

Supported Lodgings Schemes and Care Leavers' Survey 2009

Final Report
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the fostering network
the voice of foster care



Supported Lodgings Schemes and Care Leavers' Survey

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Supported Lodgings Schemes and Care Leavers' Survey

Context

This report of the supported lodgings survey findings is one part of the Fostering Network's Supported Lodgings Action Research and Practice Project 2008-2009. What are presented here are the findings of the survey questionnaire, representing the third phase of the project's research element.

Phase one consisted of a summary literature review of supported lodgings and care leavers and phase two was a scoping exercise of four supported lodgings schemes as case studies. Phase one has already been published and is available on the Fostering Network's web site.¹

The overall objectives of the wider project are to map current practice, collect stakeholders' views and experiences, identify best and innovative practice that achieves good outcomes, identify supported lodgings schemes training needs and make recommendations about supported lodgings developments at the national level.

The literature review

The literature review examined the following areas: the existing legal framework addressing supported lodgings and care leavers, youth homelessness, the meaning and definition of supported lodgings, the housing policy context, and the looked after children/leaving care policy context. Reference was also made to the research evidence in this specialist area.

Although the detail of that review will not be repeated here, it is relevant to note the five key points that arose:

1. In relation to establishing the number of care leavers living in supported lodgings official statistics are incomplete in that they only record information about 19 year olds previously looked after (i.e. DCSF, 2008) so the full figure for *all* care leavers living in supported lodgings will be higher than these limited official figures. In other words statistics are not gathered about those younger or older care leavers living in supported lodgings.

¹ For supported lodgings/leaving care literature review by Bob Broad go to http://www.fostering.net/resources/documents/young_people/supported_lodgings_literature_review.pdf

2. For the year ending March 31 2008 8,300 children aged 16 or over ceased to be looked after. Research studies recording supported lodgings figures for those aged 16-21 entitled to services under the CLCA 2000 report between 10% and 25% living in supported lodgings accommodation, i.e. between 830 and 2075. However children looked after statistics for the year ending 03/08 and who are now 19 years old and who were looked after between April 2000 and April 2005 then aged 16 years reveal that 9% (520) were living in supported lodgings, an increase of 1% on the previous year.²
3. Supported lodgings is one of many types of accommodation for young people leaving care entitled to leaving care services under the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 (CLCA 2000) pre and post 18. Supported lodgings is distinct and different from other types of supported accommodation though it is not always presented as such and sometimes is not listed separately from 'supported accommodation' (a more generic category).
4. The practice of using supported lodgings for care leavers is ahead of any central government policy and funding lead. The lack of any substantive legislative base and its 'Cinderella' policy status helps to explain its apparent muddle in terms of guidance for local authorities, regulation, assessment, financial governance, agency arrangements, and support entitlements for host and care leaver.
5. Research suggests that those care leavers in supported lodgings place the highest value on the support they receive from leaving care teams.

Drawing on information from the literature review and preliminary findings from a small scoping study of four supported lodgings case studies undertaken by Elaine Arnull a range of key questions arose and these were incorporated into the questions for the questionnaire.³

Introduction

The supported lodgings and care leavers' questionnaire contained 39 questions and was designed, piloted and distributed to all young people's supported lodgings schemes known to the Fostering Network⁴. It was sent to those schemes for whom young people in/leaving care were eligible, whether or not other groups of young people (e.g. homeless or young offenders) were

2 Children looked after in England (including adoption and care leavers) year ending 31 March 2008, DCSF/ONS, Statistical First Release, September, 2008.

3 Dr. Elaine Arnull undertook the case studies. She has now left South Bank University.

4 Please see Appendix 1 for a full copy of the questionnaire.

also eligible. Schemes were identified in a number of ways: through publicity events, a weblink, the 2008 York supported lodgings conference hosted by 'Nightstop' (on behalf of the CLG) and use of other 'snowball' sampling techniques. The questions were based on the issues that had been identified earlier in the literature review and the pilot studies. Hard copies of the questionnaires were initially distributed in late 2008 and services were then sent reminders by email. Respondents were given a total of two months to reply and were followed up several times to encourage responses. In total 105 questionnaires were distributed and 57 were returned; this represents a response rate of 60% which is excellent for a questionnaire survey. The questionnaire responses were entered onto an Excel spreadsheet by Fostering Network (Hannah Rees); and the resulting data was analysed by London South Bank University using Excel software.

The 57 responses were from across the nine Government Office Regions in England. It is not possible to surmise that the data is representative of all supported lodgings schemes across England since the sample was purposive and voluntary. Nevertheless their responses provide substantial and significant new insights into and knowledge about an area of practice hitherto largely unknown or recognised at a national policy level. Not all respondents answered all questions, resulting in the number of responses not always totalling 57; furthermore, for some questions respondents could give multiple answers and thus some answers exceed 57.

Acknowledgements

A special acknowledgement is extended to all the supported lodgings schemes which took the trouble to complete the questionnaire, staff at the 2007 York supported lodgings conference, and to the research advisory group comprising Judy Walsh, Dr. Claire Baker (NCAS), Hannah Rees and her predecessor Sophie Williams. Special thanks are again extended to Hannah Rees who took on the essential data entry, questionnaire distribution, and chase-up tasks. Our thanks also go to Elaine Arnull and Sue Baxter for their contribution to this report. Without all these people this study would not have been possible.

A profile of the supported lodgings schemes

The 57 schemes are based in a mixture of statutory and voluntary providers or agencies with 29 based in local authority leaving care teams, 16 in voluntary organisations, 2 in local authority fostering teams and 10 in 'other' settings (including local authority adult care, children and young people's services and housing departments).

