

2018

HOMELESS SHELTER

REGENCY ONE

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This document has been written by Arfat Ashraf & Waqas Ashraf as a means of clarifying our strategy for the opening & development of a supported living accommodation. We recognise that a business plan is a living document & a plan for future action, so we will endeavour to review & improve the plan on a regular basis

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Summary

Regency One homeless shelter will be located in the heart of Kings Heath Birmingham, where Waqas Ashraf & Arfat Ashraf will be the executive directors. The goal of the organisation is to provide homeless individuals in Kings Heath and surrounding areas with temporary accommodation, which is recognised as a fundamental human need and moral human right. A pivotal aspect of this project is to transform each individual life, by providing the basic necessities of life and ensuring the smooth integration of individuals into society. The homeless shelter aims to make a significant impact on the Kings Heath community by primarily focusing on the homeless within this area. After careful market research conducted through communicating with those immediately homeless within Kings Heath, it can be concluded that the majority of homeless in this area are sleeping rough, with some sofa surfing who eventually become rough sleepers. Thus, by introducing Regency One into this area the objective is to directly house those on the streets of Kings Heath with an aim of tackling homelessness within this area.

Regency One will take the form of the old office building on Kings Heath high street, which has been vacant for the past 7-8 years. This building has been identified as an ideal facility for housing the homeless and we have taken many precautionary measures and risk assessments to ensure this building will serve its purpose and be the right space for our specially trained staff to transform people's lives. We understand the building will need some renovation and upgrading of current fixings for rooms. We have invested funds in carrying out all the checks by qualified professionals to ensure the building serves its purpose of intent.

Our exceptional strategy will not only offer shelter for the vulnerable but provide them with an opportunity to transform their life back through various resources such as in-house mental health teams and support workers. The support team will ascertain knowledge on the welfare system, housing options, food banks and aware of the local medical centres as well as encouraging tenants to find long-term accommodation, seeking education/employment, addressing drug/alcohol use and managing their debt problems. These aspects will ensure individuals are provided with adequate support and second opportunity in life.

Aims & objectives

Through the initial brainstorming stages of this business plan, our mission has always been to become a very reputable & reliant organisation for the homeless and to make a change in the local community. In order for us to accomplish this, several objectives have been recognised:

- Taking the homeless away from the streets off Kings Heath & providing them with adequate shelter will result in a much more peaceful & safer environment for the public
- Providing day-to-day support needs of vulnerable individuals such as food, warmth, hygiene and somewhere to sleep to ensure we tackle street homelessness.
- A full induction which will cover health & safety, house rules, health check where needed, ID checks including photocopies of all required documents.

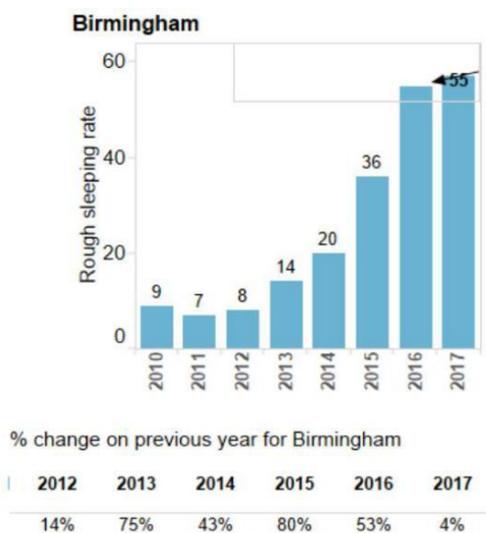
- Providing the homeless with a smooth and quick transition into society by equipping them with life skills, such as budgeting, home and personal care skills, dealing with emotions and problem solving.
- Turning around the lives of these individuals on the streets by working with the local job centre and careers advisors with an aim to ensure that when an individual leaves the shelter they walk out with future career prospects & are giving something back to the community.
- Provide activities within the centre which are likely to enhance tenants' skills and raise self-confidence as a first step towards changing their lives.
- Building and supporting the local community through the creation of wide ranging and accessible volunteering opportunities.

Is there a need for this Homeless shelter?

We want to specifically now look at the need for the homeless shelters in the Birmingham Area, one of the main questions which arise when opening a shelter *'is there an actual need for this?'* Market research has only been a proportion of evidence suggesting there is a great need for homeless shelters especially in the Birmingham area, due to the rise in those suffering from homelessness. The current hostels we work with are operating very efficiently as the rooms are always at 100% capacity, which unfortunately leads to turning people away.

