



AVALON

Expanding Horizons

Service Users Handbook

Avalon Enterprise respects your rights and expects every staff member to uphold these rights, on your behalf.

If you would like a copy of this document in an alternative format e.g. Braille, large print or other language, please call 01843 596652

YOUR RIGHTS

- To have privacy in your own home.
- To be protected from harm.
- To make decisions about any changes in your living arrangements.
- To have visitors of your choice.
- To have a support/care plan that is clearly laid out.
- To know your belongings are safe.
- To have your living space just how you like it.

- To choose how you want to be addressed.
- To have access to a range of specialist services.
- To choose what you want to eat.
- To have access to an advocate.
- To be treated as an individual.
- To have opportunities to develop your skills and interests.
- To know how to complain if things go wrong and that your complaint will be dealt with properly.

- To register and vote in elections.
- To mix with the local community.
- To choose your own GP and Dentist.
- To be independent without unnecessary restrictions.
- To have your cultural and religious needs respected.
- To care for yourselves whenever possible.
- To be prepared for life in society and independent living, with the necessary help available to you while you achieve this.

PURPOSE AND FUNCTION

Avalon Enterprise was formed in 2000 with the intention of providing “an alternative form of care from residential placements to independent living within the community” for adults with learning, physical and sensory disabilities.

The idea evolved from our Director of Care’s experiences over the last twenty five years of working and managing residential homes within the private sector. The desire is to enable the disabled and disadvantaged to be recognized as valued and valuable members of society living, working and experiencing the same rights, responsibilities and privileges that the rest of society often take for granted.

We are committed to the ongoing development of our Service User’s and in light of this seek to promote the recreational and educational opportunities that are available through both the agencies networking but also promoting the Service User’s freedom of choice.

Avalon Enterprise works with the Service User to identify and facilitate areas in which they can be involved socially within their community, this can involve clubs, pubs, cinema, theatre, religious activities, nightclubs, holidays and any other activity the Service User wishes to pursue. The team are

committed to supporting the Service User's in accessing these resources, and where able facilitating self development.

What to expect on the start of your Support

During your first few weeks with us you will get to know the lifestyle mentors. One of them will be chosen with you, to be your key worker.

With your help, your lifestyle mentors, care manager and family, will create a support/care plan. This is to help you in your quest towards independence and in enabling you to gain the skills to achieve your ambitions.

You will also become familiar with how your home operates and may have a few new ideas that will help you to feel comfortable and at home. That is why you have regular tenants meetings this is where you all discuss daily issues in running your household, for example, how you all budget, shop for food and organize the general cleaning.

In the tenants meetings any problems you may be experiencing can be dealt with, outings, holidays, parties, health and safety issues and changes can be planned and agreed upon and house rules can be amended accordingly.

Tenants meetings can be requested at any time by any tenant or lifestyle mentor. They are led by a lifestyle mentor or another member of the team at Avalon who will arrange a tenants meeting when everyone can be present.

However long your stay is, we hope your new home will be a happy and fulfilling experience for you. All at Avalon are here to ensure that you have a safe, secure and homely environment.

Entry/Admission Criteria

Service User's will have an identified physical, learning disability and/or a sensory impairment, they must be over eighteen. Avalon Enterprise will consider offering placements to Service User's with a criminal record but will consider each on individual basis.

Avalon can offer mixed or single gender placements in line with the guidance from the Service User as well as their families and the responsible authority. We are also able to support you in your own home if you already have accommodation.

In accordance with the company admission criteria Avalon Enterprise and the Care Manager will create a support/care plan in response to the Service User's needs, religious and cultural identity. Such plans will reflect variations in diet, dress and any risks involved. The framework used by the agency is drawn from Supporting Peoples "Outcomes Framework" and covers the following outcomes.

- Be healthy
- Stay Safe
- Enjoy and Achieve
- Make a Positive Contribution
- Achieve Economic Wellbeing

Within the function of Avalon Enterprise we cannot accommodate adults with profound challenging behavior, serious criminal behavior or those experiencing serious mental health issues. Placement is reliant upon whether Avalon Enterprise can be foreseen to meet and be responsive to the needs of the referred adult and the objective criteria of Avalon Enterprise and the care manager.

