

## THE ANCHOR-SEMI INDEPENDENT LIVING

### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

#### Statement of Purpose & Function

This Policy Document has been devised in accordance with the Children Act 1989, Children's Homes Regulations 2015, and the National Minimum Standards for Children's Homes 2001.

Issued on:	January 2018
Scheduled Review date:	December 2018
Lead Person:	Mary Longe-Raheem-Director Adetoun Elizabeth Hepzibah – Director

# The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

## Table of Contents

1. The Purpose of The Anchor Services
  - 1.1 Details of Unit Manager
2. Philosophy and Values
3. Our Key Objectives
  - 3.1 Equality and Diversity
4. Staffing and Recruitment
5. Staffing Structure
  - 5.1 Staff cover
  - 5.2 Staff Supervision, Training and Development
6. Facilities and Services Provided by The Anchor
  - 6.1 Important things to know about our units
  - 6.2 Referrals and Admissions
  - 6.3 Arrival and moving into the unit
  - 6.4 Information for resident young people
  - 6.5 Independent Living Skills Programme
  - 6.6 Allowances and Clothing
  - 6.7 Food
  - 6.8 Health
  - 6.9 Recreational activities
- 7 Education
8. Contact and visitors
9. Discipline
- 10 Absences
- 11 Child protection and bullying
- 12 Religious observance
- 13 Complaints
- 14 Allegations
- 15 Reviews
- 16 Feedback

## Appendix A: Fire Precautions

### **1. The Purpose of The Anchor-Semi Independent Living**

The Anchor provides short to medium term periods of accommodation to young people aged from 16-21, giving them the opportunity to live independently but in a supported environment. The purpose of the units is to provide housing with support to vulnerable young people and help them to learn about independent living and life skills. We are currently unable to accommodate young people with a disability.

We respond to young people leaving care with issues such as low academic and vocational achievement, youth offending behaviour, involvement with gang culture, drug and alcohol abuse, mental health problems and homelessness as a result of an inability to maintain tenancies. We also offer support to young people who have experienced the multiple breakdown of previous fostering or residential placements and work with them to enable them to move on to more appropriate alternatives. The focus of our transitional housing scheme will be on involving young people to shape their own roles in order to achieve full independence.

From the point of admission, our staff will start to build a more comprehensive picture of the young person's needs. In order to establish a clearer assessment of the young person's needs we will endeavour to work closely with agencies such as education, health and relevant Youth Offending Services (YOS).

Our service offers the opportunity for young people to live within supported environment and to have the choice of staff support. Staff will support young people in gaining confidence to enable them to make decisions in their life. The young person will have the opportunity to be supported with managing their own tenancy, finances, maintaining access to the community and building their future.

The Anchor aims to complete its Independent Living Skills programme with all young people and move them on within a period of three months. This timescale may be extended on a planned and time limited basis. We aim to actively promote young people's general welfare, protect them from harm and treat them with dignity and respect. We will achieve positive

## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

outcomes through an intensive support programme, with specific involvement of the young people.

The Anchor provides accommodation for 6 young people, each of whom will have their own room. Our units accept young people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds including Asian, Caribbean and African communities, as well as refugees from European Communities and other countries around the globe.

### **1.1 Details of the Unit Manager**

The Units Manager is Mary Longe who is employed by The Anchor. Mary will be managing all The Anchor's semi-independent units. Mary has worked with children, young people in residential and fostering settings, where she has gained many skills and experience of working with young people including working with young people with additional physical and medical needs, mental health needs and challenging behaviours.

As a manager Mary has a good appreciation of the current issues impacting on young people's lives such as emotional, educational, social and behavioural, immigration, homelessness, alcohol, drugs and substance misuse, radicalisation and child sexual exploitation. In addition to the day to day management of the units, the manager ensures that she is readily available for the young people within the units and has a good oversight of their day to day needs and support packages. The manager has a good working knowledge of current legislation pertaining to young people in care.

## **2. Philosophy and Values**

- Stays at The Anchor units are time limited. We aim to be making positive changes and moving the young person forward within the timescales set to achieve their move on satisfactorily. The Anchor works closely with education and health services and have developed partnerships with other agencies including Local Authority Early Help Services and Youth Offending services.

## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

- The Anchor staff are aware that the young people they work with come from a diversity of backgrounds and have had a wide range of personal experiences. Our staff acknowledges these differences and strives to provide an environment which values an individual's identity and strengths, offering a sensitive and responsive service to each young person.
- We aim to work intensively with young people to enable them to move on to independent accommodation.
- The approach to support young people at The Anchor is based on an understanding of adolescence and involves listening to them and understanding their needs. We actively encourage young people to take part in the decision making process relating to their future and in respect to their independent living skills programme. In this way, young people can feel that they have a say in determining their route to progression, and experience the benefits from the decisions they make.
- We work closely with young people placed in our units and make every effort to provide an environment that is welcoming, nurturing and preparatory for adult independent living.
- We believe that it is important that young people, who have been socially excluded and/or suffered abuse in the past, can experience positive relationships with adults. Our staff will act as positive role models, providing support and guidance as well as a structured environment. We acknowledge the need to move forward and develop our service and to respond to initiatives by reviewing and monitoring our own performance.
- We recognise the need for a clear and consistent structure and that some young people will find it difficult to adhere to boundaries and may behave in a challenging way. We approach any difficulties both on an individual basis and by means of house meetings, with the support of other related professionals as and when required.

## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

- Research has shown that one of the most distressing aspects of living within a shared residential environment can be the actions and behaviour of other young people. The Anchor staff are committed to building an experience of shared living that is better, safe and rewarding by actively working to create a culture that is free from any forms of bullying.
- Our staff are fully aware that poor literacy and educational underachievement of vulnerable young people continues to have a negative impact on their life chances. We place great importance on the provision of a structured programme within the units and actively encourage each young person to work towards fulfilling their potential during their stay with us.
- We ensure that all young people receive appropriate healthcare and that they are encouraged and helped, in an age appropriate way, to take responsibility for their own health and well-being.
- We recognise the importance to young people of working collaboratively with different agencies including the YOS, CAMHS, Education and other related professionals.
- We utilise in-house training, in conjunction with consultations from relevant professionals, to extend our knowledge and understanding of adolescent development and working with young people in a building on lessons learnt to continue to improve the services we provide.

### **We believe that each young person we support has the fundamental right to:**

- Be regarded as an individual and given our special attention;
- Be supported by people who can understand his/her needs and competent to meet those needs;

## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

- Be treated equally, and no less favourably than others, receive respect and understanding regarding their background, cultural, religious and spiritual beliefs;
- Receive prompt attention in relation to all their healthcare needs;
- Be safe, feel loved and always know that “someone cares”
- Be informed about all important decisions that affect them, and for them to have a say;
- Be afforded privacy for themselves and their belongings and be afforded dignity, at all times,
- Have the opportunity to think independently, and make their own choices;
- Complain about anything they feel is unfair or unjust, and to have that complaint listened and responded to adequately.

### **3. Our Key Objectives**

1. To provide short to medium term places for young people (Gender Specific) with an aim to developing their independent living skills in order for them to maintain their tenancies when they move on.
2. To ensure that the delivery of our Independent Living Skills programme and timescales are adhered to and appropriately meets the young people’s needs.
3. To provide a service which is appropriate, to the diverse needs of young people placed with us, and to ensure that each young person is consulted and involved in the planning of their programme.
4. Working in conjunction with appropriate Looked After Child (LAC) and Leaving Care (LC) teams to positively promote the values of learning and actively work to ensure the provision of educational opportunities and support the achievement of each young person’s individual training programme.

## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

5. To improve the health outcomes for the young people in our units and to promote awareness of the particular health issues that impact on the lives of young people and adolescents.
6. To encourage young people placed at The Anchor units to maintain links with their local community by continuing to take part in positive activities previously attended prior to their placement with us.
7. To work in partnership with other agencies to enhance the quality of support that we offer young people and to reduce the incidents of criminal offending.
8. To provide a welcoming and safe environment. To ensure that young people placed with us are safe, by providing firm boundaries and structures appropriate to the individual, to ensure their protection and safety whilst on the premises, and to help with their social development.
9. To provide each young person with a key worker to help oversee their practical and emotional needs, and to ensure that their independent living skills programme is adhered to. The key worker will also liaise with other professionals and agencies and help to organise any practical arrangements in conjunction with the young person.
10. Each staff member will be guided by regular supervision and supported to develop their skills through The Anchor's staff appraisal system.

### **3.1 Equality and Diversity**

- Equality and Diversity is a core value and key policy within The Anchor.
- Young people who reside at The Anchor units come from a wide range of backgrounds and we have a broad mix of staff employed to reflect this diversity.
- Equality and Diversity is about ensuring fair and equitable treatment for all in the way in which services are provided to young people and how staff are treated.



## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

- Young people will receive a service that is appropriate and takes account of their background and individual circumstances.
- Young people's identity and culture will be valued and respected. Every effort will be made to help them reach their full potential.
- Staff will expect to work in an environment that is free from discrimination, victimisation, harassment and bullying.
- In the event of discriminatory practices being brought to the attention of staff or other professionals, these will be challenged sensitively within an informal discussion framework or through the process of the formal complaints procedure, as appropriate.