Market Research

After careful market research we learnt that the need for homeless shelters is higher than anticipated, Birmingham is the worst City in UK outside of South East for homelessness, with more than 12,000 people sleeping rough or in temporary accommodations. These numbers are increasing dramatically year on year. (*J, Green 2017, Birmingham Live*)



The chart is just a simple indication Of the increasing need for our Business within the Birmingham Area; these figures have been Submitted annually by local Authorities. This is showing the Increasing percentage of people Sleeping rough. (www.homeless.org.uk)

Majority of homeless shelters were funded by Local Authorities, over the years many have shut down their accommodations due to budget cuts. These huge cuts to homelessness services will trigger an outburst in the number of people forced to sleep on the streets. News, Articles, Blogs, Forums have all clearly highlighted several councils are continuing to dismiss Housing support services.

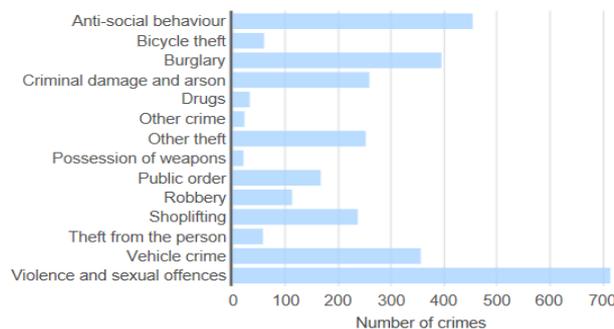
Current situation in Proposed Location

Within Kings Heath, many locals have already expressed concerns of homeless individuals sleeping rough in this area, which attracts other problems such as drug/alcohol activities in public areas which can lead to robberies/violence/theft & more commonly anti-social behaviour. An article (Birmingham Mail.co.uk 2017) reported *'the issue of begging & positioning to beg were not directly tackled by the previous order in place'*. West midlands police have issued details of a new public space protection order that tackles approaching & positioning to beg concerns. We aim to work alongside the local police service to help them clean the streets up with our new shelter in place. This will help & hopefully decrease the need of the police workforce to patrol the streets & tackle other areas of crime.

Local Crime Statistics

According to an article by Hannah Cromarty; Pat Strickland- which looks at rough sleepers & anti-social behaviour, homelessness & rough sleeping is often associated with nuisance activities such as begging, street drinking & anti-social behaviour, although police have powers to tackle these problems, voluntary sector organisations state that these powers are not addressing the root cause of the problem. As discussed above its very clear that anti-social behaviour is often associated with homelessness, so this brings us to the crime reports of Kings Heath between 2017- 2018 & what are the main areas of crime?

Comparison of crime types in this area between October 2017 and September 2018



Crime type	Total	Percentage
Anti-social behaviour	454	14.45%
Bicycle theft	60	1.91%
Burglary	395	12.57%
Criminal damage and arson	259	8.24%
Drugs	33	1.05%
Other crime	23	0.73%
Other theft	252	8.02%
Possession of weapons	21	0.67%

This data was taken from:
<https://www.police.uk/west-midlands/BE06/crime/stats/>

Types of people we can expect & the causes of homelessness

Homeless or people in need of temporary accommodation would include those who are sleeping rough & without a roof over their heads, individuals who may be moving from place to place with friends, those living in unsafe/poor housing and individuals who have been threatened by courts/eviction. We have handled cases in the past where people are homeless for various reasons, the aim is not just to house the homeless but understand their full situation, and so by looking at the root of the problem, it can give us a better idea of where to begin our work. The causes of homelessness can vary & are based on numerous factors; it's known as a complex social problem that affects people of any gender/age/racial group. Some of the factors contributing towards homelessness are detailed below:

- **Low income & Unemployment-** people become restricted to pay for their priority bills such as rent/ mortgages causing homelessness, much research shows these individuals are in poverty
- **Social patterns** – relationship breakdowns & trying to become financially independent can lead to overwhelming expenses, debt, rising number of people having to survive on their own means and more costs to manage individually, leaving no disposable income.
- **Economical & housing markets-** with the ever increasing house prices/ interest & rent prices, this leaves individuals struggling to pay their bills resulting in eviction.
- **Family issues/disputes-** breakdowns/disputes, physical & sexual abuse, poor upbringing, parents who may have had alcohol/drug problems.
- **Academicals issues-** learning difficulties, lack of education/qualifications, employment & personal development issues, lack of social support.
- **Institutional background** – previously been in care, military/ armed forces or prison leading to feelings of social exclusion and having difficulty integrating into society again.

