

# On my own:

The accommodation needs  
of young people leaving  
care in England

**Believe in  
children**



**Barnardo's**

June 2014





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# Foreword



Having a safe and secure place to live is something that most of us take for granted. For care leavers – some of the most vulnerable young people in our society – this can often seem unattainable; their first adult struggle following a disrupted childhood.

The reality of ‘home’ for care leavers can be harsh: damp or run-down flats; stressful shared housing; unaffordable utilities; loneliness; worry; debt. Some struggle with the practical problems of how to pay bills and cook for themselves. Others face eviction, sofa-surfing or even sleeping rough.

These young people deserve better. They need better options if they face a housing crisis, not to be placed in unsafe B&Bs or homeless hostels. They need to be given second, and third, chances and the support to manage on their own, not to be assessed as ‘intentionally homeless’ by their corporate parent. They need on-going help past 21 to stay in their housing when other support falls away.

At Barnardo’s, we work with some of the most vulnerable children and young people in the country. In partnership with local authorities and other providers, we work with those for whom leaving care can be a traumatic and challenging time. Our services include supported lodgings, supported accommodation, advocacy, tenancy support, mentoring and befriending schemes. We have seen young people achieve despite the difficulties they have faced in the past, going on to university, apprenticeships or employment.

We know from first-hand experience how much young people can struggle when they leave care, and the importance of having somewhere safe and secure to live. We won’t stop calling for better, more consistent support until all care leavers have the help they need to manage with living on their own.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Javed Khan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line under the name.

**Javed Khan**  
**Chief Executive, Barnardo’s**

# Introduction

Every year, around 10,000 young people in England aged 16 to 18 leave local authority care (Department for Education, 2013). Many young people have a positive experience of leaving care. In a survey by the Children's Rights Director for England, 88 per cent of care leavers reported receiving support to prepare them for life as an independent adult (Morgan, 2014). Many young people leaving care go on to university or into apprenticeships or employment. The new 'Staying Put' duty, which allows young people with a stable foster placement to remain in their foster family home up to the age of 21, should lead to further improvements in outcomes (Children and Families Act, 2014). Many care leavers show great resilience and the ability to succeed despite the challenges they may have faced in their lives.

For other young people, however, leaving care is a difficult and unsettling time, when they are expected to manage alone before they feel ready. Many young people whom we spoke to experienced, for example, problems with managing their own tenancy, living on a low income, looking for work with few qualifications, having a limited support network, or experiencing loneliness or isolation.

Previous research shows that young people who experience the most difficulties as

they leave care tend to have had the most damaging pre-care family experiences for which care has been unable to compensate (Stein, 2010). They often experience multiple placement moves while in care, as well as a range of other challenges including limited social networks, disrupted education and trouble at school or with the police.

Barnardo's works with some of the most vulnerable young people in the UK, including care leavers. We carried out research with young people who have used our services to find out more about their experiences of leaving care. This report focuses on one of the major issues identified by the research: difficulties with housing.

Housing has been described as "a vehicle for stability" for care leavers and affects a wide range of other outcomes (Demos and Barnardo's, 2010). In this report, we set out the policy and research context for care leavers' housing and then explore four major issues that our research shows young people are most concerned about:

- having a choice in their housing
- finding appropriate and safe accommodation
- managing to live alone
- the risk of being made homeless.



# The policy context

When young people leave care, they need somewhere safe and secure to live. Local authorities in England have a statutory duty to assess the accommodation needs of young people in care when they reach 16, including their capacity to live independently and manage their own finances (HM Government, 2010). Some of the areas of support offered to care leavers are outlined below.

## Pathway plans

Each young person leaving care should have a pathway plan that sets out the accommodation they will live in after leaving care (Department for Education, 2014). For those leaving care before they reach the age of 18, the plan should set out how the local authority children's services will meet their accommodation and maintenance costs. For those over the age of 18, the plan should be clear about the mainstream services that will be provided, including accommodation. Housing costs for those over the age of 18 are usually met through Housing Benefit.

A care leaver's personal adviser should carry out regular reviews of the plan and check that the accommodation is suitable<sup>1</sup> and that the care leaver is managing their financial commitments. Care leavers should also receive a setting up home allowance (a 'leaving care grant') from their local authority to help them furnish and settle into their new accommodation.

