

A photograph of two young women walking down a city street. The woman on the left has purple hair and is wearing a denim jacket over a white lace top. The woman on the right has brown hair, wears glasses, and a denim jacket over a pink top. They are both smiling and looking towards the right. The background shows a brick building and a street with other people.

YMCA

YMCA NORFOLK

Supported Lodgings

Your spare room could change lives



Welcome

At YMCA Norfolk, we believe every young person deserves a safe place to call home and the support to thrive.

Our Supported Lodgings Service offers young people who are at risk of homelessness, the opportunity to live in a welcoming home with a dedicated host.

Why choose Supported Lodgings?

A unique approach to supporting young people:

> **Personalised matching**

We carefully match each young person with a host who can offer not just a room, but encouragement and understanding.

> **Ongoing support**

Our experienced team is there for both our hosts and young people from day one, providing regular visits, advice, and practical help.

> **Focus on progress**

We work with young people to agree development plans, helping them gain skills, confidence, and independence.

> **Comprehensive host training**

Every host receives training before welcoming a young person, covering safeguarding, communication skills, and practical guidance. This ensures hosts feel confident and equipped to provide a safe, supportive environment.

Meet our team

Our dedicated staff are passionate about supporting you and young people.

- > **Service Manager**
Oversees the programme and ensures high standards of care.
- > **Senior Engagement Worker**
Provide regular visits, guidance, and a listening ear.
- > **Engagement Worker(s)**
Support you every step of the way.

“It’s a privilege to see young people grow in confidence and move on to independent living.”

YMCA Norfolk Support Worker

Who can host?

If you have a spare room and a heart for young people, you could make a life-changing difference.

Supported Lodgings isn’t about being a professional carer – it’s about offering a safe space and encouragement.

We carefully **match you and young people**, provide **comprehensive training**, and stay in regular contact to make sure you feel supported every step of the way. Our team is always on hand for advice, visits, and practical help.

Hosting is open to people from all walks of life – families, couples, or individuals. What matters most is your willingness to offer stability and understanding

The support you will receive

- > Comprehensive training and induction
- > Regular contact and support from YMCA staff
- > Peer support opportunities
- > Clear guidance on roles and boundaries

“Being a host is incredibly rewarding. I’ve seen young people flourish and gain confidence.”

Supported Lodgings Host

How our Supported Lodgings service works

Becoming a Supported Lodgings provider is a rewarding journey, and we make sure you're never alone. Here's what to expect:

Starting the conversation

After you express interest, our team will visit you at home. This is a relaxed meeting where we:

- > Explain how the service works
- > Understand your motivation and what a good match looks like
- > Discuss payments and practical arrangements
- > Share how young people's development plans work and how you can be involved

Training before placement

YMCA is committed to safeguarding young people. Before welcoming a young person, you'll be required to complete an enhanced DBS check and receive comprehensive training to include:

- > Safeguarding
- > Professional boundaries
- > A-Z of successful hosting

Matching and onboarding

When a young person is referred and paired with you, we'll arrange an initial meeting. Our staff will support onboarding, including house rules, boundaries and expectations.

Ongoing support

While the young person lives with you, they'll work through a development plan with their Housing Engagement Worker – setting goals and action steps. Weekly meetings will take place either at your home or at a mutually agreed location. For you as a host you will receive:

- > A monthly home visit from us
- > Weekly phone calls to check progress and gather feedback
- > Ad-hoc support whenever you need it – our team is just a call away

You're never on your own. We're here to make sure hosting is a positive and supported experience.

Moving on and debrief

When the young person moves on, we'll hold a thorough debrief with you – looking at what went well and what could improve. This helps us continually fine-tune the programme and support you and future hosts even better.



Case Study

Young person's journey

At 18, Liam* faced a sudden crisis when family relationships broke down, leaving him without a home.

For months, he sofa surfed across Norwich and Norfolk, sometimes sleeping rough in a local woodland. "It was such a difficult and chaotic time," he recalls. Substance misuse became a way to cope, and his health began to decline.

Everything changed when Liam was referred to **Supported Lodgings**. Moving in with a host family gave him a safe, stable environment and the chance to start again. He built a strong relationship with his Housing Engagement Worker, who understood his situation and never judged him. "Having someone listen and support me made a huge difference," Liam says.

Through Supported Lodgings, Liam began to regain confidence and learn practical skills for daily life. He discovered what independence could look like, budgeting, cooking, and managing responsibilities – while having guidance when he needed it.