Development of individuals

Its already been discussed one of our objectives is to help & support individuals in getting their lives back on track, now it will be briefly explained how Regency One intend to accomplish this:

Personal development- The aim is to position plans in place at the moment an individual enters the shelter with a view to monitor progress/aims/tasks/objectives, look at short term/long term goals in order to understand & maximise their potential, assess & enhance skills or qualities an individual may have.

Career development- We want to help form a work identity by helping the homeless understand how people produce an income. This is a vital aspect of the human development cycle which will benefit individuals through their lives. Discussing career routes, work experience, CV builder lessons, job search, referring to job centre /careers advisors.

Interpersonal skill development- Our staffs are trained in delivering learning styles and presentations, we want to look at the needs of everyone after putting together a development plan and then concentrate on areas such as decision making, listening skills, verbal/ nonverbal communication, negotiation, problem solving & so forth.

Community involvement- The purpose of this shelter is also to provide a benefit to the local community to help Kings Heath grow & develop, we encourage the homeless to participate in various voluntary exercises around the area with guidance from relevant authorities, this will include litter picking, painting, cutting grass and importantly educating those who are in similar situations etc.

Leisure activities & other creative events- We aim to organise visits to various landmarks, museums and galleries to provide educational trips.

Independent living- workshops which include activities to explain & understand personal hygiene, taking care of clothes, dietary needs & how to cook basic foods, finance management, personal awareness and problem solving.

Making this sustainable

The overwhelming amount of work & manpower needed within this sector can lead to a lot of difficulty for some, such as coping with stress, back logs with paper work, incorrect referrals, overtime from staff & even under estimating the amount of work needed to run a shelter effectively operating 24hrs. Our strategy is to incorporate standards & procedures to create an effective framework to deal with this:

-Management will deal with the running of the hostel and oversee that the day to day operations are running smoothly & answer to any queries. This will include organising staff Rote's, punctuality/attendance checks. Daily/Weekly action plans and case reviews to keep track of paperwork, floor/room/building checks, ensuring all incidents are logged correctly, processing of invoices & wages and team briefings. Management will also arrange adequate training to ensure staff is up to date with legislation, policies and procedures.

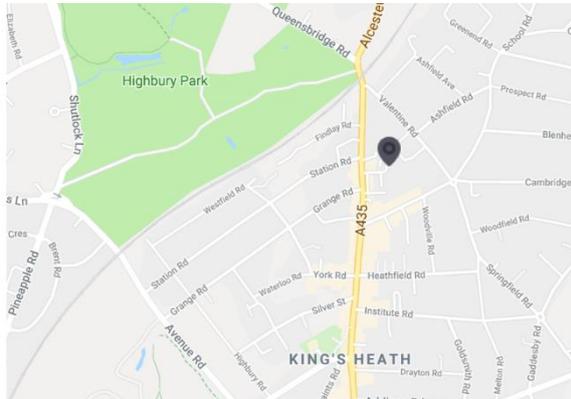
- Setting short term/ long term objectives will reflect the continued improvement & success of the shelter, taking time out for staff to make sure the guidelines are met & all procedures are followed, although this will not be a concern as majority of staff which we will recruit have already implemented these procedures into their day to day roles, where we see any concerns we will ensure for up skilling and improving our team via training.

- Meetings & clear communication with agencies that will refer homeless to make sure they are aware of the eligibility criteria to prevent incorrect referrals to save time for maximum productivity.

- In terms of communication with the wider public & other external referrals we already have staffs that are trained with IT skills, Excel, Outlook & an in-house web development/ graphic designer. These individuals will all be able to play their part in the day to day operations of the shelter.

What makes us different?

-location



The building for this homeless shelter is located in Kings Heath, 2A High Street, Kings Heath, Birmingham, B14, the property comprises of a solid 3 storey brick built modern building, with secure basement car parking, the property has recently gone under refurbishment, however we do want to make alterations with this shelter & are in talks with various professionals in enhancing the building to an even better standard. For anyone who has concerns regarding a property in this sector within the local community we are more than happy to give a tour of the property for reassurance.

