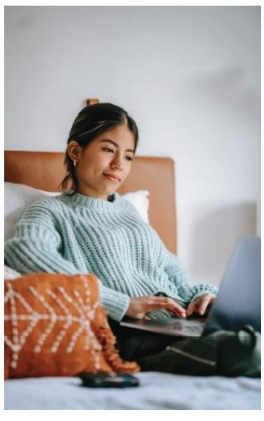
Management, Wellbeing and Tenure Plan

Plot 11 (Block C) - First Street South, Manchester



Background

The scheme comprises of 555 bedrooms in a mixture of shared cluster and self-contained studio units developed as purpose built student accommodation (PBSA).

Downing has owned and managed residential schemes for over three decades and in the 1990's was the first company to bring the concept of secure purpose-built, en-suite bedrooms to city centre locations. This product was developed in-house and stemmed from hands-on experience in all aspects of the student sector. Building upon our knowledge and experience, Downing continues to improve and develop upon the provision of purpose-built student accommodation, employing new technologies in design and paying close attention to the changing market and environmental issues.

By employing a highly skilled, multi-disciplined team of in-house property professionals, Downing ensures the highest standards of maintenance and customer service. The executive team is supported by thirty head office administrative staff who work closely together to continuously improve our product and customer service. Each scheme has a dedicated on-site team covering Management, Customer Services Administration and Maintenance in addition to cleaning and security services. The entire workforce is experienced in property management of the residential and education sectors, from front of house and tenancy administration through to the construction and development teams.

Downing are members of Accreditation Network – UK (ANUK), which is a network of private and public-sector landlords that adhere to a recognised code of practice. The completed project will be operated in accordance with The National Code of Standards for Larger Developments. This code establishes a set of specific standards with particular reference to larger developments tenanted by students. The Code enjoys the support of, amongst others, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the National Union of Students (NUS), and numerous higher education institutions.

Management of the scheme

The scheme will consist of a supervised reception entrance area at ground level. From this position, the management team and security will be able to see all of the people who enter the building and they will undertake the necessary security checks. The property will be managed by Downing Property Services Limited.

From our previous experience, we anticipate that this development will require a staffing allocation consisting of the following:

- General Manager
- Facilities Manager
- Assistant Manager
- Front of House Associates
- Security Staff
- Cleaning Staff
- Maintenance Staff

The scheme will be manned on a 24 hour basis and there will be a member of the management team or security based on site for residents and visitors at all times. A member of the management team will be in residence each weekday as a minimum between the hours of 8am and 6pm.

Outside of these hours the reception will be staffed via security personnel and there will be a contact number and escalation procedure available to get in touch with a member of the management team if required. The contact details for the members of the management team will be displayed in communal areas and an 'on-call' system for emergencies will be maintained by Downing Property Services Limited.

Training on all aspects of residence management will be provided to the management team and this will include health and safety procedures, management of internal processes, incident management, legionella control, risk assessments, fire safety matters and first aid.

Allocation Procedures

Student bedrooms will only be allocated to students who can demonstrate that their student status will remain throughout the duration of the tenancy. Written documentary evidence will be required to substantiate the fact that they have been accepted at a place of higher education, prior to entering into tenancy agreements in the form of the Assured Shorthold Tenancy Agreements.

Upon taking occupancy, all students are provided with a welcome pack, which includes a student handbook and online induction explaining the features of the accommodation as well as the rules of occupancy at a practical level. An induction evening/welcome event is held, at which a presentation of the handbook is made, as well as acting as an informal 'getting to know you' event for the residents.

Security & Access

A robust CCTV system will be included as part of the development, and this will provide a link to the management office. These images will be visible to security staff and able to be monitored on a continuous basis. The CCTV surveillance will cover all areas of the common parts, entrance areas and amenity space and will be in operation 24 hours each day in accordance with statutory regulations.

The CCTV system will supplement the on-site staff and security presence. The management team and security will regularly monitor the CCTV system and carry out and record regular foot patrols throughout the off-peak hours seven days a week.

Access to the development will be enabled by an individually addressable key fob. This will permit access into the development, the accommodation and the communal facilities.

When access is required to an occupied room by the management team, they will give at least 24 hours written notice of the requirement to the tenant in line with the tenancy agreement. In the case of emergency access being required, two members of the management team must be in attendance.

