

**REPORT**

**By:** Caroline Highwood – Director of Resources, Adult Social Services

**To:** Supporting People in Kent Commissioning Body

**26 June 2008**

**Subject: Growth Bid - Dartford**

**Classification: Unrestricted**

**For Information**

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**Summary: A growth bid from YMCA Thames Gateway (South) Ltd to revenue fund housing related support to 10 one bedroom move on units in Dartford**

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**1.0 Introduction**

The Commissioning Body of September 2007 agreed that all growth bids for Supporting People funding be presented to the Commissioning Body on an agreed template with additional support from the relevant district or borough council.

**2.0 Strategic Fit**

The proposed service (Appendix 1) is intended to be for homeless young people aged between 18-25 in the Dartford area. The service is identified as Church View and will be used as move on accommodation for service users from the YMCA Thames Gateway service. The updated needs analysis presented to the Commissioning Body as a separate agenda item identifies a need for

- More countywide supported housing and alternatives to bed & breakfast accommodation for single homeless people, in particular for those aged 16 and 17

The supporting letter from Jackie Pye, Housing Policy and Development Manager at Dartford Borough Council (Appendix 2) states

- It is the council's aim to reduce homelessness wherever possible and our excellent working relationship with the YMCA helps us to achieve this by providing five placements per year for 16/17 year olds who might otherwise be based in bed and breakfast accommodation.

The bid from YMCA Thames Gateway identifies the service as also contributing to Dartford Borough Council's Homelessness Strategy 2004 and the Community Strategy for Kent Thameside (January 2008)

### **3.0 Funding Request**

YMCA Thames Gateway have identified an additional value of £10,000 on top of their existing Supporting People contract to enable the provision of housing related support to Church View. The existing value of the Supporting People contract held with YMCA Thames Gateway is £137,999.10 per year.

### **4.0 Financial Impact**

The requested level of funding for this growth bid will have a negligible impact on grant expenditure in light of recent identified savings. Members should refer to item 15 'Supporting People Budget' for further information.

All growth bids that are considered and subsequently funded by the Commissioning Body are subject to the requirements of the five year strategy and to any strategic review undertaken as part of that strategy. Any contract awarded to growth bids can be terminated should a review indicate that the service is not strategically relevant.

### **5.0 Conclusions**

YMCA Thames Gateway have submitted a growth bid for £10,000 to fund 10 units of move on accommodation for young people within Dartford. The proposed service meets with Supporting People identified need, local borough council strategies and has the required support from Dartford Borough Council.

## **6.0 Recommendations**

The Commissioning Body is asked to note the contents of the growth bid and to make a commissioning decision on the service.

**Kevin Prior**  
**Acting Procurement & Commissioning Manager**  
**01622 696198**

### **Background Information:**

None

**Appendix One: Supporting People Team Growth Bid – Business Case**  
**Appendix Two: Supporting Letter from Jackie Pye, Dartford Borough Council**

## **Appendix One: Supporting People Team Growth Bid – Business Case**

### **Supporting People Team Growth Bid – Business Case**

#### Summary of the Service

YMCA Thames Gateway aims to provide safe and secure accommodation for young people aged 18-25 with support needs. The housing department works both formally and informally with young people, providing opportunities and support, through a personal development plan, to equip them with the skills to enable them to live independently. We have 10 one-bedroom move on units, Church View, that are for residents who are ready to move onto more independent living.

#### Evidence of Need

We do not currently have any Supporting People Funding for Church View, however, there is a need for staff to provide support to these residents, as can be seen by the attached report (Appendix 1).

