

## **Wiltshire Council Families and Children's Services Staying Put Procedure –**

**Updated June 2025**

### **Establishing Staying Put Arrangements for in-house and IFA foster carers**

#### Process

1 - At age 15 ¾ to 16 years old, a Personal Advisor will be allocated to the young person and will start attending looked-after reviews where the Staying Put arrangement will be first discussed.

The option of Staying Put should be identified through the Care and Pathway Planning processes.

2 - No less than 6 months before a young person's 18th birthday. The personal advisor, working closely with the social worker, has the responsibility to lead on the Staying Put arrangement. Arrange a meeting with young person, foster carer, supervising social worker, and social worker – go through the agreement, ensure you include:

Preparation for independence – Income and benefit claims plans, rent payment and contribution plan for payment – house rules inclusive of visitors – night out / away – health plan and support – move on longer term plan.

Finalise staying put rate!

After the meeting, it can be sent to the team manager for financial agreement. This ensures the young person can feel settled in their home.

3 – No less than 2 months before 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting to get the paperwork agreement and licence agreement signed with all parties.

1 – Staying Put placement to be reviewed every 6 months within the pathway plan review. The PA must ensure the provider is present for this part of the review to look at independence, how placement is going, and longer-term housing plan.

#### Ending Staying Put arrangements

1 - Termination Before Age 21: The arrangement can be ended by either the young person or the provider with at least 28 days' notice, unless there is a serious breach—then it can end immediately with Head of Service approval.

2 - Automatic End at 21: The arrangement typically ends when the young person turns 21, unless there's a formal agreement to extend it.

3 - Housing Consideration: After turning 21, the young person is no longer automatically prioritised for social housing, so early planning is crucial. They will still have their Band 1 eligibility on Homes 4 Wiltshire.

4 - Post-21 Living: If the young person stays with the provider beyond 21, it generally becomes a private arrangement unless officially extended.

## Finances

Please remember we have two different processes for our in-house carers and the independent foster carers, IFA's.

FAFs must be completed with the full total on the total. In the description, break down the costs, including the full rate, personal contribution, and Wiltshire contribution, with the total to be paid clearly stated.

### Staying Put Retainer

A £20 weekly retainer may be paid in specific cases (e.g., young person is on remand, hospitalised, or at university), decided case-by-case by the Head of Service. The young person does not contribute to this retainer.

Retainer Duration: Normally capped at 12 weeks (excluding university attendance), in line with Housing Benefit rules.

### A – In-House Foster Carer: The rate is £233 per week, which is broken down into

Single Room Rent – As per the local housing rate - [Search for Local Housing Allowance rates by postcode or local authority: DirectGov - LHA Rates](#)

Young Person Contribution - £20

Wiltshire Council contribution – The Difference to make £233.00

If the young person is in education, we will match the foster career rates for that academic year, until the last exam – this is to ensure the young person can feel confident that their home will not change to support their studies.

Team Manager will sign the FAF for this – it does not need to go to placement panel.

At the looked-after reviews and 6-month point meeting, you can confirm the rates – match if in education, then down to the standard £233 rate.

Please note that if the foster carer is on a higher / enhanced rate, it must be discussed with TM before agreeing the matched cost.

### B – Independent Foster Carers

There is an agreed-upon framework of finances for most of the IFAs.

PAs, please ask your SPA to check the rates with Brokerage and confirm them to you. SPAs, add that on LL as managers' comment confirmation of staying put rate.

If not in the framework ( very rare ), you will need to foster carers for what they want to be paid. Be mindful that they can come under us and have direct payments from the CIC team.

Payment breakdown will be.

Single Room Rent – As per the local housing rate - [Search for Local Housing Allowance rates by postcode or local authority: DirectGov - LHA Rates](#)

Young Person Contribution - £20

Wiltshire Council contribution – The Difference to make.

Team Manager will sign the FAF for this – it does not need to go to placement panel.

If a young person is working

Where the young person is in employment, the first £500 (net) earned per month will be disregarded. Then, for every £100 (net) earned over this amount, the young person will be expected to contribute £10 per week towards the shortfall. This means that a young person would need to earn £1500 net each month before making up the full Housing Benefit shortfall.