Fire Safety

A detailed fire strategy for the Site has been agreed with Building Control, the salient headlines being:

Residential – Apartments

Each residential apartment shall be provided with a minimum Grade C, Category LD1 fire detection
and alarm system in accordance with BS 5839-6.

The means of escape throughout the apartments is based upon a 'defend in place' evacuation
strategy, whereby only the occupants of the apartment of fire origin are required to escape, therefore
there is no requirement to connect each apartment to the common system.

However, as the client would like to have the ability for the apartments to notify the landlords fire alarm system of an apartment activation, a link has been allowed for to allow connectivity between the Part 1 and Part 6 system. The interconnectivity between the Part 1 and Part 6 system should have the ability to facilitate a building wide or floor by floor evacuation.

Residential – Common Areas & Amenity

An addressable, Category L5, automatic fire detection and alarm system in accordance with BS 5839-
1 is to be provided. Category L5 systems are provided to satisfy a specific fire safety objective; in this case, the 'defend in place' strategy and operation of corridor smoke ventilation, with detection required in common corridors and stairs. the following areas;

- Common corridors
- Stairs

Automatic fire detection coverage, consistent with a category L1 system, is also required throughout.
Fire alarm sounders are not required within the residential corridors and stairs. For occupants working
in isolation in non-residential areas or where noise levels might be higher than ambient noise level
such as plant rooms, podium terraces and roof top areas, fire alarm sounders or visual alarms should
be provided.

Once occupied, the management team will comply with all statutory requirements regarding Fire Risk Assessments etc.

Move in & Move Out Arrangements

Upon being advised of their success in being a granted a tenancy, the residents will be required to contact the management team to agree an appointment move in date and time. During this discussion, all residents will be notified that there is limited

temporary onsite private parking/unloading areas available, as this is a large scheme, and there could be multiple tenant moves on any day. Should the resident be able to demonstrate that they have no other means than by the use of a car for the moving in process, and then they will be allocated a short period to allow them to off load. Each resident will be allocated a specific time slot in which they must arrive to take occupancy of their apartment.

During the off-loading process at check in, the resident will move their baggage/items into a secure dedicated storage area at the ground level of the accommodation. The residents will not be allowed to offload their belongings immediately into their allocated bedroom or apartment. This requirement will limit the amount of time taken to off load any vehicles, and upon completion of offloading, the vehicle must be immediately moved away from site. Information will be provided to residents on public car parks within the locality that can be used for longer periods of parking post drop off.

Similar arrangements will be in place for moving out occasions and communicated to building users towards the end of their tenancy.

Equality

All procedures for the allocation of tenancies within the scheme comply with any equality policies that apply and in accordance with the law.

No person or group of persons applying for accommodation will be treated less favourably than any other person or group of persons because of their race, colour, ethnic or national origin, gender, disability, appearance, age, sexual orientation, marital or social status. Staff will be trained or will have sufficient knowledge of equality and diversity practice to ensure that commitments to equality are fulfilled.

Residents are made aware of the organisation's equality and diversity policies as part of the information provided to residents and potential residents in marketing and resident information.

It is agreed that charges for rooms adapted for use by residents with disabilities, should not exceed the normal room rate for the scheme.

Code of conduct

It is proposed that the management team work proactively with the local community to develop a constructive relationship and open dialogue. Local residents and members of the community will be afforded the opportunity to be able to link directly with the management team to discuss any issues arising and agree how best to resolve any ongoing problems.

The management team and security will be responsible for monitoring and promoting responsible behaviour from residents. The residents will be required to keep the environment clean and tidy and they will be responsible for maintaining the peace and quiet enjoyment of the Commercial Tenants within the podium building element and the local residents, when entering and leaving the scheme.

Downing have an experienced management team onsite providing support on a day to day basis and any complaints or behaviour issues that are raised or identified would be investigated impartially to fully understand the matter. Depending on the severity action could range from an email reminding of the rules, a meeting with the General Manager, or to the local authority or police. Further conversations or reporting would occur especially in cases where a problem may continue.

In support of a code of conduct policy, please find enclosed a draft tenancy agreement which residents would sign along with a draft template of an online induction completed within 14 days prior to arrival/tenancy start date.

Welfare, Wellbeing & Social Engagement

Downing Students strive to maximise the impact that our accommodation has on the overall student experience.