A note on key terms used in this report

There were discussions within the advisory group about which terms to use to describe those people who provide supported lodgings and those who run or organise supported lodgings. As a result of those discussions a consensus was agreed that the term 'host' or 'carer' be used to describe the person (s) providing the supported lodgings and that those organisations which run supported lodgings schemes be described as either 'providers' or 'agencies'. This report adopts those conventions. Respondents' views of, and support for, the suggested definition of 'supported lodgings' can be found towards the end of this report.

Survey findings

Services were asked: 'what is the purpose of your supported lodgings scheme?' and their responses bear a considerable degree of similarity which point to 'the need to support young people (usually leaving care) with 'living more independently' and to assist them with the 'life skills to do that in a safe and supportive environment'. Some of the typical responses were:

'Enable young people to develop the skills to achieve self-sustained independent living, with support and guidance'

'Provide supported accommodation for care leavers; preparation for independence in safe, secure accommodation'

'Assist young people to successfully move on to independence'

'Prepare young people for independent living'

A small number of services referred more specifically to:

'Extension to an established foster placement post 18 for young people going to university'

'House care leavers until the end of year 13'

Just one service aimed at a more specific group of care leavers, which was gay, bisexual and transgendered young people.

Of the 57 respondents, the majority (37/57) provided both 'long term' (defined as 'up to two years') and 'short term' accommodation (defined as between one night and 6 weeks) to young people. 17/57 services provided solely long term

accommodation and just 2/57 provided only short term accommodation for young people⁵.

52/57 services worked with looked after children and care leavers between 16-17 years and 51/57 also worked with care leavers aged 18+.

Less than half (24/57) also catered for other young people aged 16-17 who were homeless and a smaller group (16/57) also offered that service to non care leavers who were aged 18+. Just 14/57 worked with young offenders (who were not care leavers) aged 16-17 years and only 11/57 with this group at 18+. In general the same services targeted a wide range of young people thus the services who worked with those aged 18+ also offered services to those who were not care leavers or were young offenders. None of the services appeared to specialise in providing services to non care leavers or young offenders⁶. Those who offered generic services might also include asylum seekers, or young pregnant women in their target groups. The most likely target group for supported lodgings services then were those aged 16-17 years and those who aged 18+ who are care leavers. This is not surprising as initially the majority of supported lodgings schemes were developed by children's services to support those leaving care⁷.

Which level of young people's needs do supported lodgings schemes set out to meet?

Supported lodgings schemes were asked to define the level of need they set out to meet and the responses are based on providers' own definition of support levels.⁸ Overall supported lodgings schemes cater for young people with low to medium support needs. 43 schemes stated that their scheme was aimed at young people with low support needs and 49 indicated that the scheme aimed to meet medium support needs. A smaller (though significant) number of schemes said they targeted young people with high support needs (27/57). The needs of the young people who were placed were seen as highly variable, but a common response was that young people could have high support needs, which one provider suggested might emerge during the placement:

⁵ 1 service did not provide a response within the categories

⁶ One service seemed to offer services to young offenders aged 16-18+ who were also substance users

⁷ Making a Difference Supported lodgings as a housing option for young people CLG <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/doc/supportedlodgings.doc>

⁸ The research team deliberately did not offer a definition of low, medium or high support needs following a consultation meeting with a number of providers of services. This is an area which it could be useful to define further.

'Many clients appear to have one issue but others appear later, including family, mental health, sexuality, disability, self esteem, education...'

'Can't offer the most to those with greatest needs, risk of theft, would never turn someone down whose needs were 'too low', often needs are only realised later on in a placement'

'Emotional development is greatest need, isolation a bigger problem than bill paying'

'Contracted for low-med needs but do place some with high needs - involves multi-agency meetings'

'Originally designed for low support needs, but have been taking high needs. Being reviewed.'

'Supported lodgings providers tend to struggle with higher needs young people. Most have varying needs.'

'Young people should not be in supported lodgings before 18 as affects payments. Lack of provision for Christmas, birthdays, holidays in supported lodgings. Young people needs are much greater than supported lodgings scheme originally designed to deal with.'

Size, referrals and eligibility

The number of supported lodgings *hosts* available to the 57 supported lodgings schemes was 995 and there were a total of 1159 supported lodgings *places* available for young people across the 57 schemes. The number of *current places* provided per scheme varied considerably with the highest being 157 and the lowest 1, and with an average of 42 current places per scheme. Of these 1159 available places 711 were for young people in or leaving care (and not foster care conversions) and 249 were foster placement conversions.⁹

The supported lodgings schemes varied in terms of size and type and number of young people being accommodated. For example in seven schemes the looked after/leaving care population comprised 100% of the total population worked with, whereas in the largest scheme which accommodated 157 young people, just 43 had previously been or were in care and only three were converted foster placements. In view of wide variations it is not possible to generalise about the size of schemes or their eligibility criteria.

⁹ There were some incomplete answers to this question, helping to explain the difference of 199 between the total figure of 1159 and the combined figure of 960.

Of the 57 schemes just seven could *not* be accessed by young people leaving care. There were only six schemes which indicated they did not have any limitations on the eligibility of young people to access the scheme or the length of time they might stay.

Most supported lodgings schemes do have selection criteria, and these appear to be influenced by local needs and considerations rather than a national perspective.

Furthermore the selection criteria and the length of stay in the schemes varied between the clear cut – i.e. young person can stay until they are 21, to the more interpretable – ‘*young people must be in ETE¹⁰. Some people are reluctant to take on young people who ‘hang about all day’.*

Scheme staffing and changes

How are schemes staffed?

