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Importance of Support Plans

1. Under the terms of the “License to Occupy” Agreement, Support Plans set out the support that:
 - Transom Trust needs to give to their Licensees/Residents;
 - the Residents have agreed, & need, to engage with;
 - ultimately aims to enable the Resident to live independently.
2. Placing a Residents in a property is simply the start. The support the Resident receives is what really determines the success of the ministry we are engaged in. As always, prayer needs to be the foundation for any ministry.

3. Local Authorities look at the evidence provided by the Support Plan & Contact Logs to determine a Resident's continued entitlement to Housing Benefit (the basic amount), plus an additional component relating to supported accommodation (which helps Transom Trust maintain its properties).
4. Support Plans provide structured & valuable content for contacts:
 - made with Residents on a relational basis;
 - & recorded in Contact Logs (see separate guidance on Contact Logs [available via the Tool Kit on Transom Trust's website](#)).
5. Support Plans are designed to:
 - be accessible & engaging;
 - focus on meaningful & sustainable outcomes;
 - improve the identification & planning of actions;
 - enable, support & measure change;
 - be empowering (done with, not to).

Pastoral Support volunteer role

6. The responsibilities of the role are to:
 - provide housing-related support to Residents to enable them to maintain their license agreement, & to achieve their goal to live independently;
 - identify Resident's support needs &, agree with them a support plan that ensures their needs are met;
 - encourage & support Residents to live as fully & independently as possible within the local community – providing appropriate: information; emotional, organisational & practical support; & training;
 - help Residents understand the house rules as set out in their license agreement (experience shows that this is an area where most license breaches occur);
 - help Residents budget & manage their money (eg: support to open a bank account, & set up a direct debit to pay the Resident's Contribution to Transom Trust (in line with their license agreement);
 - help Residents make the best use of their time now they are housed (& no longer part of a street community) – eg: organised sport or other exercise (Seaview [have](#) run Bowls, & Football activities);
 - support Residents to secure & undertake voluntary work of an appropriate type;
 - help Residents access other training opportunities & paid work;
 - carry out assessments as & when necessary due to the changing needs & aspirations of the Resident;
 - ensure compliance with Transom Trust's policies & procedures;
 - organise & provide appropriate support for residents preparing to move onto greater independence, including support through the move & resettlement into their new home;
 - contribute to the protection of Residents from abuse, & support them when they are distressed;
 - liaise with other housing, health & social care professionals ... plus ... benefits, welfare & advocacy agencies, & other landlords as needed;

- make personal contact with Residents for 2 hours per week, making timely entries in the Contact Log;
- liaise with other pastoral support volunteers, **Operations Manager, Housing Manager** & Trustees, so that the volunteers feel part of a bigger & supportive team.

Understanding & agreeing the License

7. The first task in drawing up a Support Plan is to ensure the Resident fully understands the requirements of the License Agreement, even if they have gone through & agreed it as part of the New Resident process.
8. Ensure the Resident understands the:
 - the terms and conditions of this license;
 - the roles, duties & responsibility of each party to the license;
 - consequences of non-compliance with the terms of the license (see “What happens if Residents fail to engage with their support” in para 28 to 31 below).

Support Plan Template & Example

9. The Support Plan Template is available via the [Tool Kit](#) on Transom Trust's website.
10. Support Plans should be completed using the Template. Examples of completed Support Plans are available from Transom Trust's Operations Manager.

Identifying Needs

11. Support Plans are based on the needs of the Resident (ie a vulnerable person). It is acknowledged that some Residents may have had issues for decades. They may need support, friendship & care over a longer term period to help them develop & change as people, & progress to independent living.
12. Identifying & putting a Resident's needs on paper may therefore be the most difficult part of completing & using a Support Plan. It may take more than one meeting to devise the first Support Plan (as no needs are ever too small & the Resident may find the process challenging).
13. A Resident's needs must be:
 - specific & explained (with reasons);
 - based on the **14** Support areas/items listed in the “License to Occupy” Agreement – **see Annex A** (which also gives examples of the Goals appropriate under each area/item of support).
14. Identify a Resident's needs by:
 - taking into account the Resident's Referral form (Risk to Self and Others sections) and Transom Trust's own Risk Assessment for a resident. This is a separate document, which is normally completed by the Operations Manager when they meet a new resident to complete their new resident paperwork prior to stating their supported housing licence;

