



# Housing Strategy and Performance: Move-on Accommodation

## Home in on Housing programme

### November 2025

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|         |          |                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                      |

|                          |                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Subject of Report</b> | Move-on Accommodation                                                                                                         |
| <b>Purpose of Report</b> | <b>Information / Recommendations / Decision Making</b>                                                                        |
| <b>Background Papers</b> | <a href="#">Housing Strategy January 2024 to January 2029 - Dorset Council</a><br><a href="#">dorset-council-plan-for-web</a> |
| <b>Acknowledgements</b>  |                                                                                                                               |

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## Summary

This report provides detailed analysis of supported accommodation commissioned by Dorset Council. It identifies barriers faced by residents in securing settled accommodation when they are ready to move on to independence. It considers current ways of working and makes recommendations for new and/or alternative ways of working to improve move-on from supported accommodation.

The project is cross departmental with scope beyond that of services offered by Housing Services.

This project forms part of phase 1 of the 'Home In on Housing' programme to deliver the Housing Strategy.

## Project Purpose and strategic context

The Dorset Council Housing Strategy 2024-2029<sup>1</sup> identifies four key objectives for Housing Services. The first objective relates to 'Housing Need' seeking to enable residents to live safe, healthy, independent lives in homes that meet their needs. The strategy goes on to

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<sup>1</sup> [Housing Strategy January 2024 to January 2029 - Dorset Council](#)

identify 15 areas of focus in achieving these objectives. These areas of focus include ensuring residents have access to the 'Right property'.

Delivering homes and support services that meet current and future need means the Council must use resources efficiently. Some residents requiring support, need to be able to access this either in their home or the community. The reasons residents require support vary and can include age, disability or health-related care, homelessness or young people.

In meeting this need across the People and Children's directorates Dorset Council provides a wide range of supported accommodation services. These services are intended to meet specific support needs with each service having its own pathway for access. Providing services in this way is well established and an effective way to meet support needs within the community. However, the model is not without its challenges. Common challenges include:

- There not being enough move-on accommodation from supported housing
- People remaining in supported housing, when they no longer have a support need.
- Ensuring that residents are skilled to move on with independence meaning they stay beyond maximum length of stay.

## Project Objectives and what we looked at

The 'Move-On' project and the conclusion within this report seeks to gain a better understanding of the challenges faced by Dorset Council commissioned supported accommodation.

A clear understanding of the scale of the problem and who is affected.

Understanding the barriers affecting residents moving to and from supported accommodation and options to overcome this.

Recommending options on how to reduce the number of people in supported accommodation that do not need to be there & enhance independent living.

Provide recommendations for a clearer pathway to and from move-on accommodation.

For this report the project has:

- Conducted a cross departmental review of all commissioned supported accommodation.
- Reviewed why residents, who are ready to move on, are unable to do so.
- Gap analysis
- Reviewed co-ordination, processes and the allocation policy.
- Provide a clear definition of what is meant by supported & specialist accommodation.

Throughout the course of this project, we have considered and included information from the following sources.

- Joint report from Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government and Department for Work and Pensions; Supported Housing Review 2023.

- University of York, York Policy engine and Health Determinants Research Collaboration Bradford; How Could Local Authorities improve Supported Housing, January 2025.
- Local Government Association; Support Housing Guidance for local authorities in England, August 2025.
- Loughborough University, Centre for research in social policy; Living or surviving? Benefits, barriers, and opportunities for young people transitioning out of homelessness, February 2023.
- YMCA report; Impossible homes, March 2021.
- Women's aid; From Safety to Stability, access to move-on accommodation after refuge, 2025.

For the purposes of this report the following is out of scope and not discussed:

- procurement processes,
- service design,
- hospital discharge,
- contract management of providers,
- temporary accommodation,
- provisions for children,
- supported accommodation that is not commissioned by Dorset Council (e.g. Pivotal)
- procurement of individual care packages or support attached to the individual.

## What is meant by supported accommodation

There are multiple and interchangeable definitions of what constitutes supported housing used by national government, local authorities, regulatory bodies and providers<sup>2</sup>. Broadly, when taken together they refer to a 'specific form of accommodation where care, support and supervision are offered to tenants as part of their tenancy; the goal being to support people with specific needs to live as independently as possible.'<sup>3</sup>

In general, short term and transitional supported accommodation typically caters to a range of client groups, including individuals who have experienced homelessness, young people, those at risk of domestic abuse, people with substance misuse challenges, ex-offenders, refugees, asylum seekers and armed forces veterans. Long-term supported accommodation for working-age adults generally focuses on three core groups: individuals with mental health conditions, those with learning disabilities and people with physical or sensory impairments.

Supported accommodation is provided by a wide variety of landlords, delivery models and funding mechanisms. There are two elements to supported accommodation that require funding:

1. the accommodation, and
2. the care and support.

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<sup>2</sup> [Supported Housing Review](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Supported Housing Report Jan 2025 - For Comms Review](#)

Where the resident is eligible<sup>4</sup>, the Housing Benefit system funds the accommodation element with housing related support services funded separately, often through services commissioned by the local authority.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) 'Supported Housing Review of 2023'<sup>5</sup> published in November 2024 provides the most recent review of supported housing. The review evaluated supply, demand, funding and commissioning across Great Britain. In their review MHCLG and DWP considered what issues impact on the supply and demand for supported housing. They found difficulties in sustaining or expanding the supply of supported housing has occurred, alongside increasing demand for supported housing provision. The increase in demand has been seen across all client groups particularly homelessness, young people, mental health provision and people with learning disabilities and autism. The complexity of need across client groups is also increasing. Which has required a more intensive and higher level of specialist support for complex needs which has directly increased costs. They found that there is a high demand for move-on accommodation which is not being met which leads to 'blockages' within a limited supply of supported accommodation.

It estimates by 2040, between 361,700 and 640,700 additional units of supported housing will be needed to meet overall demand<sup>6</sup>. Their research concluded that 'there is significant long-term challenges in sustaining the current supply of supported housing as well as numerous barriers in developing new provision'.

## Dorset Council supported and specialist accommodation

Dorset Council have 49 commissioned supported accommodation provisions. Within each scheme there are different units of accommodation held, offering varying levels of support, pathways into and out of the schemes.

