

YMCA ST PAUL'S GROUP



Supported Lodgings Scheme

YMCA

Here for young people
Here for communities
Here for you

► CONTENTS

About Home Base Supported Lodgings Project	3
Who can be a host?	3
Reasons why a young person needs a host	4
Emergency, security and on-going support	4
Keys	4
The referral process	5
House rules	6
Financial support, payment, benefit, insurance and tax	6
Host Recruitment and Assessment Process for Hosts	8
Staff support	10

► ABOUT THE SUPPORTED LODGINGS SERVICE

Most young people experience difficulties when they leave home. The Supported Lodgings service began in Harrow in 2007, initially as a pilot scheme jointly funded by Communities and Local Government and London Borough of Harrow, in response to the Government drive at the time to end the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless young people aged 16/17.

Today we now deliver the scheme in three London Boroughs: Harrow, Hillingdon, and Ealing to meet the needs of a diverse group of young people including the homeless, care leavers, asylum seekers, teenage parents and emergency placements.

The purpose of the scheme is to provide supportive accommodation in a homely environment for young people to gain the skills required to live independently. The scheme aims to bridge the gap between home or being in care, and living independently in the community; providing an opportunity for young people to seek help and advice from a caring host with the day-to-day living skills. Usually all that is needed is a listening ear, but inevitably some young people will need more help than others.

► WHO CAN BE A HOST?

We need people from all walks of life and all cultural backgrounds to become hosts. Being a Supported Lodgings Host is not about having any particular qualifications - it's more about having the special skills and qualities we are looking for.

A host wants to make a positive difference in a young person's life. It may be that you have the skills and qualities we are looking for because you have children of your own, or because you have experience of working with young people.

All that we ask in addition is that you are in good health, have a spare room and are willing to share your home with a young person.



In summary the necessary requirements are:

- A spare room
- An ability to listen and respond appropriately
- Patience and understanding
- A willingness to work alongside YMCA support staff
- Some awareness of the needs of young people
- A willingness to undertake the statutory check: DBS - there must be nothing in your background to suggest a young person would be at risk
- You must have an up-to-date gas certificate (if you have a gas supply to your home)
- You could be a homeowner or tenant. If you have a mortgage you should check with your mortgage provider first; if you rent your home you should obtain permission from your landlord.

In return we offer:

- On-going support from staff
- Training
- Allowances

**Is this
for you?**

Contact us for more
information!

► REASONS WHY A YOUNG PERSON BECOMES HOMELESS

Some young people are unable to live at home with their families for a number of reasons including:

- Bereavement of parent
- Family breakdown
- Parents in custody
- Risk of harm at home
- Parents have mental health problems
- Parents in hospital
- Parents on drugs and / or alcohol
- Young person's challenging behaviour or is beyond parental control
- Young person at risk of sexual harm and emotional abuse
- Family crisis
- Leaving care
- Homelessness
- Unaccompanied Minors

With the young person's consent, we will tell you why they have become homeless.

► EMERGENCY AND SECURITY

YMCA St Paul's Group will provide hosts with contact numbers. Hosts will be trained and expected to know when to call emergency services e.g. police, ambulance and fire services. A Support Worker will make weekly contact with hosts and the young person either through visits or by telephone to ensure that the placement is progressing well.

The aim of the Supported Lodgings scheme is to show an accepting and non-judgmental attitude to a vulnerable young person who needs support. However, a balance must be struck between a duty of care and the promotion of independence. A young person must not be put in a position where he/she may be tempted to abuse the hospitality being offered whilst on a placement. You should bear in mind that a young person in your home may be in a desperate financial situation, or may have been subject to physical, emotional or sexual abuse.

► THE REFERRALS PROCESS

We take referrals from the following referring agencies:

- London Borough of Harrow
- London Borough of Ealing
- London Borough of Hillingdon

We also take spot placements from other neighbouring councils as the need arises.