## 'Sufficient accommodation'

Local authorities also have a statutory duty to provide sufficient accommodation that meets the needs of looked after children (the sufficiency duty). This explicitly includes a range of provisions to meet the needs of care leavers (Department for Education, 2010).

## Welfare benefits

Most care leavers will claim Housing Benefit when they move into their own accommodation and may receive other benefits depending on their educational or employment

situation. Since October 2013, the Department for Work and Pensions has allowed care leavers to make advance claims for benefits via their local Jobcentre Plus to avoid unnecessary delays in receiving their payments when they reach 18 (HM Government, 2013). In addition, care leavers aged 18 to 21 are exempt from the Shared Accommodation Rate reduction applied to Housing Benefit for those aged under 35, although this exemption ends when they reach 22.

## Homelessness support

If a care leaver encounters issues with their housing, they may face homelessness. Care leavers who apply to their local authority as homeless should be assessed as being in 'priority need' if they are aged 21 or under. Provided they are not found to be 'intentionally homeless', the local authority should supply them with accommodation under the homelessness duty. For care leavers over the age of 21, the local authority may provide support if it assesses them to be vulnerable as a consequence of having been in care. The Homelessness Act 2002 requires local authority housing and social services departments to develop joint strategies to prevent homelessness among vulnerable groups, including care leavers.

## Standard of housing

Despite the substantial safeguards in legislation and statutory guidance, in practice some care leavers live in inappropriate, insecure or poor housing. This can be due to the unaffordability of better-quality housing locally, difficulty in accessing social housing, poor-quality private housing or having limited support to find appropriate accommodation. The care leavers most likely to be in housing need are those who left care at a young age, young people with a health need or disability, and those with a range of mental health, substance use or offending needs.

# The research context

Overall, research indicates that leaving care services are effective in assisting most care leavers to access housing (Stein, 2010). Many care leavers receive the accommodation they want on leaving care and have good outcomes after leaving care. There is evidence, however, of wide variations between local authorities in the provision of suitable accommodation. Research also shows that some areas, particularly rural ones, have a shortage of housing and increased dependency on the private rental sector (Stein, 2010).

Research also indicates that having access to 'good' housing on leaving care tends to lead to better outcomes in other areas of life for care leavers, with those who did not secure good housing early on tending to do less well later (Demos and Barnardo's, 2010). Care leavers define safe, settled accommodation as follows (Stein, 2010):

- having a choice when to leave care
- being prepared for leaving care
- having a choice in their accommodation
- being and feeling safe
- having practical and personal support
- having support from family, friends and former carers
- having financial support
- being involved in services affecting them.

Research studies show that about one-third of young people with care backgrounds experience homelessness at some stage between six and 24 months after leaving care (Stein, 2010). Homelessness in this context includes 'sofa surfing' (short stays with family, friends or acquaintances, usually sleeping in a room other than a bedroom), staying at homeless hostels or refuges, sleeping rough and spending short periods in B&B accommodation.



# Accommodation needs: findings from Barnardo's research

To gain an in-depth understanding of the experiences of care leavers, we carried out a qualitative research study with young people who have used a range of our services. We interviewed 62 care leavers, aged between 16 and early 20s, and the staff who worked with them across all four nations of the UK. This report is based on the research findings relating to England only, as the legislative and policy context differs between the UK nations.

As a group, the care leavers we interviewed had used more than 15 of our services, including statutory personal adviser services, advocacy, participation and accommodation services, and employment and training services. About one-quarter of the care leavers were receiving a statutory leaving care service provided by Barnardo's on behalf of a local authority; the rest had come to Barnardo's to use other services such as advocacy or housing support.

## Choices about housing

As well as having a choice about when to leave care, research shows that having a choice in housing is a central stage in the process of moving into appropriate accommodation (Stein, 2010). A survey by the Children's Rights Director of 302 young people found that only 69% of care leavers felt they were in the right accommodation for them (Morgan, 2014). Research by A National Voice found that over half (55%) of care leavers felt they had "no real choice" in the accommodation offered to them (A National Voice, 2005).