We have engaged with various security specialists for some of the most promising security equipment and technology on the market, we understand that health and safety for all parties whether it be internal or external is of most importance.

-Experience/ knowledge

Experiences count when it comes to making good decisions at work, luckily for us we have this & wealth of knowledge within the same sector. We have worked alongside hostels from a managerial perspective for years from managing staff to processing paperwork. We are promising to bring a team of experienced individuals on board, who not only have the expertise but also accredited qualifications which will play a major role in the success of our business & its objectives.

-Security

Security is something which although may not be essential as we have not experienced any problems thanks to our business structure & standards, 24hr security systems will be installed to promote the safety of tenants as well as monitoring the building externally and internally. Alongside this, we will be installing fire safety equipment such as fire alarms, fire Doors and fire fighting equipment and train staff regularly to ensure they are equipped to deal with fires.

-Team skills

Our trained support workers will work alongside the homeless encouraging them to get their lives back on track. This will include giving advice, filling out application forms, giving interview techniques, assisting with job searches, referring to job Centre and assisting with benefits. Our support workers will be able to provide soft skills such as self-awareness and giving individuals the ability to structure their day. Anyone with mental health or potentially vulnerable individuals will also be able to receive help/assistance.

-Dinner / breakfast

We will offer services such as breakfast/dinner for the homeless at specific times in the day. From market research a gap has been noticed where majority of homeless shelters fail to provide this service. Many homeless individuals do not have the finances to buy meals or do not have the facilities to prepare their meals. We have been offering this service in one of the current hostel we worked in & by going the extra mile it does really make a big difference for the individual's well-being.

-Raising awareness

We want to become a well-recognised homeless shelter with a proven track record of making change for the local community & also the lives of homeless individuals. So for us to be able to get our message across we will aim to use our in-house web developers and social media experts to create awareness of the current situation out on the streets, the more people we reach, the more change we can make.

Risk Assessment

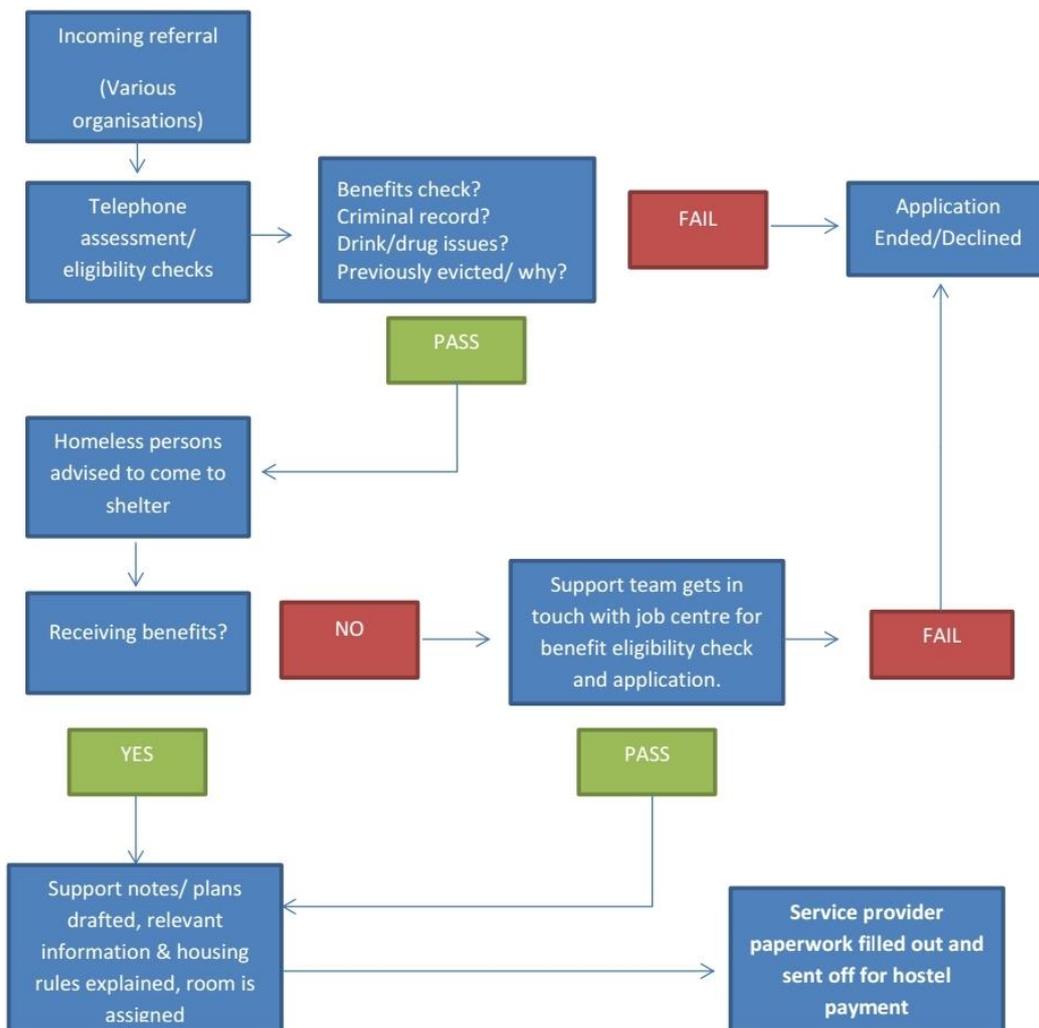
We understand risks can arise at various stages & areas; we have put a lot of thought and consideration into this. We believe in failing to prepare is preparing to fail and for this reason we have listed just a few potential risks below & what actions could be carried out to counter/mitigate these from arising. We have planned & investigated all our concerns which have been addressed & are confident this homeless shelter will carry out its intended purpose & show a difference to the local community.

