

Charles Darwin House and Lewis King House, Bromley Proposal for the Delivery of an Integrated Housing & Support Offer

Our Approach

Due to our experience providing over 300 homelessness services across the country, Riverside is uniquely positioned to deliver an innovative, integrated, strengths-based housing and support service at our Charles Darwin House (CDH) and Lewis King House (LKH) properties. As a longstanding provider of social housing in Bromley, we are similarly well-placed to [understand and respond to the local context](#), including working in collaboration with the local community and delivering a robust resettlement offer which is cognisant of the complex housing market challenges.

We bring fresh perspectives and new ideas from other London boroughs and our services nationally, and [a proven track record](#) mobilising complex support contracts in London and beyond. We also have access to significant resources as one of the largest providers of homelessness services in England. Together, these elements will enable us to successfully deliver [a high-quality integrated service](#) for customers in Bromley.

This proposal sets our proposed service delivery model and approach to delivering an integrated housing and support offer at CDH and LKH that will meet the needs of the target cohort over the coming years and assist the London Borough of Bromley to delivery its strategic priorities in relation to homelessness.

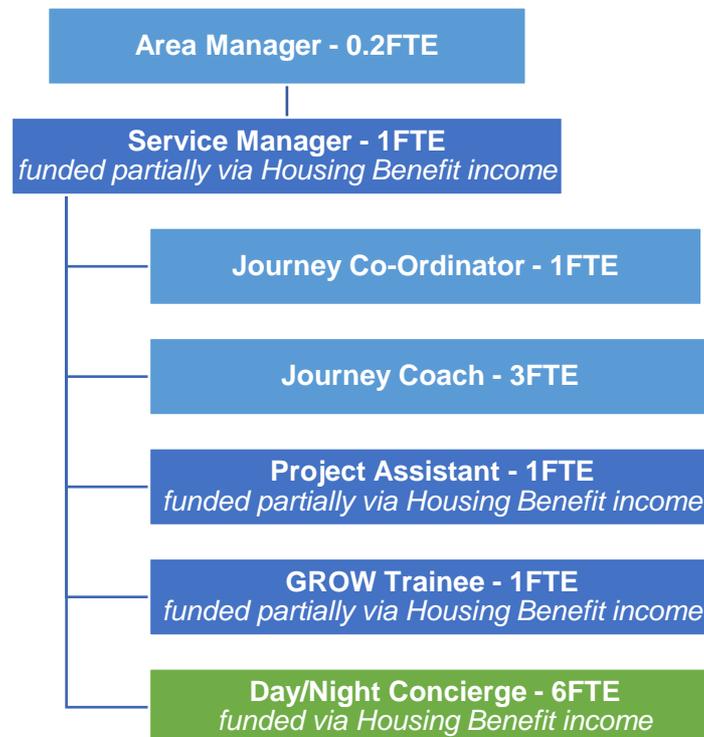
Staffing

Riverside's integrated housing and support approach will be embedded in our staffing structure, with roles funded through both support contract and Housing Benefit income. In our experience, this maximises our service's ability to provide truly integrated housing-led support, ensuring the whole staff team is working collaboratively to support customers to maintain their accommodation, achieve the best housing-related outcomes and increasing the likelihood of a positive move-on.

We have used operating models from similar services to develop our proposed staff structure in terms of posts, support and housing management hours and the funding of posts. We have a lot of experience of working with commissioners and housing benefit teams to validate rent and service charges and charge eligible costs to housing benefit. Our experience of providing support and housing management services from Riverside properties in London includes:

- Acre Lane in Lambeth, a 24/7 supported accommodation service for people with complex mental health needs (35 units).
- St Mary's/Chapter Street in Westminster, a 24/7 supported accommodation service for women with complex mental health needs (49 units).
- The Boundaries and Lucas Court in Havering, a 24/7 supported accommodation service for people with complex mental health needs (22 units).