#### Strategic Context

In order to assess how YMCA Thames Gateway's service meets local, regional and national targets and strategies, the following documents were taken into consideration:

- ❖ Supporting People Strategy
- ❖ Dartford Borough Council Homelessness Strategy 2004
- ❖ Community Strategy for Kent Thameside January 2008

After analysing the above documents it can be confirmed that YMCA Thames Gateway's Housing department's approach meets local and regional strategies by providing good quality housing advice and assistance to all its residents. Furthermore, the support offered by staff, as well as assisting residents in becoming more involved in the wider community, covers the key issues identified by the "Community Strategy for Kent Thameside: January 2008" for sustainable communities. These are:

- ❖ Education and training
- ❖ Jobs and Business
- ❖ Housing and urban design
- ❖ Leisure and Culture
- ❖ Health
- ❖ Community Safety and the environment

YMCA Thames Gateway also promotes independence and a larger contribution to society by building partnerships with other agencies such as landlords/housing associations, Local Authorities, Voluntary agencies and other charities. With additional funding for Church View YMCA Thames Gateway would be able to work more efficiently to move residents on to permanent accommodation, as well as empowering the residents to be more proactive in terms of move on, whilst maintaining their independence. By providing the appropriate amount of support to Church View residents YMCA Thames Gateway can help

to reduce homelessness and anti-social behaviour and ensure earlier intervention when problems arise, therefore, minimising the risk of residents being excluded from society.

In accordance with the Dartford Borough Council Homeless Strategy YMCA Thames Gateway aim to maintain the provision of settled accommodation and provide additional support to residents to help them manage their income more appropriately so that they can uphold their existing Tenancy Agreement. This will ensure they receive a good landlords reference for move on accommodation, which will increase their options, therefore enabling residents to make more informed choices regarding move on accommodation, and creating a more structured resettlement programme. With a dedicated Resettlement Worker for Church View YMCA Thames Gateway could ensure that housing and resettlement advice could be offered to all residents, not just those at risk of homelessness. The strategic objectives that are met by YMCA Thames Gateway are as follows:

- ❖ Preventing homelessness wherever possible by providing accommodation to vulnerable young people and working with them to maintain their tenancies. YMCATG also works jointly with the Local Authority and YMCA staff attend the Dartford Borough Council Homelessness strategy Implementation and Review meetings.
- ❖ Ensuring there is sufficient and appropriate support to meet the needs of the client group by working to a key worker system and providing almost twenty-four hour support
- ❖ Improving access to health and social care by working to a Support Plan that covers welfare benefits and healthy living.

### Service Implementation

If Supporting People Funding is provided then we aim to extend an existing part-time support worker's position to a full time position that would include an extra ten hours per week to be used to provide more structured support to residents at Church View, particularly regarding budgeting, move on and resettlement. The Church View Support Worker would meet regularly with each resident, working towards a Support Plan, with the main goal being sustaining their existing Tenancy and planning the resident's move on. The Support Worker would build stronger links with other agencies to increase the choices that residents would have for move on accommodation e.g. Local Authorities, Housing Associations, Private Landlords, specialist agencies to provide support to residents. Please see attached Job Description (Appendix 2) for full details of this post.

### Anticipated Outcomes

If structured support could be offered to Church View residents at YMCA Thames Gateway then we anticipate that we can reduce the risk of these residents becoming excluded from society in the following ways:

- ❖ Preventing possible homelessness due to anti-social behaviour or rent arrears and poor money management
- ❖ Increasing the percentage of positive move ons at YMCA Thames Gateway
- ❖ Empowering residents to make more informed choices about move on opportunities

- ❖ Higher turnaround within Church View and YMCA Thames Gateway's Foyer, therefore helping more young people who are in need of supported accommodation.

### **Timescales**

Please see the attached time scale chart (Appendix 3). As can be seen by the chart, YMCA Thames Gateway anticipate that a person for this post could be recruited within four weeks of the funding being awarded, and so the full service could be implemented from then, depending on any Notice period that the appointed person would need to work.

### **Financial Information**

YMCA Thames Gateway have calculated that we will need an extension of £10,000.00 on our existing Supporting People Contract in order to implement this service to Church View residents. A full breakdown of these costs is available from the proposed budget for this additional service (Appendix 4) and includes costs for paid staff and management.

NB: The 15% Central Management Charge includes apportioned amounts for postage, energy costs, telephone, stationary, payroll/finance costs, insurance and IT support.



