

Introduction

This proposal has been created thanks to work between MCR and the *Manchester Homeless Partnership* over the past year.

Partners from a variety of organisations working with and for people who are homeless, and including people with personal insight themselves into being homeless came together to discuss and detail what we believe the city needs from the Lord Street development.

What the centre offers will complement existing provision and not duplicate what is already out there. This proposal should be regarded as an informed framework based upon a wealth of knowledge and expertise within this field.



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OVERVIEW

Who will the building be for and what does our charity want to achieve?

This scheme will offer a pathway out of homelessness for single men with lower support needs. It will provide high quality, single room accommodation with 24-hour staffing. Residents will be supported to build skills and address any underlying issues before being supported to move onto independent private rented tenancies. People will be linked into other support services including health and skills services and there will be support to enable people to move into employment.

Supporting Local and National Strategic Aims

This project has been developed with partners, including input from Manchester City Council, Voluntary Sector partners, including SSG and the Booth Centre, and people who have been effected by homelessness and this partnership approach will follow through into the detailed service planning and service delivery.

This project supports the vision of the **Manchester Homeless Partnership** which aims to work toward ending homelessness in Manchester and specifically that:

“Everyone who is homeless should have a safe, secure home, and if needed, an appropriate level of support to create a good quality of life” and the development of the project has involved co-production which is key value and aim of the Manchester Homelessness Partnership.

This project supports the Council’s aims set out in the **Homelessness Strategy** of helping to make:

“Homelessness as brief as possible: improving temporary and supported accommodation so it becomes a positive experience”

And

“Experience of homelessness a one-off occurrence: increasing access to settled homes”

This project is also in line with the **Greater Manchester Combined Authority’s** aims to end homelessness and the Greater Manchester Action Networks stated aims of the 4 R’s

- Reduction: To prevent rough sleeping in the future, both identifying solutions for people at risk of rough sleeping for the first time and for existing rough sleepers, to prevent a return to the street.
- Respite: To provide a safe place for people off the street.
- Recovery: To manage issues, to stabilise individuals and to work towards independence through support, wellbeing, life skills and steps towards employment, volunteering, training and education.
- Reconnection: To enable individuals to lead meaningful lives with choice and agency in our community.

It also supports Central Governments aims of ending rough sleeping and reducing homelessness and ensuring that COVID secure single room accommodation is provided to people who are homeless.

Service Model

This project will be based around three general areas of support:

1. **A psychologically informed, high quality environment.** The building will be fully refurbished to provide a psychologically informed environment including a welcoming reception area, individual personal space, communal space to enable people to socialise and meetings rooms to provide private space for people to meet with their workers. In line with Manchester's Minimum Standards for Emergency Accommodation all the accommodation will be single room with en-suite facilities, providing privacy, dignity and security. This also ensures that it is COVID secure and meets COVID infection control guidance. In line with a psychologically informed approach, staff will be trained in strengths based approaches, motivational interviewing and trauma informed care to ensure that they are providing the support and encouragement that will help people to move forward in their lives.
2. **Support to move towards independence.** Each resident will have a key worker who will help them to build on their strengths, positive social networks and skills and to address any underlying issues which have contributed to their homelessness including financial, legal or health issues. Links and partnerships will be developed with support services and meeting rooms will be available for other services to meet with residents on site if appropriate. This would include support to address any underlying issues with their physical or mental health, drug or alcohol issues or trauma they may have experienced. Referrals will be made to other services including GP's, CGL and the HMHT as appropriate. People will also be encouraged to build their skills, confidence and self-esteem and to make good use of their time. The project would work in partnership with the Booth Centre, which is just a 5-minute walk away, where people will be able to go during the day to access art, sport, education and volunteering programmes and also to access their Employment Programme and Job Club.
3. **Move on to independent accommodation and employment.** As soon as people are ready they will be supported to move on into independent private rented accommodation. This will ensure that they don't get institutionalised into living in a hostel environment. The move on accommodation will be provided by or sourced by MCR through their links in the property sector. People will be provided with resettlement support to ensure that the move is sustainable. People will also be encouraged to move into employment and employment opportunities will be provided through MCR's contacts in the private sector. The ongoing support after they have left will be designed to provide a solid base, a community to feel part of and a family, so that they always know that there is someone they can turn to during the first few years rather than spiral back into homelessness.

