



Joint Housing Protocol for Young People Leaving Care

**Cambridgeshire County Council
and Districts**

Policy Name	Joint Housing Protocol for Young People Leaving Care
Policy Description	The Protocol outlines how Cambridgeshire County Council, the five districts, Corporate Parenting Service, alongside key partner agencies will work together to support care leavers to successfully transition into independent living
Key Contributors	Young People (via Participation Service) Leaving Care Service- Corporate Parenting Services Cambridgeshire District Councils Youth Justice Service Access to Resource Team
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1.Introduction:

- 1.1 In Cambridgeshire we want the same things for the children and young people we look after as any good parent would want for their children. We will achieve this by providing the highest quality of care delivered through the services for which we are both responsible and accountable. We understand the journey through care and into adulthood is an important milestone that needs our attention and support. We recognise the successes of our care leavers; we also recognise that reaching the chronological age of adulthood does not always align with the readiness for adult responsibilities. This protocol is informed by the lived experiences of our Care Leavers shared via the Participation forum and Children in Care and Care Leavers Council.
- 1.2 The Children and Social Work Act (2017) sets out corporate parenting principles for the council as a whole; to be the best parent it can be to children in its care. Local authorities are required to publish their local offer to care leavers. Significantly, the legislation requires local authorities to appoint personal advisers to provide support to care leavers up to the age of 25, except where the young person no longer wants a personal adviser. Such support should be based on the needs of the young people as per their statutory Pathway Plan.

Our local offer to Care Leavers should be read in conjunction with this which can be found via [Care Leavers Local Offer - Cambridgeshire County Council](#)

- 1.3 When exercising our functions in relation to children in care and care leavers Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) and the District Councils recognise and have regard to the seven Corporate Parenting principles identified In the Children and Social Work Act 2017:
- To act in the best interests and promote the physical and mental health and wellbeing of those children and young people.
 - To encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings.
 - To consider the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people.
 - To help those children and young people gain access to and make the best use of services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners.
 - To promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people.
 - For those children and young people to be safe and for the stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work.
 - To prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.

2. Aims of the Protocol

- 2.1 The journey out of care is a particularly important and challenging transition; the degree of success can have an impact on outcomes in early adulthood and beyond. In Cambridgeshire, we, as corporate parents (including our partner agencies) want to ensure young people are well equipped and understand their own level of skill, readiness, aspirations, and expectations for their transition from care into independent living. Having access to safe and appropriate accommodation is key to young people achieving positive outcomes, however this is much more than just finding them a somewhere to stay.
- 2.2 Through transitions planning, care leavers should be made aware of all accommodation options available outlined within this protocol. The options will depend on a young person's wishes, readiness, and affordability.
- 2.3 The ability to live independently demands resources, support, and skills. Many care leavers have difficulty acquiring the necessary practical skills and developing and sustaining positive social networks. The lives of our cared for children are often characterised by disruption, for example changes in care placements, accommodation and education whereby building support networks can be difficult. Indeed, even when good quality accommodation is found for care leavers this may be in unfamiliar communities, far from family and peers. There is significant research evidence that tenancies for care leavers have a relatively high failure rate in the first few months after leaving care.
- 2.4 Our aim is that young people have stability not just in their choice of accommodation but stability in other areas of their lives, including relationships, education/employment, physical and mental health and in their well-being. It is essential that agencies work together to ensure safe, supportive pathways when leaving care and beyond.

3. Objectives

- 3.1 To jointly assess and meet the diverse housing and support needs of young people leaving care.
 - 3.2 To work closely together to establish a common database of housing resources and service provision for young people.
 - 3.3 To ensure care leavers achieve a successful transition into independent living through support, preparation, being 'rent ready' (see section 6) and provision of suitable accommodation.
 - 3.4 To ensure young people are awarded care leaver banding A (priority status) on Home Link to prevent the need to go through the homeless route. *
- *under Part 6 of the Housing Act (Housing Allocations) and not part 7 (homelessness – Priority Need)*
- 3.5 To identify gaps in service provision for young people and to work together with other agencies to address these gaps, feeding information into the relevant strategies.
 - 3.6 To prevent Care Leavers becoming homeless, entering the homelessness system, and to avoid placements in temporary accommodation. Where homelessness is

unavoidable, bed and breakfast accommodation, including hotels and nightly let accommodation with shared facilities, is not considered suitable for care leavers aged under 25 and should only be used in exceptional circumstances and for short periods.

- 3.7 To jointly ensure that all staff are aware of the housing needs of young people leaving care and the obligations of each agency to work together to address these needs. Strategies include implementing joint training, including supporting induction into respective services, and shadowing.
- 3.8 To ensure that Home Link and the housing associations we collaborate with, to maintain the Housing Register, fulfil their statutory duty to assist the local authority to provide suitable accommodation for care leavers via the fair allocation of properties using the Home Link choice-based lettings scheme.
- 3.9 Through this protocol Children's Services and Housing will adopt a shared strategic approach to the provision of suitable accommodation for care leavers.
- 3.10 To ensure that the accommodation needs of young people entering and discharged from custody are robustly planned for.

4. Who Does This Protocol Apply to?

- 4.1 The local authority is the corporate parent of Children in Care and therefore has a legal and moral duty to 'provide the kind of support that any good parent would provide to their own children'.
- 4.2 This is a legal responsibility which extends to all departments within the council.
- 4.3 All local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure all eligible and relevant young people with leaving care eligibility are placed in suitable accommodation.
- 4.4 This protocol applies to young people who have an eligibility for Leaving Care Support. Young People aged 16 and 17 years who are not care leavers but require support from the housing authority and children's service will be assisted in line with the [Joint Protocol for the assessment of Homeless 16 and 17 year olds in Cambridgeshire or Peterborough | Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board \(safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk\)](#)
- 4.5 The different categories of eligibility are as follows;

Eligible Children

A young person aged 16 and 17 who have been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and who are still looked after. The following are also Eligible:

- **Young people remanded into local authority care**, even if they are not subsequently given a custodial sentence and if the period of remand is for 13 weeks or more.
- **Young people seeking asylum** are covered by all the terms of The Children's Act 1989 (eligibility commences from the time a young person was accommodated in a hotel by the Home Office opposed to the date in which the young person was received into the care of the Local Authority and will follow the same eligibility categories as our citizen children- see Appendix A).

Relevant Children

A young person aged 16 and 17 who have been looked after for at least 13 weeks since the age of 14 and who have left care. This also includes young people who were detained (e.g., in a youth offending institution or hospital) when they turned 16 but immediately before that were looked after.

[Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

Former Relevant Children

A young person over 18 who was previously 'eligible' or 'relevant'. Local authorities support Former Relevant young people at least until age 21, or up to the age of 25 years if there are continued support needs.

When a child or young person qualifies for advice and guidance from their Leaving Care Service (Qualifying)

There are different routes a young person may qualify for advice and guidance, these are;

- A young person aged between 16 and up to their 21st birthday (up to 25 if in education) and was in care for **less than 13 weeks** on or after their 16th birthday and are no longer looked after.
- A young person who was looked after immediately prior to the making of a special guardianship order and are now 16-21 years old.
- A young person who was looked after in a Private Fostering arrangement and are now 16-21 years old.

There is a duty to advise and assist young people who qualify for a Leaving Care Service [Qualifying) and for the purposes of meeting housing needs their status is as that applied to any other young person seeking assistance. That said, individual needs and circumstances should be assessed by the Leaving Care Personal Adviser and in working together with housing partners ensure that efforts are made to ensure access to suitable accommodation.