- “digging-deep” with questions to the Resident about their life experiences - eg: why they think like they do, what support do they need & why? Questions can be asked under each of the support areas;
 - if needed, ask questions based on the following 7 related areas:
 - Self-care & living skills;
 - Motivation & taking responsibility;
 - Managing accommodation;
 - Health – physical & mental/emotional;
 - Social networks & relationships;
 - Use of time;
 - Managing money.
15. Ensure all needs are recorded, even if they need prioritising. Some will need to be addressed at a later date, or over a longer timescale. Less complex needs may be met over a shorter timeframe, meaning that the Resident & Pastoral Support volunteer can then move onto meeting another need, while still keeping an eye on the overall picture.

Completing the Support Plan

16. As part of the process to induct a new resident & complete their paperwork prior to the resident starting their supported housing licence, Transom Trust's Operations Manager completes the first Support Plan for a new resident as follows:
- Resident's Personal Information, History, Employment history, & Summary of Needs – all based on the information already set out in their Referral form;
 - only Item 1 of the Needs & Goals section (General Counselling & Support) - based on the Resident's Referral form & any new outcomes from their “new resident paperwork” meeting;
 - the Resident Statement section - to show the Resident's agreement with their initial Support Plan.
17. The Support Plan (Needs & Goals section) lists:
- The 14 Support items listed in the “License to Occupy” Agreement;
 - Generic Goals provided by Green Pastures as examples (See Annex A), which can be adapted for use. Any Goals needs to be agreed with the Resident & SMART – ie:
 - Specific;
 - Measurable;
 - Achievable;
 - Relevant;
 - & Timebound (can be achieved by a Support Plan review date).
18. Items 2 to 14 of the Support Plan will need to be completed by the first 6 monthly review of the initial Support Plan. The Operations Manager can help the pastoral support team members with this task.

Reviewing Support Plans

19. Review & update, & agree the Needs & Goals section of the Support Plan with the Resident every 6 months. Ensure the Resident Statement section at the end of the Support Plan is signed & dated to show their agreement with their updated Support Plan.
20. Focus reviews on:
 - what the Resident has achieved – completing or adding to the **Progress & Outcome** column;
 - & what they still need to do – adding or updating any **Needs** or **Goals** as necessary.
21. To make simple updates to a live document. at the 6-month/year/18-month etc review:
 - **type all updates in bold;**
 - “de-bold” all the updates from the previous review, so the last update becomes very clear.
22. When completing the **Progress & Outcome** column, use the following simple format – eg:
JUNE 2022
Progress
Type progress – one or two lines on how the Resident has developed: as a person &/or licensee; his confidence &/or life skills

Outcome
Type outcome – one or two lines on what the Resident has achieved as a result of his progress
23. Examples of **Updated Support Plans** (with examples of Progress & Outcomes at review time) are available from the Operations Manager.

Ongoing Support

24. **Annex B** lists other types of ongoing support that Pastoral Support volunteers can give to Residents. A variety of these & other examples add up to the Resident being appreciated & valued. This means the Resident is far more likely to settle in well, develop & see fruit in their lives.

Financial support

25. Pastoral Support volunteers are not expected to give financial support to Residents. However, exceptional situations may arise when Transom Trust needs to provide Residents with a small amount of cash help to supplement their support (eg: to cover specific items such as mobile phone top up charges to ensure contact; lunch on the day of a move; small cash in hand if resident has no money awaiting benefit pay day etc). However:
 - this must be done with the agreement of Transom Trust (**Operations Manager** or Trustee);

- & it must be made clear to the Resident that cash help will not be ongoing & that Foodbank items (food, toiletries & cleaning items) can be arranged to meet urgent needs. Transom Trust do not want residents to be dependent on them for money.

