

**Bridgend County
Borough Council
Special Guardianship
Orders
Financial Policy
November 2020**

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Updates, Revisions and Amendments

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1. Introduction

This policy should be read in conjunction with the BCBC Special Guardianship Policy which outlines the legislative framework of Special Guardianship Orders. This policy relates only to financial support and reviews of financial support for Special Guardians.

Support to Special Guardians, including financial provision is outlined in the Special Guardianship (Wales) Regulations 2005, amended by The Special Guardianship (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 and Special Guardianship Code of Practice on the exercise of social services functions in relation to Special Guardianship orders 2018.

In accordance with, a Guide for The Offer of Special Guardianship Support in Wales 2020 (AFA), which draws together statutory guidance relating to support service requirements as outlined within The Children Act 1989, the Special Guardianship (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended in 2018) and the Special Guardianship Code of Practice on the exercise of social services functions in relation to Special Guardianship orders 2018. The Local Authority is required to make arrangements for the provision of financial support to Special Guardians.

In order for special guardians to receive a financial allowance, they must fulfil the requirements for assessment and review, in line with the financial procedure outlined in this document.

2. Financial Support for Prospective Special Guardians

2.1 The Special Guardianship Order (SGO) regulations state that financial support should be provided where it is necessary to ensure that the arrangements for a Special Guardianship Order can be secured. Financial support should not be the sole reason for a Special Guardianship arrangement failing to survive. This applies to both looked after and non-looked after children.

2.2 Financial support can be provided as:

- A single lump sum payment to meet a specific assessed need
- A series of lump sum payments to meet a specific assessed need
- A periodic or regular payment payable at intervals to be determined by the local authority to meet a specific assessed ongoing need.

2.3 In accordance with the Special Guardianship Code of Practice on the exercise of social services functions in relation to Special Guardianship orders (2018), the local authority may begin providing financial support in the following circumstances:

- (a) A child subject to a special guardianship order is living with the special guardian and the local authority consider that financial support is necessary to ensure the guardian can continue to look after the child.
- (b) A child in respect of whom a special guardianship order is sought, or in respect of whom a court has required a report, lives with a prospective special guardian and the local authority considers that:
 - i. It would be beneficial for the child for a special guardianship order to be made
 - ii. That financial support is necessary to ensure the prospective special guardian can continue to look after the child pending the court's decision.

This provision allows for financial support where the local authority supports the making of a special guardianship order, but considers that the long-term success of the child's relationship with the prospective special guardian is in doubt without the provision of such support while the application is still being considered.

- 2.4 In all cases, financial support can only be provided after an SGO financial assessment has been undertaken to determine the amount to be paid and to ensure that the applicant is making an informed decision regarding SGO.
- 2.5 In accordance with SGO Regulations financial support to Special Guardians must complement and not duplicate financial support available through the benefits and tax credits systems. All Special Guardians are therefore obliged to apply for child benefit and child tax credit to which they are entitled. This sum will be deducted from the overall SGO allowance payment to be made.
- 2.6 Financial support must not include any element of remuneration for the care of the child, however, Regulation 7(4) (The Special Guardianship (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2018) allows Local Authorities to provide financial support above the usual level to a previous foster carer. This is not an automatic entitlement.

3. Overview of the financial assessment process

3.1 Financial assessments will be conducted either:

- Following a decision that a full assessment for a SGO will proceed,
- As part of a Connected Persons Assessment or
- Where a potential eligible applicant requests a provisional assessment to inform their decision making.

3.2 In order to complete the financial assessment, the allocated Assessing Social Worker will submit a SGO financial request form on the applicants file on WCCIS. Once marked 'complete', an alert will be received by the BCBC Financial Assessment Team, who will make contact with the applicant to collect and verify the required financial information and documentation for the assessment. Should any issues relating to the above process arise, they will be shared with the Assessing Social Worker.

3.3 It will be the responsibility of the Assessing Social Worker to ensure any allocated Social Worker for the child and Childcare Solicitor are updated where there are any delays in this process and the case is within proceedings.

3.4 Copies of the verified documents will be passed to and retained by the BCBC Financial Assessment Team who will develop a mechanism for ensuring that all information required is collected, seen and stored in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2016.