5 Legislative Framework

5.1 The Joint Protocol should be read in conjunction with:

- Housing Act 1996 - [Part 6 \(Allocations\)](#) and [Part 7 \(Homelessness\)](#), as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- [Homelessness \(Priority Need for Accommodation\) \(England\) Order 2002](#)
- [Children Act 1989](#)
- [Children \(Leaving Care\) Act 2000](#)
- [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#) - sections 1, 2 and 3

The following is a list of statutory guidance that the document refers to:


- [Homelessness code of guidance](#)
- [Applying corporate parenting principles to looked after children and care leavers](#)
- [Children Act 1989: care planning, placement and case review](#)
- [Children Act 1989: transition to adulthood for care leavers](#)
- [Extending Personal Adviser support for all care leavers to age 25](#)
- [Local offer guidance](#)

6 Helping Care Leavers to Prepare for Independent Living

6.1 All young people aged 16 to 21 (or up to 25 in some cases) leaving care who are Eligible, Relevant or Former Relevant will have an assessment of need and Pathway Plan (in Cambridgeshire this is one combined document). These are legal documents and the method by which their needs are identified and addressed. The Pathway Plan is reviewed at least every six months, and there is an expectation that we will engage with the relevant housing partner to contribute to this plan, for example through consultation. The Pathway Plan will detail accommodation needs and the type of housing related support that the young person may require to successfully maintain a tenancy. All pathway plans must include a contingency plan.

6.2 Developing life skills starts much sooner than 16 and 17 years and in Cambridgeshire we advocate a natural process supported by our Foster Carers and residential care workers encouraging and promoting opportunities for our children to learn and develop responsibilities.

When a young person is aged 16 and 17 years, Pathway Planning will be overseen by the Independent Reviewing Officer. This is a key role in ensuring timely progress and preparedness as young people are enabled to exercise life skills and pre-tenancy awareness in a safe environment where mistakes can be made and learned from.

To support assessment of life skills we have developed the Leaving Care Welcome Pack which includes the Stepping Out Toolkit ( [Stepping Out Document - CCC - V1.pdf](#)) to be completed by the young person and their main carer.

Our semi-independent providers will also promote independent living skills with their own in-house toolkit (unique to the provider). These should be cross-referenced with the Stepping Out tool to ensure a consistent approach. Our young people can access the [Stepladder of Achievement — The Share Foundation](#); which '*provides both life skills and financial resources in order to enhance the capability and prospects of children and young people in care, who are likely to have experienced an unpredictable education.*'

6.3 Young People's voice has influenced the co-developed independent living course with the WEA (adult education provider) which can be accessed online for free [Courses to help people live independently | WEA](#).

WEA also offer a range of complimentary additional courses that may suit the varied needs of our young people including;

- Money Management
- Confidence
- Cooking Skills
- ESOL
- Skills for Work
- Skills for Life

6.4 Corporate Parenting Services have partnered with social impact specialists, Goal 17 Ltd, to offer care leavers, aged 18+, the option of a mentor to provide guidance, advice, and support to young care leavers as they navigate the challenges of adulthood. The goal is to help young people build self-esteem, develop new skills, and achieve their full potential.

- 6.5 It is an expectation that our foster carers, residential workers, and accommodation key workers will be included in Pathway Planning and will play a key role in ensuring the learning and support opportunities are accessed as part of daily life. To ensure joined up approach specific roles and responsibilities should be outlined within the Pathway Plan and ensure regular joint meetings take place between the young person, provider, Social Worker, and Personal Adviser.
- 6.6 Additional oversight will take place within the Transition Meeting facilitated by Corporate Parenting services which will inform Young Person level discussion within the Joint Partnership Meeting between Leaving Care and the Districts. (See Appendix D).
- 6.7 When a young person reaches adulthood, the success of tenancies will be monitored by the housing provider (if supported) and the Leaving Care Service. If the tenancy is with a social or private landlord, the Personal Adviser will make efforts (with consent) to assist in addressing potential difficulties, so these are dealt with swiftly involving the young person. If there is evidence that a tenancy is unlikely to be sustained, early communication between agencies is essential and a review of the pathway plan will be undertaken identifying current and future need.

The housing provider and the Leaving Care Service must ensure that young people understand fully what is required of them as a tenant, who is supporting them, and what they should do in a crisis.

- 6.8 The prompt sharing of information between agencies is essential to support young people and address tenancy issues. General Data Protection regulations (2018) requires that young people should give their written consent (See Appendix B) before any information about them can be shared.
- 6.9 All young people should be offered the option of independent advocacy via NYAS ([The National Youth Advocacy Service | NYAS](#)) as part of their planning and preparation for adulthood.

7 Accommodation and Support Options for Care Leavers

- 7.1 The accommodation section of the Pathway Plan, particularly for 16 & 17-year old's should always consider post 18 supported options including; Staying Put, Supported Lodgings and Supported Accommodation allowing a staged approach to independent living.
- 7.2 **Accommodation options for care leavers aged 16 and 17:**

Some young people may be ready to experience semi-independent accommodation (regulated by Ofsted from October 2023). Depending on a young person's support needs there are a range of semi-independent provision accessible via the local Framework. Social Workers will complete a child profile and matching form detailing the needs of the young person and the expectations of a placement provider. Once agreement from the Head of Service (or Assistant Director depending on type of request) has been confirmed, the Access to Resource Team (ART) will undertake a placement search and share any appropriate options available with the Social Worker. The Social Worker will make relevant enquiries before seeking approval to progress with the preferred option.

The range of commissioned options include;

- Group living accommodation comprised of a room only with shared kitchen and bathroom.
- Group Living accommodation comprised of a room with ensuite bathroom and shared kitchen.
- Group Living accommodation comprised of a self-contained flat with kitchenette and ensuite bathroom.
- Individual support living accommodation 1 or 2 bed house, flat or apartment.
- Crash pad (flat attached to a group living accommodation usually a Foyer type placement) used for emergencies due to an urgent or unforeseen need. This provision will be utilised for young people who require an emergency home and will be for a maximum of 72 hours.

7.3 Supported Accommodation options for care leavers aged 18-21 years in Cambridgeshire include:

Staying Put Arrangement: This option enables care leavers to remain with their former foster carer when they cease to be looked after at 18 years. Where both the young person and their former carer wish to continue living together, the local authority is under a duty to support this arrangement, including financially. The arrangement can continue up to the young person's 21st birthday. Staying Put needs to be explored routinely at least from the first Pathway Plan to be satisfied that expectations are known, understood, and planned for.

 [Staying Put Policy 2023.pdf](#)

Staying Close/ Staying Connected: The Staying Close is a scheme that enables care leavers leaving residential accommodation to live independently in accommodation close to their former residential home. The scheme is delivered by BREAK on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council. The benefits of Staying Connected enable young people to maintain important relationships with familiar and trusted adults as they adjust to new responsibilities. They can keep in touch and still visit 'home' if they want to. All referrals are managed by the Access to Resources Team.

Supported Lodgings: The scheme is available to young people aged 16-21 years. The young person will reside in the home with the Supported Lodgings provider, with support given to help the young person develop skills for independent living. Referrals to the scheme are made via the Access to Resource Team (ART).

Living with family: Some care leavers choose to return to live with immediate or extended family when they leave care. The Social Worker and/or Personal Adviser will support around relationship building and informal mediation with family members to ensure living with family is the most appropriate choice for the young person. Joint planning will take place with a support network and direct visits will take place to establish suitability. Family member's views will also be incorporated within the Pathway Plan which will capture what family life looks like for the young person. Direct

visits (keeping in-touch) will continue once the move is completed and ideally in the family home.

Support for young parents: Young Parent Project; offering supported accommodation for young parents aged 16-25 who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The support extends to subsidised nursery places, and developing networks. [Young Parent Project Helps Support Young Parents To Live Independently \(chsgroup.org.uk\)](http://chsgroup.org.uk). Parents may also access supported accommodation via In-Form (see below 'Supported Accommodation').

Support for young people with disabilities: Young people who require an adapted property will be supported to complete a medical assessment form for consideration by the councils' medical advisers.

Support for young people attending university including vacation accommodation: Most universities offer accommodation in student halls or residence for the first year, and in some universities care leavers may remain in halls beyond year 1. Young People will be supported to access student loans and grants that may assist with their accommodation costs.