### **4. Staffing and Recruitment**

Our staff members are experienced in working with and supporting young people to gain their independence:

- The team varies in its expertise. It includes a registered social worker, social care workers and support staff with significant experience in children and young people's services.
- All our staff are provided with regular training and monthly supervision.
- All our staff have completed an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) checks and provided 2 years of references taken up before they are offered training and employment. Reference checks are completed in line with safer recruitment requirements.
- The units' Staff induction training begins before the applicant is placed at the unit to ensure that they have sufficient skills and knowledge to carry out their duties to support young people with their independent skills development.
- Our Staff work effectively in a multi-disciplinary team.
- There is sufficient flexibility in staffing numbers to accommodate young people's changing needs.
- Our Recruitment practice strives to maintain the full staffing complement at all times.
- We have a clear management structure that will work effectively to support services for young people.

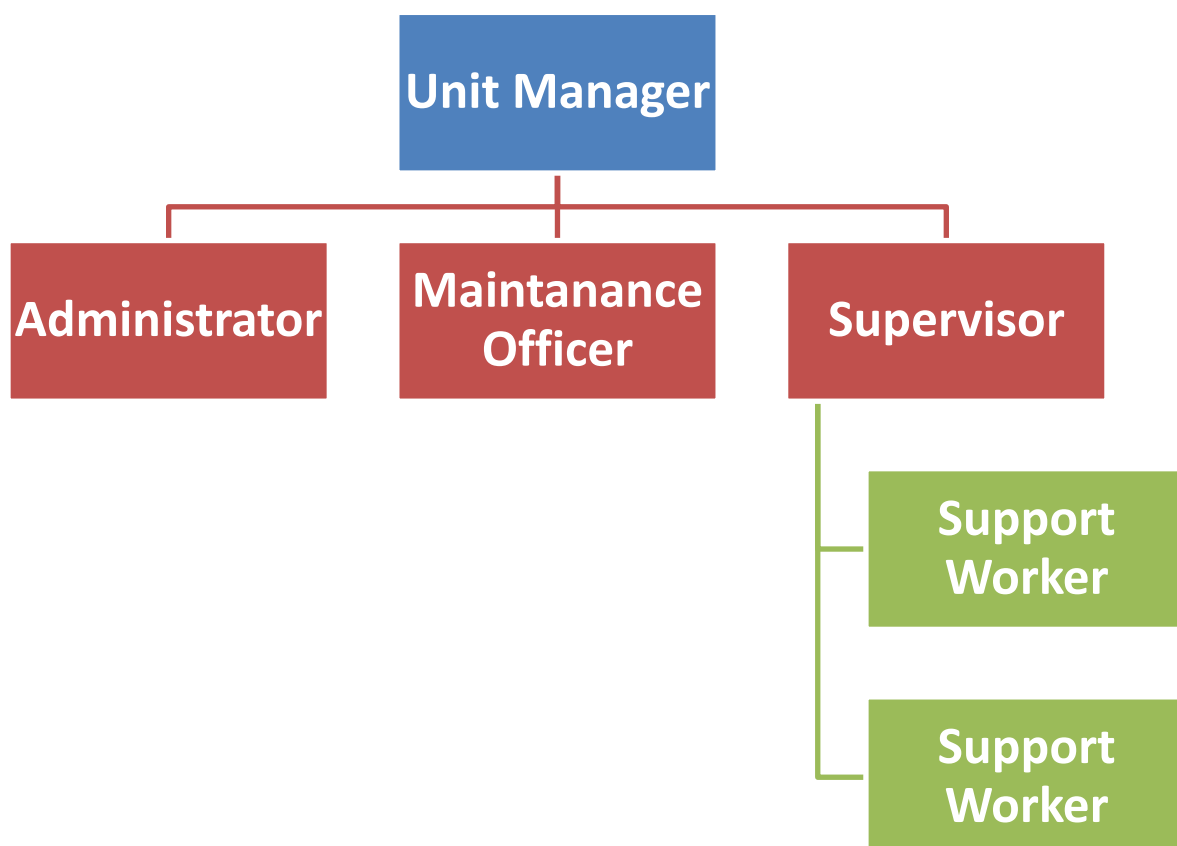
## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

- We will also use consultants to advise us on any changes and/or improvements that may be required in our service provision and support our quality assurance for the services we provide to young people in our units.

### 5. Staffing Structure

The Staff group at The Anchor comprises of the following:

- 1 Unit Manager
- 1 Supervisor
- 2 Support workers
- 1 Administrator
- 1 Maintenance Officer



### 5.1. Staff Cover

The Anchor offers a basic provision of staffing which should meet the needs of young people who have a medium level of need. The Anchor units will be staffed overnight and have a minimum of 5 hours support per day for the medium need young people. This will be focused on the evening as young people will be at work or in education.

