

MOVING ON – GUIDANCE TO DEVELOP A SIMILAR PROJECT.

Northumberland's Moving On Project was launched back in January 2011. Over the last two and a half years we have developed the project and have achieved good outcomes for young people. In May 2012 the Ofsted Inspection in Northumberland for Safeguarding and Looked After Children noted the Moving On project to be an example of 'Outstanding' practice. Clearly if you provide stable accommodation you facilitate the delivery of appropriate plans to meet individual needs. We have achieved good outcomes in relation to reductions in offending and substance misuse, high level of engagement in training programmes, avoiding remands to custody, managing risk and vulnerability, successful transitions into adult services and moves into medium and long term accommodation.

We have analysed our learning and are able to provide advice and guidance to enable other areas to consider developing a similar project. This paper will cover a number of areas which include the model, cost, securing accommodation, management agreements, managing and supporting the young people, criteria, branding, governance and managing maintenance and repairs effectively.

The model is simply, accommodation with support. It is advised that accommodation should be 'single occupancy'. Latest research indicates this provides better outcomes for young people.

Local Authority's would primarily need to fund any project. However this could bring about cost savings if we consider the financial implications of remands into custody. It could also provide savings by offering more appropriate accommodation for those young people presenting with high needs and risks.

To initially commit to developing a project you would need to consider how to provide the accommodation and support.

We have a total of 11 properties across Northumberland. We secured some capital funding and purchased 4 properties. Children Services 'gifted' us two further properties and we currently rent 5 others.

Local areas would need to explore any opportunities for capital investment to purchase properties. Other options include exploring links with accommodation providers in your area. Local Authority housing departments and local providers may have properties which could be made available to you. The key here is to demonstrate the support you will be providing to the young people and how you will manage their behaviour. Private landlords will also have accommodation available. The costing for rented properties is 1) the market price for the rent and 2) 'on' costs of about £5000 per year (this includes furniture, maintenance and repairs). For the five rented properties in Northumberland the approximate total cost is £45,000 per year.

If you were to purchase or rent several properties you are best spreading these across your local area. If you have properties in various areas this provides choice and options. We have found young people need to be close to families, local amenities and transport links.

We have developed a 'management agreement' with our legal department. This agreement determines the local authorities and the landlord's responsibilities towards the property (a copy of the management agreement is provided). The landlords have signed this agreement and entered

into an initial 12 month contract. We have also assured the landlord that we have separate process to manage the tenancy and young person's behaviour.

From our experience young people will need to receive at least 5 hours of support a week. This could be considerably more if the young people have high levels of need and risk. We have secured support through additional resources and identifying capacity within Targeted Adolescent Services. As well as direct support you need to have the resources to manage the day to day issues of the project e.g. property maintenance. The total amount of support is obviously dependent on the size of the project. It could be suggested you would need to commit at least 20 hours per week of support to a small scale project.

In Northumberland we have worked closely with our legal department and formulated an 'occupancy agreement' that a young person signs before they move in (a copy of the 'occupancy agreement' is provided). The agreement covers the young person's responsibilities and sets clear boundaries around such issues as visitors, nuisance, harassment, noise, pets and damage. We have clear structures in place if we need to 'evict' a young person. They also sign schedule 1 (inventory) and schedule 2 (which outlines the support that is available to the young person) documents. They must agree to and accept the support that is provided to them. The 'occupancy agreement' is normally made for 3 months however this can be made for a shorter period if need be. The agreement can be renewed after 3 months. Rent for the properties can be charged in some circumstances.

You will also need to consider 'branding' the project. We consulted with young people and Moving On was the most popular name. Once a name is established it allows you to promote the project and build the partner relationships you need to develop the project.

In Northumberland we devised clear criteria for the project. In Northumberland the criteria covers three areas 1) aged 16-21 2) risk of remand to custody, leaving custody with no suitable accommodation, leaving care or having a high level of vulnerability.3) and offenders with substance misuse issues. It would be for any area to determine the criteria. This would obviously be dependent on local need and resources.

Some consideration needs to be given to establish governance arrangements. In Northumberland we have a management group, an accommodation panel and a team manager designated as a single point of contact (who facilitates referrals and manages the day to day issues of the project). The management group comes from across Targeted Adolescent Services and this has meant that interventions are clearly co-ordinated to meet the young person's individual needs. We have recently established an accommodation team to provide more co-ordinated and intensive support.

You will also need to develop an infrastructure for the project so you can manage maintenance and repairs effectively. In Northumberland we have built relationships with Asset Management and Property Services. Asset Management need to officially recognise the properties and Property Services are able to provide for maintenance, repairs and health and safety checks.

This document is only intended to give a brief guide on how to develop a project. If you require any further information please contact John Lathaen (Team Manager Northumberland Targeted Adolescent Services) on 01670 852225 or e mail john.lathaen@northumberland.gcsx.gov.uk.

