**A group of people posing for a photo

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**Housing Toolkit**

**Plain English Version for people and families**

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# Section 1: What this is about

This guide is to help people with learning disabilities and autistic people think about where they want to live.

This includes choices like different kinds of house or flat, how you pay for it or where you might live.

There is information on **rights** and choices as well as examples of how people got the right home for them.

We hope it will help you plan for what kind of housing is right for you or your family.

Remember you will need to make decisions on what is most important to you. Your ideal home might not be possible, or you might have to work towards it over time. We hope this guide helps you work out what is possible and important in where you live

There are 13 sections with information on:

* Who this guide is for and how the guide works
* **Independent living** – what that is
* **Commissioners** and local people working together to plan housing choices
* Your rights when deciding where to live
* Making your own housing plan for what matters to you
* Finding the right home for you and understanding the options you have
* How you can pay for your home and **living expenses**
* Housing design options
* Who might help you find or get your home
* Quality and legal frameworks

You can use this guide, with people who support you (family, friends, social workers, advisers) to help you decide.

We hope this guide will be useful for anyone thinking about where they live now or want to live next.

The guide is aimed at people who get paid support via the Council and will be most use to them.

There is another guide that we wrote for people who commission services.

The 2 guides link together because we think that coproduction should be at the heart of work on helping people with learning disabilities and autistic people find a home.

You can find out more about **co-production** with this guide.

# Section 2: Who this guide is for?

This guide is open to anyone who is interested.

Most of the information is aimed at autistic people and people with learning disabilities who have support from health or social care in their life and are thinking about where they live.

We have tried to make an easy to use and read version so autistic people, and people with learning disabilities can use it. We hope family members and paid supporters will be able to use it too.

The information is for any adults, Although we hope young people and their families will use it to plan ahead.

There is more information on all parts of growing up and planning for young people and their families on the Preparing for Adulthood website - <https://www.ndti.org.uk/resources/preparing-for-adulthood-all-tools-resources/>

# Section 3: How this guide works

We have tried to make this guide easy to use.

The words in **blue** are ones we think need explaining.

There is a Blue Word Glossary section at the end of this document with a list that explains what these words or phrases mean.

EXAMPLE of blue word – **Supported living**

Supported living is when someone lives in a house or flat with some support. They could live alone or share with others. People will rent or own their house

There are also some stories from people on how they got their home.

There are people’s stories in a separate section: on page 54

## Independent Living

We have written this guide to support **independent living** for everyone.

This guide talks a lot about housing and support choices, but we want to explain an important idea called independent living.

Living independently does not mean doing everything yourself or not having support.

Independent living is about having choice and control over your life

and having the same range of opportunities as a non-disabled person.

This is a right disabled people have campaigned for and that is in the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**.

There is an easy read report on the UN Convention of Human Rights:

<https://bit.ly/easy-read-un-convention>

Inclusion Europe explain more about Independent Living:

<https://www.inclusion-europe.eu/crpd/>

The REACH standards on support for living explain more about how services can make sure how they work supports independent living.

You can find out about those here - <https://paradigm-uk.org/what-we-do/reach-support-for-living/>

# Section 4: Planning together the housing choices in your area

This section is about people with learning disabilities, their families and commissioners or providers working together to develop the services and housing local people need.

Section 5 is on making your own housing plan HERE

You can read about how the London Borough of Greenwich worked with local people and Golden Lane housing to write a big plan for housing:

<https://bit.ly/Examples-Housing>

## Doing a housing needs assessment together

We know that for people to have choices about their home the local **commissioners** and services need to understand:

* How many autistic people or people with learning disabilities live locally?
* What kinds of housing and support they will need?

They need this information, so they make decisions about services they develop and money they spend. This is often called a housing needs assessment. Doing this assessment helps commissioners and housing providers plan and delivery the kinds of housing choices local people need.

This assessment is best done by local people working together. Sometimes this is called co-production. We explain more about co-production on page 11.

There 5 stages to making the housing needs assessment:

1. **Assessing what is needed** – People working together to agree what is needed for young people and adults with learning disabilities and autistic people and their families.
2. **Planning how housing choices happen** - working together to agree how the money and services are arranged based on what people need.
3. **Making sure the plans happen** - Local people and families are part of checking how services are working and if people get the right choices.
4. **Checking how it is going** - co-evaluation of the service
5. **Making changes based on feedback**

Working together is what will help build a local housing offer that meets more people’s needs and makes best use of local resources.

SCIE have resources and training on **co-production** (working together with equal power) here

They share an example of Greenwich London Borough working with Golden Lane housing to co-produce the housing strategy (including housing needs assessment). You can read it and other examples: <https://bit.ly/Examples-Housing>

The technical section on what needs to be in a housing needs assessment: LINK

## More about coproduction

Co-production means services working together with people who use services and carers.

There are some important principles we suggest people and organisations who work together follow.

These are the ones Think Local Act Personal (TLAP) promote:

1. Equality – everyone has something to give, and nobody is more important than anyone else.
2. Diversity – services should make sure everyone can take part in co-production.
3. Access – there should not be anything that makes it difficult for any group of people to take part in co-production.
4. Reciprocity – this means everyone getting something for what they do in co-production. Sometimes they get money. Sometimes they get something for free. Working together is what will help build a local housing offer that meets more people’s needs and makes best use of local resources.

NHS England has information on working together and coproduction:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/learning-disabilities/about/get-involved/involving-people/why-is-it-important-to-involve-people/>

There is a film people with learning disabilities made about coproduction:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qjFI0y-Qx84>

The TLAP resources include a range of resources and examples. They are about how local people, paid workers and organisations worked together to develop a local plan and commission the services.

You can find these resources at:

<https://bit.ly/TLAP-Stories-and-resources>

The Coalition 4 Personalised Care (C4PC) has a coproduction model that sets out the 5 values and 7 steps to making coproduction happen. You can find these resources at:

<https://bit.ly/Co-Production-Model>

For more information about co-production please read on page 11.

# Section 5: Making your own housing plan

Each person’s decisions about where they live, who they live with and how they live their life will be different.

We know that not everyone will be able to get their ideal home. Although using person centred tools and having good information can help people make the best choice for them with the options available now.

You might need to think about this again if your life changes.

Remember that you can change where you live or how you are supported.

That might be because your relationship changes or you want to live nearer work or a family member.

You are deciding what is right for you now. On the next page there are some important steps to help you make a plan.

Important steps to help you make a plan

### Step 1: My Ideas

Think about your ideas and what is important now.

* Why move?
* Who do I want to live with?
* Should I stay where I am?
* What’s wrong with where I am?
* I’d like to be more independent
* What kind of home do I want?
* How soon?

### Step 2: What’s important?

Think about what is most important about where you live next.

* Where and how I live
* Who I live with?
* Area: Being near friends and family
* Feeling safe
* Getting the right kind of support
* Helping with the housing
* Transport
* Being near shops
* Having enough space on my own

### Step 3: What sort of home?

Think about what kind of home you want and who with.

* Housing with others
* Flat on my own
* Living with a family
* Sharing with my friend
* Moving into a shared house or support service that already exists.

### Step 4: How to find a place?

Think about how you might find a place to live.

* Buying your own home with a mortgage or money you have
* Renting
* Renting from housing association or council, private landlords
* An existing care home

### Step 5: Information and help

* Look for where you can get information or help
* Think about what you need to know and where to find it. There is more information on this in section 10
* Council offices
* Books or internet
* Someone who’s done this before
* House experts
* Family
* Social worker
* People who provide housing or support

### Step 6: Care and support

Next think about what is important to you to get help on or be near. Do you need to think about how you will manage any of these things?

* Feeling safe and not lonely
* Help in the home with housekeeping, money, shopping, cooking and other practical things
* Personal and health care
* Transport and getting about
* Work, social and leisure activities
* Planning things and communication
* Feeling safe and not lonely
* Help in the home with housekeeping, money, shopping, cooking and other practical things
* Personal and health care
* Transport and getting about
* Work, social and leisure activities
* Planning things and communication

### Step 7: Moving in

Once you know what kind of home you are looking for and started that plan you can think about how you will be ready to move once you find somewhere.

* Furniture, equipment
* Who provides what?
* Gas, electric, services
* Bills and managing money

## How can you work out what is important?

The important points from autistic people, people with learning disabilities and family’s experiences would be:

* Think about what matters most to you about how you live including:
  + who you live with
  + what you like doing
  + where you want to be
* Think about what is important for you to keep safe and happy
* Plan ahead – finding the right home can take time so start thinking about any changes early.
* Make a list of what you want and decide which things are most important and which you can compromise on.

Together Matters have a guide to help people make these decisions – they help you think about 3 big questions.

* Who do you want to live with?
* Where do you want to live?
* What help would you need?

The guide is free and you can download it and fill in your answers here:

<https://www.togethermatters.org.uk/planning-the-future/>

Below is an example of just 1 of the sections from the guide. There are lots of other ideas to help you plan in the guide.

Graphical user interface, application

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Self-advocates in North Yorkshire made this checklist to help decide on what kind of home you want. Here is an example from the checklist:

Graphical user interface, timeline

Description automatically generated

You can see their full easy read guide on housing choices:

<https://www.nypartnerships.org.uk/findingahome>

## Information that can help you decide

You can use these different guides or tools that can help you think about what matters most to you.

After answering questions in the guides, you can then start to find out what choices there are where you live and with the money you have.

You can find more things to help you think about what is most important on the next few pages. You might plan with your family or paid supporters.

## Useful tools and templates for anyone

**Together Matters** is a organisation that works with people and their families to plan ahead.

They have a guide on planning ahead that includes information on housing and support choices

This guide is aimed at family or friends helping someone plan. There is also an easy to use guide people planning for themselves.

<https://www.togethermatters.org.uk/planning-the-future/>

## Useful tools and templates for young people and their families

**The Preparing for Adulthood Programme** helps Councils and others work with young disabled people and their families as they become adults

They have a guide and top tips on **independent living** and housing choices

PFA guide

**Life Begins at Home** – information for families of children who display **behaviour that challenges**. The resource includes a guide, information on safe design in the home and videos

The resources includes a guide, information on safe design in the home and videos:

[http://hsa.learningdisabilityengland.org.uk/life-begins-at-home.html](file:///C:\Users\david\Library\Containers\com.microsoft.Word\Data\Library\Preferences\AutoRecovery\The%20resources%20includes%20a%20guide,%20information%20on%20safe%20design%20in%20the%20home%20and%20videos:%20http:\hsa.learningdisabilityengland.org.uk\life-begins-at-home.html)

## Useful tools and templates for families of people whose behaviours challenges others

**Planning Your House** is a guide from the Challenging Behaviour Foundation.

People with learning disabilities and challenging behaviour have the same rights as everyone else to appropriate local housing and support.

