

SSG Sustainable Living

Management and Operations Statement



Poplar House, 16 Alness Road, Whalley Range, M16 8FX

1. Contents

- 2. Project Aims – p2**
- 3. Background Information – p2**
- 4. Supporting Local and National Strategic Aims – p2, p3**
- 5. The Strategic need for these proposals – p3**
- 6. Who will live at Poplar House? – p5**
- 7. Site and Surrounding – p5**
- 8. The Building – p6**
- 9. Ownership/Management agreement – p6**
- 10. Service Model – p6, p7**
- 11. Service Provision - p7**
- 12. Outcomes – p7**
- 13. Referrals – p8**
- 14. Licence Agreement and Behaviour Management – p8**
- 15. Staffing and Management – p8, p9**
- 16. Customer Involvement – p9**
- 17. Funding – p9**
- 18. Consultation with Key stakeholders – p9, p10**

2. Aims

2.1 SSG Sustainable Living is proposing to open a 15 -bed supported accommodation of which 3 accessible rooms with two of these being wheelchair accessible. The property is on the Moss Side boarder of Whalley Range utilising a building that had previously been used as a HMO for several years up until 2021 when the HMO license lapsed due to the previous landlord not wishing to renew due to retirement.

2.2 The previous landlord housed homeless people and worked with the council and other agencies such as Rainbow Haven. During this time the landlord stated he experienced no issues with any of the tenants or within the community and he states he is pleased that the property is going to be used how he always intended.

2.3 The project will offer a pathway out of homeless for single men over 18 with complex needs. It will provide high quality self-contained studios with 24-hour staffing.

2.4 This accommodation will be supported housing which will provide a stable, safe and supported environment where our clients will be supported to overcome the issues that led to their homelessness and move into their own accommodation.

2.5 The goal of the service would be to move residents onto private rented tenancies or social housing having provided improved health and wellbeing and independent living skills. Clients will also be supported to work with external agencies to access meaningful occupations.

3. Background Information – SSG Sustainable Living

3.1 SSG Sustainable Living is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (registration number 1167457) that works across greater Manchester. SSG Sustainable Living's mission is to provide temporary supported accommodation for rough sleepers in Manchester enabling individuals to overcome obstacles that prevent them from having permanent accommodation by providing limitless bespoke support and empowering them to reach their goals and live independent and fulfilling lives.

3.2 SSG has accommodated those experiencing homeless for over 7 years providing 82 bed spaces for low/medium need males across 3 schemes within Manchester City Centre. SSG has a proven track record of supporting clients through person-centred support plans to assist them to overcome the issues that led to their homelessness.

3.3 SSG has an inhouse resettlement team that supports clients from the first encounter for as long as necessary which prevents the revolving door effect.

4. Supporting Local and National Strategic Aims

4.1 Homelessness – The Strategic Context and Need for Action

The term 'homelessness' is often considered to apply only to people 'sleeping rough', however homelessness means that someone has no home in the UK or anywhere else in the world, that is available and reasonable for them to live in.

4.2 The Scale of the Problem

SSG Sustainable Living a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England with The Charity Commission under registration number 1167457 whose registered office is at Kashmir House 439 – 441 Cheetham Hill Road, Manchester M8 0PF

There is a need for a range of different types of temporary accommodation for different groups of people, including people with high, medium and low support needs.

4.3 Manchester has some of the highest levels of homelessness in the UK, with around 7,407 people (one in 74 people) experiencing homelessness. The city is among the 25 local authorities in England with the biggest problems on the issue, and one in every 81 residents in Manchester is homeless.

4.4 Manchester City Council commissions a range of accommodation including A Bed Every Night (ABEN) and Housing Related Support (hostels/supported accommodation) for single people, as well as running/operating its own temporary accommodation.

4.5 In addition to this over 250 single homeless people are accommodated in unsupported Bed and Breakfast hotels due to a lack of supported temporary accommodation. Bed and Breakfast accommodation is very costly to the local authority. Some of these are located outside Manchester, due to a lack of supply within Manchester. This causes problems for people trying to keep in touch with friends and family or accessing health and other services.

4.6 This scheme would enable people who are living in unsupported B+B accommodation and temporary accommodation to move-on to bespoke supported accommodation and free up spaces for others that continue to rough sleep due to lack of appropriate accommodation.

4.7 There are also delayed discharges from hospitals due to the lack of available suitable supported accommodation, which is costly to the NHS.