AREA OF RISK	WHAT IS THE RISK	MITIGATION & FUTURE PLANNING
Community	Neighbour/ Local Community object to the service opening	Community meetings to talk through their concerns/ stressing the need & benefits, reducing anti-social behaviour
Clients	Clients presenting with challenging behaviours	Staff trained to manage conflict, Risk assessment in place, 1 to 1 session to build relationships, PCSOs drop in during their patrols.
Building	Issues/concern about health & safety	Fire officers/ inspectors to assess building & provide guidance, log book to record incidents, security & CCTV, building insurance.
Joint working & external relationships	Clients are working with multiple providers for support which may duplicate support work	Establishing joint working protocols & communication, so staff are aware what support is in process elsewhere.
Incompetent staff	Errors which may slow productivity of business down	Skilled & experienced staff will be taken on board who have a proven track record of outstanding

		performance/experience and DBS checked.
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Step by Step process

The diagram below is a basic flow chart demonstrating the daily operations at Regency One. Once a referral/ request for a room comes through, various pre-checks are done over the phone where external organisations must disclose any sensitive information they feel could have an impact on housing of the individual at the hostel. DO THEY REALLY DISCLOSE THOUGH? WHAT AGENCIES DO YOU WORK WITH? Once they arrive at the accommodation, our dedicated team will do necessary checks again; get in touch with job centre for benefits checks/entitlement. If they are approved we are happy to accept them. We will request for the individual to fill out all relevant paperwork associated with the service provider, submit the paper work & payments arrive within 28 days. If the individual is not receiving benefits we will still consider them.



Case planning & stages

As per previous experience, we have implemented a multi stage process of information gathering & working with the homeless individual, the above diagram is just a brief illustration of what a typical day may look like.

-We are always aiming to improve our services & client base, by connecting with homeless individuals at an emergency shelter, drop-in centre and local charity events. Engagement will be a key aspect of where the relationship will be formed between the client and our team. Referrals will be received from various avenues such as government agencies, local organisations, hospitals & other institutions or even by a client directly.

We will carry out detailed pre checks, drink/ drug concerns, criminal records, whether they have been previously evicted & if so why. Possible reference checks where applicable, identification of individual's health, housing & other support needs will be established upon arrival.

From the point of intake our framework & procedures will be used to successfully allocate the individual a room at the hostel. This would include information gathering such as basic information including name, DOB, where client has slept last night, personal information, medical issues, and history of homelessness and sources of income.

Our trained support workers will identify the client's goals & support needs, create plans & interventions, such as agreement of actions to be taken by the individual & the specific tasks to be pursued by the support worker. These actions will be directly linked with the individual's aspirations/goals. Regular reviews will be conducted of the agreed case plan to check progress on goals with the purpose of revising goals continuously.

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