

SECTION 4 — ACCOMMODATION & RESIDENTIAL MANAGEMENT

POLICY 36 — ACCOMMODATION MANAGEMENT POLICY

36.1 Purpose

Homeward Futures LTD is committed to providing safe, secure, suitable and well-maintained accommodation for care leavers and young adults aged 18–25.

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear arrangements for the management of accommodation and to ensure that residents live in an environment that promotes safety, dignity, independence, wellbeing and successful transition into adulthood.

Accommodation is an important part of the support provided by Homeward Futures LTD. Residents will be encouraged and supported to develop the practical skills required to maintain a home and sustain independent living.

36.2 Scope

This policy applies to:

- All Homeward Futures LTD accommodation.
- All residents living within Homeward Futures LTD accommodation.
- All Homeward Futures LTD staff, managers and contractors with accommodation-related responsibilities.
- Communal areas, bedrooms, kitchens, bathrooms, gardens and other areas forming part of the accommodation.

36.3 Policy Statement

Homeward Futures LTD will:

- Provide accommodation that is safe, clean, secure and appropriately maintained.
- Ensure accommodation is suitable for the resident's individual needs wherever reasonably possible.
- Maintain appropriate health and safety arrangements.
- Ensure repairs and maintenance issues are identified and addressed promptly.
- Carry out appropriate property inspections.
- Maintain essential statutory safety checks and certificates.
- Promote cleanliness and good housekeeping.

- Respect residents' privacy and personal space.
- Support residents to develop independent living skills.
- Respond promptly to hazards, damage, security concerns and maintenance issues.
- Maintain appropriate records relating to accommodation.

36.4 Responsibilities

Management

The Manager is responsible for:

- Overall accommodation standards.
- Ensuring properties are appropriately maintained.
- Ensuring health and safety requirements are met.
- Arranging repairs and maintenance.
- Monitoring inspection records.
- Ensuring appropriate safety checks are completed.
- Addressing significant accommodation concerns.
- Liaising with landlords, contractors, councils and other relevant organisations.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Reporting maintenance and safety concerns.
- Supporting residents to maintain their accommodation.
- Completing required accommodation checks.
- Recording relevant concerns.
- Responding appropriately to emergencies.
- Supporting residents to understand their responsibilities.

Residents

Residents are expected to:

- Look after their accommodation.
- Keep their bedroom and communal areas reasonably clean.
- Report repairs and hazards promptly.
- Avoid deliberately damaging property.
- Follow fire and safety procedures.
- Respect other residents.
- Follow the House Rules.

36.5 Accommodation Inspections

Homeward Futures LTD may carry out accommodation inspections to ensure:

- The property remains safe.
- Repairs have been identified.

- Fire safety arrangements remain appropriate.
- Communal areas are maintained.
- There are no significant hazards.
- Residents are receiving appropriate support.

Residents will normally be given reasonable notice of planned inspections unless there is an emergency, safeguarding concern or other legitimate reason requiring immediate access.

36.6 Repairs and Maintenance

Residents should report repairs as soon as they become aware of them.

Repairs will be assessed according to their urgency and potential impact on health, safety and security.

Emergency Repairs

Emergency repairs may include:

- Serious water leaks.
- Significant electrical hazards.
- Serious security problems.
- Fire safety concerns.
- Major flooding.
- Other circumstances presenting an immediate risk to health or safety.

Routine Repairs

Routine repairs will be arranged within a reasonable timeframe according to their seriousness and the availability of appropriate contractors.

36.7 Monitoring

Accommodation standards will be monitored through:

- Property inspections.
- Maintenance records.
- Resident feedback.
- Incident reports.
- Health and safety checks.
- Fire safety checks.
- Management reviews.

POLICY 37 — HOUSE RULES & RESIDENT EXPECTATIONS POLICY

37.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear and reasonable expectations for residents living in Homeward Futures LTD accommodation.

The House Rules are intended to promote a safe, respectful and positive living environment while helping residents develop the skills necessary for independent living.

