

Supported housing

For adults living with mental illness

Supported housing combines housing with support services. This can help people who live with mental illness to live as independently as possible. This factsheet explains the different types of supported housing that may be available in your area. It is for people 18 or over living with mental illness in England. It is also for their loved ones and carers, and anyone interested in this subject.

Key Points.

- There are different types of supported housing to help people with different needs.
- You can get supported housing by getting a social care assessment or asking your mental health team. You might be able to contact the supported housing service directly.
- You might be able to get help with the costs of living in supported housing.
- You might have the right to choose your supported housing if it is funded by the local authority.
- There are people who can help and advise you if you have problems with your supported housing.

This factsheet covers:

- 1. What is supported housing and what are the different types?
- 2. How can I get supported housing?
- 3. How do I pay for supported housing?
- 4. Do I have the right to choose my supported housing?
- 5. Who do I contact if I have housing problems?

Do Rethink Advice and Information Service give advice on housing?

Our <u>Rethink Advice and Information Service</u> give advice on housing that is specific to people who live with severe mental illness. Like supported housing, which you can read about in this factsheet.

But they do not provide expert advice on ordinary housing. Like if you live in social housing, rent from a private landlord, or own your own home. If you need advice on those things, see the <u>Useful contacts</u> section at the end of this factsheet for organisations who can help.

Top

1. What is supported housing and what are the different types?

Supported housing combines housing with support services. This can help people who live with mental illness to live as independently as possible.

Living independently means being able to take care of yourself most of the time. Even if you sometimes need help.

Supported housing schemes are usually run by local authorities, housing associations or voluntary groups.

Sometimes you have to wait to get supported housing after you have applied for it. Wait times can vary from service to service.

If you feel that supported housing may benefit you, then you can talk to people involved with your care.

You may be charged for your rent and care separately in supported housing.

You might get one bill with both the rent and care charges. But they are sometimes funded differently.

There are different types of supported housing which give different levels of support. You might need to know about these if you need to decide about where to live. The different types are shown below.

What are group homes?

The term supported housing is mostly used to describe supported group flats and housing services.

Supported housing will usually mean that you live in a block or group of flats or houses with other people. They may have similar support needs to you.

Often accommodation is self-contained. But you may share common areas such as a lounge, utilities, and a garden.

You can live independently but there should be 24-hour emergency support available if you need it. Often there will be support onsite.

You may live in supported housing and still get help from social care and NHS mental health teams.

You can find more information about:

- Social care assessment Under the Care Act 2014
- NHS mental health teams

at <u>www.rethink.org</u>. Or call our General Enquiries team on 0121 522 7007 and ask them to send you a copy of our factsheet.

What are registered care homes?

Care homes can help if you need 24-hour support.

You usually have your own bedroom and bathroom. You will share common living areas with other residents. Meals are usually provided for you.

You can find more information about 'Care home fees - who pays (Under the Care Act 2014)' at www.rethink.org. Or call our General Enquiries team on 0121 522 7007 and ask them to send you a copy of our factsheet.

What is sheltered housing?

In sheltered housing you live in a block or group of flats. They are monitored by a warden and sometimes have extra support staff.

You will look after yourself in your flat. But you can get extra support in your flat if you need it.

The support will depend on what the service offers and what your needs are. Or you may be able to get extra support from a social services.

Sheltered housing is usually for older people, but it can cover people who live with mental illness.

Sheltered housing is often a long-term housing option for people. Most sheltered housing is provided by local councils or housing associations.

What are almshouses?

Almshouses are usually for older people. But they also provide housing and support to vulnerable people with different needs.¹ This can include people who live with mental illness.

Some also operate with a warden, like sheltered housing.²

Each almshouse is run by its own charity. Each will have their own selection criteria. Rent is usually quite low.³

For more information on almshouses, you can contact the **Almshouse Association**. Their details are in our <u>Useful contacts</u> at the end of this factsheet.

What are shared lives schemes?4

Under this scheme you will be matched with an approved carer.

You will either:

- live with a person who cares for you, or
- you will regularly visit your carer for support.

Shared lives schemes are an alternative to home care and care homes.

Your carer will be registered with the shared lives scheme.

You can get short- or long-term support.

The scheme isn't available in all areas.