Our research with care leavers working with Barnardo's services found similar problems with housing choice. The care leavers we interviewed reported having very little say about where they lived and whom they lived with. Many believed that they were just given the first available property, rather than one

that suited their needs. One pregnant young woman explained that not living within walking distance of the local shops was affecting her ability to cope. Another young man described daily homophobic bullying in his previous accommodation. One care leaver described his lack of choice as follows:

**'I think I was just dropped into a flat on my own. I didn't get to choose the flat. I felt I was just dumped and not really prepared, and that is a quite common experience.'**

For some, along with little choice, there was little time to prepare for moving into new accommodation. Care leavers commonly described having very limited information about what changes were due to happen as they left care. One young man described his experience:

**'Well, at that time I was 16, so I didn't really know what I wanted. But at that time we have two semi-independent flats about the children's home. So you go through them and then you get your own flat. That's how it is for so many people, so that's what we thought was going to happen. Then one day they said to me that they were moving me to [another area]. So I thought, cool. They moved me to [what] I thought was a children's home. I asked them**

**what [it] was and they said it was a semi-independent. I didn't know anything about this place, they just dumped me there and said this is your place now.'**

Some young people felt a sense of mistrust as a result of having little choice or information about where they were going to live after leaving care. Decisions about accommodation seemed to be made without consulting care leavers and often with little warning. A young woman described how she found out that her belongings had been moved to a new flat without her knowledge:

**'I had my old flat in [X]. They were meant to come and show me the new one. I go to meet them. They said they were outside my flat and I swear to God I go into the flat and all my stuff was just thrown in the middle [of the room]. There were painters in there painting. I did not know that I was moving in there; I thought I was going to view a flat. They were like, oh we're packing your stuff, you're being evicted. I was like, what for? They never said that to me on the phone... For four days I had to stay with my mum because they couldn't – I didn't have my flat and my stuff was just sitting there in storage.'**

Having a choice about where they lived was particularly important for the care leavers who had unstable placements during their time in care. They needed somewhere that they liked, that they and their advisers felt met their personal needs, and that they had the skills and experience to be able to manage.

## **Finding appropriate accommodation**

When young people leave care, they should have somewhere to live that suits their needs, that is in a safe location and is properly habitable, and that supports them to reach their educational or employment goals. For many, getting their 'own place' is an important part of leaving care and of starting a new phase of their lives. Care leavers say that independent tenancies provide the greatest stability, followed by supported accommodation, living with family and finally 'other' types of accommodation such as staying with friends or acquaintances, in B&Bs or in custody (Dixon, 2006).

Many care leavers whom we interviewed described their expectations of getting their own social housing, either when they left care or shortly after. As previous research has identified, there were particular challenges for those young people who had been living away from their home borough while in care, including the realities of conditions in the social housing available (Vernon, 2000). One of our project workers described some of the issues affecting young people who had been placed away from their home borough, but needed to return to receive a service or be put on the priority list for housing:

**'A lot of these young people don't want to come back because they've already established their networks in [the other borough]. You move these young people for a specific reason but now you call them to come back – you give them a mixed message.'**

To help resolve these issues, the project worker suggested that care leavers from one area who were living in another local authority should become eligible to get priority housing in that area after living there for a certain amount of time:

**‘There needs to be something that proxies regional boundaries, that says if you can prove your local connection – you’ve been living in [area B] for the past five years even though you are from [area A] – then as a care leaver you still get priority nomination.’**

Staff tended to consider that social housing provided by specialist housing associations or the local authority offered the best option for care leavers. This type of housing was seen to provide more stability and does not require a deposit or guarantor. However, following the introduction of the ‘bedroom tax’ (spare room subsidy), care leavers lose a portion of their Housing Benefit if they move into a two-bedroom property. As a result, there is high demand for one-bedroom social housing, but this is in short supply. This leaves a difficult choice for young people and their advisers between social housing, with the penalty of the ‘bedroom tax’, and less-stable private renting.

In practice, many care leavers we interviewed were living in private tenancies that were often unsuitable. For example, one care leaver and his girlfriend lived in a basement flat that had significant problems with damp. Although some young people were living in decent accommodation, in other areas care leavers could only afford poor-quality, even unsafe, rented housing and experienced intimidation or threats of violence from landlords. One tenancy support worker described some of the problems with low-quality housing:

**‘Some of the [flats] are the ‘affordable’ ones, shall we say. We know them in particular. You wouldn’t put a dog in some of them. I’ve had a young care leaver with a baby in there. Electricity would**

**go every five minutes. The cooker’s not working. “We’re getting the parts, we’ll send someone down this afternoon.” And there’s damp coming down the length of the walls. But that’s all she can afford.’**

