

## Supported Lodgings Provider Story: Virginia



### What led you to become a Supported Lodgings Provider?

For some time I wanted to feel more satisfaction in my career, to do something where I felt I could help and make a difference. So, after giving it a lot of thought, I applied and was registered as a foster carer in 2009. Our first placement was a young teenager.

At the same time, a friend registered to become a Supported Lodgings Provider (SLP). Working with older young people appealed to me so I decided to swap to SLP.

I began in late 2010, initially supporting one young person within our family home. In 2019, we moved house and built an annexe which can house three young people in self-contained accommodation.

Over the years we have cared for approximately 15 youngsters, some for very short periods and others for years.

### What do you enjoy about being a Supported Lodgings Provider?

We feel we have helped many of the young people who have stayed with us, and it gives us great satisfaction to know we have aided them on their journey. Looking after young people feels very worthwhile. Each youngster needs a different type of help, ranging from the day-to-day tasks of cooking for themselves and keeping their room clean and tidy, to helping them access college courses, jobs and relationships with their families.

### What are the challenges?

There are many challenges involved in this care, often to do with the fact that young people don't always do what is in their own best interest! So, a patient and calm nature is very helpful and often necessary!

When I first started as an SLP, I thought, having brought up 2 children of my own, that I knew what I was doing and that not a lot could surprise me. But I now realise that, given the difficult past of most of the young people I work with, I still had and have a lot to learn!

For more information about fostering with Herefordshire Council, call 01432 383240, email [fostering@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:fostering@herefordshire.gov.uk) or visit <https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/fostering>

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