Graph A: Shows the breakdown of supported accommodation across services

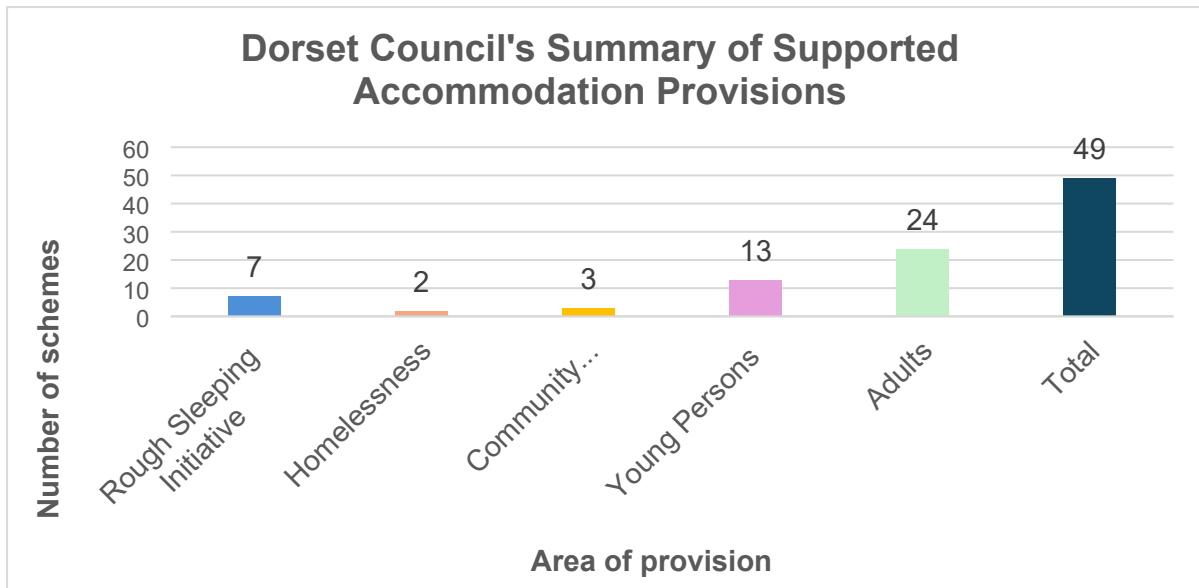
Graph A:

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<sup>4</sup> Housing Benefit requirements for supported housing relate to the type of landlord, whether care, support or supervision is being provided and by whom. These rules determine how the eligible rent and service charges for the Housing Benefit claim are calculated.

<sup>5</sup> [Supported Housing Review](#)

<sup>6</sup> 91,100 for working age people and between 88,600 and 297,000 for older people.



Graph B: Shows the number of units of accommodation per service area

Graph B:

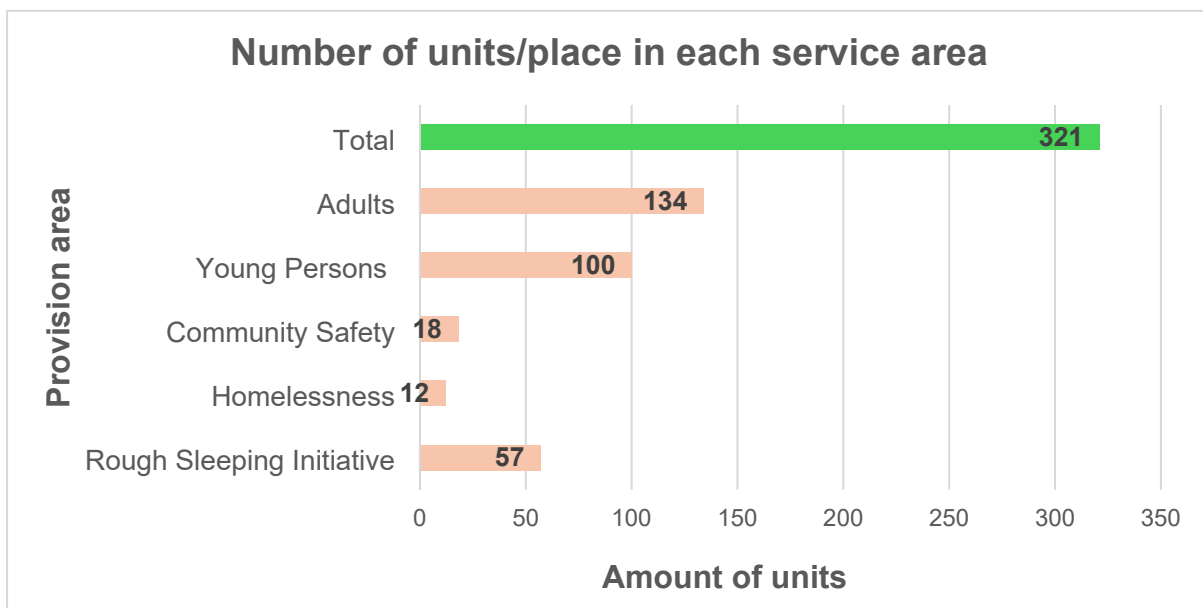


Table C: Lists the levels of support offered within each service area, the pathways in and out.

Table C:

| Service area/department   | Support level      | Pathway in                          | Pathway out                                                       |
|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Rough Sleeping Initiative | Medium-High        | Referral                            | Social housing, private rented accommodation or further supported |
| Homelessness              | Low-medium         | Referral                            | Social housing or private rented accommodation                    |
| Community Safety          | Low-medium         | Referral and/or assessment          | Social housing or private rented accommodation                    |
| Young Persons             | Low, medium & high | Referral and/or assessment          | Social housing, private rented accommodation or further supported |
| Adults                    | Low, medium & high | Referral and care & need assessment | Social housing, private rented accommodation or further supported |

Dorset Council is across all the relevant services are offering occupants of supported accommodation either assured shorthold tenancies (AST) or licenses. The Renter' Rights Act will come into force in May 2026. This act introduces significant reforms to the private rented sector in England. The changes brought by this act will apply to all existing and new private tenancies. Under the Act, individuals with assured shorthold tenancies will benefit from additional rights including, the abolishment of Section 21 notice or eviction<sup>7</sup>, all assured shorthold tenancies will automatically become periodic assured tenancies<sup>8</sup>, new grounds for possession, new private rented sector ombudsman and a protected 12-month period at the start of any tenancies. The Renters' Right Act is primarily concerned with forms of assured tenancies with license relatively unaffected however a key feature of the Act, 'decent homes standard' will be extended to include temporary accommodation.