Referrals are made to Avalon Enterprise through Social Services departments, Local Authority Housing Officer, Supporting People Team and by private enquiry. Initial contact is made via the telephone or letter.

Referral application forms have to be completed. These are available from Avalon Enterprise Head Office, LAC Housing Office and Social Services.

All Service User's must have a Community Care Assessment, Risk Assessment and a Care Plan prior to a placement being offered.

Private clients will be advised to contact Social Services for assessment before being considered for our services.

Service User's must be able access Housing Benefit in order to receive to support from the Supporting People Team.

Admission Procedure

1. Upon receiving a referral, Avalon Enterprise will request sufficient information to ascertain whether your referral falls broadly in line with any of our stated criteria. Once this information has been received a referral panel meeting with the Directors and the Group Manager will take place in order to identify if your referral meets our criteria and to identify what service we would be able to provide, in line with our Statement of Purpose. If outside the criteria we will be unable to offer you a placement, and will explain the reasons for this to you in full, we will suggest an alternate provider more suited to meeting your needs. Should you disagree with this outcome we also offer the right to appeal the decision.
2. If there is a possibility that Avalon Enterprise could meet the stated needs we will in each case seek to follow these steps with you and or your representative:
 - We will contact the Care Manager and arrange an informal meeting with you, your Family and any other significant party you would like to invite; you will also be given a copy of your service user handbook.
 - We will arrange an informal social outing with you and other tenants.

- We will arrange a longer visit with you to the house to meet the other tenants and lifestyle mentors, as a getting to know you session, to see the house, and for you to see what could be your bedroom, to get to know the routines, house rules and the experiences of independent living from the other Service User's point of view.
 - A further visit with an overnight stay will be arranged to further reinforce the strengths and opportunities of our independent living scheme in order for you to make up your mind.
3. Prior to admission we will need to receive as much of your documentation, information on you as is possible. This should include copies of your benefits details including bank details (in order to support you in applying for housing benefit), medical history, education and work history. At this point we will issue you with your Tenancy Agreement, your own keys, Conduct and Behavior Contract, and emergency telephone numbers
 4. On the day of admission you will be made to feel welcome, this is our first priority, your room will be prepared before you arrive, this will also take into account any personal items you have provided to allow you to settle in and feel comfortable. On your arrival you will need to return the signed and dated Tenancy Agreement and Conduct and Behaviour Contract. We will also arrange with you, your care manager, family and other significant parties a date for a four week review meeting at which we will all discuss your feelings, our initial assessment and together formulate a support/care plan with both short and long term goals.
 5. As soon as possible after your admission it will be ascertained if you need a complete health check and to register with a local G.P, Dentist, Optician and any other medical practitioners important to you. Medication is assessed individually and is recorded on your support plan. If it is deemed necessary for our staff to help you with medication, your medication and all other preparations including herbal and over the counter drugs, can be kept securely locked and a record kept.

Reception of New Service User

During your first few days we will make every effort to make sure you are comfortable and are able to speak openly about any problems or worries you may have. We will help you to set up your room and if you wish we will help you unpack and put your belongings away, and take you on a tour of the local area. We will ensure that you are able to feel as valued within your home as any existing tenants.

Service User Development

We are committed to helping you to develop your skills and abilities to enable you to live as independently as possible. This is the primary focus of work at Avalon Enterprise, whatever role we are expected to fulfill within your Support and Care plan. We therefore, operate in alongside you, Social Services, Education, Work, Therapists and others concerned with your welfare.

As we spoke about earlier to help you to gain more independence we use the 5 outcomes from supporting people - following is a brief look at how these affect your support:

Be Healthy

We will support you to with your basic health needs such as seeing Doctors, dentist, Opticians, help with nutrition, exercise, medicines, in order to better manage your physical health.

We will also help you to feel better about yourself, learn to manage your feelings and worries, for you to express yourself and feel valued.