3.5 The BCBC Financial Assessment Team will apply the means test (as detailed in section 5) to assess if any SGO allowance is payable. The calculation will then be sent via e-mail to the Assessing Social Worker to share and discuss with the applicant(s). The e-mail will confirm if all documents required have

been received in line with this policy. The assessment remains provisional until they are.

- 3.6 Where the decision is to proceed, the amount payable, duration and timescale for review will be included in the SGO support plan and recorded on WCCIS.
- 3.7 Special guardians should be asked by the Assessing Social Worker to provide details of their bank account (bank, branch, sort code, account number and name of account holder/s) for payments to be set up at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.8 The Assessing Social Worker is responsible for ensuring the SGO or Connected Persons Assessment, support plan and financial assessment are recorded on the EDRM Live Application (or equivalent) for future reference should any queries arise in relation to the original assessment and agreement.
- 3.9 Following the granting of the SGO, a member of the Permanence Team will be responsible for ensuring a letter is sent to the Special Guardian/s confirming:
 - The outcome of the financial assessment
 - The amount, start date and frequency of payments
 - The requirement to apply for Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit
 - Any additional conditions in respect of the allowance and the consequences of not meeting them
- 3.10 If the prospective special guardian refuses to cooperate with the financial assessment process, no allowance will be payable.

- 3.11 If, in the process of completing the assessment it is found that the prospective special guardian(s) is/are not claiming their welfare benefit entitlements in line with central government guidance and there are concerns about fraudulent claims, the matter will be referred back to the Assessing Social Worker or Permanence Team (in the case of a financial review) to address.
- 3.12 The local authority will provide support for prospective guardians to obtain 2 hours legal advice upon completion of an assessment and support plan to facilitate the applicant(s) to make an informed decision and submit an application to the court.

4. Required documentation

4.1 If one or both of the special guardian applicants are:

- Employed, Payslips for 3 months or 12 weeks are required as part of the verification process.
- For self-employed applicants, a copy of their tax return and/or business accounts are required.
- For those not working, verification of all benefit income is required (either via a DWP award letter or in some exceptional circumstances, copy of a bank statement).
- For those in receipt of child/working tax credit and pension credit, copies of the award notices are required and our letter that we send out with the financial form asks specifically for 'all pages' of the letters to be included.
- Bank statements are also required for all accounts for the last 3 months.

4.2 Verification of any other income is required. If an undeclared income is identified on a bank statement, Finance will query this with the applicant.

4.3 An allowance can be made within the financial assessment for costs such as mortgage, rent, council tax, etc. Verification of these costs is requested and required.

4.4 Where an entitlement to adult benefits is identified but not taken up by the applicant(s), the applicant(s) would be advised that an additional benefit could be claimed and given an opportunity to submit a claim. Finance would then follow up on this claim in due course. If the claim is not submitted, Finance will

seek the advice of the Assessing Social Worker regarding whether the amount of the benefit ordinarily payable will be taken into account as income, as part of the assessment procedure.

- 4.5 Where an entitlement to child benefit and/or child tax credit is identified and applied for by the applicants but they are awaiting award, this income will be included in the allowance and reclaimed either from the backdated award, or through an adjustment of the allowance.

- 4.6 Special guardians must notify the Kinship Care business support team when they become in receipt of the benefit and must provide a copy of the statement of award. This is intended to avoid unnecessary delay in making the correct payments, and to arrange repayment options if necessary.

5. Applying the means test

Income

- 5.1 The total weekly net income of the special guardian(s) (after deducting tax, national insurance and pension contributions) is taken into account. Any deductions taken at source for items such as monthly season ticket, travel allowance, loans, gym membership etc. will be added back into the total net income.
- 5.2 All other income of a regular kind will need to be included for the purpose of the means test, i.e. from non-dependants, own children, relatives, lettings of property and accommodation, income from savings and investments, pensions, court orders, child maintenance payments, all benefit income including working tax credits and child tax credits, all child benefit payments.
- 5.3 Furthermore, as part of the application for an SGO allowance, the disclosure of any other income not listed above is required. These may include, but are not restricted to, any payments received in respect of Adoption, Residence Orders, existing Special Guardianship Orders and Disability Living Allowance(s). Income from such payments are not included within the means test but are required to verify the information within bank statements.
- 5.4 Where the young person (subject of the SGO application), or another young person in the household, is in receipt of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) or income associated with government employment training schemes, these will not be included in the household income assessment.