Because the size of the schemes varied considerably it is of no surprise that the number of staff working within them was wide ranging; from one FTE (full-time equivalent) in one scheme to 23 FTE in another. Less obviously the ratio of staff to young people and staff to hosts also showed significant variation – with no pattern emerging. Staff most commonly came from social/youth work backgrounds (33/57 schemes) with the housing sector the next most likely (14/57).¹¹ However unlike the pilot studies undertaken, staff in these schemes did not commonly support both host and the young person (35/57 did not); again there was no obvious pattern, thus it could not be ascertained that schemes from any staffing level or location/organisational background did or did not offer support to both parties.

The bodies responsible for managing the schemes came from a variety of backgrounds; 14/57 from leaving care teams; 9/57 managed the schemes themselves and the rest were drawn from fostering, housing, commissioning, placements or a wider organisational role. Once again therefore there was no clear pattern to how services are managed and run.

¹⁰ Education training and employment

¹¹ Some schemes named both social/youth work and/or housing and so may be shown in both numbers.

Have the schemes experienced any significant changes in the last year?

All schemes indicated that they either had recent changes or were planning those, but once again there was no pattern to those responses. They included:

'Introduction of mum and baby placements'

'Continuous redevelopment and re-evaluation. Looking to develop crash pad model within next 6 months'

'Intending to employ a specific supported lodgings worker, half time as young person's social worker also supports hosts'

'Foster care conversions post-18 have increased so Family Placement Team now works more closely with 16+ team'

Many were related to growth and expansion:

'Plan to increase staff for 2010 if necessary, emergency mediation placements for 2009'

But this was not always the case:

'Loss of full time accommodation worker due to uncertainty of funding, work now shared between 2 other posts'

Recruitment and assessment of hosts

Recruitment

Most schemes use formal and informal methods of recruiting hosts or carers, the most popular being 'word of mouth' (49/57) and specific advertisements in the local press (45/57). Other methods, such as conversions from foster care (35/57), use of websites (26/57) and community networks (27/57) were also used by many schemes. Also mentioned were local radio (6/57), and a small number of schemes said they used bus adverts, leaflets, council payslips, churches, other local outlets/organisations and the redirection of applicants for fostering who were thought more suited to supported lodgings. Some schemes sought to utilise a wide range of resources in order to recruit hosts, but this was less common.

Assessment of hosts or carers

The assessment of hosts was usually undertaken using an in-house assessment method, which also included a CRB check, 2 or more references, home visit, health and safety check and medical reference.¹² The use of standardised forms of assessment such as the Common Assessment Framework¹³ (6/57) and Form F¹⁴ (10/57) was uncommon.

The following is a breakdown of their answers about assessments and/or checks used:

- 43/57 said they used their own 'in-house' assessment system
- 53/57 indicated they used CRB checks
- 51 schemes took up 2 or more references
- 52 schemes undertook home visits/assessments
- 42 took up medical references
- 48 took up health and safety checks

17 of the schemes indicated they used other forms of assessment as addition, which included references from children, child protection register checks, employer references, and a 'Property Accreditation Assessment'.

One stated it conducted

'Full statutory checks, SSAFA¹⁵ checks, own competency-based assessment + specialist HandS checks+ accommodation description'

and another:

'an animal questionnaire'

All of the schemes used some form of final placement formal approval, but this varied with 14/57 schemes using the foster panel¹⁶, 30/57 by another panel (no details provided), 11 by a manager and 1 by some other form which they did not detail, but suggested might at some stage include a young person. The manager who gave approval (where identified) varied entirely and included an aftercare manager, a children's services manager, a senior manager (housing) and a deputy director.

¹² One scheme appeared not to use any form of assessment and one other scheme relied solely on a CRB check and health and safety assessment.

¹³ <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/deliveringservices/caf/>

¹⁴ Form F is the official form that social workers are required to complete during the home study part of a person's application to become a foster carer

¹⁵ Social services adoption and fostering assessments

¹⁶ This is very different from the pilot areas that all used the fostering panel, or a special sitting of it.

Learning and development

Given that the project set out to identify and begin to meet the training needs of supported lodgings schemes the questionnaire sought respondents' views about a range of training issues.

What training is available or offered to supported lodging hosts?

A wide range of training appears to be available to many supported lodgings hosts across the country, but they would welcome further training. The questionnaire asked respondents to say whether training was 'currently offered', 'not offered but relevant' or 'not relevant' across 11 areas. The full list of training topics is shown below with response rates, and it was rare for respondents to suggest that any of those topics were irrelevant to hosts, even where training was not offered. Responses are shown in list form with the most commonly offered training courses at the top and then descending to the least common¹⁷. The appendices list all the training courses offered by supported lodgings schemes in addition to those listed below, as well as other training the schemes would like to offer to provide. Those detailed findings may help to inform and guide this project's wider training and learning agendas.

Training currently offered – by topic and numbers of responses from the 57 respondents:

- Safeguarding/child protection (41/57)
- Roles and responsibilities (39/57)
- Substance abuse/alcohol (37/57)
- Sexual health (35/57)
- Managing challenging behaviour (34/57)
- Mental health (32/57)
- Health and safety (33/57)
- Adolescent development (25/57)
- First aid (24/57)
- ETE (21/57)
- Issues for UASC¹⁸ (11/57)

¹⁷ Not all respondents answered the question.

¹⁸ Unaccompanied asylum seeking children.