Shared accommodation was an option for care leavers in some areas as it was often more affordable. This type of housing, however, brings its own problems, especially for young people who do not have the skills or experience to manage difficult relationships with other tenants. One support worker described the experience of two care leavers who moved in with two other vulnerable tenants:

**‘All hell broke loose. We were getting phone calls from the police, the property was broken into, there was violence, there was intimidation... They were both 18, first tenancies. One, in particular, was like, “I’m going to make this a success; I’m going to do this and that.” They lasted about three months. It was the first property that the care homes could find and then that’s it. They were shipped out.’**

We also interviewed several young people who were living temporarily with friends or in inappropriate housing such as all-age hostels, hotels or B&B accommodation. Some had returned to live with family after reaching the age of 18 despite on-going conflict and difficulties. Three care leavers discussed their experiences:

**A: ‘Normally you get the option about whether you go back to your family or into accommodation.’**

**B: 'It wasn't an option for me to go back to my family because of the relationship.'**

**C: 'It shouldn't have been an option for me but that's what happened. I literally got kicked out [of care] and sent back to my family on my 18th birthday. It was literally, it was my 18th and we went out for a meal and by the night-time all my bags were packed. They told me I could stay there until something was sorted but they just sent me back home.'**

## **Managing to live alone**

Many young people we interviewed were living on their own, some in inappropriate housing, and often from a young age. Some were living in isolating circumstances, managing their own household affairs alone on low budgets, as well as sometimes dealing with difficult tenancies or aggressive landlords. By comparison, 29 per cent of men and 18 per cent of women aged 20 to 34 in the UK live with their parents, with only 8 per cent of this age group living alone (ONS, 2012). One young woman told us:

**'I hated living on my own. I couldn't cope at first. I didn't know how to pay bills. I knew how to cook and clean and stuff, I just didn't know how to do everything else. I didn't know how to pay bills or council tax; I didn't know what the letters meant when they came through the post.'**

Several young people described how they had looked forward to moving into their own

housing, but then found the reality of living alone very challenging and not what they had expected. Young people's perceptions of how prepared they were for leaving care tended to worsen as they started to appreciate the difficulties of independent living. One young man explained:

**'And it's the emotional support as well isn't it? Because you're in the big world, and it's much harder than you realised.'**

Many young adults who grow up living with their families are able to move back at a later stage if necessary, such as between jobs or if a relationship breaks down. However, the young people in our interviews described feeling a sense of finality after leaving care to live on their own. One young woman described how she felt:

**'I think the main thing that I'm scared about is that I know that I feel now that I'll be able to live by myself and be able to support myself. But what I'm scared about is that when I get to that point and I can't do it, I'm out there and you're not. There's no way of getting back into care once you leave it... [A]s soon as you've left, you can't go back.'**

Our research showed budgeting is particularly difficult for young people living alone after leaving care. Many found the abrupt shift from having few responsibilities while in care to running their own household to be a significant challenge, even if they had previously felt prepared to live alone or had support to move towards independence. Some described using their leaving care grant, but others reported difficulties in accessing it, such as when setting up home with a partner. In discussion, three young people reflected on their experiences:

**A: 'Kids at 16 should experience living alone for a whole week so they know what they're doing. Or show them so they get real-life experience, not just dump them in there.'**

**B: 'They need to tell you how it is as well.'**

**C: 'Yeah, they need to tell you how to budget as well, because when you turn 16 and you don't know how to budget £56 per week, I don't think any normal 16- or 17-year-old is going to survive for long.'**

One participation worker expressed frustration at the limited preparation some young people received before they left care. They felt the assessments by social workers of their preparedness for independent living were often patchy. Another care leaver explained:

**'When you're in care, you get it all sorted for you – you get your food bought for you and electricity is bought for you and they pay for council tax and all. Then when you start living on your own, you've got to start paying for all this [yourself].'**

Living alone can be isolating and lonely for care leavers. Some young people were particularly affected, with one young man explaining:

**'If am alone too long I self-harm and think of suicide and stuff. I try**

**to keep my days and nights busy 24/7. It is hard but I get by.'**

Another young woman whom we interviewed had tried living alone in two independent flats but became depressed and struggled with low self-esteem. She was able to move into supported lodgings for a year where she formed a positive relationship with the adults in the household.

