

InFocus

Supported Living

InFocus



Thanks for taking an interest in the InFocus supported living community here in Exeter.

Our accommodation gives young adults with vision impairment and other needs the opportunity to live as independently as possible, with just the right amount of support.

Experienced and caring staff are on hand to help you increase your independence and live your dreams, whether that's getting access to employment or volunteering, or getting more confident to live more independently.

I hope you'll find this information useful, and I look forward to meeting you in Exeter if you decide that you want to come and visit.

Shelley Mathews, Community Services Manager

The vision impairment & complex needs charity

The people we support and the places they call home

InFocus is a charity that supports people with vision impairment and complex needs.

Some of the young adults at InFocus have cerebral palsy, or maybe a learning disability that affects their vision. For others their vision impairment is their main challenge.



Bedrooms

Each bedroom has a bed, wardrobe and chest of drawers, and some of the rooms have their own en-suite bathroom. Lots of the residents have chosen to bring their own furniture or television, or personalise their rooms.

All rooms have keys or swipe-card access.

Communal living

Our houses have communal living areas with a TV in the lounge. Kitchens are equipped with a talking microwave oven, plus toaster, kettle, oven etc). There's also a small communal fridge, but we recommend that you bring your own so you have plenty of space to store your own food and drink.



Expert, caring staff, and person-centred support that meets your needs

Support Workers/Enablers

Our support team is available throughout the year, seven days a week (including cover overnight).

We can often arrange for occasional, additional support.

For example, staff to accompany you if you want to travel to another part of the country to visit friends and family.

Therapy and mobility

InFocus employs a team of mobility/ROVI (Rehabilitation Officer Visual Impairment) staff to help with habilitation and orientation (including using a long cane and travelling by public transport).

There are also tutors in Braille and Access Technology, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists and access to a music therapist.

All of these services can be booked during school term times at an additional cost (see Finance and Funding).

Cars and drivers

InFocus has a pool of cars (including larger vehicles with lifts for wheelchairs) which can be booked by residents.

If you have your own vehicle then we can arrange for it to be parked at InFocus, and for staff to be insured to drive you as required. All staff are carefully vetted each year before being allowed to drive for InFocus.



Adam, a Supported Living Resident says:

“There are nice big bedrooms, and the house is really nice. The staff are great”

How does the support work?

You will be supported with your tenancy and how to manage your own bank account, including setting up and managing direct debits and budgets.

We will also support you to manage utility bills (e.g. for your mobile phone), and to think about how to manage your bills as and when you decide to leave InFocus supported living.

You will manage your own medical appointments and medication with as much or as little support as you need. Our staff can help you find a



doctor, dentist etc in the local community, and support you to access your appointments.

You will be supported to manage your own benefits and payments and advocate for yourself with the local authorities.

You will be supported to do your own weekly shopping and cooking, as well as having responsibility for your own laundry.

Tom, a Supported Living Resident says:

“The support I have received from the staff has given me the confidence to independently plan and travel on my own, including recent trips to London”

If you want to find paid or voluntary employment then we can support you to explore opportunities in and around the local area.

You will be encouraged and supported to access community-based activities and sports clubs. We have links to drama, art, music and football clubs to name but a few. Exeter has a rich and vibrant cultural scene, and there are also lots of opportunities to enjoy the beautiful Devon coast and countryside which are on our doorstep.

You will also be living with other tenants so will have regular house meetings. This is an opportunity for you and your housemates to get together to decide how you run your home.

It will be your responsibility to manage your own personal space and to take a shared responsibility for the communal areas.



Frequently Asked Questions

How long can I stay for?

Some of our residents have been with us for a couple of years, and some have chosen to stay for much longer. The most important thing is that it's not just for a year!

Can I go home and visit my family?

Of course you can! It's your home, and you can choose to come and go as you wish.

Is it possible to live at InFocus just for term time or on an occasional basis?

Spaces are limited and are in demand, so we do ask you to rent your room throughout the year. It's not possible just to pay for term-time only accommodation.

Of course, it's your home, so if you wanted to go and stay with family for the summer or Christmas, or at any other time then that's absolutely fine. You would still need to pay your rent and bills for the whole month as usual.

Can I have visitors?

Visitors are welcome. You can have an overnight guest for two nights a week, as long as the other people in your house are happy (remember – it's their home too).

We don't have accommodation for visiting families, but can happily make local recommendations if your parents want to visit you here in Exeter.

Can I bring my own TV or other electrical items

Absolutely. All electrical appliances need to be PAT tested by InFocus before you use them in the house (£1.50 per device per year)

If you watch television in your own room (or on your iPad, laptop etc) then you will need your own TV license.

“All the staff are great. Especially as they help me plan trips away. I also get support in accessing work”

Will, Supported Living Resident



Finance and

Funding

The cost of Support Living is funded either by the individual (e.g. using a direct payment), their home local authority, or a combination of the two.

Each person can be supported to claim benefits such as housing benefit to help them meet their rent and household costs. They may need to pay something towards the support element depending on the charging policy of the referring local authority.

Deposit

A deposit is payable at the start of the tenancy, and held independently by a deposit protection scheme. This is usually returned at the end of the tenancy.

Rent and utilities

Rent is paid monthly. Please contact us for up-to-date rent costs.

Utilities (gas, electric, water, council tax, TV in main areas, maintenance, basic internet and shared phone) are paid monthly on top of rent.

Support from our enablers/support workers

This is an hourly rate for support - please contact us for current charges.

Use of vehicles and drivers

We charge an annual cost for insurance, then a fixed rate per mile.

Next steps

If you are interested in finding out more about Supported Living then we would recommend you to get in touch with our admissions team for an informal chat.

We recommend coming to visit us in Exeter, to meet some of the staff, and to see our houses (and any available rooms).

There is then a half-day assessment which helps us to make sure that we can meet your needs, and helps you to work out if we're the right place for you. We would then work out the costs of the supported living place, and talk about who will be funding it.

To start a conversation please email Shelley Mathews:

smathews@infocus-charity.org.uk or call 01392 454313.

Checklist for new tenants



Documents

(to be provided before the tenancy begins)

Please provide proof of identity (preferably a passport, but if not a birth certificate) and National Insurance number.

You will also need a bank account that is solely in your own name

If someone holds Deputyship, Guardianship or Lasting Power of Attorney for you then we will need to see verification of this.



Furniture

We provide you with a bed, wardrobe and chest of drawers. however, you are welcome to bring your own.

You might also want to bring additional furniture for your bedroom – we can tell you how much space there is in your room, or arrange another visit before you move in to help you plan what to bring.



Appliances and electrical equipment

We provide a single fridge in the communal kitchen, and some residents choose to have a fridge in their room so they have plenty of space to store their own food.

All electrical appliances need to be PAT tested by InFocus before you use them in the house (£1.50 per item).

If you watch television in your own room (or on your iPad, laptop etc) then you will need your own TV license.

