals and build on your strengths and as it is yours you can change it whenever you want.

To ensure we capture your needs appropriately and can track your journey of support we use the Outcome Star framework.

The Outcomes Star allows us to develop a personalised plan for you, helping you identify your own strengths and weaknesses as well as develop your own action plan to overcome any challenges you may face.

The ten areas of focus (strands) of the Outcome Star are:

1. Motivation and taking responsibility
2. Self-care and living skills
3. Managing money and personal administration
4. Social networks and relationships
5. Drug and alcohol misuse
6. Physical health
7. Emotional and mental health
8. Meaningful use of time
9. Managing tenancy & accommodation
10. Offending

Your support plan will be reviewed together with your Support Worker on a regular and planned basis to see how you are getting on however you can arrange to meet with your Support Worker at any time. The support plan is yours so any changes you wish to make can be shared with your Support Worker.

### 3.3 Move on

An important aspect of your support plan is to help you work towards becoming more independent.

The YMCA accommodation is temporary, offering the support you need to be able to successfully move on. Your placement authority may be responsible to support you to find suitable move on accommodation, however in some cases, you may be



required to explore move on options. We are here to offer advice and support in exploring your move on options, so you won't feel alone with this.

### 3.4 What you are entitled to (benefits etc)

#### Housing Benefit

Depending on your circumstances, you may be able to claim Housing Benefit. Your support worker can advise you on whether you are entitled to Housing Benefit and will support you with making a claim.

#### Other Benefits & Entitlements

You may well be entitled to other state benefits such as Universal Credit. Your Support Worker will be able to assist you in making the relevant claims. If you have a social worker, they will also be able to advise you on any entitlements you may have.

#### Change of Circumstance

If there is any change in your circumstances during your stay, for example you have started full time education, started work, if working your hours worked, earnings, benefits, going on holiday etc. you must inform the local Housing Benefit Office and your Support Worker immediately.

This is because it could affect your benefit entitlements. If in doubt, always ask!

We will help you to look after your benefit claims and help you to provide all the information the benefits office need, but you are responsible for your claim, not us.

Contact information on Benefit Agencies can be found in section 2 of this handbook.

### 3.6 Progression Team

During your stay with **YMCA St Paul's Group**, you will be supported by and have access to our dedicated Progression Team Coaches.

The Progression Team works to support you with all the things you may need in your development with living skills, training / education, and employment support, as well as progression towards independent living and move on. The Progression Team has a syllabus designed to support you to achieve your hopes and goals towards your future.

Your Support Worker will be able to give you a copy of the latest timetable or the contact details of your Progression Coach.

## 4. RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT

We actively encourage residents to get involved in all aspects of YMCA life.

### 4.1 Resident Consultation

We value your opinion and therefore an important aspect of our work is resident consultation.

- ▶ We want to hear your views on particular issues.
- ▶ We want to involve you in the decision-making process.
- ▶ We want your ideas and suggestions for improving our services.

How do we do this?

### 4.2 Resident Meetings

These are held every six weeks and are a good opportunity for you to make friends, find out more about what is going on in the YMCA and make decisions about your home and the services you receive.

### 4.3 Resident Questionnaires

These are given to all residents on a regular basis, so that we can assess how we are performing and make improvements.

#### 4.4 Suggestion Boxes

You will find a suggestion box located in the resident lounge. This is for you to write down any comments as and when you wish and can do so anonymously.

#### 4.5 Social Activities

There are lots of opportunities to get involved in social activities including:

- ✓ Cooking
- ✓ Film Nights

And lots more! These activities are for you and we are open to your suggestions! We would encourage you to participate in as many activities as you want to.

Please get in touch with a member of staff to find out more or if you have an idea of what we could do for an activity.

#### 4.6 Being a part of the wider community

We not only provide you with opportunities within the YMCA but also encourage you to be involved in the wider community.

This could be by attending a Social Club, leisure centres, training courses etc. Your Support Worker will discuss all the options with you as part of your support plan.

For information on services in the local area see section 2 of this guide.

## 4.7 Your Rights & Responsibilities

### Our commitment to you

As someone who uses our services, you have certain rights and responsibilities. **YMCA St Paul's Group wants to ensure that the young people's voice is** at the heart of everything we do, from excellent service delivery, to shaping our future.

Understanding you and everyone we work with is essential to help us as a YMCA best meet your needs and aspirations and to deliver services that matter in the right way.

We believe in empowering our young people, so you are able to have a better say in decisions that affect your lives and supporting your personal growth in wider life.

We have worked with our residents (including young people) to create a Customer Involvement, Engagement and Empowerment Charter, which sets out our commitment to our young people and wider resident and customer base.

The charter is our promise to continue to develop our culture that values, listens, and acts on the views and needs of the young people we house.

By understanding you, we will be able to take better decisions that improve the quality of outcomes for all.