Fig. 1 – Proposed staffing structure



- The *Service Manager* will be responsible for the delivery of a **holistic, wrap-around housing management and support service**, including oversight of casework and outcomes, and health and safety. They will be an active member of local groups, partnership forums and develop relationships with key delivery partners. They will manage the staff team, monitoring performance and quality and driving continuous improvement.
- The Service Manager will report directly to a local *Area Manager*, who will manage the relationship with the commissioner and ensure CDH and LKH continue to deliver an effective service in line with local needs.
- The *Journey Co-Ordinator* will have a greater level of experience/skill and will be responsible for **overseeing the ‘resettlement journey’**, ensuring the service is able to support customers to overcome the barriers to moving-on they may face. They will **ensure a resettlement-focused culture is embedded within the service**, e.g. establishing partnerships with trusted local landlords, brokering employment, training/volunteering opportunities and/or facilitating daily resettlement workshops. They will also support a small number of customers with a higher level of need.
- The *Journey Coaches* will provide **121 support** for a caseload of customers, allocated by the Service Manager based on their experience/skills/complexity. They will provide a **consistent, reassuring presence**, with the majority of time spent delivering 121 support and interventions to facilitate recovery from homelessness and associated challenges.

- The *Project Assistant* will provide [administrative/practical support](#), including dealing with customer queries, signposting customers to other services, and managing referrals and voids.
- They will be supported by a *GROW* (*‘Giving Real Opportunities of Work’*) *Trainee*, who will have [lived experience](#) of homelessness, mental health or long-term unemployment and will bring a unique perspective, representing the customer voice among the staff team and more widely within Riverside. Our GROW Trainees receive enhanced supervision designed to enable them to progress in the Care and Support sector, with previous Trainees working in and managing our Westminster and Lambeth services. Subject to agreement from your Housing Benefit department, we expect to fund this post through housing benefit income.
- The *Day/Night Concierge* will ensure [a safe, secure service](#), providing a 24 hour presence for the proactive management of issues such as noise complaints and anti-social behaviour. Subject to agreement from your Housing Benefit department, we expect to fund these posts through housing benefit income.

The team will be supported by an *Income Officer*, to monitor rent and service charge collection, and a *Regional Operations Manager*, with strategic oversight and responsibility for regional health & safety, quality and compliance. These posts are funded centrally.

Accommodation and Asset Management

Over the next 5 years, Riverside will invest £26 million in its supported accommodation stock, recognising that our homes must undergo continuous improvement to meet the changing needs of customers and commissioners. CDH and LKH have been identified as high priorities and will benefit from improvements in Phase 1 of the project. A Project Manager from Riverside’s Care and Support Business Development Team has been appointed to lead the project in partnership with locally-based Assets Officers and Area Managers. A designated Business Development Officer and/or Area Manager for the locality will liaise with commissioners, customers, staff and the project team to ensure a truly collaborative approach to project design and delivery. We are aware of the complex challenges in the provision of single homelessness accommodation in Bromley, and will ensure improvements to the buildings are undertaken in such a way as to minimise disruption to the adult pathway.

In line with Psychologically-Informed Environments (PIE) design principles, the Stakeholder Group will work through a [PIE Toolkit](#) to ensure the completed works truly improve the quality of our accommodation in a way which recognises the unique experiences of their customer group. An example of the psychologically-informed changes which may be made include: the creation of formal/informal activity areas to promote engagement in meaningful activities; creating open spaces and improved use of natural lighting; the creation of designated ‘therapeutic’ areas for relaxation/reflection for colleagues and customers.

Alongside these improvements, targeted building-specific works will be carried out through:

- A **comprehensive option appraisal**, led by local managers, involving commissioners and customers, to identify the extent to which the service meets future needs and expectations
- Once the proposed changes are identified through the Option Appraisal, an **Evaluation** of the financial and practical feasibility will take place, considering project constraints and timescales
- Works are approved via the **Stakeholder Group**, and reviewed by the **national Steering Group**
- The project is **handed over** to the Assets Officer, a workplan is developed and contractors appointed

We will consider the accessibility needs of the customer group, including exploring options for a DDA compliant unit by adapting the existing emergency bed unit and moving this to converted office space. We will also explore viability of any other potential changes which would improve accessibility of the buildings.

