



**Council Cabinet**  
**12 February 2020**

**ITEM 12**

Report sponsor: Strategic Director of  
Communities and Place  
Report author: Housing Strategy and Initiatives  
Manager

## **YMCA Derbyshire – Y-Steps Under 35's Housing Scheme**

### **Purpose**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the renewal of a lease arrangement for 24 two-bedroomed properties with YMCA Derbyshire (YMCA), for a period of 5 years, to commence January 2020.
- 1.2 The shared units will continue to provide accommodation for single people under 35 years of age supporting their transition from homelessness into longer term housing solutions. YMCA will work with the residents to develop the necessary skills for sustainable independent living over the period of their stay. The YMCA's agreement to let the properties to meet these aims will be incorporated into the lease as express provisions, and demonstrates that these measures form part of the Council's commitment to meeting its statutory obligations.
- 1.3 Approving this proposal will respond to duties contained within the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, particularly the development of housing pathways for vulnerable people in need of homes. It also responds to a shared accommodation need within the city that Derby Homes are not currently able to offer.
- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the renewal of a lease arrangement for 24 two-bedroomed properties with YMCA Derbyshire (YMCA), for a period of 5 years, to commence January 2020.

### **Recommendations**

- 2.1 To agree to the renewal of leases of 24 two-bedroomed Housing Revenue Account (HRA) owned properties, as proposed, to the YMCA for a period of 5 years, at a total annual rental of £93,900 in year one, increasing on 1 April each year thereafter in line with rent policy (September CPI plus 1%).

- 2.2 To note that other general terms of these leases will be the same as those for the leases that have recently expired for the same properties, with the following amendments:
- that, by agreement, the specific properties may be swapped in or out of the leasing arrangements if more suitable alternative units become available
  - rolling break clauses for both parties will be incorporated into the lease arrangements
- 2.3 That the Director of Development & Growth, in consultation with Strategic Director of Corporate Resources and Cabinet Member for Adults Health and Housing be authorised to take all necessary and appropriate steps to agree terms, extend, terminate or vary the lease arrangements.

### **Reasons**

- 3.1 This proposal helps the Council to meet its new duties, applied nationally, under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, which requires it to work with partner providers to ensure it can meet these new duties.
- 3.2 The YMCA will partner with the Council and Derby Homes to help meet these new duties through this scheme, utilising the 24 units that are currently being leased.
- 3.3 YMCA will maximise use of this accommodation through shared occupancy and 6 monthly turnover.
- 3.4 Without this provision, whenever such a young person starts to struggle and loses their accommodation, poor outcomes for the young person and a homelessness representation and related costs to the Council are likely to follow.

### **Supporting information**

- 4.1 Currently the YMCA lease 24 properties from the Council to deliver the Y-Steps project. At any one time, Y-Steps offers up to 48 young people aged 18-35, who have experienced homelessness, accommodation in these two bedroom flats. Therefore, by accommodating up to 96 young people per annum, this scheme has the potential to provide invaluable help, support, tenancy sustainability skills and accommodation for up to 480 young people over the 5 year lease period. The young people are offered this accommodation having demonstrated that they can manage their rent, look after their accommodation and are ready to get into work, education or training. These units are intended as transitional shared homes for up to 6 months, before residents are ready to move on to longer term housing solutions, having gained the skills and demonstrated the potential to sustain an independent tenancy elsewhere. The current leases on these properties expire in January 2020.

- 4.2 The scheme is particularly valuable within the city as it provides shared accommodation and focussed skills development for under 35s transitioning from homelessness into more stable longer term homes. Its unique approach – linked directly with the YMCA Foyer – also allows for further reduction in homelessness by facilitating a step-up, step-down approach which quickly recognises when a young person is starting to fail and can move them back to the Foyer temporarily. If this link was not in place, when a young person starts to struggle and loses their accommodation it would result in a homelessness representation to the Council.
- 4.3 This proposal is a focussed resource which best assists the Council to meet its obligations under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and must be seen within the context of Derby's growing reputation within MHCLG, and beyond, as a trailblazing authority in its approach to homelessness and rough sleeping issues. In addition it provides support/skills needs assessments and planning to help meet longer term housing needs.
- 4.4 Key features of this proposal include:
- 6 months temporary accommodation, allowing for housing benefit recovery
  - “My Own Place” learning platform completion a condition of tenancy
  - Increased engagement activity with the private rented sector to increase access to this sector for the cohort
  - Housing Navigator input into each resident through their move into permanent housing
  - Eligibility Assessment under the HRA and Homelessness Prevention, casework and Personal Housing Plans support
  - Timely feed into monitoring arrangements.
- 4.5 People referred onto the project demonstrate they are Y-Steps ready by:
- keeping up-to-date with their rent
  - looking after their room on Campus and respecting others whilst living there
  - learning how to cook and shop for food
  - learning how best to manage their money and take care of themselves
  - working with their Housing Navigator, the Health & Wellbeing Team and attending Foyer sessions to do this.
  - fully understanding and meeting the responsibilities that come with living in a shared flat
  - practicing the skills needed to achieve their goal of moving into their own place in 6 month's time.

- 4.6 At time of writing, 87 young people had been accommodated and supported since June 2018, of which:  
 55 were 18-24 year olds  
 32 were 25-35 year olds.

