



Housing options

When you turn 18, you are no longer 'in care' and will need to decide where you would like to live as a young adult. Some young people move out of their foster home at this time, but some will remain living with their former foster carers for a year or more, under a "staying put" arrangement.

Where will I go?

Home to birth family

Some young people return to live with a parent or other family members when they leave care. This can be a positive move but it would affect your rights as a care leaver (you would not be entitled to as much support from Social Services) and you could risk becoming homeless if the move did not go well and your parent decided that you could not stay any longer.

Supported lodgings or Staying Put

Before moving into your own home you might spend some time in supported lodgings. This gives you a chance to be more independent but still live with a "host family". Some young people stay with their foster carers when they turn 18, as a "staying put" placement. You would claim state benefits if you are not working, and pay some money towards the household bills. As a young adult, you would be expected to become more and more self-sufficient and you will learn practical skills like cooking, shopping, laundry and budgeting so that you are ready to move on to your own home.

Supported shared housing

This is usually a large house with some shared living areas (e.g. kitchen, living room, dining room, and bathroom) and individual bedrooms. You would be able to lock your bedroom so that it is private and secure. There will be house rules about the time you must be home, whether visitors are allowed in your bedroom, whether alcohol is allowed and where you can smoke. You would usually have a "key worker" who will be available to you for advice and guidance and you will learn the practical skills necessary for moving on to your own home.

Some supported housing is called a "Foyer". Foyers usually include an education/training programme and assistance with finding a permanent home.



Your own house or flat

You might rent a home from your local Council, from a Housing Association or from a private landlord. When you rent a home, you are called a “tenant” and you have a contract between you and your landlord called a “tenancy agreement” which sets out what your rights are to live in the home and also your landlord’s right to receive rent payments from you (see separate fact sheet on tenancy agreements).

Council tenancies are more secure than tenancies with a private landlord, and the rent is usually lower. If you are not working, or are on a low income you might be able to get help with your rent by claiming state benefits.