Additional help for Pastoral Support teams

26. Green Pastures provide a range of additional guidance for Pastoral Support teams covering specific issues & situations relating to supporting Residents. The following guidance can be (unless stated) accessed via this link: [support paperwork](#):

- **What to do When** – covering specified issues relating to benefits, the property & the Residents themselves;
- **Street Sheet** - which lists the Agencies to which the Residents could be referred for help. The Operations Manager will e-mail the Transom Trust Team with the latest Street Sheet in December of each year;
- **Supporting Your Residents Training** – with tips on:
 - preparing for visits to Residents;
 - dealing with pastoral issues;
 - sharing Jesus & inviting Residents to events (also see paras 26 & 27 below);
 - & identifying the life skill training they may need;
- **Budgeting Training for Residents** – to help them draw up & follow a practical personal budget;
- **Finding Employment** - advice & tips on helping the Resident get back into paid work, or volunteering.

Interacting with other Support Agencies

27. Support items 6 & 7 in the License/Support Plan refer to interactions with other Support Agencies. Pastoral Support volunteers may be involved in:

- ensuring Residents continue links with Support Agencies they are already receiving support from;
- identifying & sign-posting Residents to new Support Agencies;
- ensuring Residents attend appointments on time & take up the additional opportunities those Support Agencies provide;
- accompanying Residents to appointments & sessions;
- building relations with other Support workers, which help fulfil the Pastoral Support volunteer role, & progress the aims of Transom Trust;
- identifying how Transom Trust & the Support Agency can work together to benefit the Resident, without the Pastoral Support volunteer duplicating effort;
- getting relevant feedback from the Support Agencies to update the Resident's: Support Plan & Contact Logs (with progress, outcomes & times).

Helping Residents find paid employment

28. The first thing to consider is whether the Resident is ready to go back to work. It may be that before a Resident can actively seek work, some other issues need dealing With – eg: anger management, personal hygiene, time-keeping etc. Before devising any action plan, work out the Resident's readiness for employment journey.
29. If the Resident is ready for work, the Green Pastures guidance on **Finding Employment** provides advice & tips on helping the Resident get back into paid work, or volunteering. The **DWP Contact list** provides a useful list of job search sites. Both sources of information are available via this link: [support paperwork](#). The Operations Manager will also update the Transom Trust Team on all the events, training and other employment opportunities for the residents provided by ESTAR.
30. Job Centres may be the main way Residents get back into work, but Pastoral Support volunteers may be involved with:
 - CV writing, interview practice or providing character/personal references;
 - sign-posting the Resident to other support agencies – eg: the Re-Work Employability Programme ran by Holy Trinity Hastings;
 - using local networks to help the Resident find work, & acting as their advocate with initial introductions or phone calls etc.

Impact on benefit

31. When a Resident starts earning, their income will affect any benefit they are receiving. There are tools available (eg the "Better off calculation"), which CAB & the Job Centre use to determine the impact of earnings on benefit entitlement. Pastoral Support volunteers should not do this calculation for our Residents – instead, they should be signposted to CAB or the Job Centre.
32. A Resident may become self-employed & submit earnings to the Job Centre to adjust their benefit. As this process is always done in arrears, the Resident will need to be mindful that – if they stopped earning – they may be left with a period with only reduced benefit to live on.

Sharing Jesus with Residents

33. Transom Trust is a Christian Charity, & its Pastoral Support volunteers all have a Christian faith. Pastoral support volunteers are free to share their faith with Residents in a variety of ways within the context of "friendship evangelism", & taking into account the Residents are vulnerable people. Transom Trust have a Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults policy in place – available via this link: [TT Policies](#) .
34. As landlords, Transom Trust need to ensure that we do not abuse our relationships with our Residents, as they may feel obliged to show an interest in the Christian faith. All we can do is explain our role, & provide opportunities for Residents to engage with conversations about faith or life within a local church. Ultimately, however, the choice to so engage is for the Residents to decide for themselves.

35. Often Residents will have had some contact with Christian organisations in the area that support the homeless, & this often opens the door for questions & conversations. Green Pastures provide a range of guidance for Pastoral Support teams on sharing their faith with Residents. The following guidance can be accessed via this link: [support paperwork](#):

- **Christian witness to Residents** (Green Pastures are in the process of updating this);
- **Inviting non-Christian Residents to events** – incorporating Residents into church ministries & activities;
- **Interested in Faith & Follow-up** – ways that the local church can care for & support Residents;
- **Discipleship courses, Bibles & resources** – tips on how to approach these courses & resources;
- **Christian Rehabs** – an overview of two of the UK's most substantial Christian abstinence based rehabilitation centres for tackling alcohol & drug addiction.

