



Housing and Care: Defining settings

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Housing & Care: Defining settings

There are many types of housing with care and/or support available in Wales, allowing choice for residents with diverse needs and preferences. The language and terminology used to describe such housing and accommodation can lack clarity, with some terms being used interchangeably.

This was highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic, when a huge amount of guidance relating to these settings was being produced at pace. It has become evident that there are not widely understood shared definitions that enable officials and stakeholders to distinguish between the different types of provision, which sometimes results in confusion about how guidance should apply to each setting.

Community Housing Cymru and Cymorth Cymru have produced this guide to try and address this challenge, and to support informed decisions on the application of public health and coronavirus policy on a range of supported accommodation where care and/or support are provided. The goal is that all stakeholders can be confident and clear when discussing these types of housing and support.

NB:

- The terms 'supported accommodation' and 'supported housing' can be used interchangeably, and both may appear in this guide
- This guide **does**:
 - refer to accommodation and the registered care and housing related support services that are sometimes delivered in these settings
 - seek to help demystify and distinguish between settings and services, indicating typical features of each setting
 - include a number of appendices for your reference
 - indicate where the Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 (RH(W)A), when implemented, will affect some accommodation types in this document
- This guide **does not**:
 - aim to provide conclusive definitions for all settings and services
 - include care services registered with Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW), such as residential care and domiciliary care, as these are broadly well understood¹
- The following diagrams show, in two different ways, the broad categories of care and support and how they interact. The diagrams are not (and cannot be) exhaustive or comprehensive, as they are illustrating two separate systems that operate in different ways. People in 'care' can access support, and people in 'support' can also receive care. Any person in any setting may in theory be in receipt of domiciliary care or floating support.

¹ For a list of regulated services, see here: [Regulation and Inspection of Social Care \(Wales\) Act 2016](#)

Diagram #1

This diagram demonstrates the overlapping of groupings within these settings and services. The number of circles and overlaps shows the complexity of this landscape and the diversity of the sector; it also demonstrates how confusing the picture can become without clarity and shared understanding.

For example:

- Shared Lives and Supported Living sit in: **Registered Care, Domiciliary Care, Support** - but not Supported Housing
- Sheltered Housing and Extra Care Housing sit in: **Registered Care, Domiciliary Care, Support** and **Supported Housing**
- Floating Support and Housing First sit in: **Support** - but not Supported Housing or Care

NB: The diagram cannot capture the full complexity of every permeation of a model, instead it aims to capture broad definitions for easy understanding. Please see tables further down for more specific descriptions.