Young people will receive payments from the Leaving Care Service to cover the cost of vacation accommodation at the Local Housing Allowance rate where they will be living.

Young people who are 'Staying Put' are included in these arrangements.

Support for young people requiring care and support in adulthood: Young people who have been assessed under the Care Act as having a need for care and support will be supported by the 0-25 Disability Service, that said Personal Advisers can still provide advice and guidance on a range of issues including housing.

Supported Accommodation (with a maximum stay of up to 2 years): Young People's supported accommodation in Cambridgeshire is accessed via different routes depending on the Local Housing Authority. Cambridgeshire care leavers can apply to any of the Local Housing Authorities (LHA). For further details on the different options and Pathways please refer to Appendix C.

Where a young person's needs are such that they are complex but not eligible for Adult Social Care, it is critical that a referral is made to the Multi-Agency Risk Management forum [Multi-Agency Risk Management Guidance | Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board \(safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk\)](http://safeguardingcambspeterborough.org.uk) to explore how partner agencies can work together to ensure safe and suitable plans are in place.

8 Local Connection and The Moving on Options in Cambridgeshire

8.1 Local connection

There are specific legal requirements in relation to local connection for care leavers.

A young person owed leaving care duties under section 23C of the Children Act will have a local connection to the area of the children services authority that owes them the duties. If the children services authority is a county council and not a housing authority, the young person will have a local connection with every housing authority district falling within the area of the children services authority.

- 8.2 Where a care leaver is aged under 21 and normally lives in a different area to that of a local authority that owes them leaving care duties and has done for at least 2 years including some time before they turned 16, the young person will also have a local connection in that area.
- 8.3 This criteria applies to local connection for the purposes of homeless applications under Housing Act 1996 Part VII. The criteria does not apply to Part 6 (Housing Allocations) however, housing authorities will also apply this to Part 6 and care leavers will be assessed as having a local connection to the districts/ City within Cambridgeshire. Demand on a particular district will be reviewed in line with the Joint Partnership Meeting (see Appendix D).

8.4 **Move on Options**

Social Housing and Joining the Home Link Housing Register

Young people will be supported to join Home Link, the councils Housing Allocations List, by 17 ½ years, by their Social Worker or Personal Adviser. This allows for up to 6 months accrued waiting time on the housing register and therefore increasing chances of successfully being allocated a property when they are an adult and when they are ready. This step does not mean that young people will be bidding on accommodation prior to adulthood.

- 8.5 Young People who are looked after and placed outside of Cambridgeshire may choose to continue to reside in the placed area. Young people may have developed support networks and links to the area and the Social Worker and/or Personal Adviser will advocate with the housing provider to seek agreement of priority status and submit an application.

Applications for all districts are via; [Home-Link - Home](#) Young People are able to register for social housing with a housing authority(ies) of their choice in Cambridgeshire.

- 8.6 To progress an application it is essential young people have the relevant documentation in place, this includes;
- Proof of identity for all household members (e.g. passports, birth certificates)
 - Proof of current address (e.g. recent utility bill)
 - Evidence of their right to reside in the UK if they are not a British Citizen (e.g. passport & other relevant Home Office documentation)
 - Proof of income and other financial details
 - Supporting information about any medical issues or support you receive (if this applies)

The documents listed above must be arranged in advance of completing the Home Link process and must be available if proof needs to be provided ahead of an offer of a tenancy.

Once the Home Link Application has been submitted, the Social Worker or Personal Adviser must ensure the application has been completed, an email will be received to confirm. Once validated, the reference number and application date should be recorded on the Young Person's LCS (Liquid Logic) record.

Refer to Appendix I 'Useful Links' for the different allocation policies.

- 8.7 Young people will be prioritised (banded) according to their circumstances and in line with the lettings policy of the district councils. At the appropriate time, once a social worker or Personal Advisor has provided evidence that the young person is ready to live independently, the relevant district council will consider awarding a Home-Link band A (move on from supported housing). At Cambridge City Council, the decision to award a move-on band A is made by its Hostel Allocations and Resettlement Panel (HARP). In reviewing a request for the award of a band A, HARP will also, as an alternative, give consideration to the appropriateness of a move-on into the private rented sector with financial assistance from the City Council.
- 8.9 At any point within the first 12 months, the young person may hand back the tenancy and return to supported housing, with the opportunity to be placed back on the housing register, at a later date, when they are more ready to cope with independent living. This will require considered planning between the district, supported living provider and the Leaving Care Service to ensure changes are effectively facilitated and will be considered as part of the Joint Partnership Meeting (Appendix D).
- 8.10 Additional support for young people may be available via P3 Charity providing floating support services to compliment the support provided by Leaving Care to help young people settle into their new home, or if they find they are struggling with living in their own home and need intensive support. Further details can be found via; [Cambridgeshire Floating Support Service - P3 \(p3charity.org\)](http://p3charity.org)

8.11 **Home Link Renewals and Change of Circumstances**

Once an applicant has been accepted onto the Housing Register, the application will remain live, with the applicant having a duty to inform Home Link of any change of circumstances.

The Personal Adviser will promote regular bidding with the young person. Young people's pathway plans should always set out which Housing Needs Register, or registers the young person's application is logged on, if there are any renewal arrangements relating to that authority and who will inform housing if/when the young person's circumstances change.

Progress of bidding activity alongside any barriers or delays can be checked with the Housing Needs team.

8.12 **Young people aged between 21 years and their 25th birthday**

Priority status for Care leavers aged 21-25 will be considered on a case-by-case basis by Housing Needs/Options. If the young person has continued support from the Leaving Care service their Personal Adviser will assist in seeking a decision.

8.13 **Young People Placed Outside of Cambridgeshire Prior to their 16th Birthday**

Individual authorities can vary in respect of their rules regarding local connection when deciding whether someone can join their housing register, and in the first instance the Social Worker and/or Personal Adviser will;

- When the Young Person reaches their 16th birthday; liaise with the housing authority and establish the local letting and allocations policy.
- Seek to join the local Housing Needs Register and honour priority status.
- Liaise with the relevant authority and Leaving Care Service to request details of housing options including Supported Lodgings Schemes, mainstream supported housing (such as Foyers) and Private Accommodation
- Ensure early consideration and planning commences to prepare for realistic options when the young person reaches 18 years.

In some circumstances, the final option may include a homelessness application which can only commence when a young person has already reached the age of 18 years. At this stage should the young person become threatened with homelessness/homeless the authority should accept an application.

Wherever possible, part 7 homelessness applications should be avoided. Planning and contingency planning should include consideration of local supported accommodation and private sector options, in addition to the prospect of returning to Cambridgeshire alongside a homelessness application.

If an authority refuses to accept a homeless application for a care leaver who fits the local connection criteria, please seek advice from any of the Cambridgeshire authorities Housing Needs Team marked for the attention of a Team Leader. District colleagues will advise on escalation including where decision making is unlawful and when a young person may need to seek legal advice.

For young people who wish to return to Cambridgeshire they will have a 'priority need' as detailed below. In any case, all avenues should be considered within Pathway Planning and addressed via the Child in Care Review process prior to a young person leaving care.

- 8.14 **Private Rented Sector (PRS):** Another option to live independently is to rent privately from a landlord, this allows more flexibility in location and timescale. Accommodation can be found either through a letting agent, directly with a landlord or through arrangements put in place by the local housing authority. Enquiries should be made of the relevant Local Housing Authority regarding the availability of rent in advance/deposit including access to the Discretionary Housing Payment [Applying for a Discretionary Housing Payment - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

Social workers/personal adviser should confirm that the property will be affordable and sustainable and will need to check the local housing allowance for the area <https://lha-direct.voa.gov.uk/Search.aspx>

Social workers/ personal advisers should liaise with the Local Housing Authority (Environmental Team- see Appendix H) to request housing standards checks and/or clarify suitability of accommodation. For Fenland Property inspections; the Social Worker/Personal Adviser can contact PrivateSectorHousing@fenland.gov.uk where the team will conduct property safety inspections on request.

