

Midland Crescent Student Management Plan

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Executive summary

This document outlines Corporate Residential Management's (CRM) proposed management strategy for the Midland Crescent student property scheme in the London borough of Camden. CRM are the UK's largest student accommodation management company, managing some 14,000 beds across the UK in schemes ranging from 30 bedrooms to 600.

The document focuses on several areas, all of which are fundamental to the scheme's management, operation and student wellbeing. Where relevant, examples from other similar schemes have been cited in order to demonstrate the specific needs of the student audience.

The document covers:

- The National Code of Standards – ANUK
 - CRM are a board member of the Code which provides a stringent outline of how the scheme should be run offering peace of mind to the owners, the local community and the student residents.
- The approach to managing the scheme including
 - How CRM have contributed to the design of the scheme
 - How managing a student scheme presents different challenges to those of a residential scheme.
 - CRM's proposed outline of the staffing provision for the scheme
 - How the use of Student Wardens, mature individuals chosen from the residents, positively contribute to the management of the scheme and the wellbeing of the students.
 - How communication with neighbours and empathy reduces friction and complaints.
- The approach to travel management
 - How the students can take individual responsibility for their travel choices and how the scheme can positively contribute
 - How, through careful management, any disruption on move in weekends can be minimised
 - How the move out process has significantly less impact on the local area than move in
- The safety and security of the students
 - CRM's approach to out of hours emergencies and 24/7 coverage of the scheme
 - CRM's recommendations for Midland Crescent and how the design can significantly contribute to the students' security and safety
 - How CRM manage the Health and Safety processes at Midland Crescent
- The processes for the day to day management of the scheme
 - How CRM deal with the students during their tenancy
 - How the pastoral care of the students will be managed

Introduction and Background

Corporate Residential Management Limited (CRM) has been asked by Stadium Capital Holdings, to complete a student management report to support its planning application for the development of Midland Crescent, Camden. The proposal includes 60 student rooms.

The student housing proposed would be managed by a dedicated and experienced operator and in this instance it is proposed that CRM would be responsible for the full-time management of Midland Crescent on behalf of the owner. CRM is a provider of specialist property management solutions throughout the UK and additional information on our services is detailed at www.crm-limited.co.uk.

CRM has extensive experience managing purpose built student accommodation. We currently provide management services for 14,000 beds across nearly 50 sites throughout the UK.

CRM manage a range of student accommodation throughout the UK. We operate a number of large scale developments within commercial and residential locations such as Brayford Quays in Lincoln and The Hub, Dundee, as well as smaller schemes where the impact on local residents needs to be well managed. It is understanding and managing the interactions between the tenants and the other occupiers within the area which is a key focus of CRM's day to day offering. St Margaret's in Durham (109 beds) and Purbeck House in Cambridge (140 beds) are further good examples of how well managed CRM student accommodation sits comfortably within the local area. Students at these sites add to the local community, both economically and socially.

Our management philosophy is to provide a safe and caring environment in which our student tenants and our staff can live and work, whilst taking into account the sensitivities of the local area and community. This is important in the context of Midland Crescent as the existing area, which is mainly occupied by retail units and residential properties. We employ a good neighbour policy and believe that consultation is the most effective way in managing local requirements and local relationships.

As part of this policy the local CRM staff actively seek to be part of and work with local groups to ensure we are a significant element of that local community. We welcome representatives from the local community to the student accommodation schemes we run, subject to operational demands. In the case of Midland Crescent, the management focus will be on ensuring that the student population feels safe and secure whilst at the same time being fully integrated in an exciting and cosmopolitan local community.

We are proud of our close working relationships with a large number of London's Universities, both at senior level and on day to day working basis, and will take into account their views and opinions when marketing and managing Midland Crescent.

National Code of Standards

CRM are Board Members of the Code of Standards for non-educationally owned/managed student accommodation blocks. The Accreditation Network UK (ANUK) has been established with the full backing of the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to ensure standards within privately run schemes are maintained at the highest level. Full details of the code are available online at www.anuk.org.uk. The Managers of the code and its enforcement is reported to Government, as required by statute on an annual basis.

It is normal practice for CRM to register schemes that it manages with ANUK on behalf of its Owners. Compliance with the code ensures that both tenants and site managers enjoy the benefits of good practice. Protocols and procedures are part of the Code and are normally put in place to identify and resolve issues as quickly as possible; ANUK accreditation is displayed within the communal areas of registered scheme and within all our literature.

University Vice Chancellors are advised by their own body, Universities UK, (www.universitiesuk.ac.uk) to only use ANUK accredited schemes when recommending private sector accommodation.