Customer consultation will be embedded from the outset, with our **Customer Involvement Framework** informing the process and ensuring all works are carried out central to customer need. An individual from the Stakeholder Group will be appointed to liaise with the Service Manager to carry out consultation in a way which is most appropriate for the service/needs of the customer group, including formal and informal written feedback, digital and written surveys, organised verbal feedback such as focus groups, and/or 121 conversations for customers who do not feel able, or want, to engage in group feedback.

A Social Value Action Plan also forms a core part of the programme, and we look forward to working with customers and contractors to explore how organisations procured to carry out works can bring wider benefits to our customers and services, such as through the provision of apprenticeships/work placements.

Support

Riverside's commitment to creating services which are truly psychologically- and trauma-informed enables us to support people to successfully move on from homelessness. Based on our experience, we would expect a service of this type to involve supporting customers who are already engaging in support (or are willing to engage in support), providing a calm and consistent environment for customers. Our proposal is therefore based on supporting customers who are *not* experiencing highly complex challenges, such as those at the pre-contemplative stages of tackling substance misuse, or those with mental health needs including Dual Diagnoses which have the potential to escalate rapidly.

In our experience, successfully supporting customers requires a flexible, persistent approach, which starts with establishing trust. We are aware that customers we support have often had very negative experiences of engaging with services and other professionals, and we are experienced in working with customers who do not 'engage' with support in the way we may necessarily expect.

We will deliver a range of interventions which follow a common framework of:

- **Psychologically-informed environments** – using positive psychology to elicit recovery
- **Strengths-based support** – with support conversations focusing on utilising people's existing assets to make progress

- **Trauma Informed Care** – systems, processes and support relationships which promote recovery from trauma and adverse childhood experiences
- **Housing-led support** – maximising customers' ability to move-on through an emphasis on identifying, building and maintaining independence.

Support will be delivered using a variety of tools/interventions such as:

- **121 keywork sessions**, delivered as desired by customers – on or off site, in a location of choice, alongside an existing support provider, whilst participating in an activity, etc.
- **Riverside's 'Library of Targeted Support' (psychosocial toolkits)**, containing tailorable guidance/activities/sessions corresponding to areas of need. These can be delivered in groups or 1:1 sessions, and include topics such as: Healthy Relationships, Money Management, Universal Credit, and Resettlement.
- **Psychologically-informed tools (e.g. Goals Creation)**, which help customers to think positively about themselves, identify what's important to them/their aspirations, and how to build positive and sustainable support networks.
- **Targeted Activities/Sessions**, designed with customers to improve independence, and health and wellbeing, e.g. social activities (parks/museum outings), therapeutic art sessions, technology workshops.

From the outset, our support plans consist of goals and outcomes identified entirely by customers, ensuring initial support focuses on what's important to them. This often involves an intensive initial period of support addressing the urgent needs that matter to customers, before moving on to address longer-term challenges, such as income maximisation and building budgeting skills. These 'quick wins' **establish the trust** required to go on to tackle more difficult, personal challenges, facilitated through our team's training in Motivational Interviewing and Coaching. This approach will be complemented by a 'resettlement focus' from the outset of support, ensuring our work enables customers to address barriers to moving on, such as previous rent arrears. Similarly, we will manage expectations and ensure customers have an accurate understanding of realistic accommodation options, such as understanding what accommodation options they are most likely to be able to access in the context of Bromley's housing offer. Combined, these approaches will ensure customers see the service as a key step in the transition to settled accommodation.

Our **personalisation fund** through our exclusive partnership with Church Homeless Trust will enable our customers to access additional funding to buy items or explore interests which are essential to their wellbeing, e.g. exploring hobbies and interests. This can be beneficial in establishing positive social and peer networks and promoting the meaningful use of time.

Tenancy Sustainment

It is our aim to ensure customers remain in CDH and LKH until they are ready to move on, minimising the 'revolving door' of homelessness services. In Riverside services, traditional sanctions/warnings are replaced by **Success Agreements** (if the customer's accommodation may be at risk due to persistent avoidable non-payment) and **Development Plans** (if the customer's accommodation may be at risk due to behaviour), which

[re-frame](#) challenging behaviour as learning opportunities. This reinforces psychologically-informed environments, and presents ASB as a barrier which can be addressed in the same way that challenges such as substance misuse and offending behaviour can be overcome.

