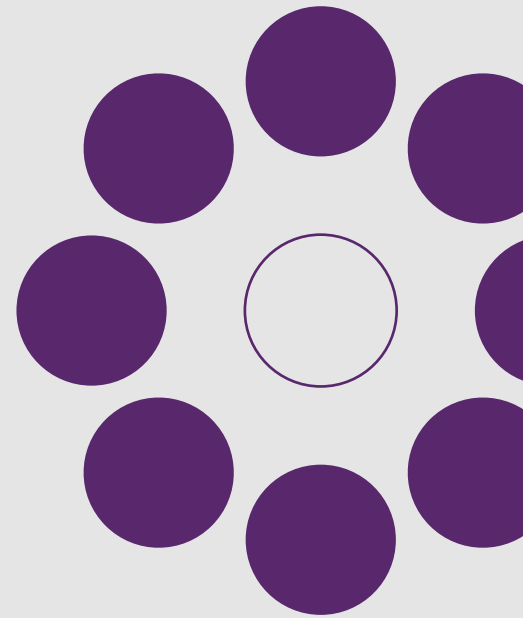


# DIDS SUPPORT GUIDE

Welcome to 'Doing it Differently South West – 'DiDs' for short.

This guide is designed to help you understand what to expect from us and what is expected from you during your stay with us. You can also find all this information on our website:

[www.didsouthwest.org.uk](http://www.didsouthwest.org.uk) under the 'Young People' button. You will receive a 'welcome' pack with essentials in it like laundry liquid, personal hygiene products, a food hamper and a Business Card with the contact details of your home and the Wi-Fi code for your wallet.



## ACCOMODATION

You will be given a key for the front door. Please look after it as you will be charged replacement costs at £7 per key. As this is a semi-independent home, there will be times when you will need to let yourself in, so always keep it with you and immediately advise the team if you have lost it.

You will have your own room with a lockable door. You will be provided with a key and are encouraged to keep your bedroom locked when you are away from the home. Inside the room you will be provided with:

- A comfortable bed and one set of bedding.
- A set of towels.
- A Smart TV – if you do not already have one of your own.
- Storage for your clean clothes and a laundry basket.
- Bedside table and lamp.

If you require a desk for study, please let us know and one can be provided. You are expected and will be supported to clean your bedroom weekly along with your laundry.

You will share a bathroom with the other young people in the house, which will have a shower and a bath. Cleaning of this bathroom is divided weekly between residents, you will be shown how and put on the rota.

The communal lounge will have sofas, a Smart TV with Netflix, books and games. There will be a table and chairs for dining at. The shared kitchen is fully equipped with everything you need. You will be given your own crockery and cutlery; you can take these with you when you leave. Maintaining the communal spaces so that everyone can use them safely at all times will be up to you with support from the YIMs.

# YOUTH INDEPENDENCE MENTORS (YIMS FOR SHORT)

At DiDs you will receive support from our Youth Independence Mentors. Their role is to help keep you safe and support you to learn independence skills to enable you to move on to living independently. They are based in the house for 24 hours a day in order to support you with both practical tasks and emotional support. Their role is to guide you through this transitional period as you look toward becoming 18 and independent.

We have an online independence skills record which you will work through during your stay with us. Don't be shy about admitting that you have little or no skills, your Youth Independence Mentors are nurturing, patient and trained to deliver the skills you need. If you are a fast learner, or you already have some skills, getting through the program will be easy.

It is not set up to be a formal process but to work with you at your own pace. A completed record will demonstrate that you have the skills to live independently and may help toward securing permanent housing after you turn 18. We want you to feel part of the service here at DiDs so each week you will meet with a Youth Independence Mentor to review your week.

This is your opportunity to provide feedback on how its working for you and discuss any concerns you may have. You can approach a YIM at anytime during your stay, this weekly session is booked to ensure your voice is heard and communication is clear. We share this information with your social worker or leaving care personal assistant.

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## KEEPING SAFE

You have been accommodated by us at DiDs because you have shown willingness and or ability to progress with your independence in a safe environment with support.

An important part of being in semi-independent accommodation is learning how to keep yourself safe. You will have a missing from home plan, agreed with you and the team around you, that instructs us how to react if you are not home or contactable as agreed. Keeping in touch with the home is important to avoid any mis communications.

The rules we have are designed to keep everyone safe. Please make sure you have understood them. Should you demonstrate that you cannot keep yourself safe with our support, your stay here may need to be reviewed.



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## MAKING INFORMED DECISIONS

We are not here to pass judgement on your choices but to support you to gain a better understanding of what effect those choices may have on your transition to adulthood. As a looked after young person, you are at higher risk of exploitation. Your YIMs are trained to always talk to you openly and our hope is that you will also be honest and open about your circumstances so that we may support you.