### Adult Services

Adult social care supported accommodation commissioned by Dorset Council includes a range of housing and care options designed to support individuals who need help with daily living, including supported specialist accommodation. This comprises of 24 commissioned supported provisions across the local authority area equating to 134 units. These are a mixture of low, medium and high support accommodation. Each scheme differs in terms of housing type, tenure and number of units. For example, Grosvenor Road a mental health scheme offering low support has eight single flats, offered on assured shorthold tenancy, compared with Ramsbury Transitions a mental health and autism scheme offering 24-hour support, set in a shared house scheme with three units offered on a license.

Within the portfolio of adults supported accommodation there are four shared houses, two offered under a license and two offered under assured shorthold tenancies. Thirteen flats

<sup>7</sup> This is often referred to as 'no fault' eviction as it does not require the landlord to give a reason for taking the property back. The landlord will now be required to give legal reason for seeking possession.

<sup>8</sup> This will provide the tenant with more security of tenure.

and one two-bedroom house and six bungalows offered on assured shorthold tenancies. The pathways into a provision is through brokerage teams and usually requires a care needs assessment and referrals from a social worker.

The length of stay and the need to move-on varies depending on the service design. There are two predominant services:

- Short-term or transition services this would include crisis accommodation
- Long-term services where someone would only need to move on when either their needs change or because they have chosen to move somewhere else.

For some schemes, particularly those catering to individuals with learning difficulties or long-term supported living provisions there is no expectation that the individual will move on, the expectation is for the residents to stay as long as they need. For other provisions, such as Grosvenor Road, or Dorchester Road Transitions, there is the expectation that people will move on within 12 – 36 months.

In April 2024 a new provision to support young adults with learning disabilities, mental health and autism launched, Dorchester Road Transitions. This is a four-bedroom shared house with 24-hour support. Residents are offered a licence with an intended stay of between 12-24 months to develop skills for independence. All residents at Dorchester Road have a person-centred plan which includes ensuring the individual has applied to Dorset Housing Register. All four of the original residents who moved in during April 2024 remain resident with two individuals deemed ready for move on to independent living.

Table D: gives a summary of adults supported accommodation

Table D:



| Provision name                         | Unit/bed number | Support level | Property type             | Tenure  |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------|
| Grosvenor Rd                           | 8               | Low           | Single flat               | AST     |
| Dorchester Rd                          | 4               | High          | Shared house              | Licence |
| Ramsbury                               | 3               | High          | Shared house              | Licence |
| Red Oak                                | 12              | High          | Single flat               | AST     |
| Peter Grant Way – Crisis accommodation | 1               | High - TCP    | Single unit               | AST     |
| Fleet Cottage – Crisis accommodation   | 1               | High - TCP    | Single unit               | AST     |
| Albany Cottage                         | 6               | High - TCP    | Single unit               | AST     |
| Albany Close                           | 7               | High          | Single unit               | AST     |
| Elizabeth Court                        | 16              | High          | Single flat               | AST     |
| Fox Court                              | 18              | High          | Single flat               | AST     |
| Orchard Court                          | 15              | High          | Single flat               | AST     |
| Digby Court                            | 10              | High          | Single flat               | AST     |
| Coburg Court                           | 4               | Low           | Single flat               | AST     |
| Cranford Ct                            | 6               | High          | Share house               | AST     |
| Cranford Ave                           | 2               | High TCP      | Single house + sleep room | AST     |
| Trinity Rd                             | 3               | High          | Share house               | AST     |
| Cambridge Ct                           | 7               | High          | Single flat               | AST     |
| Prince George Hse                      | 5               | High          | Single flat               | AST     |
| Arnold Way                             | 1               | TCP           | Bungalow                  | AST     |
| Bear Cross                             | 1               | TCP           | Bungalow                  | AST     |
| Bear Cross                             | 1               | TCP           | Bungalow                  | AST     |
| Vernalls Close                         | 1               | TCP           | Bungalow                  | AST     |
| Hayward Ave                            | 1               | TCP           | Bungalow                  | AST     |
| Astral Cottage                         | 1               | TCP           | Bungalow                  | AST     |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                           | <b>134</b>      |               |                           |         |

## Children and Young people services

Children's services accommodation, for the purposes of this project, includes only commissioned young people's supported accommodation. This type of accommodation is designed to meet the diverse needs of young people aged between 16-25 who cannot live with their families. Dorset Council commissions 13 schemes with a total of 100 units all of which are offered on a license.

The schemes vary in terms of size, type and level of support, with most accommodation being shared. With exception of Fiergen Court which offers a mix of both shared living and self-contained flats. Generally, most of the accommodation offers between 5-10 hours

support per person, with some having overnight sleep in support during weekdays and weekend call out support. There are some schemes which offers support off site on an ad-hoc basis.

The expected length of stay is up to 18 months (547.5 days) with flexibility for this to be extended to meet additional needs. The average lengths of stay show that most residents move on within this time frame;

Lennox Street – 616 days, Dorchester Road – 269 days, Derby Street – 677 days, Waterloo – 288 days, Pottery Lane – 435 days, Woolston – 264 days, Woolston Road – 373 days, Station Road- 349 days, Stonewater – 313 days and Fiergen Court – 352 days.

Whilst the average length of stay gives some indication as to the journey for the resident it does not necessarily help to identify individual cases and blockages. For example, the average length of stay considers those who have just entered the provision which brings the overall average down. For example, one young person has been in supported lodgings for 6 years (2190 days), and another young person who is ready for move on has been in Pottery Lane for 2.8 years (657 days).

Pathways into the provision include referral by social worker or the leaving care team and for those aged 18-21 a joint housing assessment. Pathways out include social housing via the housing register or private rented accommodation.