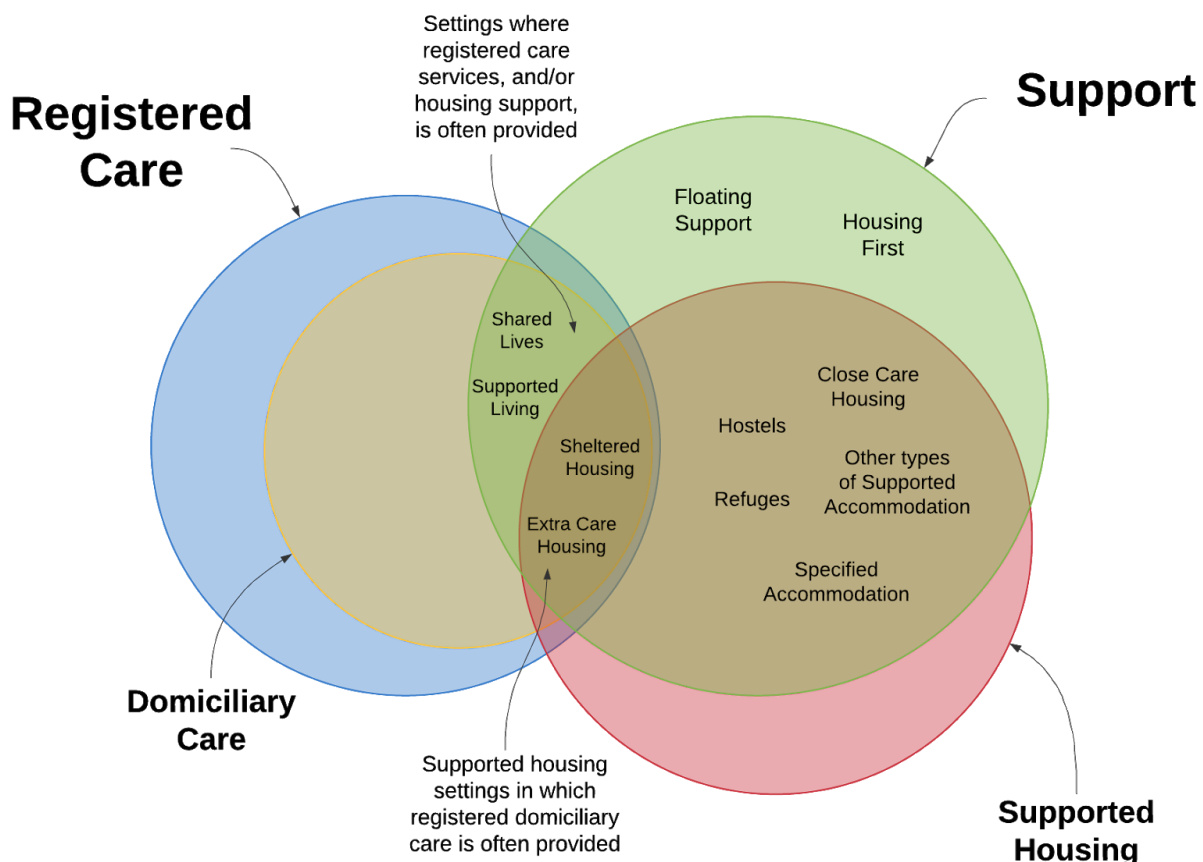
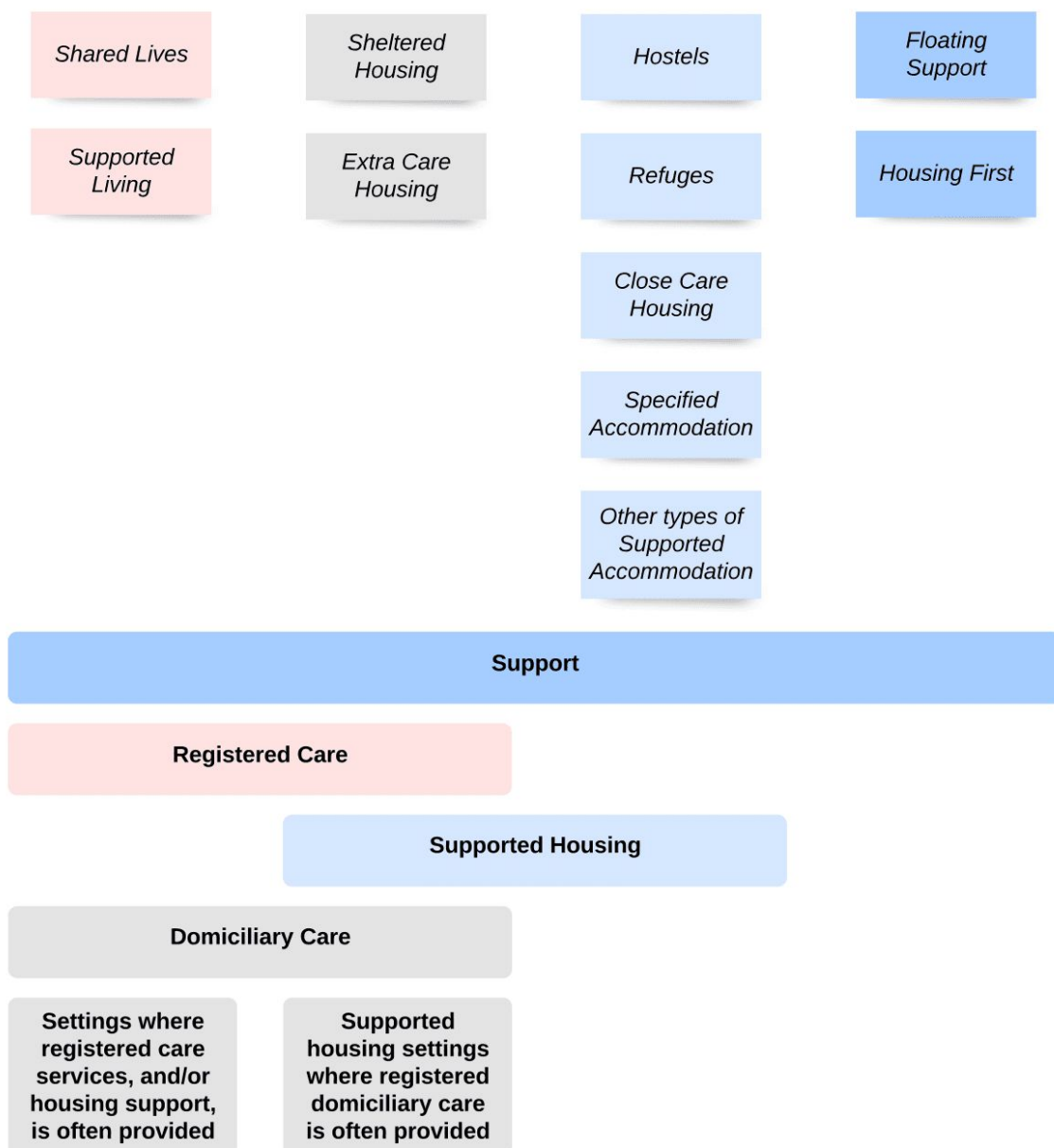