37.2 Policy Statement

Residents are expected to:

- Treat staff, residents, neighbours and visitors with respect.
- Maintain reasonable standards of cleanliness.
- Respect other people's belongings.
- Keep noise at a reasonable level.
- Follow fire safety procedures.
- Report repairs and hazards.
- Follow their occupancy agreement.
- Follow reasonable instructions relating to health and safety.
- Respect communal areas.
- Take responsibility for their behaviour.

37.3 Respectful Behaviour

Homeward Futures LTD will not tolerate:

- Bullying.
- Harassment.
- Threatening behaviour.
- Violence.
- Intimidation.
- Discriminatory behaviour.
- Deliberate damage.
- Persistent anti-social behaviour.

Concerns will be managed proportionately and in accordance with relevant safeguarding, behavioural and incident-management procedures.

37.4 Cleanliness

Residents are expected to:

- Keep bedrooms reasonably clean.
- Dispose of rubbish appropriately.
- Clean up after cooking.
- Wash dishes and utensils.
- Keep bathrooms reasonably clean after use.

- Avoid creating health hazards.
- Participate in agreed household cleaning arrangements.

Staff may provide practical support where a resident requires assistance developing these skills.

37.5 Noise

Residents must consider other residents and neighbours.

Excessive noise, particularly late at night, should be avoided.

Where complaints are received, staff will investigate and work with the resident to resolve the issue.

37.6 Communal Areas

Communal areas must be:

- Kept reasonably clean.
- Free from unnecessary hazards.
- Used respectfully.
- Kept accessible where required for safety.

Residents must not deliberately obstruct fire exits or safety equipment.

37.7 Breaches of House Rules

Where a resident breaches the House Rules, staff will:

1. Discuss the concern with the resident.
2. Establish what happened.
3. Identify whether support or additional guidance is required.
4. Agree reasonable actions where appropriate.
5. Record significant concerns.
6. Escalate persistent or serious breaches to management.

Serious incidents may require immediate safeguarding, emergency or police action.

POLICY 38 — ROOM ALLOCATION & ACCOMMODATION STANDARDS

POLICY

38.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that residents are allocated accommodation that is appropriate to their circumstances, needs and level of independence.

38.2 Room Allocation

Room allocation will consider, where relevant:

- Age.
- Individual needs.
- Risk assessment.
- Safeguarding considerations.
- Compatibility with other residents.
- Accessibility requirements.
- Gender considerations where relevant.
- Support requirements.
- Known behavioural risks.
- Location and proximity to education, employment or services.

No resident will be allocated accommodation solely on the basis of availability where this would create a known and avoidable safeguarding or compatibility concern.

38.3 Resident Bedrooms

Bedrooms should provide:

- Appropriate privacy.
- A suitable bed.
- Appropriate storage.
- Adequate lighting.
- Heating.
- Appropriate ventilation.
- Suitable electrical provision.
- Appropriate furnishings.
- A safe and comfortable environment.

38.4 Personalisation

Residents should be encouraged to make their room feel like their own home, subject to reasonable restrictions relating to:

- Fire safety.
- Property damage.
- Security.
- Health and safety.
- The terms of the occupancy agreement.

38.5 Accommodation Standards

Homeward Futures LTD will seek to ensure that accommodation is:

- Clean.
- Safe.
- Secure.
- Warm and adequately heated.
- Properly maintained.
- Appropriately furnished.
- Free from serious hazards.
- Suitable for the intended resident group.

38.6 Room Inspections

Room inspections may be undertaken where reasonably required for:

- Health and safety.
- Maintenance.
- Repairs.
- Property inspections.
- Safeguarding.
- Fire safety.
- Compliance with the occupancy agreement.

Residents' privacy will be respected and access will normally be provided with reasonable notice except where immediate access is justified.

POLICY 39 — VISITORS & GUEST POLICY

39.1 Purpose

This policy establishes arrangements for visitors and guests while protecting the safety, privacy and wellbeing of residents.