We will also help you to understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle and provide information on activities which can affect your overall health.

Stay Safe

We will support you in relation to maintaining your accommodation and/or avoiding eviction, with the outcome of you maintaining your accommodation until you are ready to leave.

We will support you so that you can keep yourself safe by avoiding self harm, avoiding causing harm to others and avoiding harm caused by others.

Enjoy and achieve

We will support you in relation to training and/or education, allowing you to take part in your choice of training, education and gaining a qualification. We will support you in relation to leisure, cultural, faith or informal learning activities, with the actual outcome of you taking part in your chosen activities.

We will support you in relation to work like activities for example, paid work or work experience, with the actual outcome of you taking part in your chosen work like activities.

We will support you in relation to contact with external services, groups, friends and family, allowing you to choose your support and social networks, friends and pastimes

Make a Positive Contribution

We will support you to ensure your voice and choices are heard in all areas of your life of your support/care plan so that you know you are in control.

Achieve Economic Wellbeing

We will support you to claim your welfare benefits, with the actual outcome of you receiving all the correct benefits you are entitled to.

We will support you in managing any debts you may have, with the actual outcome of you having reduced your debt.

We will support you in relation to paid work, with the actual outcome of you being in paid work.

We will support you in managing your money including opening bank accounts, arranging financial advice, direct debits and direct payments with the outcome being achieving financial independence.

101 Challenges

As well as your support/care plan we can offer you our 101 challenges for independence, this will help you and your supporters to recognize your achievements.

Finance

A big part of living independently is being responsible for your own budget. The support staff will advise you of all benefits that you are entitled to and will help you to claim them, they will also offer practical advice on budgeting skills but all the decisions are your own, however if you do not pay your own expenses you may be breaking your contract.

The rent is identified on your Tenancy Agreement, Housing Benefit will pay part of this and you must pay the difference. Your household bills can be shared with the other tenants and you all will decide how you want to pay your share within the tenants meetings.

Direct Payments

Some of you will be your own fund holders, this means that Social Services will pay your care fees directly into an account which you will be solely responsible for, this will enable you to choose the agency that delivers your support and pay for those services directly to them, where you have chosen us as your accommodation but not your support.

Social Services will pay the majority of your care bill, but you may need to pay a top up charge out of your own money. It will be your responsibility to ensure that this top up is paid to the agency at the right time, a lifestyle mentor will always be on hand to advise you.

You will receive an invoice for your care every four weeks, and it will be up to you to ensure that this is paid promptly.

A current list of fees is attached.

Guidelines

Listed below we have set out the general rules you have agreed to live by and some Policies and Procedures designed for your safety and comfort;

- You must not enter other tenant's rooms unless invited and accompanied by them.
- Other Avalon homes can only be visited by invitation and with the consent of the tenants.
- Any aggressive behaviour, stealing or criminal damage will be reported to the Police, Social Services and all other significant people, and could result in the termination of your Tenancy.
- To pay all your rent and household bills promptly.
- To do your share of the general cleaning upkeep of the garden.
- To be a law abiding member of society.
- To have consideration for your neighbours, fellow tenants and lifestyle mentors.
- To be involved in tenants meetings.

The lifestyle mentors can support you in reading and understanding your handbook, and have role play sessions to help you remember what to do. Any questions or concerns you may have, you can bring it to a staff member's attention or call a house meeting for discussion.

Equal Opportunities Policy

The care plan will give proper consideration to family, ethnic and community ties and staff will promote such ties in line with those essential features of the support/care plan including diet, religion, language, physical needs and our recruitment policy.

Our aim is to ensure that all of our employees, job applicants and Service User's are treated equally irrespective of disability, race, colour, creed, religion, nationality, ethnic origin, age, sex or marital status and sexual orientation. Our policy sets out instructions that all employees are required to follow in order to ensure that this is achieved.

Religious Observances

You will, as far as is practicable, have an opportunity to attend such religious services and receive such instructions, which are appropriate to your religious persuasion.