This resource has been developed to help families to work with others to plan the right housing for their relative.

You can find the guide at:

<https://www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk/information-and-guidance/housing-education-leisure/planning-your-house/>

## Useful guide about choosing a support provider guide

There is a Top 10 tips when choosing a support provider guide that can help you think about the support once you have a housing plan:

<https://www.housinglin.org.uk/_assets/Resources/Housing/OtherOrganisation/2017-VODG-Top-10-tips-when-choosing-a-support-provider.pdf>

There is also an easy read version of this guide:

<https://www.vodg.org.uk/publications/top-ten-tips-for-choosing-a-support-provider-easy-read/>

## Example record sheet

### The kinds of housing options that might be good for me

You can use a record sheet to write down the kinds of housing options that might be good for you.

This is where you can record the key points on things that are important to you. You can get someone to help you with this.

The answers should give you a good idea of where to start and what happens next.

You can fill in the questions over the next few pages.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **I need/would like to move by** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (date/year)  (This date may not be possible as it can take a long time to find your home.) | |
| **Where I want to live in the future** (e.g. in my own home, in the family home, in a shared home) | |
| **The area or type of area I would prefer to live in** (e.g. town, village, near to family/ work/public transport) | |
| **The kinds of property that would be worth looking at** are (e.g. house flat, bungalow) | |
| **Number of bedrooms I need is** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |
| **The following options are worth looking at:** (please tick) | |
| Private Rented  Public sector rented  Home ownership  Living with another family | Supported living scheme  Shared ownership  Residential care  Other: please state: |
| **I will/might need the following adaptations to make the property accessible** (e.g. walk-in shower, wide doors, turning space, hoist, etc.) | |
| **I am likely to need support with** (e.g. personal care, shopping, bills, cleaning, etc.) | |
| **What I think I will need to pay for and how I will have enough** money (e.g. bills, rent or mortgage, moving costs) | |
| **I would like to live with** (name of any specific people) | |
| **Next steps: What needs to happen next and who will do it** (e.g. registering with the Council as needing accommodation, contacting housing associations, etc.) | |

## Ed’s story - the right home and support

“have given him a life.”

Ed spent most of the summer of 2017 in a log cabin at the bottom of his parents’ garden. The windows were shut. The blinds were drawn. On the rare occasions Ed did leave the cabin, he wore ear defenders to block out any noise.

Ed’s older sisters had both left home and Ed’s sense of loss manifested itself in extreme anxiety and frustration. His parents built him a log cabin in the garden, hoping it would give him independence and a safe space. It didn’t quite work out as they’d planned. “He refused to come out,” says Sharon, Ed’s mum. “For nearly three years he was a recluse.”

One day, Ed took his parents by surprise. “He said, ‘Why am I still here when Stacey and Leanne have left?’” Sharon remembers.

The family started looking for supported accommodation, but it wasn’t easy. After the first place did not work out, Sharon thought that Ed would be put off by the idea, but when he was offered a bungalow and his own tenancy in Bicester with support, he was delighted.

“When we visited, he had this huge smile,” says Sharon. “He was opening all the cupboards and asking, ‘Is this all mine?’”

Sharon vividly remembers the first time she visited her son in his new home. “Straightaway he said, ‘Hello Mum, do you want a tea?’ It was lovely, as in the log cabin he never wanted to do anything.”

The support team has helped Ed organise his week around the things he loves doing. They encouraged him to think about what skills he wanted to develop and together they decided to focus on his passion for woodwork.

They found a furniture restoration class on Fridays, and it’s really given Ed a chance to shine.

He’s a long way from the Ed in ear defenders who rarely left his cabin.

Things have improved for Sharon, too. Before Ed moved out, her life had become increasingly restricted to the house. Today, she can pop out knowing that Ed is getting the right support.

“It’s changed all our lives,” she says. “My daughter Leanne said to me, ‘It’s like having the old Ed back.’ She really hit the nail on the head. The SeeAbility team have given him a life.”

# Section 6: Your rights when deciding where to live

## What is this document about?

When you are thinking about where you want to live, it is important to know about your **rights**. Rights are about how people should be treated.

Everyone has rights. Your rights belong to you, you do not have to do anything to get your rights, and they can never be taken away.

Your rights **protect** you from being treated badly or unfairly.

Some of your rights are protected by the **law**. This means there will be a duty on someone to protect your rights.

There are different laws that protect your rights when you are thinking about where to live. In this section, we will talk about.

* A law called the **Human Rights Act**
* How the Human Rights Act protects you and who must look after your rights
* How you can talk about an issue which affects your human rights

## What is the Human Rights Act?

The Human Rights Act is the law that protects everyone’s human rights in the UK.

The Human Rights Act protects you if you are anywhere in the UK. This includes England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

A law is a set of rules decided by the government which says what people can and can’t do. If you break the law, you could be punished.

Everyone has rights which are protected by the Human Rights Act, including:

* People with disabilities
* People who have committed crimes
* People who are living in the UK but who were not born here
* Children and young people

The Human Rights Act says that it is the law for staff working in **public bodies** to respect and protect your human rights.

Public bodies are organisations that serve the public. For example, NHS or councils. They are usually paid for by the government.

When you are thinking about where to live, you might talk about this with different staff who work in public bodies.

Staff who have to look after your human rights could include:

* Staff who work for your local council, such as housing officers or social workers
* Staff who work for a **housing association**. This is an organisation which looks after **social housing**.
* Staff who work for the NHS, such as doctors, nurses, or **commissioners**.
* **Government bodies** that find out what has happened when someone complains about an organisation. This is called an **Ombudsman**.
* The judge if you have to go to Court.

There is an Easy Read guide to the Human Rights Act by The British Institute of Human Rights. You can read it at:

<https://www.bihr.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=4d5e5a20-93c0-44b5-8e22-e903ea41885f>

## What do staff in public bodies have to do to look after your human rights?

Staff in public bodies have to look after your human rights in three ways. They have to:

1. **Respect your human rights.** This means staff should not take away your rights on purpose.
2. **Protect your human rights.** This means staff should step in and help you if they know your rights are at risk. This is sometimes called **safeguarding**.
3. **Fulfil your human rights.** This means if something has gone wrong, public bodies must find out why so they can stop this from happening again.

Staff working in public services may need to think about other laws, such as the **Care Act**. Staff working in public services have to make sure they are looking after your human rights at the same time.

If your human rights are not looked after, you can take a **legal case** to the courts.

There is an Easy Read guide to the Care Act by the Department of Health: <https://bit.ly/CareActUK>

## What rights do you have when thinking about where to live?

You have 16 rights under the Human Rights Act. The British Institute of Human Rights has made guides to all of your rights: [www.bihr.org.uk/what-rights-do-i-have](http://www.bihr.org.uk/what-rights-do-i-have)

The Human Rights Act says you have rights which are important to know about when you are deciding where to live. These are:

* The right to be safe from serious harm.
* The right to a fair **trial**.
* The right to private and family life, home and contact.
* The right to enjoy things that belong to you.
* The right not to be treated unfairly.

## The right to be safe from serious harm

The right to be safe from serious harm is Article 3 of the Human Rights Act.

In the law this is called the right to be free from inhumane and degrading treatment.

Staff working in public services must not make decisions or do things which cause you to feel very scared, embarrassed or which cause you a lot of pain.

Staff working in public services must not make decisions or do things which cause you:

* to feel very scared
* to feel embarrassed
* a lot of pain

If staff in public bodies know you are at risk of serious harm, they have to do something to help you. This is called safeguarding.

Staff in public bodies must respect and protect this right whether you:

* are renting your home from a housing association or a private landlord
* own your own home

There are lots of ways that someone's right to be safe from serious harm could be at risk. Being homeless is one example. This may be because being homeless makes someone feel very scared or it is very bad for their health. This person could talk to the housing officer about their right to be safe from serious harm. The Housing Officer has to look after this right because they work for a public body.

There is guide about the right to be safe from serious harm by The British Institute of Human Rights:

[www.bihr.org.uk/the-right-to-be-free-from-inhuman-and-degrading-treatment](http://www.bihr.org.uk/the-right-to-be-free-from-inhuman-and-degrading-treatment)

## The right to a fair trial

The right to a fair trial is Article 6 of the Human Rights Act.

Public services might make decisions that affect your rights. You must be included in conversations about this in a way which is fair. For example, if you are at risk of being evicted from your home. You should be given the important information in a way you understand.

If you need an interpreter, including a BSL signer, you are allowed to have one. You do not have to pay for this.

You can find out more about your right to a fair trial:

<https://www.bihr.org.uk/get-informed/what-rights-do-i-have/the-right-to-a-fair-trial>

There is an Easy Read guide about the right to accessible information by The British Institute of Human Rights:

[www.bihr.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=e51028db-8962-49f8-905c-31ff258c68e9](http://www.bihr.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=e51028db-8962-49f8-905c-31ff258c68e9)

## The right to private and family life, home and contact

The right to private and family life, home and contact is Article 8 of the Human Rights Act. This right protects lots of day-to-day things like:

* Your wellbeing
* Having control and being involved in decisions about you
* Being a part of your community, including the people and places that are important to you
* Keeping in touch with people who are important to you
* Keeping your private information safe
* Being able to enjoy where you live. This does not mean you can be given a home automatically. But, it does mean if you have a home that you like, this shouldn’t be taken away from you.

There are some cases where staff in public services don't need to follow this right to a family life. This should only happen if it is:

* Lawful – is there a law saying this is allowed?
* For a good reason – why is this decision being made? The good reasons are written down in the law and they cannot be made up. Normally a good reason is to keep you or other people safe.
* It is the best option – All options have been thought about and considered to find the best thing to do. This is also called the least restrictive option.

