

On-boarding Supported Living Accommodation in Essex



This document sets out the process for on-boarding Supported Living accommodation for Adults with disabilities in Essex.

Essex County Council (ECC) wants to support Adults with disabilities to have access to Supported Living accommodation, which is of good quality, allows people to be part of their community and to have their support needs met the way they choose. Essentially, for the accommodation to be a base for the person to lead a life which is meaningful to them.

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What is Supported Living

Supported Living is housing for adults with disabilities who want to live independently but may need some additional support.

Supported Living housing can be:

- shared houses, usually with 2 to 4 tenants living together with their own bedrooms and sharing a communal space
- a cluster of single occupancy units, where adults have their own property within a group of other single occupancy properties, such as flats or bungalows

The support individuals receive in these service is usually a mixture of one to one support or shared support hours (core hours) that all adults living at the service benefit from.

In Supported Living the Landlord and the support Provider are separate.

Starting the on-boarding process

Essex County Council (ECC) operates a Supported Living Scheme Approval Process (on-boarding) which all new Supported Living schemes from Providers on the ECC Framework must fully pass before being added to a void list (Matching Tool).

The purpose of the approval process is to ensure good quality and stable Supported Living accommodation is available for adults with disabilities and to support partner organisations to develop new Supported Living schemes.

A Provider must have been successful in joining the ECC Supported Living Framework to participate in this below process.

Further information and document templates as well as the Supported Living Accommodation Standards can be found at:

<https://www.essexproviderhub.org/adults-with-disabilities-hub/supported-living/overview/>

1. Planned Scheme developments

- 1.1 ECC Procurement Services and/or ECC Adults with Disabilities Commissioning and/or The Specialist Accommodation Leads (SALs) from the Accommodation Hub will be advised on a proposed property by a Developer, Landlord or Support Provider. If the enquiry comes directly through to the Accommodation Hub, ECC Commissioning will be informed.
- 1.2 ECC Adults with Disabilities Commissioning may choose to invite the Developer, Provider and/or Landlords for a meeting if further information is required by any party. An initial conversation with ECC Adults with Disabilities Commissioning Team can help to determine if the proposed Scheme is something which is required in Essex. This is an opportunity to make early enquiries.
- 1.3 New proposed Schemes may be at various stages of readiness when a Provider and/or Landlord notifies Essex County Council (ECC) of the intention to develop a new Service. These stages can include:
- Developers making tentative enquires as to demand for services in an area,
 - Developers, Landlords or Providers have plans for a new build for a Supported Living Scheme,
 - A Provider/Landlord may have a property they are thinking of purchasing,
- 1.4 ECC will want to understand the intended Scheme more and be able to support by way of guidance and advice. Developers, Providers and Landlords may want to know a little more about demand in Essex and what the expectations are prior to committing to going forward with a development.
- 1.5 The earlier ECC are aware of the intentions of a Developer, Provider or Landlord to create a new Supported Living Scheme, the earlier joint working can begin. Joint working is crucial to support sustainable and high-quality accommodation and support options for the residents of Essex who require them.
- 1.6 If a development is in early stages, then a letter of support may be requested from the Accommodation Planning Board (APB), with the proposed Scheme returning to APB later for on-boarding.
- 1.7 Once a new property/scheme is near completion ECC Adults with Disabilities Commissioning Team and the Specialist Accommodation Leads will follow the process below in order to begin the on-boarding.
- 1.8 SALs send covering standard letter via email with APB Form for completion by Landlord and/or Provider.
- 1.9 Landlord and/or Provider to complete form and return it to:
Specialist.Accommodation@essex.gov.uk
- 1.10 SALs to check the tenancy to ensure there is no link between the Landlord and Provider, the tenancy is sustainable, and that the tenancy is fair. ECC is not ultimately responsible for checks of tenancy agreements, as those are still primarily the Landlord's and tenant's responsibilities.

1.11 SALs check rent breakdown to ensure:

- Private Landlords – core rent is within Local Housing Allowance (LHA), ineligible charges are reasonable, affordable, and only related to the property,
- Social Landlords – provider to confirm they understand that Housing Benefit (HB) must cover all eligible rent and no top-up of rent is to be required, subject to the Adult's income and benefit entitlement. SALs to check all ineligible charges are reasonable and affordable.

1.12 SALs arrange a site visit. A SAL will attend together with potential, relevant colleagues e.g., a quadrant operational manager or deputy, an Occupational Therapist, a Behaviour Advisor, contract manager, a representative from Adults with Disabilities Commissioning. The visit's objective is to verify that the scheme is compliant with ECC Supported Living Accommodation Standards: <https://www.essexproviderhub.org/adults-with-disabilities-hub/supported-living/supported-living-accommodation-standards/>

1.13 On-Boarding visit takes place. SALs to follow up visit with an email to all attendees, including the Provider, summarising the discussion, including points raised during visit and follow-up actions that may be required to enable progression for presentation at APB.

1.14 SAL completes APB paperwork and submits it as an agenda item for the next Accommodation Planning Board meeting.

2. Newly opened Schemes

2.1 ECC Procurement Services and/or ECC Adults with Disabilities Commissioning and/or The Specialist Accommodation Leads (SALs) from the Accommodation Hub. will be advised on a new property by a Landlord or Support Provider. If the enquiry comes directly through to the Accommodation Hub, ECC Commissioning will be informed and will advise the SALs if it is appropriate to proceed with the on-boarding process.

2.2 ECC Commissioning may choose to invite Providers and/or Landlords for a meeting if further information is required by any party. An initial conversation with ECC Adults with Disabilities Commissioning Team can help to determine if the proposed Scheme is something which is required in Essex. This is an opportunity to make early enquiries.

