

Press Release

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## Green light for Bristol project to provide vital affordable housing for young homeless people

*Planning permission granted for restoration of derelict Bedminster property*



*Photo caption: Left to right: Latest watercolour sketch of the East Street Mews project, image of existing site; Marcus Piet of Willmott Dixon shows young people from 1625 Independent People around the building; and East Street Mews partners Lancer Scott & Labourforce clear the site for construction to begin*

Plans to restore an empty property into much-needed affordable housing for young homeless people in Bristol have been given the go ahead by Bristol City Council.

With preparatory works, including asbestos removal, having been completed over the last few weeks, the redevelopment of this dilapidated building on East Street in Bedminster is due to start imminently. The East Street Mews initiative will create contemporary but affordable apartments that will transform the lives of young homeless people in the city.

The project has been set up by a team of local businesses, charities and property experts to provide a solid foundation on which young people can build towards the next stage of their lives in education and employment. The first residents are expected to be welcomed into



East Street Mews in 2019 after extensive renovations are carried out. The restored property will also include space on the ground floor for local businesses or social enterprises.

East Street Mews is the brainchild of Bristol-based property developer Cubex, property industry charity LandAid and local charity Developing Health & Independence (DHI). Realising there was a major gap in provision for young homeless people who are not eligible for other forms of support, they decided to donate their time, investment and expertise to address the problem.

Together, the team has enlisted the support of other businesses in the property and construction supply chain, such as contractors Willmott Dixon and Lancer Scott to help convert the empty properties in Bedminster into high quality housing. The building is owned by Bristol City Council and will be managed by DHI.

Gavin Bridge, director of developers Cubex who are responsible for regenerating Bristol's new quarter at Finzels Reach, said: "With planning permission now granted, we can now forge ahead with construction works, bringing us one step closer to providing vital affordable housing for young people in our city.

"The level of support we have received from local businesses and organisations has been phenomenal and we are hugely grateful for their time and expertise. However, we would still love to hear from others who would like to lend their support as we approach the next stages of construction, so would urge interested people or organisations to get in touch."

Planning consent was granted by Bristol City Council this week. Paul Smith, councillor and cabinet member for housing at Bristol City Council, said: "Our big gap in housing for the homeless is 'move on' from the hostels. This amazing project fronted by Cubex, LandAid and many other partners meets that key need. I hope we can replicate this in other locations across the city. A real public, private and voluntary sector success."

When complete, the apartments will be offered for rent by DHI's social enterprise 'Home Turf Lettings' at rental levels set according to the amount young homeless people can afford to pay; approximately 40% of market rent.

Young people in the UK are three times more likely to experience homelessness than the rest of the population and are disproportionately impacted by job insecurity and poverty.

Paul Morrish, chief executive at LandAid, said: "As the property industry charity we are so proud to be supporting East Street Mews. Youth homelessness is a problem which continues to rise – Centrepoin estimates that there are over 86,000 young people will experience it this year, and it is a problem which is rising in Bristol. But by bringing together the charity



and the property sector we can make a huge difference to the lives of young people. We hope that East Street Mews will be the first of many of this kind of project.”

John Boughton, deputy managing director at Willmott Dixon, said: “As a business we are proud to be part of this fantastic initiative, and play our part in helping bring back to life this building to provide some much-needed accommodation to young homeless people in Bristol. It is great to see the construction industry coming together to deliver this project and we encourage anyone interested to join us and help give something back to the city.”

To find out more about the project, volunteer on-site skills, time or materials, or if you can provide items to refurbish the apartments, visit the website [www.eaststreetmews.co.uk](http://www.eaststreetmews.co.uk) or contact Eleanor Lynch at East Street Mews on [eleanor@eaststreetmews.co.uk](mailto:eleanor@eaststreetmews.co.uk).

All the companies who have worked on the project are donating their time and skills free of charge so far, and include: The Bush Consultancy, GVA, JLL, Hydrock, Creation Design, Spirit Public Relations, Carbon Consult, TFT, Cook Brown Building Control, Lancer Scott, Osbourne Clarke, Labourforce, Currie Brown, ETM Recycling, Gleeds, Simmons & Simmons, Rockside Estates, Abacus Waste, ETM Recycling, Allium Environmental, Solum Surveying, Allsigns & Design, Brandon Tool Hire, Cabot Industrial Doors and ACES Electrical. There are also many more businesses that have pledged support as we continue into the construction phase.

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