

Kingswood Young Homeless Project

SERVICE USER HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION

Kingswood Young Homeless Project (KYHP)

If you have just moved into one of our properties or just want to know more about what we do then this information pack is for you.

Contents

This pack will contain all the main information about our services. It begins with our Resident's Handbook . This is designed for Young People who have just come to live at either our Hostel or in one of the supported flats. There is also the Health and Safety Policy, which you should pay particular attention to. Importantly, the pack contains our Harassment and Bullying policy.

We are particularly interested in any problems you have at KYHP whether it be with the service provided by KYHP staff or problems with other residents. If we know there is a problem then we can do something about it.

Copies of all our policies are available from the office and are available to residents whenever the office is open. If you have questions about any of the policies please talk to a member of staff about them. It is part of our job to make sure you understand how we operate. Some of our policies are available on the Internet at www.kyhp.co.uk. In particular our referrals policy is available on the website. It is likely that more and more of our policies will be available on the website as we develop it.

Kingswood Young Homeless Project

71 High St, Kingswood, Bristol, BS15 4AD Tel: 0117 9352881 Fax: 0117 9077370
E-Mail: KYHP@aol.com www.kyhp.co.uk Charity No: 29877 Reg'd Co Number: 2060534

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RESIDENT'S HANDBOOK

Welcome to Kingswood Young Homeless Project !

Opening Times and Contacting Staff

Our opening times are from 9am until 1pm and then from 2pm until 5pm 5 days a week. You will notice that the office is staffed from 9 until 6pm and residents are welcome to come and talk to our staff at these times. However, if we are busy with paperwork or on the phone please don't be offended. There is a lot of paperwork for staff to do and some phone calls have to be private. Staff will ask you to come back or arrange an appointment for you.

KYHP is also open at weekends and bank holidays from 11am until 1pm and then in the afternoon from 2pm until 3pm. In fact we are open every day of the year!

We also have a telephone emergency service on 0797 705 2133. This service is staffed 24 hours a day so that you will always be able to contact a member of staff if you need one. This phone line is for emergencies such as a pipe bursting or the heating failing. It is up to you to decide what an emergency is and whether it's important enough to contact our staff. If there is a serious emergency such as a fire or someone getting hurt then you should phone the emergency service on 999 first and then contact us afterwards.

Confidentiality

We hold all personal information under strict legal and ethical obligations of

confidentiality. We must not use or disclose information that is given to us in

confidence in a form that might identify a service-user (or other identifiable individual) without his or her consent. The same principle applies to staff and carer records.

There are a number of important exceptions to this rule that are described below, but we must, in most circumstances, involve service-users and others, including carers and colleagues, in decisions about use of their personal information.

- child protection and protecting vulnerable adults: staff should adhere to the Policy on Protection from Abuse
- life threatening or dangerous situations, for example, where a young person is at risk of significant harm or threatening suicide, is threatening to kill or severely harm another person
- the prevention, detection or prosecution of crime
- prevention or reduction of risk to personal or public health.

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Service-users have the right to access their personal files, including paper and electronic files however there are restrictions on when and how they can do this (see section 10 of the Confidentiality policy).

Support

Our aim is to enable people to live in ordinary housing.

The following list shows examples of housing-related support, which may assist vulnerable people to live in their own homes.

- Explaining tenancy agreements.
- Agreeing support plans.
- Giving detailed advice and support in claiming benefits.
- Arranging and counselling on move options.
- Accessing health care
- Help with budgeting
- Putting residents in touch with care, support and welfare service providers.
- Help with filling in benefit forms
- Advice on training or education
- Helping to develop life skills.
- If specialist advice or support is required, the project should endeavour to obtain it on behalf of young people and refer them to the relevant agency.

When both K.Y.H.P and the young person are satisfied that he/she is ready to live independently, a referral may be made to more permanent/independent accommodation.

Safeguarding adults and children

The protection of young people and children from abuse is recognised by KYHP as an absolute priority. By reporting any worries or concerns we can protect ourselves and people we know from risk of abuse.

Abuse could be sexual abuse, forcing someone into sexual acts, or physical abuse including violence or threats of violence. Abuse can also include financial exploitation such as using someone to get their money.

