

Introduction to Culverdale

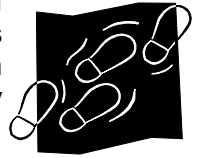
*A SEMI-INDEPENDENT HOUSE FOR PEOPLE SUFFERING WITH
MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES*



This Guide is accurate as of **April 2011**. It is reviewed and changed periodically to reflect current practice.

A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

Crossways Community is a Christian charity caring for people with mental health difficulties. Founded in 1967, Crossways has grown steadily through the years and the Community now runs two houses and a block of flats, all situated in the vicinity of Culverden Park Road in Tunbridge Wells. Although all our full time staff are Christians, it is not required that anyone who comes to us for help has any particular belief.



Treating each other fairly

In the same way that Crossways treats everybody equally, we ask that everyone who comes to us respects other people, their beliefs and lifestyle. This means that residents, staff members and visitors will treat each other in way that they would expect to be treated themselves. Bullying, abuse and being disrespectful will not be tolerated.

The care in each home is tailored to meet specific needs; people in No. 8 have more acute mental health difficulties, whilst those opposite in No. 5 (Culverdale) are, in the main, able to live more independently. In both houses, the Community endeavours to provide a caring and safe environment in which to live.

Culverdale

Culverdale is a purpose built house which is ideal for those, aged between 18 and 64, who need a place to live as a long or short term stepping stone to greater independence. Set in an attractive garden, we have two self contained flats and 16 fully furnished single bedsits with ensuite facilities. The kitchens are shared with 3 others and although each room has a shower, there is a bathroom on each floor if you prefer (there may be a small charge for the use of the bath). There are two communal lounges with colour televisions and video players. You are free to come and go as you wish and to take part in the optional leisure activities.



We hope you will regard Culverdale as your home and we encourage you to treat your room as such. Basic support is available during weekdays if you need help and encouragement. If it is your intention to move on eventually to greater independence, you will receive appropriate instruction.

Application Process

- You must be able to:
- Self medicate,
- Shop,
- Cook,
- Care for yourself
- Be able to occupy your time appropriately.
- You must also be willing, should the need arise, to come under the care of a Psychiatrist, Care Co-ordinator or CPN.
- You are required to take the medication prescribed by your specialist and failure to do so is regarded as a breach of your licence. We can arrange for medication to be delivered to the house on either a weekly or monthly basis, if this would be helpful.



If you would like to apply for a place at Culverdale, please contact your Care Manager, who will discuss it with you and if appropriate will contact us to arrange an informal look-around. During the informal look around you will be shown a typical room and all the other facilities available to residents, you will meet some of the staff, and will have an opportunity to ask any questions you have. In addition this "Introduction to Culverdale" brochure covers a lot of areas regarding living at Culverdale.

We will give your Care Manager a set of application forms to complete and return to us. One form will need to be filled out by you (you can ask your Care Manager to help you with this), one will be filled out by your Care Manager and one by your Psychiatrist.

Once these forms have been completed and returned to the office, we will contact your Care Manager and invite you back for a more formal interview. You are welcome to bring someone with you to this. The purpose of this interview is

to carry out an assessment of your needs, look at what support you might need and consider whether we are able to help you. This will simply involve us asking you a few questions about different areas of your life including information on your physical and mental health, what you do with your day, and other needs you might have. There will also be an opportunity for you to ask us questions about living at Culverdale.

Successful applicants will be informed in writing and any additional information needed to process their application will be requested. Unsuccessful applicants will be given a written

explanation.

You may appeal against an unsuccessful application. This will be carried out by staff members other than those who were at the initial interview and will include a member of the management team. Your case will be reviewed independently of the views of staff at your interview. You are welcome to bring with you a family member, friend or



advocate. With your permission, your Care Manager and other professionals involved with your care will be asked for their opinion. The appeal panel will inform you in writing of their decision with an explanation. If your appeal is successful you will be offered a place at Culverdale when one becomes available, if your appeal is unsuccessful we will try to suggest other places that may be able to help meet your needs.

The house has been specifically designed for people with mental health difficulties, for example the out of hours emergency pager. We feel we would also be able to make special provision for people with auditory disabilities and other sensory loss. However, given the structure of the building, we regret we can not provide facilities for people with physical disabilities which severely impair movement.

