

The **Benjamin** Foundation

Pottergate

Shared Accommodation in Norwich Young Persons Handbook

This handbook tells you about our Housing and Homelessness service, Pottergate in Norwich. It gives you information about how we will support you and what you should expect from our service.

If you have any questions about the service, please talk to anyone in the team – they will be happy to help. If you could help us improve this handbook, please let us know.

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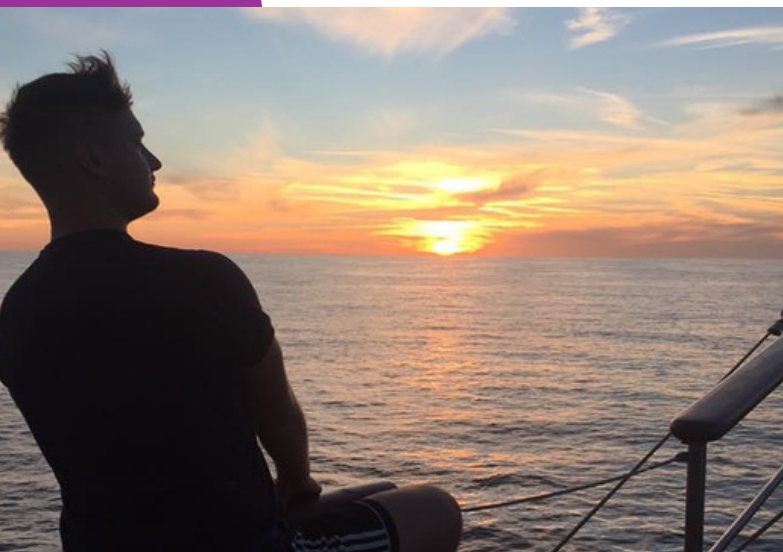
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About The Benjamin Foundation and Pottergate

The Benjamin Foundation is a local charity which helps people across Norfolk and Suffolk to deal with some of the challenges that life throws at them.

Whether it's the prevention of youth homelessness, helping families to build stronger relationships or providing positive activities for young people with limited opportunities in life, our work brings hope, opportunity, stability and independence to the people we support.

For more information about The Benjamin Foundation, please visit www.benjaminfoundation.co.uk



Pottergate is one of our housing services for young people in Norwich. The service opened in January 2023.

We work with the private landlord sector to provide safe and affordable accommodation and opportunities to help young people move confidently along their journey to independence.



Flats at Pottergate

Pottergate supports young adults between the ages of 18 to 25 in self contained flats in Norwich city centre. Once a young person has moved into one of our flats we support them with managing their tenancy and personal development to move them closer to securing more permanent accommodation.

You will be supported in managing your own accommodation and there will be staff on site weekly who will be available for support. The staff will work closely with you whilst living at the flats to help you learn valuable life skills. We will also provide employability training and advice. Our office based at Pottergate will be available for you to use to support your training and career.

Our staff team will work closely with you while you're here. You will be allocated a Support Worker, who will be here to help you on the path to becoming a confident young adult and to prepare you for independent life.

Staff team; Gail Hodds – Service Manager
Chantel Stone – Assistant Manager
Anne – Monique Hipwell – Housing Management and Support Worker
Sylvia Roper – Housing Management and Support Worker

The Staff Team

Settling In

Moving somewhere new can be a daunting prospect but don't worry! We create a safe and stable environment and our staff are welcoming, friendly. If you need support, please get in touch – our staff team will be available during the week.

You may only need a few weeks in a safe and stable environment but you can stay for up to two years – until you feel you have reached a stage where you feel you need less support, or you feel you can manage your own accommodation in the community.

If you need help with cooking or cleaning skills then please talk to your Support Worker, who will arrange to support you.

If you receive benefits, remember it's important to keep your details up to date – our team can help you with this if you wish.

The Benjamin Foundation brings hope, opportunity, stability and independence to over 2,500 children, young people and families each year.



"I feel that I am listened to for the first time."

Before moving in, you will have a short interview and you may have the chance to look around and meet the staff and residents on site.

You will be given a copy of the house rules, which are largely based around respect for other people including fellow residents, staff and neighbours.

You will be asked to sign to say you understand and agree to them. If accepted and you move in, you will have an induction to explain things like fire regulations and procedures and you will also then be allocated a Support Worker. If you're not accepted, our staff will inform you how you can appeal.

Supporting You

Your Support Worker will work closely with you and existing professionals, such as Social Workers and other agencies who may be supporting you.

We make weekly visits to support you. We make notes of conversations and all staff see these. We aim for every tenant to be doing something, such as work, education or volunteering and we will support you with this. Our Job Coach/Employability Advisor will help with advice around this.

Above all, we want you to have great opportunities and consistent support while you are staying with us. Our principle aim is to give you the skills you need to live independently in the future.

You can request a support session at any time and we will do what we can to honour this. All support sessions are documented and agreed by you. All relevant staff can access your information.

"I settled in well. I now have new friends, a new home and I feel safe."