You can find more information and a video about the shared lives scheme on this NHS website: www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/care-services-equipment-and-care-homes/shared-lives-schemes

You can find out more about shared lives schemes on the **Shared Lives Plus** website. It can be found in the <u>Useful contacts</u> section at the end of this factsheet.

What are therapeutic communities?⁵

Therapeutic communities may help if:

- you have a long-term emotional condition, and
- it makes it difficult for you to live in your normal community.

Therapeutic communities are aimed at people with different needs. These needs can include mental health conditions.

They can be run by the NHS, the prison estate, or voluntary and private providers. This depends on the client group.

Therapeutic communities:

- are set up differently in different areas,
- are not available in all areas,
- are often short term or you will visit regularly as part of your treatment.

Therapeutic communities aim to improve your social skills through group therapy and structured activities. This helps you work towards living in the outside community.

You can find out more about therapeutic communities on **The Consortium for Therapeutic Communities** website. It can be found in the <u>Useful</u> <u>Contacts</u> section at the end of this factsheet.

What are crisis houses?

If you are having a mental health crisis you might be able to go to a crisis house.

Having a mental health crisis can mean different things to different people. It can include having severe symptoms such as hallucinations or delusions. Or you might be feeling suicidal or harming yourself.

Crisis houses offer short-term housing and support. How long you can stay depends on the service. You can only usually stay for days or weeks.

You might be able to go to a crisis house instead of going into hospital.⁶ This may be better for some people as you are not detained in a crisis house. And it might feel less clinical. But crisis houses are not in every area of the country.

Crisis houses will have support staff on-site 24 hours a day. You may also be visited by staff from a local NHS mental health team.

You can self-refer to some crisis houses. For others you might need to ask a health professional or social worker to refer you.

If you think you need to stay in a crisis house you can:

- speak to the health professional or social worker you see most often.
- contact your local NHS urgent mental health helpline: <u>www.nhs.uk/service-search/mental-health/find-an-urgent-mental-health-helpline</u>,
- contact your local authority adult social services team. You can find contact details for your local authority here: www.gov.uk/find-local-council,
- search online for local crisis houses,
- search Rethink Mental Illness' website as we provide some of these services in some areas. You can click the 'Help in your area' link on our website to search: www.rethink.org

What are short-stay hostels?

Short-stay hostels offer housing on a short stay basis. They are usually for people who are homeless.

You may be placed in a hostel while you are waiting for more permanent housing.

The hostel may try to help you develop the skills you need to live on your own.

You might get your own room but if you go there in an emergency you may have to share.

Each hostel will offer a different level of support. You may get a support worker. You may live in a hostel and still get help from a NHS mental health team or social services.

Many hostels are for specific groups of people. This includes people who have a mental illness, homeless people, women, or young people.

You can find the details of hostels in your local area through your local authority. You can find contact details for your local authority here: www.gov.uk/find-local-council. Or you could ask your care coordinator, if you have one.

You can also search on the Homeless Link website at: homeless.org.uk/homeless-england.

Top

2. How can I get supported housing?

There are different ways you can get supported housing.

You:

- can search for supported housing yourself, including asking your NHS mental health team to help,
- ask for a social care assessment.
- might be assessed for supported housing before you are discharged from hospital.

Can I search for supported housing myself?

You can:

- contact the housing department at your local council. You can find contact details for your local authority here: www.gov.uk/find-local-council,
- look for supported housing on the following website: <u>www.gov.uk/apply-for-sheltered-housing</u>. This website will redirect you to the relevant page on your local authority's website.
- ask your NHS mental health team.

How can my NHS mental health team to help?

If you are being supported by an NHS mental health team, they may be able to help.

You might be receiving mental health support under the community mental health framework. This is a framework used by the CMHT and other health professionals to plan your care.⁷ This can include supported housing.

Ask your care coordinator for help with supported housing, if you have one. Or the person responsible for your mental health care.

What can I ask if I contact the service directly?

You might choose to contact the service directly. There are a few things you might want to ask them, such as:

- Do you support people with mental health conditions?
- Can I apply directly? Or do I have to go through the local authority or mental health services?
- What support do you provide?
- · What facilities do you have?
- How much does it cost?
- How long will I have to wait to get your services?

You could try writing down everything you want to ask before you make contact. This can help you remember everything you want to ask.

It might also help you to call them with someone from a relative, carer, or friend.

