



Housing Toolkit:

Easy read guide to choosing a place to live



A guide for people with learning disabilities in
East Sussex

July 2021



How to use this booklet



If you need help to read this you could ask

- a support worker
- someone in your family
- a friend or carer



This is a guide about choosing your housing and support.

It will tell you about different types of housing and support options that are available in East Sussex.

You can use this guide to



- help you understand your options for choosing your housing and support









- help you make good choices about your housing and support.

Words highlighted in **blue** are explained on pages **61** and **62**.

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What the Government says about housing



The Government says people with learning disabilities should have the same choices as everyone else about where they live and who they live with.

This is written in the **Valuing People Now** paper which you can find in easy read [here](#).



Today, many people with a learning disability live with their family or in a residential care home.



People may not have been asked if this is what they want.

Some people may not know about other choices like having their own **tenancy** or owning their own home.



Everybody should know what their housing options are.

What the Government says about housing



There is a national plan to change the way that people with a learning disability and / or autism are supported.

The plan is called **Building the right support** and you can find it in easy read [here](#).



The government said they would move people with a learning disability and / or autism out of hospital who should not be there.



The plan says that people should be able to get support close to home and that they should only go to hospital when they really need to.



The plan is to make sure that people with learning disabilities and / or autism get to make more choices about their own lives, like where they live and how they are supported.

Housing and support options



Everyone is different.

Some people with learning disabilities are able to live fully **independent** lives in their **community**.



Other people with learning disabilities need support to help them live their life.



It is important that you have support that help you to get better at doing things independently.

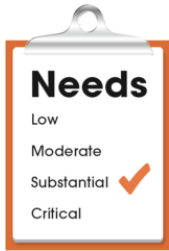


Good support can help you feel more **confident** so that you can be as independent as possible in your own home.



There are lots of different housing and support options.

The level of support you get will depend on how much help you need and how much you can do for yourself.



Some people need support for just a few hours a week and other people need it 24 hours a day.



To live in some types of housing, you need to be allowed to use Adult Social Care Services.

Your **care manager** or Health and Social Care Connect can arrange for you to have an **assessment**.



Health and Social Care Connect **0345 60 80 191**

You can find the Adult Social Care website [here](#).



An assessment says what your support needs are. This is agreed together with you.



After your assessment, Adult Social Care can say what housing and support options you can use.



How much support you need might affect what housing you can live in.



If you have a social care assessment and are **not** able to use services, you may still be able to live with support in other kinds of housing.

Name	_____
Address	_____ _____ _____
Phone Number	_____

Contact your local District of Borough housing department to find out more.

Details are on pages **58** and **59**.

Choosing where to live



There are many housing options.

You may need support to think about which option is best for you.

This booklet can help you do this.



Some housing options are just for people who have higher support needs and not everyone can use them.



A social care assessment will help us to decide if this kind of housing is right for you.

This can be described as 'having eligible needs'.



There are also housing options for people with lower support needs.



Some options are good if you want to live in your own home.



Some options are good if you want to live with friends or other people.

Choosing who to live with

Living on your own



Lots of people decide that they would like to live on their own.



Living on your own does not mean that you will get less support.

Your assessment will say what support you need and your care manager will make sure you get this support.



Here are some things about living on your own that might help you decide if this is the best option for you:

If you live on your own:



- You will have your own front door



- You will be able to be more independent and make your own decisions



- You will be able to choose who you see and what you do



- There may be some shared space where you can meet other people



- You will have more privacy in your life.

But



- You may get lonely or bored.

If you live on your own you will be **responsible** for things like:



- paying your bills



- shopping



- cooking



- cleaning



- keeping yourself safe



- arranging your daily activities



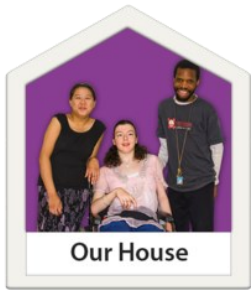
- meeting up with your friends



You may be able to get support with some of these things.

The amount of support you get will depend upon your needs and how much you can do for yourself.

Living with other people



Lots of people decide that they would like to live with other people.

Here are some things about living with other people that might help you decide if this is the right option for you.