You can find the charter on our website or ask a member of staff who can give you a copy.

## Working together

You and us will work together to ensure that everyone living at the YMCA can:

- ✓ use the services provided within a safe environment
- ✓ live free from abuse, harassment and bullying
- ✓ be treated equally
- ✓ have their privacy & confidentiality respected
- ✓ be consulted and able to express their views

## To use services provided within a safe environment

What you can expect from us:

We will ensure your accommodation meets all necessary standards and legal requirements so that you experience a comfortable and secure living environment during your stay with us.

We do this by ensuring that we provide you with accommodation:

- ▶ that is designed and furnished so as to meet the needs of each of you individually and all of you collectively;
- ▶ that is suitable for the purposes of supported accommodation and is accessible, safe, secure, and well-maintained;
- ▶ that offers a comfortable, positive, and nurturing environment, while respecting your needs for privacy;

- ▶ that is adequately maintained so as to provide a welcoming and homely environment within both individual and shared living spaces;
- ▶ that is designed, furnished, and maintained to remove avoidable hazards which could pose a health and safety risk
- ▶ that complies with all relevant health and safety and fire safety legislation, that being any statutory provision dealing with health and safety or fire safety matters;

What we expect from you:

You will therefore appreciate that if you irresponsibly cause yourself or others to be placed in danger, it will be treated seriously, and action will be taken. In case of an accident or emergency please inform a member of staff immediately.

### To live free from abuse, harassment and bullying

What you can expect from us:

Our Safeguarding Policy & Procedures cover a wide range of abuse, including bullying & racism, none of which will be tolerated by the YMCA. We will ensure that all young people are protected from harm, kept safe, have their individual needs met and provide support 24/7. Staff are regularly trained to ensure that they can continue to offer these services to a high standard.

What we expect from you:

If you have been abused, harassed, or bullied, or suspect abuse is taking place please contact an appropriate member of staff or contact one of the support groups detailed in section 2 of this guide.

We expect all residents, visitors, and staff to treat each other respectfully and politely. Any such behaviour that is deemed as abusive will be dealt with appropriately.

Further information is contained within the **‘What is Abuse?’** leaflet given to you when you move in.

### To be treated equally

What you can expect from us:

Our Equality and Diversity Policy seeks to ensure that all residents are treated fairly and without discrimination and that services are accessible to all.

What we expect from you:

If you believe you (or someone else in the house) have been discriminated against, please let a member of staff know.

If you feel that a decision we have made was not fair, you have the right to appeal by following our Complaints Procedure (complaints procedure information is set out later in this guide).



## To have your privacy and confidentiality respected

What you can expect from us:

We hold information about you so that staff can provide you with the best possible support. Information normally remains within the Housing Team, but our policy obliges us to comply with any requests from your placement authority social worker or placement officer, and or the emergency services.

What we expect from you:

You have the right to access information on your file at all times unless it is supplied by a third party. You also have the right to receive all mail unopened which is addressed to you.

## To be consulted and express your views

What you can expect from us:

Our Customer Involvement, Engagement & Empowerment Charter clearly states that we seek to inform you about things which affect you and obtain your views wherever possible. For more information on how we consult residents see the Resident Involvement section in this guide.

What we expect from you:

Get involved. Tell us what you think! If you have an idea, let us know. If you are not happy with something, speak up.

## 4.8 General expectations to ensure a good living environment

All residents have the right to peaceful enjoyment whilst living at the YMCA.

A set of expectations are therefore implemented to ensure that everyone can live comfortably and be respected by one another. These expectations are set out in Schedule 1 of your License Agreement.

When it comes to behaviour, we do understand that everyone has a bad day from time to time, however, we will not tolerate violent, abusive, or threatening behaviour towards staff or other residents. Any such behaviour will be dealt with appropriately, which could involve contacting the police, and or the referring authority / social worker.

Behaviour deemed as inappropriate could lead to investigation and decisions regarding your placement and residency with YMCA St **Paul's** Group. This could potentially lead to termination of your stay with us, and referral back to your placement authority / social worker.

The sort of things that definitely are not acceptable (even if you are having a bad day):

- ✘ violence and threat
- ✘ sexual or predatory behaviour
- ✘ bullying or harassment
- ✘ discriminatory behaviour (including racist, homophobic or sexist comments)

- ✘ gang involvement
- ✘ county lines involvement
- ✘ drug dealing
- ✘ misuse of illicit substances and or alcohol
- ✘ acts of terrorism
- ✘ criminality including anti-social behaviour / criminal damage / theft / carrying or use of weapons (such as knives or firearms)
- ✘ inviting external persons into the service without permission
- ✘ breaking curfew and or going missing without communicating whereabouts
- ✘ non-engagement with the support offered by the service.

If you are struggling with any of the above (both as the perpetrator or the victim), please speak to a member of staff or your social worker. We are here to support you and help you find ways to overcome these challenges.