To ensure quality within our organisation we adopt the following objectives:

- We set measurable objectives for our departments and staff that will help contribute to meeting the students' requirements and needs. This is in the form of regular KPIs based on satisfaction of our student base and internal audits.
- Monitor performance through site audits and staff appraisals.
- Maintain our assets to an excellent standard and adopt an ethos of reliability.
- Create a safe, secure environment with staff available 24 hours a day.
- Ensure that the business complies with all required regulations.
- Through robust procurement processes, select and collaborate with suppliers that match company values.
- Recruit and retain employees who are student focused, support by effective internal and external training to do their job to the best of their ability, meeting the company requirements.
- Provide a positive work environment that promotes wellbeing and teamwork.
- Encourage staff to provide feedback and make suggestions for improvements to operations, service and processes.
- Robust complaints process (Can be provided).
- Analyse the causes of any complaint/problem and take the appropriate action to avoid recurrence.

We have dedicated and diverse experienced teams who ensure that our residents feel safe, supported, and informed. We recognise that our people are our biggest asset and whilst we build fantastic buildings with the best facilities and design for our students, it is our people who set us apart and help create an environment to thrive, feel comfortable, safe and at home. Beyond our employees, each property has a series of 'Social Reps'. These individuals are on hand to help guide new residents, support meeting people, and guide them through any peer-to-peer queries.

Welfare & Training

Having worked with many higher education establishments' accommodation, wellbeing, and student services teams for many years we have experienced the changes and growth in the recognition and importance of wellness and mental health in student life and we value the connection, training and support provided by Universities. These collaborations strengthen to ensure that all students have access

and are signposted to relevant departments to meet their individual needs. We have committed to dedicated mental health training for our teams which is delivered by Student Minds and is specific to supporting students within accommodation settings, this includes:

- *An overview of student mental health and the challenges that university life can bring*
- *Understanding when someone may be struggling*
- *Communication skills and how to start difficult conversations*
- *Boundaries for staff and managing conversations with students*
- *Self-care and looking after yourself*
- *Action planning*

This level of training enables staff to offer support where needed but also develop the skills to recognise when expert support is required. We have preferred partners in Student Minds and My Healthy Advantage (MHA) app as well as signpost to local organisations and local institutions to create an all-round support service. It is a vital part of our operation to offer the most up to date information to ensure residents are safeguarded appropriately.

We also offer dedicated and specific training to our maintenance team as they tend to go into tenant spaces more than other staff and these interactions can be invaluable in ascertaining how a resident is feeling and coping.

We aim to remove the stigma surrounding mental health and to make it a talking topic within our schemes, we promote events on our social media platforms, post regular reminders on how students can access support and enhanced our partnership with Student Minds to have a dedicated helpline 24-7. As an accommodation provider it is vital that we can recognise any early signs of mental health illness and act on them. Our managers are also trained in dispute resolution/mediation and we can step in and offer support where required because we know that issues can arise with shared student spaces, and these forums help to alleviate frustrations and promote a happier living environment for all.

As part of staff inductions all new staff and existing staff attend a bespoke 2 day Health and Safety course which our Health and Safety Manager has devised alongside Rawlings Safety and Consultancy, a company specific Health and Safety course which includes all health and safety aspects of our daily operation to keep both residents and staff safe at home and in the workplace. We also have a section on safe systems of work and risk assessments, where staff can devise their own processes and risk assessments for their daily tasks and any social events.

Social Engagement & Wellbeing

Starting University life and moving into student accommodation is a big transition for young people, whilst it is an exciting time in their lives, we are aware that it can be a daunting and there are key challenges faced by students and their families. These challenges include learning to be more independent and responsible, learning how to prioritise, not to feel peer pressure, learning to budget and knowing that it is ok to speak to someone for advice and support. Downing Students understands this and our vast experience in student accommodation and our 'hands on', personal

approach means that we are always able to share our knowledge and support our students.

As part of our student experience programme, we offer a variety of events to enhance the experience of students living with us. We know that we are uniquely placed to add value to the student experience as well as provide vital support to students who find themselves in difficulty from time to time. We acknowledge and converse regularly with our students so we can learn how they are coping and adjusting to the responsibilities and new experiences of student life and creating that community leads to a great sense of belonging and positive mental health outlook.

