

## **New North Worcestershire scheme seeks hosts in local community to support care leavers**

St Basils has been awarded a contract from Worcestershire County Council to provide a 'Supported Lodgings' scheme for homeless young people in North Worcestershire.

This scheme aims to provide a stepping stone to independent living for young people aged 16 to 21. The scheme recruits 'hosts'; caring people from all walks of life who have a spare room and want to make a difference to vulnerable young people by providing accommodation and support to a young person within their home for an agreed amount of time.

The young people involved in the scheme are generally people who are leaving care or due to other issues, don't yet have the necessary knowledge and skills to live on their own successfully.

The scheme aims to recruit hosts who can provide encouragement and guidance to enable them to develop the practical skills and confidence needed to make the leap to independent living. This means they can move on in a planned way thus helping to prevent 'crisis' situations. In return hosts receive a weekly fee of at least £120 and a support package which includes training, opportunities to network, social activities and invitations to events.

St Basils launched a similar scheme in Birmingham in 2010. Dawn Shuttleworth from Birmingham who has provided accommodation for three young people, said of the experience; I love it! It's very rewarding. It's enriched my life. I've helped the young people staying with me to learn to take better care of themselves and eat healthier...Most of all I've tried to help them see that they are important, they can do things and to get them to think about and plan for the future". "What I've found most rewarding is seeing their behaviour change over time, seeing them more able to make their own choices and decisions and gradually start to blossom."

St Basils is now looking for Hosts within the North Worcestershire area. An application pack can be obtained on Tel: 07540126635. For informal enquiries, or to find out more about the scheme, ring Emma on 01527 572050.