The most common types of abuse are:

- **Physical** – including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, or restraint

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- **Sexual** – including rape, sexual assault, sexual acts carried out without the consent of the individual or where the individual was pressured into consenting
- **Psychological** – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks
- **Financial or material** – including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits
- **Neglect and acts of omission** – including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating
- **Discriminatory abuse** – including racist, sexist, homophobic abuse that based on a person's impairment, and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment
- **Institutional abuse** – can include any of the above and is characterised by repeated instances of poor care, sometimes intentional, but often unintentional and resulting from a lack of knowledge

You can talk to your support worker about any worries you might have or if you have any questions. Staff are open to you bringing such issues to support sessions and that staff are responsible for identifying abuse.

The matter should then be reported to the manager and to the chair of the board of trustees.

Keeping everyone safe from violence

We all have to look out for each other and be sensible about who we let into the project. All staff member will be police checked and all residents will have a risk assessment. This risk assessment includes a section where we look at whether the new resident could be a danger to other people.

Staff will try to maintain your safety by being careful about who works and lives with you but they also have procedures to follow to keep themselves safe for example, only service users will be allowed into the office if a member of staff is on their own.

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We ask you therefore to be careful about who you bring into KYHP. Don't bring people you don't know or people you know have a dodgy reputation. Some people are fine most of the time but can get aggressive or stupid when they drink – be particularly aware of this!

You also need to check the doors and windows at night and keep your own room locked. We have worked with Places for People to and Redland to get good quality locks and security. USE IT! Don't leave the doors open at night so anyone can get it and don't leave the door on the latch. This is just an invitation for trouble.

Needs Assessment

Once you have been accepted we will interview you and fill out a Needs Assessment. We will discuss any needs identified in the Referral or Application Forms and any other needs that you might have.

Support Planning

We will also agree a Support Plan with you. This is your Support Plan and we hope it will help you focus on problems or issues you might have and plan to deal with them. The Support Plan will be reviewed periodically but can be looked at again if we feel that your needs have changes or you can ask for it to be looked at again if you feel things have changed. Information and feedback from other agencies such as connexions or social services can be used in your support plan if you agree.

Resettlement

K.Y.H.P offers resettlement support when young people move on from the project hostel. The project offers practical and emotional support to young people in their preparations and move into permanent accommodation. The project will work alongside young people towards gaining the skills needed to successfully remain in accommodation suited to their needs. The project will work with young people before, during and after their move into accommodation.

Sexual Health

Staff at KYHP can provide help and advice about sexual health. We can talk with you about any questions you have. We are keen to provide a non judgemental support and if we can't help we will try to find another organisation that can. You will find contacts for various organisation later on in this Handbook.

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Complaints

We hope you will not have any need to make a complaint but if you do the complaints procedure is available on our web site or in the office.

You can make a complaint about another resident, a member of staff or anyone involved in the project or any aspect of the project. Normally you should talk to the person you are bringing the complaint against first to see if you can resolve the matter. Just as you would rather people were upfront with you you should be upfront with them. If you are worried about how to bring a matter up or feel you can't then talk to the person you have a problem with then talk to your support worker. They should listen to you and see if we can find some way to deal with the situation.

If the matter is to do with a member of staff then you should normally talk to the manager. Again it's only fair to try to talk to the staff member concerned first.

South Glos Council Safeguarding Adults Website :

<http://www.southglos.gov.uk/HealthandSocialCare/safeguardingadults.htm>

South Glos Child Protection Webgiste :

<http://www.southglos.gov.uk/NR/exeres/17136907-2f24-4854-af20-aa7b4b3e82ef>

Equal Opportunities

K.Y.H.P is an equal opportunities organisation and will not discriminate against, or work with anyone who discriminates against others on grounds of race, colour, nationality, gender, age, marital status, sexual orientation, class or disability.

This means that racism, sexism or homophobia will not be accepted and will be challenged. In serious or persistent cases the disciplinary or warning procedure will be used.

If you have any questions then ask a member of staff or manager.

Repairs

If you have one of our supported flats then you are responsible for arranging repairs but we can provide help with this. If you live in our hostel then you should report any needed repairs to us and we will arrange for them to be dealt with either by Places for People or ourselves.

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GETTING INVOLVED

KYHP is committed to involving tenants in all aspects of our service. You can get involved in a number of ways and at a level that suits you. If you have any suggestions then please talk to a member of staff or the project manager. You could also bring them up at the residents meetings. Our residents meetings are planned to happen every month and any resident can bring any matter up. We are particularly interested in any Health and Safety issues you might have noticed. You can also contact the management committee and can come to management committee meetings if you feel you have something to say or are interested in how the meetings work.

