



Derventio Housing Trust | Service Review

1st January to 31st March 2010

Welcoming Derwentio Housing Trust

Our Mission: To alleviate housing problems and end homelessness



I am proud to welcome Derwentio Housing Trust and celebrate the achievements of our first quarter in operation. We are made up of the well-established housing and support services previously run by the charity DHA. The success of these services, which include Milestone House emergency accommodation and SmartShare supported housing, have led to the formation of Community Interest Company Derwentio Housing Trust.

Derwentio Housing Trust is made up of a strong management board, a highly committed senior staff team and over 50 experienced, high quality staff. Our aim is to address housing needs in an equitable way, providing support and assistance to ensure that appropriate accommodation is available to all. The handover process went well; front line services continued uninterrupted and we have already been able to support hundreds of people under the Derwentio Housing Trust banner. This smooth transition was made possible by the trustees, staff and volunteers of both organisations. We will continue to work closely with DHA, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody who has been involved for their support during this time.

As Derwentio Housing Trust develops and grows, I am confident that we will continue to move ever closer to our goal of helping everyone, whatever their background, to feel a full and equal member of the community. As well as continuing the success of our housing services, we have established a new social lettings agency, Derwentio Property Management Services (DPMS), enabling us to expand our portfolio by housing disadvantaged people in private rented accommodation. We have renewed our focus on helping Milestone House residents to achieve greater independence, this quarter supporting 97 people to move on to more appropriate accommodation. And over 100 people have been given support and accommodation through SmartShare and SmartSteps supported housing.

We are looking forward to a future of working with people with housing needs to truly make a difference to their lives.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Hernandez', written over a light grey circular watermark.

Sarah Hernandez
Managing Director

Key Achievements

In our first 3 months we have:

- Accommodated 113 people through SmartShare and SmartSteps supported housing
- Established the beginnings of our social lettings agency, Derventio Property Management Service
- Engaged 61 residents in regular skills building activities and training including property maintenance, cookery and sports
- Further developed our partnership working at Milestone House, the multi-agency emergency accommodation and assessment centre in Derby
- Improved our Move-On performance from our emergency and supported accommodation, which assists the Local Strategic



- Partnership to meet its national targets
- Successfully tackled anti-social behaviour through a strong partnership approach
- Developed the steering group of Milestone House to bring in local community representation
- Met some key performance targets to continuously improve our services, improve our standards through the Quality Assessment Framework and improve our involvement and engagement

Benefiting the Community

A Community Interest Company (CIC) is a not-for-profit trading company which operates for the benefit of the community it serves and generally has charitable aims and objectives whilst being able to trade to enable greater financial stability.

The governing document of Derventio Housing Trust is our Memorandum and Articles of Association, which states the company objects to carry out activities which benefit the community.

SmartSupport

Working with families to prevent homelessness



SmartSupport provides floating support to improve the lives of families and communities affected by anti-social behaviour. 15 families at risk of losing their home are being supported with a wide range of issues, with the goal to address the root causes of their anti-social behaviour.

Families are encouraged to express for themselves their needs and aspirations and are given help to identify pathways that will help them out of their situation and empower them to lead independent, responsible and safe lives.

Milestone House

Emergency accommodation and holistic support

David's Story

Originally from Derby, David left his steady job at Rolls-Royce to start a new life in London, but ended up returning home with no money after failing to find work. With just £1 in his pocket, and his clothes in a bag, David realised he had hit rock bottom. His life was transformed when he came to Milestone House.

"I was in Derby with no family or friends to support me and nowhere to go. I felt low and embarrassed. I was scared what might happen to me, especially if I had to go and rough it on the streets.

I'm just so grateful to Milestone House. I now feel like I'm on top of the tree. I feel safe, clean and proud that things are going superbly for me. I couldn't have wished for anything more."



Milestone House was established as a multi-agency approach to tackling homelessness in Derby city. It brings together a number of essential services under one roof, including our own emergency accommodation and support service for 35 people.

Milestone House clients are amongst the most socially isolated, challenging and at-risk individuals in the community; they include entrenched rough sleepers, people with substance dependencies, prison leavers and people with long-term mental health issues.

We provide a holistic service to give our clients the best possible chance to break away from the vicious trap of homelessness and regain their independence. Daytime services delivered through multi-agency partners include full needs assessments, Single Point of Entry for single homelessness services in Derby city, nurse services, specialist services and accommodation finding.

SmartShare

Shared housing with flexible, tailored support

SmartShare provides a long-term solution for people affected by homelessness by placing them in shared accommodation and providing flexible, comprehensive support appropriate to their needs.

The project aims to enable people to identify and tackle their problems, and develop the life skills and coping strategies to achieve and maintain their independence.