The CRM Approach to Managing Midland Crescent

The management of student accommodation is a specialist service. Unlike residential flats where only the physical infrastructure is managed, in student accommodation there are many additional areas which need to be constantly addressed:

- Students on courses together who choose to live in the same building
- Universities and other colleges introduce students to developments and expect a consistent service
- Students will expect on site staff to respond to problems of behaviour and noise from others
- Students will expect assistance from site staff on property and also personal issues
- Student sites are seen as high risk by The Fire Services and others and require intensive and detailed H&S and Fire Management strategies
- Given that this may be their first experience of living on their own, students often have a laissez faire attitude towards security and both active and passive methods of securing the site must be utilised.

During this pre-planning phase of the project, the role of CRM has been to provide direct advice and experience of the operational, design and specification needs of a purpose built student residence to meet the current and continuously evolving needs of this specialist occupier group.

A growing focus, not only of educational institutions, but of the students themselves, is with regards to the 'student experience'. With the management of 14,000 student bedrooms across the UK, CRM is well positioned to provide advice to CZWG who have been responsible for the design of the proposed development. CRM is the leading provider of student property management services, and as such is frequently asked to consult on similar schemes to Midland Crescent. Currently we are working on several projects; University of Bangor (600 beds); University of Edinburgh (1,200 beds) and several private providers including schemes of 1,000 beds in Colchester, 400 beds in Liverpool and 250 beds in Bristol.

CRM has been asked to provide a management solution for management and letting of the student housing element of the proposal. This is to ensure that the student housing element can be appropriately managed and meet the needs of the local environment, as well as the student tenants.

Demand and desire

Given the design and outstanding location of the scheme, Midland Crescent is likely to attract student tenants who are seeking good quality accommodation at attractive prices and are looking for a student experience that enables them to live together with others in their peer group.

The mixed studio and cluster design of the scheme enables students with similar age/course/demographic/culture to live together, whilst at the same time, the communal and study areas allow mixing beyond just the individual cluster or floor. The design of the scheme provides a considered architectural response, with significant value added through the communal facilities.

Demand for purpose built student accommodation in London continues to grow given London's reputation within world educational rankings and an exceptionally large student population seeking quality accommodation. Students are no longer prepared to accept poor quality and poorly located accommodation and Midland Crescent, with its wide range of public transport links and simple connections by bicycle, as well as its high specification, will address these important needs.

Furthermore, the style of Midland Crescent, in terms of the internal design and range of room types, communal space and group learning, has become increasingly popular with students seeking a safe secure and quality living environment.

Many city centre developments, both in London, and elsewhere, are moving towards offering only studio rooms, however, we are seeing a trend for more affordable accommodation. This is also reflected in anecdotal evidence from universities, who are becoming concerned that only wealthy students can attend London's universities and colleges due to the price of accommodation.

The scheme at Midland Crescent seeks to ensure that a range of accommodation is provided for a range of student requirements and budgets. This is enabled through the provision of various sizes of cluster type en-suite rooms and studio rooms.

Site Management for Midland Crescent

General Management

The site will benefit from a 24/7 management strategy, which would include the dedicated management via a CRM team during the core times of Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Management via the on site team would vary depending on the needs of service; for example across the move in period, these times would need to be extended (see below).

Through careful design and the utilisation of Community Ambassadors (see below), we believe that following move in weekend for an initial two week period, there will not be a need for additional management during the night hours.

The scheme is well positioned and there is a real 24/7 culture within this area of Camden, driven by the O2 and the nearby abundance of late night bars and restaurants. This level of activity will also contribute to Midland Crescent's passive security.

At this stage, given the room numbers and extent of the scheme, we anticipate the provision of the management team would include the following:

- Full time Accommodation Manager
- Part time Maintenance Operative

On site staff would be employed directly by CRM and all aspects of personnel are managed by CRM's human resources department. Our recruitment philosophy is to always seek to

employ the site staff from the local community or within reasonable travel distance. Whilst this provides an economic benefit locally, the site team also then has a greater understanding and empathy with the local community, as they often live locally.

Community Ambassadors

Whilst the security provision reassures the residents and provides a visible presence, we have found that for the 'softer' out of hours services, Student Wardens provide the perfect interface.

Our Community Ambassadors are employed by CRM and offer 24 hour seven days a week coverage of the site. The Community Ambassadors are typically third year or postgraduate students with a mature outlook who are resident on the site (see also under health & safety issues). At least one Ambassador will be on call on a rota basis whenever daytime site management are not on duty.