Diagram #2

This diagram shows the continuum of supported accommodation where care and/or support are provided; registered care is on the left hand side, and the settings gradually move towards support.

You will see banners running along the bottom of this diagram, indicating groupings of services and settings within this continuum.

NB: The diagram cannot capture the full complexity of every permeation of a model, instead it aims to capture broad definitions for easy understanding. Please see tables further down for more specific descriptions.



Supported Living²	
Also known as	Support for living, can include Shared Lives
Typical service user	People who are considered vulnerable due to needs such as learning disabilities, autism, mental illness or alcohol/drug dependency
Service type/ support level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Domiciliary care - Distinct from residential care as the tenancy is separate to the support provided, even if the landlord is also the provider
Services typically offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Domestic help - Cooking meals - Personal care - Going shopping - Varies from a few hours per week to a 24/7 basis
Tenure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), charities and private providers: usually Assured Shorthold Tenancy agreement (AST) - Local authorities (LAs): AST (if through a support provider), secure tenancy, license - Upon implementation of the RH(W)A, this accommodation type will be likely to offer the Standard Supported Contract or the Standard Contract
Staffing	Varies.
Access	Varies. Can be own front door or shared entrance
Self-contained	Can be shared housing or self-contained units
Communal spaces	Yes
Revenue Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Housing Benefit (HB) - Housing Support Grant (HSG) - Adult social care funding - Mental health-related funding
Regulation, monitoring and/or inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CIW (domiciliary care element only) - Care workforce is registered with SCW - Monitored under the HSG process if in receipt

² For more information, please see:

<https://www.wlga.wales/support-for-living-services-for-people-with-learning-disabilities>

Shared Lives	
Also known as	Adult Placements
Typical service user	People with temporary or permanent support needs, such as older people, care leavers, stroke survivors; people with learning disabilities, mental illness or dementia; and any adult who has identified support and housing needs
Service type/ support level	Matches an individual with an approved carer who shares their family and community life with, and gives care and support to, the individual.
Services typically offered	The individual may move in with their carer and their family, or have regular daytime and/or overnight visits
Tenure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If an arrangement is long-term, rent and service charge will be payable to the carer under a Licence Agreement and a Shared Lives agreement (usually with a 28 day notice period). - The RH(W)A will not affect this type of occupancy agreement.
Staffing	Shared Lives workers check, assess, train, monitor and support Shared Lives Carers. Direct care and support are provided by approved, self-employed Shared Lives Carers who must work as part of a registered Shared Lives Scheme.
Access	Individuals will have their own front door key unless there are specific reasons not to.
Self-contained	Individuals have their own room within the Shared Lives Carer's family home.
Communal spaces	The individual and Shared Lives Carer share family life including shared communal spaces.
Revenue Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HB - HSG - Adult social care funding - Mental health-related funding - Self-funding
Regulation, monitoring and/or inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CIW - Monitored under the HSG process if in receipt - Shared Lives Managers are registered with Social Care Wales (SCW)