One of the ways in which care leavers said they dealt with this sense of isolation was to invite their friends to visit them. Several explained how this could lead to tensions with landlords and neighbours, who complained about the noise and disruption. Some young people described being evicted as a result. Others, however, were resolute in not allowing friends round as they were worried about potential consequences:

**'When I first got my own flat everyone wanted to come round and have parties or even move in, but I told them where to go.'**

Another young woman tried having friends round but found the experience disruptive:

**'I had two parties of my own and then I learnt that that wasn't good because my house got trashed and I was always cleaning. I felt proud of my house. I am fussy about where things are, I don't like things being moved.'**

Several of Barnardo's services, working together with local authorities provide extra opportunities for young people to build social networks. With several services, young people visit frequently and spend time with staff in the office. Other Barnardo's staff have set up specific activities to get a group of care leavers together to support each other, as this staff member explains:

**‘When we set up the Wednesday evenings, originally we were going to do an interview session one week, and a CV session the next, etc. But actually, [the care leavers] got more benefit from just coming and having a chat and interacting with each other. We do a cook-and-eat every week. Just having a place to go that was fun or just something to do was of more benefit. And they get a hot meal, which they have to make themselves.’**

## **Dealing with the risk of homelessness**

Homelessness is a very real worry for many young people leaving care. Research has shown that around a third of young people experience homelessness within two years of leaving care (Wade and Dixon, 2006). At one extreme, some may sleep rough (Homeless Link, 2014),<sup>2</sup> but for many more care leavers homelessness is ‘hidden’ and can include ‘sofa-surfing’, staying short-term with family or friends, using homeless or emergency hostels, or spending periods in B&B accommodation.

As well as the immediate uncertainty and anxiety, homelessness can have longer-term consequences for young people. The instability of being homeless can disrupt education or training and make finding or keeping employment particularly difficult (Homeless Link, 2014). Homelessness can also lead to a higher risk of mental health problems, substance use and, in some areas, involvement in gangs (St Basils, 2013). Adults with complex and multiple needs, including rough sleeping and substance use, often experienced homelessness in early life (McDonagh, 2011). Preventing youth homelessness is critical, particularly among care leavers who often

have fewer family support networks that they can turn to in a crisis.

Our study indicated that problems with managing an independent tenancy and living on a low budget increased the risk of homelessness amongst care leavers. Care leavers also described other issues that put them at risk of homelessness. Some young people had difficulties getting housed on leaving prison. Others explained how they struggled to access private housing because estate agents and landlords were reluctant to let to young people.

Support workers considered that the risk of eviction was compounded by the behaviour of some young people in their own tenancies – a predictable risk for young people living alone with little support or supervision:

**‘Private tenancies don’t last because some of our young people display anti-social behaviour. They are also evicted from places that are supposedly there for [those with] high needs. What [other agencies] view as high need, and what we view as high and complex needs, is quite different.’**

Young people often need ongoing personal support to maintain their tenancy, but unless a care leaver is in education or training, support from a personal adviser ends at the age of 21. Support workers in Barnardo's services identified reaching the age of 21 as a stage that brought a higher risk of homelessness. One explained:

**‘I’ve got a couple [of care leavers] that are coming onto 20, 21 now and this is when they need you more than ever. To think of leaving them – this is when they need so much.’**

Another described:

**'then at 21 they end up living with friends. It is a really sad ending.'**

Some care leavers who did experience homelessness applied to their local authority – their 'corporate parent' – as homeless. Research shows that this is often a negative and stigmatising experience for young people (St Basils, 2013). Our interviews identified several examples of local authorities assessing care leavers as 'intentionally homeless', which usually denies them full statutory housing support. One young woman who has low communication and numeracy skills and ongoing health problems was assessed as intentionally homeless by her local authority despite explaining that she was leaving a violent boyfriend.

Some of the particularly vulnerable care leavers in our study explained that they had become homeless and were placed in unsuitable B&Bs or hostels where other residents had used drugs or displayed threatening behaviour towards them. While B&B accommodation is sometimes the only option in an emergency, it is not an appropriate housing solution for homeless young people, including care leavers, even when facing a crisis situation, as it provides no support and raises significant safeguarding issues (Homeless Link, 2014). Youth-specific emergency accommodation is more appropriate for care leavers in a housing crisis, rather than generic all-age options.

