



BATH & NORTH EAST SOMERSET

My Own Home



**A guide to housing
for people with
learning difficulties**

**Working to achieve better life chances for
people with learning difficulties**

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Who can use this information?

This information is for people with learning difficulties, their family and carers.



This pack has been put together to help you find out more about housing.



To help you find out more about how you can be supported.



To help you find out who to ask for help and how to find out more.

Using the guide



When reading this guide you will see some words in **blue** these are words that you might find difficult to understand or have not heard before.

If you turn to page 55 at the back of the guide you can see what these words mean. You might want to ask someone to help you with them.

What the government say about housing



Valuing People is the governments plan for making the lives of people with learning difficulties, their families and carers better.



Valuing People says that the government wants more people with learning difficulties and their carers to have greater choice and control over where and how they live.

Having your own home

What do we mean by Supported Living and Independent Living?

Supported Living?



Independent Living?

You may have heard the terms supported living and independent living being used. It can be difficult to understand what these terms really mean.



What both of these terms mean is that a person has their own home



and support is put in place to help them live independently in their home.

When will I be ready for Supported Living?



What if I don't have all of the skills to live independently?



Supported living will help you develop the skills you need. This could mean you are supported for a few hours a week, everyday, overnight or even 24 hours a day.



The support will be carefully planned to support your needs to live independently.

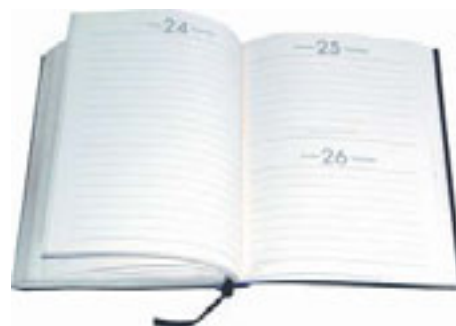
Planning a move



Moving home is a very big step in anyone's life. You should think about the things that are important to you.



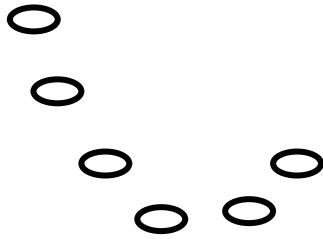
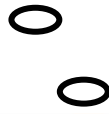
You might think about if you would like to live on your own or with other people, whether you would like to buy your own home or rent somewhere.



Whatever your situation it is very important to plan ahead. You may not be ready to move at the moment but you should start to think about what is available and the time it might take to get what you want.

What are my housing options?

This section will tell you about the different types of housing and the people you can contact to help you find out more.



Renting your home



If you pay money to live in your home this is called **rent**.

If you pay rent to live in your home you will be the **Tenant**.



The person you pay this money to is called the **Landlord**. This is the person or group who own the building.



If you are a tenant there are rules that you and your Landlord will have to keep to. When you agree to move into your home you will need to sign a **Tenancy agreement** which is the piece of paper that lists all of these rules.

Renting from a Registered Social Landlord

Bath & North East Somerset Council do not have any Council housing all of the properties are owned by **Registered Social Landlords** and **Housing Associations**.



To get a home with a **Registered Social Landlord** or **Housing Association** you need to go onto the Council's housing register this is called the Homeseekers register.



You do this by filling out a form.



The Housing Department or your Care Manager can help you complete the form.

If you do not have a Care Manager and think you might need one see page 33.



Return the form to the Council's Housing Department.



It is important that you make sure the Homeseekers Team are aware of any special **adaptations** needed in your home.



You should apply as early as possible as there are lots of people waiting for homes and it could be a very long wait.

You can join the register from 16 years old.



It is important that if your need for housing becomes more urgent that you tell your Care Manager or the Housing Department.

What is good about this type of housing?



- Secure **tenancy**
- Affordable rents

What is not so good?