Sheltered Housing	
Also known as	Retirement Housing
Typical service user	Older people, typically 55+. Some schemes accept 50+ with medical evidence
Service type/ support level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is no clear definition of sheltered housing as a model - Service users' support needs vary from none to very high - Some schemes may resemble general needs accommodation; support is provided to individuals as required in a similar way to general needs housing, rather than being provided to all tenants - The environment may be adapted to include raised sockets and hardwired alarms.
Services typically offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 24-hour emergency help through an alarm system - Social activities - Tenancy-related support
Tenure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rent (long term tenancies, assured tenancy for RSLs or secure tenancy for LAs) - Upon implementation of the RH(W)A, Secure Contracts will be the main contract type for retirement housing - Occupiers/residents may also purchase their home within some retirement housing schemes
Staffing	May include on-site/nearby scheme manager(s) or warden(s), and a team of support staff. Additional support may be provided by Housing Officers or Tenancy Support Officers
Access	Own front door. Access through main door may be controlled by individuals
Self-contained	Yes
Communal spaces	Sometimes
Revenue Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-paid rent and/or HB (or Universal Credit [UC] if below pension age unless scheme is specified accommodation, where HB can be claimed instead) - HSG for support/supervision provided (much less common)
Regulation, monitoring and/or inspection	Monitored under the HSG process if in receipt

Extra Care Housing	
Also known as	Assisted Living, Enhanced Sheltered Housing, Very Sheltered Housing, Housing with Care
Typical service user	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Older people (55/60+) - People with disabilities, poor mobility or low support or care needs - People with no current, but who anticipate future, care needs - People with high care needs where Extra Care may be preferable to residential care - Couples with differing support or care needs
Service type/ support level	<p>- Care is regularly provided for some residents but, importantly, not all. Requiring care or support is not a precondition for many Extra Care schemes, and many intentionally have tenants with a range of abilities and needs.</p> <p>- Care and/or support may not necessarily be provided “in-house” by the landlord. It may be provided by separate agencies commissioned by LAs.</p>
Services typically offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Domestic help - Personal care - 24-hour emergency help through an alarm system - Social activities - Tenancy-related support - (Sometimes) some meals
Tenure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rent (long term tenancies, assured tenancy for RSLs or secure tenancy for LAs) - Upon implementation of the RH(W)A, Secure Contracts will be the main contract type for retirement housing - Occupiers/residents may also purchase their home within some retirement housing schemes.
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On-site/nearby scheme manager (warden) and/or team of support staff - (Sometimes) care staff on-site
Access	Own front door. Access through main door may be controlled by individuals
Self-contained	Yes
Communal spaces	Yes
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-paid rent and/or HB (or UC if below pension age, unless scheme is specified accommodation, where HB can be claimed instead) - Adult social care funding (where individuals receive commissioned domiciliary care) - HSG
Regulation, monitoring and/or inspection	Monitored under the HSG process if in receipt CIW (care element only)

Abbeyfield model	
Also known as	
Typical service user	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elderly people (80+) - People with poor mobility, who are frail and/or are less independent
Service type/ support level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small scale provision - En-suite room within a shared home of 8-9 residents - Care is regularly provided for some residents but not all - Care is not necessarily provided “in-house” by the landlord. It may be provided by separate agencies commissioned by LAs
Services typically offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Domestic help - 24-hour emergency help through an alarm system - Social activities - Tenancy-related support - Two meals per day
Tenure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assured tenancy - Upon implementation of the RH(W)A, Secure Contracts will be the main contract type for retirement housing
Staffing	Team of support staff 7 days per week
Access	Own front door to room. Shared entrance to home
Self-contained	No - en-suite room only
Communal spaces	Yes - lounge and dining area
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-paid rent and/or HB - Adult social care funding (where individuals receive commissioned domiciliary care) - HSG (for homes with mental health/substance misuse support only)
Regulation, monitoring and/or inspection	Monitored under the HSG process if in receipt

