

OUR PLANS 2026-27

TAKING A STAND AGAINST YOUTH HOMELESSNESS



stepbystep.org.uk



Young People. Hard Times. Bright Futures.

OUR MISSION

Every young person deserves a safe place to call home and a genuine chance to reach their full potential. At Step by Step, we work with young people to support them to overcome difficult circumstances and move towards the brighter future they deserve.

We support young people facing homelessness and other challenges across six counties in the South of England. As well as a safe place to live, we offer a range of specialist support services that make a real and lasting difference, including counselling, wellbeing support and tailored advice.

Our approach is built on a simple truth: young people need more than a roof over their head to move on to sustainable independent living.

TAKE A STAND AGAINST YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

You can make a real difference to young lives by joining Step by Step's mission.

Each year, we need to raise nearly a million pounds to keep our vital services running. It is through these services, and with your support, that we will transform the lives of hundreds of young people this year.

Over the following pages, you will find details of some of our key projects, along with opportunities to support our work and take a stand against youth homelessness.



ACCOMMODATION

Having nowhere safe and stable to live affects everything for a young person: their education, their mental health, and their chances of a settled future. With record rent costs and a chronic shortage of affordable housing, that crisis is harder to escape than ever.

Safe, appropriate accommodation is at the heart of everything we do. Depending on their needs and stage of their journey, a young person might stay in one of the following:

SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION BEDS

Young people aged 18-25 live alongside their peers, each with their own bedroom and shower, and a dedicated Support Worker providing tailored, one-to-one support. These placements exist only because of voluntary income.

SUPPORTED INDEPENDENCE FLATS

Based at our Aldershot Foyer, young people aged 18-25 live in a self-contained flat with their own bedroom, giving them a unique opportunity to prepare for independent living. Funded entirely through voluntary income.

EXTENDED SUPPORTED LODGINGS

Our host families offer young people a safe, vetted home and the closest thing to family support many have known. Statutory funding stops at 18, but thanks to voluntary income, we can extend these placements so a young person can stay until they have finished their exams, found somewhere to move on to, and are truly ready to leave.

MOVE ON ACCOMMODATION

With no support network behind them and rents at record highs, young people leaving supported accommodation can find the move to independent living almost impossible. Our Move On homes let them live independently in the community, with support on hand if they need it. This service relies entirely on voluntary income.

Your support means more young people have a safe place to call home, at a critical point in their lives.

WELLBEING & GUIDANCE

Homelessness rarely arrives out of nowhere. For many young people, it follows months or years of unresolved struggles with money, education, relationships or their own wellbeing, often with nobody to turn to before things reach crisis point.

Launch, our free advice and guidance service for young people aged 11-25, exists to reach them earlier. Every young person is assigned a dedicated Support Worker who offers practical, hands-on support across five key areas:

HOUSING AND BENEFITS ADVICE

Helping young people understand their rights and navigate the benefits system.

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Support with applications, training and building the skills and confidence to move forward.

EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

A listening ear, and a route into counselling or other mental health support when it's needed.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL RECOVERY

Non-judgemental support to access the right help and build healthier coping strategies.

SEXUAL HEALTH

Confidential advice and connections to local sexual health services.

Your support means more young people get the right help early, before a crisis takes hold.



BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS

Even with a safe place to live and the right support, young people can still be held back, by a lack of money for the basics, by a system that penalises them for growing up, or by never being asked what they think. We're tackling all three.

At 18, many young people hit a financial cliff edge: their benefits drop just as they're expected to live independently, with no family safety net behind them. Through our 18 Isn't Cheaper campaign, we're calling for Universal Credit parity so young people are not penalised simply for turning 18.

OPPORTUNITIES FUND

Made up entirely of voluntary funding, this fund breaks down the everyday financial barriers in a young person's way: a bike to get to college, smart clothes for a job interview, or train tickets to get to work.

SPEAK OUT!

Our youth voice programme, giving young people a genuine say in how our services are shaped and a platform to speak out on the issues that affect them, so decisions about young people are made with them, not just for them.

Your support helps young people today, and helps us keep pushing for the fairer system they deserve tomorrow.



WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

ETHAN'S STORY: LEARNING TO TRUST

Ethan lived in our Supported Lodgings service when he was facing homelessness. Here he shares, in his own words, how a stable environment and supportive host, helped him to grow in confidence and work towards his future.

"When I moved in, I stayed in my room all the time and didn't speak to anyone. I wouldn't have been able to share my story like I am now. I couldn't look at people and I'd avoid seeing anyone. Now I can chat with my Support Worker and people I know.

"David [the host] gets me. He pushes me slowly so I can then do things for myself.

"I hadn't realised how much I couldn't do when I moved in, until I started talking about this. I'm now spending time out of my room, baking cakes, which I love to do as I love eating cake. I'm not in my room gaming all the time.

"I'm going out, which I never would of done before living here. I've now got my girlfriend and we do things together and go out. I feel like a normal 20 year old.

"David helped me get through my college course. He believed in me and helped me get a temporary job on a building site, so now I know what I



want to do. David has been teaching me to drive, which is going really well. He has fought for me to have a EHCP so if I want to go back to college, I can."

"David stands up for me. It's nice to know someone cares and believes in me as I've never had that. He has been to my hospital appointments with me and helped me to understand what I needed to change to stop my stress-related seizures, and I haven't had any in a long time so now I can get a job.

"David just gets me and hasn't given up on me. Having him there to push me in the right way means I'm now living life. He treats me like an adult. I feel like I'm having a normal life now."

OTHER WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

BECOME A REGULAR DONOR

Regular giving is the backbone of everything we do. A gift given every month means we can plan ahead, respond quickly when a young person needs us, and keep vital services running all year round, not just when a big appeal is in the headlines.

Join our community of regular donors to help us deliver lasting change.

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteers help keep Step by Step running, including helping out at events, supporting our fundraising team, or lending a hand behind the scenes.

Whether you have a few hours a month or want a more regular commitment, there is a volunteering role to suit a wide range of interests and availability.

Will you give your time to help change the future for young people?



BECOME A HOST OR FOSTER CARER

Could you offer a young person a safe place to call home?

Whether you have just a few hours to spare as a Supported Lodgings Host, or want to offer the love and stability of a Foster Carer, you can make a huge difference in a young person's life.



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