

**Supporting People Team  
Growth Bid  
For a new supported emergency accommodation service for young  
homeless people**

All growth bids must be fully supported by a member of the Supporting People Commissioning Body detailing how the bid will meet their own strategic objectives and how this will support the SP Programme objectives. This should be attached as an appendix to this document.

Providers submitting a growth bid should provide information by means of the template below, which sets out the business case. It should then be returned to the Supporting People Team.

<b>1</b>	<b>Organisation Details</b>	
1.1	Organisation name:	Dover District Council
1.2	Main address for correspondence:	Council Offices White Cliffs Business Park Dover, Kent CT16 3PJ
1.3	Registered Office: (If different from above)	
1.4	Person applying on behalf of the Company or Consortium	Ms. Janet Walton
1.5	Position in the Company:	Housing Initiatives Manager
1.6	Telephone Number:	01304 872266
1.7	Fax Number:	01304 872316
1.8	Email Address:	Janet.walton@dover.gov.uk
1.9	Website address:	<a href="http://www.dover.gov.uk">www.dover.gov.uk</a>
1.10	VAT Registration Number	
1.11	Is your organisation a public limited company / limited company / a partnership / a sole trader / registered as an Industrial & Provident Society / has Charitable status / <b>other</b> : If a Charity please indicate if your organisation is: a) Unincorporated b) A Trust c) A Company	
1.14	Please state the registration number of your organisation  Registered Charity no:  Registered Company no:	
1.17	Companies House Registration Number of parent company (if applicable)	

Purpose The purpose of the business case is to provide a full statement of reasons for the commissioning of a service. It should include all the topics below and must have the full backing of at least one member of the Commissioning Body.

---

Contents This Business Case contains the following topics:

Topic	See Page
Summary of the Service	2
Evidence of Need	3
Strategic Context	4
Service Implementation	5
Anticipated Outcomes	5
Timescales	5
Financial Information	6
Supporting Statement(s) from Commissioning Body member(s)	

---

Summary of the Service

*The service is to provide support to young people aged 16 and 17 who are at risk of homelessness and placed in safe emergency accommodation while assessment of their circumstances is undertaken and efforts made to avoid their becoming homeless.*

*The support service will work with the young people and their families to promote continuity of important relationships, to achieve a return home or to stable accommodation with extended family or friends where this is safe and appropriate and to enable the young person to move on from the service into sustainable arrangements for education, training, work, accommodation and social engagement.*

---

Evidence of  
Need

*In 2008 Dover District Council prepared a strategy to prevent and tackle youth homelessness in its area. This work included the participation of key agencies providing services to young people in the district and consultation with young people. The strategy has recently been reviewed by the Communities and Local Government Specialist Adviser on youth homelessness and correspondence following a recent review meeting is attached for information.*

- 1. Based on statistics produced by local authorities and collated by CLG and referred to in the attached letter, Dover is now, with one other authority, the highest user in England outside London of bed and breakfast accommodation for vulnerable 16 and 17 year olds at risk of homelessness.*
  - 2. There is no alternative emergency accommodation in the District.*
  - 3. Dover has a more rapidly growing number of 11-18 year olds than average for Kent and the South East region (Dover DC Youth Homelessness Strategy para. 3.1).*
  - 4. Research elsewhere has demonstrated that homelessness among young people is more prevalent among economically deprived communities, and in Dover there is correlation between high proportions of 11-18 year olds in the population and the most deprived wards selected for the Kent County Council "Supporting Independence" Programme (Dover DC Youth Homelessness Strategy paras. 3.1-3.2).*
  - 5. On average, 70 young people approach the Local Authority for advice about their housing situation each year, for up to 25 of whom emergency accommodation in the form of bed and breakfast may be necessary. The Council accepts a duty for the majority of these young people placed in bed and breakfast in Dover and a Floating Support referral is made for every young person placed.*
-

Strategic  
Context

*This proposal is central to Dover District Council achieving a number of national, county-wide and local strategic objectives:*

*1. In 2006 Government announced its commitment to eliminate by 2010 the use of bed and breakfast accommodation for homeless 16 and 17 year olds, except in an emergency, and then for no longer than 6 weeks.*

*2. The Kent Children and Young People's Plan (currently being updated) has a priority "to improve the quality and stability of housing provision for vulnerable children and young people through to early adulthood" with a key action "to develop support and interventions that prevent young people's becoming homeless or living in poor housing conditions" (draft version).*

*3. Dover District Council's Youth Homelessness Strategy reflects these two objectives in a number of its key objectives ((Dover DC Youth Homelessness Strategy para. 5.3):*

- Supporting children, young people and their families in planning transitions to independence;*
- Exploring all possible alternatives to the disruptive and potentially damaging experience of statutory homelessness and long waits in temporary accommodation;*
- Providing effective and supportive pathways to independence for young people accommodated without recourse to bed and breakfast accommodation.*