Homeward Futures LTD recognises that residents have the right to maintain relationships with friends and family and should be supported to develop healthy social networks.

39.2 Visitors

Residents may generally have visitors subject to:

- The House Rules.

- The occupancy agreement.
- Reasonable safety requirements.
- The rights of other residents.
- Any individual safeguarding restrictions.

Residents are responsible for the behaviour of their visitors.

39.3 Visitor Expectations

Visitors must:

- Behave respectfully.
- Follow reasonable property rules.
- Not threaten or intimidate residents or staff.
- Not damage property.
- Not bring prohibited items into the accommodation.
- Not interfere with fire safety equipment.
- Leave when reasonably requested due to safety or other legitimate concerns.

39.4 Overnight Guests

Overnight guests will be subject to the individual accommodation agreement and House Rules.

Residents must not allow another person to move into or occupy their accommodation without authorisation.

39.5 Safeguarding Concerns

Homeward Futures LTD may restrict or refuse access to a visitor where there is a legitimate concern regarding:

- Safeguarding.
- Violence.
- Exploitation.
- Drug or alcohol-related risks.
- Criminal activity.
- Intimidation.
- Abuse.
- Serious anti-social behaviour.

Any significant safeguarding concern will be managed under the Safeguarding Policy.

39.6 Unauthorised Occupancy

Residents must not provide accommodation to another person without prior authorisation.

Unauthorised occupancy may result in a review of the resident's occupancy agreement and risk assessment.

POLICY 40 — RESIDENT TENANCY / LICENCE & OCCUPANCY POLICY

40.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that residents understand their accommodation arrangements, rights and responsibilities.

40.2 Occupancy Agreement

Before moving into accommodation, residents will be provided with an appropriate written occupancy agreement.

The agreement will explain, as applicable:

- The nature of the accommodation arrangement.
- Occupancy rights.
- Payment responsibilities.
- House Rules.
- Responsibilities of the resident.
- Responsibilities of Homeward Futures LTD.
- Repairs and maintenance.
- Access arrangements.
- Ending the arrangement.
- Relevant notice requirements.
- Behavioural expectations.

40.3 Legal Status

Homeward Futures LTD will ensure that the legal status of each resident's accommodation arrangement is correctly identified.

The organisation will not assume that every resident is a tenant or that every arrangement is a licence.

Where necessary, Homeward Futures LTD will obtain appropriate legal or housing advice.

40.4 Resident Responsibilities

Residents are expected to:

- Comply with the occupancy agreement.
- Pay agreed charges where applicable.
- Look after the accommodation.
- Report repairs.
- Follow reasonable health and safety requirements.
- Respect other residents.
- Avoid unauthorised occupation by others.
- Follow the House Rules.

40.5 Homeward Futures Responsibilities

Homeward Futures LTD will:

- Provide the accommodation in accordance with the relevant agreement.
- Maintain the property appropriately.
- Address repairs.
- Respect residents' privacy.
- Provide relevant information about accommodation arrangements.
- Respond appropriately to concerns.

40.6 Ending Occupancy

Where occupancy needs to end, Homeward Futures LTD will follow:

- The resident's occupancy agreement.
- Applicable housing legislation.
- Any relevant contractual requirements.
- Appropriate notice requirements.
- Safeguarding considerations.
- Relevant council/referrer arrangements.

Homeward Futures LTD will not unlawfully remove a resident from accommodation.

40.7 Abandonment

Where there are concerns that a resident may have abandoned accommodation, staff will make reasonable attempts to establish the resident's circumstances before taking action.

This may include:

- Contacting the resident.
 - Contacting the relevant professional where appropriate.
 - Checking for safeguarding concerns.
 - Reviewing available information.
 - Following the relevant occupancy agreement and legal process.
-

POLICY 41 — RENT, SERVICE CHARGES & FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES POLICY

41.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish transparent arrangements for accommodation-related payments and support residents to develop financial independence.