Close Care Housing	
Also known as	
Typical service user	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Older people (55/60+) - Older couples where one partner needs to be in a care home but the other does not - People with a diagnosis of a deteriorating condition - People who benefit from the reassurance of nearby help even if it is not currently required
Service type/ support level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Independent flats, houses or bungalows linked to/on the same site as a care home - Care and support needs vary significantly - Allows residents to move to care home in future if appropriate
Services typically offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Domestic help - Social activities - Some meals - Other services can be purchased from care home (e.g. emergency response to alarm calls, short term support following an operation)
Tenure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rent (long term tenancies, assured tenancy for RSLs or secure tenancy for LAs) - Upon implementation of the RH(W)A, Secure Contracts will be the main contract type for retirement housing. - Occupiers/residents may also purchase their home within some retirement housing schemes. Some schemes offer a guaranteed buy back facility upon end of residency.
Staffing	Depends on the type of care home with which the accommodation is associated
Access	Own front door
Self-contained	Yes
Communal spaces	Yes - can join in with social activities and meals in the care home
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-paid rent and/or HB (or UC if below pension age unless scheme is specified accommodation, where HB can be claimed instead) - HSG - Ownership
Regulation, monitoring and/or inspection	Monitored under the HSG process if in receipt

Hostels	
Also known as	Night shelter, direct access supported accommodation
Typical service user	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Single homeless people - People who are street homeless - Prison leavers - Homeless families
Service type/ support level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Short term or emergency supported accommodation - Some services may operate in a way similar to supported living, for longer periods of time
Services typically offered	<p>Holistic needs-led, person-centred support to move on to longer-term housing. May include support around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Managing money and budgeting - Claiming welfare benefits - Gaining access to other services - Accessing leisure, skills and employment opportunities - Improving the quality of life and well-being - Referral to other services where appropriate - Pre-tenancy support and setting up a tenancy for Move-On
Tenure	Generally, licenses (whether protected or excluded) to reflect the short term nature of the stay.
Staffing	Can be 24/7 or specific times/hours
Access	Varies. Can be own front door or shared entrance
Self-contained	Can be shared housing, self-contained units or dispersed accommodation
Communal spaces	Food preparation facilities and shared bathrooms
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HB (as accommodation usually specified) - HSG - Charitable funding
Regulation, monitoring and/or inspection	Monitored through the HSG processes

Refuges	
Also known as	Safehouses
Typical service user	People and families fleeing domestic abuse and violence
Service type/ support level	Emergency / short term accommodation
Services typically offered	<p>Holistic needs-led, person-centred support to move on to longer-term housing. May include support around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lifesaving and preventative work in response to Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) - Navigating the justice system - For children and young people - Managing money and budgeting - Claiming welfare benefits - Gaining access to other services - Accessing leisure, skills and employment opportunities - Support to improve the quality of life and well-being - Referral to other services where appropriate - Pre-tenancy support and setting up a tenancy for Move-On
Tenure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Generally licenses, or ASTs (if managed by an RSL or charity), reflecting the transitory nature of the stay. - Under the RH(W)A, once implemented, refuges will mostly use licenses or the standard supported contract.
Staffing	Can be 24/7 or specific times/hours
Access	Varies. Can be own front door or shared entrance
Self-contained	Can be shared housing, self-contained units or dispersed accommodation
Communal spaces	Kitchens, bathrooms, living areas, playrooms for children
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HB (as accommodation usually specified) - HSG - VAWDASV-specific funding
Regulation, monitoring and/or inspection	Monitored through HSG processes

Other types of Supported Accommodation	
Also known as	General supported accommodation
Typical service user	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - People leaving homelessness with support needs - Care leavers and young people leaving homelessness - People with mental ill-health or dementia - People with substance use issues - Ex-offenders
Service type/ support level	Generally up to two years with varying intensities of support
Services typically offered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support with emotional issues - Managing money and budgeting; claiming welfare benefits - Gaining access to other services e.g. mental health and substance misuse - Diversionary activities (gym, hobbies, etc) to maintain health and wellbeing - Accessing leisure, skills and employment opportunities - Pre-tenancy support and setting up a tenancy for Move-On - Improving the quality of life and well-being - Referral to other services where appropriate
Tenure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - RSLs, charities and private providers: licenses, assured tenancy or assured shorthold tenancy (depending on whether self-contained or shared) - LAs: licenses or secure tenancies - Under the RH(W)A, once implemented, a range of occupation contracts/licenses may be used, depending on the length of stay etc. These include: license, secure contract, standard contract and standard supported contract.
Staffing	Can be 24/7 or specific times/hours
Access	Varies. Can be own front door or shared entrance
Self-contained	Can be shared housing, self-contained units within a block or dispersed housing
Communal spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Usually kitchens, dining areas, bathrooms and living areas - (Sometimes) activity or training rooms
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HB (as accommodation usually specified) - HSG - For some care leavers, funding via LA
Regulation, monitoring and/or inspection	Monitored through HSG processes

Appendix A - Historic Models

Historic models of supported housing have left a legacy of terminology which is still in use today by some housing/care professionals.