## CHURCH VIEW- SUPPORT OR NO SUPPORT...?

### A REPORT ON THE LEVEL OF SUPPORT REQUIRED AT CHURCH VIEW, PART OF YMCA THAMES GATEWAY (DARTFORD)

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*Marc R. Howard*

#### **Introduction**

Church View, otherwise known as phase two, was built over six years ago. It has allowed the main Foyer to move up to ten people, who are ready to take their next steps towards independent living. Co-ordinated through an application procedure, those that meet the necessary requirements (contribute to the YMCA community, in employment or education and able to pay rent) are granted the opportunity to live away from the supported nature of the original site.

Idealistically, once the residents move to Church View they should be equipped with the necessary skills in order to sustain independent living. In practise, the YMCA has experienced something else, with tenants seeking advice and support with; moving on into further accommodation, financial issues and emotional well-being.

The aim of this report is to give an insight into the support that is being carried out by the YMCA and what support the current tenants of Church View feel they need. This will be accomplished by including – examples of past and current tenants. The past tenants will be defined through an overview of their past records of support. The overview of the current tenants also includes a consultation (schedule in Appendix A), where they were asked the type of support that they require. This will be summarised at the end of the report.

#### **Findings**

When looking over past record sheets, talking with staff (HSO & FSO) and consulting the tenants, themes started to emerge (financial difficulties, mental health problems...). These themes were placed into categories of support (Financial, Mental Health...), which assisted in the analysis. Each tenant (ten in total) was placed in the grid (top three were past tenants) where information was either included (√) or not (N/A). From the data input process, the number of columns that were ticked for each theme was tallied up at the bottom, correlations were assembled and relevance of general support needs judged. In this instance I believe the percentage for an ability to generalise would be within 5% of the top quartile (above 70%), which means that areas of finance, administrative and resettlement support showed to be significant. Above 50% was employment support, which correlated with some of the difficulties the tenants experienced in terms of pay and conditions. Personal areas were dismissed as the residents felt that they are mature enough to cope independently. A restriction of this research is the small sample size but the findings can be viewed as representative due to member validation (residents and staff agreed with the findings).

## CHART 1

*Skill based*

TENANT	FINANCIAL	EMPLOYMENT	TRAINING
<b>1</b> <b>FW</b>	√ During tenancy FW had a number of change of circumstances, resulting in time being set aside to assist her with income enquiries	√ Had aspirations in hair dressing but could not seem to work out. Worked in a couple of saloons doing menial duties	N/A
<b>2</b> <b>CT</b>	√ CT had debts relating to store and credit cards.	√ Part-time job but was often talking about moving-on	N/A
<b>3</b> <b>CW</b>	√ Got into arrears after the first year. Required meetings and a budget plan	N/A	N/A
<b>4</b> <b>TP</b>	√ TP has experienced some problems with her health that led to some time off work. TP says "now I'm £600 into my overdraft"	√ Full-time employment at the moment but would like to move-on, needs support in doing so	N/A
<b>5</b> <b>PJ</b>	N/A	√ Originally with a full-time Job but left after two months. He needs support in finding employment	√ Always looking for new training opportunities
<b>6</b> <b>CM</b>	√ Is in financial difficulties. Budget plan needs to be organised so that CM realises what comes in and out of her account. Is currently in arrears	√ Went through a CV and covering letter in order for her to get a new job. Gained employment but was looking for new work, which required more assistance	N/A
<b>7</b> <b>KT</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>8</b> <b>LC</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>9</b> <b>JC</b>	√ Support with overcoming previous arrears	N/A	N/A
<b>10</b> <b>JA</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>TOTAL</b>	7 out of 10 70%	5 out of 10 50%	1 out of 10 1%