Tim and Sylvia’s story is an example of this right being important in real life. You can watch their story:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7DzDu4BZUJE>

You can find out more about your right to private and family life, home and contact:

<https://www.bihr.org.uk/the-right-to-private-and-family-life>

# Making decisions about where you live

If staff are helping you to decide where to live, they must follow another law called the **Mental Capacity Act**.

The Mental Capacity Act applies if you are in England or Wales. If you live in Scotland or Northern Ireland, the law is different.

The Mental Capacity Act is about helping people make decisions about their life.

The Mental Capacity Act says staff have to follow 5 rules. Staff have to:

1. Assume you can make your own decision about something, unless it is shown that you can’t.
2. Give you as much help as you need to make your own decision.
3. Allow you to make an unwise decision, if you understand what you are doing.
4. Make a decision that is best for you, if you cannot make a decision for yourself.
5. Find a way of doing what needs to be done that is right for you.

If you can’t make a decision about signing or ending an agreement to rent a home, the only people who can do this for you are:

* Someone you have formally chosen to make decisions for you about things that belong to you. This is called a Lasting Power of Attorney.
* Someone who has been chosen by a court to make decisions for you about things that belong to you. This is called a Deputy.
* A court which makes decisions when people can’t decide for themselves. This is called the Court of Protection.

Staff in public bodies must follow the Mental Capacity Act and the Human Rights Act when they are helping you decide where to live.

There is Easy Read guide to the Mental Capacity Act:

<https://www.careengland.org.uk/sites/careengland/files/Mental%20Capacity%20Act%202005%20easy%20read%20guide.pdf>

There is an Easy Read guide about people who make decisions for you:

<https://assets.nhs.uk/prod/documents/MH-CoP-Decisions-for-you.pdf>

## The right to enjoy things that belong to you

The right to enjoy things that belong to you is part of Protocol 1, Article 1 of the Human Rights Act.

This right means you should be able to enjoy things that belong to you, including your home and some benefits. Staff in public services are not allow to control things that belong to you or take them away.

Staff in public bodies can sometimes make decisions or do things that limit this right. Staff in public bodies must make sure that their decision is:

* Lawful
* For a good reason
* Thought about properly

We have explained what these words mean on page ? of this guide.

You can find out more about your right to enjoy things that belong to you: [www.bihr.org.uk/the-right-to-peaceful-enjoyment-of-possessions](http://www.bihr.org.uk/the-right-to-peaceful-enjoyment-of-possessions)

## The right not to be treated unfairly

The right not to be treated unfairly is Article 14 of the Human Rights Act.

In the law this is called the right to be free from **discrimination**.

This right means that nobody should be treated worse than others for any reason, such as disability or race. Or for a number of reasons, such as being a young, black, disabled woman.

Staff working in public services can only treat you differently if this is to stop you from being treated worse. For example, providing you with different support so you can access the same things as other people.

When using this right, it has to be joined onto another one of the other rights in the Human Rights Act, such as your right to be safe from serious harm.

For example, think about a person who lives in specialist housing which is paid for by the local council. The local council say they will stop paying for specialist housing because they are different homes that are cheaper. Staff in the local council haven’t spoken to the person or thought about what help he needs.

This issue would be about their right not to be treated unfairly as well as their right to private and family life.

You can find out more about your right to be free from discrimination:

<https://www.bihr.org.uk/the-right-to-be-free-from-discrimination>

## Extra protection for your right not to be treated unfairly

As well as the Human Rights Act, another law also protects you from being treated unfairly. This is called the **Equality Act**.

The Equality Act applies if you live in England, Scotland or Wales. If you live in Northern Ireland, the law is different.

The Equality Act protects you from being treated unfairly for 9 different things. These are:

* Age
* Disability
* Gender reassignment
* Marriage or civil partnership
* Pregnancy or motherhood
* Race
* Religion or belief
* Sex
* Sexual orientation

The Equality Act applies to public bodies and **private bodies** if they are serving people. For example:

* Private landlords
* Shops
* Employers

The Human Rights Act only applies to public bodies.

There is an Easy Read guide on the Equality Act:

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/85039/easy-read.pdf>

## Jane’s Story

Jane is a disabled single mum. Jane applied to **rent** a home from a **private landlord**.

The private landlord said no. He said this was because of a rule which said people who get some housing benefits can’t rent a home from a private landlord.

Jane challenged this rule in the courts, saying she was being treated unfairly for being a woman and having a disability.

The courts decided that Jane was right.

The judge said the rule about who can rent a home from a private landlord was not fair, and the Equality Act had been broken.

## What can I do if I’m worried about my human rights?

You can talk to staff in public services about their decisions to do with where you live. And you can ask them to tell you how they are looking after your rights.

You may think changes could be made which mean that your human rights would be better protected. Then you can tell staff in public services about this. Their decision might not be the best option for you.

The British Institute of Human Rights has an online tool called Know Your Human Rights where you can:

* Learn more about your rights
* Ask questions
* Find out if your issue is about human rights
* Download letter templates to write about your issue

You can find the Know Your Human Rights at:

<https://knowyourhumanrights.co.uk/home/>

## John’s Story

John is a man with a learning disability. He lived alone in a flat which he rented from a local authority housing provider.

John’s flat was just one small room which he used as his bedroom, bathroom and living room all at the same time. His shower wasn’t working and his toilet was close to his bed.

John’s nurse was very worried when she visited his flat. She told the local NHS trust, the local authority and John’s housing provider that his right to private life and his right to be safe from serious harm were at risk.

Talking about John’s human rights helped change his life. New accommodation was found for John which was better for him. He now has more space, he can get washed properly, and his quality of life is much better.

## Where can I find more information about my rights?

There is an Easy Read guide to the Human Rights Act by The British Institute of Human Rights. You can read it at:

<https://www.bihr.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=4d5e5a20-93c0-44b5-8e22-e903ea41885f>

There is an Easy Read guide about the right to accessible information by The British Institute of Human Rights:

[www.bihr.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=e51028db-8962-49f8-905c-31ff258c68e9](http://www.bihr.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=e51028db-8962-49f8-905c-31ff258c68e9)

You can find the Know Your Human Rights at:

<https://knowyourhumanrights.co.uk/home/>

There is an Easy Read guide to the Care Act by the Department of Health:

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/365345/Making_Sure_the_Care_Act_Works_EASY_READ.pdf>

There is Easy Read guide to the Mental Capacity Act:

<https://www.careengland.org.uk/sites/careengland/files/Mental%20Capacity%20Act%202005%20easy%20read%20guide.pdf>

There is an Easy Read guide on the Equality Act:

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/85039/easy-read.pdf>

There is an Easy Read guide about people who make decisions for you:

<https://assets.nhs.uk/prod/documents/MH-CoP-Decisions-for-you.pdf>

# Section 7: The different options for finding the right home for you

## About this section

This section is all about the different options you can think about when finding the right place to live.

You can get more information about advantages and disadvantages on page 48.

You can also read about other people's experiences on page 54.

Learning Disability England and Riverside Housing have some cards that can help you think about and make housing choices.

Each card tells you some of the good and bad things about each option.

You can download the Housing cards:

[www.learningdisabilityengland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/LDE-Pack-1-Housing-Choices-Cards-i.pdf](http://www.learningdisabilityengland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/LDE-Pack-1-Housing-Choices-Cards-i.pdf)

## Your local choices

You will need to find out what is possible for you. Some might not be possible for you now because of the area or the money you have.

We have asked some questions in the sections to help you.

Remember it could take time to make this happen or you might decide to live somewhere for a short time and then move.

## Housing and Support

There are a lot of different ways to organise where you live and how you get support. They do not have to be from the same organisation.

Having a different landlord and support provider can give you more choice. You can have a **personal budget** to pay for your support or organise it with the Council.

In Control have information and fact sheets to help you make a **support** plan and learn about how you can organise your support:

<https://in-control.org.uk/resources/factsheets/>

You can work with a support provider organisation to plan the support you need in your home.

This can be still controlled by you through an **Individual Service Fund**. This is where a provider manages your support and the money under an agreement with you

You can find out more about this way of managing support:

[www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/\_assets/Resources/SDS/TLAPISFsContractingFINAL.pdf](http://www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/_assets/Resources/SDS/TLAPISFsContractingFINAL.pdf)

## Support provider guide

This guide to choosing a support provider can help you think about the support once you have a housing plan:

<https://www.housinglin.org.uk/_assets/Resources/Housing/OtherOrganisation/2017-VODG-Top-10-tips-when-choosing-a-support-provider.pdf>

This the is easy read guide to choosing a support provider can help you think about the support once you have a housing plan:

<https://www.vodg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/VODG-top-tips-Easy-Read.pdf>

Remember if your support is paid for by the Council talk to them before you make final plans.

You need to check you will have enough money to pay for the option you chose.

There are good and bad things about choosing something already set up with support organised or finding a home and then organising support.

**Together Matters** have some information on things to think about for all the choices: [www.togethermatters.org.uk/downloads/6-ta-housing-and-support.pdf](http://www.togethermatters.org.uk/downloads/6-ta-housing-and-support.pdf)

## How you can find out more about housing in your area

You can find out more by:

1. Asking the Council Housing Department
2. Contacting local housing Associations
3. Asking the Learning Disability Team
4. Contacting local self-advocacy and family organisations

## Rental options

**Renting** means that you will pay someone else to live in a building they own.

1. You can rent a home from a Council or local housing association
2. You can rent a home from a voluntary or charity organisation
3. You can rent a home from a private landlord or letting agent
4. You can rent a home from a family member, friend or someone that you know

### You can rent a home from a Council or local housing association

You normally have to put your name on the housing register to get this type of housing.

Check with your local Council to see what age you can register; it will be when you are either 16 or 18 years old. You will usually need to show you live locally already or have a reason for living the area you are applying for.

Most applications will need to be made online, but you can contact them by phone or in person at the Housing Office or department.

You will have to tell them about yourself, what your needs are now and how you are living.

When you make an application, make sure you tell them about your disability, because it might help you get on a priority list. It can take a while to get a home this way, so if you think you might like to rent from a Council or housing association it is best to register as soon as possible even if you don’t want to move yet.

What happens after you apply will depend on your personal circumstances; the person you speak to at the Housing Office will be able to tell you the next steps.

Some Housing Associations have Supported Housing that is for people who need some help to live in their own home.

There is often a different way to apply for Supported Housing than for the other housing that is open to everyone.