Helping Residents get free from substance abuse & other addictions

36. **Before May 2023**, to be considered for Transom Trust accommodation, referrals who had an active substance (drug and/or alcohol) dependency must **have already been** part of a recovery programme, or must **have been** willing to engage in recovery process. **However, since May 2023, Transom Trust can no longer consider referrals who have an active addiction, regardless of their engagement with a recovery agency/programme.**

37. Pastoral Support volunteers are not expected to deal with the complexities associated with helping **pre May 2023** Residents get free from substance abuse & other addictions. If the Resident is already part of a recovery programme, Pastoral Support volunteers can simply interact with the Support Agency running the programme (see para 27 above).

38. If the Resident is committed to joining a recovery programme, Pastoral Support volunteers may be involved in helping Transom Trust identify the Support Agency (& its recovery programme), which the Resident needs to sign up to (in order to continue their license).

39. If any substance misuse issues arise during a Resident's license, Pastoral Support volunteers should seek advice from Transom Trust. Advice on drugs, controlled substances, how to spot the signs, the law, or finding local recovery programmes etc is available from the following organisations:

- East Sussex Recovery Alliance - <https://www.esrauk.org/>
- Hastings STAR - <https://www.changegrowlive.org/star-drug-alcohol-service-east-sussex/hastings>
- Talk to Frank - <https://www.talktofrank.com/>.

40. If a Resident is seriously ill due to taking **any substances** - call 999. If it is not an emergency but they need medical attention outside of normal hours - call NHS Direct on 111 who will advise accordingly.

What happens if Resident fails to engage with their support?

41. If a Resident fails to agree having a Support Plan in place, they will not progress through the New Resident process.
42. Once a Support Plan has been agreed, & following a review period if a Resident starts to not engage with their Support Plan Pastoral Support volunteers can feel discouraged &/or frustrated. Transom's Operations Manager is available to talk through any issues. However, we need to follow a process to ensure we have done everything we can do to support the Resident even if they fail to engage. This starts with arranging a specific meeting with the Resident to:
- firmly remind the Resident that engaging with their Support Plan is part & parcel of living in supported accommodation, & a requirement of their license;
 - find out how they feel about their Support Plan & whether they could be better or differently supported (& how)? Advice can be sought from Transom's **Operations Manager** on any issues that arise;
 - ensure the Support Plan is relevant & up-to-date;
 - set a review date by which the Resident has to show their engagement with recordable progress & outcomes.
43. If the Resident feels that they no longer require the support that is being provided, it may be time to help them transition into independent living. It is important for the Resident to know that as it does not mean they have to cut contact with their Pastoral Support volunteer. However, the support offered will decrease & can be offered on a more reactive basis.
44. If the Resident fails to attend the meeting in para 26 above ... or... by the set review date, the Resident has continued to fail to engage with their Support Plan.... discuss the matter with Transom's **Operations Manager** who will refer the matter to the Trustees to decide whether to apply Transom's Non-engagement policy & procedure. This can involve issuing two warnings followed by the ending of a license.

**The 14 Support Items listed in the “License to Occupy” Agreement
(with examples of relevant Goals)**

1 General Counselling and Support

- Explaining the License and supported living journey
- Physical, Emotional, Mental Health – registering with a GP & Dentist
- Managing my own food & maintaining a healthy diet
- Social Interaction & community living - to grow in confidence meeting new people & building good relationships with flatmates & neighbours
- To trust the process & to remain committed to abiding by all the terms & conditions contained in the Support Plan
- To be aware of, & to address, negative behavioural patterns
- To make good friendships with his pastoral carer in the first instance, & then to extend this to his flat/house-mates
- To learn & understand the importance of kitchen hygiene, receive advice on food preparation & storage
- To develop or sustain the relevant basic life-skills & abilities essential to holding down a license
- To see if work needs to be done on re-building family relationships

2 Managing Money - Budgeting & debt counselling

- To pay rent every month, keep out of debt, & have enough money to cover priority needs
- To learn & and understand personal budgeting skills when shopping