What is a social care assessment?

You might be able to get supported housing through a social care assessment. The assessment is done by social services.

Under the Care Act 2014 you have a right to have your social care needs assessed.8

If you have what are known as eligible needs the local authority must meet those needs.⁹ One of those needs might be a need for supported housing. If it is, the local authority must provide suitable supporting housing to you.

Social services will also look at your income, savings, and capital. You might have to pay for none, some, or all your supported housing care costs. ¹⁰ But it won't fund your rent costs. See <u>section 3</u> of this factsheet for more information.

You can find more information about 'Social care assessment – Under the Care Act 2014' at www.rethink.org. Or call our General Enquiries team on 0121 522 7007 and ask them to send you a copy of our factsheet.

Can I get supported housing after discharge from hospital?

You may need supported housing following a stay in hospital to meet your needs.

You might be taken into an acute mental health hospital. Professionals there should begin planning for your discharge with you and your carers within 72 hours.¹¹

This is as part of your overall care planning process. Planning should include discussion of your housing options. It should involve relevant housing staff from your local authority and supported housing providers.¹²

You should be involved in this process. Or with the support of an advocate or loved ones who may act as a carer to you.¹³

You can find more information about 'Discharge from the Mental Health Act' at www.rethink.org. Or call our General Enquiries team on 0121 522 7007 and ask them to send you a copy of our factsheet.

Top

3. How do I pay for supported housing?

You can pay for supported housing out of your own money. But:

- you might be able to claim benefits to help you pay rent, and
- Your care might be partly or fully paid for by the local authority through social care.

How can I pay for my rent if I am on a low income?

If you stay in supported housing, you will have to pay rent.

You may be able to claim welfare benefits called housing benefit or universal credit to help cover your rent if:

- if you are on a low income, or
- claiming certain benefits.

Whether you claim housing benefit or universal credit depends on if your supporting housing is:14

- specified accommodation, known as housing-related support, or
- not specified accommodation.

You can read more about this here: https://medium.com/adviser/defining-specified-accommodation-43faa68076af

This can be complicated. So, before you make a benefits claim for your supported accommodation rent it is best to get advice.

You can search for local welfare benefits advisers on the **Turn2Us** website: https://advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk Select 'benefits' from the dropdown menu and pop in your postcode.

You can also get free benefits advice from:

Citizens Advice

Phone 0800 144 8848

Website: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

You can find more information about 'Universal credit' and 'Housing benefit' at: www.mentalhealthandmoneyadvice.org/en

What is 'housing-related' only supported housing?

Some supported housing placements do not have a care charge. They require a rent payment only. The rent includes some level of support. Rent will usually be higher because of the support provided.¹⁵

This is known as 'housing-related' support. It is sometimes called 'specified accommodation', especially for welfare benefit purposes.¹⁶

The support at these types of placements is usually 'housing-related' only. So, things like, support with managing a tenancy, budgeting, and benefits.

You do not usually need to go through a social care assessment to access this type of supported housing.¹⁸

How will my care be funded?

Your care costs might be partly or fully paid for by the local authority through social care. Social services will look at your income, savings, and capital.¹⁹

See 'What is a social care assessment?' in section 2 of this factsheet for more information.

There are no standard charges for your care but there is guidance stating that charges must be 'reasonable'. This means that you should be left with a minimum amount to live on after paying the charges. ²⁰

You can find more information about 'Social care - Charging for non-residential services under the Care Act 2014' at www.rethink.org. Or call our General Enquiries team on 0121 522 7007 and ask them to send you a copy of our factsheet.

What is section 117 aftercare?

You may have been detained in hospital under a section 3 or some other sections of the Mental Health Act 1983. If so, you can get free aftercare. This is called 'section 117' aftercare.²¹

The cost of supported housing is often split into charges for rent as well as charges for care.

Some local authorities may charge you rent even if your care is free of charge under section 117. It is unclear whether this is within the law. But if this happens you may be able to claim benefits to cover rent if you are on a low income. See 'how can I pay for my rent if I am on a low income?' above, for more information.

You can find more information about 'Section 117 aftercare - Under the Mental Health Act 1983' at www.rethink.org. Or call our General Enquiries team on 0121 522 7007 and ask them to send you a copy of our factsheet.