We will actively promote that you involve yourself in the decisions that affect you. Attendance to your support meetings with open dialogue is a skill that you will need moving onto independent living. Ensuring that your voice is heard is something your YIMs will champion. This includes giving you the opportunity to get involved in making decisions about the organisation and our services.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is an important part of data protection as well as building trusting relationships with our team. All information held by us about you will not be disclosed unless:

- Required by Law
- Your safety is at risk
- Safety of others is at Risk

We will only share information with your family members i.e. parents if you have given us

consent, which you can withdraw at any time. However, information cannot be withheld from your social worker.

If we find ourselves in a situation where we need to disclose information about you, we will only do this if the situation is to keep you or others safe and we will be honest with you at all times.

## CCTV

We have CCTV in operation at all our homes. This is only in communal areas, particularly front and back doors, so that we can ensure we know who is in the house at any given time. Your YIMs will show you the system in your home so that you are comfortable with it.

## ADVOCACY

You are entitled to an independent advocate. This means that you will have someone, completely independent from us or your support team, to support and help you with interactions with the local authority. We promote that you have one, please speak to a YIM or you can access more information on this service at: [www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk](http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk)

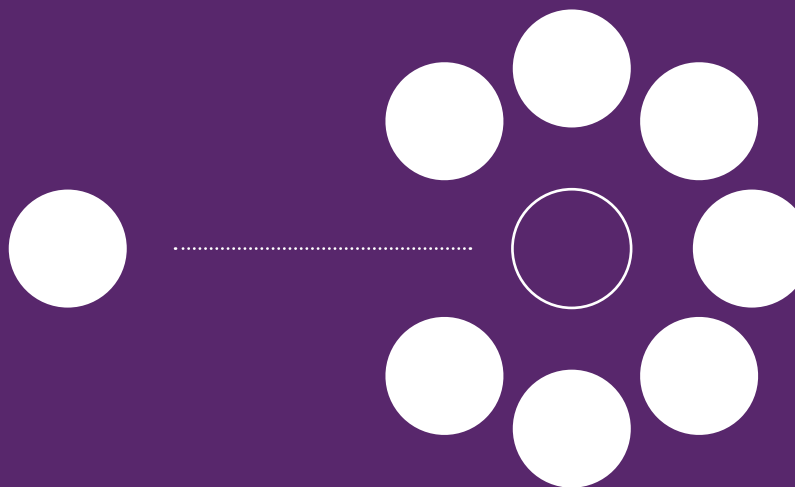
## FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS

We are always trying to improve our services, and so we will ask you for feedback on how we are doing. However, if you feel unhappy with any of the services, we encourage you to make a complaint. If you want to complain, you do not need to put the complaint in writing or complete a specific form.

A verbal complaint is valid and will be accepted in the same way as a written complaint, but if you want to put your complaint in writing, please ask if we can support you to do that. Complaints can also be submitted through our website.

## MAINTENANCE OF YOUR SPACE

You will need to maintain your bedroom and the communal spaces to a standard that would be expected by a landlord. YIM s will show you how to do this.



A comment is a suggestion, idea, or observation about our services. Anyone can make a comment about our services, how they access our services, about colleagues who deliver them, and so on. When we receive a comment, we will acknowledge it and say thank you for the feedback. We will then consider how we can use it to improve our services.

Compliments are shared (with your permission) and discussed with the relevant people.

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A paper copy of the complaints policy is given to you on admission but if you would like another copy please ask a team member. Alternatively, you can read our complaints policy, in full via the website: [didsouthwest.org.uk](http://didsouthwest.org.uk) and click on Young People - Complaints.

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## KEEPING YOUR ACCOMMODATION

You will be given a licence agreement or tenancy agreement that will explain your responsibilities. This will include things such as:

- Not causing a nuisance or harassing others
- Not damaging the property
- Not committing criminal acts
- Sticking to the rules e.g., curfew

You can lose your accommodation if you break the conditions of your licence or tenancy – so you must ask if you don't understand any of it.

Your Youth Independence Mentors will let you know if you are not sticking to your licence/tenancy agreement and they will help you to make improvements. The important thing is to have an honest conversation if you are struggling and to ask for help when you need it.

We use a 3 stage system to help you understand what will happen if you are struggling to stick to the rules.

**Stage 1** – is where your YIMs will be exploring ways we can support you to achieve your goals.

**Stage 2** - If they have been unable to help you get back on track or you are not sticking to your agreement, we will have a meeting with your social worker where further support will be agreed to get you back on track.

**Stage 3** – This is a placement stability meeting, with yourself, social team and team leader here, where we will consider what other support may be necessary to support you to stay with us.

At anytime if you do not want to stay with us, for whatever reason, we encourage you to discuss that with us or your social worker/PA.

## FIND OUT MORE

We would encourage you to use our website – [www.didsouthwest.org.uk](http://www.didsouthwest.org.uk)

Under the young people button you will find lots of this information in a shorter format for you to refer to at anytime.

There is a button at the top of the page called 'independence' – this will be available for you to use forever. You will find lots of links to useful information that you may need now or in the future. Go ahead have a scroll!