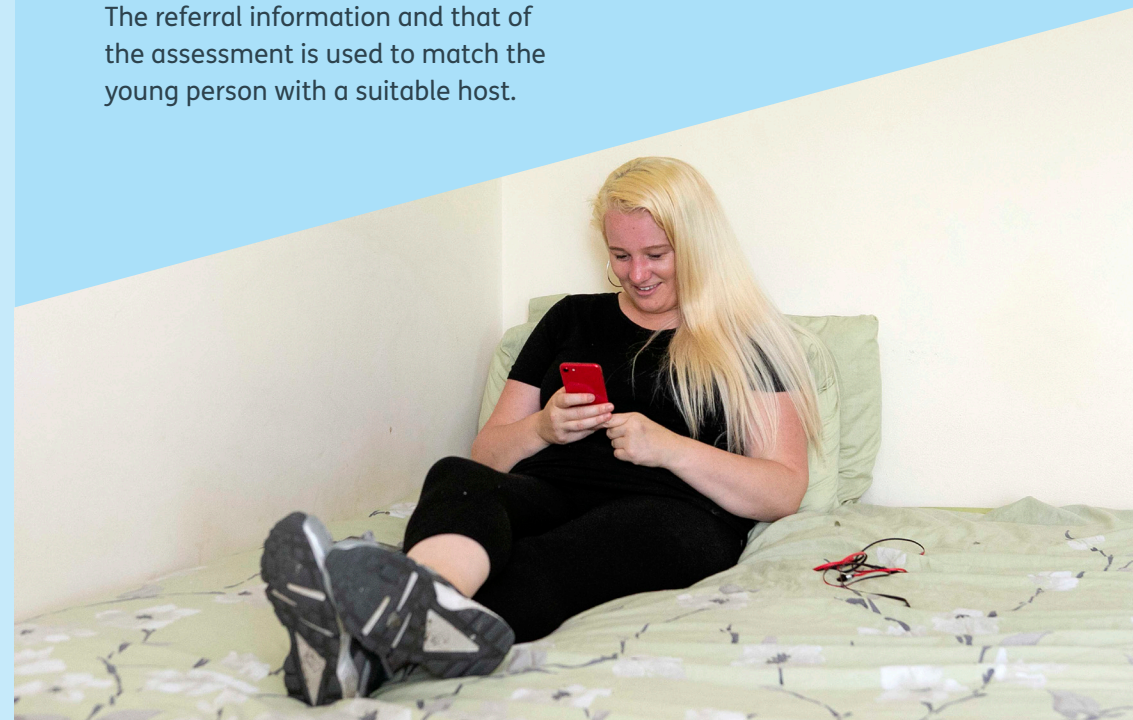
All referrals are accompanied by information about the young person's circumstances. Upon receipt of a referral, we arrange to meet the young person to undertake the needs and risks assessment.

The referral information and that of the assessment is used to match the young person with a suitable host.



► KEYS

The young person will receive two keys, one for the front door and the other to the bedroom where applicable. If they lose the key it will need to be replaced and paid for by the young person.



► HOUSE RULES

We have a fair house rule agreement in place which is to be signed between the host and young person. This is explained to all parties before commencement of placement. The house rules set out mutual obligations between the host and young person.

► FINANCIAL SUPPORT, PAYMENT, BENEFITS, INSURANCE AND TAX

You will receive weekly rent payments for your room that are in accordance with the Local Housing Allowance (LHA). The LHA rate is the rate used by Universal Credit/Housing Benefit. To find out the rate for your postcode simply visit <https://lha-direct.voa.gov.uk/search.aspx>.

You will also receive additional payments for supporting the young person. Payments are made in arrears by BACS into your account on a monthly (pro rata) basis. Hosts can declare their earnings from the scheme through the rent-a-room scheme of HMRC. This means that the first £7,500 earned by using the room for supported lodgings is disregarded for tax purposes. The YMCA is willing to provide hosts with a statement of income of their annual earnings from the scheme for tax office purposes. As a host you it is your responsibility to have adequate building and contents insurance.

