Leaving Care

**Are you ready to move to your own place?**

**This badge aims to help you know what you are entitled to prior to moving out and help you get ready with your belongings, money etc.**

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**Are you ready to move to your own place #1 - Think you’re ready to move to your own place?**

**Read the quotes of real young people who are care leavers…**

**Life Skills[[1]](#footnote-1)**

“I wasn’t sure what life skills were and I’m still not completely sure. But I know you need to know how to look after yourself, because you will be on your own. You need to be able to stand up for yourself, because you won’t always have someone, like your carer or social worker, to look out for you or sort out your problems and make it all right. You should know basic stuff like how to cook, budget your money, read a bill, keep clean and who to ask for help if you need it… because I can tell you, you are going to need help to live on your own, no matter how prepared you think you are!” Pete

**Accommodation[[2]](#footnote-2)**

“Don’t think that when you leave care you are going to get your own flat straight away. The housing association doesn’t give out flats or houses that easily anymore. I was waiting for months and lived in lots of places like hostels and B&Bs before I got my own place. When I got my own place it needed a lot of work done to it. I painted it, put carpet down and bought some furniture. There was still stuff that needed doing, but it was my place and it felt great! I didn’t listen to my carer when she went on about bills. I never knew I needed a TV licence or what council tax is, or that I had to pay for water in my taps. Don’t get me wrong, having my flat is great, but it does cost a lot to live on your own. You’d better ask about bills and listen to your carer to find out what it’s going to cost you to live when you move out. Good luck!” – Vanessa.

**Does what the care leavers have said above fit with what you are expecting when you set up home? Is there anything they have said that has surprised you or do you have an important piece of advice you would pass on to other care leavers???**

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**Are you ready to move to your own place #2 – Care Leavers Grant**

Care leavers are entitled to a ‘Setting Up Home Allowance’ (or leaving care grant). These are given out by local authorities and are crucial in helping young people to live independently and set up their own safe, stable and secure home. The amount, as agreed by Chairs for Children in Care Councils, is £2000. Take a look at the list below of goods below and find the best prices you can and see how this will fit into your £2000 budget… Do you know whether where you are planning to live, provides any of these anyway?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **High Priority Items** | **Buy From** | **Price** |
| Cooker |  |  |
| Fitting of cooker |  |  |
| Fridge/freezer |  |  |
| Sofa |  |  |
| Floor covering (carpet, lino etc) |  |  |
| Wardrobe |  |  |
| Bedding (duvet, pillows, sheets, duvet cover) |  |  |
| Bed with mattress |  |  |
| Curtains/blinds |  |  |
| TV |  |  |
| Chest of drawers |  |  |
| Vacuum cleaner |  |  |
| Iron and ironing board |  |  |
| Towels |  |  |
| Kettle and toaster |  |  |
| Crockery and cutlery |  |  |
| Pots and pans |  |  |
| Kitchen tools |  |  |
| Smoke alarms |  |  |
| TV licence |  |  |
| Contents insurance |  |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Medium Priority Items** | **Buy From** | **Price** |
| Washing machine |  |  |
| Bedside cabinet |  |  |
| Desk  |  |  |
| Clock  |  |  |
| Coffee table |  |  |
| Lamps |  |  |
| Glasses |  |  |
| Laundry bin |  |  |
| Mirror |  |  |
| Bedside lamp |  |  |
| Tea towels |  |  |

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|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Low Priority Items** | **Buy From** | **Price** |
| Plants |  |  |
| Ornaments |  |  |
| Pictures/frames |  |  |
| Vases |  |  |
| Bread bin |  |  |
| Coat rack |  |  |
| Clothes airer |  |  |

**What is the total amount of the items you have chosen?**

**How much are you outside of your budget…?**

**Over:**

**Under:**

**How has this exercise made you think about the budget?**

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**Are you ready to move to your own place #3 – Housing Options Checklist**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Checklist | Yes/No |
| Do you know what type of accommodation you can apply for when you leave care? |  |
| Notes: |
| Do you know what a tenancy agreement is? |  |
| Notes: |
| Do you know what utility bills you will have to pay? |  |
| Notes: |
| Do you know what you’ll need to set up your home? |  |
| Notes: |
| Do you know how much it will cost to set up your home? |  |
| Notes: |
| Are you good at basic DIY, like changing a lightbulb, painting a wall or putting together flat-pack furniture? |  |
| Notes: |
| Do you know how to keep your home clean? |  |
| Notes: |
| Do you know how to save energy in your home? |  |
| Notes: |
| If something in your home needed fixing would you know who to ask for help? |  |
| Notes: |
| Do you know who can help you with accommodation issues? |  |
| Notes: |
| Do you know what to do if you have a problem with your neighbour? |  |
| Notes: |
| Do you know what the Environmental Health Agency can help you with? |  |
| Notes: |

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|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| What do you need to find out or work on? | What will you do? Where will you go to find out? | Who will you ask for help? |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

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**#4 – Cumbria Care Leavers Protocol**

In Cumbria, we have a Care Leaver’s Protocol in place; this is an agreement between Children’s Services and the Housing teams about how we will work together to support you find the right kind of housing for you and help you to live successfully in whatever type of housing you choose. This document lists the different housing choices in each district; you can find the documents here <http://cumbria.gov.uk/yphousing>.

**Have a look through the document and answer these questions:**

1. At what age should people leaving care be thinking about move-on accommodation?
2. Who can support you with your move on?
3. How do you apply for a council property?
4. What is the name of your Pathways Adviser?

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**#5 – Money Checklist**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Yes** | **No** |
| Do you have a bank account? |  |  |
| Do you know how to open a bank account? |  |  |
| Do you know how to budget your money? |  |  |
| Do you know where your income will come from when you leave care? |  |  |
| Do you know how much money you will get per week? |  |  |
| Have you ever gone shopping for your weekly food? |  |  |
| Have you ever saved up to buy anything? |  |  |
| Do you have any savings? |  |  |
| Have you had the chance to budget your money for the week? |  |  |
| Do you know how to read a bill, eg phone bill, gas bill etc? |  |  |
| Do you know how to pay bills on time? |  |  |
| Do you know what a direct debit is? |  |  |
| Do you know about different types of credit and the problems they could cause? |  |  |

**What to do next…**

Look at your answers and where you’ve ticked ‘no’, write:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **What do you need to find out or work on?** | **How will you do this?** | **Who will you ask for help?** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

Top tip: if you have a “to do” list, check out some of our other badges and see if they will help you work out what next.

1. (Source: [www.leavingcare.org](http://www.leavingcare.org) , WMTD? What Young People Have Said, Rainer, NLCAS & The Fostering Network) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. As above. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)