



SUPPORT CHARTER


Foundation Housing
Tai Sylfaen

Providing Housing and Support Services

What is a Support Charter?

A Support Charter is a document, which sets out the roles and responsibilities of all persons involved in providing and receiving support. It is an agreement, based on the values and ethos of the organisation.

Having a Support Charter ensures that all those who use the service have a say in how they are treated and the type of support that best suits their needs. It also sets out what happens when things are not working.

A Support Charter can also be used as a mechanism for 'Supporting People', for 'Best Value Review' and in particular consultation with tenants in the form of an agreement. It is also good practice, allowing transparency and accountability.

What the Charter contains

This charter will explain what you can expect from the service we provide while you are our client. The charter will explain what is expected from you while you are using our service. It is important to note that this charter is not a legally enforceable contract.

If there are any points of this charter you do not understand you can ask your support officer or another member of our staff to help you with it. You can also obtain independent advice from the Citizens Advice Bureau, a solicitor, housing and law advice centres and the Commissions for Racial Equality or Equal Opportunities.

Principles & Values

Foundation Housing/Tai Sylfaen is committed to the principles of empowerment and self help in supporting families, single people, older people and young people who are experiencing difficulties and are accessing our service.

Support is a two way process and in order for it to be productive we ask that both you and your support officer observe the following guidelines:

- Treat each other fairly
- Do not discriminate or use discriminatory language during the support session
- Communicate in an open and constructive manner
- Try and keep appointments, only cancelling where unavoidable and giving as much notice as possible should this happen.

Your Support Officer will also:

- Respect individuals right to maintain their own identity, political, sexual, religious & cultural beliefs, providing they do not involve any criminal activity
- Respect individuals rights to make their own decisions that affect their lives
- Provide support to individuals in a way that enables them to make informed choices about their own life.

Confidentiality

Foundation Housing/Tai Sylfaen will not disclose any information regarding its clients without first obtaining their permission or informing them that we will have to do so.

Foundation Housing/Tai Sylfaen reserves the right to disclose information regarding clients in line with its Confidentiality policy and safety procedures

When you first access our service

We will aim to provide you with the following information:

- Tenancy/licence agreement
- Landlord/tenant handbook
- The Support Charter
- Your Individual Support Plan

We will explain any of our following policies and procedures that affect you, and you will be provided with a paper copy should you ask for one:

- Complaints
- Confidentiality
- Equal Opportunities
- Health and Safety
- Allocations and Move on
- Repairs
- Rent Arrears
- Tenant Participation

If your tenancy is with us

We will provide you with information regarding the following:

- Your tenancy agreement
- How to pay your rent
- How to report repairs
- We will check and sign an inventory of any furniture provided
- Explain how your household appliances work
- Where your local amenities are in relation to your property
- Your nearest travel points
- We will explain how you can end your tenancy or how we can end your tenancy
- We will provide you with keys to your property and explain any security measures.

We will also inform you if we are entering your property giving you at least twenty-four hours notice. There are times when we may have to enter the premises, they are:

- a) when there is a legal obligation to enter e.g. the police have a warrant
- b) when we have good reason to believe there is a potential risk/danger to yourself or another person in the property
- c) if we believe you have abandoned the property.

“We will work with you to an agreed support plan, which will be reviewed on a regular basis.”

How we will provide your support

We will work with you to an agreed support plan, which will be reviewed on a regular basis. You will be allocated a support officer who will:

- Meet you at your property
- Discuss with you the type of support you need and then agree your support plan with you based on what you state your needs are
- Work with you to achieve your goals set out in the support plan
- Keep written notes of all your meetings, which will be held in a file at our offices but to which you can have access
- Hold regular review meetings with you and revise your support plan if necessary
- Provide you with information regarding Foundation Housing/ Tai Sylfaen’s projects
- Inform you of the amount of support (hours) we can give, where the support will take place and agree revision dates/times.