Training 'not currently offered but would like to offer it' - by topic and number of responses:

- First aid (18/57)
- ETE (18/57)
- Managing challenging behaviour (15/57)
- Health and safety (14/57)
- Roles and responsibilities (11/57)
- Adolescent development (10/57)
- Safeguarding/child protection (7/57)
- Mental health (11/57)
- Sexual health (11/57)
- Substance abuse/alcohol (9/57)
- Issues for UASC (8/57)

Training issues described as 'not relevant' - by topic and responses

- Issues for UASC (2/57)
- ETE (3/57)
- Adolescent development (1/57)
- Health and safety (1 /57)
- Safeguarding/child protection (1/57)

What is not clear is whether training was compulsory for hosts, or whether hosts could chose from a menu, or if they undertook training at all. Where respondents expanded on their responses as they were able to do, some said that training was similar to, adapted from, or the same as fostering training:

'Training is identical to fostering, with addition of specialist training in areas such as eating disorders and self-harm'

Others however suggested a more ad hoc, voluntary or 'pick and mix' approach:

'As suggested by providers' (i.e. hosts)

'All relevant in-house training is offered'

'All training is available to carers.'

'Supported lodgings hosts are encouraged to ask for training, self-harm and conflict resolution, NVQ3¹⁹ Childcare'

¹⁹ National vocational qualification

'Access to free in-house training'

Some areas offered a range of other courses/training which varied but included:

'Fire safety, police liaison'

'Expectations, values, child protection, Safe Care, Vulnerable Adults Act, Skills for Life book'

'Young people and criminal justice system, post-16 options, "Total Respect"..."'

'Equality, diversity, self-harm...'

With regard to what other sorts of training might be relevant to hosts no apparent consensus emerged. Two areas suggested a need for training around asylum seekers and others that training needed to be practical, not 'theory-based'. Other responses included:

'Cover wide geographical area so training difficult - want to use specialist agencies for ad hoc training'

'Understanding tax, insurance'

'More training on challenging behaviour, but needs to be practical not theory-based'

Undoubtedly the variety in responses will be affected by the wide difference in the size and range of schemes, the number of people who need to be trained and how this can be delivered in a cost-effective and efficient way.

Support for hosts and young people

How do you support hosts?

Most schemes offered a type of review and support for hosts which were more like evaluations, rather than a form of peer or mentor based support. Thus the majority of schemes annually reviewed hosts (50/57), offered out-of-hours support (although this might be limited- 44/57), formal supervision (41/57) and respite care (34/57). Less common was peer support (23/57) or mentoring (10/57).

Other sorts of support which were offered by individual schemes included social events and home visits.²⁰ Where neither annual reviews nor supervision were undertaken some schemes indicated that out-of-hours and respite care was available; thus it may be that in some schemes support is available only on an emergency basis or where requested, but not as a regular or standard response.

Respondents gave little detail about how much time it took or what was required to support either the hosts or for the hosts to support the young person. Where this question was answered it was usually suggested that this was on a needs basis, i.e. what was required. With regard to the host this support might be given over the telephone or in person. Where the response was about the support given by the host to the young person in general it focussed on 'independent living skills, listening, guidance'.

Funding

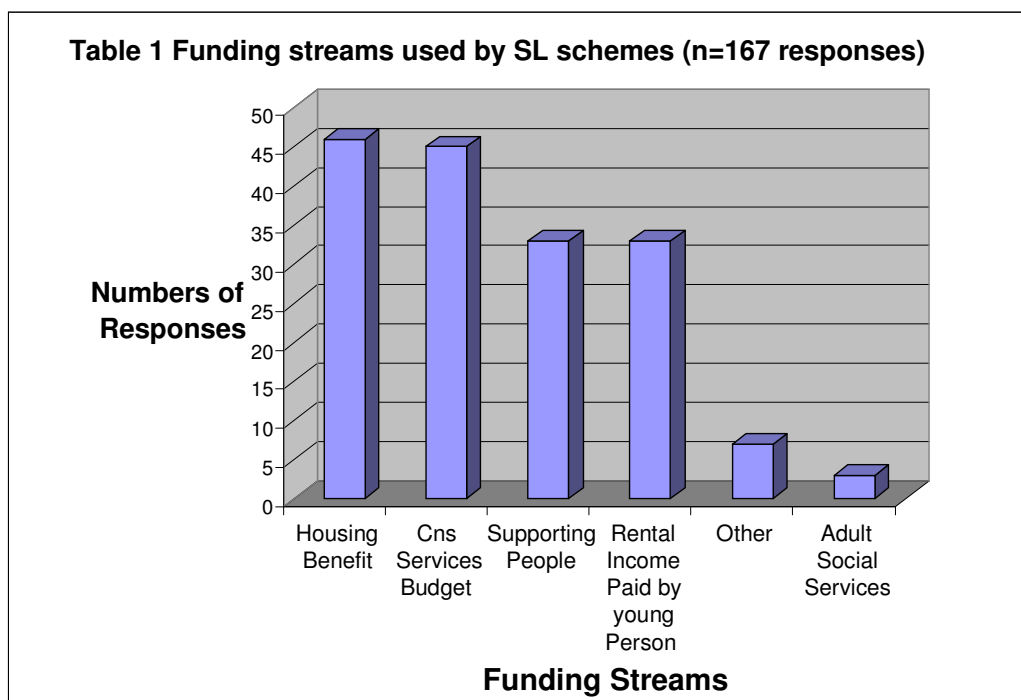
The amount which schemes paid to hosts varied tremendously, with the highest being £320 per week for a foster care conversion and the lowest £52 per week (the highest in that area for a 'high needs' young person was £105). The average weekly payment to hosts across all schemes was £151.

28 of the 57 schemes paid £150 or above and it was difficult to discern any apparent reason for the wide differentials or how amounts were calculated. Additional discretionary payments were often available if 'higher needs' than were originally assessed displayed themselves, or for 'mother and baby', or for 'language tuition', or 'food provided by hosts'. There appeared to be a number of schemes which paid according to 'need', but as is indicated above this could still result in considerable variation between schemes, so that one area's 'high need' payment might be lower or the same as another area's 'low need' or standard payment. Geographical factors (such as the high cost of living for example in the South East) did not appear to account for this variation.