Short-term supported lodgings, such as Barnardo's 'Crash Pad', are another effective solution for care leavers who need emergency accommodation. In this project, young people stay in a family home temporarily and receive support from the trained household who help them in moving back to a more independent lifestyle. The family assists with all the practical skills of daily life, a lack of which may be a contributory cause of the young person's housing crisis, as well as being available for

emotional support and company. A young man who stayed for eight weeks at a Barnardo's Crash Pad explained how the scheme works:

**'It's emergency accommodation; if you have nowhere at all to stay your social worker can refer you. In them eight weeks you can find somewhere else [to live] or Barnardo's will put you with someone else. People are employed by Barnardo's to do it. You have your own room in someone's house; with Crash Pad they help you with everything, cooking all the meals, doing the washing and tidying the bedroom.'**

Some care leavers we interviewed had stayed in a supported lodgings scheme for a longer period of up to two years to help them transition to living independently.



# Conclusions and recommendations

Young people leaving care often face particular difficulties with their accommodation. Significant issues include having a choice in where to live and whom to live with, finding somewhere appropriate and affordable to live on a low income, managing a household on their own day to day, and facing the risk of homelessness.

Based on our interviews with care leavers, we have identified the following conclusions and recommendations for central and local government:

## Improving choice

Some care leavers have little choice about where they live on leaving care, despite this being a central stage in the process of moving towards independence. Depending on their experience, skills and situation, young people may need different levels of support with their housing, and their needs may change over time.

### Recommendation

Housing and children's services departments in local authorities should work closely together to identify the needs of young people in their area. They should jointly commission an accommodation pathway for young people so that care leavers have a degree of choice and are able to access a range of accommodation that meets their needs at different stages of independence. This should include reciprocal agreements on social housing allocations across local authorities to support those care leavers who have been placed out of area.

## Delivering appropriate housing

Having somewhere safe and appropriate to live is critical for young people leaving care, especially for those who have limited independent living skills. Too often, care leavers live in unsuitable or inappropriate housing, including poor-quality private rented housing or an inappropriate house-share.

### Recommendation

In their role as 'corporate parent', local authorities should support all care leavers to find suitable accommodation. This includes thoroughly checking the quality and ongoing suitability of housing as the young person's needs change, and preparing care leavers who may face financial difficulties when they reach the age of 21. Local authorities should offer ongoing floating support<sup>3</sup> to care leavers when they start to live alone to help them maintain their accommodation.

## Reducing the risk of homelessness

When experiencing a crisis with their housing, some care leavers can face the risk of homelessness, which can be a stressful and damaging experience. In some situations, homeless young people are placed in unsuitable B&B accommodation or all-age hostels, posing safeguarding risks as well as being inappropriate in the longer term. Alternative emergency options include crash-pads, Nightstop, short-term supported lodgings or supported housing specifically for young people.

### Recommendation

Housing and children's services departments in local authorities should work closely together to develop emergency accommodation pathways so that care leavers are not placed in unsuitable B&Bs or other inappropriate short-term options. This could include jointly commissioning across local authority boundaries.

## Improving general housing options

Living in suitable, sustainable and safe accommodation is the foundation on which young people can build other positive outcomes when they leave care. Many care leavers, however, experience poor housing options, including unaffordable private rented

housing, inappropriate accommodation or unsuitable temporary housing.

### **Recommendation**

As they deliver on the Government's Care Leaver Strategy, the Department for Education and the Department for Communities and Local Government should work together to provide leadership for better joint working between children's services and housing departments in local authorities so that care leavers do not fall through the gap between services.

## **Extending support to care leavers**

Care leavers have the support of a personal adviser up to the age of 21, but many face challenges as they approach this age because other assistance, such as exemption from the Shared Accommodation Rate reduction to Housing Benefit, stops as well. On top of not having the option to return 'home' when they struggle with their housing, most care leavers are not eligible for support past the age of 21 and have to cope with these difficulties alone.

### **Recommendation**

The Department for Education should extend the support given to care leavers so that all are offered a personal adviser up to the age of 25, not just those in education or training.

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# Notes

- 1 Suitability of accommodation relates to: the facilities and services provided; state of repair; safety; location; support; tenancy status; and affordability. In addition, the young person's views on the accommodation must be taken into account, as well as their understanding of their rights and responsibilities, and their understanding of the funding arrangements. B&B accommodation is explicitly categorised as not suitable.
- 2 Around half of the young people surveyed who reported sleeping rough had done so for one or two nights only (Homeless Link, 2014).
- 3 Floating support is support provided to people in their own homes to help them live independently.

**On my own:**

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of young people leaving care  
in England***

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