There is one staff on duty every shift. Day shift is from 8am to 10pm with an hour hand over period. The night shift operates from 10pm to 8am. The Unit Manager will provide on call support. In line with the 'Working time Regulations' all staff who work night shifts will sign an agreement stating that they agree to work the twelve hour night shifts.

If young people require higher level of support; The Anchor endeavours to offer additional support to manage the situation and avoid placement breakdowns. This support is responsive to the young person's needs. It includes extra 1:1 support, higher level of presence onsite support within the units or working night provision. For higher level needs young people The Anchor will offer a 24hr assisted living/support which will be broken down into two 12-hour shifts; day and night shift. In each case, The Anchor discusses this with the young person; the local authority allocated social worker and agrees the support package based on presenting needs.

Any support package will have to be financed and therefore agreed by the local authority before commencing. We will review any extra support on a 2-4 weekly basis and reduce this additional support as soon as is practicable and safe to do so.

- Staff are deployed flexibly in order to ensure that the young people can pursue a range of interests, which may at times mean that one member of staff is responsible for small groups of young people to take part in planned activities, within or outside the building.
- The work of staff will be co-ordinated by the designated shift leader/supervisor who reports to the Manager.
- The maintenance officer will work during the week as and when needed.

## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

- The units Manager will be on call at all times to deal with serious concerns and give staff support and guidance. The Manager will be contactable through the on-call phone number.
- Additional support will be provided through the relevant Local Authorities' Emergency Duty Team/Out of Hours Services if necessary.

### **5.2 Staff Supervision, Training & Development**

Staff receives supervision at least once a month and new staff members are supervised once every two weeks for the probationary period of their employment. All staff will undergo an induction programme and in-house training programmes so that they familiarise with their duties and responsibilities. Their induction will also involve shadowing experienced staff so that they gain instant hands-on experience.

The Anchor supports staff performance and individual development through the use of its Appraisal Scheme. All The Anchor social care staff have their performance appraised once a year against individual competencies and service targets. Specific personal training and development needs are identified through this system of appraisal which is reviewed every six months.

The Anchor is committed to offering all our social care staff the opportunity to undertake the NVQ Level 3 'Caring Together (Children and Young People)', to ensure that all staff have the prospect of becoming suitably qualified.

Through working in partnership with Local Authorities we will gain access to Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) training courses that are ongoing, with particular reference to Child Protection and Safeguarding Young People, Child Sexual Exploitation and Prevent Strategy Training. We also utilise our internal resources and have qualified senior staff who deliver in-house training and staff development sessions.

## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

The Manager will receive supervision on a monthly basis. In addition, all staff have an annual Appraisal which sets objectives and key tasks for the year and forms the basis of a Personal Development Plan.

### **6. Facilities and Services Provided by The Anchor**

**The Anchor has one unit available to place young people, which is as follows:**

#### **1. 38 Long Riding, Basildon, Essex, SS14 1QY**

The property is a mid-terrace building on two levels. The unit is in a quiet street adjacent to shops, doctor's surgery, opticians, dentist and a local gym. The main town centre is about ten minutes' drive by bus. The nearest train station is Basildon which is in the main city centre and has direct links to London. There is a regular bus service from Basildon, into the main town centre and other local areas such as Southend on Sea, Thurrock and Chelmsford meaning young people are able to travel and access leisure and recreational facilities that Essex has to offer. The local colleges are South Essex College and Basildon Adult Community College. Young people at our unit will be supported to access the local colleges by being assisted to complete application forms, decide on careers of choice and attend interviews. There are also restaurants, take away shops and bars and young people are able to enjoy their local amenities without the need to travel far. The Anchor will also work with the local police who also have an office close by to ensure that community relationships are promoted.

#### **6.1 Important things to know about our units:**

- Our unit is in Basildon, Essex which is an area that has got a very rich history and a very diverse cultural spectrum.
- At The Anchor we offer young people the chance to live within a group and yet retain the opportunity for privacy. We provide semi-independent accommodation and support for up to 4 young people at any one time in our unit.

## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

- We offer each young person a bedroom of their own. Young people will be provided with a key and have access to their bedrooms whenever they wish and are encouraged to personalise their rooms (without structural changes) to help them feel at home.
- Each bedroom has a desk, to enable young people to study. Private possessions can be locked away in their bedrooms. When friends or family members visit they will have the opportunity to see where the young people live.
- The property has a reception room which on some occasions will be used for residents' meetings, professional meetings such as LAC Reviews or Placement Agreement Meetings and key working meetings/sessions.
- The Anchor unit have their own laundry facilities. Staff will ensure that the young people understand how to operate all electrical equipment safely.
- Access to the garden is through the back-kitchen doors. The garden is secured by a fence to ensure that young people will have privacy when they are using the garden to relax or socialise with their friends.
- There is a working 24-hour CCTV at the unit to ensure that the safety of the young people at the unit is adequately supported and managed
- The unit is serviced by a robust transport networks-there is a good service of buses and trains with easy access to over ground rail services into Greater London.
- Our unit has close proximity to local colleges and universities such as Basildon Upper Academy, South Essex College, Seevic College, Thurrock and Basildon College, Essex and Basildon Adult Community College. We also in close communicable distance to University of Essex, Southend, Anglian Ruskin University, Chelmsford. The universities will be a good incentive to young people who would want to study for various careers and we will support them to access these colleges.

## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

- The unit is also close to many Academies, Colleges and good schools with good Ofsted rating all within a five-mile radius which will be easily accessible for young people who will be placed in our units. These include Barstable Lower Academy, Seevic College and Basildon Adult Community College.
- The unit is well served by local health and medical facilities. The unit is within a 3-mile radius from Basildon Hospital and all have GP surgeries with a mile radius. Surgeries include The Long Riding Surgery, Clayhill Medical Centre, and Kingswood Medical Centre.
- Emergency services are vital for the safety and wellbeing of young people who will stay in our unit. The unit is within a 3-mile radius from Basildon Police Station and the local Fire Services which makes them easily accessible if needed.

### 6.2. Referrals and Admissions

The Anchor offers short-term and medium-term accommodation to young people experiencing a crisis in their lives. Referrals from local authorities should be submitted to The Anchor via email to: [theanchor.services@gmail.com](mailto:theanchor.services@gmail.com)

All referrals to The Anchor are looked at both on an individual and group basis, in terms of compatibility with existing residents and staff. As a result, there may be times when a referral is not accepted based on matching reasons.

The initial referral needs to outline:

- The young person's basic details
- Young person's historical background
- Known behavioural Issues
- Religious and cultural needs
- Any specific medical requirement including dietary requirements
- A risk assessment of the risk posed by them to others and to themselves.
- Specific needs such as allergies and dietary needs

## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

- Suggested level of support required.
1. The referral will be assessed and if the young person is suitable for the unit, an initial quotation based on level of support package required will be submitted to the Local Authority. The Anchor's placement charges vary from £800 - £1500 per week and are based on the level of support needed for a young person.
  2. The Anchor primarily encourages young people to be placed in our units in a planned way. For planned admissions, a pre-placement planning meeting and visit should take place with the young person visiting the placement with their social workers and be able to ask any questions they may have.
  3. Referrals will only be accepted from Local Authority Social Services Departments, for young people (16-21 years old), considered to need an intensive programme of development of their independent living skills and initiating a sense of personal responsibility.
  4. The Anchor's referral form must be completed in full. If information requested has not been considered adequate, clarification will be sought from the referring social worker and any request for further information will be made in writing and e-mailed to the individual social worker and copied to their team manager when necessary.
  5. Once all the information requested for the referral has been received, arrangements will be made to invite the young person and their allocated social worker to visit the accommodation, and a draft plan made available for discussion and subsequent agreement. The intention of the meeting will be to share, review and hand-over any relevant information relating to the young person. Any sensitive information should be discussed prior to hand-over arrangements being finalised.
  6. The young person will be introduced to other members of the household unit, and an induction will be carried out. This will cover house rules; expected behaviours, health



## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

and safety; sharing responsibilities in the house; mentoring sessions; house meetings; the schedule of independent skills development; the young person's expectations and the organisation's expectations. The notion of working in partnership to achieve objectives will also be covered during the induction process with the young person.

7. The young person will be given the opportunity to seek clarification on any issues or concerns that they may have as moving into a semi-independent can be overwhelming for other young people.
8. Young people are usually expected to move in after the pre-placement visit. Support sessions will be mapped out with the young person within the first 48 hours of their placement and they will be allocated a key worker.
9. At the end of the first week the young person and their Key worker will discuss and agree the individual personal plan linked to their care/pathway plans and this will form the basis of support work to be done with them duration the period of their stay.
10. A placement planning meeting with the young person, the allocated social worker and the key worker to agree the young person's personal plan will be arranged by the end of the first week. At that meeting all parties concerned will sign the agreement and strive to meet their responsibilities regarding meeting the requirements of the personal plan.
11. The young person's Key worker will give continual feedback on progress or setbacks, combined with advice and guidance as to how best to deal with unexpected issues that may arise at the unit.
12. If for any reason it is felt that the young person needs more input after the initial agreed period, any extension will only occur with agreement of the young person and their allocated social worker.

## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

13. All young people placed at The Anchor will be provided with a key worker to oversee their independent living skills programme and their support. It is the responsibility of the key worker, together with their manager to prepare the young person for moving on from The Anchor units into their own accommodation.