4.8 The use of temporary accommodation, in particular for complex need and accessible bed spaces has been steadily increasing over the past decade, highlighting ongoing challenges in finding permanent housing solutions.

5. The Strategic Need for these proposals

It is therefore considered that there is an overwhelming need for supported complex and accessible bed spaces within Manchester. This has been confirmed by the Manchester City Council Homeless Commissioning Directorate.

5.1 Nationally, rough sleeping figures have shown variability in recent years, partly due to the impact of COVID-19 and government interventions such as the "Everyone In" initiative.

5.2 Following a statement shown the Manchester Homelessness and Rough sleeping Strategy 2024-27, regarding National context it stated that the single-night count of people sleeping rough decreased from 2018 to 2021, and then increased in 2022 by 26%.

5.3 Poplar House proposal supports the vision of Manchester Homeless and Rough Sleeping Strategy (2024-2027)

5.4 Making Manchester Fairer – ‘People owed a homeless duty in Manchester with recorded support needs of physical ill health and disability increased by 103% over the

previous strategy period. This is a major cause for concern as people with poor physical and mental health are more likely to present as homeless or end up in unstable accommodation settings. There is a lack of suitably adapted accommodation for people with disabilities both for temporary and settled accommodation.'

5.5 In addition to this, a statement from Manchester City Council informs us that there are 'less than 10 total units that are accessible' and 'we have a known pressure with accessible accommodation for wheelchair users and those with mobility needs. It is an aim of MCC's commissioning team to develop additional services to help us meet this need'.

5.6 Taking into account the factors raised in the Making Manchester Fairer 5 year plan and the statement from Manchester City Council, SSG has recognised the immediate need of complex and accessible bed spaces, and developed Poplar House with this in mind.

5.7 Amongst the objectives in the Manchester Homelessness and Rough Sleeping strategy it states that homelessness should be as brief as possible; improving temporary and supported accommodation so that it becomes a positive experience.

5.8 SSG's approach to providing a positive experience whilst in homeless accommodation is unique due to the following factors:

- a.** Clients are encouraged to take responsibility for actioning their goals through bespoke support carried out in conjunction and partnership with the person. This enables them to set achievable milestones that helps them to measure their progress towards their objectives. This motivates the client to continue their journey to independence
- b.** The environment is non-judgemental, and clients are never required to conform to prevailing standards of society, however they are supported to manage/address their vulnerabilities to enable them to become tenancy ready
- c.** In house resettlement scheme
- d.** A consistent approach which promotes respect and mutual understanding of boundaries

5.9 Through the above approach, clients have stated that they have;

- a.** More control over their actions through being able making informed decisions
- b.** Improved self-worth
- c.** Increased confidence
- d.** That life is worth living
- e.** Raised aspirations
- f.** The skills, ability and ambition to manage their own tenancy so that they never become homeless again

5.10 From comments made by clients regarding SSG's support approach it is evident that we support the vision of Manchester Homeless Partnership and specifically that 'Everyone

who is homeless should have a safe, secure home, and if needed, and appropriate level of support to create a good quality of life’.

5.11 Poplar House would increase the accessible bed spaces in Manchester by over 33%.

6. Who will live at Poplar House?

6.1 Poplar House will comprise of 15 self-contained studio flats for complex need single homeless men who meet the following referral criteria:

- 18 and over
- Single Males
- Eligibility to benefits
- No schedule 1 offenders or arsonist
- Ready to move into stable accommodation and engage with support
- Scheme is able to manage risk
- Right to reside in UK

6.2 SSG Sustainable Living has designed this scheme of 15 individual self-contained units on the Moss Side boarder of Whalley Range to provide accommodation for adults with complex needs, who are sleeping rough, who are in priority need and who are currently experiencing homelessness. This accommodation will be supported housing which will provide a stable, safe and supported environment where our clients will be supported to overcome the issues that led to their homelessness and move into their own accommodation.

6.3 The goal of the service would be to move residents onto private rented tenancies or social housing having provided improved health and wellbeing and independent living.

7. Site and Surrounding

7.1 The proposed residents would typically utilise the Greater Manchester public transport system with the most local bus stop located on Alexandra Road S/Opposite Wellington Road (approximately 0.12miles) and Firwood Metrolink station (approximately 0.94 miles).

7.2 Staff who drive will utilise the existing private car park located at the back of the property. The car park can accommodate a number of vehicles. Visitors can also park there. In the event that any future clients may have a car (it is not expected that residents will own cars) they may also park there. Staff members on site will usually be 2 at all times plus 1 to 2 members of SMT attending site daily.