- Not a lot of choice
- A long wait

Information
on page 33
about paying
for housing

Find out more

Homeseekers

Social & Housing Services,
Bath & North East
Somerset Council
PO Box 3343, Bath,
BA1 2ZH
Minicom: 01225 477815

Housing Advice Line:
01225396296



Renting from a Private Landlord

There is a lot of private rented housing available in Bath and North East Somerset.



Renting from a private landlord can be a good way of trying out living with friends and living independently.



You can find out what is available in your area by looking in the local newspaper



or going to letting agents and estate agents.



- Good way to try living with a partner or friends
- Lots of choice
- You can get housing quickly.



- You may not be able to stay there for a long time. You usually have to agree to live there for 6 months.
- Rent can be expensive
- You may have to pay a lot of money when you first move in as the Landlord will ask for a **deposit** and **rent in advance**.

Find out more

Bath & North East Somerset Housing Advice Team

Telephone: 01225 396296

Email: housingoptions_adviceteam@bathnes.gov.uk

www.bathnes.gov.uk

Swan Advice Network

Leigh House, 1 Wells Hill, Radstock, BA33RN

Telephone: 01761 432445

Monday to Friday 10am – 12 noon

Local letting agents and Newspapers

Owning your own home?

Shared Ownership - What is it?



Shared ownership is where you buy a share of a property and rent the other share from a Housing Association.

How do you buy your share?



You can borrow the money. This is called a **mortgage**. It is possible to get help to pay your mortgage if you receive Income Support. If you are working you may have to pay some or all of the mortgage yourself.



You may have been given a large amount of money.



Your family may have money to buy a share.

How do I pay the rent?



The Housing Association will rent their share to you. If you receive Income Support you may get help from Housing Benefit to pay the rent.

What about repairs?



The Housing Association will often cover the cost of repairs. The cost will be included in the rent. They call this a service charge.

If you claim Housing Benefit to pay the rent it will cover the service charge.

For more information about paying for housing see page 33



- You can choose where you live.
- The Housing Associations will sometimes cover maintenance.
- Long term security.



- It may be difficult to pay the mortgage if you work.
- It may be difficult if you want to move.

Find out more

There are several Housing Associations who specialise in home ownership for people with learning difficulties



Advance Housing

1 Cygnet Court
Witney

Oxfordshire

Telephone: 01993709221

Email:

homeownership@advanceuk.org

Website: [www. advanceuk.org](http://www.advanceuk.org)



Golden Lane Housing

West Point

501 Chester Road

Old Trafford

Manchester

M16 9HU

Telephone: 08456040046

Email: enquiries@glh.org.uk

Buying your home outright

You may have been given a large amount of money and are able to buy a property outright.



Here are a few things you might want to consider:



- You can choose where you live.
- You will have long term security.



- You will be responsible for maintenance and repairs.
- It may be expensive to move.

Find out more

HOUSING
OPTIONS

0845 4561497 for full contact details see back of the guide.



Ask Mencap on
08088081111 for full contact details see back of guide.

Passing on the family home



Remaining in your family home may not be an option that you and your family have considered.



It takes careful planning and **specialist legal advice** but it can be a good option for some people.



- Long term security.
- You can remain in your home.
- Good way of planning for the future.



- You may want your independence.
- Can take a lot of planning.
- If not arranged properly you might lose access to welfare benefits.

What is a **Discretionary Trust**?

A **trust** is a useful way of providing for an adult with a learning difficulty.



A **trust** can be used if your family wishes to leave you money or a property.

What are the benefits of setting up a **discretionary trust**?



- Good way of arranging **inheritance**
- A very important feature of a **discretionary trust** is that anything put in trust does not usually affect your access to welfare benefits

If you are thinking about setting up a trust it is important that you seek **specialist legal advice**

**Find out more about Discretionary Trusts,
Wills and passing on the family home.**



Mencap – Wills and Trusts team

Telephone: 020 76966925

Email: legaciesweb@mencap.org.uk

Website:

www.mencap.org.uk/willsandtrusts

The Wills and Trusts team can recommend local solicitors who specialise in working with families of people with learning difficulties.

They also publish a good booklet called Leaving money by will to people with learning disabilities.