### **6.3. Arrival and moving into the units**

At the point of arriving and moving into the unit, a placement contract is signed by the young person outlining what is expected of the young person at The Anchor units.

Each young person is given their Welcome Pack and a key to their room. These keys will open the young person's bedroom and the front door, but none of the other rooms in the property. The keys are signed for on admission as an undertaking that the young person will pay for the cost of replacing them if this becomes necessary.

The Anchor staff holds a universal key and are able to access the young person's room-but this only occurs in an emergency or with young person's permission.

#### **Each young person is given a welcome box upon arrival which includes:**

- Bedding
- Bath towel set and toiletries
- A Young Person's Handbook, which includes all the things young people need to know about the placement, the support package they will receive, the key policies: Complaints Procedure and Anti-Bullying Policy, Smoking, Drugs and Alcohol Policies
- A comprehensive guide to Local Services
- Guidelines and Expectations for Young People

These items will belong to the young person as personal items. By so doing, The Anchor demonstrates the importance of a warm welcome to the young person which will mark the beginning of a working relationship.

#### **6.4. Information for resident young people**

The Anchor operates on the premise that a unit with no rules and consequences will not teach a young person anything. Young people are warned that criminal damage may result in them being charged the cost to repair the damage or replace an item and could result in police involvement.

##### **There is zero tolerance to:**

- The use of illicit drugs and substances including legal highs at the unit
- Alcohol use at the unit
- Verbal and/or physical aggression at the unit or within the vicinity of the unit
- Smoking within the unit
- Criminal damage and vandalism of the unit

##### **Young people meetings**

The Anchor will also have regular young people meetings. These meetings occur on the first Monday of every month. The purpose of the meetings is to bring young people together and explore any issues that may be developing within the group. Local professionals may also be invited to attend part of the young people's meeting to explore a particular issue. These professionals may include:

- Social Workers or Personal Advisors
- Health professionals
- Police officers
- Financial advisors
- Drug & Alcohol Teams
- Housing Officers
- Career advisors

#### **6.5 Independent Living Skills Programme**

The Anchor guides young people into acquiring the independent living skills that are necessary for them to function as responsible citizens in a modern world. It is a requirement that every

## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

young person adheres to the independent living skills programme. We support young people including providing advice and/or assistance with:

- Budgeting and paying bills.
- Life skills
- Assisting the young people in partaking in group activities
- Assisting young people going through criminal justice system
- Maintaining the security and safety of the units.
- Opportunities for education, training and employment
- Leisure and recreation activities
- Registering with local GP, Dentist and Optician of their choice and maintaining links with appropriate healthcare services.
- Responding to their changing needs in liaison with other agencies involved in their support and care/pathway packages.
- CVs and job applications
- Interviewing skills, including how to present yourself at job interviews
- Understanding how Department of Works and Pension (DWP) and the benefits system work
- Independent moving-on accommodation
- Understanding tenancy and tenancy agreements
- Key working sessions

### **6.6. Allowances and Clothing**

The young people who will be placed in our units will be aged 16 to 21 years of age, and will be either receiving services under section 20 (Looked After), or section 24 (Leaving Care). As such they will be receiving financial support and clothing allowances from their prospective Local Authorities. For young people receiving services under section 17 (Child in Need) we will support them through the process of claiming either Income Support or Job Seekers Allowance.

### **6.7. Food**

An integral aspect of our Independent Living Skills programme is to help young people to focus on individual dietary, cultural and nutritional needs, addressing the poor eating habits of many young people. Young people will be encouraged to prepare their own meals under supervision from their key worker and will be taught the importance of shopping for food using a limited budget, healthy diet, basic food preparation and food hygiene. There will always be breakfast cereals and other basic items on the premises at any given time and these will be provided by The Anchor.

Young people will be expected to shop for their own food and being able to prepare meals with the supervision of their key workers.

### **6.8. Health**

We recognise that promoting the health and well-being of young people in our units is of paramount importance. By being open and offering information and encouragement, we aim to help young people to take responsibility for their own health care.

All young people in our units will be registered with a GP locally. Our experienced staff at The Anchor will speak with young people about the range of health-related issues that are known to be important to young people such as nutrition, weight, sexual health, drugs and substance misuse, alcohol, smoking, emotional well-being, educational progress, friends and support systems.

Although appropriate confidentiality is maintained, young people are encouraged to share any concerns with staff. Arrangements will be made for all young people to have regular eye and dental examinations and for follow up work to be undertaken.

Our staff will respond quickly to any accident or emergency and ensure that the young people's social workers are informed as soon as possible and updated as to the young person's state of health.

## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

The Anchor operates a No Smoking policy, and staff will ensure to the best of their ability that young people are made aware of the risks of drug and substance misuse, alcohol, solvent abuse and smoking.