What you will need

If you have been offered a place at Culverdale, there are a few things that need to be arranged. Firstly, between us we will have to arrange a moving-in date.

Once this has been agreed, you will need to:

- Get a housing benefit form from the Town Hall which we will help you fill out if you pop in to see us.
- Return the housing benefit form to the Town Hall, with any other information or documentation they may have requested from you, a least one week before your moving in date.
- Then you will need to make sure you have all the items you need to move in with. Although the bed-sits come furnished you will need your own bedding, pillows and linen, pots and pans, crockery and cutlery for the kitchen.
- You are welcome to bring your own furniture for your room. For fire safety reasons you may not be able to bring some furniture, a member of staff can give you advice on this.
- We also like to encourage you to choose the paint for your own rooms, normally this will be done by asking you to look at some colour sheets and choose one before you move in, so we can have the room decorated for when you arrive, but you are also welcome to redecorate your own room whilst you are here, so long as you inform the staff you are going to do so and check that the type of paint you are planning to use is safe for use within Culverdale. If you are bringing a television with you, you will need to get a Television Licence, addressed to your own room.



Settling-in Period

The first six months of your stay will be a settling-in or trial period so that we can assess whether we are the best place to provide you with the level and type of support you need. A review of your place after this time.

Financial Arrangements



When you fill out your housing benefit form you will be told how much your rent will be. This will be based on the rent for your room, some of the bills (i.e. water rates) plus an amount to cover the support we expect to give you. Housing benefit and Supporting People will cover the majority of this (as long as you don't have too much in savings) but you will need to pay a small amount per week to cover the difference, usually between £5 – £10 per week, but a higher amount if you have more than £6,000 in savings or have other money coming in. The rent is reviewed annually with increases usually applied in April.

If you are employed (part-time or full-time) please ensure you let us know of any amounts you receive and any changes in your income/hours worked and if you receive Working Tax Credit.

We ask everybody to have their housing benefit and supporting people payment paid directly to Crossways, and to give us permission to contact these agencies directly on your behalf. This seems to make life easier for us both as we can try to sort out any problems there may be with the payment of the benefits. We will pass on to you any information we receive regarding your benefits as soon as practically possible. You will also be billed each month for the electricity you use in your room as these are metered individually. If you have difficulty with budgeting your money, will we try to help you get into a routine.

Living at Culverdale

Once a someone moves in he/she will be expected to occupy their time in appropriate ways, this will vary from person to person. If you feel you have too much time and too little to do the staff may be able to give you advise on the different options available. We also have an optional events programme, this will include subsidised activities such as Barbecues, Video & pizza evenings, Pub lunches, Afternoon teas, Day trips out to the coast or an attraction, or shopping trips to Bluewater etc. We are open to suggestions of places people would like to go and we aim to do something as a group each week.



Support Plans

When you have had a few weeks to settle in, we will arrange with you a time to have a support plan meeting, this is an opportunity for us to discuss together what support is appropriate. Also, if there are specific things you would like to do, for example, an adult education course or voluntary work, we will discuss how this can best be worked towards. With your permission we will invite all those involved in you support package, for example your Care Co-ordinator. You may also invite someone to be there with you if you wish, for example, a friend or family member.



Where there are difficulties with day-to-day chores, this will be addressed with your support worker. If there are things you would like to try outside of the house, we will help point you in the right direction and make the necessary contacts for you. However, wherever possible you are encouraged to do things for yourself and not to rely too heavily on house activities and staff input.

Support plan reviews will be held periodically, as agreed between you and your support team, but at least once a year. However, if you feel at any time urgent need to an earlier review this can be arranged between you and the staff for a mutually convenient time.

Staffing

Staff are available during weekdays (usually between 9am – 5pm) to provide help if needed, whether that be help filling out forms or organising appointments etc. We also make time each day so that people can just drop in for coffee and a chat. There is an emergency on-call system in operation during the night and weekends for emergencies which need staff input and cannot wait until the next day. If, as part of your support plan, you we feel that you need extra help, we will try and arrange for this to be provided. Either by our own staff or from Social Services. This might be to help you with shopping or cooking etc and will normally start soon after you moving in. The amount you need will be reviewed from time to time with you and your support team, in the support planning review.