Housing Options can provide information about options for families wanting to pass on the family home

Telephone: 0845 4561497 for full contact details see back of the guide.

The Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities

The Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities have a free booklet called: Discretionary Trusts: A guide for families. This is available at www.learningdisabilities.org.uk or by telephone on: 02078031100

Passing on a rented home



If your family rent their property from a Registered Social Landlord or a Housing Association it might be possible for the **tenancy** to be passed on to a family member allowing you to remain in the property.



To find out if this is possible you will need to speak to your Landlord or seek housing advice.

Find out more

Bath & North East Somerset Housing Advice Team:
01225 396296

Swan Housing Advice Network: 01761 432445

Citizens Advice Bureau: 08448487919 see back of guide for full contact details and area offices.

Shelter Housing Advice Line: 0808 800 4444
Website: www.England.shelter.org.uk

Housing that comes with support

Several supported living schemes have been set up in Bath & North East Somerset.



A supported living scheme is where a group of people live in a group of flats. You would usually have your own flat and there is sometimes an office for staff and a communal room for **tenants**.



Sometimes a small number of people may live in one house together. You may have your own room but share a kitchen and bathroom. This may be a good way of trying out living with friends.



- There will often be other people around.
- You may be able to live with a friend.
- It will take lots of planning and you may have to wait some time.
- You may not have the independence you would like.

I am interested, what do I do next?



If you are interested in this type of accommodation you need to let us know so we can add it into our future plans.



It can often take a long time to set up this type of scheme. It takes a lot of careful planning to make sure that the housing suits the person's needs.



To find out more you should speak to your Care Manager at the Community Learning Difficulties Team.

What are my support options?



Getting the right support package can be like making a jigsaw puzzle with lots of different pieces to fit together.

This section will tell you about the types of support available and how to find out more.



Everyone will need support. Some people will need only a small amount of support and other people may need much more.



Everyone is different so the support you need will be different too.



Your Support Plan will be carefully planned and pieced together with you to make sure you get the support you need.

Support Service

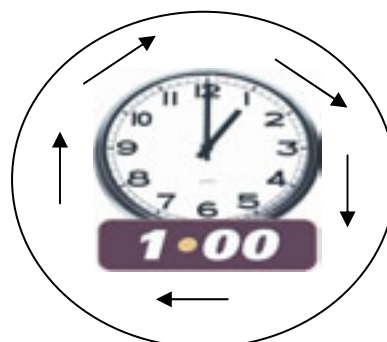
Support is provided in your own home. The amount of support you get will depend on your needs.



You may need support in your home for a few hours a day to help you with things like shopping and cooking.



Or you might need support all day and maybe someone to sleep over at night.



There are teams of Support Workers who are specially trained to help you live independently and develop your skills.



The Support Worker does not live with you. They are usually based in a central office.



There is often a 24 hour help line if you need to contact them urgently.

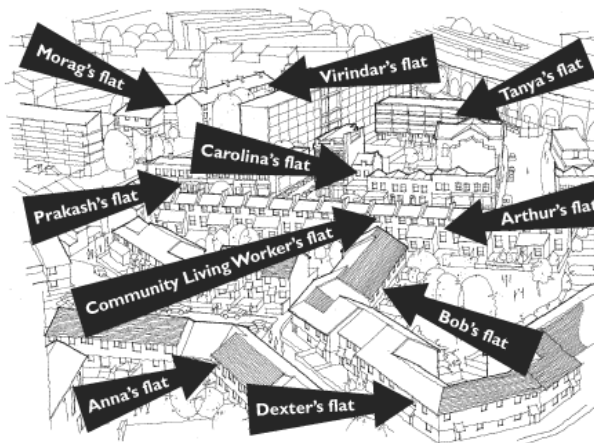


See page
37 for more
about Direct
Payments

Your support will be carefully planned with your Care Manager. Your Care Manager can arrange your support or you can receive a Direct Payment and choose your support and who supports you.

KeyRing Scheme

A keyRing scheme has been set up in Bath & North East Somerset.