Top

4. Do I have the right to choose my supported housing?²²

Your care might be funded by your local authority (LA). If so, they should let you know about your right to choose your supported housing.

You can choose your own supported housing if:

- It is the same type of supported housing shown in your care plan,
- it has room to house you,
- it can meet your assessed needs, and
- it agrees to enter a contract with your LA and follow your LA's conditions.

You cannot choose your own supported housing if your care is funded by NHS continuing healthcare.

What are top-up payments?

The supported housing you want to live in might cost more than your assessed personal budget. If so, you or your loved ones can make 'top-up' payments to cover this.

What if my local authority (LA) refuse my chosen supported housing?

Your LA might refuse or might be unable to arrange a place in the supported housing you have chosen. They must give you their reasons in writing.

What if I choose out-of-area supported housing?

You may want to live in supported housing in an area outside of the local authority (LA) where you normally live. You might want to move closer to friends and family.

Your current LA must organise this for you. But only if the housing you want to live in fits the things mentioned above.

The LA where you currently live must agree your personal budget. They should think about the cost of care in the area you want to live in when agreeing this.

Your current LA would remain responsible for your care after you have moved to your new area.

You can find more information about 'Social care - Care and support planning under the Care Act 2014' at www.rethink.org. Or call our General Enquiries team on 0121 522 7007 and ask them to send you a copy of our factsheet.

Top

5. Who do I contact if I have housing problems?

You might have problems with your supported housing, like a maintenance or repair issue.

You can:

- contacting the on-site housing support, if there is any,
- contacting off-site housing support, if there is any,
- speak to your support workers or care co-ordinator,
- if your supporting housing is local authority run, contact the housing department there. You can find contact details for your local authority here: www.gov.uk/find-local-council,
- contact the organisations who provide general housing advice in the <u>useful contacts</u> section of this factsheet.

<u>Top</u>



Organisations who provide general housing advice:

Shelter

The leading housing charity in the UK. They offer advice and help on all aspects of housing, including homelessness through their online advice service and free phone advice line. They can also direct you towards local housing organisations in your area.

Phone: 0808 800 4444 Website: www.shelter.org.uk

Citizens Advice

Give free advice to help you to sort housing, legal, money and other problems.

Phone 0800 144 8848

Website: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

Turn2us

You can search for local housing or homelessness advice on their website. Choose 'housing' or 'homelessness' from the drop-down menu and put in your postcode.

Website: https://advicefinder.turn2us.org.uk

Disability Law Service

Give free advice to people on certain areas of law including social care, and some areas of housing.

Phone: 0207 791 9800 Email:advice@dls.org.uk Website: dls.org.uk



Other organisations who provide supported housing or other advice:

The Consortium for Therapeutic Communities

This group produces a directory of therapeutic communities on their website.

Phone: 01242 620 077

Email: admin@therapeuticcommunities.org
Website: www.therapeuticcommunities.org

Rethink Mental Illness

Rethink Mental Illness have some supported housing services in different parts of England. You can see if they have any services close to you using the website below. Or you can call the General Enquiries number.

Telephone: 0121 522 7007 Email: info@rethink.org

Website: www.rethink.org/help-in-your-area/about-services-and-groups

MIND

This charity run services across the country. For information on your nearest local Mind, contact the Mind Infoline or search on their website.

Phone: 0300 123 3393 Email: info@mind.org.uk Website: www.mind.org.uk

Address: 2 Redman Place, London, E20 1JQ

Advance

This is a charity that offers housing, support, employment, and other services for people who have a mental health problem. They have services in different parts of the country.

Phone: 0333 012 4307

Address: 2 Witan Way, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX28 6FH

Email: Customer.Services@advanceuk.org

Website: www.advanceuk.org

Community Housing and Therapy

Supports people with complex and severe mental health conditions including personality disorder, psychosis, and trauma to live more fulfilled lives. They provide a recovery orientated therapeutic community. Their services are based around London and the South-East.

Phone: 020 7381 5888

Address: Vox Studios (WG10), 1 – 45 Durham Street, London, SE11 5JH

Email: co@cht.org.uk
Website: www.cht.org.uk

Riverside

This is a large housing association with a range of supported housing services. They have services across the country.

Telephone: 0345 111 0000

Address: Riverside, PO Box 2065, Liverpool, L4 4YX

Webchat: www.riverside.org.uk/contact_us/faqs/talk-on-live-chat

Website: www.riverside.org.uk

The Salvation Army Housing Association

The Salvation Army runs supported housing across the UK for single, homeless men and women. This often includes people with mental health problems.

Phone: 0800 970 6363 Email: info@saha.org.uk Website: www.saha.org.uk

Sanctuary Housing Association

This charity offers housing services. They can provide different levels of support, and a number of specialist services are available. They have services across the country.

Phone: 01905 334000

Address: Sanctuary House, Chamber Court, Castle Street, Worcester,

WR1 3ZQ

Email via website: www.sanctuary.co.uk/general-enquiry-form

Website: www.sanctuary.co.uk

Shared Lives Plus

The UK network for Shared Lives and Home Share.

Phone: 0151 227 3499

Address: Eleanor Rathbone House, Connect Business Village, 24 Derby

Road, Liverpool, L5 9PR

E-mail: <u>info@sharedlivesplus.org.uk</u> **Website**: <u>www.sharedlivesplus.org.uk</u>

Home Group

This group is a provider of housing, care, and support services across England. They aim to help people with special needs to live independently.

Phone: 0345 141 4663

Email: contactus@homegroup.org.uk

Email via website: www.homegroup.org.uk/get-in-touch/get-in-touch-form

Website: www.homegroup.org.uk

Together

This group works in the community, hospitals and prisons supporting people with severe and enduring mental health needs and their carers. Their schemes include supported housing. They have services across the country.

Phone: 020 7780 7300

Address: Together for Mental Wellbeing, 52 Walnut Tree Walk, London,

SE11 6DN

Email: contact-us@together-uk.org
Website: www.together-uk.org

Turning Point

This group offers supported housing for people with substance misuse issues and mental health problems. They have services across the country.

Email via website: www.turning-point.co.uk/contact-us

Website: www.turning-point.co.uk

United Response

This group works in local communities throughout England and South Wales. Their services include small residential care homes and supported housing.

Phone: 0208 016 5678

Address: 7th Floor, Knollys House, 17 Addiscombe Road, Croydon

CR0 6SR

Email: info@unitedresponse.org.uk **Website**: www.unitedresponse.org.uk

Stonewall Housing

A national charity supporting LGBTQ+ people of all ages who live in the UK and are experiencing homelessness or living in an unsafe environment. Have specialisms in mental Health, domestic abuse and supported accommodation.

Address: Stonewall Housing 8 Coppergate House 10 Whites Row London

E1 7NF

Email: info@stonewallhousing.org

Phone: 0800 6 404 404

Website: https://stonewallhousing.org

Broken links?

All links to other pages on our website, and other websites, worked when we last reviewed this page. If you notice that any links no longer work, you can help us by emailing us at feedback@rethink.org and we will fix them. Many thanks.

Incorrect information?

All the information in this factsheet was correct, to the best of our knowledge, when we published it. If you think any information is incorrect you can help us by emailing us at feedback@rethink.org. Many thanks.

Top

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This factsheet is available in large print.

Rethink Mental Illness Advice Service

Phone 0808 801 0525 Monday to Friday, 9:30am to 4pm (excluding bank holidays)

Email advice@rethink.org



We'd love to know If this Information helped you

Drop us a line at: feedback@rethink.org

or write to us at Rethink Mental Illness:

RAIS

PO Box 18252

Solihull

B91 9BA

or call us on 0808 801 0525

We're open 9:30am to 4pm

Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays)



Equality, rights, fair treatment, and the maximum quality of life for all those severely affected by mental illness.

For further information on Rethink Mental Illness Phone 0121 522 7007 Email info@rethink.org











Patient Information Forum

Need more help?

Go to <u>rethink.org</u> for information on symptoms, treatments, money and benefits and your rights.

Don't have access to the web?

Call us on 0121 522 7007. We are open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, and we will send you the information you need in the post.

Need to talk to an adviser?

If you need practical advice, call us on: 0808 801 0525 between 9:30am to 4pm, Monday to Friday, Our specialist advisers can help you with queries like how to apply for benefits, get access to care or make a complaint.

Can you help us to keep going?

We can only help people because of donations from people like you. If you can donate please go to rethink.org/donate or call 0121 522 7007 to make a gift. We are very grateful for all our donors' generous support.

