Table E: gives a summary of young peoples supported accommodation

Table E:

| Provision name | Unit/bed number | Support level                                                   | Property type                                                            | Tenure  |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Lennox St      | 4               | 7-10 hours per person per week, overnight cluster-based support | Shared house, furnished                                                  | License |
| Dorchester Rd  | 7               | 7-10 hours per person per week, overnight cluster-based support | Shared house, furnished                                                  | License |
| Derby St       | 5               | 7-10 hours per person per week, overnight cluster-based support | Shared house, furnished                                                  | License |
| Waterloo       | 10              | 7-10 hours per person per week, overnight cluster-based support | Shared house, furnished                                                  | License |
| Pottery Lane   | 20              | 7-10 hours per person per week, sleep-in weekdays, w/e on-call  | Shared building (ex-Foyer), furnished                                    | License |
| Woolaston      | 4               | 7-10 hours per person per week, sleep-in weekdays, w/e on-call  | Shared house, furnished                                                  | License |
| Woolaston Rd   | 7               | 7-10 hours per person per week, sleep-in weekdays, w/e on-call  | Shared house, furnished                                                  | License |
| Station Rd     | 9               | 7-10 hours per person per week, sleep-in weekdays, w/e on-call  | Shared house, furnished                                                  | License |
| Stonewater     | 9               | 5-7 hours per person per week on-site, no sleep-in              | Shared house, furnished                                                  | License |
| Fiergen Court  | 8               | 5-7 hours per person per week on-site, no sleep-in              | Shared house / self-contained flats combi                                | License |
| Kirtleton Ave  | 12              | Off-site ad hoc advice & guidance from the Leaving Care Team    | Shared flats in a town house, with a Care Leaver Hub on the ground floor | License |
| Clarence Rd    | 2               | Off-site ad hoc advice & guidance from the Leaving Care Team    | Shared house                                                             | License |
| Leon House     | 3               | Off-site ad hoc advice & guidance from the Leaving Care Team    | Shared house                                                             | License |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>100</b>      |                                                                 |                                                                          |         |

## Community Safety

Dorset Council community safety service commissions refuges to provide essential support, accommodation and advocacy for individuals and their families who are experiencing domestic violence and abuse. There are three provisions within Dorset, one four bed house, one ten bed property and one three bed house, totalling eighteen units. Each property comprises shared facilities which can be adapted to suit single people or families. The Weymouth refuge offers low support, for those who are imminently ready to move on, compared to the North Dorset and East Dorset refuges where a higher level of support is offered, including help applying to the housing register and courses around confidence building and self-esteem. The expected stay is between 3-6 months, the average length of stay overall is 6.5 months across all accommodation and all three provisions are offered on a license agreement. Magna and Sovereign provide housing management for these provisions. The pathway in is through a specialist referral and the pathway out is either through the housing register or to private rented, with some residents choosing to return to their previous accommodation.

Table F: gives a summary of community safety supported accommodation

Table F:

| Provision name      | Unit/bed number | Support level  | Property type                  | Tenure  |
|---------------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| Weymouth refuge     | 4               | Lower support  | Shared house, shared bathrooms | License |
| North Dorset Refuge | 10              | Medium support | Shared house, shared bathrooms | License |
| East Dorset Refuge  | 3               | Medium support | Shared house, shared bathrooms | License |

## Homelessness and Housing Advice

Supported accommodation within the homelessness service provides supported accommodation for those who have sought homelessness and housing advice. The accommodation differs from ordinary temporary accommodation which does not typically offer any additional support. There are two provisions one in Blandford, and the other in Shaftesbury.

West View House is owned by Dorset Council and managed by the Housing Solutions team with the Tenancy Sustainment team providing support. West View House is a six-bedroom house with each bedroom having its own kitchenette and communal bathrooms. The average length of stay is between two – four months. Lyra House, owned and managed by Sovereign as temporary accommodation for individuals with low-medium support needs. Lyra House has 6 furnished bedsits each with ensuite shower rooms. The intended length of stay is up to six months with the average stay of up to eight months.

Pathways into the accommodation are made through referral completed by the homelessness service. Pathways out include social housing or private rented accommodation.

Table G: gives a summary of homelessness supported accommodation

Table G:

| Provision name  | Unit/bed number | Support level      | Property type          | Tenure  |
|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|------------------------|---------|
| West View House | 6               | Low-medium support | Rooms in a share house | License |
| Lyra House      | 6               | Medium support     | Self-contained bedsits | License |

### Rough Sleeping Initiative

Dorset Council's Rough Sleeping Initiative is part of a broader strategy to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping. As well as outreach services there is support and guidance on how to access accommodation and support services. The rough sleeper's initiative consists of 7 provisions, which make up 57 units, with the majority being in Weymouth. The level of support differs with each provision, ranging from medium-high support which can include intensive 1-2-1 support or floating support as and when needed. The average length of stay is 632 days (excluding Roundhayes). For the Roundhayes provision, where there has been move-on into registered provider properties outside of the rough sleeping pathway, the average stay is 414 days.

The accommodation type depends on the provision; the Bus Shelter phase 1 is individual pods with a communal kitchen whereas the Bus Shelter phase 2 is completely self-contained units. There are further self-contained flats and studios and a shared property. Most tenures are non-secure occupancy agreements apart from the Bus Shelter provisions and the Haven provisions, which are licenses. Referrals are considered either through a panel or by completing another phase (such as Bus Shelter phase 1). Most people within the rough sleeping schemes move on via social housing, although some individuals have found move on into the private rented sector.

Table H: gives a summary of the rough sleeping initiative supported accommodation

Table H:

| Provision name             | Unit/bed number | Support level | Property type                                    | Tenure                         |
|----------------------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Bus Shelter - phase 1      | 12              | High          | Pods, own bathroom, shared kitchen               | Licenses                       |
| Bus Shelter - phase 2      | 5               | Medium        | Self-contained units                             | Licenses                       |
| Roundhayes                 | 6               | Medium        | Self-contained studio flat. Shared communal area | Non-secure occupancy agreement |
| Shelter IFS                | 18              | High          | Self-contained properties                        | Non-secure occupancy agreement |
| Lantern Supported Lettings | 2               | Medium        | Self-contained properties                        | Non-secure occupancy agreement |
| TSO/RSAP properties        | 8               | Medium        | Self-contained properties                        | Non-secure occupancy agreement |
| Haven                      | 6               | High          | Shared property                                  | License                        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>               | <b>57</b>       |               |                                                  |                                |

## Barriers to moving on from supported and specialist accommodation

The exit strategy for the majority of Dorset Council supported accommodation is for the resident to secure accommodation through the Housing Register or the private rented sector. A few schemes (Rough Sleeper and Young Persons) offer some limited spaces to move on in a stage way from shared living in to forms of semi-independent self-contained units, with these residents ultimately supported to move into social or private rented accommodation.

The current Dorset Council Housing Allocations Policy 2021 – 2026<sup>9</sup> allows eligible applicants to join the housing register and bid on a choice based letting system for social housing. There are two reasonable preference categories given to individuals living in supported accommodation:

- band B – high housing need for those in “supported housing and ready to move on”

<sup>9</sup> [Dorset Council Housing Allocations Policy 2021 to 2026. Revised August 2024 - Dorset Council](#)

- band D – low housing need for those in “supported housing or care leaver not ready to move on”

Band A, emergency housing need being the highest priority and band D – low housing need being the lowest band. Applicants may be awarded additional reasonable preference categories based on other assessments, such as welfare, medical need or statutory homeless duties. Where two or more reasonable preference categories apply the applicant will be placed in the highest band that applies. Banding assessments do not have a cumulative effect.

Following recent consultation there will be a new housing allocation policy in April 2026 which will go until 2031<sup>10</sup> which proposes some changes to the reasonable preference categories. Under the new draft policy reasonable preference band two will be awarded to:

- People who need to move on welfare grounds, due to being ready to make a planned move from supported housing (commissioned by Dorset Council), where they are provided with care, support or supervision on:  
Resettlement accommodation; or  
A managed property; or  
A hostel for homeless people.

Band four, general housing need will be awarded to:

- People not ready to make a planned move from supported housing (commissioned by Dorset Council), where they are provided with care, support or supervision in:  
Resettlement accommodation; or  
A managed property; or  
A refuge for people who have left their home as a result of domestic abuse; or  
A hostel for homeless people

Similarly, to the current policy, applicants can be assessed as meeting other reasonable preference categories and will be awarded the highest band applicable. A similar level of priority for those in supported accommodation can be seen across the allocation policies of other neighbouring authorities<sup>11</sup>.

Securing social housing provides applicants with a good long-term housing solution, offering secure tenure, affordable rents and good support. However, the demand for affordable social housing in Dorset far outweighs the supply, with 6658 households on the housing register and around 500 new applications received each month. 3826 households on the housing register, 57% require a one bedroom or bedsit size property.

The total number of studio and 1 bed general needs properties allocated between April 2024 -2025 was 200. The average number of bids placed before an allocation for all general needs properties was 136. With studio and 1 bed properties having overall highest bid count:

| Property Size | Average bid count |
|---------------|-------------------|
|---------------|-------------------|

<sup>10</sup> [Dorset Council draft housing allocation scheme 2026 to 2031 - Dorset Council](#)

<sup>11</sup> See appendix A

|                    |     |
|--------------------|-----|
| Studio and one bed | 217 |
| Two bed            | 88  |
| Three bed          | 144 |
| Four bed           | 97  |
| Five bed           | 13  |

There are 1631 households under 55's (sheltered housing age) that can bid on studios and 1 bedroom properties. However, being over 55 does not prevent someone from bidding for this type of property, so the total number that can bid is 3857. 123 households are in band B as in supported housing and ready for move on, 119 of these have a one bed need. 43 applicants are currently awarded band D as in supported housing and not ready for move on, totalling 169 applicants. This is around 51% of those placed in supported accommodation.

Between April 2024 – 2025 there were 26 applicants housed through the housing register who had band B, high housing need in supported housing and ready to move on applied to their application. For 24 of these this was their primary banding reason. Of the 26, 2 applicants had band A urgent housing need as being statutory homeless and owed a full housing duty. They were awarded this in addition to band B. For these applicants the total average length of time from application to being housed was 703 days, this includes time that the applicant is likely to have been placed in band D not ready for move on. The average length of time from the date they were moved into band B ready to move was 442 days. When the two applicants who were awarded band A are removed, the average length of time from application is 645 days and 456 days once placed in band B ready for move on.

There was a total of 423 one-bedroom properties allocated through the housing register between April 2024 – 2025. 230 of these were allocated for general needs with the remaining being for those over 55. Of the 230 general needs properties, 107 were allocated to those in band A with 65 going to those in band B. The 26 properties that were allocated to those in band B ready for move on represented 40% of all the band B allocations. Overall, 29% of all the one-bedroom allocations went to band B. The average wait for an allocation to someone in band B was 375 days. 58 one-bedroom properties in this period were allocated to those awarded band C or band D.

| Band         | Number of allocations | Percentage of total allocations |
|--------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Band A       | 107                   | 46%                             |
| Band B       | 65                    | 28%                             |
| Band C and D | 58                    | 25%                             |
| Total        | 230                   |                                 |

Once a property is advertised all the bids placed are used to generate a shortlist, this ranks all the bids in order of the highest band with the longest award date. Officers then use this shortlist to allocate the property working from the top down. The Housing Register operates as a choice based letting scheme, this allows applicants the choice to bid for available social housing properties that are advertised to all those registered. The choice based letting scheme means that applicants must actively participate in bidding on available properties. If an applicant is registered with an active application but does not place bids on available properties, they will not be considered in the shortlisting of the allocation of the property. There is a process where requests for automatic bidding on behalf of an applicant can be



made. For this to be applied there must be sufficient reasons as to why the applicant is unable to bid for themselves or cannot be supported to do so. This is a separate request and would not automatically be applied at the point of registration.

226 of the supported accommodation throughout Dorset Council across all services are located in Weymouth or Dorchester, this is almost 70 % of all supported accommodation.

| Provision                 | Total units | Weymouth & Dorchester total | % of total stock per service |
|---------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Adults                    | 134         | 80                          | 60%                          |
| Young Persons             | 100         | 81                          | 81%                          |
| Community Safety          | 18          | 5                           | 27%                          |
| Homelessness              | 12          | 0                           | 0                            |
| Rough Sleeping Initiative | 57          | 51                          | 89%                          |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>327</b>  | <b>226</b>                  | <b>69%</b>                   |

Many residents who have been able to progress to the stage of being tenancy ready, express a desire to remain in the area where they have been supported and started to settle. These are popular areas within in Dorset and generally demand out strips supply. The average waiting time for a one bedroom/studio social property in Dorchester is 1 year 3 months and 1 year 6 months for Weymouth<sup>12</sup>. People are encouraged to broaden their search outside of these areas, but often for many there would be a significant impact on their progress if they were to move away from their support networks.