Today, Liam has moved into his own accommodation and is thriving. He's working towards a career in gardening and feels ready to manage a tenancy.

"Supported Lodgings helped me believe in myself and gave me the tools to live independently."

**Name changed to protect identity.*



Case Study

A host's journey

When I first thought about becoming a Supported Lodgings host, I was honestly quite nervous. Opening your home to someone you don't know is a big decision, and I wasn't sure what to expect.

But from the start, the team made things feel manageable. They took time to explain how it all works and gave me the confidence that I'd have guidance whenever I needed it. By the time Leah arrived, I felt prepared and reassured.

Of course, it wasn't always easy. There were moments when things felt challenging – learning how to support someone who's been through a lot of challenges can be emotional. But I never felt left to figure it out alone. Whenever I had questions or needed advice, the team were there to listen and offer practical suggestions. That made a huge difference.

The best part was watching her change over time. At first, Leah was quiet and kept to herself, but gradually she started to open up. Her confidence grew, she began making plans for her future, and eventually moved into her own place. Knowing I played even a small part in that journey is something I'll always be proud of – it's incredibly rewarding.

**Name changed to protect identity.*



How to get involved

For hosts

Ready to open your home and heart?
Contact us to find out more about becoming
a Supported Lodgings Host.

YMCA Norfolk

Supported Lodgings Service

01603 340870

supportedlodgings@ymcanorfolk.org

www.ymcanorfolk.org/supportedlodgings



FAQs

Do I need special qualifications to be a host?

No. You don't need professional experience – just a spare room and a genuine desire to support a young person. We provide DBS, training and ongoing guidance so you feel confident.

What kind of young people will I be hosting?

Young people aged 16-25 who are at risk of homelessness and want a fresh start. We carefully match hosts and young people to ensure a good fit.

How does the matching process work?

We meet with you at home to understand your lifestyle, preferences, and motivation. Then we pair you with a young person who we believe will suit your household and personality.

Will I get training before someone moves in?

Yes. Every provider receives comprehensive training and practical tips. This happens before any placement begins.

What support will I have once hosting starts?

You're never on your own. Our team stays in regular contact, checks in with you, and is available for advice whenever you need it. We also visit periodically to make sure everything is going well.

What if challenges come up?

It's normal to face challenges. If something feels difficult, we're here to help – whether that's advice, mediation, or practical solutions. You'll always have someone to turn to.

How long will a young person stay?

It varies. Some placements are short-term, others longer, depending on the young person's needs and progress towards independence.

Do I get paid for hosting?

Yes. We provide a financial contribution to cover costs and recognise your commitment. We'll explain how payments work during your home visit.

Do I have to pay tax on money I earn from hosting?

Hosts can use the Government's Rent a Room Scheme which lets you earn up to £7500 per year tax free for renting out a furnished room in your main home.

What's expected of me as a host?

You're offering a safe, supportive environment – not professional care. Encouragement, patience, and a willingness to involve the young person in everyday life make a big difference.

What happens when the young person moves on?

We'll debrief with you to reflect on what went well and what could improve. Many hosts find it incredibly rewarding to see the young person gain confidence and move into independent living.

Supported Lodgings part of the YMCA Family

Supported Lodgings is part of a YMCA legacy spanning 170 years, dedicated to transforming young lives and building stronger communities.

YMCA Norfolk provides a wide range of services, including housing for homeless young people, youth work programmes, education, children's nurseries, youth mental health services, and family support initiatives. Together, these services reflect a commitment to meeting the diverse needs of young people and their families, offering tailored support to help them overcome challenges and achieve success.

At the core of YMCA Norfolk's mission is the belief that when young people feel a sense of belonging, have opportunities to contribute, and are supported to thrive, the entire community benefits. Supported Lodgings contributes to this vision by empowering young people to reach their potential, fostering confidence and resilience, and inspiring hope for a brighter future.



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EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE A
DISCOVER WHO THEY CAN

YMCA Norfolk Supported Lodgings Service

Telephone: **01603 621263**

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www.ymcanorfolk.org/supportedlodgings



Here for young people
Here for communities
Here for you

YMCA enables people to develop their full potential in mind, body and spirit. Inspired by, and faithful to, our Christian values, we create supportive, inclusive and energising communities, where young people can truly belong, contribute and thrive.