KeyRing offers a network of support for people living close to each other.

People with learning difficulties living in the same neighbourhood are supported by a Community Support Worker.

The Community Support Worker will offer low level support. If you are part of a keyRing network you will also be supported by the other people living in the network.



If additional support is needed it can be added to your support package.

Community Alarms and Technology

There are lots of alarm systems and technology that can help you live independently.



There is a Community Alarm System that you can use to get help in an emergency.



There is technology that can do things like set off an alarm if the bath is too hot or about to overflow and turn off the cooker if it is left on too long.

Find out more

Community Alarms: Contact the Community Alarm Service Tel: 01225 477892

Assistive Technology



0845 4561497 for full contact details see back of the guide.



Telephone: 01993709221

Informal Support

This support can come from neighbours although it is usually from friends and relatives.



These people can act as **advocates** to help you speak up for what you want. You can also get an independent advocate to help you with this (see contact details at back of the guide).

Find out more about your support options?

Your Care Manager can talk to you about the support options available to you.

It may also be useful to talk to:



0845 4561497 for full contact details see back of guide.



Ask Mencap on 08088081111 for full contact details see back of guide.

How do I pay for Supported Living?



This section will briefly explain how you can pay for your housing and support and who you will need to contact to find out more.



**BATH & NORTH
EAST SOMERSET**



The Local Authority has a duty to provide some people with support. You need to have a **Community Care Assessment** from Social Services to assess whether you need support services.



You may be asked questions about money and your savings this is because some people may need to make a payment towards their supported living costs.



If you think you need a community care assessment contact the Adult Duty Desk:
01225 477000

How do I pay my rent?

Housing Benefit



**BATH & NORTH
EAST SOMERSET**



In some cases Housing Benefit will pay the rent. You will have to complete a form to see whether you can claim Housing Benefit. The amount you get will depend on the savings you have and the money you earn if you are working.

If you can claim Housing Benefit you may also get help with your Council Tax.

Your wage



If you work the money you earn is called a **wage**. You may be able to use your money to pay for some of your housing and support costs

Find out more

Housing Benefit 24 hour information line:

08459400480

See back of guide for full contact details

What if I want to buy my own home?



If you are thinking of purchasing your own home and get Income Support you may be able to get help from Income Support to pay the **mortgage**.



There are lots of ways to buy your own home. There are also lots of rules about paying for your home. If you are interested in owning your own home you will need special advice.

Find out more



Telephone: 01993709221



Telephone: 08456040046



Telephone: 08454561497.

How do I pay for my daily living costs?

Income Support and Disability Benefit



You may be able to get Income Support and Disability Benefit to pay for your day to day living costs such as food, clothes, bills and travel.



The amount of money you get will depend on your age, whether you have a partner, children, any savings you have and whether you work.

Find out more

Your Care Manager can help you. They can make you an appointment to talk to someone who works in welfare benefits.

It may also be useful to speak too: **DWP** Department for Work and Pensions Disability and Cares Service.

Benefit enquiry line: 0800 88 22 00

Text phone: 0800 24 33 55 (for hearing and speech difficulties)

How do I pay for my Support?

Direct Payment

If your **Community Care Assessment** shows that you need support to live independently you can choose to have a Direct Payment.

Your Care Manger will offer you a Direct Payment so you can pay for and choose your own support. This will give you a greater choice over the support you get and who supports you.



The Direct Payments Support service can help you choose and manage your support staff.



Find out more

Speak to your Care Manager or speak to the Direct Payments Scheme

Telephone: Dawn Gillard –
Direct Payments Lead
Officer on 01225 477821

Independent Living Fund

Some people can receive an Independent Living Fund to help pay for support if you live in your own home. To be eligible for the fund you must:



- Be aged 16 - 65 years old.
- Must be getting highest rate Disability Living care component.
- Receiving a service from the Local Authority of at least £200 per week.
- Total care costs should not exceed £785 per week.