For properties that are Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO), license checks and queries can be made via [Licensing of houses in multiple occupation - Cambridge City Council](#), or the Local Housing Authority (see Appendix G). Suitability of housing

(including where young people reside in HMO) should be recorded by the Social Worker/ Personal Adviser on the young person's LCS record and refreshed at least every 3 months.

Care leavers are eligible for the Local Housing Authority one bedroom rate until their 25th birthday. In addition, anyone who has spent 3 months in a homeless hostel from the age of 16 is also exempt from the Shared Accommodation Rate (SAR). For more information [Exemptions to the shared accommodation rate for care leavers and young people in homeless hostels | Centrepoint](#)

Personal Advisers will seek written consent from a young person living in a private let arrangement to be a point of contact with landlords. This is to support young people in terms of negotiating any problems that might occur and in the worst-case scenario that a young person may be threatened with eviction to prevent escalation where possible.

- 8.15 **Home Ownership:** Young People may aspire to owning their own homes and may require advice and signposting to achieve this. Where this is a goal, advice and guidance should be referenced within the Pathway Plan. There are a range of resources including;

Financial management and understanding mortgages sessions [Care Leavers Money Zone Sessions - Care Leaver Covenant \(mycovenant.org.uk\)](#)

Buying your Council Property [Right to Buy: buying your council home: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Buying your Housing Association Property [Right to Acquire: buying your housing association home: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Opening a Lifetime Individual Savings Account (L-ISA) to buy a first home [Lifetime ISA - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Shared Ownership Schemes [Shared ownership homes: buying, improving and selling: How shared ownership works - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

- 8.16 **Emergency Accommodation for Care Leavers aged 18-24 years**

Whilst the emergency accommodation options (under Part 7, Housing Act 1996) listed may be accessed by young people aged 16 and 17; Children's Services will access commissioned services for Eligible and Relevant care leavers.

When young people present to Housing Options as homeless; this triggers an Interim Duty for accommodation under s188 Housing Act 1996. The following types of accommodation options are available dependant on the needs of the young person:

Automatic priority status in respect of care leaver status ceases at 21 years. However, Cambridge City or the District Councils must consider whether a person is vulnerable because of having been looked after, accommodated, or fostered. This relates to all applicants not just the 18- 24 year old group.

See Appendix F for the Accommodation Pathways.

8.17 Suitability of Accommodation

The suitability of accommodation for care leavers is provided in the Children Act 1989: care planning guidance – volume 2 (pages 74 – 80) and volume 3 (7.12 – 7.18). Where a young person is homeless, a housing authority must have regard to suitability of accommodation provided for them as set out in the Homelessness code of guidance – chapter 17 and in sections 22.24 to 22.29.

The use of bed and breakfasts (B&Bs), which is privately owned accommodation in which residents share facilities with other individuals or households, is not suitable accommodation for care leavers. B&Bs should only be used in exceptional circumstances as a last resort for care leavers aged 18+. In the event B&B accommodation is accessed this should be for the minimum period necessary. The Personal Adviser should undertake increased Keeping-In-Touch (this may be in the community or the office base) with pro-active and evidenced attempts to ensure alternative arrangements are progressed. A referral will be considered for additional Floating Support via P3 Charity. Young People residing in B&B accommodation will be routinely reviewed by the Leaving Care Service Manager ensuring robust exit planning.

Young people who are not satisfied that the Temporary Accommodation being provided under Homelessness Legislation is suitable may request a review or seek judicial review. They should liaise with their Housing Needs Officer and will be supported by their Social Worker/ Personal Adviser and the Team Manager/ Move on Team. The young person may also be supported to access independent advocacy via NYAS ([The National Youth Advocacy Service | NYAS](#)).

9 Joint Contingency Planning

- 9.1 Personal Advisers within the Leaving Care service will work closely alongside partners to minimise and manage crises including;
- Preventing eviction from accommodation
 - Negotiating resolution with providers and landlords where young people have complex needs
- 9.2 Care leavers who may be more vulnerable to loss of accommodation, for example those who have experienced multiple placements moves and instability, mental health needs, substance misuse and experience of offending will be overseen by the Transition Planning Meeting (see Appendix D) prior to leaving care to ensure contingency planning is robust and realistic.
- 9.4 Arrangements to minimise unplanned moves and evictions is reflected within paragraphs 6.6, 6.7, 6.8 and 8.9, and 8.10 and will be overseen within the Joint Partnership Meeting (see Appendix D).
- 9.5 Please refer to section 11 re: Duty to Refer and Appendix F for the different Pathways supporting contingency planning.

10 Care Leavers Leaving Custody

- 10.1 For all young people who are at a risk of custody, a Pathway Plan review should take place as soon as this risk becomes known to ensure impact on accommodation is accounted for. Where this is not possible due to unexpected circumstances, the Pathway Plan should be reviewed **within 28 days** of a stay in custody as this would be considered a significant change to their circumstances. Personal Advisers should visit young people **within 10 working days** of being remanded/sentenced and no less than every 8 weeks thereafter. If a young person declines visits, keeping in-touch should take the form of a letter every 8 weeks.
- 10.2 Regardless of the length of stay the Pathway Plan should clearly outline (as far as possible) the plan for where the young person will live on release. Efforts should be made from the offset to gather information alongside the young person's views to allow for sufficient time to plan and explore likelihood of the options, for example, friends and family, in addition to supported or social housing.
- 10.3 Social Workers and Youth Justice Case Managers are responsible for ensuring preparation for resettlement for young people aged 16 and 17 years is confirmed at least **one month in advance of their release date** and reflected in an updated Pathway Plan.
- 10.4 For young people aged 18-25 years, Personal Advisers are responsible for the Pathway Plan and resettlement options. Personal Advisers will be a key link for the young person when negotiating and exploring options. It is important that the proposals are assessed to be both suitable (refer to Suitable Accommodation) and deemed to be safe in terms of potential impact on other householders. The assessment should include input from a Housing Needs Officer. The Personal Adviser will link with Housing Needs to ensure there is an active account and Priority Need is assigned. Prisons, probation and the Corporate Parenting Service should refer to the [care-experience-matters.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67222/care-experience-matters.pdf) to support how we effectively, consistently appropriately support our young people whilst in prison, upon release or under community supervision.
- 10.5 In all cases, young people leaving custody should have an up to date Pathway Plan at least **one month in advance of their release date** reflecting;
- Who will be collecting them
 - Where they will be living
 - Any reporting requirements
 - Sources of support including out of hours
 - Arrangements for Education, Training and/or Employment
 - Arrangements for health needs
 - Arrangements for financial support
 - When their Social Worker/Personal Adviser will visit and how often including any increase in frequency when a young person is likely to be more vulnerable in the early weeks of release
 - Clarity in roles of the Social Worker/ Personal Adviser and Youth Justice/ Probation Officer
- 10.6 Where suitable accommodation is not in place 56 days prior to release there is a duty to refer to Housing Options. Inside the gate the young person will have access to Shelter for advice and guidance.

- 10.7 In the event a Young Person chooses to return home or to a living arrangement that we would otherwise consider to be a concern and after explaining the reasons, the allocated Personal Adviser will progress a safeguarding concern via [Make a professional referral to Cambridgeshire County Council Children's Services - Instructions and Data Protection - Cambridgeshire County Council website \(achieveservice.com\)](#) (if risk is associated to a child) or Adult Safeguarding (if risk is associated to an adult) via [Safeguarding referral form - Cambridgeshire County Council website \(achieveservice.com\)](#)
- 10.8 Joint working expectations are set out within the Accommodation Protocol- Pathways Home for People with experience of the Criminal Justice System (see Appendix F).