41.2 Charges

Residents will be informed clearly of:

- Rent or occupancy charges.
- Service charges, where applicable.
- What services are included.
- Payment dates.
- Payment methods.
- Any other agreed financial responsibilities.

Residents should receive appropriate written information about charges before or at the commencement of their occupancy.

41.3 Financial Support

Homeward Futures LTD recognises that care leavers may require support managing finances.

Staff may support residents with:

- Budgeting.
- Understanding bills.
- Setting up payment arrangements.
- Understanding benefits.
- Planning expenditure.
- Managing rent payments.
- Developing financial independence.

Staff will not take control of a resident's money unless there is a lawful and properly authorised arrangement.

41.4 Rent Arrears

Where a resident falls into arrears:

1. Staff will identify the amount outstanding.

2. The resident will be approached in a supportive and non-judgemental manner.
3. The reason for the arrears will be explored.
4. Staff will identify whether benefit, employment or financial difficulties are contributing.
5. Appropriate support will be offered.
6. A repayment arrangement may be considered where appropriate.
7. Persistent arrears will be escalated to management.

41.5 Financial Hardship

Residents experiencing financial difficulties should be encouraged to inform staff as early as possible.

Staff will consider whether additional support or referral to appropriate services is required.

41.6 Financial Records

Homeward Futures LTD will maintain appropriate records of:

- Charges.
- Payments.
- Arrears.
- Payment arrangements.
- Relevant financial correspondence.

Financial information will be handled confidentially and in accordance with data protection requirements.

POLICY 42 — PROPERTY DAMAGE & REPAIRS POLICY

42.1 Purpose

This policy establishes how Homeward Futures LTD responds to property damage and repairs.

42.2 Reporting Repairs

Residents should report repairs as soon as they become aware of them.

Repairs may be reported to:

- Their allocated support worker.
- The Manager.

- The designated accommodation contact.
- The emergency contact where applicable.

42.3 Types of Damage

Damage may include:

- Accidental damage.
- Normal wear and tear.
- Negligent damage.
- Deliberate damage.
- Vandalism.

Normal wear and tear will not normally be treated as resident damage.

42.4 Deliberate Damage

Where deliberate or negligent damage is suspected, Homeward Futures LTD will:

1. Establish what happened.
2. Speak with the resident.
3. Record the incident.
4. Consider any relevant risk or safeguarding factors.
5. Obtain repair estimates where appropriate.
6. Consider whether the resident may reasonably be responsible for the cost.
7. Follow the occupancy agreement and applicable law.

Residents will not automatically be charged simply because damage has occurred.

42.5 Emergency Damage

Where damage creates an immediate safety risk, staff will take appropriate emergency action.

This may include:

- Isolating unsafe areas.
- Contacting emergency contractors.
- Contacting emergency services.
- Arranging temporary accommodation where necessary.
- Informing management.

42.6 Repairs

Repairs will be prioritised according to:

- Risk to life.
- Risk of injury.
- Fire safety.

- Security.
 - Serious damage.
 - Loss of essential services.
 - General maintenance requirements.
-

POLICY 43 — KEYS, ACCESS & SECURITY POLICY

43.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect the security of residents, staff and Homeward Futures LTD accommodation.

43.2 Keys

Residents will be provided with appropriate keys or access devices.

Residents must:

- Keep keys secure.
- Not copy keys without permission.
- Not give keys to unauthorised people.
- Report lost or stolen keys promptly.
- Return keys when occupancy ends.

43.3 Lost Keys

Where a key is lost, the resident must notify Homeward Futures LTD as soon as possible.

Management will assess whether:

- A replacement key is required.
- Locks need to be changed.
- There is a security risk.
- A charge is applicable under the relevant agreement.

43.4 Staff Access

Staff will respect residents' privacy.

Access to bedrooms or private accommodation will normally be arranged with reasonable notice unless:

- There is an emergency.

- There is an immediate health and safety concern.
- There is a safeguarding concern.
- Immediate access is otherwise legally justified.