8. The Building

8.1 The property is situated at 16 Alness Road which is 5,490 square feet. The property will contain 15 studios (of which 3 accessible rooms, 2 with wheelchair access), office space, an interview room, activity room, storage and laundry rooms.

8.2 It has been recognised that the current capacity of housing related support in Manchester for those with disabilities, especially wheelchair users is limited in relation to the current number of males experiencing homeless needing adapted access.

8.3 SSG strives to ensure that we are only creating bed spaces where there is a greater need within the Manchester homeless sector. The accommodation will provide lift access to the main floor of the accommodation which is where the accessible rooms will be situated. The staff office, support rooms and laundry will also be on the main floor to ensure there is access to all necessary amenities.

9. Ownership/Management Agreement

9.1 SSG are affiliated with Depaul Housing Services, who are a registered social landlord. Depaul Housing services would have a licence to occupy with the landlord to provide supported accommodation at Poplar House and SSG would then have a management agreement with Depaul acting as the housing support provider.

10. Service Model

10. 1 This project will be based around four general areas of support:

A psychologically informed, high-quality environment -The building will be 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 clients to meet with their workers where they can set realistic goals and achievable milestones.

The self-contained studios will provide privacy, dignity and security. In line with a psychologically informed approach, staff will be trained in strength-based approaches, motivational interviewing and trauma informed tactics to ensure that they are providing the support and encouragement that will help people to move forward in their lives.

Health and Wellbeing - The project will have a focus on health and wellbeing. Support Workers will ensure that they support residents to address any underlying needs through referrals that 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 engage in in-house and external meaningful occupations which distract from destructive behaviours.

Move on Support - 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.

Resettlement – SSG has a proven track record of successfully resettling clients into sustainable tenancies through ongoing resettlement support which prevents the revolving door effect. Our resettlement service starts at the beginning of a client's journey with SSG where clients will complete tenancy ready courses in addition to minor

DIY repair courses such as changing a lightbulb or fuse. As the resettlement worker will be facilitating these courses, she will already have a working relationship with each of the clients in preparation for their move on so she can assess their level of need and develop their plan to independence with them.

In order to promote and encourage independence a tapered resettlement support service is in place. However, access to our resettlement service is unrestricted irrespective of the length of time they have been moved on for to ensure sustainability and prevent tenancy failures.

11. Service Provision

Support - Each resident will have a key worker who will support them to address any underlying issues that are detrimental to their progress towards independent living.

External Services - 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.

Skills and employment - People will also be encouraged to build their skills, confidence and self-esteem and to make good use of their time.

Holistic Approach – The project will house an activity room where activities will take place to detract from destructive behaviours. Proposed clients will develop new skills and create local community links.

Housing management and rehousing – Housing management staff will ensure people meet the conditions of the license agreement, and work with residents on their move-on plans

Resettlement Support – SSG has an inhouse resettlement team that supports clients from the first encounter for as long as necessary which prevents the revolving door effect.

12. Outcomes

Outcomes for residents would include

- Engaging in meaningful occupations
- Improved health and wellbeing
- Raised aspirations
- Increased confidence
- Sustainable move-on
- Acquisition of skills

13. Referrals

13.1 Referrals would come from MCC and its recognised partners (other agencies, ABENS, hospital discharge etc. The strict referral criteria would need to be met along with background checks, risk assessments and interviews before being accepted into the scheme.

13.2 Residents would be required to sign a licence agreement. In any circumstance where the license conditions are breached the resident in question will be supported to find alternative accommodation.

14. Licence Agreement and Behaviour Management

14.1 We operate a consistent and fair approach where all residents are aware of what policies and procedure are in place, that they understand them and what responsibilities they have to ensure they maintain their tenancy with SSG. The policies and procedures we have in place are designed to avoid escalation and breakdown of tenancies.

14.2 In any circumstance where the license conditions are breached the resident in question will be supported to find alternative accommodation. In the case of severe breaches that pose a threat to the organisation, clients, staff or the community the license will terminate immediately.

14.3 At move in clients will be required to sign the move in checklist which outlines the house rules in addition to a support agreement. We have a tiered behaviour contract in place that will be utilised to avoid clients putting their accommodation at risk.

14.4 The Project will operate a robust visitor policy which will control visitor access. HM staff will monitor all people entering and leaving the building and additional security will be provided via the use of CCTV both internally and externally.

