

Report to Executive Board – 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2004  
 Report to Council – 24<sup>th</sup> January

### HOSTEL CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

<b>Report of:</b>	<i>Val Johnson Neighbourhood Renewal</i>	<b>Wards Affected</b>
<b>Report Author:</b>	<i>Nerys Parry, Street Homeless Co-ordinator Tel no. 01865 252825 Email: nparry@oxford.gov.uk</i>	<b>St Mary's Carfax</b>
<b>Lead Member Responsible:</b>	<i>Portfolio Holder Housing</i>	
<b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee Responsibility:</b>	<i>Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee</i>	
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<i>Yes</i>	

#### SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Council has been successful in an award of Capital Funding from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Homelessness Directorate for £1,266,000 to be allocated as follows:

- £1.2m for Cherwell Housing Trust, Simon House
- £16,000 to English Churches Housing Group, Lucy Faithful House
- £20,000 for The Bridge Oxford
- £30,000 also for the Bridge Oxford's Annex House on Regent Street

This funding will contribute towards Oxford City Council's Single Homeless Strategy, with the aim of providing appropriate, good quality accommodation for rough sleepers and single homeless people.

This will also help deliver the Council's vision in terms of enhancing community safety by providing better quality hostel accommodation which will provide people with an environment where they can address their issues and learn the basic skills needed to return to independent living.

There are no staffing implications.

There are no financial implications for Oxford City Council although two OCC officers will give of their time to make up part of the project management group for Simon House.

## **Recommendation:**

The Executive Board is asked to recommend to Council to include:

- a) £66,000 in the capital programme for 04/05 and to seek approval to spend in this financial year:
  - £16,000 for the refurbishment of Lucy Faithful House
  - £20,000 for refurbishment at The Bridge Oxford
  - £30,000 for refurbishment of The Bridge's Annex House at Regent Street.
  
- b) £1.2m for in the capital programme for 05/06 and 06/07 for the total refurbishment and upgrade of Simon House's building and service.

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The first step off the streets for the majority of rough sleepers is into a hostel. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) have made a commitment to radically improve the general standard of hostel provision across England.
- 1.2 This tranche of funding from the Homelessness Directorate is to enable Oxford to continue its programme of improving the standards and services of its hostel provision. This is in line with OCC's Single Homeless Strategy.

## **2. BREAKDOWN OF THE CAPITAL ALLOCATION**

### **2.1 English Churches Housing – Lucy Faithful House Capital Allocation – £16,000**

Lucy Faithful House is a 61-bed hostel, providing accommodation and support to rough sleepers and single homeless people in Oxford City, including those who are suffering from addiction and mental health problems.

In 2003, ECH completed the refurbishment of the first and second floors, leaving just the top floor in need of refurbishment. The top floor accommodation comprises of two self-contained flats. One is for the Alcohol Recovery Programme (a detox for street drinkers and homeless people with an alcohol addiction) and the other is called Next Step, offering accommodation for residents returning to work and or training for work.

In total, there are 10 bedrooms, 2 lounges, 4 corridors, 2 kitchens and 8 toilets/bathrooms

The capital is for the upgrade of this top floor.

### **2.2 The Bridge Oxford – Emergency Hostel for 16-25 year olds Capital Allocation - £20,000**

The Bridge Project is a 23-bed hostel providing emergency, direct access accommodation and support for 16-25 year olds in Oxford City.

Following previous successful capital allocations, the Bridge has increased its opening hours from 9pm to 8am to a 24-hour service for 12 of the beds, leaving 12 further beds open for direct access. Revenue costs for the 24-hour service are covered by Supporting People.

These funds will pay to reconfigure two double rooms on the top floor to 6 single rooms and install a swipe card lock system.

### **2.3 The Bridge Oxford – Annex House**

#### **Capital Allocation - £30,000**

The building will provide accommodation for up to 6 people between 16 and 25 years old who have been referred via The Bridge Project in a property in East Oxford on a 20-year lease. The Annex House will assist The Bridge to continue with successful prevention and resettlement work. The Annex will enable staff to work, encourage and introduce, re-introduce clients to independent living and a sustainable tenancy.

The Capital bid will be used to refurbish the building and The Bridge will fundraise separately for the balance of capital costs including building works, fixtures and fittings.

### **2.4 Cherwell Housing Trust – Simon House**

#### **Capital Allocation - £1.2 million**

Simon House is a dry and clean hostel (no drink and no drugs) and provides a specialist provision in Oxford City with 51 beds for rough sleepers and single homeless people.

The grant will pay for the total refurbishment of Simon House, built in 1981. The Care Standards Inspectorate, in their report of Simon House in July 2003, recommended its updating. Refurbishment can be broken down to 5 stages:

- Refurbish the ground floor office area to allow the registered care beds, administration from the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor offices and the resettlement team to relocate
- Convert the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor office into a 6 bed cluster accommodation
- Convert the rooms on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor (directly below the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor) into 6 or 5 bed cluster arrangements
- Convert the Car Port side of the accommodation on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor into 5 bed cluster arrangements
- Refurbish the single rooms on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.

There may be a need for a partial decant as this work progresses. Options for decanting may involve the use of suitable OCC property.

**These projects will be managed by Nerys Parry, Street Homeless Co-ordinator as part of her current monitoring work with all hostel providers in the City.**

### **3. STAFFING CONSEQUENCES**

There are no staffing implications for the Council arising from this report

**4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications for the Council arising from this report. Any overspend incurred by individual organisations involved in these projects will be absorbed by the organisations themselves. There is no financial risk to Oxford City Council.

**THIS REPORT HAS BEEN APPROVED BY:**

Andy Collett – Finance and Asset Management Business Unit  
Lindsay Cane – Legal and Democratic Services Business Unit  
Val Johnson – Business Unit Manager, Neighbourhood Renewal  
Cllr Ed Turner – Portfolio Holder for Housing