11 Support to Prevent and Relieve Homelessness

- 11.1 One of the most common features of a poor transition to adulthood is housing instability, risk of homelessness and actual homelessness, we want to ensure we are working together, and much earlier to prevent this outcome.
- 11.2 At the time a Personal Adviser is made aware that a Young Person may either face homelessness or is already homeless, they will seek consent from them to make a referral to the housing options team the [Duty to Refer](#) process (section 213B). Housing Options should respond to this referral within one working day.
- 11.3 The following services are among those subject to the duty to refer:
- a. social service authorities; and,
 - b. custodial institutions, youth offending teams and probation services.
- 11.4 There is a duty to **assess** a Young Person's housing and other support needs and develop a personalised housing plan. Arrangements should be in place to enable the Personal Adviser to be involved in the assessment process, again with the Young Person's consent.
- 11.5 Following the referral a joint planning meeting will take place within 10 working days. The meeting should include the Young Person, Housing Needs Officer and the Personal Adviser to look at how homelessness can be prevented or relieved.
- 11.6 A Personalised Housing Plan (PHP) will be completed with all young people who make a homeless application, and (with consent) shared with the Personal Adviser. The PHP should outline the reasonable steps that the local authority and young person will take to prevent or relieve homelessness. Subject to consent the PHP should be informed by the young person's Pathway Plan.
- 11.7 Where homelessness **cannot be prevented** and interim accommodation is required, the local Housing Team will work with the Personal Adviser to secure suitable temporary accommodation within Cambridgeshire before anything is considered further afield.
- 11.8 All parties are committed to minimising the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation for young people and undertake to always look at alternatives with a view to in future, not using it at all. If it is used, it must be for brief periods, more usually as a bridge to more suitable accommodation. Should homelessness not be prevented, or relieved young people will be supported by the Personal Adviser to ensure the Housing Team

has all relevant information required to consider whether the young person is owed a full homelessness duty under the 1996 Act (S.184 decision).

12 Intentionality Decisions for Care Leavers

- 12.1 The Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities considers that all attempts should be made by housing authorities to ***avoid the impact of intentionally homeless decisions in relation to care leavers aged 18 – 25.***
- 12.2 It will be a matter for the housing authority to determine whether a care leaver has become homeless intentionally, taking into account all relevant facts. To inform this assessment, the Housing Authority should consult with the Leaving Care Service and obtain advice and information as to the young person's emotional and mental well-being, maturity, and general ability to understand the impact of their actions.
- 12.3 Due to the impact a negative decision can have on a young person, if it is likely an 'intentional' decision is to be made, the Local Housing Authority will write a 'Minded To' notification to the young person and the Leaving Care Service to enable further time and opportunity to mitigate and resolve matters that could prevent an intentional decision. A meeting will be offered between the young person, their Personal Adviser and the Housing Team to review the supporting evidence and inform a decision. Any negative decision will need sign off and agreement by a senior officer within the Local Housing Authority notifying the Leaving Care Service.
- 12.4 Where an Intentionally Homeless decision is reached, services will continue to work together as corporate parents and ensure a jointly agreed plan is place to explore suitable accommodation options for the young person in order to minimise repeated homelessness or rough sleeping.

13 Support for Care Leavers from other Local Authorities living in Cambridgeshire

- 13.1 If a care leaver's parent is another Local Authority they may still chose to register for housing and move to Cambridgeshire. At this time they will not be eligible for Priority Status however the parent authority can still contact the housing authority or Cambridgeshire Leaving Care Service to share any relevant information and seek advice and guidance as to local support services.
- 13.2 The steps we will jointly take to reconnect a care leaver with their parent authority are;
 - With consent, the LHA will connect with Cambridgeshire Leaving Care Duty Worker and share information including Young Person's name, DoB (under 25) and their home authority.
 - The Leaving Care Duty Worker will make enquiries with the parent authority and seek to reunite which may include providing interim duty assistance on behalf of the parent authority where this is proportionate and time sensitive.
- 13.3 The parent authority will maintain statutory responsibilities and will lead the Pathway Plan.

14 Main Housing Duty

- 14.1 The main housing duty is a duty to provide temporary accommodation under s193 Housing act 1996 until such time as the duty is ended, either by an offer of settled accommodation or for another specified reason (See Appendix E).

15 Resolving Practitioner Differences

- 15.1 Problem resolution is an integral part of professional co-operation and joint working to safeguard and promote the well-being of children and young people. While often a positive sign of developing thinking within a dynamic process this can be reflected in the immediate term as a lack of clarity in procedures or approaches. Professional disagreement is only dysfunctional if not resolved in a constructive and timely fashion.
- 15.2 Attempts at problem resolution may leave one worker or agency believing that the young person remains at risk of significant harm. This person or agency has responsibility for communicating such concerns through agreed channels.
- 15.3 It is the responsibility of every professional to be solution focused. The aim must be to resolve professional disagreement at the earliest opportunity and as swiftly as possible always keeping in mind that the child and young person's safety and welfare is the paramount consideration. The Cambridgeshire Safeguarding Board is clear that there must be respectful challenge whenever a professional or agency has concern about the action or inaction of another.
- 15.4 If a professional disagreement arises and the issue cannot be resolved between practitioners the matter must be referred to the Line Manager who will discuss with their opposite number in the other agency in the hope that the issue can be resolved.

Failure to resolve disagreements between Line Managers must be further escalated to Senior Managers within the respective organisations.

A clear record of all discussions, agreements and actions must be kept by all parties.

See Appendix H for list of contacts.

16 Training and Development

- 16.1 Training and development of practitioners across all services within Cambridgeshire County Council is a priority to ensure both consistency and depth of knowledge and understanding amongst the workforce. The beneficiaries being our care leavers. This protocol and any future amendments will be accessed via Tri-X (Children's Services), Local Housing Authority systems and embedded in learning across services through;

- Induction
- Briefings
- Team Meetings
- Service Away Days
- Newsletters
- Our Conversation (formally supervision/appraisals)

- 16.2 The protocol is a live document with an associated action plan where the Leaving Care Service and the Districts will have continued responsibilities in ensuring we work together in meeting the needs of our Young People. The action plan will identify responsible persons (role and service). It will be reviewed on a quarterly basis and the protocol amendments on an annual basis.

17 Equality and Diversity

- 17.1 This Protocol will be subject to the equality and diversity policies adopted by Cambridgeshire County Council and the District Councils which are reviewed regularly.
- 17.2 All relevant partners value diversity and are committed to equality of opportunity and access to suitable accommodation for all young people, regardless of age, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy or maternity, sexual orientation, race, religious belief or disability.
- 17.3 All relevant partners seek to promote the participation of young people in the decision-making process. This should be evidenced in the individual Pathway Plan.

18 Appendix

A. Separated Migrant Children and Young People

Under the Children Act 1989, asylum applicants below the age of 18 who arrive in the UK without close adult family members, either accompanying them or already in the UK who they can join, may be provided a service by the local authority children's services, regardless of immigration status. If there is any possibility that the person could be a child (or under 25), Cambridgeshire Children's Services will accommodate without prejudice with a view to completing a full Merton compliant age assessment if required.

Separated Migrant young people who have former relevant status and awaiting asylum application decisions may not be eligible for public funds. Cambridgeshire Corporate Parenting Services assist to the extent that welfare requires it, including the provision of suitable accommodation.

Asylum seekers or those with failed asylum applications are not eligible for homelessness assistance from the Local Authority under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996.

Young People with the following immigration status are eligible for assistance;

- Refugee Status
- Humanitarian Protection
- Indefinite Leave to Remain
- UASC Leave
- Section 67 Leave
- Calais Leave
- Pre-settled status
- Settled status

In assessing the need for accommodation, the Local Authority cannot take account any accommodation that could be provided by the UK Border Agency (UKBA) as the UKBA are not required to provide accommodation if the asylum seeker (or failed asylum seeker) is entitled to accommodation under another statutory regime.

B. Information Sharing

This protocol has been formulated to facilitate the exchange of information between the signatories. It is, however, incumbent on all partners to recognise that any information shared must be justified on the merits of the agreement. The need to disclose information, must be assessed to ensure the information shared between agencies is proportionate to the purpose. Anyone in doubt should consult their Information Sharing Lead before proceeding.

