



Our Model of Support

Oakfield Easton Maudit was founded in 1981 on sound principles and values, these included putting people at the heart of what we do, giving everyone respect and choice but importantly being part of a community where friendship and the opportunities for socialising and being part of a group were paramount.

Prior to the 1980's other than living with family the only option for people with learning disabilities and autism, who were not able to live independently, was to live in a large purpose-built hospital. Thankfully a more enlightened approach prevailed and the concept of residential care within a smaller more homely environment was adopted. However, people only had a bedroom, and, in most cases, all other facilities were shared. They had no legal rights as tenants and opportunities to increase independent living skills were limited. The model assumed people would be cared for by others with little opportunity to make their own choices or assert their opinions.

In recent years, the thinking regarding this group of people has taken another massive leap forward. The Government, national good practice guidance and market forces are all demanding change and a shift in approach and attitude. This new model is called supported living, the idea being that people will have rights such as any other citizen in accommodation they can call their own home. They will be supported to achieve a lifestyle of their choice, maximising their potential, and achieving their goals and aspirations. In essence people will no longer be 'cared for' in a group setting, they will be 'supported to' in their own home.

A key component of the new model is that people have their own accommodation and will receive the support they need to live a fulfilled and happy life. They have their own tenancy agreement and associated rights the same as any other person. Having your own front door immediately changes how you are perceived.

The intention with the new model is for people to live in their own house or flat in the community with support from others according to their assessed need. Whilst this is commendable, living alone even with support can be lonely and some situations have broken down. Furthermore, life is unpredictable and although people may have support for part of the day what happens if something goes wrong, they are on their own and need some help.

At Oakfield we believe there is a middle way and are mindful of the original intention of the Trustees in 1981 for the people we support to be part of a community.

We have demonstrated that at our Yardley Hastings site which opened in 2016 that it is possible to have your own flat and facilities however still be able to participate in communal activities as and when you choose and to have support on hand if things go wrong.

The people we support at Yardley Hastings have the privacy and facilities that most of us take for granted, they have increased independence but are still able to call upon support if they need it and socialise with others if they wish.



We believe that at Yardley Hastings we have created the model that people we support; their families and local authorities are looking for. By renting one of our flats young people who are just leaving home can 'test drive' independent living with staff on hand to provide support to meet their needs and should things go wrong. We believe this gives families the assurance that their loved one has the freedom of their own home but is not alone.

Similarly, people who have lived in residential care all their lives can learn new skills, gain independence, and maximise their potential. We hope that this will lead to an increase in independence and reduction in the need for support. Many people may move on into increased independence requiring less support from others, however others may always want to be in a more supportive environment. Should people move fully into the community we are able to offer continuity through this transition from support by staff who know them well and can continue to provide their support in their new home.

Our aim is to be the provider and employer of choice in Northamptonshire. It is our intention to develop our model and provide high quality housing and support that is safe, supportive and offers opportunities and freedom for people with additional needs to have the best life.

Specialist Supported Housing offers individual personalised facilities in a high-quality environment under the legal protection of a tenancy agreement. We will continue to provide high quality personalised support that meets the needs of each individual. We value our staff and only by supporting and investing in them can we achieve this goal.

We have a robust recruitment and selection process and comprehensive induction, monitoring and supervision. We support the learning and development of our staff through an on-going training programme, tailored to them and the people we support.

We have an in-depth quality assurance system with detailed quality control processes. We recognise that however good our system of quality control we know that quality can only be assured at the point of delivery. Put simply, how someone is supported to look after their flat, shower or get dressed reflects the quality of their experience, only the people we support, and their families can say what is good for them. In order to achieve this, we will focus on the outcomes and the experiences of the people we support and their families and will continue to reflect, adapt, develop, and improve.

We are continuing with the project to re-model the environment at our Easton Maudit site in line with that at Yardley Hastings. We currently have 9 flats at Easton Maudit with 3 more being developed by spring 2025. Our intention is that by 2026 we will have completed the last 4 and have 16 flats on this site.

In addition, we are widening our services and developing exciting day opportunities. Please explore our website further to discover more of what's on offer.

Sara Morrison, Chair of Trustees - Oakfield Community.

"It is those people who no-one expects anything of who do things no-one expects." The Imitation Game (2014).