If you live with other people:



- you will nearly always have someone around to talk to



- you will be able to share some of the chores, like cooking and cleaning



- you will be able to share the cost of paying for things like gas and electricity



- you may be able to arrange to go out in the evenings and weekends with some of the people you live with.

But you will also need to think about things like:



- you may not always get on with the people you live with



- you may find it difficult to have quiet times because there may be people around most of the time



- you may not have very much privacy.



For more information about the different types of support you can get when you are living on your own or living with other people, see pages **47** to **53**.



It is important to think carefully about what is right for you now and also think about your plans for the future.



You can talk about these with your family and friends, your supporters or your care manager.



Remember that a decision about where you want to live can be changed in the future.

Your life may change and you may need to change where you are living.



A good plan for the future can help to make sure you find the right place for you.

This page shows some of the housing options you can choose from

Renting from a private landlord



Renting from the council or a housing association



Supported Housing



Supported Accommodation



Housing for older people



more information on pages **42 to 45**

Shared Lives

Adult Social Care and Health Learning Disability Services



with a supporter in their home



Owning your own home



more information on pages **37 to 41**

Homeshare



with a supporter in your home

Residential Care



with a group of people in a home with support staff

Renting from a private landlord



Rent is the money you pay each month to live somewhere.

You pay rent to a **landlord**.



The landlord is the owner of the property or building.
This could be a person or an organisation.



If you rent the place you live you are called a **tenant**.

You can find out about homes you can rent:

- through an **estate agent**
- directly with a landlord
- through adverts in newspapers or newsagents.



Renting from a private landlord - things to think about



When you rent from a private landlord, it might not always be for a long time.

It can vary from 6 months to 5 years.



You will have lots of **properties** to choose from.



Housing Benefit rules are different when you rent from a private landlord.

You will need to find out about how your **benefits** might be affected.



Some landlords will not accept tenants who receive benefits.



You may have to pay a large **deposit**, as well as your rent.

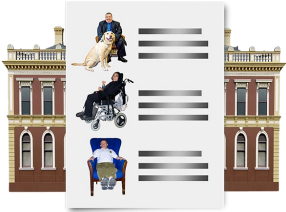


You can usually get this type of housing quite quickly.



It can be good to try independent living or living with friends.

Finding housing through your local Council Housing Register



Your local Council Housing Register is a list of people who want a house or flat.

There is a Register for each of the 5 Districts and Boroughs in East Sussex (Lewes, Wealden, Eastbourne, Hastings and Rother).



Your care manager can give you a form that will get you on your local housing register.

You can also contact your local housing department yourself.

See pages **58** and **59** for more details.



The housing department will assess your housing needs.

This is when they find out about your life to see what kind of housing you need.



It might take a long time to get the home you want.

You might be offered temporary housing first.

Council Housing Register - things to think about



You will have a secure or assured tenancy.

This means that as long as you follow the rules in the tenancy agreement, you can stay there as long as you need.



There may have been some recent changes in the law that may affect your housing rights.

This could include some new kinds of tenancy agreements.



The landlord must make sure that your home is safe and in good condition.



For more information about renting through the Council or Housing Association, you can contact the local housing department in your area.

The contact details are on pages **58** and **59**.

Supported Living Services



Supported living helps people with a wide range of support needs to live in their own home.



People in supported living will have had a social care assessment to see how much support they need to live in the service.



A care provider is often based within the supported living service to support the people living there.

But people can choose another care provider to help them with some or all of their support.

This will not affect a person's tenancy agreement.



There are different types of Supported living.

For example, you could have a flat of your own or you could live in a house with some shared rooms, like the kitchen and bathroom.



You are the tenant and have a tenancy agreement.
You pay rent to a **housing provider** who is the landlord.



The housing provider is responsible for looking after the building.



The housing provider will offer you a housing management service to help you with any problems that you may have to do with your housing.



Your housing management service will work closely with your care and support service.



You will pay a service charge.

This is money that pays towards things like window cleaning, gardening, heating and lighting.