Information shared will include personal data about the young person, including an assessment of their needs.

Where there is a need to share additional information on a one-off-basis, the parties concerned should consider whether the sharing is necessary to the agreement and document their considerations/findings, including any additional consents sought (and if not sought, an explanation as to why).

Consent should be sought and recorded by each agency who is sharing information where possible, however, information should be shared without consent if necessary if there are child protection and safeguarding concerns

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Information Sharing Framework ([Information Sharing Framework - Cambridgeshire County Council](#)) provides details of the overall security standards required of participating organisations to manage the information they receive from other parties under this agreement. These must be respected by all signatories.

Everyone sharing data under this agreement is responsible for the quality of the data they are sharing.

Before sharing data, officers will check that the information being shared is accurate and up to date to the best of their knowledge.

Partners to this agreement undertake that information shared under the agreement will only be used for the specific purpose for which it was shared, in line with this agreement. It must not be shared for any other purpose outside of this agreement.

Each agency should follow its own guidelines for retention periods in relation to this data.

The recipient will not release the information to any third party without obtaining the express written authority of the partner who provided the information.

Partners as receivers of information covered under this Agreement will accept total liability for a breach of this Information Sharing Agreement should legal proceedings be served in relation to the breach.

If a breach of data occurs, then all organisations need to be made aware and the organisation responsible for the breach should lead the investigation. The lead organisation must decide whether the Information Commissioner ([Right to be informed | ICO](#)) needs to be made aware.

C Housing Pathways by Local Housing Authority

Cambridge City Council: Young Futures Partnership Arrangement. Referrals are made by completing 'In-form', [YFP information April 2023 \(002\).pdf](#), in which both the Leaving Care Service and ART are issued licenses to access and progress a referral directly. Young people may be referred between the ages of 18 and 24 years who may need support around strengthening their independent living skills.

The range of accommodation provided by registered providers includes;

- **Dispersed Shared Houses** provided by Castle Dispersed Support Service and CHS Young Futures Support Service.
- **Self-contained accommodation in a larger service** provided by Queen Anne House and Cambridge Youth Foyer
- **Self-contained accommodation in smaller service** provided by Young Parents' Project and Whitworth House
- **Accommodation with shared facilities in a larger service** provided by Queen Anne House and Cambridge Youth Foyer

- **Accommodation with shared facilities in a smaller service** provided by Whitworth House

Fenland District Council:

- **Wisbech Foyer, Longhurst Housing Association-** providing accommodation for young people aged 18-25 years old alongside Housing Related Support, with a focus on independent living skills and promoting education and training opportunities. The home is staffed 24/7. To access, young people need to be eligible for housing benefit as this is an exempt housing service. The service supports young people to move on to their own independent accommodation when they are ready.
- **Newlands House-** a provision that offers two self-contained homes. Applicants need to have an income or in receipt of Universal Credit. A conditional AST is awarded and support provided until a young person can be assisted in moving into permanent accommodation.
- **The Staithe Wisbech/ Fenland Young People's Project in Wisbech-** provides three shared accommodation and support in March for young people aged 16-25 years who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless and who want to make positive changes in their lives. Applications are made online via a digital form [CHS Community Support Housing Referral Form 2022](#) or by printing off a paper version and emailing FenlandService@chsgroup.org.uk

Huntingdonshire District Council: There are two young person supported housing schemes (aged 16 to 25 years) in the Huntingdonshire area. They do not provide direct access accommodation (ie 'on the day' access) and both operate an application and waiting list system, although if there are vacancies available this can be fast tracked by the scheme to try and assess and interview as quickly as possible.

The schemes are:

[Kings Ripton Court, Huntingdon](#) – managed by the Salvation Army housing association.

[Paines Mill Foyer, St Neots](#) – managed by Longhurst housing association (18-25 years)

South Cambridgeshire District Council: As with Cambridge City, referrals for supported living options are made by completing 'In-form' [YFP information April 2023 \(002\).pdf](#). Young people may be referred between the ages of 18 and 24 years who may need support around strengthening their independent living skills.

The range of accommodation provided by registered providers includes;

- **Dispersed Shared Houses** provided by Castle Dispersed Support Service
- **Accommodation with shared facilities** provided by YMCA (Queen Anne House), Railway House and Whitworth House

East Cambridgeshire District Council: There is one young person supported housing scheme (aged 16 to 25 years) in the East Cambridgeshire area. They do not provide direct access accommodation (ie 'on the day' access) and both operate an application and waiting

list system, although if there are vacancies available this can be fast tracked by the scheme who will prioritise urgent assessment and interviews.

The scheme is:

[Wheatsheaf Close, Ely Supports Young People To Live Independent Lives \(chsgroup.org.uk\)](http://chsgroup.org.uk): based at Wheatsheaf Close, Ely, the scheme provides accommodation and support young people aged 16-25 who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless and who want support to make positive changes in their lives. It includes tailored 1:1 support with a support team on site daily and overnight incorporating social activities as well as plans to independence.

D Transition Planning Meeting and Joint Housing Partnership Meeting for Care Leavers- Terms of Reference



CCC%20Transition%
20Planning%20Meeti



v1%20ToR%20Partn
ership%20Meeting%2

E Main Housing Duty

The Council will owe young people the main housing duty when the relief duty has come to an end and Housing Options are satisfied that the young person is:

Eligible for assistance: You are usually eligible for help if you're a British or Irish citizen living in the UK. If you're a British or Irish citizen recently returned to the UK, the rules can be complex, if you're a person from abroad refugee status, indefinite leave to remain or settled status from the EU Settlement Scheme would make you eligible you can get further advice on this from Citizens Advice Bureau.

In priority need: Care leavers are automatically priority need up until their 21st birthday, after their 21st birthday the Council would have to assess if the young person is more vulnerable than the average person as a result of being in care or due to other reasons e.g. physical/mental health illness, being threatened with abuse or violence.

Homeless: You are legally homeless if you have nowhere to live in the UK or abroad, you have a home but can't access it, it would be unreasonable for you to continue occupying your accommodation due to abuse or poor conditions of the home, you have been served valid notice to terminate your tenancy agreement.

A young person placed out of area will have a local connection to that authority if they were normally resident there; defined as, a continuous period of 2 years; at least some of which applied before their 16th birthday; and because of being looked after by Cambridgeshire Childrens Services. This connection will last until their 21st Birthday.

Not intentionally homeless: You can be made intentionally homeless if your homelessness was caused by a deliberate act or omission. Examples of these could be being evicted for failure to pay rent or displaying antisocial behaviour. For further guidance on intentional homelessness see Chapter 9. It will be a matter for the housing authority to determine whether or not a care leaver has become homeless intentionally, taking into account all relevant facts. To inform this assessment, housing authorities should consult with the relevant children's services authority and obtain advice and

information as to the young person's emotional and mental well-being, maturity and general ability to understand the impact of their actions.

Have a local connection to CCC: to have a local connection to CCC you need to have lived here for 6 of the last 12 months or 3 of the last 5 years. You can also have a connection on the grounds of family association normal residence, employment, special circumstances and leaving care.

Section 199(8) to (11) makes specific provisions relating to local connection for care leavers.

Where a care leaver is placed outside of CCC prior to their 16th birthday, has lived in the same housing authority area for at least 2 years and is homeless or will become homeless within 56 days, they will also have a 'local connection' (under part 7) and are eligible to make a homelessness application in that area (part 7) as well as an application in CCC. For further guidance on Local Connection see Chapter 10 of the Homelessness Code of Guidance.

The main duty does not apply where you:

1. turned down a suitable final accommodation or final Part 6 offer made by the authority in pursuance of its duty to relieve homelessness.
2. been served a notice of 'deliberate and unreasonable refusal to cooperate' with a step in her/his PHP. In this case, the authority must ensure that accommodation is available to the applicant until such time as either a final accommodation offer of a final Part 6 offer of suitable accommodation is made, or the duty comes to an end in another way. This provides an unintentionally homeless applicant who is in priority need with a 'safety net'.