Schemes were funded in a variety of ways. In answer to the question 'What funding streams do you use?' the answers, in descending order, were: housing benefit (46/57); children's services budget (45/57); *Supporting People* monies (33/57); rental income paid by young person (33/57); 'other' (7/57) and finally 'adult social services' (3/57).

²⁰ Not all schemes responded to this question however so it is not clear if some providers received no sort of support, or whether in fact the question was simply not answered.

Table 1 illustrates the different funding streams used by schemes.



For many respondents this funding area was seen as a particularly complex one and respondents highlighted in particular the issue of lower levels of payment, benefits and taxation and the complexity of this area vis-à-vis hosts; it seems that the funding of schemes and the financial implications for hosts is clearly an area which requires consideration, training/advice and national policy action.²¹

Comparing supported lodgings rates for young people with fostering rates for older foster children

Respondents were asked how the rates for supported lodgings and fostering rates for older children/young people compared. 43/57 said that supported lodgings rates were lower than fostering rates for older foster children; five said that the rates were the same (with some acknowledgement that foster carers rates are enhanced); one said the supported lodgings rates were higher and seven said 'don't know.'

²¹ A considerable amount of work about the financial arrangements for supported lodgings has been undertaken by John Short. The publication 'Caring for a young person aged 18+ financial implications' based on much of his work, provides valuable information for foster carers and it can be purchased from the Fostering Network.

In other words the overwhelming majority of respondents -75%- paid supported lodgings hosts at a lower rate than they paid their foster carers for older foster children.

Respondents provided a wealth of comments about financial matters which demonstrated the variations in the ways supported lodgings schemes are funded, organised and supported. In some cases they articulated the frustrations they felt about the financial complexities involved. Respondents pointed out that foster carers were eligible for enhancements not available to supported lodgings hosts.

Monitoring and evaluating outcomes

How is the effectiveness of schemes judged?

According to survey 53 of the 57 supported lodgings schemes monitor their outcomes although there was no real pattern to this monitoring and no indication about its quality or consistency, with the exception of those that met the requirements of the *Supporting People Outcomes Framework*.²² Indeed, where schemes were eligible, the most common monitoring method used was that prescribed within that framework. Others used a range of data sources such as:

'Length of time in placement, reason for ending, move-on details'

'Pilot scheme, but ran exit interviews, and will monitor young people's progress'

'Move-on rates, quality of provision, maintaining EET, reviews'

Consultations with young people

Most schemes also said that they consulted with young people about the scheme and this ranged in frequency from regular meetings to exit interviews (the latter being the most common form):

'Exit interviews, more to be developed'

'Weekly contact, exit interviews, quarterly lodgers' form'

'Meet at providers' homes, reviews, exit interview'

²² <http://www.spkweb.org.uk/Subjects/Outcomes/>

'Interview for placement, 3-monthly review meetings, meeting social worker'

Therefore it is not clear at this stage that there is a ready body of evidence available on the effectiveness of the supported lodgings scheme although there has been considerable accommodation work undertaken by NCAS and the publication *Making a Difference - Supported lodgings as a housing option for young people* (CLG, 2008). Both represent significant contributions in this developing field.²³

What are the key issues facing supported lodgings schemes?

Schemes were asked to identify three priority issues still to be addressed in relation to supported lodgings. These did not break into any obvious or easy groupings for analysis. Overall however they divided into two areas, first the more frequently listed one being 'finance and/or policy focused', such as:

'National recognition for scheme'

'Tax arrangements to be same as for fostering'

'Lack of resources'

'Impact on providers claiming means tested benefits'

'Lack of national standards'

and those linked practice issues, which appeared to be 'local and cultural' including:

'Reluctance of Social Services to share info'

'Length of assessment'

'How to shape service for young people under social services department care, and 18+...'

'Lack of move-on accommodation'

'Lack of enough suitable providers and accommodation'

²³ <http://www.leavingcare.org/> and www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/makingadifference

Alongside these were voiced more generic concerns which it seemed that supported lodgings were meant to be there to address:

'How to realistically prepare young people for life'

Towards an agreed definition of the term 'supported lodgings'

One of the reasons for undertaking the research was to get a better sense of the level of supported lodging provisions nationally and to see if there are commonalities in that provision.

The research indicates there is cohesion within certain parameters, but there are also substantial differences in terms of the size and scope of the schemes, eligibility criteria, staffing and the ratio of staff to hosts and young people.

In order to test a consensus around a definition of supported lodgings in relation to young people leaving care the following definition was offered at the end of the questionnaire and respondents were asked to agree or not with it.

Proposed definition

1. Domestic or private lodgings where there is both an adult (usually called a 'host' or 'carer') living on-site and a requirement and/or expectation, and/or agreement that some level of support is provided
2. The supported lodgings host together with the support provided are vetted and approved in some way by the local authority as suitable for a young person aged 16+ who qualifies for services under the CLCA 2000
3. Supported lodgings for care leavers over 18 are not regulated as a group home and fall outside the Fostering Services Regulations (2002)

37 of the 57 respondents (65%) said that they agreed with the above definition, with two of those suggesting that it needed also to incorporate the words 'supportive' and/or identify the type of housing support provided.²⁴ Indicating keenness for their work to be acknowledged, recognised and available to others, a large welcome majority of respondents (44 of 57) indicated that they would be willing for the Fostering Network to summarise and share their work and place details on its website.

²⁴ Nine respondents disagreed, mostly because their particular scheme was more restrictive or specific, although one argued that the definition was too specific to CLCA 2000.