Find out More

Speak to your Care Manager or contact Independent Living Fund

Telephone: 0845 601 8815

Write: Independent Living Fund

PO BOX 7525

Nottingham

NG2 4ZT

Email: funds@ilf.org.uk

Website: www.ilf.org.uk



Making it happen – what to do next?

This book has given you a very brief description of some of the housing and support options that are available. This section will help you think about what to do next if you think you are interested in getting your own place or want to find out more.

Things to think about

How will I pay for my home and support?
What can I afford?



Will my property need adapting?

When would I like to move?



Do I want to live on my own or with other people?



What do I need to do first?



Where do I want to live?



What is important to me about where I live?

Who can help me?

Your Care Manager is key to organising your housing and support. You can contact the Community Learning Difficulties Team



Your **Advocate**, to find out about getting an advocate contact Your Say.



You can attend your Local Network group. Contact **Your Say** for further information on:
01275374703

Your family



Person Centred planning facilitator. To request a **Person Centred Plan** see page 53.

You can speak to friends who are already living independently.



Your Personal Housing Plan



This is a section where you can keep a copy of your Personal Housing Plan.



Your Care Manager will fill it in with you during your assessment or review.



You can even have a go at filling it in with your family or carers before you meet with your Care Manager.

Personal housing plan

Where you live?

Describe where you live?



Who else do you live with?



Age of family carers (if you live with them)?

What is good about where you live?



What don't you like?



What would you like to change?



Have you thought about where you would like to live in the future (think about the things that are important to you i.e. location amenities, who you live with)?



Do you have any special accommodation needs (adaptations, access)?



Are you on the Council's homeseekers register? Have you applied for any other housing?



What support do you need?



Paying for your Housing & Support?





Where Can I find out more?

Organisations that can provide specialist advice about housing for people with Learning Difficulties



Housing Options
A national independent advice organisation.

Telephone: 08454561497

Email:
enquiries@housingoptions.org.uk

Website: www.housingoptions.org.uk
The website has some very useful fact sheets and quick briefs.

Post: Housing Options
Stanelaw House
Sutton Lane
Sutton
Witney
Oxon
OX29 5RY





Mencap Learning Disability Helpline

Telephone: 0808 808 1111 - free phone number

Minicom: 0808 808 8181

Email: help@mencap.org.uk

Website: www.mencap.org.uk

Post: 4 Swan Court Yard,
Coventry Road,
Birmingham,
B26 1 BU



The Foundation for People with Learning Difficulties

Telephone: 02078031100

Website: www.learningdisabilities.org.uk



**BATH & NORTH
EAST SOMERSET**

General Housing Advice

Bath & North East Somerset Housing Advice Team

Telephone: 01225 477000

Minicom: 01225 477815

Email:

Housingoptions_adviceteam@bathnes.gov.uk

Website: www.bathnes.gov.uk

Advice is also available in person at:

Lewis House
Manvers Street
Bath, BA1 1JG

Opening times:

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 8.30am –
5.00pm

Wednesday 9.30am – 5.00pm

Friday 8.30am – 4.30pm



Swan Housing Advice Network

Telephone: 01761 432445

Or you can drop in at:

Leigh House
1 Wells Hill
Radstock, BA3 3RN

Monday to Friday 10am – 12 noon

Community Information Centre
The Flat, Town Hall
Keynsham

Wednesday 10am -12noon

Somer Community Housing Office
Rosewell Court, Bath

Tuesday 1.30pm – 3.30pm

Thursday 10am -12noon



Shelter

Website: www.England.shelter.org.uk

Telephone: Free housing advice line:
0808 8004444



Citizens Advice Bureau

How to contact: Drop in, phone, contact for an appointment or write.