You might be able to apply to both so ask what the choices are in your area.

Sometimes you have to look for the houses that are available on the internet.

Remember: If you would like to live with a friend or long-term partner, you can apply for this type of housing together.

### You can rent a home from a voluntary or charity organisation

Many voluntary organisations and charities have properties that they rent out. Some are for one person, and some are to share with other people.

### You can rent a home from a private landlord or letting agent

You can rent from a private landlord. This means paying money to a person who owns a property so you can live there. Many young people start their housing journey by renting a flat from a private landlord.

Ways you can find private rented housing:

* Through a local letting agent
* From the Council: ask a) if they have arrangements to lease properties from private landlords and b) if they can help with a deposit
* A family member who has a property that they rent out (see below for more information on ‘Renting from a family member, friend, or someone that you know’)
* Looking for ‘to let’ signs
* Looking in the local newspaper
* Looking in shop windows

### You can rent a home from a family member, friend or someone that you know

You can rent from a family member, friend, or someone that you know.

## Tenancy agreement

When you rent a home, you are called a ‘**tenant’**.

To rent a home, you will normally need to sign a ‘**tenancy agreement’**.

A tenancy agreement gives you the right to live in the home. This is a contract agreed between you and the landlord.

You can find out more about what a tenancy is and the law on page 70.

## Useful information about rented accommodation

Many Councils have their own information on rented accommodation

Shelter provides useful advice and guidance. They also have a useful tool to help you work out what kind of tenancy you have so you can work out your legal rights:

<http://england.shelter.org.uk/get_advice/downloads_and_tools/tenancy_checker>

Shelter’s website also tells you where you can find advice in your area:

<http://england.shelter.org.uk/get_advice/advice_services_directory>

## Making changes to your home: Disabled Facilities Grant

Sometimes your home may need adaptions to help you live there. For example, handrails or wet room.

If you live in England, Northern Ireland, or Wales, you may be able to get a **Disabled Facilities Grant** to help with adapting your home.

You must have your landlord’s permission before making any changes.

Check with your local Council for more information on the Disabled Facilities Grant and look at:

[www.gov.uk/disabled-facilities-grants/overview](http://www.gov.uk/disabled-facilities-grants/overview)

## Making changes to your home: JMS Trust

JMS Trust supports disabled people and their families to set up their own supported living. They do this through offering information, advice and funding.

They can help people make changes in a property to set up a shared house. They will fund changes in rented houses or if you own it.

You can find out more <https://www.supportedlivingfunding.co.uk/>

## Home Ownership

It is possible to buy your own home. You can find out more by speaking to an organisation that specialises in home ownership for people with long-term disabilities (e.g., My Safe Home or Advance Housing – see ‘Useful information about home ownership’ on page ??).

Always speak to a professional to get the best advice about the advantages and disadvantages of buying a property.

For more information on home ownership, please look at Paying for Your Home section on page 80.

### Buying your own home through a Trust or with help from family

Sometimes a family can help someone buy somewhere to live. This is done through a **trust**. It may not be possible for everyone but there are examples of families using their own money to create buy to let solutions, which can be for someone living alone or sharing.

Find out more about family buying or a trust in Section 13 on page ??.

Always speak to a professional to get the best advice about the advantages and disadvantages of buying a property.

### Buying your home with a mortgage

You can buy a home by getting a mortgage. You need to get advice on if this will work for you. You can find out more about a mortgage or ways to pay it in Section 13 on page ??.

### Buying your home through the HOLD scheme

HOLD stands for Home Ownership for People with Long-term Disabilities. It is a government scheme in England to help people with a long-term disability buy any home for sale on a Shared Ownership basis (part-rent/part-buy).

There are rules about who can use the **HOLD scheme**. You can find out more about a mortgage or ways to pay it in Section 13 on page ??.

### Buying through Shared Ownership

Some properties are available to buy through a Shared Ownership scheme. This is where ownership of the property is shared between you and the landlord. You buy a portion of the property (between 25% and 75%). And the rest is owned by the landlord, to whom who you pay rent. You may be able to buy a larger share later on if you wish.

This is a good option to consider if you would like to buy a home but can’t afford a full mortgage. Some housing associations and charities offer shared ownership schemes. You can find out more information at - [www.helptobuy.gov.uk/shared-ownership/](http://www.helptobuy.gov.uk/shared-ownership/)

### A specialist NHS capital grant

If someone with a learning disability or autism or both has been in a specialist mental health hospital or needs extra help so they stay in the community, there could be an NHS England grant to help them get a home.

This only applies to a small number of people. You can find out more from the NHS England regional housing advisors:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/learning-disabilities/care/housing/>

### Useful information about home ownership

My Safe Home offer a service to help people with disabilities buy their own home through shared ownership or a financial advisor who specialises in advice and support about home ownership. See their easy read guide to home ownership - [www.mysafehome.info/easyreadguide/index.php/](http://www.mysafehome.info/easyreadguide/index.php/)

Advance Housing offer support to buy via the HOLD scheme. Find out more - <https://www.advanceuk.org/services/shared-ownership>

Please note that these are only examples and there may be other organisations who can support you.

## Supported living schemes with shared houses or group homes

### Supported Housing or group homes

Some housing providers have small groups of supported housing schemes. This may be people sharing a house, or small clusters of individual flats with shared communal facilities.

Sometimes these are self-contained flats or houses where each person has their own room but share other parts of the house.

Often, support is provided on site but sometimes there is a visiting support service. People can usually get extra support if they need it.

The Council or Learning Disability Team can tell you about what there is in your area.

### A Housing Network

KeyRing is one of the best-known housing network providers. Keyring's support is based on people living in their own homes but sharing their skills and talents with each other and with their communities.

There is a volunteer in each network. The volunteer sees members of the network regularly and helps the group work together. The volunteer is like a good neighbour who will help out if difficulties arise. The volunteer lives in the same community so knows what is going on and is able to help members make links.

In addition, Community Support Workers and Supported Living Managers make sure that members get the support they need. <http://www.keyring.org/Home>

Most Councils have information on the supported living schemes in their area.

## Other options for housing

In this section, we consider four other options:

1. Support in your existing home
2. Move-on schemes
3. Living with another family: Shared Lives Schemes
4. Residential and Nursing homes

### Staying in your current home

You could get a grant called a Disabled Facilities Grant from your Council if you’re disabled and need to make changes to your home, for example to:

* widen doors and install ramps
* improve access to rooms and facilities – e.g., stairlifts or a downstairs bathroom
* provide a heating system suitable for your needs
* adapt heating or lighting controls to make them easier to use

Depending on your income, you may need to pay towards the cost of the work to the property.

People who rent their property will need to get permission for any adaptations from their landlord. When the changes that you are seeking permission for relate to adaptations for a disabled person, the landlord should not refuse permission unless they have a good reason. In some cases, your landlord may be responsible for making the changes.

You might not get any grant if you start work on your property before the Council approves your application, so you must apply through your local Council.

A Disabled Facilities Grant won’t affect any benefits you get.

For more information go to - <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-facilities-grants/overview> or speak to your local Council.

Local councils also have the option to give financial and other assistance for repair, improvement, and adaptation of homes. This is help in addition to Disabled Facilities Grants.

You can be given help in the form of a loan or grant, equipment or materials or advice. Local councils can set their own conditions for deciding who gets help. They may, for example, choose whether to look at your income and savings when you apply for a grant.

### Move-on schemes

Some providers use the name ‘move-on’ for a type of service available through a **supported living** arrangement. This is usually provided through a local councils or housing association. Services vary in what they offer. Some providers may have an arranged training courses for young people to attend.

There may be criteria for accessing move-on accommodation; for example, it may only be available to young people between the ages of 18 and 30 via a nomination or direct referral process.

Once accepted by the service, the support required by individuals will be assessed. The support will be provided by a support worker/keyworker who will provide consistent visits to offer support. This type of service often acts as the bridge between supported housing and living independently.

They may provide help with:

* cooking
* cleaning
* shopping
* maintaining an independent tenancy
* linking in with healthcare services
* budgeting and managing money and benefits
* increasing social and living skills and broader support networks
* education, training and work opportunities

Young people cannot stay in this supported accommodation indefinitely. Time spent there will vary from person to person, but many schemes expect that within two years a young person will have the skills and knowledge to consider living independently, either in move-on accommodation or external supported, or unsupported, housing.

Some young people who are ready to move on may still require some level of support, for example through the structure of supported housing and/or a floating support service.

### Living with another family: Shared Lives Schemes

In a **Shared Lives Scheme**, you would live with a host family who have been checked to make sure they are trustworthy. You would share family life and live with, or near to, the host family. The family gives you support and care. This can either be a short- or long-term arrangement.

Each Shared Lives Scheme will have a person who makes sure that you are matched with a host family that is right for you. You would have a chance to meet them first and usually have a trial stay before deciding if you want to go ahead.

If the Council pays for your support, this would be organised by an Adult Social Care team, Social Worker or Care Manager. If you pay for your support, or you have a personal budget, you or someone who supports you might be able to organise it.

You can find out more about Shared Lives at <https://sharedlivesplus.org.uk/news-campaigns-and-jobs/about-us/>

Insert Rachel for Shared Lives short clip

### Residential care and nursing homes

Some people with a learning disability live in **registered care homes** and **nursing homes**. These homes can be good if someone has a lot of specialist care needs.

Many people choose other options because a care home offers people less independence usually.

A registered care home is a home that is set up for people who share a similar disability. This may mean that there are a lot of people living together, although some homes are small.

Residents usually have their own bedroom and sometimes have their own bathroom, but other parts of the home are shared between all residents.

Care homes are registered with the Care Quality Commission, who check if they think care homes are providing good enough care.

Nursing homes are similar to residential care homes but must have a registered and qualified nurse available 24 hours a day.

You can find more about local care homes in England on this website - <http://www.cqc.org.uk/content/care-homes>

# Section 8: Advantages & disadvantages of different home options

## Renting a home from a Council or local

There are advantages and disadvantages for renting a home from a Council or local **housing association**.

**The advantages are:**

* Housing benefit might be able to help you with all or part of your rent.
* Repairs and **maintenance** will mostly be the responsibility of the council or housing association.
* The notice you have to give if you want to move is much shorter than if you buy your home.
* No need to pay a **deposit**.
* You can keep hold of the house so long as you follow the rules.