### **6.9. Leisure and Recreational Activities**

We have links with local sports and leisure facilities including gyms and fitness centres. Young people will be actively encouraged to plan and participate in activities within the local community. Our staff support young people in pursuing their own hobbies and interests.

## **7. Education**

The Anchor assists and encourages young persons in our units to access and engage with colleges, universities, apprenticeships, and other educational and training programmes. This is done by:

- Finding an appropriate course.
- Completing the application forms.
- Preparing for interviews.
- Escorting to interviews.
- Monitoring progress and offering on-going support.
- Working with young people to build their confidence and self-esteem.
- Working with educational partners.
- Seeking part time jobs, work placements and apprenticeships

## **8. Contact and visitors**

Contact between young people and significant people in their lives is always encouraged and there is space within the unit to allow this to take place with an appropriate degree of privacy.

To ensure that young people have realistic and safe expectations about contact, we discuss this in detail at the time of admission and agree arrangements for contact and these are subject to reviews.

## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

Where it is not possible for family, friends and advocates to visit, we still promote a level of interaction and with support from our Support Staff/key worker.

Visitors will be allowed for young people in our units when it is safe to do so. All visitors to the unit are asked to identify themselves to staff before entering and staff will always take steps to verify visitors' identity if in doubt.

All visitors are required to sign the visitors' book on arrival and departure. No overnight guests/visitors are allowed at The Anchor units and every visitor is expected to leave by 9pm. The Anchor reserves the right to ban people from the units if this is deemed to be in the best interests of the resident young people.

There will be no parties at The Anchor units unless if they have been approved by The Anchor and staff are supervising. Failure to adhere to this rule may result in a young person being asked to leave.

### **9. Discipline**

We recognise that discipline fits within an overall framework of support for each young person, both individually and as part of a group. Management and staff at The Anchor will familiarise themselves as far as is possible prior to admission with the backgrounds of each young person placed, in order to identify particular behavioural issues and undertake a risk assessment.

Young people who do not adhere to the house rules will be told off in terms of being confronted with their actions and the consequences and adverse effects on other residents. Young people will be required to put back, replace or mend anything broken or stolen and this will incur charges which will be taken off the young person responsible. Additional supervision may also be an option.

Corporal punishment of any kind is not acceptable, nor is depriving young people of food and drink. We will not fine young people or subject them to personal searches.

## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

The Anchor staff are not encouraged to restrain young people. Restraining will only be used as a last resort in order to either safeguard the young person, others, or to prevent serious damage to property, and is consistent with DfES (2003) guidelines. All staff are aware of the organisations Restraint Policy.

### **10.Absences**

Any prolonged absence from our Independent Living Skills programme will be reported to the appropriate social worker. Young person who fail to return to the units at the agreed time will be reported as missing persons to the police and their respective social workers will be notified.

### **11.Child Protection and Bullying**

The Anchor operates under Child Protection Procedures. Our staff have a strong awareness of the vulnerability of young people living away from home and the need for constant vigilance. In order to protect young people the following safeguards are put in place:

- Young people feel valued and respected and their self-esteem and confidence is promoted.
- There is transparency on the part of The Anchor in terms of the external world and external scrutiny, including openness with families and the wider community.
- All staff receive training in aspects of safeguarding young people so that they are alert to young people's vulnerabilities and risk of harm and know how to implement child protection procedures.
- Young people have ready access to their social worker and are made aware of how they can access the Children's Rights Service and other independent advocacy services, including 'Childline' and the 'Voice for the Child in Care'.



## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

- The Anchor promotes a culture in which minor complaints are responded to in a timely and open manner. Clear information about the formal complaints procedure is given to all young people individually in the Clients Handbook. There is a complaints book within The Anchor which documents all representations or complaints, the action taken to address them and the outcomes.
- The Anchor's recruitment processes rigorously scrutinise applicants for employment to deter abusers.
- Staff are made aware of the duty to raise legitimate concerns about the conduct of colleagues or managers, and a copy of The Anchor's Whistle Blowing policy is given to all staff during their induction.
- Our staff are alert to the risks vulnerable young people are exposed to in the wider community and seek to prepare young people to help minimise those risks.
- Bullying of any form is not tolerated at The Anchor units. The damage done by bullying can be extremely detrimental to young people and can affect their overall health and well-being. All young people placed within The Anchor units are given a copy of its Anti-Bullying Policy.

## 12. Religious Observance

Staff at The Anchor will always aim to enable young people to feel confident about expressing their wishes and feelings around the practice of religion. This is done by encouraging an environment where difference is respected. During the pre-placement meeting or at the point of admission, we will establish the religious and cultural requirements of each young person.