Bath

Telephone: 01225 463333

2 Edgar Buildings
Bath, BA1 2EE

Midsomer Norton

Telephone: 01761 418599

Old Town Hall,
The Island
Midsomer Norton, BA3 2HQ
Email: advice@nescad.org.uk

Keynsham

Telephone: 0117 9862345

Community Centre, Town Hall
Keynsham, BS31 1EF
Email: keynsham@nescab.org.uk





**BATH & NORTH
EAST SOMERSET**

Paying for housing

Housing Benefit

Housing Benefit 24 hour information line:
08459400480

Email: bathnesrb@lastestinfo.co.uk

Post:

Revenues & Benefits
PO Box 2979
Bath, BA1 1WF



Department for work and Pensions

Disability and Cares Service.
They offer advice and information for
people with disabilities and their carers
about welfare benefits.

Benefit enquiry line: 0800 88 22 00

Text phone: 0800 24 33 55 (for hearing
and speech difficulties)



Swan Housing Advice Network and the
Citizens Advice Bureau will also be able to
help with welfare benefit advice.

Advocacy



Your Say

Your Say is an advocacy service for people of all ages with Learning Difficulties.

Telephone: 01275 374703

Email: info@yoursay.advocacy.co.uk

Website: www.yoursay-advocacy.co.uk

Write to: 5 Bank Place
Pill
Bristol
BS20 0AH

You can also contact Your Say if you would be interested in attending your local Network event.

Network events are held in Bath, Keynsham and Midsomer Norton. The events are for people with learning difficulties to find out about what is going on in Bath & North East Somerset and talk about local issues.



Person Centred Planning



If you are interested in having a person centred plan you should complete the referral form at the back of this guide.

Alternatively you can ask your Care Manager who will help you with the referral form.

Carers Support



The Care Network

Carers Line: 01761 431389

This is a line just for Carers, you are guaranteed a response from a Carers Support Worker between the hours of: Monday – Thursday 9 -11 am, 1 -3pm

Office Telephone: 01761 431388

Email:
carerssupport@thecarenetwork.co.uk

Post
1 Riverside Cottage
Radstock, Bath,
BA33 PS



What the words mean?



Any words that may have been difficult to understand were highlighted in blue, here is what they mean.

Rent




This is the money you pay to live in your home.







Tenant

If you pay rent to live in your home you are called a tenant.



<p>Landlord</p>	<p>If you rent your home the person or group who own your home is called a Landlord.</p> 
<p>Tenancy agreement</p>	<p>If you rent your home there are rules that you and your Landlord must keep. When you move in you will need to sign a Tenancy Agreement which is a piece of paper that lists all of these rules.</p> 
<p>Registered Social Landlord</p>	<p>Provide homes for people to rent or buy. They get money from the government to help them build homes.</p> 

Housing Association	The same as a Registered Social Landlord
Deposit	<p>This is money that your Landlord will ask for before you move in. It is usually the same amount of money as one months rent. Your Landlord will ask for this money in case you damage the property or don't pay the rent. You will get this money back when you leave the property if you have paid the rent and there are no damages to the property.</p> 
Rent in advance	<p>This is the money that your Landlord may ask you to pay before you move in. It is the same as one month rent this is called rent in advance.</p> 

<p>Mortgage</p>	<p>If you buy your own house you may have to borrow money to help you pay for it. The money you borrow is called a mortgage.</p> 
<p>Adaptations</p>	<p>An adaptation is work carried out to make your home better for your needs. This could be by having ramps, handrails or a walk in shower.</p> 
<p>Specialist legal advice</p>	<p>This is advice from a person who works with the law and is use to working with people with learning difficulties and their families.</p>

Discretionary Trust

This is a way that your family can leave you money or a property.



Inheritance

This is money or a property that a family member such as a Parent may leave to their Son or Daughter.



Assistive technology

This is alarm systems and technology that can help you live independently.



Advocate

An advocate is someone who can help you make your feelings, wishes and voice heard about the things that affect your life.



Community Care Assessment

If you think you need help from Social Services you will need to have a Community Care Assessment.



Wage

If you work the money you earn is called a wage.





This guide to Housing for people with learning difficulties can be made available in a range of community languages, large print, Braille, on tape, electronic and accessible formats from the Information Officer

information_officer@bathnes.gov.uk

Tel (01225 477983)

Fax (01225 477973)

Minicom (01225 477043)



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