Emergency Pager

There is also an pager system which is available when staff are not on duty. This pager is for use in emergency only to help people prepare for living even more independently, most concerns should be kept until staff are next on duty. So please only use it if your concerns can not wait until then. To use the pager, you must go to the payphone on your floor and use the pre-set button labelled “pager”. This will automatically dial the number. This is a free call. The member of staff on-call will usually answer the phone immediately and you will be able to explain the situation to them. If however the phone is not answered and your call goes through to an *answerphone*, please leave a short message with your name and which phone you are calling from (Ground or First floor), and the member of staff will call you back, as soon as possible. If this does happen, please stay near the payphone you called from so that the staff will be able to call you back. (Please also see posters near the payphones with directions for using the pager.)



Residents' Involvement

Residents are able and encouraged to:

- Request a review of their support plan at any time
- Report any issue relating to Health and Safety relating to the property. This will be recorded by the staff in the Maintenance Book and periodically reported back in the Residents' House Meetings. At regular intervals an external member of staff will undertake an unannounced inspection and, where available, will have a resident to accompany them.
- Make known their wishes about the structure and running of Crossways to the Administrator. Crossways will provide a timetable of meetings, copies of agendas, minutes and briefing notes of the Management Meetings, and any recommendations made, will be put forward to the Meeting. Subsequent minutes will inform residents of how their views have been taken into account.

House meetings

We hold house meetings every three months. These are for people to voice any concerns about the house in general and to make suggestions for changes you would like us to consider. For us these meetings give us an opportunity to discuss with you any proposed changes to the day-to-day running of the house and get your opinions, or to talk about problems that have arisen since the last meeting that concern the house as a whole. We encourage everyone to attend these meetings as we value everyone's opinions and suggestions. From time to time you will be given the opportunity to attend meetings to discuss a specific issue, this could be regarding any aspect of the running of the house, from the décor of the communal areas to the review of policies and procedures or staffing levels. You will always know before the meeting what the discussion is to be about, and will be informed of the outcome of any involvement you wish to make.



Residents' surveys

Periodically we will carry out surveys, which will ask questions about how people find living at Culverdale. These are anonymous to try and ensure that everyone gets a chance to express how they feel about living at Culverdale and give suggestions about what they would like to change. These are not compulsory, but we would encourage everyone to take part if they choose. We also have a suggestions box, where you can make suggestions regarding any aspect of living in the house, these can be anonymous, however if you would like feed back then put your name on it.



Laundry Facilities

We have a laundry on the lower ground floor. There are two washing machines, a tumble dryer, a spin dryer, and clothes airers. The washing machines cost £1.60 per wash, and the tumble dryer takes 20 pence coins and a normal load would cost about 80 pence to dry. These machines are semi-industrial and therefore take large loads. There are also shared irons and ironing boards in the laundry and on each floor.



Access to Your Room

For security reasons the front door is kept locked at all times. You will be given a key which will open both your own room, the front door and the laundry door. We may occasionally need to come into your room and this will be done in such a way as to retain your dignity and privacy, and whenever possible only with your permission.



Repairs and Decorations

We will be responsible for the repair and maintenance of the house, except in cases where you are responsible for the damage. If you find anything that needs repairing or replacing you should report this to the office. Your room will be redecorated for you every few years and your choice of decor will be taken into consideration.

Insurance for Personal Property

Culverdale will provide insurance cover for personal property and effects to the sum of £500.00. If you have any personal property which is worth more than this sum you are advised to take out personal contents insurance in your own name. We can help you arrange this if necessary.



Visitors

All visitors to the home will enter by ringing either an individual room or the office bell. We want you to feel at home and you are welcome to have visitors. However, some people find other people visiting late at night uncomfortable so we ask that all visitors should leave by 11:00pm. Your visitors must not bring alcohol or illegal drugs onto the premises. If discovered doing so they will be asked to leave and the Manager will address this issue with you. Unfortunately we do not have spare rooms for visitors to stay in at Culverdale, but if you have a visitor coming from further afield who wishes to stay please talk to the staff and they will try to help, and can provide you with a list of B&B's and hotels in the area.

Local Groups

We are fortunate to be located very near to the local Mental Health **Resource Centre**, which runs many groups during the week, details of these groups can be found on the notice board.