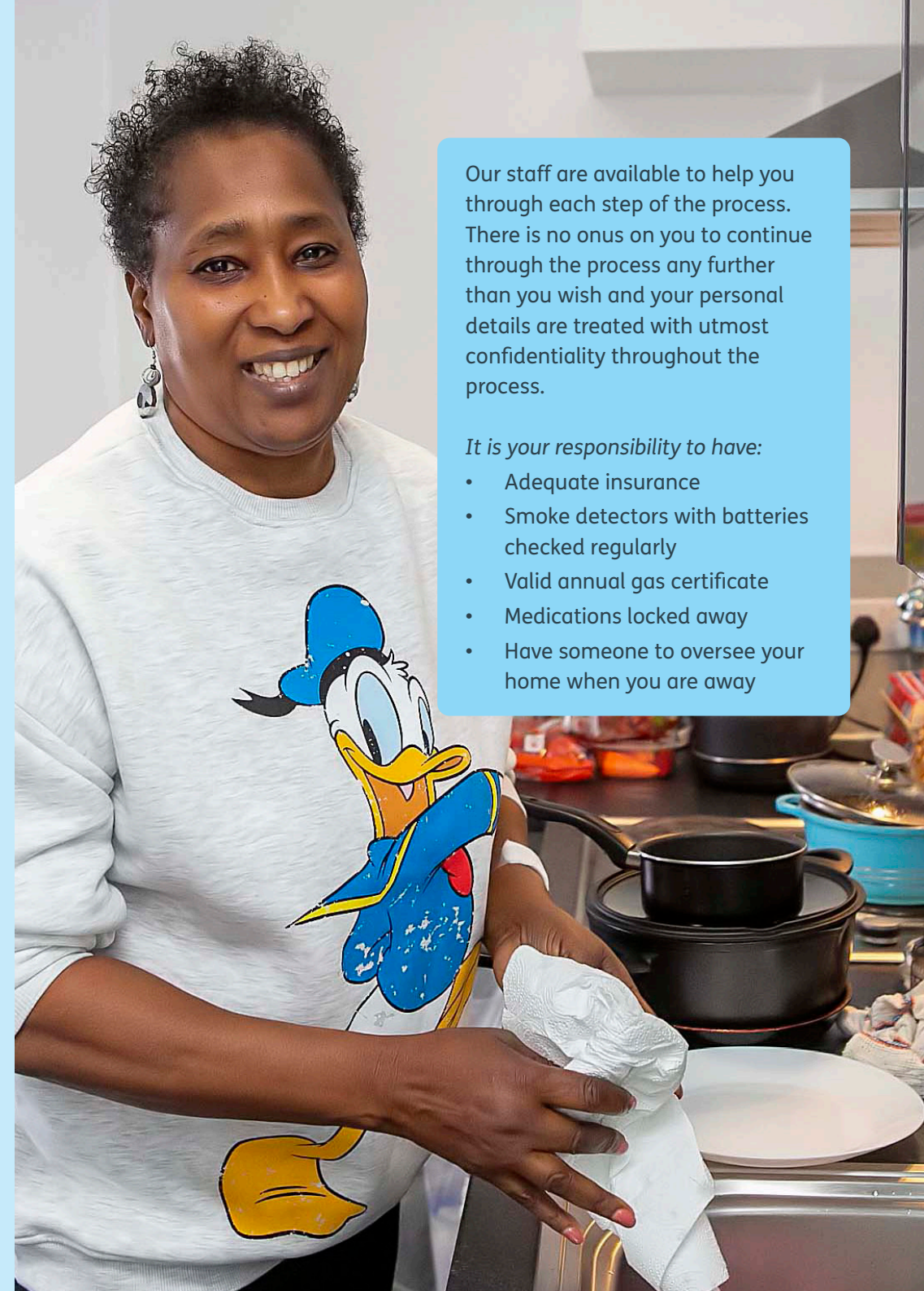
If unsure about any of the above, please check and clarify your particular circumstances with your accountant, tax office, benefit office, insurance or mortgage providers as appropriate. Do not hesitate to contact us if you require further information around benefits, tax, or insurance and we will be happy to provide you with more information as much as possible.



► HOST RECRUITMENT AND ASSESSMENT PROCESS

To be considered as a host:

- Give us a call and we would answer your questions about the scheme.
- Then if you want to follow this up we would then arrange to meet you for a discussion. If at this stage you are interested in becoming a host you can choose to apply.
- Once you confirm that you would like to become a host, we will start a process to assess your suitability to have a young person living with you in your home. This includes working with you to carry out a health and safety assessment of your home, statutory DBS checks for all adults in your home (and a nominated person who will oversee your home during holidays), medical reference and two character references.
- Host approval decision is made by the Supported Lodgings Panel. This has representatives from YMCA St Paul's Group.
- Once approved you would then be available to take in a young person.
- We would contact you when a suitable young person has been matched with you and arrange an initial meeting.
- Further meetings can then take place up to 3 times and if both you and the young person are happy to proceed the placement will be set up.
- Remember that you can stop the assessment at any stage if you are not entirely comfortable with the process.
- The aim is that a young person would then stay with you until they are ready to move on to more independent accommodation. This would normally be a period of up to 24 months or more.



Our staff are available to help you through each step of the process. There is no onus on you to continue through the process any further than you wish and your personal details are treated with utmost confidentiality throughout the process.

It is your responsibility to have:

- Adequate insurance
- Smoke detectors with batteries checked regularly
- Valid annual gas certificate
- Medications locked away
- Have someone to oversee your home when you are away

► STAFF SUPPORT

A YMCA Support Worker is responsible for undertaking all initial needs and risks assessments for the young person; however the host will be required to attend all initial assessments. The support plan created with the young person is reviewed regularly based on the level of needs of the young person. Support tasks to be undertaken with the young person and host support and are reviewed frequently to see how it is working. Normally the types of support to be given by the host in preparing the young person for independent living include support around life skills such as: cooking, budgeting, shopping, washing, housework, accessing local services etc.

The host and young person are free to contact the Support Worker outside the scheduled meetings times. The support worker provides additional support depending on the level of needs. Frequent host and young persons' forums are held which involve a variety of activities such as training, consultation on policy reviews, social outings, peer networking etc.

For further information, please contact:

Supported Lodgings Office
Roxeth Gate
Roxeth Hill
HAZ 0JN

Tel 020 8832 1551

Email supportedlodgings@ymcaspg.org

Mobile 07587 034280 (Marianna)
07715 804541 (Michelle)
07850 923186 (Violetta)





Here for young people
Here for communities
Here for you

YMCA enables people to develop their full potential in mind, body and spirit. Inspired by, and faithful to, our Christian values, we create supportive, inclusive and energising communities, where young people can truly belong, contribute and thrive.

FAMILY & YOUTH WORK

HEALTH & WELLBEING

HOUSING

TRAINING & EDUCATION

SUPPORT & ADVICE