## CHART 2

### *Environmental Factors*

TENANT	MOVE-ON	ASSISTANCE FORMS
<b>1</b> <b>FW</b>	√ HSO helped arrange move-on accommodation to a housing association in Reading	√ Assistance with claiming benefits
<b>2</b> <b>CT</b>	√ Letters sent to the council from HSO regarding CT's situation	√ Help with Housing benefit claims
<b>3</b> <b>CW</b>	√ NRP arranged due to pregnancy and letter forwarded to the council accordingly	√ Assistance with council application for housing
<b>4</b> <b>TP</b>	√ Would like assistance when the time comes	√ Assistance with a letter to the Department for work
<b>5</b> <b>PJ</b>	√ Would like to move away	√ Income and expenditure form worked through with FSO
<b>6</b> <b>CM</b>	N/A	√ Assistance with Housing Benefit
<b>7</b> <b>KT</b>	√ "In time to come will need some move-on support, any help is always good"	√ "Yeah, Anna always gives me advice and helps me fill in forms"
<b>8</b> <b>LC</b>	N/A	√ Housing Benefit when off sick
<b>9</b> <b>JC</b>	√ Has applied to the council 5 years ago. HSO is currently communicating with the council over a move-on flat	N/A
<b>10</b> <b>JA</b>	√ Is currently looking to move-on from the YMCA. An hour has been booked for support	N/A
<b>TOTAL</b>	8 Out of 10 80%	8 Out of 10 80%

### CHART 3

*Personal Factors*

TENANT	CLEANLINESS	EMOTIONAL	DRUG/ALCOHOL
1 FW	√ On H&S checks room was of an untidy nature so required monitoring	√ Experienced some harassment from her ex-partner towards the end of tenancy	√ There were some drug issues that accumulated through being with her ex-partner
2 CT	N/A	√ At times would come in and talk with staff over her emotional needs	N/A
3 CW	N/A	N/A	√ Issues with drugs misuse
4 TP	N/A	N/A	N/A
5 PJ	N/A	Previously spoke with HSO over suffering from depression	N/A
6 CM	N/A	N/A	N/A
7 KT	√ H&S reveal that KT is not keeping his living quarters to standard.	N/A	N/A
8 LC	N/A	√ Has experienced some depression	N/A
9 JC	N/A	√ In the past spoke with the HM over anger management issues	N/A
10 JA	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>TOTAL</b>	2 Out of 10 20%	4 Out of 10 40%	2 Out of 10 2%

## DISCUSSION

In summary, the tenants of Church View are capable of sustaining themselves through independent living skills, due to the support programme in the main foyer and the assessment procedures of gaining the tenancy. This can explain why the tenants declined the possibility of further key working sessions. What they do require is a low-level of support that they can access of their own accord. The significant areas are finance, assistance with forms and resettlement.

Financial assistance and advice is an area of support that the YMCA delivers frequently with its tenants. With personal debt of £114 billion and the average person in the UK owing £23,000<sup>1</sup>, it is of no surprise that those that are in low income employment will experience this type of hardship. Contributing is change in circumstances, unemployment, changing jobs or going off sick, has meant a considerable amount of attention has been required in mediating communication between the tenants and the third party (council or Inland Revenue).

A large part of this support is with the administrative processes involved, for example applying for Housing Benefit. Along with the 35 out of the 42 (84%) in the main foyer on Housing Benefit, those in Church View that require support with the Housing Benefit agency, which at the moment is two (20%), do stretch the resources of the department somewhat. Other tasks similar to this that were present in the research were assistance with letters and correspondence with the council.

Move-on accommodation is the primary area in this correspondence, with the majority not able to afford the costs of private letting. The waiting list for Dartford Council is extensive (over 8 years for Band C)<sup>2</sup>, and with housing associations in short supply in the area, the market is competitive. Links to these agencies have led to some success, but the area is an element in the YMCA service that requires a designated staff member to further the networking process.

To finish, the magnitude of the support offered by the YMCA in the Main Foyer, requires the full attention of the housing staff, any additional support to the tenants at Church View means time away from their duties. In consequence, a part-time support worker would be beneficial with specialising in the areas specified in this report, in particular resettlement. Building links with local businesses, housing associations and the council requires a dedication, which at the moment is only succeeding partially<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Information from National Statistics

<sup>2</sup> More information available on Dartford Borough Council's website [www.dartford.gov.uk](http://www.dartford.gov.uk)

<sup>3</sup> If you have any questions relating to this report then contact;  
[marc.howard@ymcathamesgateway.org.uk](mailto:marc.howard@ymcathamesgateway.org.uk)

## **YMCA Thames Gateway – Job Description.**

POSITION TITLE: Resettlement Support Worker

RESPONSIBLE TO: **Housing Support officer**

### **JOB PURPOSE:**

The role of Resettlement Support Worker is to provide support and resettlement services to residents. The Resettlement Support Officer is expected to develop effective relationships with residents and external agencies to support and assist individuals to successfully enable residents to make a positive, planned move into their own independent accommodation, and prepare them to be able to manage and sustain a tenancy

### **Key Responsibilities**

To ensure that residents keep within the terms of their Assured Shorthold Tenancy, to deal with any breaches of this tenancy, and keep adequate records of any action taken.