Support Officers

- You will be allocated a named Support Officer
- **They can be contacted on:**
Cardiff / Taff / Newport Support Officers: **029 2046 0107**
Vale Support Officers: **01446 741500**
Newport Officers: **01633 274166**
Between 9.30am and 4.30pm
Mondays to Fridays
- **Your support is agreed to be:**
.....(hours per week)
- These arrangements will apply from the date your tenancy starts or if on a floating support scheme the date that support begins. They will be reviewed as needed or at least every 6 weeks to ensure you are receiving the right level of support you need.

If you are not happy with your Support Officer

You can, in line with Foundation Housing/ Tai Sylfaen’s complaint procedure:

- Try to resolve the problems first by talking to your support officer, unless you have a serious complaint
- If this does not work or you have a serious complaint, you can contact the Project Manager
- If you are still dissatisfied you can contact the Chief Executive of Foundation Housing/ Tai Sylfaen.

Accessing External Services

There may be times when you require a specific service that Foundation Housing/ Tai Sylfaen is unable to provide. In these circumstances we would discuss with you accessing an external agency.

We will provide support by:

- Providing you with the relevant information regarding the availability of specialist services you may require
- If you request access to this service, with your permission we would act as advocate in order for you to access the service.
- Contacting a service provider with your permission
- Assist you to arrange initial contact.

Advocacy

As described above there may be times when you ask us to advocate on your behalf. ‘Advocating’ is where we support you to put your own views and opinions across to other agencies or people. To ensure we do this appropriately we will follow the guidelines below.

We will:

- Always seek your express permission before contacting an agency
- Ensure that the agency we are contacting is aware that you have given us permission (by asking you to sign a permission form that can be sent to them or, ideally, by you being present when we make contact)

- Provide you with a copy of any letters we send on your behalf
- Provide you with information about what happened or what was said during any telephone conversations or meetings
- Never withhold from you information exchanged during advocacy
- Fully record all advocacy work undertaken in your personal file, to which you have open access.

Supporting you during crisis and emergency staffing cover

- As explained above staff are available to you between the hours of 9.30 am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday
- Our offices close over bank holidays but we offer an emergency telephone number that can be used during the hours of 12.00pm and 2.00pm.
- Prior to any holiday we will write to you with details of closure times and the number to use in an emergency
- If you use this service you will be connected to a Support Officer (this will not necessarily be your personal Support Officer)
- Support Officers can, if needed, then put you in touch with other emergency services such as Social Services Duty Team, the Police or The Samaritans for example
- If your tenancy is not with us and your emergency is related to an urgent maintenance problem you should contact the out of hours service for your landlord.

Move on

If you live in temporary housing with us, before you move we will:

- Identify with you when you are ready to move
- Assist you to identify and make applications for suitable accommodation
- Discuss the suitability and location of any potential accommodation offered with you
- Advocate on your behalf if you request us to

If you are being re-housed or moving on from any of our projects we will:

- Assist with any benefit changes you may have to make
- Assist you to organise your move
- Assist with contacting the utilities companies and reading meters
- Advocate on your behalf if you request us to

“Staff are available to you between the hours of 9.30 am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday.”

Tapering your Support

If your home is within one of our floating support projects, before you finish receiving support from us, we will:

- Identify with you when you are nearly ready to finish receiving support
- Agree with you a time scale for finishing support – e.g. 1 month, 3 months
- Up date your landlord on your intention to finish receiving support and agree between us that there are no outstanding tenancy issues that you would like our assistance with
- For 6 months after you finish receiving support, you may contact us by telephone for any information you may subsequently need.

If you are not satisfied with the service you have received

If you are unhappy with any part of the service you receive from us you can complain using our Complaints Procedure as explained above.

We will at all times take your complaints seriously and they will be investigated by us.

When you leave our service we will give you an ‘Exit Questionnaire’, which we hope you will take the time to fill in. The questionnaire is designed to help us monitor and evaluate the services we provide and gives you a say in how we do this.

If you would like more information on the Support Charter or want to know more about our other services, please telephone or write to us at either of our offices detailed on the back of this leaflet.



Cardiff Office

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