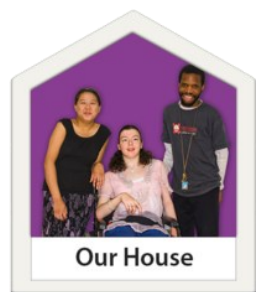
Supported living services - things to think about



You can still receive benefits in supported living services.



You can still live by yourself or share with others and have staff support.



If you share a home, you may have to share the responsibilities with housemates, like cooking, cleaning and paying the bills.



If you live in your own flat, you will have responsibility for cooking, cleaning and paying the bills.
You can get support for this if you need it.



Different supported living services can offer different levels of support.

More support



This means that there are always staff to support you. They sleep in the building overnight, and are on call if you need help at any time.

Less support



This means that support staff are there when you need help but may not sleep in overnight. There will be someone on call to contact in an emergency.



Supporting living services can be good if you are already living somewhere that provides high levels of support but you want to live more independently.

Supported Accommodation



There are supported accommodation services where you rent a room or a flat and get support when it is needed.



Support is given by the landlord or by support staff that visit.



This housing is only for people who have had a social care assessment and need this level of support.



The support offered does not include any kind of personal care, such as help with getting up, washing, or taking medication.



Each supported accommodation service aims to give people the chance to live as independently as possible.



They will give people the support that they need and also help people to get better at doing things for themselves.

Supported Accommodation - things to think about



Other people with support needs may live with you in this type of accommodation.



You can still receive the benefits that you are entitled to.



Staff will work with you on your daily living skills.

This is to help you get ready to move on to your own flat or more independent living.



This type of housing can be good if you are already living in a home that provides higher levels of support and feel that you may be ready to be more independent.

Shared Lives



With Shared Lives, you would live with the person or people that are paid to give you support.



You would live like a family and share their home.



This housing is only for people who have had a social care assessment and need this level of support.

Shared Lives - things to think about



You will probably have someone around most of the time to help you with the things that you need support with.



You and your family know that there is someone around most of the time to help you if there is an emergency.



You might have to wait a long time for this type of accommodation if there is not a family available at the time.



You may not have a lot of privacy or independence because the family will be around a lot of the time.

Homeshare



Homeshare is a scheme that can give live in support for people who live in their own homes.



This means that the home sharer lives with you in your flat or house.

They will have their own bedroom but will share the others rooms, like the kitchen and bathroom.



The home sharer will not normally pay rent.



The home sharer will help with everyday things like cooking, cleaning and shopping.



The home sharer can provide up to 10 hours of support for you each week.

Homeshare - things to think about



You can stay in your own home, with your own independence.



You will have someone to talk to and to keep you company.



You and your family know that there is someone around, some of the time, to help you and be there if you need them.



The home sharer may not always be at home and available straight away if you have a problem.



The home sharer may want to move out when you do not want them to.

Owning your own home - Shared Ownership



Shared ownership means you buy part and rent part of your home.



For example, you buy half and rent the other half.



Shared ownership does not mean that you have to share it with other people, but you can if you want to.



You can buy your share with cash or by getting a mortgage.

A **mortgage** is the money you can borrow from a bank to buy a house.

Shared Ownership - things to think about



You may have more choice about where you live and what the property is like than you would if you were renting.



You will have **long-term security**.



You will be able to choose a home from the open market.

This means that you can choose any home that is for sale.



You need to be sure that it is the right place for you before you decide to live there.



You will need to make sure that you have enough money to cover all of the costs of buying your home.

Owning your own home - Joint Ownership



This is where a group of people get together to buy a house.

Joint Ownership - things to think about



This can be a good idea as long as you do not fall out or decide not to live together anymore.



Being on benefits can make it difficult to get a mortgage.



You will have to pay bills, such as a mortgage, gas, electricity and telephone.

Owning your own home - Outright Ownership



This is when you buy all of your own house.

You could do this with savings or by getting a mortgage from a bank.

Outright Ownership - things to think about



Being on benefits can make it difficult to get a mortgage.



If you have a mortgage, you must make sure you pay it back or your house could be taken away from you.



When you own your own house, you are responsible for making sure it is safe to live in and in good repair.

Owning your own home - Inheriting a house



If you have a parent who owns a house, they might leave it to you in their will.

Inheriting a house - things to think about



You must be sure that you can look after a house if you choose to keep it.