Concluding comments

In the year ending March 31 2008 8,300 young people ceased to be looked after of whom 61% were 18 years of age and 39% were either 16 or 17²⁵ (DCSF, 2008, Table F1). The research evidence identified in the literature review of supported lodgings and care leavers by this author²⁶ estimates that between 10% and 25% of care leavers (using current figures that would be between 830 and 2,675 young people leaving care) live or have lived in supported lodgings accommodation.²⁷ This significant number of young people living in supported lodgings, combined with the issues raised in this project, especially about variations in funding, staffing, standards and provision, suggest a range of statistical, policy and practice agenda items. These will need to be discussed, agreed, and taken forward if there is to be further professional progress and standards for young people leaving care and living in supported lodgings. An action agenda from the research elements of this wider project might look like the following:

1. It is imperative that statistical information about the accommodation circumstances of care leavers be collected , including after they cease to be looked after, at various age points and not only on their 19th birthday.
2. An accepted definition of supported lodgings as it relates to care leavers, perhaps the one contained here, may well be achievable as there is commonality in purpose of provision.
3. Given the difference in recruitment, assessment, support and training provision, there is a strong argument for the development of national supported lodging standards.
4. The priority issues identified indicate a need for a national voice particularly where national legislative/policy changes are required.
5. There is a key question at national strategic policy level about the best ways forward for supported lodgings and care leavers. Should it be incorporated within wider youth homelessness policy strategy or dealt separately within the social care field? Or both?

²⁵ Children looked after in England (including adoption and care leavers) year ending 31 March 2008, Table G1, DCSF/ONS, Statistical First Release, September, 2008

²⁶

http://www.fostering.net/resources/documents/young_people/supported_lodgings_literature_review.pdf

²⁷ This figure is higher than the 520 number for only 19 year olds who were previously looked after and recorded as living in supported lodgings accommodation (DCSF, 2008, Table F1).

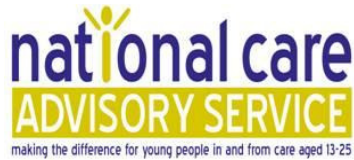
6. There is a difference in culture and expectations between foster placement for older children and supported lodgings that needs to be examined not just in light of funding.
7. More detailed research and evaluation of supported lodgings in relation to care leavers is needed in order to further illuminate, research and monitor supported lodgings practice and policy developments.

'Supported Lodgings Schemes and Care Leavers Survey' by Professor of Children and Families Research, Bob Broad, Social Policy and Urban Research Institute, London South Bank University,
<http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/families/index.shtml>

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Appendix 1 –The Questionnaire

the fostering network
the voice of foster care



Questionnaire Code	
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Supported Lodgings and Care Leavers

A questionnaire to Supported Lodgings services

The aim of this research project is to map current practice and collect views on what works in supported lodgings.

Only answer this questionnaire if your scheme takes young people in care or care leavers.

To keep the demands on your time as low as possible most questions only require you to tick or circle the relevant response.

We would be grateful if you could complete and return this questionnaire to us in the enclosed FREEPOST envelope within two weeks.

All your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence and your name and that of your organisation or authority will not appear any reports or documents resulting from this research.

As part of the research we would like to collect documents/tools that you currently use and which you would be willing to share with other supported lodgings schemes – please send back with this questionnaire or email to judy.walsh@fostering.net

About you and your supported lodgings scheme

Q1. Information about your scheme

Name of scheme	
Postcode of scheme	
Your name	
Your job title	
Email address	

Q.2 How long has your scheme been in existence?

	years		Months (if known)
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Q.3 Where is your supported lodgings scheme based:

	Circle one number only
Local authority – leaving care team	1
Local authority – fostering team	2
Contracted out partnership with Voluntary organisation	3
Contracted out - Private	4
Other	5
(please describe below)	

Q.4 What is the purpose of the supported lodgings scheme?

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Q.5 Please indicate which statement best reflects duration of your scheme:

	Please circle one number only
Short term accommodation <u>only</u> (offer between 1 night and 6 weeks)	1
Long term accommodation <u>only</u> (up to about 2 years)	2
Both short and long term accommodation offered	3

Q.6 Which young people does the scheme target?

	Age 16 and 17 Circle all that apply	Age 18+ Circle all that apply
Young people are/have been in care	1	1
Young homeless people (not care leaver)	2	2
Young offenders (not care leaver)	3	3
Other groups you work with: (please describe)		

Q.7 Numbers of supported lodgings 'providers'
(NB: these may also be called 'hosts'; 'households' or 'carers')

	Please write current number below
Current number of supported lodgings providers ('hosts'/'households')	

Q.8 Numbers of young people

	Please write current number below
Total number of places for young people	
Number of young people in or from care	
Number of 'foster placement' conversions	

Referral and eligibility

Q.9 Are all young people leaving care able to access your supported lodgings scheme? (please tick)

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

Q. 10 Are there any limitations on young people's eligibility and length or stay?
(please tick)

Yes		No	
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Q. 11 Any comments on above:

--

Project and staffing

Q. 12 How many staff (full time equivalent) does your supported lodging scheme have?

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Q.13 What is the ratio – staff to young person

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Q. 14 What is the ratio - staff to supported lodgings provider

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Q. 15 What background are the staff who run the supported lodging scheme from?
(e.g. social work; housing)

--

Q. 16 Do the staff who run the supported lodging scheme support both the young person and the host? (please tick)

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

Q. 17 Who manages the team?
(Post and level e.g. leaving care manager)

--

Q. 18 Has the scheme experienced any significant changes in last year or are any changes planned

Young people

Q. 19 Would you say your supported lodgings scheme is aimed at:

	Please circle as many numbers as apply
Young people with low support needs	1
Young people with medium support needs	2
Young people with high support needs	3