Positive steps will be then made to provide you facilities to practice your religion in a manner appropriate to you. You may need us to help you make contact with a local church or group of adherents to your religion. Great sensitivity will be given and your family/supporters may be asked to assist in teaching us about your religion.

Policy on Physical Intervention

Avalon Enterprise has a policy of non physical intervention as a behavior management tool.

We do however recognize the need for physical comfort and support for our Service User's at a time of anxiety and stress, therefore physical contact is permitted in terms of appropriate hugs and reassurance.

In the event of violence in your home the lifestyle mentors are able to use "reasonable force" to protect you and themselves as well as other service users.

Contact

We are aware of the importance of maintaining your links with family and friends as well as other individuals important to you, as such you may wish for family and friends to visit you in your own home, alternatively you may want some support in arranging travel to and from your family and friends, in such cases we are able to help you with this. As part of your support we will encourage and support you to expand your horizons and take new opportunities to meet new people so that you are able to be fully involved in your community while maintaining your safety and security. You will be able to talk to other tenants about the rules for visitors at your tenants meetings, at which you will agree what the rules are, with those you live with.

Sanctions

Any sanctions are given on the basis that it is within your understanding and it is reasonable to the "offence". Sanctions will always be used to encourage appropriate behavior and not to generate resentment.

Where willful damage or theft has occurred the police and social services will be informed.

In a case of a serious offence or emergency we will phone 999 and we will ask for the police for a less urgent offence we will phone the local station:

Thanet Police	01843 231055
Canterbury Police	01227 762055
Ashford Police	01233 611055
Maidstone H.Q	01622 690690

After we have informed the police we will notify the Care Managers on their local numbers or if out of office hours:

Kent Social Services Out of Hours. 08457 626777

The Service User will be encouraged to make reparation to the victim and must be within the guidelines set out by statutory regulations. Withholding of treats or prevention from going on outings is permissible but care is taken in not letting the Service User feel victimized.

Sanctions are not of a prolonged nature so that the reason becomes lost and resentment does not set in.

At all stages of the procedure the Service User, Family, Care Managers, Advocate and interested parties will be kept involved.

Rights

We are committed to advising you of your rights to complain, access to files and confidentiality policies. This ensures that all our we practice in a manner which not only treats you equally and fairly but also that you have equal rights to all services and treatments without exception.

Avalon Enterprise respects every adult's right to live free from abuse in accordance with the principles of respect, dignity, autonomy, privacy and equality. We are dedicated to the provision and encouragement of these rights without prejudice.

Emergency Call out Procedure

We operate an on call service for any emergency twenty four hours a day. There is a list of names and telephone, numbers beside the telephones in your house; this will alert the on call Senior Staff to deal with any problems that may arise.

Training

We are committed to making sure that you receive the best support possible, as such we ensure that all of our Lifestyle mentors receive training both internal and external to improve the support you receive. There are also some training courses that we offer that you may wish to take advantage of (first aid, Health and safety ect.) and you will be given opportunities to take part.

All of our staff will have a minimum of an NVQ level 3 in promoting independence or be working towards one. Our Area Managers will also have and NVQ level 4 or equivalent. In addition the Directors and the Group manager have completed the Registered Managers Award.

Qualifications

Managers must demonstrate lengthy experience in care, support and should have suitable qualifications in the field. The other support staff will be assessed on merit, but experienced staff form the senior team and are capable of providing professionally competent leadership to less experienced staff.

All employees will have a satisfactorily CRB, POVA and references.

Quality Assurance

We ensure you are consulted about all aspects of the service during the monthly tenants meetings, any suggestions are taken into consideration when revising the services offered.

We annually conduct a Quality Assurance Survey this is distributed to all Service User's, their relatives/representatives and all interested parties. Results of this survey are sent to all mentioned parties in an annual newsletter and the results are used in the future planning of the company.