The Main Housing Duty can come to an end when:

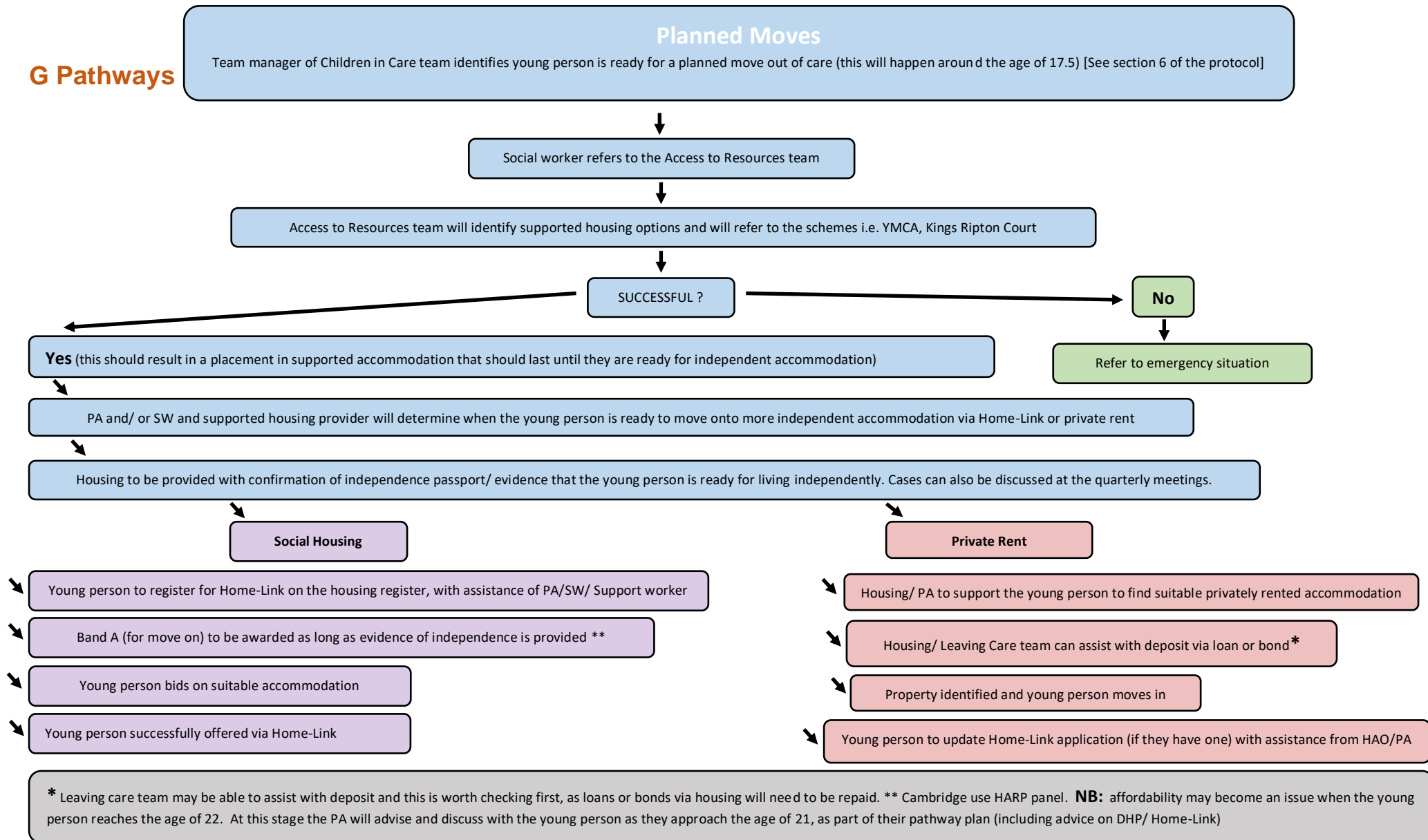
1. You cease to be eligible for assistance.
2. You become homeless intentionally from accommodation made available for your occupation
3. You accept an offer of accommodation under Part 6 (allocation of housing)
4. You voluntarily cease to occupy as your only principle home the accommodation made available for your occupation. (This means that if you do not stay or you voluntarily leave accommodation provided the Council will have no duty to provide you with further accommodation).
5. The Council arranges for a private landlord to make you an offer of an assured shorthold tenancy in the private rented sector for a period of at least 12 months

F Offender Pathway



Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Operational Housing Pathway Final 2023.pdf

G Pathways



KEY: PA = Personal Advisor, SW = Social Worker, HAO = Housing Advice Officer, DHP = Discretionary Housing Payments

Homeless prevention from existing accommodation

NB: Social services retain responsibility for children in care and care leavers under the age of 18. This flow chart relates to 18+ care leavers. Referrals may start prior to 18, where it is likely there is a risk of homelessness after the young person turns 18.

Duty to refer completed when young person approaches housing with SW or consent to contact SW/PA

Yes

No

Where homelessness is not imminent (see flowchart for emergency homeless situation) 3-way meeting arranged with housing, SW/PA and young person including needs assessment (and joint vulnerability assessment for care leavers aged 21-25) and completion of PHP including actions required to prevent homelessness.

Where a risk is identified PA/SW will provide intensive support to help the young person to achieve their tasks to prevent homelessness.

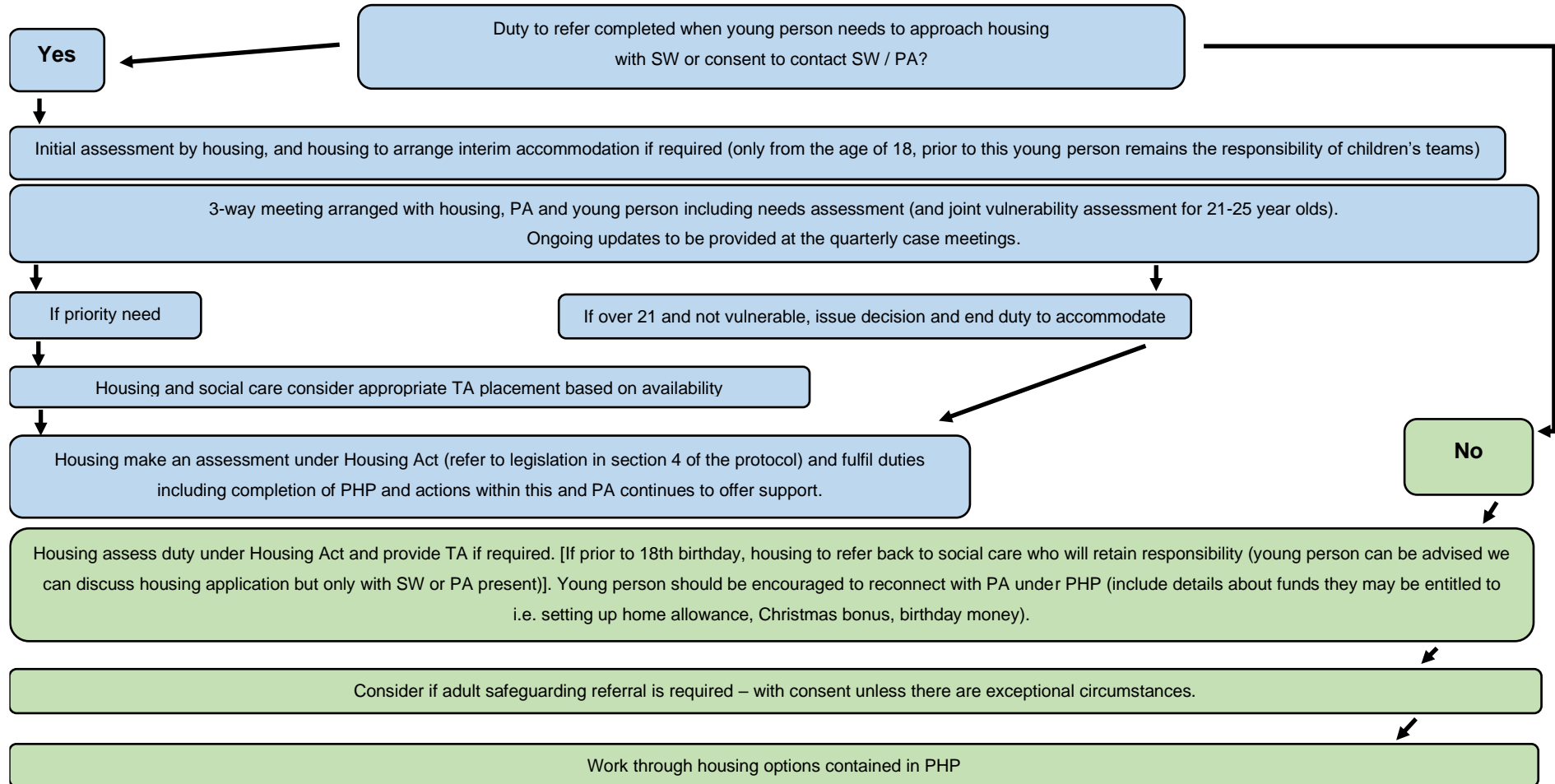
Housing assess needs and complete PHP with the young person (If prior to their 18th birthday housing to refer back to social care who will retain responsibility – young person can be advised we can continue to discuss housing application but only with SW/PA present). If 18+ young person should be encouraged to reconnect with SW/PA under the PHP (include details about the funds they may be entitled to i.e. Setting up home allowance, Christmas bonus and birthday money), along with actions to prevent homelessness.

