

HERTS YOUNG HOMELESS GROUP

Herts Young Homeless Group (HYHG) is a charity established in 1998. We aim to enable young people to secure and maintain appropriate accommodation through prevention, crisis intervention and tenancy sustainment. We work throughout Hertfordshire with young people aged 16-25, although some specialised projects work with people younger or older than this. We have a turnover of approximately £1.6 million per year and have recently secured long term funding from Herts County Council for our core services.

We have a dedicated staff team of just under 50 people together with approximately 25 volunteers, who are invaluable in enabling HYHG to provide a quality service to young people.

Advice, Information and Mediation

Advice and Information Workers are normally the first point of contact for a young person (aged 16-25) accessing HYHG's services. They will assess the young person's situation and refer them to the relevant support agencies. Where possible an Advice and Information Worker will use their mediation skills in order to prevent a homeless situation. HYHG also has a team of mediators (two working with 16-25 year olds, and two working with 10-15 year olds) who mediate in more complex cases. If homelessness cannot be prevented, then the Advice and Information Workers will support the young person in accessing appropriate accommodation.

Floating Support

HYHG works in partnership with Aldwyck Housing Group to provide a Floating Support service across the county. Floating Support will normally begin once a service user is placed into emergency or temporary accommodation but can begin earlier, for example when an individual is still at home or living with friends. A Floating Support Worker will visit young people in their accommodation and offer support in areas such as paying rent, budgeting, managing benefits and accessing healthcare. They can also make referrals through to other agencies as required. Visits to the service user can take place as frequently as the young person needs, whether this is twice a week or once a month.

Crashpad

Crashpad offers safe, emergency accommodation for homeless 16 and 17 year olds and care leavers up to the age of 21. The young person will stay with a volunteer host family for between 3 weeks and 42 nights. The hosts provide a room in their own home, breakfast and an evening meal. Support for the young person is offered throughout their stay, normally by an HYHG Floating Support Worker.

Health and Specialist Services

Dual Diagnosis Support - This service works with homeless and potentially homeless people aged 16 and over who have a mental health problem and/or additional needs.

Counselling - One to one counselling is available across all areas of the county to all homeless people 16 years and over. This is provided by volunteer student counselors.

Education and Service User Involvement Project - Education sessions are delivered in local schools in conjunction with services users to educate young people on the realities of leaving home and homelessness.