- 5.5 Those in receipt of Job Seeker's Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance will be subject to a full financial assessment.
- 5.6 Any fostering allowances and fostering remuneration fees received by the special guardians for any child looked after in their care, not solely the subject of the application, are not taken into consideration as income for assessment purposes.
- 5.7 Income for self-employed applicants will be based on their drawings. Profit will also be included as income and averaged out over 52 weeks (in order to determine a weekly income figure).
- 5.8 Rental income is included in full. However, where the rental is arranged through a letting agency, only the final rental income figure is included (after making an allowance for rental fees).
- 5.9 Only the interest from income generated from capital investments and savings is taken into consideration within the financial assessment.
- 5.10 Where an applicant has submitted a self-assessment tax return to HMRC within the last year, a copy is required.
- 5.11 Payments from Criminal Injuries Compensation Awards should not be included in the financial assessment, however, a copy of the award documentation should be provided to the Financial Assessment Team to verify the information provided.

- 5.12 Interest on capital belonging to the child is disregarded. Only interest on the applicant's capital is taken into consideration.
- 5.13 General household expenditure on items such as food, transport, clothes, utilities (gas, electricity and water), recreation etc. will be calculated using the Income Support allowance rates and increased by 25%.

Calculation

- 5.14 The maximum rate of Special Guardianship Allowance is the equivalent to level 1 BCBC fostering allowance rates unless there are exceptional circumstances that require a supplementary allowance.
- 5.15 The family's disposal income will be calculated by adding together the accommodation expenses and the general household expenditure/personal allowance figures and offsetting this against the assessable income. This will provide an amount equating to the disposable income. The outcome of the assessment is determined by the amount of the disposable income:
- If the outcome of the financial assessment is 'nil', then no payment will be made to the applicant/s.
 - If the outcome of the financial assessment (a) is less than the applicable fostering rate less child benefit (b), then the lower figure will be paid (a).
 - If the outcome of the financial assessment (a) is greater than the applicable fostering rate less child benefit (b), then the maximum weekly amount will be payable (b).

- If an applicant is in receipt of Income Support or Pension Credit (Guarantee Credit) a means test is not required. The person would be paid the applicable fostering allowance/rate less child benefit less child tax credit (subject to proof of the qualifying benefit being in payment and proof of child tax credit).

5.16 Once the financial assessment is authorised, an email is sent to the Permanence Team detailing the outcome of the financial assessment. A copy of the financial assessment is also enclosed along with a copy of an assessment outcome form that can be forwarded to the applicants.

5.17 Payments of SGO allowance are made on a weekly basis in advance.

6. Supplementary Allowance

- 6.1 There may be exceptional cases where financial support over and above the SGO allowance rate is required to support a Special Guardianship arrangement.
- 6.2 Local authorities may impose conditions that they consider to be appropriate when providing financial support. This could include the timescale and purpose that the financial support should be used for.
- 6.3 The supplementary allowance is not subject to the financial assessment process for the SGO allowance or means test as previously described, and will be paid in addition to the SGO allowance.
- 6.4 A supplementary allowance could be granted to cover one-off costs or regular costs relating to a specific need and can be time limited. It may be awarded in the following circumstances:

Child Previously Fostered by Applicant

- 6.5 If a Special Guardianship Order is granted to an applicant who previously provided foster care to the child for whom the Order is granted, the Special Guardian will receive an SGO allowance that is equal to level 1 BCBC fostering allowance, minus child tax credit and child benefit for 2 years regardless of the outcome of the means test assessment.
- 6.6 If a Special Guardianship Order is granted to an applicant who previously provided foster care to the child for whom the Order is granted, who was in

receipt of a foster carer fee, a supplementary allowance equal to the appropriate BCBC skill based fee element may be paid for a maximum of two years at the discretion of the Head of Children's Services. This is in accordance with Regulation 7(4) (SGO Regulations Wales 2005).