Q. 20 Any comments on the support needs of young people using supported lodgings

Recruitment and assessment

Q. 21 How do you recruit supported lodgings providers

	Circle all that apply
Word of mouth	1
Specific advertisement	2
Conversion from foster care	3
Website	4
Community networks	5
Other (please describe below)	6

Q. 22 Which of the below do you use as part of your assessment process:

	Circle all that apply
Common Assessment Framework form	1
Form F	2
In-house assessment form	3
CRB check	4
2 or more references	5
Home visits	6
Medical reference / Letter from GP	7
Health and Safety check	8
Other (please describe below)	9

Q. 23 Which of below statements best describes how your supported lodgings providers are 'approved':

	Circle one number
by a foster panel	1
by another panel	2
By Manager (if so, of which designation)	3

Please send us any documents you happy to share with others relating to assessment

Learning and development

Q.24 Your experience and views of training

	Currently offer this training to supported lodgings providers	Do not offer this training but would like to	Do not think this training relevant
Roles and responsibilities	1	1	1
Health and safety	2	2	2
Safeguarding/child protection	3	3	3
Mental health	4	4	4
Sexual health	5	5	5
Substance abuse/alcohol	6	6	6
Managing challenging behaviour	7	7	7
Education, employment and training	8	8	8
Adolescent development	9	9	9
Issues for UASC	10	10	10
First aid	11	11	11

Q. 25 Please tell us about other training you offer:

Q. 26 Please tell us about other training you would like to offer (not listed above):

Please send us any documents you are happy to share with others relating to training

Support

Q. 27 Support to supported lodgings provider

	Circle all that apply
Formal supervision	1
Annual review	2
Peer support group	3
Mentor	4
Respite care offered	5
Out of hours support	6
Other (please describe below)	7

Q. 28 How many hours support is given to the young person (if known)

Hours per week of support to young person given by scheme	
Hours per week of support to young person given by provider	

Q. 29 Briefly describe what this support consists of:

Please send us any documents you are happy to share with others relating to support

Funding

Q. 30 How much do you normally pay providers per week?

£

Q. 31 Please describe any differentiated payment rates for those providing more support?

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Q.32 What funding streams do you use:

	Circle all that apply
Children's services budge	1
Supporting People	2
Adult social services	3
Housing benefit	4
Rental income paid by young person	5
Other (please describe below)	6

Q.33 How does the supported lodgings rate you pay compare to fostering rate for older foster children?

	Please circle one number only
Rate is the same	1
Rates is lower	2
Rate is higher	3
Don't know	4

Q. 34 Comments on finance issues
(e.g. personal taxation and benefits implications of earning income from supported lodgings)

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Outcomes: monitoring and evaluation

Q. 35 Do you measure outcomes? (please tick)

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

Q. 36 If you measure outcomes how do you do this:

--

Q. 37 How do you consult with young people
(e.g. weekly meeting/exit interview)

--

Issues

Q. 38 What do you think are the top 3 issues still to be addressed in relation to supported lodgings for care leavers?

Issue 1

--

Issue 2

--

Issue 3

--

Supported lodgings definition

Please read the following:

The term 'supported lodgings' does not have an agreed definition and is used here to describe the following in relation to care leavers:

4. Domestic or private lodgings where there is both an adult (usually called a 'provider' or 'host') living on-site *and* a requirement/expectation/agreement that some level of support is provided
5. The supported lodgings provider together with the support they provide are vetted and approved in some way by the local authority as suitable for a young person aged 16 plus who qualifies for services under the CLCA 2000
6. Supported lodgings for care leavers over 18 are not regulated as a group home and fall outside the Fostering Services Regulations (2002).

Q. 39 Does this adequately describe supported lodgings in your view?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.
All information is, and will remain confidential. However because we are seeking to map current practice and make this available to practitioners we may share limited information with your permission. Please read and answer below:

Please indicate if you would be willing for the Fostering Network and NCAS to include a brief summary of your scheme on their websites in order to facilitate the sharing of information amongst practitioners. The information included would be:

- Geographical location of scheme
- Size of scheme
- Who the scheme is for
- Where within the organisation the scheme is located
- Contact name and email address for the scheme

Please indicate by ticking one of the following: Yes ... I am willing for the Fostering Network and NCAS to show limited information as indicated above about our supported lodging scheme on their website/ No... I am not willing for the Fostering Network and NCAS to show limited information as indicated above about our supported lodging scheme on their website

Appendix 2

Summary of respondents' answers to the question about 'other training' offered by supported lodgings schemes

Equality, diversity, self-harm, joint-train with Stonham
YP and criminal justice system, post-16 options, "Total Respect" - delivered by Derbyshire LAC
SL providers are encouraged to ask for training, self-harm and conflict resolution, NVQ3 Childcare
Access to free in-house training
Professional boundaries, diversity, equality, eating disorders
Formal training not offered but can be provided if needs are identified during reviews
Handling allegations, AQA accredited courses for YP
Suicide intervention training, equal opps
As suggested by providers
Expectations, values, child protection, Safe Care, Vulnerable Adults Act, Skills for Life book
SL providers offered same training as Foster Carers
Contribute to fostering unit's training programme for foster carers
Providers can attend any in-house training given
All carers can access foster carer training to NVQ level; have 'virtual school head teacher' who can work with carers working with YP up to age 18.
Training is basic safeguarding, boundary setting, avoiding situations which could be misunderstood by YP. Other training is offered as needed.
Communication, supporting people requirements, support plans, risk/needs assessments, welfare rights, IR help
Assessing risk, abuse/neglect safeguarding. SCIP to be introduced.
Providers are offered Preparation to Foster - 5x sessions before taking a YP
External training from psychotherapist
Specific lodgings training. Independent living skills. Asylum seekers' needs. Also access to foster carers' training.
All relevant in-house training is offered
All training is available to carers
Preparation for independence
Specific training for hosts provided given it's seen as relevant
Training is identical to fostering, with addition of specialist training in areas such as eating disorders and self-harm
Preparing YP for adulthood, attachment theory
YP are asked to come to training for providers so they can share issues
Personalised training depending on needs
All training currently under review
Previously ran annual conference but not for past 3 yrs
Family Placement Team training is available, inc Fostering Skills training