There is also a **Reachout** group held locally every other week. This is an assertive outreach group for people suffering with mental health difficulties. The local branch of the **Shaw Trust** is at Tonbridge. It offers courses and work experience in their shop.



The Adult Education Centre, is in the town about a 15 minute walk away and West Kent College, is 15 minute bus journey away. These both run a broad range of practical and vocational courses. Also, directly opposite the house is the Winfield Trust. This is a computer training school for people with mental health difficulties. As well as learning how to use a computer for word-processing and spreadsheets, it can offer training towards nationally recognised qualifications.



Pets

Small pets which can be kept in your room are permitted subject to the agreement of the Manager. If it is agreed that you can keep a pet, then you will be wholly responsible for their feeding, welfare, cleanliness and all costs.



Use of your room

The house is for residential purposes only, you must not operate a business from your room or use it for any immoral or illegal purposes. The rooms are only to be used for single occupancy, you must not take in any lodgers or allow anyone else to live in the room.





Places of worship

You will be able to get a list of churches and other places of worship from the office if you wish to do so. N°8, opposite, has an open time of bible meditation, singing and prayer on weekdays at 1.30pm to which you are invited. Every Monday evening, Culverdale holds a Bible Study in the upstairs lounge.

The House Rules

Once someone lives here we hope they consider it their home. However, in a house with 18 people it is necessary to have some rules. The following are some of them:

1. For the benefit of everyone, all communal rooms and passageways are Non Smoking (including kitchens), this is because we have more non-smokers than smokers. So you should only smoke in your room.

2. No alcohol or illegal drugs are allowed on the premises, this is to take into consideration those who may have had alcohol related problems in the past, and keep temptation at bay. It can also sometimes affect medication. You are free to consume alcohol off the premises, but we would ask you not to drink so much that you return to the house drunk and abusive to others. 
3. You should not cause, or allow invited guests to cause a nuisance to neighbours, staff or other people at Culverdale. After 10:30 pm noise should be kept to a minimum.
4. Everyone should respect each other's needs and be considerate to each other. Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated on any grounds or either other people living at Culverdale, staff or visitors to the house. 
5. Borrowing or lending money between residents is discouraged.
6. You must not take another's belongings or food. Even if it is only borrowing, permission from the owner must be sought first. Stealing will be dealt with very severely by the staff, as trust is very important.
7. Everyone must observe the Fire safety regulations in the house, these are in place to protect everyone. (If you are unsure about these you should speak to a member of staff.)
8. here is an in/out board by the front door, we ask that when you go out or return you mark yourself in or out. This is so that if there is a fire, the fire officers' lives are not put at risk looking for people who are out of the building 
9. You will be expected to be part of the cleaning rota, for the kitchen and bathroom you share.
10. If you are responsible for any breakages in the house you will be expected to pay for the cost of repair or renewal.
11. You must not decorate or structurally alter your room or any other part of the house without the permission of the Manager.
12. For your own safety and the safety of other people, we do not allow any method of cooking or heating other than that which is provided.
13. You must not keep any combustible or offensive goods or materials in the house.
14. You must pay your rent and a nominal amount towards your metered electricity each week. The balance of the electricity bill must be paid up to date at the end of each month when the meters are read and the bill is calculated. 
15. To cover any damage (beyond fair wear and tear), non-payment of rent or other amount owed to us when you leave, you must pay a rent deposit. Any amount not owed will be returned to you when you leave.

Each of these rules are in place to help everyone in the house enjoy living together. Breaking the rules will result in you being given a warning, usually a verbal warning and then a written warning. However, if you persistently break the house rules, or in cases of violent or illegal behaviour you may be asked to leave.

Reasons Why Someone May be Asked to Leave

Like any place we want people to feel welcome here, but we ask everyone to accept that there are some types of behaviour that mean we must ask them to find somewhere else to live. Except in cases of violence or illegal behaviour, we will always seek to resolve issues and only as someone to leave as a last resort. The following are examples:

- Persistent failure to pay the weekly charge,
- Harassment of other people at Crossways on the grounds of race, sex, sexuality, disability, political, religious or other views,
- Failure to take reasonable care of your room and/or furniture, fittings and equipment of the home,
- Using the home for business of any kind, or for any illegal purposes, including bringing illegal drugs onto the premises.
- Behaviour which causes annoyance, nuisance, or physical harm to other people at Crossways (this might include bullying people or persistently asking people for money/loans/cigarettes/tobacco etc.)
- If your physical/mental health deteriorates and your personal care needs increase beyond that which we can provide for you.

