



THE
HOUSE PROJECT
Lancashire

Contingency Policy

2023 - 2025



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| Related Procedures | LCC Emergency Preparedness and Response Procedure (intranet) |
| Relevant Guidance | Supported Accommodation (England) Regulations 2023 LCC Health, Safety and Quality Homepage (intranet) LCC Health, Safety and Quality – Emergency Preparedness and Response Matrix |
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1 Introduction

This contingency policy sets out the process of planning for and intervention as a result of disruptive incidents and in particular what would happen to the young people supported by Lancashire's House Project if business continuity was to be compromised. Where the disruption affects critical business process, the consequences can be severe. The contingency policy outlines the actions that should be taken by the Registered Service Manager and LHP Practitioners.

Lancashire's House Project is part of Lancashire County Council and has access to the council's business continuity and resilience resources such as Health, Safety and Quality Services, Facility Management or ICT Services. It is part of Lancashire's Children's Services and integrated in the Children's Permanence Service for children in our care and care leaver. Hence it has access to Children's Services resources such as commissioning, facilities, management and staffing. It is included in all internal communication and works in close internal collaboration with the Children in our Care and Leaving Care Teams.

All LHP Practitioners have completed training on Health and Safety and Information Governance.

A Location Risk Assessment is completed for every LHP Home, every LHP Home meets statutory health & safety requirements as evidenced by the Registered Social Landlord and the LHP Facilitator undertakes a visual health and safety check of the LHP Home to reduce and mitigate risks of service disruption.

Young People of the House Project are provided with advice and guidance on keeping safe, emergency situations, fire safety, emergency contacts and the location of main fuse box and stop cocks specific to their LHP Home. The information is also kept by the LHP Facilitator for future reference.

Arrangements are in place for all young people to take on the tenancy of their LHP Home when turning 18 years old and these arrangements are made at point of the young person moving into their LHP Home (CLA Placement start with LHP). The

trustee arrangement to enable the young person to reside in their LHP Home pre 18 is provided by Lancashire County Council and therefore protected from any potential changes to Lancashire's House Project.

2 Incidents impacting on health, safety or quality, or business continuity

For incidents impacting on the health, safety, quality or business continuity of Lancashire's House Project refer to LCC's Health, Safety and Quality Service and Children's Services Resilience Plans provided by its senior leadership team, when required. Such incidents include:

- Adverse/Severe weather conditions
- Bomb Threat
- Civil unrest/public disorder
- Child Abduction
- Death of a child or member of staff
- Disaster in the local community
- Fire
- Gas Leak
- Industrial Actions
- Loss of services (electricity, water)
- Medical emergency/epidemic/pandemic
- Missing child/vulnerable person
- Safeguarding breach/violence/assault
- Serious traffic incident
- Suspect packages
- Water leak/flood/heavy rain

Further incidents are listed on the Emergency Preparedness and Response Matrix of the LCC's Health, Safety and Quality Service.

3 Where a young person cannot continue to reside in their LHP Home

Lancashire's House Project maintains regular communication with all Registered Social Landlords to identify any reasons why a young person may not be able to continue residing in their LHP Home early. This allows for preventative actions to be taken and planned support to be provided to the young person to reduce the likelihood for the young person having to move out of their LHP Home. The LHP facilitator will inform the young person and their social worker of such issues or concerns at the earliest opportunity and keep them informed of progress.

In the event that a young person is unable to continue residing in their LHP Home for whatever reason (temporarily or permanently), the Registered Service Manager should work with the Registered Social Landlord to identify suitable alternative accommodation.

Where this is not a viable option or possible, the Registered Service Manager should notify the social worker and Independent Reviewing Officer and liaise with the social worker to identify alternative supported accommodation through the My Home My Place process. The social worker will identify how the young person will be included in the decision making about this.

4 Significant levels of staff absence

Significant levels of staff absence e.g. as a result of long-term sickness or vacancies can compromise the service delivery of Lancashire's House Project. The issue is to be escalated to the Head of Permanence Service by the Registered Service Manager. In the first instance, the Head of Permanence Service will consider whether sufficient cover for the continuation of service delivery can be provided from the resources of the Permanence Service.

Where this is a medium to long-term issue, the Registered Service Manager should consider the appropriateness of agency recruitment and seek the required approvals to do so, where identified as necessary.

LHP Practitioners should inform the social worker and young person of any planned absences that may have an impact on service delivery and the steps taken by Lancashire's House Project to mitigate such impact.

Where absence is unplanned, the LHP Lead (or Registered Service Manager in their absence) will inform the social worker and young person of any practitioner's absence that may impact on service delivery and the steps taken by Lancashire's House Project to mitigate such impact.

5 Reduced number of LHP Homes (planned)

Lancashire's House Project has Service Level Agreements in place with each Registered Social Landlord who offers a property to Lancashire's House Project. The Registered Service Manager confirms the number of properties offered by each Registered Social Landlord annually and the LHP Lead maintains regular contact with each Registered Social Landlord regarding timing and suitability of properties offered. The number of young people accepted to Lancashire's House Project per cohort is set in accordance with the number of properties offered by Registered Social Landlords.

6 Insufficient number of LHP Homes (unplanned)

Lancashire's House Project relies on studio or 1 bedroom social housing properties in specific areas while availability of properties varies and fluctuates over time. Early and regular liaison by the LHP Lead with each Registered Social Landlord enables appropriate and timely planning to secure LHP Homes for whenever a young person is ready to move in. Regular liaison by LHP Practitioners with the social worker and young person ensures they are actively involved in the process and information is available to inform the young person's care and pathway plan.

In the extremely rare and exceptional circumstance where the number of properties offered to the House Project reduces below the required and agreed numbers due to an unexpected reduction in the availability of studio and 1 bedroom properties, the Registered Service Manager should liaise with the social worker to seek agreement for the young person to continue residing in their current home until a LHP Home becomes available. The social worker will identify who and how the young person will be informed.

Where this is not a viable option or possible, the Registered Service Manager should notify the social worker and Independent Reviewing Officer and liaise with the social worker who is to identify alternative supported accommodation through the My Home My Place process. The social worker will identify how the young person will be included in the decision making about this.

7 Planned ending of Lancashire's House Project

If Children's Social Care decides to end Lancashire's House Project, this can and will be done in a planned way. Lancashire's House Project will not accept any new young people into the project and support those already in the project to move into their LHP Homes when it is the right time for them. Once the last tenancy of a LHP Home has transferred to the young person upon their 18th birthday Lancashire's House Project will cease.

Any follow up support to young people aged 18 and above will be provided by Lancashire's Leaving Care Service in the same way as for any other former relevant care leaver.

8 Unplanned ending of Lancashire's House Project

If Lancashire's House Project has to cease in an unplanned way, the Registered Service Manager should notify the Head of Permanence Service to access all available resources of Children's Services to reduce the impact of the disruption on the young people and support the process of identifying alternative supported accommodation provisions.



The Registered Service Manager should notify the social worker and Independent Reviewing Officer and liaise with the social worker who is to identify alternative supported accommodation through the My Home My Place process. The social worker will identify how the young person will be included in the decision making about this.