GRIEVANCES

Grievances are any concerns or problems you may have on a day to day basis. There are two processes to follow to deal with this, the first is to speak to the person concerned to try to find a solution, and this is an informal process. The second is to raise the grievance formally. The following are the steps to take if you have a grievance/problem, ideally this should be resolved straight away. If however you are unhappy with the outcome you can raise your grievance as detailed below:

The Procedure

- Speak to a lifestyle mentor for advice on how to handle it.
- Raise in tenants meeting
- Speak to the area manager
- Speak to the group Manager/Director

Should you be unhappy with the outcome of your grievance you have the right to make a formal complaint this can be through the complaints procedure.

COMPLAINTS

Procedure

- All Service User's, employees, and relevant bodies should be fully aware of the existence of the complaints procedure and what it means to them.
- Service User's should be encouraged to comment on the service they are receiving and should not feel that making a complaint is a difficult process.

- Many problems which occur can be sorted out to everyone's satisfaction without becoming the subject of a formal complaint.
- However any complaint not so resolved should be recorded in writing and logged in the complaints book within seven days of the original complaint. The status of the complaint is now formalized.
- To make the process of complaining easier for the Service User's there are key individuals within the agency identified to deal with the complaints.
- Service User's should be encouraged to record their complaint in writing within three days.
- Where necessary, Service User's should be represented by a family member, friend or an independent advocate. It is the key individual's responsibility to assist in this matter.
- All complaints will be acted upon and Service User's, employees and relevant bodies will be kept informed of action taken.
- Complaints will be resolved in the shortest time frame possible. All parties will be informed in writing within twenty eight days of the outcome and action taken.
- The employees or who "named" will not be involved in investigating complaints relating to there own behavior.
- Where serious allegations are made the "named" contact will not be involved from the beginning.
- After investigating the complaint and following the company's procedure's with dealing with the complaint and the complainant is

dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation the complainant has the right to an independent complaints advisor.

- Where serious allegations suggest a criminal offence may have been committed the police should be informed. Where possible the wishes of the Service User and/or the employee should be taken into account.
- The Service User's will not be victimized by the company or employees as a consequence of making a complaint.
- All complaints and compliments will be logged in the Company Compliment and Complaints book.

Service User Complaints Policy

To ensure that the service we provide matches your needs and your expectations, we welcome any comments you may care to make

As one of our Service User's you are encouraged to raise issues which are of concern and to make complaints at any time using the procedure set out. Complaining can be a positive and constructive step in order to ensure the quality of your service. If you wish to complain about the service you are receiving from the company, or from an employee, you should follow the steps below.

- If possible you should discuss the problem with your lifestyle mentor who will do their best to resolve the problem.
- If you feel unable to discuss the problem with your lifestyle mentor or if they are unable to resolve the problem you can try to resolve it with the key individual or with Fenella, Steve or Simon, your Care Manager, Supporting People or with the Care Quality Commission.

- If you still feel that it isn't resolved it is at this stage it needs to be put in writing within seven days, and given to the key individual who will ensure that it is brought to the Directors knowledge. (You may wish to ask a relative to write out the complaint for you and you then sign it or alternatively the key individual or lifestyle mentor could help write the complaint for you, to check the accuracy, for you to sign and date.)
- If there is no immediate solution we will investigate your complaint fully, contacting those concerned and take the appropriate action to ensure it should not happen again and discuss this with you.
- Within twenty eight days of your original complaint, we will write to you with the details of our findings and any actions we have taken.
- If at any stage you are unhappy with the way in which the company is dealing with your complaint, please feel free to contact your Care Manager, Supporting People or CQC who will be happy to advise/act for you. The addresses and telephone numbers are listed below:

Kent Social Services
 St Peters House
 Dane Valley Road
 St Peters
 Broadstairs
 Kent. CT10 3JJ
 Tel: 01843 860000

Supporting People Team
 Canterbury City Council
 Military Road
 Canterbury
 Kent
 CT1 1YW
 Tel; 01227 862336

Health and Safety

- The support staff will show you the risks involved in the kitchen, bathroom, garden and generally around the house.
- You, with the lifestyle mentors will identify any particular risks involved in your own health and safety and the lifestyle mentor will carry out the appropriate risk assessments.