Our team will be trained to promote tenancy sustainment and prevent evictions/abandonments through:

- Creating an environment in which customers are treated with [unconditional positive regard](#)
- Ensuring customers understand their license and support agreements, are aware of their obligations and are able to make [an informed decision](#) to agree to the service offer
- A [resettlement-focused culture](#) in which customers are encouraged to take ownership of their responsibilities as a Riverside resident and meet their self-identified independent living goals

We recognise the trauma people have experienced through multiple exclusions and homelessness, and understand that this may manifest itself as challenging behaviour, which may include ASB. Our support teams are skilled in coaching techniques, which enables them to respond to challenging behaviour in a positive way and encourages customers to openly consider why they feel a need to resort to ASB to express negative emotions and feelings. We can then work proactively with customers to address this need, such as [exploring the reasons behind these emotions](#) and/or [finding more appropriate outlets](#).

Training, Education and Employment

All customers will have access to tailored support to help them access education, training and employment, with Journey Coaches and/or Project Assistants supporting customers to explore opportunities. Staff at CDH and LKH will support customers to access their desired ETE options, rather than prescribing recommendations, and the Journey Co-Ordinator will have established relationships with employers, enabling bespoke customer/employer matches to be developed, increasing customers' access to apprenticeship, volunteering and work experience opportunities.

CDH and LKH will make every effort to ensure barriers to education, training and employment are removed, such as overcoming financial barriers by accessing grants from our charitable partners to pay for clothing for interviews or to pursue qualifications. We will access additional support from a range of established partners including:

- [GOALS UK](#): delivering motivational coaching sessions to “at risk” people in our existing London services, to reduce crime and help people into work/FE
- [Bounce Back](#): specialist offenders' charity, who are a key partner at Riverside's Working Accommodation projects in Camden and Lewisham
- [Radical Recruit](#): specialist recruitment agency, providing employment coaching to homeless people
- [St Giles Trust](#): supporting Riverside customers to find sustainable employment
- [Learn My Way](#): as a registered learning centre, we are able to provide customers with access to online courses via Learn My Way, to build digital skills and prepare customers for using technology in the workplace

To ensure customers feel ready to access education, employment and training opportunities, we will utilise our in-house ETE readiness course. This can be delivered on a 121 basis or in a group setting, and is designed to build the confidence, communication skills and resilience required for customers to succeed in employment. Sessions include practical information on how and where to look for work and how to discover, apply and discuss transferrable skills.

Health and Wellbeing

Recognising that our customers' needs cannot be addressed in isolation, we will establish relationships with the key organisations our customers will be interacting with, such as local GP surgeries, dentists and pharmacies, Talk Together and Change Grow Live. Our 'Making Every Adult Matter' approach recognises Housing, Mental Health, Substance Misuse and Offending as primary support needs for many individuals with experience of multiple exclusions, and the importance of a collaborative approach to addressing these needs holistically. Depending on local need, we will attend and/or facilitate partnership meetings, panels and forums, and can designate staff as 'single points of contact' for partner agencies, to support continuity of customers' support between services.

Alongside meeting customers' physical and mental health needs, CDH and LKH will adopt a holistic view of health and wellbeing, and will provide a programme of activities, workshops and sessions, co-designed with customers and geared towards promoting wellbeing and prevent isolation – a common barrier to resettlement.

Locality Management

Due to our [integrated approach](#) to housing and support, all staff at CDH and LKH will recognise the importance of locality management and will maintain an awareness of how the service impacts the wider community.

Our Concierges will provide a constant presence in both CDH and LKH, with support available via a manager and senior manager on-call rota. Through incorporating a holistic range of management responsibilities into our staffing structure, we have created an [escalation process](#) from Journey Co-Ordinator to Service Manager, through to Area and Regional Managers, to ensure a targeted response to wider neighbourhood issues and provide the community with the reassurance that locality management concerns will be addressed at the appropriate level.

