

Supported Housing Design Principles

Implementing the Learning Disability Strategy has continued the strong focus on co-designing change which was a hallmark in the development of the strategy. The supported housing workstream has actively engaged with customers, providers and practitioners in a continuation of this co-design work through events, focus groups and engagement with individuals. In order to ensure that this work influences and guides the development of supported housing services, be that via contractual arrangements or personalised approaches such as ISFs, this set of design principles has been put together from the various engagement with stakeholders.

The design principles should be applied to any attempt to develop the model of support in supported housing. Any appraisal of the success in developing services should be able to positively respond to the challenge – do these changes take us closer to the aims of the supported housing design principles?

Design Principles

1. **My house is my home, not a placement** – All supported housing should be regarded and feel like the customer's **own home**, in a way that we would all expect in a similar housing environment (e.g. tenant's right equivalent to those expected in general needs secure tenancies). This includes feeling safe at home and in the local community.
2. **Freedom to take risks and to learn** – Extending choice and control to customers includes freedom to make bad choices. Customers have told us that they have learned from making bad choices, grown from that and achieved greater independence as a result.
3. **Being in the community means being part of the community** – The support given to customers in supported housing should take account of the need to ensure that connections are made between customers and their local community, outside of engagement with specialist day, evening or weekend services. This would include opportunities to build personal relationships.
4. **Procurement approaches have to work in the best interests of customers** – Any system of procurement must be flexible, be able to facilitate the development of services around the needs of individual customers and offer customer choice; alongside ensuring consistent quality, fairness to providers and good value for money.
5. **Clear information and understanding empowers** – Having clear information which is accessible is essential for customers to understand their rights and

responsibilities. This could relate to tenancy agreements, alternative housing options or information for families.

6. **Choice, control and flexibility** – Customers must have choice over their care and support provider and where they live. This may not be absolute choice (for example supported housing may only be available in certain locations), but within those parameters, choice must be able to be exercised by customers.
7. **It's about the customer's needs and wants not the needs and wants of organisations** – Organisations including providers and statutory partners who help support customers need to ensure that there is good and regular communication to ensure support to customers is effective. Organisational boundaries do not need to, and should not get in the way.
8. **Value for money, not care on the cheap** – Public bodies need to ensure good value for money is achieved, working with not-for-profit providers to ensure charges are fair and as cost effective as possible, but also result in sustainable good quality care and support.