Security

- Have a routine to lock all doors and windows when you go out and at night.
- Do not invite people you do not know into the house. If in doubt close the door and ask a lifestyle mentor for advice. If no lifestyle mentors are available phone the on call person for advice.
- Do not buy anything from anyone on the doorstep and do not sign anything.

Fire Safety

The Company Fire Officer will help you with fire safety issues identified below.

- Escape routes in case of fire will be identified, planned and practiced.
- Make yourself aware of the position and sound of the smoke detectors and the correct maintenance and cleaning of them to ensure they are working properly.
- If you discover a fire shout "FIRE" to all in the house and get out of the house, go to a neighbour and call 999 and ask for the fire department and follow the instructions they give you.

These guidelines are to help you live safely and independently in the community and we are all here to help you work and understand them.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

All work undertaken by employees with you is to be treated as confidential and is not to be discussed with any unauthorized person, excepting the course of their duties and without compromising your rights of confidentiality, either during the period of their employment or at any time thereafter. We will not Use, make public, discuss or divulge to any person any confidential document or information about you unless there is a risk to your safety.

Any breach of these terms will be regarded as gross misconduct and will result in disciplinary procedures.

Any request received by employees for information about your affairs received from another Service User or from any third person, should be reported to the Directors.

Staff are conversant with the Data Protection Act which governs the transmittal and handling of all information of a sensitive and confidential nature. At all times the individual records relating to both you as well as the staff employed by the agency will be kept in a secure location, access to which is restricted to only those persons authorized to do so.

When passing information of a confidential or sensitive nature, whether verbal, written or electronic (including e-mail, fax and telephone) this should only take place through the appropriate line management structure of the agency.

Access to files

You have the right to access to information recorded by the agency in your individual file and will be supported in doing so by the agency. Any information contained in the files produced or supplied by a 2nd or 3rd party however is not subject to this, and written permission from the originator of the information should be sought in this instance.

Staff List

Fenella Cook
Director
07976 615974

Simon Cook
Group Manager
07854 210640

Stephen Dolman
Director
07866 694309

Lorraine Nicholson
Company Administrator
01843 596652

Pat Wall
Ashford & Canterbury
Area Manager
07962 325954

Patricia Sampson
Canterbury Manager
07930 829684

Lee Brown
Thanet Area Manger
07789 027589

Alan Stewart
Maintenance
07967 759524

Hilda Lloyd
Thanet Deputy Manager

Lifestyle Mentors

Jane Doherty
Joan Martin
Emma Colthup
Mick Shaw
Sarah Rye
Mary Simmons

Jackie Blue
Rachel Cook
Stephanie Carruthers
Karla Anthony
Aaron Kelly
Ryan Roberts

Carlo Valente
Penny Overton
Paul Collett
Kim Foster
Kerry Simmons
Isabel Diez

AVALON ENTERPRISE (UK) LTD

Breakdown of Current Charges as from 5th April 2009

Agency Costs		
Care & Support Costs	£14.70	per hour
Sleeper Night Cover	£25.71	per night (8 Hrs)

Rental Income		
Single Rooms	£85.00	Per Week, Inc Council Tax
En-suite Single	£95.00	Per Week, Inc Council Tax
As with all tenancies, rent must still be paid whenever vacant from the property.		
All other expenses i.e. Gas, Electric, Water, T.V License, will be the Service User's own responsibility.		

Other Costs
Utility bills are shared by all tenants residing together. When & how household bills are paid is decided and agreed during house meetings.
Food is the responsibility of the Service User, it can be discussed during house meetings if the Service User's wish to share the expense or be responsible for own shop. This will be identified in the individual care plans
Service User's are expected to pay Avalon's travel expenses including parking expenses for private journeys at 35 pence per mile. This cost will be shared between all Service User's who take the journey i.e. day trips, hospital appointments etc

Staff Accompany Charges
If a staff member accompanies Service User's on holidays, day trips, hospital appointments etc, Service User's are expected to pay staff travel expenses, accommodation and insurance. This will be shared equally between attending Service User's.