There are also residents representatives from each of our projects who come to our trustees meetings. Trustees are very keen to hear from you.

We also have a web site at www.kyhp.co.uk and if you want to get involved in adding to it or have any comments about it then talk to the staff. We are keen for you to get involved in developing the site.

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THE PARK VIEW HOSTEL

About your Home

We want you to be as comfortable as possible at KYHP and will try to help you make your flat or room as homely as possible.

If you rent a flat this will be unfurnished. We can help you with a Social Fund application if you are on benefits to buy furniture you might need. We also are in contact with Kingswood Furniture Project and have information about grant making bodies who might be able to help.

If you live in our Hostel then we will furnish the room for you. We will provide a carpet, bed and make sure your room is decorated before you move in. If you have any particular needs for example a bad back which might require you to use an orthopaedic mattress we will consider any reasonable request. It is important to us that everybody gets a good and fair quality of accommodation.

Rents and Charges

Rent is paid weekly, we will help you with your Housing Benefit application and may be willing to wait for the Housing Benefit to be paid. We also make a charge which covers services that will not be covered by Housing Benefit payments. You will be expected to pay this directly to us on a weekly basis. If you are working or have an income you should pay your rent yourself. Remember you are responsible for your rent even if Housing Benefit pays some or all of it. If you have any problems or worries about this you should talk to a member of staff straight away.

Failure to pay the service charge

You must make sure you tell us about any relevant changes in circumstances that may effect housing benefit entitlement so we can make sure that The Council and the Job Centre know about these changes. Young people often get into trouble because they forget to tell the benefits agency that they have started work or changed benefit.

If you fail to pay your charges this is a serious matter. If you have any questions then just ask you support worker. A resident who persistently fails to pay will receive warnings (see warnings policy attached to you licence) and could eventually be evicted.

Licence Agreements

If you are a resident of the hostel then you will have a licence agreement with us. This is because we provide short-term accommodation and will be helping you to find long-term accommodation. If you want help with understanding the licence agreement then please talk to a member of staff. You may want independent advice about this licence in which case you might want

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to talk to Shelter or the Citizens Advice Bureaux. Contact details Shelter 01454 865560, CAB 0117 9569174.

After signing your licence agreement you will be given a key. This will open your room door and the main door to the Hostel. You will be charged for a replacement key if you lose it. We will not accept any responsibility for your possessions so you should make sure that your room is locked and if you live on the ground floor that your window is secure. You might want to consider taking out personal insurance and we can provide help if you want to do this.

Communal Facilities

Our Flats are self contained and facilities are managed by residents. However, if you are living in the Hostel then you will have exclusive use of your room and shared use of Kitchen, Laundry, Living rooms, Bathrooms and Garden. The hostel communal facilities are cleaned by a cleaner but you are responsible for cleaning up your own mess. If you need help with cooking and cleaning skills or have problems then you can talk to our staff who will arrange help.

You should make sure that after you have cooked the kitchen is as clean as you found it. You are responsible for washing your own pans and pots. A lockable cupboard is provided for each resident to store his or her food. The fridge and freezer is shared and residents are responsible for anything left in them.

The laundry room is located at the back of the house and contains a washing machine and dryer. Tokens are available from the office for both these machines. There is a washing line and pegs can be provided.

Two television rooms are available for residents to use and young people using these rooms are expected to keep them clean.

Bathrooms are available on each floor. Toilet roll is available from staff.

Telephone. You can use the phone in the office as long as you ask staff first and pay for your calls.

General Hygiene. You are responsible for keeping your room tidy and clean. You should also keep any communal areas tidy and clean up after yourself.

House Rules

A full list of house rules are included in our licence agreement.

Each resident will have their Licence Agreement reviewed after one month's occupancy to allow both themselves and staff to talk about how things are going.

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If you break any of the house rules then you will be given a warning. This is a serious matter and if you continue to get warnings you may be asked to leave the project.

Visitors

Visitors are not allowed to stay overnight. Residents are responsible for their visitors and any nuisance they might cause. Failure of guests to act responsibly will result in them being asked to leave.

Anti-social Behaviour, Nuisance and Harassment

As part of your licence agreement it has been made clear that Anti-social Behaviour and Harassment will not be accepted and may mean that you might have to leave the Hostel. Our rules state that we will not accept the following:

Harassment of, or behaviour causing nuisance or annoyance to, neighbours, staff or fellow residents for any reason - and in particular causing harassment or intimidation to any neighbour, staff or fellow resident because of that person's colour, race, sex, gender, creed or ethnic origin.