Consider if an adult safeguarding referral is required – with consent unless there are exceptional circumstances.

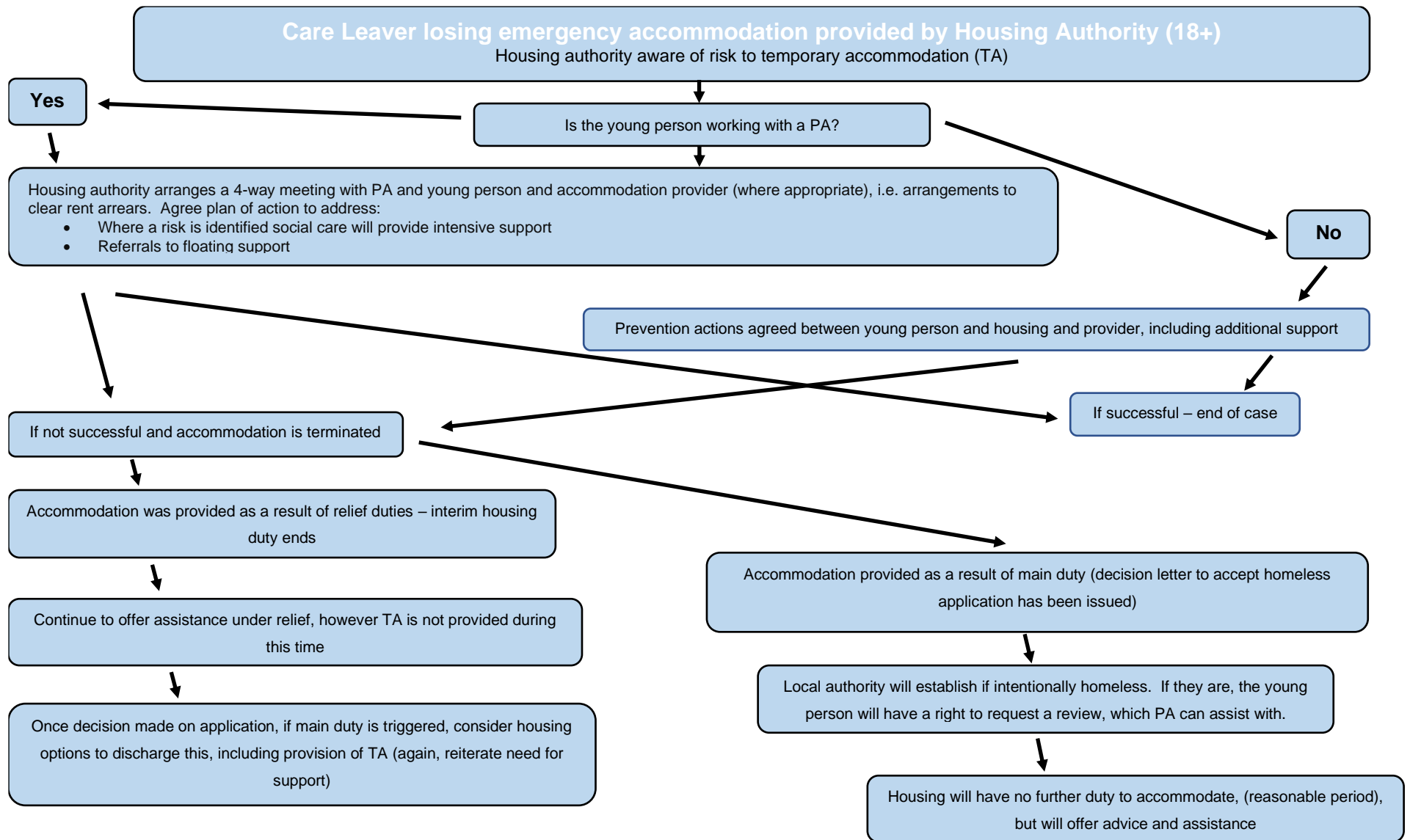
If homelessness cannot be prevented longer term – commence planned moves (see flowchart).

Care Leavers – Emergency Homeless Situation

NB: Social service retain responsibility for housing children in care and care leavers under the age of 18. This flow chart relates to 18+ care leavers
 Referrals may start prior to 18 where an emergency crisis situation has developed, and they are likely to be homeless at 18
 18 – 21 = priority need. Vulnerable 21-25 year olds – joint assessment where consent



KEY: TA = Temporary Accommodation, PHP = Personal Housing Plan, PA = Personal Advisor, SW = Social Worker, HRAct = Homeless Reduction Act



KEY: TA = Temporary accommodation, PA = Personal Advisor, HAO = Housing Advice Officer

H Key Contacts

Cambridge City Council	Housing Advice Service	Contact number: 01223 457918	housing.advice@cambridge.gov.uk
Fenland District Council	Housing Options Team	Contact number: 01354 654321	housingadvice@fenland.gov.uk
Huntingdonshire District Council	Housing Needs team – split into: Housing Register & Home-Link Housing Advice & Options (including homelessness prevention and actual homelessness)	Contact number: 01480 388218	housingservices@huntingdonshire.gov.uk housingadvice@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
East Cambridgeshire District Council	Environmental Health	Contact number: 01480 388302	envhealth@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
South Cambridgeshire District Council	Housing Advice Environmental health		housingadvice@scambs.gov.uk env.health@scambs.gov.uk
Corporate Parenting Services	Leaving Care Service	Louisa Kay- Service Manager	louisa.kay@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
	Children in Care Service	Kerry Seymour- Service Manager Peter Goddard- Service Manager	kerry.seymour@cambridgeshire.gov.uk peter.goddard@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

I Useful Links

Leaving Care Local Offer	Care Leavers Local Offer - Cambridgeshire County Council
Cambridge City Council	Lettings Policy - Cambridge City Council
	Lettings Policy (huntingdonshire.gov.uk)
Fenland District Council	LETTINGS POLICY July 2021.pdf (fenland.gov.uk)
Huntingdonshire District Council	Lettings Policy (huntingdonshire.gov.uk)
East Cambridgeshire District Council	LETTINGS POLICY 05.07.21.pdf (eastcambs.gov.uk) Microsoft Word - mso124.doc (eastcambs.gov.uk)
South Cambridgeshire District Council	Lettings Policy - August 2021 (scambs.gov.uk)