Of which:  
 21 were female  
 66 were male

Of the 51 young people that had moved on from the Y-Steps Project at the time of writing, the results are very strong, with 31 having made a positive move on:

<b>Destination</b>	<b>Number</b>
Family and/or Friends	10
University	1
Social Housing Tenancy	8
Private Sector Tenancy	3
Employer Accommodation	1
Internal transfer	8

7 people abandoned and YMCA is not aware of their subsequent destination, whether negative or positive.

Unfortunately 9 people were evicted from the scheme primarily for ASB and/or failure to pay their personal charge.

And 4 had a negative move on into police custody or prison.

In the context of the project and the client group, these are excellent early results.

- 4.7 It is therefore proposed to renew leases of the 24 two-bedroomed properties to the YMCA, for a period of 5 years. This will be on the on the same general terms as for the existing leases, and will include rental payments, rolling break clauses and, by agreement, that the specific properties may be swapped in or out of the leasing arrangements if more suitable alternative units become available. Also, in recognition of the additional services provided by the YMCA in helping the Council to meet its statutory obligations under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, the repairing and maintenance obligation will be met by Derby Homes throughout the term of the lease. Specific terms will be incorporated that specify the additional services the YMCA will provide.

### **Public/stakeholder engagement**

- 5.1 Internal and Derby Homes consultees as per sign-off box below.  
 5.2 YMCA who support the proposal.

### **Other options**

- 6.1 The Council could choose to release these 24 two bed units and let them through Homefinder, to those assessed with a housing need and requiring two bedroom accommodation. Whilst this would be advantageous in meeting need from the housing register it would only support 24 applicants. Using these units in a targeted way through leasing to YMCA will enable up to 96 young people, per annum, to transition from supported accommodation with the necessary skills to move to independent living, which will provide greater support to the delivery of the requirements of the Homeless Reduction Act, in particular, the requirements to establish housing pathways for vulnerable groups.
- 6.2 The recommended option will secure supported shared move on accommodation for younger homeless people. Without this support, the council will find it difficult to meet its duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and alternative arrangements would need to be sought, if possible, for up to 480 young people accommodated and supported through delivery of this scheme.

### **Financial and value for money issues**

- 7.1 The demand for homelessness services and housing from younger people is high. The full annual rental value of the 24 properties will be recovered from the YMCA under the lease arrangement terms for the duration of the lease: at a total annual rental of £93,900 in year one, increasing on 1 April each year thereafter in line with rent policy (September CPI plus 1%). For part years rental income will be charged by quarter or proportionate to the periods. Where any individual properties are swapped in or out of the scheme the rental will be adjusted appropriately. The HRA will benefit from this income.
- 7.2 In recognition of the additional services provided by YMCA in helping the Council to meet its statutory duties, the repairing and maintenance obligation will be met by Derby Homes throughout the term of the lease in line with all other HRA owned properties. As such, there are no direct financial implications for the HRA from the decision to amend the lease.

### **Legal implications**

- 8.1 This proposal will enable Derby City Council and its partner provider, Derby Homes, to provide essential housing and support to younger people under 35 who are transitioning from homelessness and will help meet our duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- 8.2 While leased to the YMCA under this arrangement, the properties will not be available for occupation within the allocation scheme, Homefinder, as this arrangement meets the exception in the scheme allowing for discretion to be exercised in support of 'sustainable communities' and other Council initiatives.

### **Other significant implications**

#### **9.1 Equalities Impact**

This proposal enables Derby City Council to work in partnership with Derby Homes

and the YMCA, to support younger people transitioning from homelessness who are disadvantaged by virtue of their homelessness.

## 9.2 Property and Asset Management

This proposal will result in the lease of 24 two-bedroomed properties to the YMCA for a 5 year period.

## 9.3 Risk Management and Safeguarding

This proposal will enable better safeguarding arrangements for younger homeless people who are often more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.

As detailed in the main body of the report this new proposal will assist the council in mitigating the risk of failing to meet its obligations under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

## 9.4 Corporate objectives and priorities for change

The proposal will enable the Council, in partnership with local housing providers, to deliver essential housing, advice and support to younger people who are homeless or threatened with homelessness and support them into more stable, permanent accommodation. This will promote greater sustainability of our local communities.

**This report has approved by the following officers:**

<b>Legal officer</b> <b>Financial officer</b> <b>Human Resources officer</b> <b>Estates/Property officer</b> <b>Service Director(s)</b> <b>Other(s)</b>	Olu Idowu, Head of Legal Services Andy Gill/Mazer Hussain  Tony Morton, Estates and Property Review Greg Jennings, Director of Regeneration, Property and Housing Projects Ian Fullagar, Head of Strategic Housing Services. Claire Mehrbani, Head of Housing Management and Housing Options, DH.
<b>For more information contact:</b> <b>Background papers:</b> <b>List of appendices:</b>	Martin Brown 01332 640319 <a href="mailto:martin.brown@derby.gov.uk">martin.brown@derby.gov.uk</a> None Appendix One: Business case paper submitted by YMCA



## Appendix One

### Business case papers submitted by YMCA.



Y-Steps Business  
Case for Continuation



17-19.pdf



Kawan 18-19.pdf

Also attached as separate documents.