43.5 Security Concerns

Residents must report:

- Broken locks.
- Damaged doors.
- Suspicious activity.
- Unauthorised access.
- Lost keys.
- Security equipment failures.

Concerns presenting an immediate risk should be escalated without delay.

POLICY 44 — PROHIBITED ITEMS

POLICY

44.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to protect residents, staff and the wider community from items that may create a risk of harm, fire, criminal activity or serious disruption.

44.2 Prohibited Items

Residents must not bring into Homeward Futures LTD accommodation items that are prohibited by law, the occupancy agreement or House Rules.

These may include:

- Weapons or items intended to cause serious injury.
- Explosives.
- Fireworks where prohibited.
- Illegal drugs.
- Dangerous chemicals or substances.
- Items presenting a significant fire risk.
- Stolen property.
- Equipment intended to facilitate criminal activity.
- Other items identified through an individual risk assessment.

44.3 Discovery of Prohibited Items

Where staff become aware of a prohibited item, they will:

1. Consider immediate safety.
2. Avoid unnecessary confrontation.
3. Inform management where appropriate.
4. Follow safeguarding procedures.
5. Contact emergency services or police where necessary.
6. Record the incident.
7. Review the resident's risk assessment where appropriate.

Staff should not place themselves at risk attempting to confiscate dangerous items.

44.4 Individual Risk Assessments

Where a resident presents an identified risk relating to possession of particular items, an individual risk management plan may be implemented.

This will be proportionate and reviewed regularly.

POLICY 45 — SMOKING, VAPING & FIRE SAFETY POLICY

45.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to reduce the risk of fire, injury and property damage associated with smoking and vaping.

45.2 Smoking

Smoking is not permitted inside Homeward Futures LTD accommodation.

Residents must follow any designated smoking arrangements provided by Homeward Futures LTD.

45.3 Vaping

Vaping inside accommodation may be restricted or prohibited in accordance with the House Rules, property requirements and fire-risk assessment.

Residents must comply with the arrangements applicable to their accommodation.

45.4 Fire Safety

Residents must:

- Never tamper with smoke alarms.
- Never disable fire detection equipment.
- Keep fire exits clear.
- Follow evacuation procedures.
- Report damaged fire equipment.
- Report fire hazards.
- Follow reasonable instructions from staff.

45.5 Candles and Naked Flames

Residents may be prohibited from using candles, incense burners or other naked flames inside accommodation where this is identified as an unacceptable fire risk.

Alternative arrangements may be discussed where appropriate.

45.6 Smoking Materials

Residents must dispose of cigarettes and smoking materials safely.

Smoking materials must never be:

- Thrown from windows.
- Left unattended.
- Placed near flammable materials.
- Disposed of while still alight.

45.7 Fire Safety Equipment

Fire alarms, emergency lighting, fire doors and other safety equipment must not be deliberately damaged, obstructed or disabled.

Any deliberate interference with fire safety equipment will be treated as a serious safety concern.

45.8 Fire Incident

In the event of a fire:

1. Raise the alarm.
 2. Evacuate immediately.
 3. Call 999.
 4. Do not re-enter the building until authorised.
 5. Inform staff/management as soon as safely possible.
 6. Record and investigate the incident.
-

POLICY 46 — MOVE-IN & MOVE-OUT PROCEDURE

46.1 Purpose

This procedure ensures that residents experience a safe, organised and supportive transition into and out of Homeward Futures LTD accommodation.

46.2 Move-In Procedure

Before move-in, Homeward Futures LTD will ensure, where applicable, that:

- The room is clean.
- Essential furniture is provided.
- Necessary safety checks have been completed.
- The property is suitable for occupation.
- Keys/access arrangements are available.
- Relevant documentation is prepared.
- The resident's accommodation needs have been considered.
- Relevant risk and safeguarding information has been reviewed.