What happens if you are asked to leave?

If we ask you to leave, we will give you four weeks' notice in writing, although if there is a good reason then we may ask you to leave sooner than this. We will consult your Care Co-ordinator so that all available support can be given in finding suitable alternative accommodation.

Moving on from Culverdale

If you decide to move from Culverdale, you will need to give at least four weeks' notice in writing that you wish to end your licence with us. If you have not already found somewhere to live and need assistance to find suitable accommodation we will help point you in the right direction. You will be asked to attend an exit interview prior to leaving and to return your house keys on the day you move out.

Bethel Court

In 2007 a new block of 6 flats was completed in the garden of Culverdale. This provides more independence for people who need minimal support.



Belongings stored after you leave

Once you have left you should arrange for the prompt collection of any remaining personal belongings. Regrettably, there is very little spare space in the house so, if you fail to do this we will have to make arrangements to remove your property.

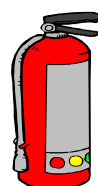


Policies

We have a number of policies and procedures including those for Health & Safety which aim to make the house a safe and secure place for all who live or work here, and their visitors. The following is a summary of some of the key ones. Detailed policies regarding all safety issues are available in the upstairs lounge.

Fire safety

In your room on the back of the door, there is a fire notice explaining what to do in case of a fire or fire alarm. You must make yourself familiar with this. To help protect the house from fire, all fire equipment is checked regularly and we hold regular fire drills to make sure everyone knows what to do in a fire.



Electrical safety



We will check all electrical equipment in the house every year, to make sure it is safe, (including your own personal electrical equipment). However, we would ask you to report any faults or suspected faults with electrical equipment to the office immediately, so it can be checked and repaired/ replaced if necessary. If you suspect an electrical appliance is unsafe, do not use it until it has been checked.

Health and Safety risk assessments

Staff will carry out Risk Assessments around the building on a regular basis to make the property as safe as possible. Please report any concerns about health and safety within the house (or grounds) to the office. This may include things which could cause someone to slip or trip, or something blocking the fire exits etc. These concerns will be used to try and minimise risk within the house, and you will be told what action the staff will take to rectify the problem in due course. Quarterly health and safety inspections will include an inspection of your flat. A mutually convenient time will be agreed with you for this to take place.



Complaints procedure

We hope that everything about your stay at Culverdale goes smoothly but sometimes there may be aspects which you may not feel you are happy with.

If you have any comments or complaints you should initially speak to the person concerned and if you feel it is appropriate complete a non-formal complaints form. This will be dealt with by staff in a manner mutually agreed between us, in the time agreed, you will receive feedback as to the outcome of your complaint.



If this does not resolve the issue, or you feel the complaint is serious enough, you should complete a formal complaint form and hand it in to the Manager. We aim to resolve all complaints within two weeks. If you are not satisfied with the outcome, you should write to, or ask to see, John Neel, Chief Executive. The Manager will arrange this for you. If the complaint is sufficiently serious you will need to put this in writing.

If you wish to get independent advice or assistance on any aspect of this complaint procedure or any other aspect of the accommodation or support you receive, you can obtain advice and information from:

- the local Citizens' Advice Bureau
- From a solicitor
- From Assert (a local mental health advocacy service). Contact details (01892) 542088 or (01732) 464363 or write to: 62 London Road, Southborough, Tunbridge Wells. (They do not run a drop-in service).



If you wish to make a complaint against the Manager of Culverdale, you should report this to the Chief Executive of Crossways or the Chairman of the Directors either in person or in writing.