- 6.7 The above applies to BCBC foster carers and Independent Fostering Agency carers. The maximum supplementary allowance paid to aid a Special Guardian's transition from being a foster carer to being a Special Guardian for a child, is the BCBC fee element applicable at the time the SGO is granted, unless it can be evidenced, with supporting written evidence that this would result in a significant detriment. These rates will not increase in line with inflation or any other changes, and will remain at that base level for the duration of the order
- 6.8 In exceptional circumstances the local authority may agree to extend the period of supplementary allowance beyond 2 years.

Exceptional Circumstances

- 6.9 In exceptional circumstances, a supplementary allowance can be granted for a specific purpose. These supplementary payments can be one-off payment or regular payments of an ongoing nature and must be included in the support plan. There must be an assessed need and appropriate evidence provided. The following are provided as examples of such circumstances but are not intended to be an exhaustive list:
- Setting up costs – e.g. furniture or equipment for any special educational needs, alterations/ adaptations to the home to support a child with a disability;

- Placing the child in a boarding school – e.g. where assessed necessary to meet the child’s special educational needs.
- Court/legal fees – e.g. where there is evidence to support this is an ongoing risk to the stability of the SGO arrangement
- Facilitating contact – e.g. contact centre fee, travel expenses. The costs associated would be calculated on an annual basis and averaged into a weekly allowance.
- Mediation – e.g. where there a complex family dynamics that will have a detrimental impact on the wellbeing of the child if not addressed.
- Therapeutic services – e.g. for the child, Special Guardian or both
- Financial hardship – e.g. where a Special Guardian has ended their employment in order to care for the child and the child’s needs require that the carer continues to remain at home to provide support. The local authority may agree to extend the period of supplementary allowance until the child is engaged in full time education.

6.10 A child who has an illness, disability, emotional or behavioural difficulties, or who is suffering from the continuing consequences of past abuse or neglect, may require a degree of care and support which necessitates additional expenditure. In these cases, medical and other professionals will have a role in evaluating the effect of the child’s condition and in providing advice to the local authority. The local authority is expected to seek specialist medical advice where appropriate and consider this expert advice when considering the need to providing any supplementary allowance payment above the basic allowance rate to support the special guardian. This payment will be regularly reviewed and time-limited. The circumstances for the supplementary allowance in these circumstances will require authorisation from a Group Manager for a fixed period to assist the family.

- 6.11 Should the supplementary financial support identified in the support plan (either initially or subsequently) exceed £500 in any single financial year then the support plan will also need authorisation from the Head of Children's Services before being submitted to the court or provided.
- 6.12 The need for ongoing additional expenditure will be re-assessed on an annual basis as part of the SGO allowance review procedure or where there is a significant change of circumstance. This would include the Special Guardian advising if contact has not taken place, where supplementary allowance is paid to facilitate contact.
- 6.13 Any agreements for supplementary allowance to be paid must be outlined in writing within the SGO Support Plan, to include specifics as to the amount agreed, for what purpose and the duration.
- 6.14 Failure on the part of the Special Guardian to adhere to financial review arrangements will result in any supplementary allowance ceasing. The local authority will also seek to recoup any overpayment of supplementary allowance, including where a Special Guardian has failed to notify the local authority of a change in circumstance.
- 6.15 Payment of the child related SGO allowance or supplementary allowance, if applicable, will not increase during the term of the order, unless the Guardian/s were previously foster carers and entitled to protected allowances under the policy, or following a financial assessment review.

7. Special Guardian(s) responsibilities

- 7.1 If the special guardian(s) qualifies for financial support following the means test, they must inform the Permanence Team of the following within 14 days:
- Any change of address/ telephone number or additional contact details such as an email address
 - If there is a significant change in theirs and/or the child's financial circumstances
 - If there is a change in family relationships (such as a new partner or the separation of the special guardians), that affects household income/expenditure
 - The child ceases full time education i.e. between 16 and 18 years and commences employment
 - The young person qualifies for Income Support or jobseekers allowance in his/her own right
- 7.2 The Permanence Team must be notified immediately if:
- The child no longer permanently resides with them
 - If the child dies
 - The SGO has ceased to have effect (the child has turned 18 or the Order revoked by the Court)
- 7.3 Special guardians are required to inform the local authority of the progress of their claims for Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit within 4 weeks of the SGO being granted. Failure to do so will result in the suspension of payments pending receipt of the required information.

