

Housing

Last Updated Saturday, 14 May 2016

Butler Gardens is a ten-bedroom supported housing scheme, which provides an abstinence-based environment for people committed to tackling their substance misuse. It is a modern detached building owned by Southern Housing Group but staffed by The Real World Trust. generally it has the atmosphere of a large friendly house.

Butler Gardens operates under the Supporting People framework (see link to their web site) and access to Butler Gardens is via a referral process from social services or health agencies providing that a room is available or likley to be so within the foreseeable future.

Length of stay is dependent upon needs and availability of other accommodation; however, an average length of stay would be between 4-6 months. Residents are allocated a support worker from the Butler Gardens team who meet regularly with each resident to work on a "Support Plan" and assist with any issues which may arise and offer advice to help people to achieve their potential. this might include accessing treatment for substance abuse and voluntary work, training, education or employment later on - in addition to discussions regarding future housing opportunities.

Rent is charged for a room at Butler Gardens and use of the shared facilities, together with service charges for shared and individual facilities; however, for people in receipt of benefits most of this charge can (dependant on individual circumstances) be covered by Housing Benefits. Staff are able to assist with this process and with completion of the necessary forms. All residents do, however, need to find (for 2015) £8-9 per week for individual use of fuel and water.

What is expected

All residents sign a Licence Agreement - a type of tenancy used in shared housing - and this includes agreeing to certain rules which are in place in order to provide a safe environment for people in abstention from alcohol or drugs. These include:

- Being in between 11pm and 7am, and only taking nights out by prior agreement following the first month's stay.
- Attending morning meetings each Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
- Attending (at least) four meetings of Alcoholics or Narcotics Anonymous during the first four weeks' stay - obviously what is said at the meetings is confidential because of the nature of the organisations.
- Taking responsibility for cleaning some of the communal areas each week on a rota basis.
- Keeping any medication in the office, and taking it in the presence of a staff member.
- Agreeing to (random) breath or urine tests for alcohol or non-prescribed drugs.

When the above rules are observed, the house is generally a happy and relaxed place!