Generally, the process for choice-based lettings is used to allocate available social let properties. However, there are times when 'direct lets' are utilised to ease pressure on a specific accommodation. These circumstances include:

- Urgent management moves, when a housing provider needs to move a tenant for operational or management reasons (these are done by the social landlord)
- Emergency cases, where individuals or households require immediate accommodation due to homelessness or other urgent housing needs.
- Specific needs used when a property is needed to meet the requirement of a disabled applicant or someone with particular support needs.

The policy emphasises that these are the exception and not standard process. In 2023 a small cohort of individuals accommodated in supported accommodation through the rough sleep er initiative who were identified as being tenancy ready but continuously unsuccessful on the housing register whilst bidding. Utilising direct lets in these circumstances proved to be successful and help this cohort to be rehoused easing pressures on the supported accommodation.

<sup>12</sup> [Housing wait times - Dorset Council](#)

Once an applicant has bid for a property and if successful in being shortlisted for the property their application will be put forward to the landlord (registered provider), ultimately it is their decision to offer or not to offer the applicant a tenancy. Some services describe frequently that even where their residents are ready for move on that they are refused tenancies. Particularly services who are supporting those with a history of rough sleeping, substance abuse and care leavers. Reasons given by the providers are broad and normally specific to the persons previous housing history but may include, the applicant previously losing a social tenancy, anti-social behaviour or existing rent arrears.

In addition to the Housing Register being a vehicle for allocation of social housing, the data it collects is critical in determining and understanding the housing need in Dorset. Most delivery of new affordable housing in Dorset is done in partnership with registered providers. These developments are supported by the Councils housing enabling service. The Housing Register plays a critical role in supporting housing enabling by providing data, insights and moulds strategic direction. The register provides real-time data on the number of people needing housing, their household type and their specific needs. This information helps to inform housing enablers as to the type of development needed. Data from the register feeds into Housing Needs Assessments and Strategic Housing Market Assessments supporting evidence-based decisions for Local Plans, planning applications and funding bids. However, this data is limited, in that it only captures the needs of those registered.

Access to accommodation in the private rented sector can be competitive with demand for more affordable properties high. As well as higher rents the private rented sector requires funds up front to secure a property. Typically, there will be a deposit and around five weeks rent in advance payable prior to the start of tenancy. For example, on an average one-bedroom self-contained flat in Weymouth the rent will be around £750.00 per month, to secure a property at this rent the tenant is likely to need funds of approximately £1600.00. Many of the residents in supported accommodation will not have access to these types of funds. Some residents may be able to access borrowing through rent deposit schemes but access to these schemes are limited to specific services and with some requiring an affordability assessment. The Homelessness Service also offers a cash incentives to private landlords who are willing to offer tenancies to their service users. This can be an attractive offer to landlords and helps to acquire more access to private rented properties. Although access to the landlord incentives is limited to those individuals working with the Homelessness and Advice service. Tenancies offered in the private rented sector differ to those usually offered in the social housing sector. Tenancies are typically offered as assured shorthold tenancies which do not offer the same level of security of tenure or support as a social tenancy.

A YMCA led investigation exploring the barriers young people in supported accommodation face when trying to move on to independent living. They interviewed 268 young people across England & Wales exploring life in YMCA supported accommodation and the challenges to moving on. Fourteen in-depth interviews were conducted with young people about their experiences of moving from supported accommodation into independent living. Young people are wary of private rented and it's often unaffordable. The study found that the top 3 personal reasons preventing move-on include not having money saved, being unemployed and still requiring support. The most common external factors include the costs associated with private renting, there not being available social housing and not receiving enough housing allowance to cover rent. Two fifths of young people expected to move into

social housing after leaving supported accommodation and stated that private rented should not be an option and social housing was the option that could provide them with a secure home in which they can lay foundations for independence. Despite the desire to move to social housing it was noted that the supply is not there.

Residents get 'stuck' and demotivated when they are ready to move on but are unsuccessful when bidding for properties on the housing register or when looking for accommodation in the private rented sector. With some residents showing a lack of motivation to find further accommodation when already living in a self-contained property. For other residents there is little expectation to move on (can be seen particularly in adults supported accommodation which is intended for those with learning difficulties), it is expected that they will stay as long as they need and sometimes this could be for many years. For others it can be difficult to get to a stage where they are tenancy ready and likely to be accepted by a landlord. For example, individuals with a history of rough sleeping often have trauma and their support needs are complex which can make their progress to independent living slow and for some they are not able to get to the stage of ever being tenancy ready.

There is a better understanding across services that work within or alongside Housing Services. The officers that support residents to move on generally have a better understanding of how to access and utilise the Housing Register, how to identify incorrect bandings, what schemes are available to help access the private rented sector and access to more contacts. For other services this can result in late or incomplete housing register applications, limited understanding of the bidding process and no active engagement with the private rented sector.

## Solutions to improve move-on from supported accommodation

Supporting adequate and efficient move-on from supported accommodation is essential for residents, provider and local authority. The impact of little to no move can have far reaching consequences such as stalling the residents progression to independence, preventing the provider from giving the services they are commissioned for and a knock on effect to other Councils other strategic priorities such as improved hospital discharge.

In August 2025 the Local Government Association published 'Supported Housing'<sup>13</sup> guidance which aims to support councils to prepare effective implementation of the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act (SHROA). The guidance draws on examples of existing good practice and sets out steps that councils can take as well as action in the short, medium and long term.

The guidance highlights the importance of collaborative partnership in move-on pathways and proactive market shaping. Noting this is essential not only for anticipating demand but also for ensuring the effective daily delivery of services. When partnerships are strong, residents are placed in environments that best suit their individual needs and supported appropriately. This alongside a well-defined supported housing strategy which is equally important.

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<sup>13</sup> [Supported Housing Guidance for local authorities in England](#)

The guidance suggests that Council should establish clear processes for working with internal departments, housing providers, and care and support organisation to ensure a coordinated approach. The guidance goes on to give examples of best practice:

Kirklees council has a collaborative move-on pathway (C-MOP) where those in supported housing ready to move-on to the private rented sector can be referred into the housing solutions service (HSS) to help with finances to secure a property they have viewed. In exchange, HSS have first refusal on the void space in the supported housing scheme.

