

DENBIGHSHIRE HOMELESSNESS TEMPORARY EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION SUPPORT PROJECT SPECIFICATION

A. Introduction

This project is a holistic, housing related support service for people who are living in temporary emergency accommodation in Denbighshire.

Individuals supported will be any gender; aged 16 and above; single or part of a couple, and may or may not have dependent children and pets. All individuals supported will be resident in temporary emergency accommodation in Denbighshire, and identified as needing support to enable them to sustain their accommodation, prevent reoccurring homelessness and move on into more suitable accommodation.

For many people the cycle of homelessness is interwoven with complex issues such as relationship breakdown, domestic abuse, drugs and alcohol, mental health issues and offending. A significant part of this project will be the delivery of a programme of meaningful activities to help people to move on from these issues by re-building self-esteem, confidence and improving wellbeing. This project will provide an opportunity to be part of something positive, enabling people to re-build social networks and learn new skills.

The support provided in this setting will be flexible and person-centred, supporting people to secure and maintain sustainable housing by addressing any mental health, substance misuse or any other problems they may face, helping to improve their health and well-being and/or helping them progress into, or nearer to, a job or training opportunity based on their specific circumstances. The support provided in this project may also include budgeting, including accessing money advice; developing life skills; achieving safety and security, and accessing other services and opportunities as well as including support to source appropriate move on accommodation.

This project will complement and support the statutory work of the Homelessness Prevention Team. The temporary emergency accommodation will be owned and managed by Denbighshire County Council, who will be responsible for maintaining the accommodation and housing management functions. The support will need to be delivered across two different accommodation sites initially, with the potential for additional sites to be added to the project in the future. There will be an overnight staffing requirement for this project as this will offer an immediate response service to offer accommodation and support in crisis situations, working with the Homelessness Prevention Team and the Homelessness Prevention Pathway.

B. Project Description

The aim of this project is to provide a better, overall, experience of living in temporary accommodation in Denbighshire, where people are supported to improve their wellbeing and build on their future.

We are keen to see an engaging programme of meaningful activities as a key part of this project. Activities will be expected to be delivered on site in the communal space available within the accommodation as well as the facilitation of access to activities/training in the community. (e.g. sports or arts organisations, education establishments and other

community groups etc). As part of this we would expect the project to build a network of a wide variety of organisations offering social activities.

Participation in activities offers many benefits to people recovering from homelessness. Activities can add structure to people's days, helping them to develop confidence, self-esteem and social skills, as well as skills that may increase their employability and readiness for work. Activities can reduce feelings of boredom and loneliness and act as a catalyst, motivating people to make positive changes. Activities can also greatly improve well-being and quality of life for individuals who may have experienced traumatic events or are facing a great deal of stress.

We want the temporary accommodation, support and activities to be psychologically and trauma informed. Ensuring citizens are involved in the development of the activities programme will be fundamental to the success of this element of the project. The programme of activities may offer new experiences that citizens may not have previously known about or considered. Intensity of engagement and intervention will vary depending on individual needs and circumstances. We would like to see an innovative and flexible approach to enable this to be delivered in a person-centred, creative way.

Periods of non-engagement are synonymous within support and are to be expected, but each occurrence should be treated differently, as the reasons for each are individual to that person. The onus will be on the service provider to engage with citizens and unless under extreme circumstances, the service provider should not consider ending support due to non-engagement.

The aim of this project is to provide holistic support to citizens placed in temporary accommodation by the local authority to reduce the risk of homelessness reoccurring and improve wellbeing outcomes.

To be most effective, we feel the project must be:

- Innovative – striving to continuously refine and improve the project to promote wellbeing, working together with the commissioners and stakeholders to build on and develop best practice.
- Structure and purpose -
- Co-productive – working in true partnership with citizens and other key stakeholders to plan solutions and shape the ongoing development of the project. We would also like to see citizens actively involved in the delivery of the project, e.g. through shaping the programme of activities alongside the service provider, and potentially sharing their skills and peer support with others.
- Staffed by a competent and dynamic team who have a broad and diverse skill set to enable the successful delivery of all elements of this project, and to enable the project to achieve positive outcomes for individuals with a broad range of needs and circumstances. It is felt that in particular, understanding and skills in supporting people experiencing poor mental health and wellbeing will be vital to the success of this project.
- Person-centred – with the individual's voice, choice and control at the forefront.
- Complementing – the work of the Homelessness Prevention Team and working to Denbighshire County Council's vision for Rapid Rehousing.

- Non-judgemental, with a psychologically informed approach - understanding that we're all individuals with different needs, goals and stories, and that everyone should be treated with dignity and respect. Engagement with support and the activity programme should be encouraged but will not be mandatory for citizens.
- Needs-led – targeting and offering support/guidance where it is needed most.
- Peer support – is enabled and encouraged
- Social integration – and reducing the stigma of homelessness.
- Accessible – being responsive, easy to find and contact, and not creating arbitrary processes, criteria or other barriers. The language used should seek to reduce the stigma associated with homelessness/risk of homelessness.
- Strengths-based in its ethos and support approach – maximising people's own strengths and resources, and recognising that people are experts in their own lives.
- Sensitivity around challenging behaviours – recognising the importance of trauma informed practice.
- Engaging with a broad range of key agencies (including landlords) and settings where there are opportunities for collaboration on both practical and strategic levels.
- A key driver/co-ordinator of managing multi-agency responses to support individuals to address a broad range of issues and support needs.
- Promoting understanding of homelessness prevention, including around identifying and appropriately responding to risk factors/warning signs.
- The project will need to be flexible to respond to changing needs and circumstances, and to ensure that trust can be built and maintained as much as possible.

C. Key aims and objectives

- People are supported to end their homelessness
- People are supported to resettle into suitable accommodation as soon as possible – working with social and private sector landlords to source accommodation for a range of needs.
- People with lived experience are able to play a key role in shaping the delivery and development of the project.
- People are supported to achieve their full potential, including accessing education, employment, training, voluntary work and meaningful social activities.
- People are able to achieve good quality of life and wellbeing.
- People are at less risk from becoming homeless or threatened with homelessness in the future.
- People are safeguarded and protected from harm.
- People are able to live independently, increasing their confidence and independent living skills, and preventing dependency on services.
- People are able to manage their housing tenure, including being able to:
 - Pay for their accommodation
 - Meet the responsibilities of having a tenancy or owning their own home
 - Know how to get all necessary utility services at their accommodation
 - Deal with repairs and/or improvements to their property
 - Keep warm, comfortable, safe and secure
 - Get on with their neighbours
- People are able to benefit from formal and informal support networks when needed.

- People have a better understanding of their rights in relation to their housing and other associated areas.
- People do not experience social isolation.

D. Delivery Requirements

i. Citizen Involvement

People supported must have their voices heard, both when it comes to shaping their own support and in influencing how the project itself develops and is reviewed. We would also like to see citizens actively involved in the delivery of the project, e.g. through shaping the programme of activities alongside the service provider, and potentially sharing their skills with others.

ii. Hours

It is expected that support hours will be managed dynamically, and will be allocated flexibly in response to individual needs. Staff will work flexibly to provide responsive support and guidance. We would need to see this flexibility extend over 7 days, with staff cover provided 24 hours a day including enabling out of hours placements. There needs to be reasonable flexibility within the staffing hours to enable an effective handover when individuals move on.

iii. Location

The service is to be delivered across Denbighshire in a number of different temporary accommodation sites. There will be two main temporary accommodation sites in the long term where staff will be expected to be based to provide 24-hour support. Staff will be required to deliver support/guidance and activities in a variety of settings.

i. Support planning and risk assessments

For the element of the project that involves direct support, all paperwork used with citizens must be user friendly, proportionate, and appropriate to individual needs and circumstances. It should be designed in a psychologically informed way and utilise the personal housing plan issued by the Homelessness Prevention Team.

The project will work with citizens to create strengths-based and outcomes-focused support plans. Agreed exit and move on strategies will also be developed.

Support staff will undertake comprehensive risk assessments and will develop appropriate and effective risk management plans where required.

Individuals supported must have ownership of their needs and risk assessments. All support plans and risk assessments/management plans will be reviewed regularly.

ii. General

The support delivered will be housing related and conform to Housing Support Grant Guidance standards, purpose and eligibility criteria. The project should not provide personal care, health care, professional or therapeutic counselling, or formal advice services.

It is expected that sufficient time for psychologically informed environment approaches for staff wellbeing is included. As often the complexities of the people requiring support are vast, best

practice would include the provision of external clinical supervision for staff to reduce vicarious trauma and burnout.

The project will be required to meet identified performance indicators, as outlined in section in section E, below.

iii. Community Benefits

Community Benefits must be delivered as part of this contract, and we are inviting proposals for these as part of the tender. We are particularly interested in proposals that will support Denbighshire County Council to achieve its Net Carbon Zero goal, and/or to support better access to meaningful employment opportunities for citizens who are homeless.

Suppliers may also wish to consider that a lack of affordable accommodation is one of our most significant challenges in preventing and ending homelessness across Denbighshire, and we are always extremely keen to explore new ways to address this pervasive problem.

E. Monitoring

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

The below are estimated KPI target levels that the project would be monitored against on a quarterly basis, including through submission of case studies. We are however keen as part of the tender process to understand what level of performance that suppliers estimate they can achieve, based on evidence of previous targets/outcomes achieved, and anticipated resources and capability.

KPI	Target	Achieved
People feel that the support/guidance/activities from this project has made a positive difference to their situation and to their wellbeing.	90%	
As a result of the support/guidance/activities from this project, people feel they have the tools they need to prevent homelessness or risk of homelessness in future.	90%	
% of planned, successful exits, i.e. the project's support to move on into more secure accommodation.	90%	
People still in secure accommodation 6 months after exiting the service. This will include leased accommodation.	90%	
Service users feel they have better knowledge and skills to be able to respond to risk of homelessness, including knowledge of local support services that can help.	90%	
People have accessed activities, training, education, and/or voluntary or paid employment	100%	

These KPIs are intended to provide a broad guide as to performance and quality standards. Where minimum targets are routinely met, there will typically be a lighter touch approach to monitoring. Where KPIs are routinely not met, monitoring may be increased to determine the causes for the under-delivery. As a new approach, the nature and target levels for these KPIs will be monitored and may be re-negotiated between the commissioners and providers.