In 1969, a Ministry of Housing and Local Government circular laid out standards for sheltered housing and introduced the concepts of category 1 and category 2. Key features are as follows.

Category 1 sheltered housing:

- Communal facilities and a resident warden are optional
- May have an alarm system
- Dwellings can be bungalows as well as flats
- Lifts are not usually provided
- Intended for the relatively independent elderly

Category 2 sheltered housing:

- Communal facilities, resident wardens and lifts are compulsory
- Usually has an alarm system
- Dwellings are flats under one roof
- Intended for more dependent elderly and/or disabled people

This circular has not been mandatory since 1980, but the Category 1 and 2 models are still found in operation across the UK.^{3,4}

During the 1980s, some local authorities in the UK began to build Category 2.5 housing for frail elderly and people who need more continuous personal care. Category 2.5 sheltered housing was also known as 'very sheltered housing' and 'extra care housing'.⁵

³ [House of Commons Hansard Debates for 14 Jun 2000 \(pt 5\)](#)

⁴ [Institute of Public Care Housing for older people in Wales: a sector review of sheltered housing January 2017](#)

⁵ [From Sheltered Housing to Lifetime Homes: an inclusive approach to housing. Dr. Julienne Hanson. 2001](#)

Appendix B - Floating Support

Floating Support (sometimes called tenancy sustainment support) falls under the wide umbrella of Supported Housing, but **does not include an accommodation element**. It follows the individual rather than their housing, meaning that the support is not withdrawn if the person loses their tenancy or has to leave their home. It is typically funded via the Housing Support Grant (HSG).

The service supports adults (aged 16+) who are at high risk of losing their home, regardless of tenure or accommodation type. Support is generally short term, and involves a support worker visiting the person in their own home or nearby.

Floating Support aims to help the person develop the skills they need to live independently and successfully manage a home.

This can include:

- Setting up and maintaining a home or tenancy
- Preventing or addressing a threat of homelessness
- Managing money and budgeting
- Claiming welfare benefits
- Gaining access to other services
- Help to make sure the accommodation is safe and secure
- Accessing leisure, skills and employment opportunities
- VAWDASV services for people fleeing domestic abuse and violence

People accessing Floating Support might include:

- Young people
- Care leavers
- Homeless people
- People fleeing domestic abuse and violence
- Former offenders
- People with mental illness
- People with physical or learning disabilities
- People struggling with substance misuse

Appendix C - Housing First

Housing First is a recovery-oriented approach to ending homelessness that centres on moving people experiencing homelessness into independent and permanent housing and then providing additional support and services as needed. The concept has been applied most specifically with people who are rough sleepers or at least very marginally housed, and who have chronic and complex support needs.⁶ By ensuring that people experiencing these issues have a place to call home, rather than interim accommodation, they are better placed to engage with intensive support, although they don't have to as a precondition of moving into the accommodation.

Housing First schemes provide **long-term accommodation** (usually a shared/single flat, and not part of an institution) with **intensive, flexible support** that is not time-limited. Accommodation is let via the same tenancy a landlord would offer to a general needs tenant.

The support provided can be wide-ranging and will involve various agencies in addition to the support provider. It might include support with health or mental health issues, substance use issues, tenancy sustainment and life skills.

Schemes are monitored through HSG processes, and may be funded via:

- HB (or UC if accommodation not 'specified')
- HSG
- Various additional Housing First related funding

People accessing Housing First services might include:

- People with high and complex needs
- People who are chronically street homeless
- People who are unable to benefit from a hostel or other temporary shared setting

There are separate principles and additional considerations for Housing First for Youth/Young People:

- Different models of accommodation may be required to reflect that young people may need shared accommodation, etc;
- Support sits with the young person as an individual, not the accommodation
- Support workers delivering Housing First for Youth should be experts in working with young people, rather than generalists.⁷

⁶ [Housing First \(HF\) – National Principles and Guidance for Wales, February 2018](#)

⁷ <https://www.cymorthcymru.org.uk/en/news-blog/news/housing-first-youth>

Appendix D - Temporary Accommodation

Temporary accommodation describes housing secured to provide accommodation to people who are homeless, but where there is **no support offered as part of the accommodation**. Residents in temporary accommodation may be in receipt of floating or other support but this is not attached to their accommodation. People living in temporary accommodation are still statutory homeless.