**The disadvantages are:**

* You will be put on a waiting list and may have to wait a long time to be offered somewhere.
* You won’t have lots of choice about what homes you can have or area they are in.
* You might not be **eligible** for a home from a Council or local housing association in your area depending on their rules.
* You might be limited with the changes you can make to your home.
* **Rights** can be different for different Housing associations, and this can affect how protected you are from **eviction**.

## Renting a home from a voluntary or charity organisation

There are advantages and disadvantages for renting a home from a voluntary or charity organisation.

The **advantages** are:

* They will often specialise in housing for people with learning disabilities.
* This can be a secure way of renting your own home.

The **disadvantages** are:

* You sometimes have to wait a long time before you are get somewhere.
* The rent can often be higher than other types of housing.

## Renting a home from a private landlord or letting agent

There are advantages and disadvantages for renting a home from a **private landlord** or **letting agent**.

The **advantages** are:

* This can give you more choice about where you live and the type of home. For example: House, flat, bungalow
* The wait is not usually too long.
* There is usually a wider choice of housing available.

The **disadvantages** are:

* The rents can be higher and there is a deposit to be paid in advance.
* **Housing benefit** may not pay the full amount to cover the rent.
* The **tenancy agreement** may not let you stay long-term so it can be less secure.
* It might not be easy to find a home that is already suitable for your needs.
* Private landlords don’t have to give tenants as much help to adapt your home.
* Some landlords do not look after their homes well.

## Renting a home from family, friend or someone that you know

There are advantages and disadvantages for renting a home from a family member, friend or someone that you know.

The **advantages** are:

* This way of renting can mean you find a house that suits you quickly.
* Relatives generally can often be a more secure way of renting privately.

The **disadvantages** are:

* With family members, it may be awkward if things do not work out well.
* It can be hard if you do not have an agreement about repairs or changes in the house.

## Buying your own home

There are advantages and disadvantages of buying your own home.

The **advantages** are:

* You will have a bigger choice of homes.
* Owning your home offers long-term security.
* Your family may be able to help you buy.

The **disadvantages** are:

* You must have a deposit.
* You will have to pay the costs involved such as **valuation** and **legal fees**, estate agent’s fees, and removal costs.
* It is not so easy to move on. For example, there will be costs involved if you want to move.
* You will need to get advice about earning your own money and how that will affect you in the future.
* You are responsible for organising repairs if you own it.
* You are responsible for organising repairs if you own it.

## Supported Living Schemes

There are advantages and disadvantages of **Supported Living Schemes**.

The **advantages** are:

* You can live near or with other people with learning disabilities.
* You can still have your independence with a support network in place.

The **disadvantages** are:

* It is not ‘ordinary’ housing so it may feel separate and different from what most people might choose.
* You might be sharing with people you did not choose to live with.
* You might not be sharing with people the same age as you.
* You might not be sharing with people with the same needs as you.

## Residential care and nursing homes

There are advantages and disadvantages for **residential care homes** and **nursing homes**.

The **advantages** are:

* They usually have 24-hour staffing and staff can help with things like washing and dressing.
* There will be other people around you for company.
* You probably do not have to worry about shopping, eating or cleaning as these will be provided for you.

The **disadvantages** are:

Larger homes can feel less homely and more **institutional**.

# Section 9: Stories of people finding their homes

## A shared house as a steppingstone to your own place with support

Mark is 53 and his has own place for the first time.

Four years ago, he was living with his mum and his brother.

When she got ill, Mark’s mum decided it was time to speak with the council and get Mark some support.

Mark moved into a shared house where he had his own room and cooking facilities. He had support three times a day and built his independence. His support helped him with things like washing, shopping, cooking and cleaning. He also had support to look after his money.

Mark now has a flat of his own and has been living there for a couple of years. He still gets some support. He also gets support from his brother and sister.

He loves having his own place and is really proud of his beautiful flat. He has lots of people he can call on and the option to be on his own when he wants it.

Mark’s brother Don says, “He looks after himself really. He gets help with forms and appointments and things. He is so happy, when he first saw his flat, he cried. It was lovely.”

## Using Home Finder

Mark is a Keyring Community Enabler. Mark told us how he supported someone to bid on a home through their local council. Houses from the local council are often called **social housing**.

In Mark’s local council he needed to use a system called Homefinder, which is an online system where people can say which houses they would like to be considered for.

It can take a long time to get a house as there are often lots of people waiting.

Mark supported David to register on Homefinder. David needed some photo identification and an email address.

Mark also helped David to get some information that would help David show that he needed a new place to live. This helped ensure that David was given a higher band.  Bands help to decide who needs the house most.

David had a letter from his doctor to show that his current housing was affecting his mental health.

Every week David would use Mark’s computer to bid on properties.

When David found a property, Mark went with him to take a look around. David loved it.

Then they arranged to sign all the paperwork.

Mark helped David to sort out his housing benefit, change his addresses and switch over all his bills like gas and electricity.

It was important that David trusted his removal company, so Mark got some recommendations for David.

On moving day, David had a separate box where he kept some essentials that he might need straight away. He had the kettle, a mug and some tea bags in at as well as his toaster and some bread.

Four months on and David is settling into his new place. There are still lots of boxes to unpack but David is taking his time. He wants things to be just right. That’s fine, after all it is his place.

## A family’s experience of buying

Twenty odd years ago our son said he wanted to leave home like our daughter had done. So, we thought about it and came up with a plan.

My husband was selling his business so we had some cash to invest. We decided to buy a property that could be converted for 4 people with a learning difficulty to share including our son.

The project is still going today with different resident’s bar one and an extension we did five years in for our son which made the numbers up to five.

Our son was in hospital for nearly 3 years and we could not get accommodation and support. We decided to break the cycle and buy a property for him to live in alone and adapted it for him.

We then started working on the care package and within 6 months he was discharged.

He was readmitted to hospital after 3 years but has now been back in his home with a different **care package** for 4 years.

The house is suitable for two people, but we are still looking for a suitable person to share.

We only get housing benefit for this property and our son rents it from us.

We could not find another way round it after a **Housing Association** said they would not be able to continue to manage the property with only one tenant.

## Story from TLs Mum on HOLD

As people with autism dislike change so much, I was determined that my son TL, should have as little change as possible during his adult life.

We decided, after a lot of research, that we would help TL to buy his own house.

We consulted My Safe Homes who pointed us towards Advance Housing and shared ownership and using a **HOLD mortgage**.

We were able to ensure that TL would have a property he would not have to leave because a **landlord** decided he would and that his home would be well maintained.

We also wanted to ensure that TL was happy where he lived, with support meeting his needs before we died.

Work was done by transition support workers to find out what TL would like in his home.

TL now lives very happily in a semi-detached house. It has three bedrooms, so he has a room to sleep, a room for a carer and a room for all his DVDs and his laptop. No one is allowed in there!

He has a lounge, dining room and kitchen so lots of space which is important to him.

He always said he wanted a garden, but he now refuses to go in it as he doesn’t like flies! We’re working on this phobia.

Financially it has been a good move. TL has an interest only mortgage.

He pays the council a sum towards his care, but because the **Care Act** say he must have enough left for accommodation, his mortgage is considered and so he pays the minimum amount he can.

Of course, he has his gas, electricity and water bills to pay but he manages well and still has money for holidays and DVDs.

The good thing about shared ownership is that TL claims housing benefit for the service charge from the shared owner. That means any structural problems don’t cost him anything!

He just buys his own furniture and carpets and he, importantly for him, can chose his own colour schemes.

He calls his home “Giant Castleland” and he absolutely loves it. It is one of the best things we have done for and with TL.

## Moving into a shared house

My mum and dad were supporting me to look for a new service for a long time.

They visited many services ran by a local support provider. They met Vicki at the one shared house and looked around the service.

My parents really loved what the service stood for and what they could offer me and were really eager for me to meet Vicki.

Vicki then came to my previous service to meet me. We instantly got on and I felt an instant connection and I felt excited to work with her and go and see the service and meet the other people who lived there.

Vicki asked me about my future goals and what I want to achieve. No one asked me that before.

Vicki then gave me her idea of what the service could support me to achieve.

I was excited and really wanted to move in.

Vicki then said before I made a decision she would go back to the house and speak to the people who lived there then arrange me to visit and meet them.

I was invited for an afternoon tea I was nervous and anxious but excited as soon as I walked through the door the atmosphere was lovely and everyone was so lovely and excited for me to move in.

I arrived and was greeted by Vicki and some of my now house mates.

I was so anxious but within minutes I was put at ease they were all so nice.

I also met some of the staff team. We had a great few hours, I knew this I where I wanted to move.

I spoke with Vicki who said she thought I should visit another couple of times before I made up my mind.

The second visit I had lunch and looked around my potential room. I loved it and really knew I wanted to live here I'd of moved in that day.

I told Vicki I had made a decision and we then arranged a meeting to arrange the transition for me to move in.

I moved my belongings in slowly and made the room my own.

I was supported each transition to build my support plan and health action plan.

## Ian’s story on his son’s experience of residential care

When choosing a place to live residential housing can be a very good option.

My son whose complex needs include a severe learning disability, autism, epilepsy, chronic constipation, and behaviour that may challenge those around him.

Over the past 12 years his support and care has been exceptional.

It was provided by a specialist provider with a well-trained, resilient and stable staff team who do their utmost to meet his needs and give him a good quality of life.

This includes 24-hour care, 1 to 1 support during the day, regular community activities and even a cook who provides healthy meals and snacks for all six residents.

The team can also provide additional staff during hospital visits to stay with him.

He needs to be supported at all times given his high needs and communication difficulties.

**Residential care** is sometimes seen as something to be avoided.

My experience shows that it can be an excellent choice alongside **supported living** and **independent living**.

I would like to stress that it’s important to look at the persons needs first and then match this with the housing choices available.

# Section 10: Quality standards and legal things to think about

This section includes information on some of the **legal** things you need to know about when you **rent** or own your own home.

This is not **legal advice** but information to help you plan. legal advice is professional advice provided by a lawyer.

There are links to places you can get more information.

Make sure you get specialist advice on legal issues if you are not sure.

## Tenancies and tenancy agreements

When you rent a home, you are called a ‘tenant’.

To rent a home, you will normally need to sign a ‘tenancy agreement’. This is a contract agreed between you and the landlord.

It gives you the right to live in the home if you:

* pay the rent
* look after the home
* keep to any other rules in the tenancy agreement

Tenancy agreements cover the rights and responsibilities of the tenant(s) and the **landlords**. Tenancy agreements must follow with **housing law**. Housing law means rules set by the government that landlords, tenets and homeowners must follow.

This applies to all Councils, **housing associations** and private tenancies.

You must always read the terms of the tenancy and look at:

* When the tenancy will start
* Whether you have a tenancy or a licence (a tenancy gives more security)
* How you can end the tenancy
* What things would be considered breaking the rules of the tenancy?
* What things might lead to eviction or being told to leave the accommodation
* What type of accommodation is covered?
* When the rent should be paid
* Tenants’ responsibilities in relation to things such as noise, pets, looking after your home
* Who will/can do repairs and decoration?

For more information about tenancies and your rights go to:

<https://england.shelter.org.uk/get_help>

Some landlords have easy read or film versions of the tenancy agreement to help people understand their rights and responsibilities

Progress Housing has examples of easy-read tenancy versions and films. You can view these at:

<https://www.progressgroup.org.uk/your-tenancy/your-supported-living-tenancy/for-supported-living-tenants/>

## Real Tenancy Test

People with a learning disability can and do have tenancy agreements; they have the same rights, choice and control in their homes as all tenants do.

Many people with learning disabilities in housing and support services do not have their rights respected. Many people with learning disabilities in housing and support services have limited choice or control.

For more information, please see the Real Tenancy Test produced by NDTi : <https://www.ndti.org.uk/resources/publications/the-real-tenancy-test1>

## Tenancies and mental capacity

Some people are able to make every decision about their own lives. Some people are able to make some decisions. A small number of people cannot make any decisions.

The **Mental Capacity Act** is a law all about making decisions.

You can read this short easy read paper on the Mental Capacity Act <https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/easy-read-guide-pdf-16-pa-2cc.pdf>

It can be complicated getting housing when considering Mental Capacity Act.

It is possible for people to have a tenancy or another way for them to be a tenant under the law.

It is important that any decisions made are based on mental capacity assessments and that all decisions are fully recorded. For guidance on this, please go to: [www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/HousingLearningDisabilities/legislation/mental-capacity-act/](http://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/browse/HousingLearningDisabilities/legislation/mental-capacity-act/)

For more information on mental capacity and supported decision making: <https://www.ndti.org.uk/resources/preparing-for-adulthood-all-tools-resources/>

The Mental Capacity and the law website have resources, blogs and webinars on the Mental Capacity Act and different decisions: <https://www.mentalcapacitylawandpolicy.org.uk/>

The Hft Family Support Service have a set of resources and films for family carers on using the Mental Capacity Act: <https://www.hft.org.uk/our-services/family-carer-support-service/fcss-updates/mental-capacity-act/>

## Quality and your rights

In section 6 we told you about your rights and the law when you are choosing somewhere to live, have moved or if you are thinking about moving.

This section has some information about who checks on quality in which services. It also has information on different service standards you might want to look out for.

## What you think is good quality

It is important that you think about and know what you are looking for a quality home or support service.

A lot of people agree on what makes good quality. But we all look for different things in where we live or the support we get.

For example, here are what some people with learning disabilities and paid supporters said about quality and housing and support:

<https://www.ndti.org.uk/assets/files/Housing_research_findings_Final.pdf>

This guide on what to ask when choosing a support provider could help you <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/_assets/Resources/Housing/OtherOrganisation/2017-VODG-Top-10-tips-when-choosing-a-support-provider.pdf>

You can read the easy read version at:

<https://www.vodg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/VODG-top-tips-Easy-Read.pdf>

Good planning can help you be confident of what matters most.

## Support to Live Quality Standards

There are some standards that might help you decide what matters or that you might look for in choosing a home or service.

The REACH standards on support for living explain more about how services can make sure how they work supports independent living.

The standards were developed by people with learning disabilities, family members and supporters working together. There are 9 standards:

1. I choose who I live with
2. I choose where I live.
3. I have my own home (with a tenancy or ownership)
4. I choose who supports me and how I am supported.
5. I choose my friends and any relationships.
6. I get help to make changes in my life.
7. I choose how to be healthy and safe.
8. I choose how I am part of the community.
9. I have the same rights and responsibilities as other **citizens**.

You can find out about the 9 Standards here:

<https://paradigm-uk.org/what-we-do/reach-support-for-living/>

There is information for:

* Commissioners who plan and buy services
* Managers of services
* People getting support
* Family members

## The Quality of Life Standards

These standards were written with people with learning disabilities autistic people and supporters. They are a set of standards that help everyone live an ordinary life like other citizens. They include:

* Being in control of your life
* Being heard and listened to
* Being safe
* Being respected
* Having a full life
* Having a home
* Having work or other roles
* Being in control of my support

More information about the Quality of Life Standards: <https://www.centreforwelfarereform.org/uploads/attachment/430/quality-of-life-standards-and-toolkit.pdf>

## Making it Real

Making it Real is a framework for how to do person centred care and support. It’s for people working in health, adult social care, housing, and for people who access services.

There are 6 areas of the framework

1. Living the life I want and keeping safe and well
2. Having the information I need, when I need it
3. Keeping family, friends and connections
4. My support, my own way
5. When things need to change
6. The people who support me

You can find easy read information about this here

<https://www.thinklocalactpersonal.org.uk/makingitreal/about/making-it-real-in-detail/>

## Support services looked at by the Care Quality Commission

Some support services must also be registered with the **Care Quality Commission (CQC)**. These are services like GPs, hospitals and residential care homes as well as some community support.

Care Quality Commission checks to see if they are giving good health and social care to people. This means they will have inspections that look at quality standards Care Quality Commission check. They look for whether the support service is:

* Responsive to people's needs
* Effective
* Well-led
* Caring
* Person centred

After Care Quality Commission have inspected a service, they will write a report. The reports might help you compare different services and make a choice about what one you choose.

You can search for care homes and view these reports on the Care Quality Commission website:

[www.cqc.org.uk/what-we-do/services-we-regulate/find-care-home](http://www.cqc.org.uk/what-we-do/services-we-regulate/find-care-home)

In most of these reports the CQC will give a rating. There are four different ratings they can give:

* **Outstanding** - The service is performing exceptionally well.
* **Good** - The service is performing well and meeting our expectations.
* **Requires improvement** - The service is not performing as well as it should, and they have told the service how it must improve.
* **Inadequate** - The service is performing badly, and they’ve taken action against the person or organisation that runs it.

A service being on the CQC list does not automatically make it better. It does mean there are rules the service should be following.

Here is easy read information on what CQC do <https://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/20170629_CQC_About_us_easyread_0.pdf>

## Building the Right Support

There is a national plan about good support for people with learning disabilities or autistic people who have specialist support from mental health services. It is called Building the Right Support. You can read about it here:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/learning-disabilities/natplan/>

Part of that national plan is Building the Right Home. This is the guide for people who buy services. You can read this guide at:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/learningdisabilities/wp-content/uploads/sites/34/2015/11/building-right-home-guidance-housing.pdf>

NICE guides for planning services:

<https://www.nice.org.uk/about/nice-communities/social-care/quick-guides/arranging-services-for-people-with-a-learning-disability-and-behaviour-that-challenges#planning-services>

<https://www.nice.org.uk/about/nice-communities/social-care/quick-guides/person-centred-future-planning>

## What to do if there is a problem where you live

If you are not happy remember you can complain about what your landlord is doing or the support you are getting.

People with a learning disability and autistic people can find it harder than other people to give feedback, raise a concern or make a complaint.

It is your right to be able to do this though. It can help to improve the care and support you and other people get.

There is a lot of information on raising a concern from the Ask, Listen, Do project. Read more here: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/learning-disabilities/about/ask-listen-do/people-information/>

Watch the film about the Ask, Listen, Do project at:

<https://youtu.be/4svbf7LXato>

Under the **Care Act**, you can have an **advocate** to support you to make decisions about where you live and support you get. You can find out about that from your local council.

They will tell you about the independent **advocacy** in your area.

# Section 11: Paying for living costs

You will need to pay for your home and living costs. If you do not have enough money in savings or from work, you can get benefits to pay for your home. What money you get will depend on your personal situation.

Make sure you get help or advice on benefits if you are not sure.

Turn 2 Us have an online benefit calculator:

[www.turn2us.org.uk/](http://www.turn2us.org.uk/)

Citizen Advice have information online or you can book to talk to someone:

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/coronavirus-check-what-benefits-you-can-get/](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/coronavirus-check-what-benefits-you-can-get/)

## Monthly living expenses

The next part of the guide will go through the monthly **living expenses** that you may want to think about. A monthly living expense is something you need and is paid for monthly.

We will tell you how to work out the cost of each monthly living expense. You can then write how much each monthly living expense will cost you.

You may want to fill this out before you think about moving as you can decide whether you will be able to afford to live there. You will then need to check how much money you get each month with how much you think it will cost. Your monthly income includes any wages you earn and benefits you receive.

## Rent

**Rent** is your regular payment to a landlord so you can live there.

It will say how much rent you need to pay every week or every month on your **tenancy agreement**.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Monthly cost of your rent?** | **£** |

## Mortgage

A **mortgage** is a loan taken out to buy a home. You will usually pay this loan off in monthly payments or you might get mortgage **interest payments** to cover that.

To calculate how much a mortgage would cost you would need to check this with a specialist advisor.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Monthly cost of your mortgage?** | **£** |

## Support

This is the cost of your social care. Most people pay for some of their care themselves. Some people may also be able to get support paid for by your local council. The amount you pay depends on the amount of savings you have and your income.

For more information about the rules you can read a factsheet call: Things your local authority should have told you about the charging for your care? You can find this fact sheet and easy read guide at:

<https://in-control.org.uk/resources/publications/>

Your local council will do a **Care Act assessment** and then a **financial** means test to see how much you will need to pay. Get help or advice if you are not sure.

Support used to be provided by social services, but it is now more likely to be delivered by not-for-profit care providers/organisations, or people who are using their own funding to arrange their support.

There are many ways of organising housing and

support. You may choose to get them together as a package, or independently of each other from different organisations.

If you are moving into **residential care**, you will need to check the fees are paid by the Council. If they are you will only get a weekly allowance and most of your benefits go to cover the costs of your care.