Student experience has become an integral part of University life, not just on campus but within halls of residence. Downing Students develop a social programme that runs throughout each academic year. We work with our partners to devise events that cater for everyone. As an accommodation provider we encourage students to interact within the accommodation setting, through our social activities and online community pages. Our social programme is centred around interaction providing an active and vibrant community that is there to support one another.

Our organised activities are categorised into the following:

- Wellbeing
- Creativity
- Community (Sense of)
- Resilience and life skills
- Sustainability and green living

Social events play a huge role in our student offer. We want students to make friends, share interests, engage, and feel part of our community. We host weekly events within our properties, from quizzes, movie nights, workshops, environmental awareness, fitness, art and craft evenings and book clubs and they vary from those led by our staff and social reps to external experts for everyone.

Downing Students have implemented and enhanced initiatives over our 35 years of development and operation of purpose-built student accommodation. Enhancements are constant and we adopt an ethos to consistently review and drive forward to improve our deliverables with both staff and students, ensuring that student welfare is at the heart of everything we do.

Downing Students understand that student accommodation plays a vital role in the student experience. We remain a family business and instill this sense of belonging and security for young people to feel supported and ready for the experiences and challenges of higher education. Students spend more time in their university accommodation than any other place whilst studying, and we know that when students reflect on their studies, their memories tend to be shaped as much by their living arrangements and life-long friendship groups, as by anything else.

Dispute & Complaints Management

Complaints can be made in writing (by letter or email), by phone, or in person. We encourage initially to raise complaints in person, either by phone or at Reception.

Our staff will endeavour to resolve complaints at this initial point of contact. If this is not possible then complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the stages set out in the prompt issue resolution system below.

All complaints must be made direct to the site that you have been dealing with. Any complaints that are sent to Head Office will be redirected to the relevant site for them to investigate in the first instance. Complaints Process:

Stage 1: Complaints will initially be dealt with at Stage 1 by the relevant Manager. Your complaint will be investigated and we will endeavour to provide a written response within 10 working days of receiving your complaint. If you do not believe that your complaint has been treated fairly and correctly you can escalate your complaint to Stage 2, however you must state why you do not think your complaint has been treated fairly or satisfactorily.

Stage 2: At Stage 2 your complaint will be investigated by the relevant Regional/Area Manager. We will endeavour to provide a written response within 10 working days of receiving your complaint. If you still do not believe that your complaint has been treated fairly and correctly you can escalate your complaint to Stage 3, however you must state why you do not think your complaint has not been treated fairly or satisfactorily.

Stage 3: Stage 3 is the final stage of the Complaints Procedure. At Stage 3 your complaint will be reviewed by the Head of Operations. They will notify you of their decision in writing, normally within 10 working days of receiving your complaint. Their decision is final – there is no further right of appeal within Downing Property Services.

Management of communal facilities

The design of our residence allows tenant's access to the purpose-built amenity spaces, workspaces, gyms, terraces and laundry facilities.

The use of these spaces is intended to encourage interaction between the residents and allows them to build a community life and co-working environment. These areas will be access controlled to monitor usage and ensure resident safety.

Amenity spaces will be open as a minimum from 08:00 to 23:00 daily, with some spaces being open 24 hours and/or bookable.

In addition to the principal communal facilities, each of the apartments includes a kitchen and living room area where residents can meet and mix. Seating for visitors is provided in the reception area/lobby.

Maintenance of the residence

General

The management team will be responsible for ensuring that the interior of the building is kept clean and tidy and that any graffiti or rubbish is removed at the earliest possible opportunity.

All fixtures and fittings will be required to comply with the relevant statutory inspection and testing legislation. This will include, but not be limited to, the following areas:

- Emergency lighting
- Fire alarm
- Mansafe systems
- Portable appliance testing
- Legionella testing
- Lift maintenance
- Window cleaning systems
- Access control systems
- Building maintenance units
- Ventilation and extract systems
- Drainage and water supply systems
- Voice data and IT systems

All internal and external common parts will be kept clean and free of rubbish and waste. Communal areas will be cleaned on a weekly basis as a minimum. A full deep clean will be undertaken to each apartment at the end of each tenancy period.

As well as statutory inspection regimes and risk assessments for fire, water and health & safety, daily Health & Safety inspections will be completed by the site management team and any issues will be noted and either rectified by the maintenance operatives or a contractor called to resolve the issue.