A 2024 case study from Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing (MTVH) highlights how the shortage of social housing is making it harder for people to move on from supported housing. Residents often end up in expensive and unstable private rentals, where they are more likely to lose tenancies without the support available in social housing. In response, MTVH worked with local authorities to set clearer pathways into social housing for residents ready to move on, including securing quota agreements and advocating for tailored allocations through local housing registers.

The LGA acknowledges the complexity of developing sustainable move-on pathways and recognises in achieving this level of coordination it requires navigating diverse organisational priorities, resource constraints, and the unpredictable nature of housing availability, which can make aligning placements with individual needs particularly challenging. Urging councils to work proactively in shaping the market based on local needs.

For example, Leicestershire County Council has adopted a market-shaping strategy through its investment prospectus<sup>14</sup>, outlining local housing needs to attract suitable providers to the region. This strategic approach helps Leicestershire shape the local housing market, inviting providers aligned with council goals.

Finally, the LGA notes, local authorities that proactively engage with private landlords and developers can gain valuable insights into their local housing economy, helping to identify opportunities for supported housing provision. Forums, surveys, and direct engagement can reveal trends in property availability and rental pressures, allowing councils to plan strategically for the future.

The Oldland Common specialised supported housing Scheme in South Gloucestershire is one example of this approach. The scheme was developed on a privately owned site acquired at open market value, highlighting the importance of engaging with the private sector to secure suitable land. Led by Elim Housing Association, with joint commissioning from three local authorities, the scheme provides bespoke homes for people with learning disabilities and autism, offering robust design, community integration, and 24/7 support. This collaboration was underpinned by a joint agreement on nominations and void costs, demonstrating how councils can shape, and de-risk supported housing delivery through active market engagement and partnership.

## Conclusions

Across the three directorates, five services managing supported accommodation there is a total of 321 bed spaces.

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<sup>14</sup> [ERP Programme options](#)

A total of 169 residents who are currently living in supported accommodation are registered on the Housing Register (123 band B and 46 band d).

There is a geographical concentration of supported accommodation in Weymouth and Dorchester. 69% of supported accommodation is located in Weymouth and Dorchester, this matched with the desire of individuals to remain in areas they have been supported creates high demand and long waiting times for move-on properties in these areas.

Nearly all schemes operate an exit strategy for the resident to secure alternative independent accommodation from either the housing register or private rented sector.

Of the 230 one-bedroom general need properties allocated between April 2024 – 2025, 26 went to applicants who were awarded band B, high housing need in supported housing and ready to move on applied to their application. This is 40% of all the allocations of one-bedroom properties that were allocated to band B.

The average length of time from the date residents were move into band B ready to move was 442 days.

A previous Home in on Housing report<sup>15</sup> concluded that whilst Dorset Council has various incentive packages to help access properties in the private rented sector these do not apply to all services. For example, Adult Social Care services do not have a specific package of support although funds can be made available to pay rent in advance and deposits which is offered on a case-by-case basis. Adult services do not offer any cash incentives or bonds.

There is no consistent approach for support to access housing advice and support. Knowledge gaps among staff in some directorates lead to incomplete housing register applications and missed opportunities for private rental options. Extended stays beyond intended timeframes can lead residents to be demotivated and hinders progress toward independence.

Data from the Housing Register is used to assess housing need, this data is then used to determine local plans, planning applications and strategic direction for the delivery of new homes. However current figures taken from the register indicate that this data does not fully represent the needs of those living in supported accommodation. The figures indicate the housing register currently captures around 51% of those residents living in supported accommodation. This follows the findings in the MHCLG latest supported housing review which identified evidence gaps at both a local and national level. Noting local authorities and county councils commonly have difficulty accessing readily available and robust data to inform understanding of demand, supply and cost. It is widely acknowledged that there is no single comprehensive or systematic national data source which captures the scale, scope, diversity costs of the sector<sup>16</sup>. Secondly, administrative and regulatory data sources are generally the most robust data sets available. However, these only provide a picture of various aspects of the supported accommodation and not the sector as a whole. The national data is relatively high-level aggregate data which treats the sector as a generic subset of all social housing.

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<sup>15</sup> [Private Landlord report v3 .docx](#)

<sup>16</sup> [Supported Housing Review](#)

While successful in easing pressure for rough sleeper cohorts, use of direct lets on the Housing Register are limited and not widely applied as a strategic tool.

## Recommendations

### **Strengthen strategic direction**

Develop a Supported Accommodation strategy that aligns with other broader council strategies<sup>17</sup> which outlines clear targets, timelines, and responsibilities for increasing move-on options across all service areas. This should include a supported housing commissioning plan in line with LGA guidance, to create a cross-sector commissioning plan that maps current and future demand, identifies gaps, and aligns with health, care, and the housing strategy.

Consider joint commissioning agreements for specialist schemes (similar to Oldland Common example).

Use planning policy and enabling functions to influence location of new developments.

Undertake an exercise which targets those in supported accommodation but not registered or registered and not bidding on the Housing Register. With the aim of gathering full data on supported accommodation residents (currently only 51% registered) to inform Local Plans and strategic housing delivery.

Establish a cross directorate supported accommodation working group to foster collaboration between directorates to streamline pathways and unblock barriers.

### **Enhance data and outcomes monitoring**

Utilising existing directorate databases to create a centralised dashboard for supported housing. Linking with the NHS and voluntary sector partners to integrate outcome indicators across health and wellbeing. Creating a live, shared database of all supported accommodation units, residents' status, and move-on readiness to improve coordination, forecasting and contract management.

Adopt as suggested by the LGA an outcomes framework which is based on national standards that:

- Measure resident progress, that focuses on core principles that are person centred, safe, effective, respectful and well-led.
- Include benchmarking for continuous improvement using model indicators, case studies, and shared local intelligence to guide performance evaluation.
- Are preventative and represent value for money.

This work to be facilitated through the Home in on Housing 'Support Accommodation Strategy' project.

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<sup>17</sup> Housing Strategy, A Better Life Strategy, Birth to Settled Adulthood Programme, Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy, Economic Growth Strategy, Domestic Abuse Strategy, Natural Environment, Climate & Ecology Strategy, Children's Services Sufficiency Strategy (pending), Corporate Parenting Strategy, Dorset Council Planning for Climate Change - Interim Guidance and Position Statement and Local Transport Plan

## **Improve pathways and Move-On planning**

Introduce move-on planning discussions from day one ensuring all supported housing placements include a clear, time-bound move-on plan that is co-produced with residents. This aligns with LGA's emphasis on outcome-focused support.