What you need to do about paying for other support depends on if you have a **direct payment** (where you organise and pay for the support yourself) or the Council pay your support provider directly.

Different ways of organising support are in explained in this fact sheet from In Control: <https://in-control.org.uk/resources/factsheets/>

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Monthly cost of your support?** | **£** |

## Household Bills (Utilities)

These are payments to make sure that where you are living is sup-plied with gas, electricity, water and internet etc. so you can live comfortably.

These will usually be supplied by different companies so you will need to arrange for the payments to be made.

You can arrange for them to come out of your bank automatically each month if you want.

If you rent your tenancy agreement will tell you which utilities, you are responsible for. You can also ask your **landlord**. Some landlords will cover certain utilities themselves. It is important you check what your tenancy agreement says.

If you have a mortgage, you will be responsible for paying for all your household bills yourself.

If you live in residential care or a group home, it may be that your rent and bills are added together into one total cost.

### Gas

Gas in your home may go towards heating the rooms or lighting your gas oven/hob.

When you rent or buy a home you will need to choose a gas supplier.

The gas supplier will give you a quote on how much they are going to charge you monthly/quarterly for gas.

You can choose to get your gas and electricity from the same supplier if you want.

There are comparison websites that can tell you the cost of energy from different providers so you can find the right deal for you.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Monthly cost of your gas?** | **£** |

### Electricity

Electricity will flow into your house through an electric current and might be used to power many things in your home such as the lights, kettle, microwave, TV etc.

When you rent or buy a home you will need to choose an electricity supplier.

The electricity supplier will give you a quote on how much they are going to charge you monthly/quarterly for gas.

You can choose to get your gas and electricity from the same supplier if you want.

There are comparison websites that can tell you the cost of energy from different providers so you can find the right deal for you.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Monthly cost of your electricity?** | **£** |

### Water

This payment will go to your local water supplier to pay for the water that comes from your taps.

You will first need to find out who your water supplier. For example, South East Water.

If you don’t pay a water bill already, think about where it is you are going to be moving to and find out who supplies water to that area.

You can put your postcode into this website, and it will tell you who supplies your water: <https://www.water.org.uk/advice-for-customers/find-your-supplier/>

You can then go to their website where they will explain how they work out your monthly bill and the different charges for these properties.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Monthly cost of your water?** | **£** |

### Internet

If you want to be able to use the internet in your home, you will need to choose a broadband provider.

When choosing a broadband provider, you might want to think about:

* What you will be using the internet for
* How important connection speed is to you
* Your budget
* Whether you want a phone and internet bundle

There are comparison websites that can tell you the cost of broadband from different providers so you can find the right deal for you.

Go onto an internet providers website and they will tell you how much they are going to charge you for different deals and what you will get as part of this package.

Once you have chosen a package the provider will usually set you up an online account where you can view your monthly bills.

You can also check your bank statement to see how much you’re being charged.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Monthly cost of your internet?** | **£** |

## Council Tax

Council Tax is a fee you pay to your local council. The cost is set by your council, and it goes towards funding local services like:

* The police and fire service
* Rubbish and waste collection
* Transport services

The amount of Council Tax you will have to pay depends on the value of your home and where it is you live.

You can find your local authority and how much you need to pay by using this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/pay-council-tax>

Some people with learning disabilities do not have to pay Council Tax

<https://www.gov.uk/council-tax/discounts-for-disabled-people>

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Monthly cost of your Council Tax?** | **£** |

## Transport

This cost includes the amount you pay each month for travel to work, appointments, for shopping or to social events.

If you drive – You will need to add together the amount you usually use for petrol and the amount you pay for **tax** and **insurance** (if you pay an annual payment you will need to divide this by 12).

If you use public transport – work out how many journeys you will be making each month and how much these tickets will cost.

To find out the cost of train journeys you can look on your local train operating companies’ website, ask at your local train station or use a website such as the train-line - <https://www.thetrainline.com/>

For taxis you can ring up the taxi company you will be using and ask how much they estimate your journey to cost.

For buses you can look this up online or ring your local bus service.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Monthly cost of your transport?** | **£** |

## Food

This is how much you spend on food shopping for your home as well as meals out with family and friends.

This might vary a lot each month. It might be useful to add together all the money you spend on food in 1 month. This will give you a rough idea of the amount that you usually spend.

The NHS has some resources on eating well for less, with lots of tips on how you can eat healthily and save money:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well/20-tips-to-eat-well-for-less/>

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Monthly cost of your food?** | **£** |

## Mobile

This will usually be the amount you pay for calls, texts and internet usage on your mobile phone.

If you choose pay-as-you-go, this means you pay for credit to your mobile to use for calls and texts. When it runs out you have to purchase more credit.

Look at your bank statement and see how much you have spent on credit in the previous month or 2.

If you have a mobile phone contract then you pay a set monthly fee for a fixed period of time and have a monthly allowance of calls, data and texts. Before you sign up for a contract you will be told how much this is going to cost you per month. If you have one set up already and don’t know how much you’re paying, get in touch with your mobile phone provider and ask or check your bank statement.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Monthly cost of your mobile?** | **£** |

## Other expenses

This might be a payment that is specific to you (not everyone pays). Examples of other payments may include:

* gym membership
* magazine subscription
* an online game subscription
* cleaning products
* toiletries

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Monthly cost of your other expenses?** | **£** |

## Total for your monthly living expenses

Add up all your monthly living expenses to work out the total.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **My total monthly living expenses?** | **£** |

# Section 11: Paying for your home

You will need to pay for your home and living costs. If you do not have enough money in savings or from work, you can get benefits to pay for your home. What money you get will depend on your personal situation.

Make sure you get help or advice on benefits if you are not sure.

Turn 2 Us have an online benefit calculator:

[www.turn2us.org.uk/](http://www.turn2us.org.uk/)

Citizen Advice have information online or you can book to talk to someone:

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/coronavirus-check-what-benefits-you-can-get/](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/coronavirus-check-what-benefits-you-can-get/)

## Paying for your rented home

If you **rent** from a **landlord**, you will need to pay rent.

### What is Local Housing Allowance

**Local Housing Allowance (LHA)** rates are used to work out how much housing benefit you can get if you are a **tenant** renting from a private landlord. There are extra rules about people under 35 and what rate will be paid.

The Local Housing Allowance rates relate to the area in which you make your claim and are based on rents paid in the area they relate to.

These rents are being paid by people with the same number of bedrooms as the property where you live, or the number of rooms you and your household need. Local Housing Allowance is usually paid direct to you rather than to your landlord.

You can check the Local Housing Allowance rates for the area you live in on the DirectGov website at:

<https://lha-direct.voa.gov.uk/search.aspx>

Some housing does not come under the Local Housing Allowance rules. This is usually if it is somewhere run by a charity or **Housing association** where people get support or care.

More information from Shelter: <https://england.shelter.org.uk/professional_resources/legal/benefits/local_housing_allowance>

It is important you check the rules about rent and **Housing Benefit** when choosing somewhere.

### Housing Benefit

You can use the online calculator for Housing Benefit to see how your money will be affected at:

[www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators](http://www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators)

You are likely to be able to claim housing benefit if you live in ‘**supported housing**’.

**Private landlords** will normally ask you for at least one month’s rent before you move in. Private landlords may ask you to pay the same amount of money as a **deposit**.

You will be given the deposit back at the end of your tenancy if:

1. You have paid all of your rent
2. You have not caused damage to the property (or the furniture if it is part of your tenancy agreement).

You should not lose any of your deposit for normal ‘wear and tear’. For example, damage that has taken place over time through normal use.

Your deposit is safe, because your landlord must give the money you pay to a compulsory deposit scheme. The scheme is free for you and your landlord.

You must make sure the rent is paid to your landlord. If you get housing benefit, it is paid into your bank account at the end of each rent period. You then pay your landlord the rent that is due.

Your rent might be more than the housing benefit you get. If that is the case, you will have to use your own money to pay the extra.

If you have trouble managing your money speak to the Council; they can pay your housing benefit directly to your landlord.

## Buying your own home

### Setting up a Trust if your family buy somewhere

Some families use a Discretionary Trust as a way for owning and managing of the home if they buy it for their relative.

The situation on paying rent is complicated but it may also be possible to claim Housing Benefit to help pay for the rent. Trustees will need to make arrangements, and pay, for repairs and maintenance.

Some families decide to buy a property and hold it in a trust because it gives their relative somewhere to live.

Mencap have information on setting up Trusts when buying a house:

[www.mencap.org.uk/advice-and-support/wills-and-trusts-service](http://www.mencap.org.uk/advice-and-support/wills-and-trusts-service)

### Getting a mortgage to buy your home

A **mortgage** is the name for a loan that you get from a bank, building society, or other lender to buy a home. When you have a mortgage, you normally must make two types of payment:

1. Capital payments, which pay back the money you borrowed to buy your home
2. Interest payments, which pay the cost of borrowing the money

An **Independent Financial Advisor** will tell you if you can apply for a mortgage. They will also help you work out how much you can afford to spend on a new home. If you can’t apply for a mortgage right now, they will help you plan so you could apply in the future. They also help with pensions, loans and debt.

You can find more information, including how to find a financial advisor, from the Money Advice Service at: <https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/articles/choosing-a-financial-adviser>

### Support for Mortgage Interest (SMI)

If you’re a homeowner getting certain income-related benefits, you might be able to get help towards interest payments on:

* Your mortgage
* Loans you have taken out for certain repairs and improvements to your home

This help is paid as part of your benefit and is called **Support for Mortgage Interest** **(SMI)**.

Support for Mortgage Interest is normally paid direct to your lender. You can’t get help towards the amount you borrowed - only the **interest**.

To check if you are eligible for Support for Mortgage Interest, and for information about how to claim it, go to:

[www.gov.uk/support-for-mortgage-interest/eligibility](http://www.gov.uk/support-for-mortgage-interest/eligibility)

### The HOLD Scheme

HOLD stands for Home Ownership for People with Long-term Disabilities. It is a government scheme designed to help people with a long-term disability buy any home for sale on a **Shared Ownership** basis (part-rent/part-buy).