You must be sure that you can pay for any help you need to look after yourself.



You could ask other people to live with you who also need support.

This way you could share the cost so it would not be so expensive.

Housing for older people



50+

If you are over the age of 50, there are some other housing options that you can think about.

Sheltered Housing (over 50 years)



You would have your own flat.



You do not need to have a social care assessment to live in sheltered housing.

Sheltered Housing - things to think about



This would usually be a good choice for people that can live more independently but like to have somebody around.



A member of staff, sometimes called a warden, provides support during the day.



An emergency call out service is available at other times.



Some sheltered housing schemes have a shared social area.



It is sometimes possible to buy a flat in a sheltered housing complex.

This is where there is a group of homes together in one place.

Extra Care Housing



With Extra Care housing, you live in your own flat in a building with other people.

The lowest age that you need to be varies in different Extra Care schemes but is usually 55 or 60.



This housing is only for people who have had a social care assessment and need this level of support.



24 hour support is available.

Extra Care Housing - things to think about



There are shared areas to eat and spend time with others.



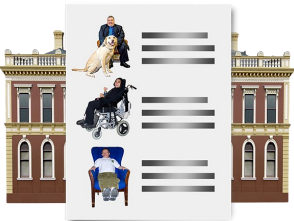
People with a wide range of needs can live in Extra Care housing.



You pay for your rent and support separately.



Extra Care flats are good if you want your own home, but still want to have other people around you.

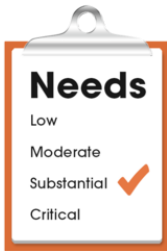


To get into an Extra Care scheme, you need to be on the housing register for the borough where the scheme is located.



Some flats are available to buy.

Other housing options - Residential Care Home



This is an option if other housing options have been assessed as unsuitable and your needs cannot be met by living in your own home.



Your care manager will assess your needs and will discuss with you if you need residential care.



This housing is only for people who have had a social care assessment and need this level of support.

What are my support options?



In most of these housing options, you can have most of the support options on page **54**.



Care and support can be provided for either a few hours each week or up to 24 hour on-site support, depending on your needs.



So far, we have looked at housing options that provide support within the accommodation, like

- supported living services
- shared lives.
- Supported Accommodation
- Extra Care and Sheltered Housing



There are other support options that are not linked to housing.

Floating / Outreach Support



Floating / outreach support can be provided when you live independently in a home of your own, if you:



- rent through a private landlord, a council or a housing association



- have bought a home of your own.



Floating / outreach support is for people who do not have support provided by the place they live in.

It is separate from your landlord and will support you to live more independently.



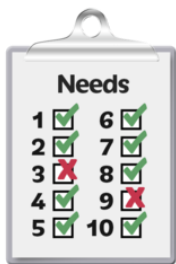
Floating / outreach support can be anything from 1 hour of support a week to someone coming in every day.



The staff who provide the support are usually based in an office and travel to visit you in your own home.



This support can be changed if your needs change.



You can keep the same support if you move but if there is a big change then you might have to have a new assessment by your care manager to check what your needs are.



There are two kinds of floating / outreach support:

- Floating / outreach housing support
- Floating / outreach social care support

Floating / Outreach Housing Support

This is help with things like:



- organising your money and paying rent and bills



- making sure you receive the correct benefits



- help with filling in forms



- settling in to a new home



- finding out about the community, like local groups or social activities



- keeping safe in your home and the community.



This support aims to help you manage your home and learn skills so that you can stay living independently.



You do not need to have had a social care assessment to get floating / outreach housing support.

Floating / Outreach Social Care



Some people may need help with housing support and social care support.

Social care support can help with lots of different things such as:



- Jobs around the house that you may need help with, such as shopping, cleaning, preparing your food and washing your clothes



- Support to manage your personal care needs and medication



- Support to find out about local transport, social activities, and work opportunities.



- Someone to talk to about how you feel.

This page shows some of the support options you can choose from

24 hour support



Support staff available night and day who will provide the support you need.

Assistive Technology



These are things that keep you safe or help you communicate.

Floating / Outreach Housing Support



Support staff who help you manage your home and learn skills.