Carers can attend all fostering training
Fire safety, police liaison
Boundaries, communication, diversity
HIV/AIDS training, confidentiality and safe caring
Currently implementing training programme

Appendix 3

Summary of respondents' answers to the question about 'other training' which supported lodgings schemes would like to offer

Cover wide geog area so training difficult - want to use specialist agencies for ad hoc training
Offer to pay for accredited courses
Money management
Understanding of tax, insurance
Life skills
Life Skills GCSE. Specific course to teach providers how to teach budgeting to YP
More detailed therapeutic interventions. Attachment disorders/mental health/learnt behaviour
More for asylum seeking YP. Mum and baby training. NVQs
More training on challenging behaviour, but needs to be practical not theory-based
Often training for providers is pitched at too high a level
Cultural diversity, especially in respect of unaccompanied asylum seekers
Managing boundaries
Appropriate adult
Anything else relevant

Appendix 4

Respondents' answers to question 'how do you consult young people?'

Link sessions, phone, text or more formal meetings
Support plan review, annual interview and exit interview
3/6-monthly reviews and evaluation at end of placement
Meet at providers' homes, reviews, exit interview
Placement meetings, exit interviews, weekly key worker meetings
Weekly meetings, monthly evaluations, exit interview
On all new policies, has national consultation group, questionnaires, interviews
Regular meetings, phone calls
Annual evaluation, fortnightly steering group
Fortnightly or less meetings, support review every 6 weeks
Feedback cards, annual conference.
Weekly contact, monthly review, exit interview
Weekly meetings or as required
Interview for placement, 3-monthly review meetings, meetings with social worker
Offer as much support as needed
Exit interview (5 listings of this answer)
YP consultation group every other month, exit questionnaires, YP on panels
Face to face contact, reviews, meetings, Group of care users and leavers
Regular meetings, reviews, home visits
Review meetings, 16+ advisor, YP consultation group
Monthly reviews, evaluation forms, references
Social workers in regular touch
Ongoing discussions, feedback forms
LA Leaving Care Team has exit interviews with care leavers
End of placement feedback sheet
3-monthly meetings, evaluation sheets, interviews
Min. 6-weekly meetings, exit interviews
Aftercare worker consults
Regular meetings, 2-3 per week to bi-monthly, depending on needs
Pathway review meetings
Exit interviews, weekly support sessions
Questionnaires at every provider's annual review
Placement reviews, exit interviews, cross-team liaison to share info
Placement reviews after 2 weeks, then 3-monthly until end. Annual reviews, exit reviews
Exit interview, support plan meetings; establishing leaving care group
Will be introducing exit interviews; all young people have access to VOICE
3-monthly review meetings; group participation, exit feedback
Regular meetings as often as needed

Weekly contact, exit interviews, quarterly lodgers' form
Aftercare worker contact, Voices participation group, weekly drop-in
Weekly contact
Young people have a Young Person's Advisor

Appendix 5

Supports provided to young people –free text from comments box

Benefits, education, training, employment, basic life skills
Access to EET, all have support plan, finances, family, identity
Benefits, budgets, mental, physical, sexual health, shopping, befriending, help
maintaining contact with professionals, family
Independent living skills, listening, guidance
1:1 key worker to focus on life skills, planning, setting and achieving goals
Housing, employment, education, life skills
Living skills, e.g. cookery, emotional support, attending appointments, signposting to
agencies, counselling
Telephone and in person, out of hours advice, guidance, specific training, supervision
Support plan, emotional support, signposting, independent living skills
Regular meetings with placement worker
Teaching living skills, benefits, budgeting, job search, college work, family mediation
Benefits advice, life skills, budgeting, cooking, job seeking, health, staying safe
Budgeting, cooking, cleaning, preparation for interviews, college timetables
Home, telephone support, informal and formal
Telephone support, weekly home visits at start, social events for providers
Pathway plan issues, support issues focussed on 'moving on'
Formal and informal, support plan, life skills file for YP to complete with provider
Allocated Pathways support worker for each YP, individual Pathway plan, Life Skills as
per Children Act (Leaving Care) 2000
Worker directly supports provider, YP indirectly if they have allocated social worker
Phone, home visits, formal and informal support.
Teaching spoken English, reading and writing. Budgeting, shopping, cooking Learning
how to stay safe, applying for college courses, form filling
Working on needs identified in needs assessment, working through support plan
Dependent on need - 1-10 hrs
Guidance, budgeting, cooking, shopping, leisure, education, emotional
Cooking, budgeting etc. Emotional support, contact
Understanding of emotional wellbeing; providing a safe and supportive environment
Visits, agreements with young person, any assistance needed
Independent living skills, education, training, employment, household skills,
communication, health, move-on etc
Carers are there for the young person at all times
Visits to young person to discuss all aspects of need
Action Plan, independent living skills, health, diet, hobbies
Providers are available 24/7 hrs for all needs
YP receives support from Leaving Care social worker and the provider
As needed - befriending, life skills, boundaries, anti-social behaviour awareness
Emotional support, safety and security, life skills, support plans
Support is given by carers and personal advisor
Daily living skills, emotional support, accessing education or training
as required, all staff mobile numbers available to young people for out-of-hours
contact
Budgeting, independent living, home skills

Emotional, life skills, leisure, form filling, laundry, move-on etc
Transition to community, housing support