All young people will be provided with what they need for religious worship within the units, together with any specific dietary requirements. Copies of the Bible or Koran and praying mats will be made available on request

### 13.Complaints

Staff at The Anchor, work closely with young people on finding resolutions to the problems that brought the young person to the programme in the first place. We will always be careful to explain how The Anchor works, what our expectations are and what young people can expect of us. Realistically, there may be times when there are difficulties and a young person may wish to make a complaint. At such times we will keep to the following standards:

- We aim to listen and work through any difficulties or complaints by young people with sensitivity. We also need to rely on contact with the young person's social worker to support and assist if a young person wishes to complain about any aspect of their support whilst placed with us.
- If the young person is unhappy about issues relating to residing at The Anchor units they can speak to their key worker, the manager or whoever they feel most comfortable with.
- If it is not possible to resolve a complaint in-house, the complaint can be referred to the appropriate Local Authority's complaints team for investigation. If they are not satisfied with the results of the investigation, the issue will be re-investigated with the help of an independent person.
- All staff are made aware of The Anchor's complaints policy and practice guidelines when dealing with complaints from young people.
- Young people will also receive copies of the complaints procedure during their induction.

### 14.Allegations

Due to the nature of working with young people, there will be occasions when allegations against staff are made. Allegations or suspicions of abuse, use of restraint other than that

## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

permitted by law or our internal guidance will be dealt with under child protection procedures.

Issues of emotional abuse are much more complex and may include bullying, racist remarks or failing to address these in others. In situations where alleged behaviour is deemed to cause significant harm, a child protection referral should be made to the appropriate Local Authority. This may result in a strategy meeting. All staff have undergone allegation training and are aware of the procedures.

### 15.Reviews

- It is the duty of every Local Authority to review the care plans/pathway plans of each young person receiving services under Section 20 or 24 (Children Act: 1989).
- Reviews are opportunities to see if changes are needed to a young person's care/pathway plan, in discussion with the young person and their allocated social worker. The review meeting is the only place where a care/pathway plan can be changed.
- Young people receiving services under section 20 or 24 (Children Act 1989) will have plans for them looked at by a review meeting at intervals of no more than 6 months.
- Staff at The Anchor will ensure that young people are prepared for their statutory reviews and that they can communicate their views in ways that they choose.
- The purpose and process of reviews will be explained and assistance offered in completing consultation forms prior to the review itself.
- Staff will also ensure that they produce a written report outlining the progress of the young person.

## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

- A nominated staff member, usually the key worker, and a manager will attend the review.

### **16.Feedback**

We recognise that to improve the service we provide, it is important to have the views from young people recorded, evaluated and acted upon when necessary. The Anchor achieves this by having a questionnaire and an elected representative from the unit who attends meetings with the manager to put The Anchor's view across. Minutes are written and shared with the young person and staffing team.

**A copy of the Statement of Purpose, our policies and procedures are available upon request from our main office:**

The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

### APPENDICES

#### Fire Precautions

- In the event of a fire it is the first duty of all concerned to prevent injury or loss of life
- For this purpose, each member of staff should make certain that they are familiar with all means of escape/fire exits
- Each member of staff will need to be familiar with how to use fire extinguishers. This equipment will only be used if there is no risk involved to self and/or others

#### Emergency Evacuation Procedures

##### On discovering a fire at The Anchor unit:

1. Sound the alarm
2. The Manager or Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the Fire Brigade is called immediately, no matter how small the fire is.
3. Make sure everyone evacuates the building using the fire exit routes
4. Make sure all doors are closed in evacuating the building, particularly those surrounding the point of the fire
5. Attempt to put out the fire by using the nearest firefighting appliance, only if this can be done without taking personal risk or risking others.
6. Staff are to assemble everyone on the pavement at the main entrance.
7. The manager or Supervisor is to call the roll and inform the Fire Officers immediately of the result.
8. The Anchor will make arrangements to temporarily accommodate the young people if necessary.
9. Do not re-enter the building until authorised to do so by the Fire Officers.

##### If the building became unusable by the young people and staff due to physical damage:

10. An alternative place of safety will be made available to the young people in placement with the support of their social workers
11. The Manager needs to be notified immediately
12. An assessment of the damage will be undertaken

## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living

13. If there is no possibility of returning to the building The Anchor would make arrangements for the young people and staff on duty to stay in a hotel from our list of emergency planning hotels
14. We would inform all the necessary people and agencies of where the young people are staying and the actions taken to prevent/minimise any disruption to the young people's lives and routines.
15. Once the building has been made safe and the necessary checks have been completed, a risk assessment would be undertaken before staff and young people return to the unit.
16. A copy of the Fire Precautions will be available at all The Anchor units and any further information can be requested from the main office:

## The Anchor-Semi Independent Living