*4. Evidence from other local authorities collected by CLG is that the provision of safe accommodation for young people in crisis together with intensive support can eliminate the regular and consistent use of bed and breakfast accommodation. In addition, this provision can achieve better outcomes for young people, either by avoiding the disruption and negative impact of a pathway to adulthood through homelessness, or, if the homelessness route proves unavoidable, of providing an early foundation of support and development planning which reduces the risk of their dropping out of education or other positive activity at the time and subsequently.*

*5. We have sought the advice of CLG's national specialist advisers on youth homelessness. In reviewing the Dover District Council Youth Homelessness Strategy in 2008, the CLG Specialist Adviser made a number of important points:*

- In her view the Council's continued reliance on bed and breakfast accommodation is not a reflection of our leadership, management or practices but that the accommodation pathway is not sufficiently developed;*
- One of the two critical areas in which we have a shortfall in the pathway is "emergency/direct access accommodation, which is short term and has a focus on prevention, assessment and a return home or to extended family where possible";*
- Without this additional capacity as a matter of urgency, Dover will continue to need to use bed and breakfast as a matter of routine.*

*6. Dover District Council officers and their advisers have researched models of emergency accommodation with support, including Crash pad / supported lodgings and dedicated shared housing projects. We have visited the Porchlight service at Whitstable Road in Canterbury. We have concluded that in the interests of relatively low development cost and time a service based on a shared housing project is our preferred approach.*

*6. We have discussed with RSL partners and with the Housing Corporation the feasibility of identifying a suitable property and securing capital funds. Both are supportive in principle but there is no building specifically for this purpose available in our timescale.*

*7. The Porchlight scheme at Whitstable Road has offered an extremely useful context for developing our ideas, but does not have sufficient*

*similarities of objectives to be a model for our provision and we have concluded that we need to do more research:*

- Into accommodation options including versions of supported lodgings such as Nightstop / Crashpad and services elsewhere such as Lambeth's Time Out, which involve varying the use of existing accommodation, and extending existing services in the locality, including the emergency call centre and Fern Court;*
- Into the needs and circumstances of young people who present as potentially homeless, particularly the extent of crisis (need for intensive support), requirements for safe emergency accommodation (numbers) and their wider support needs.*

---

Service Implementation *We need to identify a form of accommodation in which to place very young (16-17) young people in an emergency which:*

- Is safe and supervised*
- Offers intensive support to young people in a crisis, skilled assessment and access to family interventions and other services which may facilitate a return home;*
- Is not so attractive that young people will see it as a viable way into the homelessness route to independence;*
- Preferably, keeps very young people out of the homelessness / hostels culture.*
- Is sufficiently flexible to cope with variable lengths of stay (2-3 days, up to, we think approximately 8 weeks, with some seasonal peaks and troughs in numbers of young people accommodated.*

*The support service will work closely with the dedicated youth homelessness officer, which Dover District Council is in the process of recruiting. This officer will also participate with other agencies and local authorities in operating the Kent joint protocol for and in building relationships with Children's Trusts and agencies specialising in substance and health issues.*

*Other agencies, including Kent County Council Youth Service, Youth Offending Service and Connexions are represented, with provider agencies, on Dover's District Youth Homelessness Forum and are committed to providing improved services and monitoring the effectiveness of partnership working and outcomes for young people across all services, including this one now proposed.*

---

Anticipated Outcomes

- 1. The use of bed and breakfast accommodation for 16/17 year olds at risk of homelessness is reduced to very occasional emergencies.*
- 2. Homelessness is prevented in a higher proportion of cases.*
- 3. With an increased level of crisis and early days support, young people who become homeless have a less disrupted and/or damaging pathway to independent adulthood.*
- 4. Young people at risk of homelessness are identified and engaged on support and development plans earlier and in a more structured, sustainable way within a network of partner agencies.*

---

Timescales

*As stated above, the Council is keen to see this service provided as a matter of urgency. There are two critical factors in the service becoming operational:*

- 1. Identification of a Supporting People allocation and commissioning of a preferred provider.*
- 2. Identification of a feasible accommodation model which will provide the foundations for delivery of effective preventive work and support.*

*Taking into account discussions with KCC and with partners so far, we think it reasonable to anticipate the service being fully operational in the autumn of 2009.*

*With this in mind, we are putting forward this proposal for an in principal agreement to a budget in 2009/10 of Supporting People funds.*

---

Financial  
Information

*Detailed costs and resourcing will, we assume, be required of potential service providers during the Supporting People commissioning process. For the purposes of budgeting, we have made the following assumptions:*

- Emergency accommodation with support is required for approximately 20 young people each year.*
  - On average they are accommodated for 6 weeks, which equates to 120 support weeks each year.*
  - 17.5 hours of support will be provided per person per week, which equates to 2,100 support hours per annum*
  - At an indicative rate of £20 per support hour, a budget of £42,000 per annum is required.*
- 

Supporting  
People Team  
Comments