8. Review

- 8.1 Annual re-assessment of each case will take place on the anniversary of the date that the SGO is granted, however, a change in the applicant's financial circumstances would prompt a further financial assessment within a 12 month period. In order to ensure this, the review documentation will be sent to the Special Guardian(s) 2 months prior to the due date.
- 8.2 The Permanence Team will be responsible for diarising reviews in conjunction with finance. However, any changes that may be identified in the support package as a whole prior to the date of the annual financial review, which would have an impact on any financial support offered, should be forwarded to Permanence Team in order for a review to be undertaken if necessary prior to the annual anniversary date.
- 8.3 Failure to submit a completed assessment or review may result in allowances being suspended. Special guardians will be notified of this writing. Payments will not be reinstated until the required documentation has been received by the Finance Assessment Team, the financial assessment has been completed and a positive outcome determined. A reasonable number of attempts will be made to establish contact with the carer to arrange for the assessment/ financial evidence to be provided by the carer in person or via email/ post before the payment is ceased. ALL correspondence attempts MUST be clearly recorded on WCCIS with the required response by date expected by the carer.
- 8.4 It is possible that the child related SGO allowance may reduce or cease following review or re-assessment.

- 8.5 The review of the allowance may also be undertaken at any time when the authority is notified by the special guardians of any significant change in their own, or the child's, financial circumstances.
- 8.6 Where changes are made by central government to benefits, this may require a review of this policy and procedure. No changes will be made to individual payments unless it is in accordance with updated policy and procedure and following a financial assessment review.

9. Termination of payments

9.1 Payment of all allowances terminate on the occurrence of the earliest of the following events:

- The Special Guardianship Order has ceased to have effect (e.g. because the child has attained the age of 18) or has been discharged or varied by the court.
- The child ceases to permanently reside with the Special Guardian\’s (or, in a case where there are two or more Special Guardians, the child ceases to live with any of them).
- The death of the child about whom the Order relates.
- The child ceases full time education i.e. between 16 and 18 years and commences employment. The education maintenance allowance and government training schemes for young people between the ages of 16 and 18 will not be included as income for the SGO allowance. The Permanence Team will contact the applicant(s) during August each year following the child’s 16th birthday to obtain confirmation of the child’s educational status, the evidence will need to be provided within a stated number of weeks of the young person commencing their education/ placement in the September term (copies of their college I.D, etc. or written letter can be emailed/ posted/ shown to the allocated worker).
- The young person qualifies for Income Support or jobseekers allowance in his/her own right
- The applicant(s) refusing to submit the information that is required for a financial re-assessment to be undertaken

9.2 As a single financial assessment is undertaken, incorporating all children placed with the applicant(s) under any Court Order, the termination of any single Order will terminate the payment of all allowances and will require a re-

assessment in respect of the remaining children placed with the applicant(s). This re-assessment will initially be based on information provided during the most recent reassessment until a full re-assessment can be undertaken for the remaining children.

- 9.3 Where a supplementary allowance has been granted to aid the transition from foster carer to Special Guardian, any such payment will terminate after two years, unless exceptional circumstances have been agreed by the Head of Service. In these cases, the payment will cease on the predetermined date outlined in the SGO Support Plan. Unless any of the above apply (9.1).

10. Appendices



SA_FINDEC

Reference:

Name of 1st Applicant: _____ (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Other)

Date of birth: _____

Name of 2nd Applicant: _____ (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Other)

Date of birth: _____

Home Address:

Home Telephone Number:

Daytime Telephone Number:

1. Other Occupants in the Household

Name	Date of Birth	Relationship to Applicant/s (Birth child, foster child, adopted, etc)	Full Time Education Yes / No

2a. Details of Earnings (Employment)

First Applicant

Name:	
Nature of Employment:	
Name of Employer:	
Address of Employer:	
Average Gross Earnings:	
Average Net Earnings: (after deductions)	

Second Applicant

Name:	
Nature of Employment:	
Name of Employer:	
Address of Employer:	
Average Gross Earnings:	
Average Net Earnings: (after deductions)	