Supporting People

Supporting People are responsible for the registration of Culverdale under Accreditation and will visit occasionally. You can mention any matters (in confidence) about which you are unhappy during these visits or write to or telephone the Inspector at the following address:

Senior Contracts Officer, Room 4.02

Sessions House

County Hall

MAIDSTONE,

ME14 1XQ Tel: (01622) 694511

Protection from Abuse

Although accusations of abuse at Culverdale are very rare, as part of our commitment to protecting people, we take this issue very seriously. All policies referring to abuse will be reviewed annually, your input will be sought at the time of these reviews, and your comments will be taken fully into consideration and changes made as appropriate. Examples of possible abuse include:

- Physical
- Financial
- Sexual
- Neglect
- Psychological/Emotional
- Discrimination

Equal Opportunities

Culverdale staff adhere to the policies regarding Equality of Opportunity. In brief these state the following:

- Nobody applying either to stay here or to conduct business with us will be treated less favourably than any other person because of their gender, religion, political views, cultural background, disability, marital status, sexuality or because of colour, race, ethnic or national origin except where appropriate.
- Victimisation, discrimination and harassment are disciplinary offences.



If you feel that you have been the victim of victimisation, discrimination or harassment or any other type of abuse, you should follow the complaints procedure, written down earlier in this booklet, also available from the office.

Confidentiality

We will keep certain records, relating to your personal circumstances, medical information, next of kin, relatives, your personal support plan, etc., which will be used to assist staff to provide the best possible support for you. These records will be treated confidentially (and be protected by the Data Protection Act 1998). They will be available to us and with your permission to some other professionals with responsibility for your support. As a part of your licence agreement we will ask you to sign to allow us to provide KCC or the local authority with some details from your file. This information will be requested from us to verify that we are providing you with the level of support that we have agreed with the Supporting People Team.

All our policies are available in full in the policy folders in the lounges if you wish to read them. These policies are periodically reviewed by the staff and at these times your views will be taken into account and where appropriate changes will be made.

If you have any questions or would like more information please feel free to contact us:

Ginny Swaffer (Manager)
Culverdale,
5 Culverden Park Road,
Tunbridge Wells, Kent.
TN4 9QX.
(01892) 516552.

Licence Agreement

This agreement is made between Crossways Community "Culverdale"

and:.....

Your stay in room.....is from:.....(Date)

Your stay is expected to be a long-term i.e. longer than two years and therefore the first **6 months** of your stay is a "settling in" period. A review of your stay will occur after this period and the opinions of other people living at Culverdale will be taken into account.

Charges:

Accommodation Costs

The weekly charge up to **1st April 2012** is **£112.30** (a higher charge is due if you move to a lower ground or top floor flat). The weekly charge is net of ineligible service charges (i.e. the weekly charge does not include payment towards electric for cooking, water rates etc) which will be paid by a subsidy from Crossways Community's central income.

Housing-Related Support

Culverdale will also receive a Supporting People grant payment of **£135.96** if you are eligible for Housing Benefit. **If you are not eligible (or become ineligible) to receive Housing Benefit, you will be required to pay this additional amount also.**

Hence depending on your income or capital, most of this will be paid by any Housing Benefit and Supporting People money you may be entitled to (**these amounts may vary from time to time depending on your circumstances**). You will be required to pay the balance due.

I agree to:

Respecting Others & Receiving Support

- Live at Culverdale in keeping with the guidelines and house rules in this introduction brochure, which may be amended from time to time.
- The provision of the Supporting People Services for the duration of my stay and that Culverdale is entitled to alter/increase the level of support in accordance to my needs.
- Allow Culverdale to provide Kent County Council or another local authority with limited details from my file as required, to verify that I am receiving the appropriate level of support.

Housing Benefit & Paying your Weekly Charge

- Have my Housing Benefit and Supporting People payment paid directly to Culverdale.
- Authorise the manager of Culverdale and Crossways Community's Administrator to be my agents and to request of any authority dealing with a claim or payments for Housing Benefit and Supporting People under the terms of this agreement to communicate fully with Culverdale directly and not with me.
- Inform the manager of Culverdale if I receive or there is a change in my income or capital (e.g. savings etc) which might have an effect on my claim for benefit/Supporting People.

Moving on

- Undertake an exit interview prior to my departure from Culverdale.
- I will clear my room of any belongings. If I am unable or unwilling to do this, I understand that Culverdale may dispose of these which there may be a charge for.

Culverdale agrees to provide the services described within this booklet (which may be amended from time to time) for the duration of your stay with us.

Signed: ^x.....^x Date.....

Signed: Date.....

(For Culverdale)