46.3 Resident Induction

At move-in, the resident will receive information about:

- Their room.
- Communal areas.
- Kitchen facilities.
- Bathroom facilities.
- Laundry arrangements.
- House Rules.
- Fire evacuation procedures.
- Emergency arrangements.
- Reporting repairs.
- Visitors.
- Smoking and vaping.
- Keys and security.
- Rent and financial responsibilities.
- Support arrangements.
- How to raise concerns or complaints.

Information should be explained in a way that the resident can understand.

46.4 Inventory and Condition

Where appropriate, an inventory and condition report will be completed.

This should identify:

- Furniture.
- Fixtures and fittings.
- Appliances.
- Existing damage.
- General condition of the room.
- General condition of relevant communal areas.

Where possible, the resident should be given an opportunity to comment on the condition report.

46.5 Initial Support

Staff will support the resident to settle into the accommodation.

This may include support with:

- Understanding House Rules.
- Shopping.
- Cooking.
- Cleaning.
- Budgeting.
- Setting up utilities where applicable.
- Understanding local services.
- Establishing routines.
- Developing independent living skills.

46.6 Move-Out Procedure

Where a resident is preparing to leave, staff should begin move-out planning as early as reasonably possible.

This may include:

- Confirming the planned move-out date.
- Liaising with the resident's Personal Adviser, social worker, council or referring organisation where appropriate.
- Identifying move-on accommodation.
- Supporting the resident to prepare financially.
- Supporting the resident to organise belongings.
- Arranging final inspections.

46.7 Final Inspection

A final inspection will normally be completed to assess:

- Condition of the room.
- Furniture.
- Fixtures and fittings.
- Damage.
- Cleanliness.
- Missing items.
- Keys/access devices.

Normal wear and tear will be distinguished from avoidable damage wherever possible.

46.8 Return of Keys

The resident must return all keys, fobs and other access devices at the end of occupancy.

Any failure to return keys will be recorded and dealt with in accordance with the occupancy agreement.

46.9 Personal Belongings

Residents should remove their belongings before leaving.

Where belongings remain behind, Homeward Futures LTD will deal with them in accordance with the occupancy agreement and applicable legal requirements.

46.10 Financial Reconciliation

Before closure of the accommodation arrangement, Homeward Futures LTD will review, where applicable:

- Rent payments.
- Service charges.
- Outstanding balances.
- Agreed damage costs.
- Other relevant financial matters.

Residents will be informed of any outstanding amounts appropriately.

46.11 Move-On Support

Homeward Futures LTD will aim to ensure that residents are supported to move into suitable accommodation rather than simply leaving without appropriate planning.

Where appropriate, staff may support residents with:

- Finding suitable accommodation.
- Understanding tenancy responsibilities.
- Setting up utilities.
- Budgeting.

- Housing applications.
- Registration with local services.
- Establishing a new household.
- Understanding their rights and responsibilities.

46.12 Closure of Placement

Following move-out, the relevant records will be completed and securely stored.

The resident's placement will be formally closed once all appropriate administrative, accommodation and support processes have been completed.

SECTION 4 — RECORD KEEPING & MONITORING

Homeward Futures LTD will maintain appropriate records relating to accommodation management, including where relevant:

- Occupancy agreements.
- Room allocation records.
- Inventories.
- Property inspections.
- Repairs and maintenance.
- Safety checks.
- Key records.
- Damage reports.
- Rent and service charge records.
- Arrears.
- Move-in documentation.
- Move-out documentation.
- Relevant incidents.
- Resident feedback.

Records will be maintained securely and handled in accordance with Homeward Futures LTD's Data Protection and Confidentiality Policies.

Management will periodically review accommodation records and resident feedback to identify trends, risks and opportunities for improvement.

SECTION 4 — POLICY REVIEW

These policies will be reviewed:

- At least annually.
- Following significant legislative or regulatory changes.
- Following a serious incident.
- Following significant changes to Homeward Futures LTD's accommodation model.
- Where monitoring identifies a need for amendment.
- Following relevant feedback from residents, staff, commissioners or partner agencies.

The Manager is responsible for ensuring that policies remain current, effective and appropriate to the services provided by Homeward Futures LTD.