A rolling programme of planned preventative maintenance will be in place for the regular upkeep of the building and all statutory testing will be completed on time and all remedial works actioned.

External Maintenance

The management team will be responsible for ensuring that the exterior of the building is kept clean and tidy and that any graffiti or rubbish is removed at the earliest possible opportunity. A daily litter pick (Monday to Friday) will be undertaken to ensure that the accommodation presents at all times a neat, orderly appearance and that any external signage is kept clear and legible. They will also monitor contractors for the following items:

- Grounds Maintenance – a maintenance contract will be procured to ensure that all external landscaped areas are kept swept and free of litter, weeds and other rubbish, and that they are well cared for. Litter picking, and the emptying of external bins and ashtrays will be carried out daily. Cleaning of the hard-standing areas will be carried out annually.

- Pest Control – Regular inspections for evidence of pests will be undertaken, together with the implementation of a preventative and reactive pest control contract.
- Waste Management –
- Parking – Only cars for disabled residents or service vehicles are permitted to park at the accommodation

Waste Management

The development has been designed to comply with Manchester City Council's document 'Waste and Recycling Storage and Collection Requirements Guidance for Architects and Developers'. Within the refuse and recycling store, the bins will be rotated regularly for effective bin chute usage. The residents will be responsible for the deposit of all refuse and recycling into refuse chutes, accessible at each floor level. The chute provides for waster segregation at source. Frequency of collection is to be agreed with the Local Authority during the development of the site. On other schemes that we operate, our recycling policy is to have this undertaken off site as we have found that this is more effective in terms of the amount of waste that can be recycled, is simpler to manage and is subsequently more cost effective.

Housekeeping & Servicing

The management team will be responsible for ensuring that all communal areas which include the amenity space, laundry room bin store and reception area are kept clean, free from debris.

Residents are responsible for cleaning their own rooms and shared kitchens.

The management team will ensure that: -

- That all internal and external common parts, fixtures and fittings are cleaned and free of rubbish and waste.
- That all fixtures, fittings and common area facilities are deep cleaned at least annually.
- That all occupants' rooms are deep cleaned annually.
- That all emergency damage / spillages are dealt with as soon as possible following notification to the Management Team.
- That all refuse is stored safely and collected as frequently as is required to maintain sufficient capacity for waste.
- That the bin stores are cleaned and disinfected as often as is necessary to prevent pest infestations. That laundry equipment is provided within the accommodation

Management of deliveries

The management team will manage deliveries on the resident's behalf if they so wish. There will be dedicated postal storage areas within the reception area and deliveries will be accepted 24 hours a day. A holding area for hot food deliveries is also planned. All deliveries and collections will adhere to the local loading restrictions that are in place.

Residents will be notified of deliveries either by the delivery firm or our dedicated app.

Sustainability and Bicycle Provisions

Sustainable and active modes of transport are a crucial component of our operational strategy and ties in with our ESG goals, as it recognises the financial, health and wellbeing effects this has on residents.

The proposals for this scheme provide 15% bicycle space provision (83 spaces) for students, plus a further 12 spaces for visitors. 83 of the spaces include bikes provided by the operator for use by residents, which ensures the number of trips taken by bicycle are far greater than if bicycle spaces were solely for private bikes.

In this respect, residents will have access to regularly maintained bikes without having the expense of buying, maintaining, or insuring their own bicycle. The bicycle scheme is free of charge and works by a student booking a slot online/via our app to borrow a bike. All students are provided with locks and encouraged to wear a helmet.

Over our years of operation, we have seen cycle stores within our schemes under-utilised, with a very low level of individual ownership of bicycles. From our tenant engagement practices, tenants often do not see the value in purchasing a bicycle outright for personal use due to the following factors:

- A good provision on public transport links in the locality
- Cost
- Theft

By introducing a free to hire bicycle provision on an unlimited basis this scheme can alleviate some of these concerns around outright bicycle ownership and be available as and when residents would require them.

Results from our recent resident survey indicate that 5.2% of respondents use a bicycle as their main mode of transport for get to/from University.

We will review demand and usage of the bicycle provision and increase supply should that be required. As part of our ESG strategy we will promote the use of this bicycle provision through our 'Green Living' campaign.

Downing Students are committed to providing free to use bikes that are available to our residents in line with the wider travel plan for the scheme. Data on usage of the scheme will be kept and made available should this be requested.