The Community Ambassadors will be employed by CRM, under employment contracts for the period of their tenancies. Their role will be to provide a visible presence and a point of contact for all student residents and any other parties. They will be responsible for dealing with noise and any minor anti-social behaviour; supported by the security team should it be required.

Comprehensive training will be given to all employees covering areas such as first aid, fire management and major incident management in addition to other safety training as required. The Ambassadors, working in association with the security team and daytime staff, enable us to ensure that only true fire and other emergencies are responded to creating a much more integrated scheme.

The building has been configured with a student reception area on the ground floor located at the key entry point to the site to monitor and control access to the entire student accommodation scheme, including visitors. This provides both a visible management staff presence and a clear point of contact for residents. Staff will periodically, and whilst undertaking other tasks such as random room inspections, move around the building to provide a discreet but effective behaviour monitoring role that enables inappropriate behaviour to be proactively managed.

The behaviour of residents and their enjoyment of their stay at Midland Crescent will be influenced by the quality and standard of their living environment; a clean, good quality, well maintained and safe environment engenders a real sense of respect and appropriate behaviour. It is recommended that to maintain a good quality living environment, all communal areas of the building including the common rooms, study areas and laundry will be cleaned regularly and monitored via CCTV. The residents are, as part of their away from home experience, responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of their cluster bedrooms and kitchens and studios and this is ensured through a program of flat inspections and advice from site staff.

The development will be fully compliant with local and other HMO requirements for Fire and H&S.

Community Spaces

The on site community spaces has many advantages for a student accommodation scheme. With an active presence, it adds security simply by the presence of its footfall it also ensures that students and local neighbours can mix.

In schemes which CRM currently manage such as Waterways Loughborough and Jennens Court Birmingham, where restaurants and commercial space share the same building and facilities as student accommodation, we have found that an open communication policy provides honest and impartial feedback and both sets of customers and users benefit.

Likewise, in schemes such as Greenfield Crescent – Birmingham and St Margaret’s – Durham, the sites are immediately adjacent to residential homes. As with all our neighbours, we believe that engagement, from an early stage in the development and operational phase is fundamental to a scheme which is well received and understood within the local community.

Travel Management

As an element of CRM’s continued contribution to reducing the environmental impact of new buildings, we actively encourage the use of travel methods other than that of the car. We have worked with a number of local authorities throughout the UK on developing Travel Plans.

A draft Travel Plan has been submitted in support of the proposal and this includes measures to encourage the use of sustainable transport. The nature of the student accommodation is such that the academic year is typically spread over nine rather than 12 months and there is an annual turnover of student residents. It is therefore considered difficult to influence and establish a change in travel habits over a long period of time. As such, specifically for residents of the student accommodation, the Travel Plan has a strong focus on presenting informative material which can be made available prior to, and again upon first arrival, of a student resident’s stay. It is extremely relevant as the scheme has no car parking provision and parking within the local area is limited.

During our management of previous schemes, we have recommended that within our welcome information we provide students with details of local public transport services, timetables how to purchase tickets, oyster cards etc.

There will be a large provision of secure bicycle storage spaces for the student accommodation, including one space per bed for student residents, with additional spaces for visitors and staff. This storage will have secure access arrangements and CCTV coverage to enhance levels of security and safety. This CCTV will be monitored and recorded from the main management office.

Well managed and secure bike storage is proving more and more popular within the capital amongst students and we are currently developing relationships with bike hire and stores to enhance this offering.

We are very experienced in producing a Student Travel Pack which is sent to all tenants (usually electronically) prior to moving in, which highlights the opportunities to reduce the environmental impact, both on a global scale, as well as locally, from their daily commute. This can include items such as; bike storage and discounted travel cards, as well as clearly indicating that it is breach of their tenancy agreement to bring a private car with them.

At any CRM site, where parking is not provided, and the bringing of cars is discouraged, we are highly conscious of the tenants’ behaviour. We often work with the relevant Council department to ensure that permits are not issued to any residents and if necessary, terminate their tenancy.

Our site manager is our nominated travel coordinator who will produce biennial reports on the site’s impact on traffic; this is a common approach across many sites within the CRM portfolio.

Move In Process

Unlike university owned accommodation there is no specific date when all applications for privately owned / managed accommodation need to be received. Indeed, the London private hall market is a very gradual market, with a steady stream of bookings typically from November through to a peak period in August, following the publication of A-level results.

Prior to move in, we will issue welcome packs, which are distributed electronically to all students. These packs include details of the site and how it is run, advice on living with us and

other students and local information; a hard copy is also provided at check in. The preparation of this information enables a swift and largely trouble free process enabling CRM to welcome students and direct them to their rooms quickly and efficiently.