To monitor the payment of rents, working to the Arrears Policy and Procedures.

To act as the nominated support worker for Church View residents, planning and co-ordinating individual support and resettlement packages to ensure that all support and resettlement needs are met through an appropriate range of services.

Assist in the development of a directory of local support services and other local resources.

Ensure effective working links are made and maintained with local businesses, training providers, local authority, housing associations and landlords in the community, and that information is accurately and promptly communicated to other relevant professionals.

To provide direct support, counselling and practical assistance to residents in order to ensure that they are fully prepared for moving into their accommodation, including ensuring they have realistic expectations regarding the available options, and can make an informed choice regarding their move on accommodation.

To work with each resident to assist them to identify and address any problems they may have such as budgeting, isolation, domestic skills, anger, etc. through the drawing up of support/resettlement plans for each resident.

Conduct life skills sessions in identified areas for additional support, involving outside agencies where necessary.

To provide active and ongoing support to assist residents to participate in the running and development of Church View, and their wider community.

Identify appropriate move-on accommodation for individual residents including referrals to housing providers, assessing criteria, updating providers on changes to applicants' circumstances, pursuing outstanding referrals, viewing accommodation offered, and providing feedback to providers on suitability and decisions made.

To advise and assist the tenant with arrangements for moving into the property to ensure benefits and grants/loans are applied for, utilities connected, maintenance problems resolved and flat is reasonably furnished.

To agree with resettled tenant an appropriate level of follow up support in order to ensure a smooth transition into independent living.

To deal with any former tenants who contact YMCA Thames Gateway for advice or assistance after completion of their formal resettlement programme.

Any other duties that are connected with the resettlement role that are deemed reasonable by the Housing Manager

**Timescales for Service to be Fully Operational**

Funded awarded	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Induction Week 1	Induction Week 2
	Advertise position		Closing date for applications	Shortlisting and interviews to be held	Induction into organisation: familiarising with policies and procedures; learning computer systems; meeting staff and residents.	Shadowing Housing Support Officer
				Person appointed, contract signed and start date agreed		Initial One-to-One Meetings with Church View Residents, contacting local agencies and arranging meetings

## Appendix Two: YMCA Thames Gateway - Church View



### Executive Directorate

Chris Oliver *Executive Director*

Kevin Pryor  
Supporting People Team

Please ask for: Jackie Pye  
Direct Line: (01322) 343683  
Direct Fax: (01322) 343641  
E-mail: Jacqueline.pye@Dartford.gov.uk  
DX: 31908  
Your Ref:  
Our Ref:

Date: 15 November 2007

Dear Kevin  
**YMCA Thames Gateway - Church View**

The YMCA Thames Gateway provides an essential service to young homeless people in the Borough. The ten move-on units, in the centre of town, were built in 2001 with the support of the Council in the form of LASHG funding. The Council recognised that there was a real need for supported move-on accommodation for young people leaving the YMCA to enable them to gain the life skills necessary for them to move on to permanent accommodation in the future.

The service that the YMCA provide fits with the Council's aim of ensuring that everyone has access to good quality housing and it contributes to meeting our targets within the current Homeless Strategy which are focused on preventing homelessness. The Council therefore supports the YMCA's bid for Supporting People funding to provide a full time support worker for Church View to enable young people to move on to permanent accommodation; equipped with the skills necessary to maintain their tenancies. For example, by giving debt management and budgeting advice, enhancing life and social skills and staying safe.

It is the Council's aim to reduce homelessness wherever possible and our excellent working relationship with the YMCA helps us to achieve this by providing five placements per year for 16/17 olds who might otherwise be placed in bed and breakfast accommodation. These young people especially, will require structured support to enable them to live independently once they move on to Church View.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jackie Pye".

Jackie Pye  
Housing Policy & Development Manager