You could buy a home through the HOLD scheme if you have a long-term disability and meet the following criteria:

* People who live in the property earn a total of £80,000 a year or less if the property is outside London; or £90,000 a year or less if it is in London
* You are a first-time buyer; you used to own a home but can’t afford to buy one now; or are an existing shared owner looking to move

For more information about the HOLD Scheme please go to:

[www.ownyourhome.gov.uk/scheme/hold](http://www.ownyourhome.gov.uk/scheme/hold)

## Useful information about home ownership

My Safe Home offer a service to help people with disabilities buy their own home through shared ownership or a financial advisor who specialises in advice and support about home ownership. See their easy read guide to home ownership - [www.mysafehome.info/easyreadguide/index.php/](http://www.mysafehome.info/easyreadguide/index.php/)

Advance Housing offer support to buy via the HOLD scheme. Find out more - <https://www.advanceuk.org/services/shared-ownership>

Please note that these are only examples and there may be other organisations who can support you.

# Section 13: What can help you if you want to move

Changing where you live can happen for a lot of reasons.

You might want to plan to move because:

* You want to leave your family home
* You want to live nearer your partner or a family member
* You want to move for work
* You are leaving school or college
* You are unhappy where you now
* Your support needs change and you want less or different support

Whatever the reason you want to move it is important to think about what matters to you and then plan or act.

Go to Section 5 of this toolkit to make a plan.

Remember there are lots of tools that can help you

**Preparing for Adulthood** have information for young people and their families to help them plan for the future:

<https://www.ndti.org.uk/resources/preparing-for-adulthood-all-tools-resources/>

**NHS England Hospital Discharge**

A toolkit to help people planning to leave a mental health hospital back to their community.

<https://bit.ly/NHSHosptialDischarge>

**Together Matters**

Resources to help people and their families understand choices and work towards their own home.

<https://www.togethermatters.org.uk/>

**Life Begins at Home** is a guide that can help families and professionals understand the housing choices open to young people as well as adults and their families.

You can contact Learning Disability England for a copy of this guide (info@LDEngland.org.uk) or find it at:

<http://hsa.learningdisabilityengland.org.uk/life-begins-at-home.html>

**Planning Your House** is a guide from the Challenging Behaviour Foundation.

People with learning disabilities and **challenging behaviour** have the same rights as everyone else to appropriate local housing and support.

This resource has been developed to help families to work with others to plan the right housing for their relative.

You can find the guide at:

[www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk/information-and-guidance/housing-education-leisure/planning-your-house/](http://www.challengingbehaviour.org.uk/information-and-guidance/housing-education-leisure/planning-your-house/)

## Who can help you

It can feel hard to know where to start moving home. We would say get help if you can. It is your choice who you ask to help you get the home that is right for you.

Don’t forget you can ask friends or family members for help to plan – they know you well. They might be able to help you with moving or getting things you need for your home. People often lend a hand to pack or give you their spare pan if you ask around.

## Who is there to help?

The kinds of services or community support groups will be different everywhere.

We have made this list of ideas or suggestions you might contact for help or information. Could you:

1. Find other people who have been through all this. They will have ideas and contacts.

You can find autistic or disabled people through the local self-advocacy or peer support group. Some groups contact details are on this website: <https://selfadvocacygroups.co.uk/>

You can find other families through your local family or carer organisations. There might be local groups on social media too.

The Network of parent carer forums have groups in most areas. You can find them <https://nnpcf.org.uk/blog/about/>

There are family carer organisations that work with family members of people with learning disabilities in some areas.

Ask your local Council if they know of one. Or you can ask a Family Carer Support Service who may be able to help via their helpline: <https://www.hft.org.uk/our-services/family-carer-support-service/>

Sibs supports siblings of disabled people and may have a local group: <https://www.sibs.org.uk/>

1. Check the Council website for information on housing choices for people with learning disabilities locally. Most Councils have some information and contacts online.

Look on the Council website for information on housing choices for people with learning disabilities near you.

Most Councils have some information and contacts online.

1. Talk to any housing or support providers you can find locally, what can they offer or recommend?
2. Social services may have a special advisor for how to find housing and support for living. If you have a social worker, talk to them.

The local **housing department** can tell you about making a housing application. Ask them what kind of help they can offer in the case of people with a learning disability.

1. The local Learning Disability Partnership Board may have housing representatives or a housing subgroup.
2. Contact the local **advocacy** organisation and ask about having an **advocate**. An advocate could help you speak up or make decisions. The **law** says that people must have been able to have to an advocate in some situations:

* If someone cannot plan or decide without some help under The **Care Act**
* If someone is being treated under The **Mental Health Act**
* If someone cannot make a decision themselves an advocate under The **Mental Capacity Act** can represent them

# Section 14: Blue word glossary

**Advocacy**

Getting support from another person to help you express your views and wishes, and help you stand up for your rights.

**Advocate**

Someone who support you express your views and wishes, and help you stand up for your rights.

**British Institute of Human Rights**

An independent charity based in London which raises awareness and understanding about the importance of human rights.

**Care Act 2014**

A **law** about care and support for adults in England.

**Care Act assessment**

Assessment by the council for anyone who may need care and support.

**Care package**

The care and support given to you by your local council.

**Care Quality Commission (CQC)**

CQC checks health and social care services are following the rules for their service. They also look at how good the service is.

**Challenging behaviour**

Any behaviour that someone displays that is a challenge for others to manage and/or puts the young person or others at risk.

**Co-design**

A way of people working together. People with different skills and experiences make decisions together - everyone taking part has equal power.

**Co-production**

Co-production means services working together with people who use services and carers.

**Commissioners**

People who plan and buy services.

**Communal**

Shared by all members of a community or home, for common use.

**Council Tax**

A tax for all households by local councils to funding local services like such as police and fire services.

**Deposit**

When renting a landlord may ask for money before you move in, which you may get back when you leave.

**Direct Payment**

Where you receive money to organise and pay for the support yourself.

**Disabled Facilities Grant**

Money you can get from local council to pay for adaptions in your home. For example, a shower room, handrails or widening doors.

**Discrimination**

A law about care and support for adults in England.

**Eligible**

Having the right to do or get something if you meet the appropriate conditions.

**Equality Act**

The Equality Act is a law that protects you from being treated unfairly because of:

* Age
* Disability
* Gender reassignment
* Marriage or civil partnership
* Pregnancy or motherhood
* Race
* Religion or belief
* Sex
* Sexual orientation

**Government bodies**

Organisations that are part of the government.

**HOLD Scheme**

It is a government scheme to help people with a disability buy any home for sale as Shared Ownership.

**Housing Association**

A non-profit organisation that rents houses and flats to people on low incomes or with particular needs.

**Housing benefit**

Money you can get from the local council to pay for all or some of your rent.

**Housing department**

Department within local councils that support people with housing.

**Housing Law**

Rules set by the government that landlords, tenants and homeowners must follow.

**Human Rights Act**

A law to protect your human rights.

**Independent**

Being in charge of your life and making the decisions on what happens. You might have support to do that.

**Independent Financial Advisor**

A professional who provides independent advice for people about money.

**Independent living**

Independent Living means living in the community and disabled people are getting the same choice, control, and opportunities as other people.

**Individual Service Fund**

A provider who manages your support and the money under an agreement with you.

**Insurance**

An arrangement with a company to provide compensation for specified loss, damage, illness, or death in return for regular payments.

**Interest payment**

A payment you pay for borrower money.

**Landlord**

Person or organisation who owns the home you live in.

**Law**

A rule or set of rules, enforceable by the courts.

**Legal**

Connected to law or allowed by law.

**Legal Advice**

Professional advice provided by a trained lawyer.

**Legal Case**

This is when someone thinks the law has been broken so they go to court to get a decision.

**Legal fees**

A fee paid for legal service.

**Letting agent**

Organisation or person responsible for managing properties for private landlords.

**Living expense**

Something you need and is paid for monthly.

**Local Housing Allowance (LHA)**

Rates used to work out how much housing benefit you can get if you are a tenant renting from a private landlord.

**Maintenance**

Repair or servicing of a home or household goods, furniture, appliances or garden.

**Mental Capacity Act**

A law to protect and empower people who cannot make their own decisions.

**Mental Health Act**

Law that covers the assessment, treatment and rights of people with a mental health disorder.

**Mortgage**

A loan with a bank or building society to buy your own home.

**Nursing homes**

A home for a group of people with a nurse to provide medical care.

**Ombudsman**

Government bodies that find out what has happened when someone complains about an organisation.

**Personal budget**

Amount of money your local council will pay towards any social care and support you need.

**Private bodies**

Companies or business that are run by people not the government.

**Private landlord**

Person who owns the home you live in.

**Protects**

To look after yourself or look after something by legal measures.

**Public bodies**

Organisations that serve the gerenal public. For example, NHS or councils.

**Registered care home**

A home that is set up for people who share a similar disability. These homes are registered with CQC and they check how they work.

**Rent**

Paying a person or organisation to live in their home.

Research

**Residential care**

A home that provides care and support for a group of people.

**Rights**

About how people should be treated.

**Safeguarding**

Protecting a citizen's health, wellbeing and human rights.

**Secure**

Likely to continue and not fail, be lost, or taken away.

**Shared Lives Scheme**

You would live with a host family.

**Shared Ownership**

Owning part of a home, but also pay some rent.

**Social housing**

Accommodation that is provided at an affordable rate. This is usually run by Housing Associations or a Council

**Support plan**

A plan created by the local council to make sure your care and support needs are met.

**Supported Living Schemes**

Supported living is a service which supports people to live as independently as possible at home. If you live in supported living, you may receive help for just a few hours a week, or you may receive 24-hour support, depending on your support plan (see above). You would have your own housing [**tenancy**](https://www.learningdisabilityengland.org.uk/welcome/projects-and-partnerships/housing-guide/glossary#dwe_tenant) and pay for your own bills and cost of living.

Your support is separate from the provision of your housing, which means that if your support provider changes, this would not affect your right to live in your home.

**Tax**

Money paid to the government that is based on your income or the cost of goods or services you have bought.

**Tenancy agreement**

A contract agreed between you and the landlord to give you the right to live in the home.

**Tenant**

Someone who rents a home.

**Trial**

A formal examination of evidence by a judge, typically before a jury, in order to decide guilt in a case of criminal or civil proceedings.

**United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

International human rights treaty of the United Nations intended to protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities.

**Valuation**

The process of working out the value of something, such as a house.