However, the check in process itself almost mirrors the booking behaviour of the site. Unlike university owned accommodation, there is no strict start date where all students must be matriculated. This is in part due to different universities and courses commencing at different times, but also due to the anticipated mix of students at Midland Crescent, such as postgraduates and international students who will continue to arrive well into October.

With this in mind, we would not expect all tenants to arrive on a single weekend, nor would it be in the interest of the building's administration to have all students checking in for their rooms at the same time. However, we would still expect a relatively large contingent to arrive on the first weekend of their tenancy. As such, when we despatch the welcome pack, we ask all students to complete a form indicating their date of arrival and timeslot when they would like to check in.

Through this methodology, it is made clear to students that the allocation of time slots is for their benefit to ensure a smooth and trouble free move in and minimise any localised disruption in terms of vehicular movements. All room allocations for move in are spread throughout the building to minimise pressure on lifts and stairwells. If students and parents choose to ignore these timings we reserve the right to refuse access until the site is able to accept them.

It is expected that a number of vehicular drop off trips would take place, potentially with parents anticipating this to be at the main entrance. However, we would manage this process with utilisation of nearby car parks and trollies which can be used for the transportation of bulky items. This arrangement has worked well in the past in a similar scheme in South West England where the property is inaccessible by car. Once the vehicle is unloaded it is expected that some parents may choose to use public parking opportunities within the surrounding area before leaving.

To further assist in a smooth intake additional staffing support, in the form of either Community Ambassadors or head office staff, is provided on move in weekends. The staff is there to assist in directing new students to drop off and reception areas where they can collect keys and welcome packs etc, help them unload from cars or provide assistance to students using taxis or those using public transport.

As part of our communication to students and parents prior to move in details of public transport and parking locations in the general area are provided This enables students and in particular parents to pre-plan their journey, journey times and next steps after unloading.

During the move in period further assistance, support staff and student helpers may also be provided. This is dependent upon how the development lets and local relationships. This is a service and support that many Universities become involved in and can again smooth the process for student move in.

A series of "Meet & Greet" induction evening events will be arranged during the move in week and will be held in the shared student facilities on the fourth floor. We would try to ensure that this meeting, wherever possible, would be held in conjunction with Fire Service and the Police's community officers. Each may give a short presentation as to life in accommodation blocks and what issues to look out for. This opportunity reinforces the need to be a good neighbour both inside and outside of the accommodation itself, and lets the fire / police service undertake a presentation as to fire / security risks and how to avoid them.

This meeting delivers a strong message regarding acceptable behaviour and how students should live within the community. In many cases we provide students with site specific safety information and energy saving as part of the welcome pack. These meetings will also offer a chance for the students to meet each other and form friendships outside their immediate floor.

Move out process

The move out is significantly less constrained than the move in period, as individual courses within Universities finish at different times. In our experience students move out over an extended period of time at the end of the academic year.

All students will be advised, prior to the end of their tenancy period, of the move out procedure and dates on which they would be expected to finally vacate. Appointments will be made to inspect rooms for damage and cleanliness prior to departure and, where necessary, arrangements made to return deposits or use them to offset the cost of damages.

As mentioned, we would anticipate this timeframe will extend over a period of weeks as individual courses end. However, this process would be monitored. If concentrations of movements are anticipated over a shorter period, similar measures to the move in process would be put in place to ensure departures are spread over the course of several days.

Out of Hours Emergency Management

Student housing schemes that we manage are normally supported by access to a 24/7/365 national call centre and it is expected that Midland Crescent would benefit from the same support.

CRM will appoint retained local contractors who can provide a 24/7 emergency response to request for maintenance that require an immediate response.

The emergency contact telephone number for our 24 hours support service and our on site team will be displayed throughout the building and available to all students in their welcome pack and in other documentation.

In case of major incidents, the call centre also has senior management telephone numbers. A major incident plan for the scheme would be drawn up in advance of operation detailing the following:

- actions in the event of an emergency situation
- responsible persons (hierarchical chart)
- incident criteria
- contact details for relevant personnel, including staff, clients, universities, embassies and contractors (i.e. electrical contractors, plumbers etc)

CRM can work closely with local authority emergency planning officers to ensure full support in the event of a major incident. Liaison with local emergency planners will begin during the construction of Midland Crescent to develop and implement the major incident plan.

Security

Security is an important requirement when considering student developments considering that often students are perceived as an easy target and are susceptible to a wide range of crimes. At CRM we reduce the risk of crime to our tenants through both active and passive measures.

In the first instance, CRM seek to educate students on security matters. This starts with our Welcome Packs and Meet and Greet meetings mentioned above. If possible, we would work in partnership with the Community Support Team from West Hampstead Police Station.

Secondly, we have considered the active measures that we can apply at Midland Crescent. As mentioned above, the scheme will have a comprehensive CCTV installation enabling on site staff to monitor the CCTV images and to store images to disc for permanent record should they be required. This will supplement the onsite staff and is not considered to be a

replacement for the essential personal presence of responsible staff and Community Ambassadors, on site.

Thirdly, the site itself must be made secure. CRM have worked closely with CZWG to provide input into the design of the building and its layout, as well as provide advice on the operational aspects of security.

During the Tenancy

CRM undertake to allow tenants quiet enjoyment of their rooms but will give at least 24 hours notice to tenants when room inspections are due to take place.

Where room repairs and/or maintenance are required a procedure is in place to log the complaint, and schedule a repair based on the urgency of the work

Any anti-social behaviour such as excessive noise is actively managed by our site management team and in the following manner:

- CRM publish a comprehensive statement on rules and responsibilities and work with the students to create a social environment where all can live and enjoy their university living experience whilst considering and respecting others.
- CRM work actively with Universities. CRM seek to build strong personal relationships within both the University accommodation teams and the pastoral support groups. We like to meet on a regular basis to be close to issues and activities within the Universities involved. By developing those relationships with a clear and honest open dialogue those students who may have problems or difficulties have a clear and transparent support network.

As mentioned above the comprehensive CCTV system will be a deterrent to potential anti-social behaviour which could give rise to disturbance both within and outside of the student buildings.

Pastoral Care

CRM also place great emphasis on pastoral care especially for first year students who may never have lived away from home and site management do make regular visits to flats for informal chats. Later in the year, surgeries are established to encourage students with concerns to 'drop-on' and discuss any issues they may have.

The management team, wherever possible, seek to build relationships with the local University student support teams. This enables a proactive approach to pastoral and other behavioural issues which can affect the enjoyment of students and their peers while at University.

By utilising the Community Ambassadors, early indications of any pastoral issues can be raised quickly and confidentially, on a peer-to-peer bases and dealt with swiftly before the issue becomes a major concern.

Management of health and safety

CRM are extremely vigilant in their approach to health and safety. CRM have a dedicated H&S Risk Manager and utilise the services of an external specialist Health and Safety company to undertake risk assessments of student schemes in the following areas:

- Fire Risk Assessment (Fire Safety Regulatory Reform Order 2005)
- Health and Safety Risk Assessments including COSHH, PAT testing and Gas Safety certification
- Legionellosis (water) Risk Assessment

Comprehensive reports are commissioned annually if required by law and all site safety issues will be managed in house via the specialist companies interactive web based system which will be accessible by the owner in addition to relevant CRM safety personnel. The initial assessments will be undertaken towards the end of the construction phase, and will enable all required safety measures to be put in place prior to student move in dates.

The system will detail all site risk assessments, safety compliance issues, site specific task management, and will ensure that sites maintain accurate safety data and are compliant with legislation as governed by the Health & Safety Executive. The system will also host copies of the major incident and emergency evacuation plan.

With regards to issues of staff safety and compliance, staff will undertake training in general health & safety issues as appropriate for their area of responsibility. All employees required to work during the night will be eligible for night worker health assessments as required under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974.

Communal areas

A major draw of Midland Crescent, besides its outstanding location, will be its outstanding provision of communal facilities; including study rooms and the large lounge on the fourth floor. These improve the quality of the scheme but will also require management by the onsite management team.

From experience across the CRM portfolio, we will employ a number of methods which can control these spaces; methods which are both passive and active:

- Controlled electronic entry to individual blocks and communal areas
- Controlled “opening hours” of certain areas
- As mentioned previously, these areas would be subject to 24 hour monitoring and recording of CCTV
- Areas which are sensitive in terms of sound, or disturbance to other student residents, would be sealed utilising the door-entry system.

Summary and Conclusions

Midland Crescent, in the configuration and design proposed in the planning application which this report supports, represents an outstanding scheme for London’s students. With a wide range of accommodation types and high quality and large communal areas, Midland Crescent will offer a wide range of students an excellent location in which to spend their in London.

Due to the scheme’s location good control of the student’s behaviour will be required, however, with the careful design shown, strong communications with local stakeholders and sympathetic student management, the scheme can be made a safe and fully integrated environment in which to make a home.