Outcomes Star

During your time with us, we will complete an 'Outcomes Star' with you. This helps us and you to see your progress during your time with us. The focus will be housing related support, but we will help you with all aspects of your life from education, health, wellbeing, self confidence and building social networks.

What you can expect from us

All staff have the skills, knowledge, experience and personal qualities to deliver a quality service. They receive an in-depth induction, training, management and regular supervisions, meaning that the service you receive will be reliable and consistent.

If you feel that any member of staff has not acted in this way or behaved inappropriately towards you, you may raise this directly with the worker involved, the Senior Support Worker, the Manager of the service, or you can ask for another representative. All concerns will be treated with respect and investigated. You will also be asked to provide regular feedback on your experience.

Rent, Service Charge, Making Payments

You may be entitled to claim Housing Benefit to help with the rent – speak to a member of staff for help with this if you are not sure. We can help you complete the relevant paperwork.

Top-up rent is an amount of money that all young people have to pay each week. It covers things like gas, electric, water and TV licence. Again, your Support Worker will explain all this to you at your induction.

Rent must be paid on time each month.



You can expect to be treated with respect and dignity at all times during your stay with us. We celebrate people's differences and will not discriminate and we expect you to do the same.

Respect and Dignity

This means being polite, sticking to boundaries, keeping to appointments (or re-arranging them), and acting within the law. We will also provide you with our policies, such as confidentiality and our complaints procedure, which we will explain to you.

Life Skills and the AQA Awards

While staying at our supported accommodation centre, you will have the opportunity to achieve awards through our Life Skills Scheme.

The scheme is not compulsory, but is in addition to your Outcome Star and gives you the opportunity to develop a record of achievement while you are staying with us.

The Ben's Life Skills Award Scheme consists of a number of different units, which aim to help you towards independent living. These include:

- Running a home
- Living on a budget
- Introduction to home safety
- Healthy eating
- Planning and preparing a meal
- Plus many more!



Drugs and Alcohol

The Benjamin Foundation has a zero tolerance policy regarding drugs and action will always be taken in the event of this policy not being followed.

The Benjamin Foundation does not allow drugs to be brought onto any of our premises and our charity does not condone or approve of drug use, possession or supply. We aim for all of our services to be drug-free.

A copy of our Drugs and Alcohol Policy will be given to you at your induction.

"The Benjamin Foundation have helped me gain independence, confidence, self-esteem and I have discovered more about myself."

Celebrating Diversity

We celebrate people's differences and do not discriminate.

An individual's lifestyle is usually based on their cultural values, beliefs and life experiences and these should not be dismissed just because we see a person as 'different.'

We ask our service users about their needs and wishes, their culture and how they like things to be done.

We respect different cultures and challenge those who do not. We offer activities and promote an environment that includes people from different backgrounds.

If you have any concerns, or if you need any information to meet your individual needs, please speak to your Support Worker.



Confidentiality and Information Sharing

We're committed to providing a confidential service. You have a right to privacy and we want you to have trust and confidence in the service that is supporting you. This includes keeping your personal information safe and secure. We would only pass information to anyone outside of The Benjamin Foundation in very special circumstances:

- If you agree.
- In an emergency where you, staff or another person is at risk of harm.
- Where the law says information has to be provided.

Our first concern is YOU, the person using our service. Confidentiality prevents us from giving anyone information about you, even a close relative, unless we have your consent. We will go through this with you in detail – but feel free to ask us any questions about this. We will also provide you with a copy of our Confidentiality Policy at your induction.



Bullying and Harassment

We believe that bullying and harassment is unacceptable. If you think you are being bullied or harassed, tell us and we will support you.

If you would like more information about bullying, please speak to your Support Worker, the Manager of your service.

Security, Health and Safety

We take Health and Safety very seriously and ensure that we comply with current Health and Safety legislation.

If there's anybody that you do not want to have any contact with, please make your Support Worker aware so we can ensure they're not allowed into the property.

In the event of an emergency, call the emergency services on 999.

Emergency Procedures

Fire information is specific to each house and the fire instructions are on the doors in rooms. Please familiarise yourself with these when you move in.

Safeguarding Adults and Children

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

We will talk to you about this when we meet, but if you are worried or concerned that you are being abused in any way, contact your Support Worker, Manager of your service, Social Worker, the Police on 101, or 999 in an emergency.

Whoever you talk to, they will take your concerns very seriously and will work with you and others to ensure that everyone is safe.

Getting involved

We're committed to getting you involved in our organisation. Your views and experience help us to improve the services we deliver, so if you have any thoughts, feedback, ideas or concerns, we would love to hear them.

You're invited to raise issues with staff whenever you wish – we will always listen and discuss what we will do with your feedback.

You are also best placed to tell us about the support and skills you need from our Support Workers so we aim to consult you about staff appointments, consultations, rules and feedback.

We encourage all young people we support to engage more fully in the local community.

You are all voters – make sure you use your right to vote.



Complaints

Our complaints procedure leaflet will be issued to you when you move in. If you need another copy please contact us. We value your feedback.