Acts of violence against any other residents or their guests will be taken very seriously by KYHP and will normally lead to the resident losing their licence to remain in our Hostel or get support from our staff.

Noise

Noise is the biggest cause of disputes between neighbours. You can help to avoid problems by keeping TV sets, music systems and radios away from walls next to where people are living, don't put TV sets and speakers directly on the floor and by being sensible and considerate about the volume.

If you are having problems with noise from your neighbour please do talk to them first, and please remember to be polite. If you can hear noise from their room then there are probably times when they can hear noise from your room. If the problem persists or is particularly bad then talk to a member of staff and we will try to help you deal with the problem.

There are some activities that are considered Nuisance and will not be tolerated by KYHP. They are selling drugs or drug abuse, rubbish dumping, playing ball games close to someone else's home, offensive drunkenness, arguing or door slamming for example.

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HEALTH AND SAFETY

All residents and staff have a responsibility to be sensible and keep safe in their home or workplace. Ultimately it is up to the manager and trustees to look after Health and Safety which is why any worries or concerns should be passed on to staff and reported to the manager.

For example, staff will check the fire extinguishers every day to see that they are OK and haven't been tampered with but if anyone notices a problem with a fire extinguisher then it needs to be reported to staff immediately to make sure that we can get it sorted out.

Staff will regularly do risk assessments on the hostel to see if there is anything that is dangerous, for example if a carpet has got ripped and needs to be replaced. Residents will be asked in house meeting if they have any concerns and be informed of any concerns that staff have and what is being done about them.

Accidents

There will be a member of staff who can do first aid and there is a first aid box in the office. However, if staff aren't around then you can always get advice from NHS direct 0845 4647, or going to an NHS walk in centre or casualty department (Frenchay or BRI). See the list of addresses below. If in doubt, or you are not sure if someone is really hurt then get advice !

All accidents should be reported to a member of staff.

If there is a serious accident or someone is hurt then phone 999

Fire

If you find a fire and it is clearly safe to do so then take reasonable steps to put it out by using the fire extinguishers or fire blankets. But remember - do not use the fire extinguishers near an electrical device.

If the fire is not immediately extinguished or it is not safe to tackle it then you should raise the alarm using the fire alarm point.

If you hear the fire alarm you should immediately leave the building and move towards the fire assembly point in the church car park.

You should phone the fire brigade on 999

Gas and electrical safety

If you see wires exposed or a socket or electrical appliance sparking or not working properly then you should report it so that staff can check it is safe.

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Residents should take particular care to check that the gas hob should be turned off when you have finished cooking.

Gas Leak

- If a gas leak is suspected, check for an obvious reason and, if possible, turn off the supply. Then ventilate the area affected by opening doors and windows.
- Where no apparent cause is evident, Staff should be informed immediately. **Transco Gas Emergency (24 hours) 0800 111 999 (Freephone Service)**
- The area should be ventilated and evacuate the immediate vicinity of the suspected leak.
- The evacuation instructions should be by 'word of mouth' as opposed to sounding the fire alarm.

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HARASSMENT AND BULLYING POLICY

Here is a summary of our policy on Harassment and Bullying

Sexual, racial and other forms of personal harassment and bullying can seriously harm working and social conditions for both service users and staff. Any incidents of harassment will be regarded extremely seriously and can be grounds for disciplinary action which may include eviction or dismissal.

If you just want someone to talk to about harassment - without wanting any action to be taken, that's OK too – you can talk to your support worker or manager.

WHAT IS HARASSMENT ?

Personal harassment takes many forms. Basically, it is any behaviour which is unacceptable to the recipient and which creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment - for work, study or social life. This can be particularly serious if the harasser is in a position of organisational power in relation to the person harassed.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT – could include

- any behaviour which patronises, intimidates or offends, e.g. remarks, looks, jokes or offensive language.
- the display of pornographic, semi-pornographic or suggestive material, electronic or paper
- deliberate, potentially objectionable physical contact to which the person has not consented or had the opportunity to object to.
- promises of favours or housing in exchange for sexual favours.

RACIAL HARASSMENT – could include

- any behaviour which causes discomfort, intimidates or offends or which incites others to do so - derogatory names, insults, racist jokes or ridiculing cultural difference.
- the display or circulation of offensive material, including racist graffiti, electronic mail or information published through the Internet.
- verbal abuse and threats of physical attack.