We are experienced in working with local authorities, residents' groups, and partners to address concerns, particularly in services in [densely-populated residential areas](#) and/or areas which may contain higher number of residents who are particularly [vulnerable](#) to disturbances and/or anti-social behaviour, such as older people, or in areas with a high density of supported housing. We have experience of working with customers and local police officers to create a Policing Plan for services in a residential area, in which customers are involved in anti-social behaviour.

We have access to an experienced Marketing and Communications Team including a dedicated Marketing Business Partner for our Care and Support services and an [on-call Media Advisor](#). Together, this enables

Riverside to promote positive publicity in local and regional media and online, and ensure negative publicity is managed appropriately and responded to, mitigating its impact.

We recognise the role that the refurbishment of the buildings could play in supporting locality management, and expect this consideration to inform the decisions made in the refurbishment programme.

Move On Support

We are experienced in working with customers across a full spectrum of need to facilitate move-on options which best suit their needs, including in locations with challenging housing markets and [a shortage of 1-bedroom accommodation](#). We are committed to working innovatively to solve these challenges, through:

- Utilising [Riverside's social housing stock](#), including local accommodation options or supporting reconnection to other locations (e.g. Lewisham, Bexley) and facilitating access to Riverside's Retirement Living services, through our national [Move On protocol](#). This ensures customers are supported through the transition from supported to independent living, reducing the likelihood of early tenancy failure, and ensures that Riverside's housing stock is allocated to those who need it most
- Harnessing the experience of existing staff to [establish partnerships](#) with social landlords, to facilitate access to social housing
- Utilising the mobilisation period to [build relationships](#) with trusted landlords and other partners, e.g. Furniture Resource Centres
- Working through an established [internal Resettlement course](#) or our new, [strengths-based Move-On Passport](#), to equip customers with the skills required to manage a tenancy and live independently
- Delivering a [targeted social media marketing campaign](#) to local landlords, explaining the transitional support Riverside can offer to customers leaving Bromley services and encouraging them to accept our customers as tenants. This recently generated 5 leads with landlords in Kent to support move-on from a comparable service for people with a higher level of need
- Designating the Journey Co-Ordinator as the [Resettlement Lead](#) within the service, to act as a [single point of contact](#) for move-on related queries and to broker relationships with organisations which can support successful move-on, such as private landlords and furniture resource centres.

Our Performance

The following contract examples provide evidence of our experience and performance in delivering integrated housing and support services:

Our Specialist Support Pathway Accommodation Service in Manchester provides 24/7 support for 72 adults in need of housing related support that have a history of complex needs and entrenched rough sleeping. The service us delivered from two buildings, Brydon Court and Newbury House, and dispersed accommodation.

Between 01/04/2019 – 17/02/2020 the CLG outcomes for the period were as follows:

- [Achieve economic well-being](#): 93% maximised their income; 82% reduced their overall debt
- [Enjoy and achieve](#): 100% participated in leisure/cultural/faith and/or informal learning activities; 90%

established contact with external service/groups; 91% established contact with friends or family;

- **Be healthy:** 85% were better at managing their physical health; 62% were better managing their mental health; 59% were better managing their substance misuse
- **Stay safe:** 83% complied with statutory orders; 80% were better at managing self-harm; 83% were successful in minimising the risk of harm from others.
- **Make a positive contribution:** 93% had more choice/ involvement/ control.

Our Single Homeless Pathway Service at Marsh House in Wakefield provides 24/7 support and accommodation to 48 single homeless people with support needs. The service offers practical and emotional support, assistance and advice, and encourages clients to pursue resettlement options and develop life skills in preparation for independent living.

Between 01/04/2019 – 17/02/2020 the CLG outcomes for the period were as follows:

- **Achieve economic well-being:** 100% maximised their income; 90% reduced their overall debt
- **Enjoy and achieve:** 94% participated in leisure/cultural/faith and/or informal learning activities; 88% participated in work-like activities; 94% established contact with external service/groups; 95% established contact with friends or family;
- **Be healthy:** 100% were better at managing their physical health; 90% were better managing their mental health; 77% were better managing their substance misuse
- **Stay safe:** 86% complied with statutory orders; 100% were better at managing self-harm; 100% were successful in minimising the risk of harm from others.
- **Make a positive contribution:** 95% had more choice/involvement/control.