Embed making a housing register application and active bidding as a standard part of person-centred planning for all residents in transitional schemes.

Offer tenancy training to residents approaching being move-on ready ensuring they receive tailored support in budgeting, tenancy rights, independent living skills and housing options.

Offer training for staff on housing register processes, banding, and private rental options.

Expand the use of intermediate semi-independent housing models e.g. step-down flats to bridge the gap between high-support schemes and full independence.

Target new supported and move-on accommodation in under-served areas that still offer good access to amenities that are outside of Weymouth and Dorchester.

## **Housing Supply and Allocations**

There are three suggested recommendations to make use of tools available within the allocation policy, it is unlikely that these would all be required and used together.

Utilise the 'Dorset Housing Allocation Scheme 2026 – 2031' to introduce quotas (paragraph 11.6-11.9) for those in supported housing and ready to move on (MTVH example).

Develop a process that sets out the strategic use of direct lets for cohorts who are tenancy ready but unsuccessful through bidding.

## **Expand private rented sector options**

Actioning the recommendations from the Home in on Housing 'Dorset Private Landlord'<sup>18</sup> report will help to bolster private landlord engagement and improve cross directorate working in this sector.

Adult Social care to consider developing a financial support package for those ready to move on without access to necessary funds.

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<sup>18</sup> [Private Landlord report v3 .docx](#)

## Appendices

### Appendix A

Neighbouring authorities' allocation policies reasonable preference categories for living in supported accommodation

| Local Authority             | Details of Move-on from supported                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| New Forest District Council | <p>Applicants who are in supported housing within the Council's district area and have been assessed as ready to move on will be placed in Band 2: Serious Need to Move.</p> <p>This includes young people leaving care who have been assessed by Children's Services as ready for independent living.</p> <p>There is no standard definition of supported accommodation, and the Council will determine whether accommodation is to be treated as supported accommodation for the purposes of the Scheme.</p> |



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|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                | <p>Applicants not assessed as ready to move on will not qualify for this Band but may qualify for another Band depending on their Housing Need.</p> <p>Applicants whose supported accommodation is being decommissioned will only have their application placed in Band 2 if they have been assessed as ready to move on.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Bournemouth<br>Christchurch & Poole<br>Council | <p>The Housing Allocations Policy provides specific provisions for individuals moving on from supported accommodation. If you have recently moved, or are about to move, from supported accommodation, a care placement, hospital, or rehabilitation facilitated by the Council and you are assessed as able to sustain an independent tenancy, you may be eligible for a Gold band.</p> <p>For young people aged 25 or under who have been looked after, fostered, or accommodated by BCP Council between the ages of 14 and 18, for a period amounting to at least 13 weeks in total, and the council has a duty of care accepted under the Children Act, you may be eligible for Gold Band – Care Leavers Move-On, if your care placement is coming to an end or has ended recently and you have been assessed as being able to manage a tenancy.</p> <p>For vulnerable individuals with support needs who are ready to move on to independent housing following a stay in hospital or a period of living in Council-commissioned supported accommodation, you may be eligible for Gold Band – Supported Housing Move-On. This will involve a multi-agency approach to plan, assess, and review your particular needs, which may include a funded support package beyond your housing-related support needs.</p> <p>In cases where your assessment shows you are not yet ready to sustain an independent tenancy; you may be referred to supported housing or other housing for a period of time dependent on your individual needs. Your application will not be made live until an appropriate officer has assessed you as ready to move on to independent living.</p> |
| Somerset Council                               | <p>Applicants who are ready to move on from supported accommodation in Somerset can be placed in the Gold Band if they meet the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Resided in Short-Term Supported Housing:</b> The applicant must have lived in a short-term supported housing project within Somerset.</li> <li>2. <b>Deemed Ready for Independent Living:</b> The Project Manager of the supported housing scheme must complete and sign the Homefinder Somerset move-on form,</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |

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|------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                        | <p>confirming that the applicant is ready for independent living.</p> <p>This Gold Band status will last for 3 months. After this period, a review will be conducted to ensure that the applicant has been effectively bidding for homes and pursuing other housing options. If the applicant has not been actively bidding or pursuing other options, their application may be downgraded to the Bronze Band. If there were no suitable homes available during the initial 3 months, the Gold Band status may be extended for another 3 months.</p> <p>Care leavers who meet similar criteria and are ready for independent living will also be placed in the Gold Band under the "Ready to move on from Supported Housing" category.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Wiltshire Council      | <p>Move on from supported accommodation applies to applicants in shared or supported accommodation where there is a move-on protocol in place with the council. The applicant must have been assessed as ready to move into independent living accommodation by both the support provider and a housing officer of the council.</p> <p>This falls under Band 2 (High Need) in the Wiltshire Council Allocations Policy.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| North Somerset Council | <p><b>Supported Housing 'Move-On'</b></p> <p>Applicants who live within a Supported Housing project in North Somerset and are seeking to 'move-on' into independent accommodation. This does not apply to applicants whose placement is to receive treatment or rehabilitation of any kind for any kind of dependency. This only applies to applicants who met the local connection criteria in paragraph 2.2.1 at the time of the original referral and acceptance into the supported housing project. The Project Manager must confirm in writing that the applicant is ready for such a move and has acquired reasonable skills to sustain a tenancy or has the necessary support in place to do so. The case will then be considered by the Housing Assessment Manager as to whether the applicant meets all the criteria to move into Band B.</p> <p>Applicants who live in residential or nursing care settings and are seeking to 'move-on' into independent accommodation. This does not apply to applicants whose placement is to receive treatment or rehabilitation of any kind for any kind of dependency. This only applies to applicants who met the local connection criteria as set out in paragraph 2.2.1 at the time of their move into their current accommodation. The Adults' Support and Safeguarding team leader responsible for that service user must confirm in writing that the applicant is ready to live independently and has the necessary care and support in place to do so. The case will then be</p> |

|  |                                                                                                                      |
|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | considered by the Housing Assessment Manager as to whether the applicant meets all the criteria to move into Band B. |
|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|