HOMOPHOBIC HARASSMENT – could include

- any behaviour which intimidates or offends e.g. Remarks, looks, jokes, or offensive language that make direct or indirect references to lesbian, gay, bisexual or transsexual people
- any behaviour which makes people feel uncomfortable or verbally attacked because of homophobic attitudes and particularly repeated jibes in reference to people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transsexual.

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- Any behaviour which incites others to take part in homophobic bullying
- verbal abuse or threats of physical attack including graffiti, text messages, MSN or other messaging service, e-mails, voice mails

PERSONAL HARASSMENT – could include

- behaviour which makes direct or indirect reference to disability or impairment - and thus causes discomfort, patronises, insults or offends people with a physical, sensory or mental disability
- behaviour which makes direct or indirect reference to religion or culture thereby causing discomfort or offence
- invasion of privacy or practical jokes causing physical or psychological distress
- pressure to become involved in anti-social or criminal behaviour
- messages to or about a person, including electronic mail, that are offensive, insulting or cause discomfort

BULLYING

Bullying is the misuse of power or position to persistently criticise and condemn; to openly humiliate and undermine an individual's ability until this person becomes so fearful that their confidence crumbles and they lose belief in themselves. These attacks on the individual are normally sudden, irrational, unpredictable and usually unfair.

Bullying could include:

- verbal and/or physical intimidation - threats, shouting, derisory remarks, often in front of others
- consistently patronising young people
- spreading malicious rumours
- persistent criticism
- messages, including electronic mail, that are threatening, derisory or defamatory

WHAT TO DO

if you feel you're being harassed or bullied by others then seek a confidential interview with a worker or manager. Talk the problem through with a friend and with a member of staff

WHAT WILL HAPPEN

The matter will be treated seriously, it will be investigated and if it is felt that the matter is serious enough, and it seems that

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Harassment or Bullying has taken place then, action will be taken against the perpetrator.

- If this is a member of staff then the disciplinary procedure will be used.
- If this is a resident then the Warning Procedure will be used and may lead to eviction.
- If it is a contractor or another party then this person may be banned from the premises or the matter may be taken up with their manager.
- If it is appropriate the matter may be reported to the police.

To report Harassment or Bullying you should talk to a member of staff first.

- KYHP on call mobile 0797 7052133
- Chair of the Board the write to them at the office marking the envelope 'Private and Confidential'

Other numbers

- Children and Young People Information Service on 01454 868008
- Emergency Duty Team on 01454 615165
- Public Protection Unit of the police on 0117 9455969.
- The NSPCC also provide advice and can be contacted on 0880 800 500.

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USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

Bristol Buddhist Centre 0117 9249991

Bristol Churches Housing Association 0117 704100

Bristol Hebrew Congregation 0117 9273334

Bristol Muslim Cultural Society 0117 939 2559

Brook Advisory Service (Under 25's) 0117 9290090

Bristol NHS Walk in Centre 35 Broad Street, Bristol, Avon, BS1 2EZ. 0117 906 9610

Bristol Royal Infirmary, Marlborough Street, Bristol, BS2 8HW Tel: 0117 923 0000

Connexions 0117 9612760

Contraception and Pregnancy Services Bristol 0117 9276781

Department of Work and Pensions, (DSS) Lodge House 01179589400

East Bristol Youth Housing 9543500

Emergency Duty Social Worker 01454 615165

Frenchay Hospital. Frenchay Park Road, Bristol, BS16 1LE Tel: 0117 9701212

Freedom Youth, Bristol 0117 9377367

Gay and Lesbian Switchboard 0117 9420842

Holy Trinity Church Kingswood 0117 9673627

HUB Advice centre 0117 9096000

Kingswood Job Centre 0117 9913200

Kingswood Survive (Women's Aid)

Orchard Medical Centre 0117 9805100

Our Lady of Lourdes 0117 9498743

Priority Youth Housing 01454 865732

Quakers 0117 9567337

Redland Housing Association 0117 9382700

SARI Support Around Racist Incidents 0117 9525652

Sexual Health Clinic (GUN) Advice Line 0117 9283011

Shelter (South Glos) 01454 865560

Social Services Alma Rd 01454866201

Social Services Emergency Duty Team Tel (01454) 615165

South Glos Citizen's Advice Bureau 0117 9569174

South Gloucestershire Council 01454 868686

South Gloucestershire Council, Housing Benefit 01454 868686

Terrance Higgins Trust West 0117 9551000