And if you are regularly feeling like you are having a bad day, definitely come and have a chat.

Obviously we expect the same (and a bit more) around behaviour of our staff (and other professionals). Please speak to your support worker or site manager, and or social worker or other professional if you have concerns about your stay with **YMCA St Paul's Group**. This could be if you are concerned about the behaviour of a staff member or other professional, another resident or someone from the local community, place of study or work. Any concerns will be treated seriously and with the upmost confidentiality within the limits of yours and other's safety first.

## 4.9 Advocacy

Advocacy allows you to have your views, wishes and feelings heard when important decisions are being made that will affect your life.

You have a right to be listened to and have your views taken seriously. Sometimes, it can be difficult to express how you feel, and you may think that your voice **isn't** getting heard. This is when you might need the support of an advocate.

If at any time you feel that you will benefit from an advocate, you can speak to your support worker, housing manager or social worker, who will support the arrangement of obtaining advocacy from an independent advocacy service.

Alternatively, you may seek and arrange an advocate, yourself, at any time.

## 5. OTHER YMCA SERVICES

### 5.1 YMCA Gym, **Children's Activities** and Pool

You are able to use any YMCA St Paul's Group gym and the outdoor pool we operate, Hampton Pool in Hampton, free of charge. See our website for details on where we have gyms or speak to your support worker.

If you have a child, you may also be able to access some of our children activities, including our softplay pod in Kingston. See our website for details of what is on offer, and then speak to your support worker if you wanted support with any costs to access those services.

You may also be able to access some of our youth activities for free – check out our website to see what is on offer.

### 5.2 Volunteering Opportunities

YMCA offers a wide range of volunteering opportunities in the following areas:

- ▶ Children's Work
- ▶ Marketing
- ▶ Catering
- ▶ Charity Shop
- ▶ Gardening

Please see a Housing and Support Officer for more information on how you can get involved.

### 5.3 Spiritual Development

If you would like to receive support, help or guidance with your own spiritual development or journey, or just want to talk, your support worker can arrange for you to meet with one of our **YMCA St Paul's Group chaplains, who will be able to assist you.**

To find a place of worship for your faith, please speak to your support worker who will assist you in locating places of worship within the local area.

## 6. How to make a complaint

How you can complain or tell us **about something that's not going well**

When you want to make a complaint, comment, or suggestion you can speak to your support worker or the manager who will try and help you with the issue.

**If this isn't working, then** they can make a formal complaint, in line with our Complaints Policy and Procedure.

In addition to raising a complaint directly with the local team, complaints can also be submitted in a number of other ways:

Email Address: [complaints@ymcaspg.org](mailto:complaints@ymcaspg.org)

On our website: [www.ymcastpaulsgroup.org/feedback](http://www.ymcastpaulsgroup.org/feedback)

Throughout the process you will be kept informed and supported as necessary and made aware of any entitlements to additional support such as an advocate.

Complaints are fully responded to within 10 days (and a maximum of 20 days should they be of a more complex nature) and we do offer an appeals process, should you not be happy with the initial outcome.

## Raising concerns or a complaint externally

### Housing Ombudsman

As a registered provider of supported accommodation, we are also subscribed to the [Housing Ombudsman Service](#), and any young person living with us who has a complaint in relation to our landlord functions can contact the Housing Ombudsman who can offer support to residents making a complaint and considers complaints that have exhausted our complaints procedure.

As a registered landlord, we have to comply with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code which can be found [here](#).

The Housing Ombudsman can be contacted in a number of ways:

Tel: 0300 111 3000

Housing Ombudsman Service  
PO Box 152  
Liverpool  
L33 7WQ

### OFSTED

As a registered provider with OFSTED for the provision of 16/17 supported accommodation, you can also contact OFSTED if you have any concerns in relation to the service we provide:

Email: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
Tel: 0300 123 1231



## **OTHER AGENCIES**

The following may also be contacted at any time to raise concerns or get support:

### **The Children's Commissioner**

0800 528 0731 (Help at Hand) or 0207 783 8330 (for general enquiries)

Help at Hand is the Children's Commissioner's advice and assistance service for children in care, children who have a social worker or are working with social services, children living away from home and care leavers.

Children, young people, or their advocates can **get in touch** with Help at Hand for free by phone, website or email.

<https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/help-at-hand/>

**NSPCC** Helpline 0800 1111

**National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS)** Helpline 0808 808 1001

## 7. ANYTHING ELSE YOU NEED?

And last but not least, we hope we have provided you with everything you need in your flat, and all the information you may need in this guide.

However, if there is anything else you need, please don't be afraid to ask.

This may be the first time you have to cook for yourself, do your own shopping or your own laundry.

We will never assume that you know how to do any of those things, so don't be afraid to tell us if you need us to show you how things work around the house or need some guidance on where to best go shopping or how to change your bedding.

This is exactly what we are here for 😊.