14.5 SSG currently houses 56 low/medium need males in Whalley Range on the Chorlton border. We have been situated at the British Muslim Heritage Centre (BMHC) for 4 years and during this time there have been no adverse experiences within the local community. Management have previously conducted meetings with a group of 6-8 neighbours who had initially voiced their concerns of the ABEN scheme based at the BMHC of a homeless accommodation being in their community. We were able to provide guidance on how the scheme would be managed and have fostered a good working relationship with the local community.

14.6 The BMHC are also extremely supportive of the proposed new scheme as we have had a positive working relationship for the past 4 years in a multi-use building.

14.7 To address any concerns from local residents regarding the proposed Poplar House, we will implement a clear and accessible complaints procedure. This will involve establishing a dedicated contact point where residents can voice their concerns, either through access to the office number which they can contact 24/7, email, or in-person meetings. All complaints will be acknowledged and investigated thoroughly by management. We will prioritize transparency and communication throughout the resolution process, ensuring that residents are kept informed of any actions taken. Where necessary, we will facilitate community meetings to discuss concerns and provide updates on how we are addressing specific issues. Our goal is to ensure that the new accommodation is integrated smoothly into the community, with respect for both the needs of residents and those seeking support at the facility.

15. Staffing and Management

Housing management and support staff would be employed to ensure that they can identify risks and respond to issues for the safety of residents, staff and the community.

15.1 The project will be staffed as follows;

- a. 24 hours a day, 365 days a year on a 1:7 staff ratio.
- b. 8am to 8pm – Housing Management and PCP Support Staff Mon – Sun
- c. 8pm – 8am – Night Housing Management/Concierge and Night Support Staff Mon-Sun
- d. Part time cleaner who will ensure hygiene standards in line with public health standards for hostels are to the required standard
- e. Senior Managers on call 24/7
- f. The project will be managed by an experienced senior support worker and overseen by the senior management team and CEO

16. Customer Involvement

16.2 SSG has a client involvement policy in addition to a customer involvement officer who conducts quarterly meetings which allow for coproduction regarding information, consultation and involvement in policies, procedures and future plans.

17. Funding

17.1 Capital/Building Improvements - The building is on a lease on which SSG will pay rent. SSG has sufficient funds to refurbish the building to standard.

17.2 Housing Management – Funding for housing management would come from housing benefit

17.3 Support Costs – SSG intends to apply to HRS for support costs initially. We have appointed a part-time fund-raising officer that is currently looking at applying for further potential funding pots that will contribute towards the HRS costs going forward.

18. Consultation with Key Stakeholders

Manchester City Council - A meeting was held with Manchester City Council regarding pre-planning discussions in July 2024. The meeting was held with the service manager of the homeless commissioning team, along with another commissioning officer regarding the new scheme following findings at a meeting held with our ABEN commissioning officer and clients at College Road ABEN. At the MCC meeting we were encouraged to complete an application to SNMG regarding the proposed new scheme.

Urban Village medical practice - Who are commissioned to provide primary care to people experiencing homelessness. Although out of the catchment area, they have agreed to list Poplar House as an approved homeless accommodation working with their service and will continue to provide support for complex cases that are already registered with the service in

addition to an offer of training for staff regarding advocating for clients regarding their healthcare.

St. Edmunds Church - We met with Reverend from St. Edmunds Church. The Church is enthusiastic about supporting the new project, and we've initiated discussions on potential collaborative initiatives once the scheme is operational.

Counsellor Aftab Raqaz - During a meeting with local councillor Aftab Raqaz to discuss the proposed plans for Poplar House, he expressed his support for the new scheme. Counsellor Raqaz indicated that he would encourage local residents with concerns to visit the British Muslim Heritage Centre to observe how SSG operates within the community and a multi-use building. He also stated that he welcomes the new scheme and looks forward to integration for the incoming clients into the community. Counsellor Raqaz is going to communicate this information to Counsellor Muqaddasah Bano and we have emailed Counsellor Angeliki Stogia regarding the updates and provided a copy of our management statement so that all members of the council are aware of the progress.

Local Gardener - Management recently met with a local gardener to explore potential collaborative projects as part of the ongoing development of our meaningful occupation programme. In addition to discussing support for grounds maintenance, she expressed strong interest in partnering with us on future initiatives. While keen to begin discussions once the project is further along, she also suggested that, in the interim, some of our clients could participate in her gardening wellbeing sessions at a local facility.

Other Stakeholders - SNMG (Support Needs Monitoring Group) - are supportive of the project and GMP are aware of the proposed scheme and they are currently preparing a crime impact statement.