Friends and Family



You can get some help from friends and family.

Floating / Outreach social Care Support



Support that is provided in your home and can include help with personal care.

Home Help or a Cleaner



This is help if you cannot, or do not want to clean or cook.

Ways to pay for housing

There are four main ways that people who have a learning disability pay for housing.

Housing Benefit

Housing Benefit will pay for your rent in most situations if you receive Income Support or Universal Credit, or you are on a low income.



From wages or your own money

If you work, you may have to pay some or all of your rent or mortgage.

It is important to get advice about your situation.



Family investment

If your family has enough money, there are many ways that they can help.



Social Services or the NHS

If you are in registered or nursing care, Social Services or the NHS might pay for your housing.



Questions to think about

Some questions that might help you and the people who support you to think about what option may be best for you.



Would you like support to think about your housing options?



Why do you want to move?



Do you have a current Support Plan from East Sussex County Council or would you need to be assessed for support?



What type of housing are you interested in?

For example, do you want to live on your own or share? And do you need more or less support?

Where to go for more information

If you already have a care manager, you can contact them through the **Community Learning Disability Team**

East: **01424 724900**

West: **01323 747117**

If you do not have a care manager but you need social care support, you can contact **Health and Social Care Connect**

0345 60 80 191

You can find the Adult Social Care website [here](#).

Health and Social Care Connect can arrange for you to have an assessment.

For more information about **Learning Disability Supported Living Services**, contact the Learning Disability Commissioning Team

01273 336872

LDPB@eastsussex.gov.uk

District and Borough Councils

For more information about **Council** or **Housing Association** options or for **Residential Care**, contact the District or Borough Council where you live, or would like to live.

Eastbourne Borough Council

1 Grove Road

Eastbourne

BN21 4TW

01323 410000

enquiries@eastbourne.gov.uk

Hastings Borough Council

Town Hall

Queen's Road

Hastings

BN21 4TW

01424 451100

housingadvice@hastings.gov.uk

Lewes District Council

20 Fort Road

Newhaven

BN9 9QF

01273 484261

housing@lewes.gov.uk

Rother District Council

The Town Hall

Bexhill-on-Sea

TN39 3JX

01424 787000

housing@rother.gov.uk

Wealden District Council

Council Offices

Vicarage Lane

Hailsham

BN27 2AX

01323 443380

For more information about **Supported Accommodation** provided by East Sussex County Council, contact the Supported Accommodation Team

01323 747415

For more information about **Shared Lives**, contact the Shared Lives Team

01323 747415

For more information about **Residential Care Homes**, go to East Sussex's directory website [here](#).

East Sussex County Council no longer coordinates a Homeshare scheme in East Sussex.

For more information about **Homeshare**, go to
www.homeshareuk.org

For more information about **Extra Care Housing**, contact the Extra Care Coordinator, Emma Winter
07892 764161
emma.winter@eastsussex.gov.uk

For more information about **Floating / Outreach Support**, contact Health and Social Care Connect
0345 60 80 191
HSCC@eastsussex.gov.uk

Citizens Advice Bureaux (CAB)

The Citizens Advice Bureaux can offer free, independent, impartial and confidential advice.

The can give you information about benefits, your rights and issues like housing.

<http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

Glossary (explaining words)

Word	Meaning
tenancy agreement	the rules that you and a landlord agree to
independent	by themselves or with less support
community	the area that you live in
confident	a feeling that you are able to do something
care manager	the person working for adult social care who does your social care assessment
assessment	checking what your needs are
responsible	being in charge of something
rent	the money you pay to live somewhere
landlord	the person or company that you rent your home from

Word	Meaning
tenant	a person who pays to live somewhere
estate agent	a person or business that sells or rents out homes
properties	the building that you can live in
housing benefit	money from the government to help you pay for housing
benefits	money from the government to help with your day to day costs
deposit	money that you pay before you move in somewhere
housing provider	The organisation that is responsible for issuing a tenancy agreement and looking after the building that you live in.
mortgage	the money you can borrow from a bank to buy a house
long-term security	a feeling that you can stay where you are if you want to

**You can use this page to write down anything else that you may want
to remember about your tenancy agreement.**