MCR undertaking;

1. **Refurbishment:** MCR will refurbish the building to provide a state of the art facility, complying with all planning requirements.
2. **Management:** MCR recognise that this is a new venture, and that while MCR has extensive experience of property management it does not yet have experience of running a service for homeless people. Therefore, MCR will assign the management of the project to SSG, through a 5-year management agreement. SSG are a well-established and respected provider of supported accommodation for people who are homeless in Manchester. They currently have contracts with Manchester City Council to run Kashmir House, a 17 room hostel in Cheetham Hill, with a 8 unit step-down accommodation and a 57 room A Bed Every Night emergency accommodation provision at the Muslim Heritage Centre in Whalley Range.

MCR and SSG are also in discussion and have a framework agreement in place with Arawak Walton Housing Association.

SSG and Arawak Walton between them will ensure that systems are in place, which data and information governance are to a high standard.

3. **Funding:** Housing benefit will be claimed. MCR aim to ensure that the project is cost neutral to the local authority.
4. **Move on accommodation:** MCR will provide or source private rented accommodation for people to move onto.
5. **Employment:** MCR will use its contacts to provide entry level job opportunities for people. These will be paid at, at least, the Living Wage.

Staffing and Management

SOG will be responsible for staffing the project. This will include:

- A 24 hour staffed reception with a concierge on duty over-night.
- General facility management, including cleaning in line with infection control and COVID guidance.
- Key working support for residents.
- Resettlement support for people as they move into their own tenancies.

The centre will be operated and managed by an experienced and approved provider, Stop Start Go Sustainable Living (SOG). SOG's experienced management team will ensure that the centre can guarantee residents' and staff safety at all times and respond to any identified risks, whilst also enabling residents to access the right support as and when they need it. Staff at the centre will be experienced in working with this client group and will receive further training and supervision as needed.

The centre will operate a robust Visitor Policy, which will control visitor access. Residents will be encouraged to stay in the building after 10pm. The concierge will monitor all people entering and leaving the centre and additional security will be provided via the use of CCTV both internally and externally.

The centre will provide a terraced area in the inner courtyard area, where residents can get some fresh air and informally mix with visitors and other residents.

Referral Pathway

Referrals will be open to local partners including the local authorities Housing Solutions and homeless outreach teams and voluntary sector homeless services.

Referral criteria:

Single men who are currently homeless

Low risk/support needs

People with a benefit entitlement

People who are wanting to move on to independent private rented accommodation and also

People who are looking to get back into work.

Referral Routes: In and Out

Homeless people will not be able to self-refer to the centre. Access will be via referral from MCC and other providers. The suitability of potential referrals will be assessed against specific criteria before a new resident is accepted into the centre.

Emergency accommodation will require the need for referrals to be accepted at all hours of the day and night. However, it is envisaged that all new residents will usually be brought to the centre by prior arrangement, appropriate security and staffing will be provided nonetheless to deal with all potential residents.

There will be a variety of accommodation and support routes out of the centre for residents. The majority of which is anticipated to be residents moving into longer term supported accommodation or private rented accommodation with appropriate support. The centre will have appropriate agreements in place to ensure that there is access to a sufficient supply of this move-on accommodation.

Some residents, without a local connection to Manchester, will be supported to return to accommodation in their home area and/or return to friends and family.

Specialist caseworkers will lead on move on and support planning and ensure all residents have sufficient support in place to sustain their new accommodation.

Behaviour Management

All residents will be expected to engage with support relating to their needs. There will be clear expectations set for residents about what is acceptable behaviour at the centre – including around visitors, noise nuisance and drugs/alcohol. These expectations will be communicated when residents move in and will form part of the licence agreement they sign.

Ongoing support: EMPLOYMENT

MCR has an extensive network of contacts in many industries, from hospitality to construction.

MCR will seek to leverage on these existing relationships to provide living wage employment opportunities and trainee or graduate style positions. Many have already expressed a desire to be involved as they know the pedigree of MCR's projects and vision.

By building up a strong track record and educating people to remove stigmas, we will also look to sign up other businesses in Manchester to support the cause.

This project will also link into the Booth Centre and BITC's Employment Programme which enables people to build up pre-employment skills, gain work experience and qualifications and link into other training provides in the city.