3 Life Skills - Shopping and Errands

- To learn to begin to go out shopping & run errands, initially with support, but with the goal of being able to undertake such tasks independently. Other errands can include going to the Post Office & taking a prescription to the chemist

4 Life Skills - Relationships & Neighbour Disputes

- To build on positive relationships & make good friendships with neighbours
- To be a good neighbour, & learn how to manage issues with other residents or neighbours
- To be aware of, & address, possible negative behavioural patterns

5 Life Skills - Helping the residents use their domestic equipment & appliances, & support with minor repairs

- To use appliances/devices appropriately & safely

6 Life Skills - Encouraging meaningful activity, & engagement with welfare agencies

- To be able to contact agencies & professionals when needed, & also attend appointments
- To plan time so that resident has positive & enjoyable activities to participate in.

- To remain committed to learning & developing domestic & practical skills to maintain the condition of the property
- To remain committed to learning & developing various other life skills, which could include gardening, general kitchen experience, painting & decoration & other life-skills for future independent living

7 Life Skills - Helping residents with benefit claims & other occupancy related calls, letters & e-mails etc

- To receive Housing Benefit in a regular sustainable manner
- To keep himself fit & healthy
- To eat well & continue assessing his health needs
- To seek support to address any other medical conditions that may arise during treatment including any dental &/or poor eyesight
- To attend all necessary doctors/hospital appointments
- To learn to independently seek help as & when required
- To develop the confidence to independently approach the relevant service providers that can provide support
- To develop or sustain the basic confidence required to approach & seek help from the relevant professionals, including Police & Legal Services
- To learn the safe & responsible use of community facilities on the bus, in the park & in public toilets
- To identify occupant's level of education and help in areas such as literacy & numeracy to qualification level
- Enrolment on identified courses – eg: apprenticeship with the builder guild, Gateway to GCSE (Maths & English), basic computer courses or any other free courses
- To improve the Resident's employability prospects

8 Life Skills - Arranging adaptations to help residents with their disabilities

9 Managing a Licence Agreement - Property Care

- Taking responsibility for matters such as bin collections, keeping communal areas/garden/yard tidy

10 Managing a Licence Agreement - Health and Safety in the Property

- Understanding fire safety procedures, how to prevent fires, & what to do in an emergency (including water or electrical issues)
- To comply with house rules to ensure the safe & efficient running of the house, & ensure prompt reporting of maintenance issues

11 Managing a Licence Agreement - Security of the property due to the residents' support needs

- Understand responsible use of keys; what to do if resident loses them; & security & access procedures for the accommodation
- To comply with house rules to reduce crime & to ensure safety & security of the house

12 Managing a Licence Agreement - Helping resident clean rooms and windows

- Making the bedroom a good place to be; using cleaning equipment; & changing bedding weekly

13 Managing a Licence Agreement - Controlling access to the resident's home

- To be in control of who comes into the house, & keep to the house/Licence to keep everyone safe

14 Move On Support - Resident ready to live more independently, but needs help to achieve this.

- To develop or sustain the relevant basic life-skills & abilities regarding setting up a home
- When appropriate, to begin to view offered accommodation & to make a choice
- To seek other forms of available assistance with moving – see Transom Trust's separate process for supporting residents who are ready to move on.

Other types of ongoing support that Pastoral Support volunteers can give to Residents

1. A friendly chat & a listening ear over a cup of tea & sharing a meal together
2. Practical help with phone calls & correspondence to Housing Benefit etc
3. Praying regularly for the Resident, & offering to pray with the Resident
4. Accompanying Resident to appointments
5. Transport Resident to appointments or an event they just can't otherwise get to
6. Inviting residents to church
7. Helping the Resident with budgeting through a short Christians in Poverty course
8. Helping the Resident keep the house tidy by setting up a cleaning rota
9. Assisting Resident into voluntary work
10. Assisting Resident into employment
11. Invitation to an Alpha course or something similar
12. Fortnightly cleaning at the house by volunteers
13. Delivering or taking away furniture
14. House outings – eg: to a cinema or bowling trip or a day out to a park or local attraction.
15. Introducing Resident to other people in the community
16. Acting as a peacemaker for domestic disputes
17. An understanding of where the Resident is today & how far they have developed since they started in the property