Temporary accommodation may take the form of private rented sector (PRS) or social rented housing and, in some cases, B&B/hotel placements.

In some definitions, hostels and refuges are classed as temporary accommodation as well as supported accommodation. However, not all temporary accommodation is supported accommodation (e.g. placements in B&Bs etc.).

Appendix E - Specified Accommodation⁸

In 2014 the UK Government introduced the Housing Benefit and Universal Credit (Supported Housing) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 ('the Regulations'), which created a new category of 'specified accommodation'. In such accommodation, help with the rent is excluded from both the overall benefit cap and UC.

Specified accommodation always includes an element of care, support and supervision. It can therefore be assumed that any accommodation classified as *specified* would be classed as supported housing. However, in most instances supported accommodation is not classified as *specified* for whatever reason; the Supported Accommodation Review found that just 18% of supported accommodation in Wales was specified (as of 2015 data collection).⁹ Specified accommodation therefore cannot be used as a catch-all definition of whether accommodation is supported or not.

A project may fall into more than one of the four categories of specified accommodation.

1. Exempt accommodation

Excluded from:

- HB calculated on less than the full rent (minus ineligible service charges)
- Household benefit cap
- Social housing size criteria (bedroom tax)
- UC housing costs arrangements – calculated and paid monthly in arrears

Only covers claimants in accommodation where the landlord also provides the claimant with care, support or supervision – even if through a sub-contractor.

2. Supported housing where the landlord does not provide the care, support or supervision

Similar to the definition of exempt accommodation, except:

- It does not matter who provides the claimant with care, support or provision.
- The claimant must have been 'admitted' to the accommodation 'in order to meet a need for care, support or supervision' – so it only applies to people who have moved into supported accommodation, not people in general needs accommodation who are later given a package of care or support.

Covers claimants with the same landlords as exempt accommodation, but not those whose landlord is a housing authority or a private for-profit individual or organisation.

⁸ [Briefing: Specified Accommodation Definition, National Housing Federation, August 2018](#)

⁹ [Supported accommodation review: The scale, scope and cost of the supported housing sector, November 2016](#)

3. Domestic violence refuges

- Covers accommodation provided by a local housing authority as well as those landlords mentioned above
- The accommodation must consist of a building or part of a building that is used wholly or mainly for non-permanent accommodation of people who have left their homes as a result of domestic violence
- There is no requirement that the claimant needs or receives any care, support or supervision

4. Housing authority non-self-contained supported housing (e.g. hostels)

Protection from UC housing costs and the household benefit cap extends to housing authority supported housing – but only if the claimant’s accommodation is not self-contained.

Self-contained’ is generally understood to mean the claimant must have in their own premises facilities for:

- Eating
- Sleeping
- Cooking – unless, perhaps, all meals are provided
- Washing – of the person, not just a toilet and a hand basin of the claimant’s own.

The recent benefit changes apply as follows:

- **Household benefit cap** - since the Regulations came into force, people who claim HB in respect of specified accommodation (as well as exempt accommodation) have been ignored for the purposes of the benefit cap
- **Size criteria (the ‘bedroom tax’)** - categories 2, 3 and 4 above are not protected from the bedroom tax because HB is assessed under normal HB rules for social housing, unlike ‘exempt accommodation’ where the size criteria does not apply
- **UC** - housing costs for those living in ‘specified accommodation’ cannot be met through UC and must be paid through HB instead. A tenant can still receive UC but will have no entitlement to help with housing costs in UC and has to make a separate claim for HB to cover the cost of the rent.

Appendix F - Abbreviations

AST	Assured Shorthold Tenancy agreement
CIW	Care Inspectorate Wales
HB	Housing Benefit
HSG	Housing Support Grant
PRS	Private Rented Sector
LA	Local Authority
RH(W)A	Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016
RSL	Registered Social Landlord
UC	Universal Credit
SCW	Social Care Wales
VAWDASV	Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence