

## Relocation of YOS

The Lead Member for Property gave consideration to the reuse of the former Blackfriars Area Housing Office. In accordance with normal procedure "first call" was given to Directorates to identify any potential occupiers of the building. Based on the following criteria :

- (a) relocation would result in reduced costs and create a capital asset for disposal
- (b) the existing premises being used by a service were in an unsafe or unsuitable condition .

A request was received from Children's services to relocate the Youth Offending Service from Encombe Place to the above-mentioned premises. Following detailed consideration which had included a public meeting and ongoing discussions with the Ward Councillors a report on the issues was prepared and presented to the Lead Member for property detailing the matters which needed to be investigated, including those which had been raised at the public meeting, comments from the Ward Councillors and requests for Community facilities from the local community.

The report indicated that following a detailed analysis

This area has a high level of car crime and burglary. Our analysis indicates that the causal factors for this in the main are:

- On street parking by visitors to the University
- Commuter parking Manchester.
- Vehicle owners not carrying out basic security.
- Developers not providing affordable off-road parking.
- Burglaries are due to offenders taking opportunities of insecure premises.
- Student residents not following basic security procedures.

Over the last two years there have been numerous operations with the police and local authority to reduce crime levels. This is underpinned by analysis of crime and other data and on no single occasion have either the police or local authority analysts identified a contributory factor of crime being the presence of clientele from the YOS or indeed the nearby court.

Between October 2008 and January 2009 there has been only one burglary in the vicinity of Encombe Place and this could not be attributed to the YOS clientele.

An analysis of serious acquisitive crime data within a half mile radius of Encombe Place indicates that the vast majority of crime occurs out of YOS office hours between 5pm and 11 pm.

The YOS building will provide an office base for the team of YOS workers. It will also have interview rooms where the staff can work with the young people who attend the YOS on an appointment basis. The work of the YOS entails one to one work with young people and sometimes with their parents and carers to ensure that all court orders are being adhered to and to work on rehabilitation programmes with young people in order to reduce the likelihood of them re-offending.

Not all of the young people with whom the YOS works will attend the Blackfriars base; it is normal practice for YOS workers to visit young people in their own homes, particularly if the young person lives some distance away from the YOS.

The usual opening hours of the YOS are 9.00 a.m. until 7-0-0 p.m. Tuesday Wednesday and Thursday and until 4.30 p.m. on Monday and Friday. The YOS also does reparation work with young people on a Saturday with, on average, 10 to 15 young people attending. Reparation work includes activities such as litter-picking, gardening, repairs to fencing etc and we would like to use this reparation element to provide a service to the local community.

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday tend to be the busiest days for the YOS with an average attendance across the day of 25-30 young people. The young people do not all attend at the same time – the average through flow is 3 –4 per hour. Monday and Friday tend to be quieter days.

In order to access the Blackfriars building most young people will approach from the main road where there are no residential properties and the same will be the case when they leave. Due to the appointment system that is used most young people attend the building on their own or in two's and three's, rather than in large gangs.

The Lead Member for Property made the following decision

- That the YOS Service be relocated to the former Blackfriars Area Housing office and

(a) The building will be available for Community use at evening and weekends

- (b) The building will provide facilities for use by the Greater Manchester Police.
- (c) The Council will support through the neighbourhood management service Community groups in submitting bids and proposals for funding for Community use.
- (d) The Council will welcome continued dialogue with community groups to develop business plans and expressions of interest for the use of the Oasis.
- (e) Subject to the success of (d) above, the Council will investigate the retention of Youth service provision in the Oasis Building.
- (f) Arrangements will be made for people to visit the YOS at Encombe Place to inform people about the work of the Service