Ongoing support: HOUSING

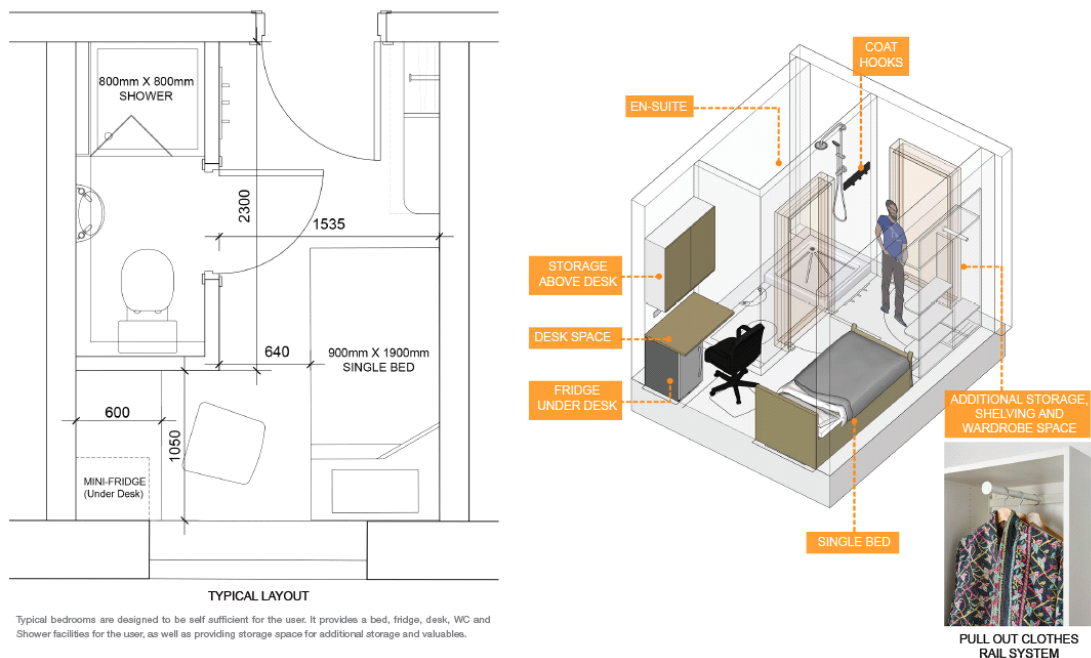
MCR already owns and manages rental properties that could support this purpose. We are also looking to acquire more properties in and around Manchester solely for this purpose.

MCR have already secured support from other landlords in Manchester keen to help with this initiative.

What kind of space will the accommodation provide?

- The entrance to the site will be open plan, welcoming and safe.
- Single rooms will be provided with en-suite facilities to provide privacy and dignity for the occupants. This will also help ensure that the accommodation is COVID secure. The centre's accommodation will not feel like a dormitory; every resident will have their own safe space.
- Each room will be furnished with a bed, and a bedside table/chest of drawers, a chair and fixed reading light. We would also look to supplying flat screen tv's. There will be en-suite toilet and shower facilities in each room. Proposal shown below:

DESIGN PROPOSALS AND DEVELOPMENT - TYPICAL BEDROOM LAYOUT



- Fridges will be provided in each room to enable people to store food safely.
- We will provide Wi-Fi throughout the building
- Bedroom walls will be of solid construction to minimise damage and wear and tear, reducing the need for plaster patching and to support a rapid relet of bed spaces. Good soundproofing between bedrooms will be provided.
- Blackout blinds will be provided for the windows. To ensure no issues of overlooking from nearby flats we may consider frosting to a certain height (externally to avoid damage) of all bedroom windows. This treatment to windows has worked well at other accommodation sites.

- Communal spaces will be able to be used effectively for group work as well as living spaces, with TV's in the lounges, relaxing space. These kitchen/diners will also provide somewhere to cook and eat.
- Freestanding style kitchen units on each floor of accommodation will ensure residents can prepare their own meals, learn how to cook, to develop life skills and eat communally with friends. Shared positive experience such as preparing and sharing a meal together helps people bond over a positive and rewarding process. All of which can help with regard to move on and increased personal resilience.
- Cleaning cupboards and materials, linen cupboards will be provided on each floor for easy access for the staff. Hygiene standards will be high and in line with guidance for hostels and COVID requirements.
- There will be a residents' garden to the rear of the property, within the boundary and walled from the road. This will assist privacy for both the residents and local occupants/passers-by.
- The resident's garden will be a place where they are encouraged to help with maintaining plants and also be a communal area in which to smoke.

Funding the project & structure

The detailed Business Plan for this project is being developed.
Funding will come from several sources:

1. The building has been purchased and funded by MCR
2. The refurbishment of the building will be funded entirely by MCR
3. MCR will lease the building to the Registered Provider, Arawak Walton for a five year term, who will in turn commission SSG as the Management Agent to run the homeless project.
4. SSG as the management organisation, who will be supported by the Registered Provider, will claim Housing Benefit for residents.
5. The detail of how much Housing Benefit can be claimed will be worked out with the Local Authority.
6. MCR will use its contacts to assist SSG in the resettlement of the clients