

6.2.1. Leaving Care

If a young person has been looked after by Havering Council and they are ready to move into their own accommodation, they may be considered for housing on welfare grounds. This includes those placed out of the Borough. To qualify, the young person must have been a relevant child under the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, which means she/he would have been looked after by the Council for a certain period of time and have had a pathway plan drawn up.

In most cases young people leaving care will be ready to move into independent living with the support of Children Services. If the young person is ready to move-on and has developed the required life skills, such as managing a budget, cooking, cleaning, the Council will support her or him to find suitable private rented accommodation.

However, some young people are more vulnerable than others when leaving care and accommodation in the private rented sector would have a detrimental effect on their transition to independent living. Such applications will be considered by a Panel, (Care Leavers Panel), who will determine whether to award priority for social housing.

~~The Care Leavers Panel will consist of senior officers from Housing Services and Children Services.~~ The panel assesses each referral individually to ensure the needs of any particularly vulnerable or at risk young person is addressed.

To be considered for social housing, the care leaver must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Young person who has been a relevant child under the Children Leaving Care Act 2000, which means you have been looked after by Havering Council for a certain period of time and have had a pathway plan.
- Young people with moderate learning difficulties or disability, or those who are subject to a statement of educational needs or a psychological assessment.
- Young people with significant mental health issues – who have had involvement with Mental Health Team for a period of three months or longer and are continuing to receive treatment.
- Young people with complex needs placed in high cost placements where they no longer require that degree of support.
- Young people with significant offending behaviour, which limits access to other types of suitable accommodation.
- Young people leaving care who are also parents and also meet one other criteria listed (e.g. they or their baby are especially vulnerable).
- Those with other mitigating circumstances.

We will work together with social services and other agencies looking at supply and demand to identify clients currently in supported housing who are ready for independent living.