Each client has an individual support plan developed using the Outcomes Star, which takes a holistic view of each person's needs from health to finances, giving a visual tool from which support worker and client can identify strengths and areas for development and monitor progress.



SmartShare is an acclaimed service uniquely developed by Derventio Housing Trust and has been nationally recognised by Homeless Link as a best practice model.

SmartSteps

Supported accommodation for ex-offenders

SmartSteps is supported accommodation tailored to the specific needs of prison leavers, including Priority and Prolific Offenders (PPOs) and Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangement (MAPPA) clients. Staff work with residents to reduce the chance of reoffending by helping them to deal with factors including debt and unemployment. Strong links with partner agencies mean that clients are able to receive specialist support in areas not covered internally, such as drug or alcohol dependency.



Mark's Story

As a prison leaver with long-term drug and alcohol dependency issues, Mark came to SmartSteps with very little confidence or self-belief, caught up in a negative social group and unable to see a future.



Since moving to his SmartSteps accommodation, Mark has started to rebuild his life. He regularly volunteered in our training kitchen, where he completed a Food Hygiene course and a Basic Cooking Skills NVQ. He is now looking forward to gaining employment in this field.

Client Involvement

Service users are involved in SmartShare and SmartSteps every step of the way; regular house meetings give them the chance to discuss issues, questionnaires are used to gather their views on the service and support groups give clients the chance to build skills, socialise and have their say in how their service is run.

Kevin's Story

Kevin had been street homeless for a number of years when he first stayed in our emergency accommodation in 2008.

The support he has received - and his involvement in an allotment project - has given him the confidence to take big steps forward in his life.

When Kevin joined the allotment, a special project set up for service users, he learned from scratch how to plant, grow and harvest fruit and vegetables. He showed a natural talent and after 1 year was in charge of overseeing the project and helping other residents with their gardening.

With support and encouragement from SmartShare staff, Kevin soon set up a small business selling home-grown produce. This enabled him to expand the allotment, starting with a greenhouse and new fruit trees.

Kevin now has a job in catering and is preparing to move into his own flat. He won't leave the allotment behind though. He has plans to set up a website and continue using the allotment to help other people in the way it has helped him.



Training & Skills

Realistic routes to independence and employment

Central to our projects is the commitment to help people regain their confidence, engage in learning, develop new skills and gain qualifications which will enable them to break the negative cycles of homelessness and achieve sustainable pathways into employment.

Often the first step in achieving this is engaging in meaningful activities, which can rebuild the confidence and self-esteem needed to move on to more structured training. Making Milestones is a weekly programme of activities, available to all clients, which runs on a drop-in basis to offer flexibility and choice. Activities include football, cooking, arts and crafts, therapeutic activities, swimming and cycling.

Building on from these services clients are encouraged to engage in practical, on the job training and are supported to develop their CVs, look for work and prepare for interviews.

Realistic routes into work are provided through work placements and volunteering opportunities with the Maintenance Team. Real work experience is offered to

beneficiaries taking part in these activities, enabling them to improve their employability skills and widen their employment options.

This quarter the project has engaged three committed volunteers who are currently learning new skills by helping out on a major refurbishment project for one of our private landlords.

Derventio Property Management Service

Making quality housing accessible to everyone

Derventio Property Management Service (DPMS) provides housing through the private rented sector to individuals and families who are experiencing housing difficulty. It has successfully established itself as a professional social lettings service to tenants and landlords.

In addition to high quality, appropriate accommodation, clients are given low-level advice and support to ensure they are able to maintain their tenancy.

A partnership has recently been made with Decent and Safe Homes (DASH) and East Midlands Accredited Landlord Scheme (EMLAS), which will expand the service to be delivered regionally across the East Midlands.

SmartMove

Rent deposit scheme for low-income households

SmartMove is an initiative that enables previously homeless or vulnerably housed people access to safe, stable and appropriate accommodation. The scheme, operating across Derby and Derbyshire, offers landlords a guarantee in place of a traditional deposit, establishing a bond of trust between tenant and landlord.

SmartMove aims to empower clients to make long-term changes, moving away from unstable lifestyles and taking control of their housing options. The project provides ongoing support to help clients maintain their tenancies, ensuring that all clients get maximum benefit from the scheme.



Private Landlords

DPMS and SmartMove staff work closely with local landlords, offering them a range of services to maximise the availability of housing.

Benefits to the landlord include:

- Assistance with legal issues connected with the tenancy
- Management Agreement to suit the needs of landlords from 6 months to 3 years
- Competitively priced maintenance and repair service available from our Maintenance and Property Standards Team
- Staff team and organisation with over 20 years experience in the field



Derventio Housing Trust CIC
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