**You will need to provide copies of payslips for 3 months
(or 12 weeks if paid weekly)**

2b. Details of Earnings (Self Employed)

Applicant Name:	
Nature of Business:	
Business Address:	
Postcode:	

You will need to supply a copy of the figures submitted to the Tax Office for Tax Assessment together with any confirmation that these have been accepted

2. Allowances, Pensions and Benefits

First Applicant

	Amount £	* Delete as Appropriate
Income Support		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Jobseekers Allowance		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Working Tax Credit		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Child Tax Credit		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Pension Credit: - Guarantee Credit		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
- Savings Credit		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Retirement Pension		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Occupational Pension (former employment)		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
DLA Care		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
DLA Mobility		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Attendance Allowance		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Incapacity Benefit		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Industrial Injuries		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Child Benefit (own children)		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Child Maintenance Payments Received		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Other (please state) _____ _____ _____		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly

Second Applicant

	Amount £	* Delete as Appropriate
Income Support		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Jobseekers Allowance		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Working Tax Credit		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Child Tax Credit		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Pension Credit: - Guarantee Credit		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
- Savings Credit		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Retirement Pension		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Occupational Pension (former employment)		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
DLA Care		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
DLA Mobility		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Attendance Allowance		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Incapacity Benefit		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Industrial Injuries		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Child Benefit (own children)		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Child Maintenance Payments Received		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly
Other (please state) _____ _____ _____		Wkly/fortnightly/4 wkly

4a. Interest/Income from savings and investments

Type of Income Received	Amount £	Frequency

Please provide copies of bank statements for the last 3 months for all accounts

4b. Any other income (fostering allowances are disregarded)

Type of Income Received	Amount £	Frequency

5. Any other income received from occupants in your home (e.g. children, other relatives, lodgers, children placed by other agencies for fostering or adoption)?

Name	Date of Birth	Relationship to Applicant	Amount £	Frequency

6. Your child's income* (this could be your own or adopted children)

	Child's Name	Child's Name	Child's Name	Child's Name
	Amount £	Amount £	Amount £	Amount £
Child Benefit				
DLA Care				
DLA Mobility				
Other (please state)				

7. Expenses and Outgoings

	Frequency	Amount £
Mortgage Payable		
Mortgage Endowment		
Rent (less any Housing Benefit received)		
Council Tax (less any Council Tax Benefit received)		

8a. Other Outgoings

	Details	Weekly Amount £
Maintenance payments / Court Orders		
Private pension contributions		
National Insurance (if self employed)		
Reasonable child care costs (not included in the childcare element of Working Tax Credit)		

8b. Loan Repayments

Lender (Bank, Building Society, etc)	Purpose of Loan	Start Date	Loan Duration	Amount £

You will need to provide proof of any costs listed in section 7 & 8

9. Additional Information

10. Please read this declaration carefully before you sign and date it.

- I declare that the information I have given on this form is correct and complete.
- I understand that you will use the information I have given to work out if I am entitled to financial support. You can check some of the information with other council departments within Bridgend County Borough Council and with other councils. You may give some information to other council departments and government organisations as required by law.
- I know that I must let the Finance Non Residential Team of the council know immediately in writing about any changes in my circumstances which might affect the amount of support I receive.
- I understand that if I knowingly give false information, action may be taken against me to recover all or part of the financial support I have been paid.

Signature of 1st Applicant: _____ **Date:**

Signature of 2nd Applicant: _____ **Date:**

How we collect and use information

- We will use the information we collect, both on this form and from supporting evidence you give us, to process your claim for a support allowance. Once we collect your information we may share it with other council departments to help provide a complete service to you.
- We may check information you (or anybody else) have provided with other information we hold. We may also get information from other bodies and organisations, or give information to them to check the accuracy of your information, to prevent or detect crime, to protect public funds in other ways or for reasons allowed by law.
- We will use your information in line with the General Data Protection Regulations 2016 and the Data Protection Act 2018. We (Bridgend County Borough Council) are the data controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 2018.
- If you want to know more about what happens to the information that we hold about you and your rights and our obligations to you, the councils Fair Processing statement is available on the data protection pages of our website.

