

Amber

transforming lives

Referral guidance

A simple guide for professionals and young people.

Amber at a glance

Amber provides supported accommodation and a mandatory employability and wellbeing programme for young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and who are unemployed. This guide is for young people considering Amber and the professionals or other people supporting them. Our centres are abstinence-based, shared living environments. Amber is not a drug or alcohol rehabilitation service.

Could Amber be right for you?

- You are single and aged 18 to 30.
- If you are aged 16 or 17, you may be considered, but only if you are not a looked-after child or care leaver.
- You are homeless, at risk of homelessness or in housing need.
- You are unemployed.
- You are eligible for Universal Credit and Housing Benefit and have recourse to public funds.
- You are willing and able to take part in Amber's mandatory programme and work towards employment, education or training.
- You can live safely and respectfully in shared accommodation and are willing to share a bedroom. [Worried about sharing a room at Amber?](#)
- You can understand and speak English well enough to follow instructions, live safely with others and benefit from the programme.
- You do not need to bring a pet to Amber.

Alcohol and drug use

Important

If you live at Amber, you must agree to remain abstinent from alcohol and non-prescribed drugs throughout your stay. Residents are tested for alcohol and drug use.

Amber may be suitable if you do not currently use substances, use substances occasionally or recreationally and can stop safely, or have moved on from dependency and want to remain abstinent.

Amber is not suitable if you are currently dependent on alcohol or drugs, need detoxification or rehabilitation, or cannot comply with an abstinence-based environment.

Amber cannot accept people who are receiving substitute prescribing, including methadone or Subutex. Cannabidiol (CBD) products are also prohibited.

You must complete the pre-assessment substance use form honestly and in full. A professional or another person can help you complete it, but the information must be accurate. If your current use suggests dependency, you may be asked to reduce or address your use before reapplying.

Guidance for professionals and young people

When Amber may not be suitable

Amber cannot offer a place where a young person's risks or needs cannot be safely managed in a mixed-gender, communal setting. This may apply if any of the following are relevant:

- Any sexual offence, including offences against children or adults.
- Any offence involving abuse, exploitation, grooming or harm to a child, or information indicating a safeguarding risk to children.
- Domestic abuse, coercive control, stalking, harassment, gender-based violence or other violence or abuse towards women and girls.
- Previous arson or fire-setting behaviour.
- Serious violence, including violence resulting in injury, such as grievous bodily harm or wounding with intent.
- Current behaviour or information indicating a risk of sexual harm to others, exploitation, violence, abuse or intimidation.
- Discriminatory or hate-based behaviour, including racist, homophobic, transphobic or misogynistic language or actions.
- Bullying, harassment or an unwillingness to take responsibility for harmful behaviour.
- Repeated serious breaches of rules in previous accommodation, or evidence that the person cannot live safely in shared accommodation.
- Mental health needs that are not sufficiently stable or require specialist or intensive support beyond what Amber can provide.
- Current suicidal intent or an active suicide plan.
- Recent suicide attempts or serious or frequent self-harm where there is insufficient evidence that the immediate risk has reduced and appropriate professional support is in place.

- An inability or unwillingness to engage with relevant healthcare or mental health professionals, take prescribed medication regularly and independently as directed, or manage medication without support from Amber staff.
- A former Amber resident who was asked to leave the service or has outstanding service charge arrears. Any re-referral must be discussed with Amber before an application is submitted.

If you are unsure, please talk to us

This list is a guide and does not replace a full assessment. Every referral is considered individually, with safeguarding and the safety of residents, staff, visitors and children remaining our priority. Young people and professionals are welcome to contact us before making a referral.

To discuss a potential referral, please email admissions@amberweb.org or call 0800 652 1081.

Referrals from prison or probation

If you have spent time in prison, Amber will need a copy of your current OASys report, including the Risk of Serious Harm (RoSH) assessment. The person completing the referral must upload this using the upload option on the referral form.

Amber can usually consider a young person assessed as presenting a low or medium level of risk, subject to a full suitability, needs and safeguarding assessment.

Before making a referral

- 1. Read this guide together.** Discuss any uncertainty with Amber before submitting the referral.
- 2. Talk it through.** Make sure the young person understands shared rooms, abstinence, testing and the mandatory programme.
- 3. Provide full and accurate information.** Include relevant health, substance use, offending, safeguarding, behaviour and accommodation history.
- 4. Upload supporting documents.** If the young person has spent time in prison, upload their current OASys report, including the Risk of Serious Harm (RoSH) assessment, with the referral form.
- 5. Complete the [online referral form](#).** The first 11 questions check basic suitability. If the referral can proceed, you will be asked to complete the remaining sections and will receive an Amber reference number after submission.

Final decision

Amber may decline a referral or end a placement if important information is missing or inaccurate, or if information provided later in the referral or assessment process shows that the young person's risks or needs cannot be safely managed. All decisions are made on a case-by-case basis, in line with our safeguarding

responsibilities and zero-tolerance approach to abuse, violence, bullying, harassment and discrimination.

Find out more or make a referral: www.amberweb.org

Our centres

Amber has four residential centres. You can apply to any one of them or select more than one centre when you apply. You do not need a local connection to any centre to be eligible.

[Ashley Court \(Devon\)](#)

[Bythesea Lodge \(Wiltshire\)](#)

[Downsview \(Kent\)](#)

[Farm Place \(Surrey\)](#)