2.3 New Schemes may be at various stages of readiness when a Provider and/or Landlord notifies Essex County Council (ECC) of the intention to develop a new Service. These stages can include:

- A Provider wishing to deregister a former or current residential care home for development into a Supported Living Scheme,
- Provider and/or Landlord have a property that they wish to have on-boarded as a Supported Living Scheme,

2.4 ECC will want to understand the intended Scheme more and be able to support by way of guidance and advice. Developers, Providers and Landlords may want to know a little more about

demand in Essex and what the expectations are prior to committing to going forward with a development.

- 2.5 The earlier ECC are aware of the intentions of a Developer, Provider or Landlord to create a new Supported Living Scheme, the earlier joint working can begin. Joint working is crucial to support sustainable and high-quality accommodation and support options for the residents of Essex who require them.
- 2.6 If a development is in early stages, then a letter of support may be requested from the Accommodation Planning Board (APB), with the proposed Scheme returning to APB later for on-boarding.
- 2.7 Once a new property/scheme is near completion ECC Adults with Disabilities Commissioning Team and the Specialist Accommodation Leads will follow the process below in order to begin the on-boarding.
- 2.8 SALs send covering standard letter via email with APB Form for completion by Landlord and/or Provider.
- 2.9 Landlord and/or Provider to complete form and return it to:
Specialist.Accommodation@essex.gov.uk
- 2.10 SALs to check the tenancy to ensure there is no link between the Landlord and Provider, the tenancy is sustainable, and that the tenancy is fair. ECC is not ultimately responsible for checks of tenancy agreements, as those are still primarily the Landlord's and tenant's responsibilities.
- 2.11 SALs check rent breakdown to ensure:
- Private Landlords – core rent is within Local Housing Allowance (LHA), ineligible charges are reasonable, affordable, and only related to the property,
 - Social Landlords – provider to confirm they understand that Housing Benefit (HB) must cover all eligible rent and no top-up of rent is to be required, subject to the Adult's income and benefit entitlement. SALs to check all ineligible charges are reasonable and affordable.
- 2.12 SALs arrange a site visit. A SAL will attend together with potential, relevant colleagues e.g., a quadrant operational manager or deputy, an Occupational Therapist, a Behaviour Advisor, contract manager, a representative from Adults with Disabilities Commissioning. The visit's objective is to verify that the scheme is compliant with ECC Supported Living Accommodation Standards: <https://www.essexproviderhub.org/adults-with-disabilities-hub/supported-living/supported-living-accommodation-standards/>
- 2.13 On-Boarding visit takes place. SALs to follow up visit with an email to all attendees, including the Provider, summarising the discussion, including points raised during visit and follow-up actions that may be required to enable progression for presentation at APB.
- 2.14 SAL completes APB paperwork and submits it as an agenda item for the next Accommodation Planning Board meeting.

3. Existing Schemes with voids

- 3.1 SALs send covering standard letter via email with APB Form for completion by Landlord and/or Provider.
- 3.2 Landlord and/or Provider to complete form and return it to:
Specialist.Accommodation@essex.gov.uk
- 3.3 SALs to check the tenancy to ensure there is no link between the Landlord and Provider, the tenancy is sustainable, and that the tenancy is fair. ECC is not ultimately responsible for checks of tenancy agreements, as those are still primarily the Landlord's and tenant's responsibilities.
- 3.4 SALs check rent breakdown to ensure:
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- 3.5 SALs arrange a site visit. A SAL will attend together with potential, relevant colleagues e.g., a quadrant operational manager or deputy, an Occupational Therapist, a Behaviour Advisor, contract manager, a representative from Adults with Disabilities Commissioning. The visit's objective is to verify that the scheme is compliant with ECC Supported Living Accommodation Standards: <https://www.essexproviderhub.org/adults-with-disabilities-hub/supported-living/supported-living-accommodation-standards/>
- 3.6 On-Boarding visit takes place. SALs to follow up visit with an email to all attendees, including the Provider, summarising the discussion, including points raised during visit and follow-up actions that may be required to enable progression for presentation at APB.
- 3.7 SAL completes APB paperwork and submits it as an agenda item for the next Accommodation Planning Board meeting.

Accommodation Planning Board

The Accommodation Planning Board meets monthly. Its purpose is:

- To agree to on-board new Supported Living Schemes, which have been through the Scheme Approval Process,
- To decide if pre-existing Supported Living Schemes which have been through the Scheme Approval Process fit ECC's quality criteria,
- To act as a forum for new proposed Supported Living developments to be discussed, and if appropriate to be given a letter of support,

- To discuss and agree new changes or additions to the Supported Living Accommodation Standards,
- A forum for the discussion of any Supported Living issues within the County and to share information among colleagues,
- To act as a reference group to support the development of the ECC Accommodation Strategy, ensuring the Board is working to ECC's strategic intentions,

Possible outcomes for new/existing scheme/void at APB

- Property/void on-boarded
- Property/void not on-boarded
- Property not on-boarded until outlined conditions met
- Further information required

Following APB

1. SALs send letter to Provider advising of outcome at the APB.
2. SALs add property (if on-boarded) to the void list (Matching Tool) and actively consider appropriate referrals.
3. Any questions following an outcome of the APB should be sent to:
Specialist.accomm@essex.gov.uk where the query will be referred to the most appropriate person in ECC to respond.

Out of board agreements

There are occasions where properties/voids may not be able to wait until the next APB to be on-boarded. In these rare instances, they can be on-boarded outside of this meeting with the agreement of the chair of the APB.