Additional monitoring will be undertaken throughout the year, including via contract monitoring meetings as required, and submission of quarterly Performance Monitoring Returns. There will also be a requirement to submit Outcomes returns in accordance with the Housing Support Grant Outcomes Framework. Full service reviews will be undertaken as needed, and written notice will be given to the provider when a full review is required. These reviews will include the commissioners gathering citizen and other stakeholder feedback, and viewing a sample of support plans.

F. Eligibility

This project will provide guidance and support to people 16+ who have been placed in temporary accommodation and are in need of a medium term intervention to prevent risk of future homelessness. This will include people across all protected characteristics, and from a wide variety of backgrounds who may or may not have children or pets. People supported must be resident in Denbighshire.

The project will not be able to provide direct support to anyone under 16; however, it is expected that children under 16 will benefit from this project.

The project will engage with individuals who may have a broad variety of support needs, related directly or indirectly to any future potential risk of homelessness. This project is not intended or expected to meet all of these support needs, but it must work to ensure that other appropriate support is in place where required, e.g. mental health support, debt advice etc. This will likely include taking an assertive and proactive role in coordinating multi-agency responses.

The areas of support needs of people accessing this project may include (but are not limited to) one or all of the following:

- Poor mental health and/or wellbeing
- Difficult home life / families struggling to cope / family breakdown
- Young people's support needs, including acknowledging the increased risk of homelessness due to factors such as vulnerability to family breakdown/abuse, leaving care and benefits rules.
- Problems with neighbours
- Survivors (or those at risk) of domestic abuse, sexual violence, or other violence
- Facing discrimination because of gender identity or sexuality, or any other protected characteristics
- Being socially isolated
- Low self-esteem
- Poor literacy and/or numeracy skills
- Financial difficulties, including debt, unaffordable rents etc.
- Difficulty budgeting
- Developmental disorders (e.g. autism)
- Physical or sensory disabilities
- Learning disability or other additional learning needs
- Chronic illnesses (including HIV & AIDS)
- Substance use issues

- Offending or history of offending
- Behavioral issues
- Multiple and complex needs, including complex trauma

People will only be excluded from this project in extreme circumstances, where risk is unmanageable. Any such decision will be made in collaboration between the provider and the Homelessness Prevention Team. These individuals will be referred to the most appropriate agency in all cases.

As above, the project should not provide personal care, health care, professional or therapeutic counselling, or formal advice services.

G. Access

Given the nature of the project, we would expect that all individuals accessing support/guidance will do so following an assessment and referral via the Homelessness Prevention Team.

We expect that this will be a responsive service that will offer support / guidance to people as soon as possible following their move in to temporary accommodation. We would also expect that any assessment processes will be designed in line with a psychologically informed approach.

H. Key partner agencies and related services

We would expect the project to work with a broad range of partner agencies and other organizations – many of which may not be ‘typical’ homelessness prevention partnership agencies, such is the nature of this project (with its aim of engaging with people through an engaging, service user led programme of activities).

While not at all an exhaustive list, we would expect that the project will need to engage with the following types of organizations / services / settings:

- DCC Homelessness Prevention Multi-Disciplinary Team
- Local colleges/ educational institutes
- Leisure centres
- Indoor and outdoor activity centres
- Holistic therapy practitioners
- Arts sector
- Sport groups
- The Job Centre / DWP
- Benefits Advice Shop
- Housing Benefit
- Social Services, including Children and Adult Services
- Families First and Flying Start
- Other family support services / settings
- Local Authority Education Services
- Youth Services
- Mediation and counselling services
- Community groups / day centres
- Various third sector agencies working in Denbighshire
- The Denbighshire Single Point of Access and Children and Families Gateway
- Talking Points

- Denbighshire libraries/One Stop Shops
- Community Mental Health Teams, CAMHS, and non-statutory mental health services
- The Substance Misuse Service, and non-statutory substance misuse services
- Food banks
- Police
- Probation
- Youth Justice
- Prison services
- Debt advice services
- Housing advice services
- Housing Maintenance Workers
- DCC Community Housing
- Private sector landlords, including landlord's associations
- Housing Associations
- Estate Agents
- Social Enterprises
- Working Denbighshire
- Other employability support services, e.g. Careers Wales
- General healthcare settings, e.g. GPs and hospitals
- Environmental Health / Housing Enforcement
- Other housing related support projects

I. Contract Dimensions

Start date: To be Confirmed
 Duration: 5 years (with an option to extend for 5 years)

Minimum units (these may be negotiated as part of the tender process): We expect that the project will engage with at least 32 individuals at any given time to provide direct support/guidance (and that each of these individuals will have recorded outcomes).

Maximum contract price: £ 4,570,000 maximum for the full (5 year) contract term
 £ 914,000 per annum (based upon Appendix 4)
 (Continued funding is reliant on continued grant funding from the Welsh Government)