

The background of the page is a complex, abstract pattern of overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of blue, ranging from light sky blue to deep navy blue. The shapes are primarily triangles and quadrilaterals, creating a sense of depth and movement.

Y:Cube

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Y:Cube?

- ▶ A new high quality, affordable and sustainable housing concept, Y:Cube is providing self-contained units that offers accommodation for single people in housing need.
- ▶ Y:Cube is constructed as a modular volumetric system that is deployable in a range of locations.
- ▶ Y:Cube provides high quality, secure and aspirational accommodation at a rent which is affordable. For example the Mitcham scheme has been set at below the Local Housing Allowance for affordable rent.
- ▶ Y:Cube was conceived by YMCA London South West to address the significant demand for affordable, self-contained accommodation for single people in housing need.
- ▶ This initiative is a partnership between the YMCA, Roger Stirk Harbour + Partners who led on design; Aecom, who provide pre and post planning consultancy; and SIG Building Systems who provide the off-site design and manufacture.
- ▶ Whilst the original use was as move-on accommodation for YMCA residents, other applications for Y:Cube could include providing accommodation for young people leaving care, low income families, key workers or students.
- ▶ Y:Cube schemes are clusters of Y:Cube units (typically between 20 to 40 units) on sites that can be bought or leased for as little as ten years.
- ▶ Rent will be set at, or below, the Local Housing Allowance for a one bedroom flat, making the accommodation accessible for people on benefits.

What is Y:Cube Mitcham?

- ▶ The Y:Cube Mitcham scheme, located on Clay Avenue in Mitcham is a 100% affordable housing scheme. It has been agreed with Merton Council that 50% of the nominations will be for YMCA residents currently living at YMCA London South West's hostels and the other 50% will be nominations from Merton Council.
- ▶ The scheme consists of 36 self-contained one bedroom flats. Each identical flat contains a living space that includes a galley kitchen, separate bedroom

and an en-suite toilet and shower. Each unit has a net internal area space of 26sqm.

- ▶ The rent is lower than the Local Housing Allowance for a one bed flat in Merton.
- ▶ Each flat will be let on an assured short-hold periodic tenancies with the anticipated length of stay being three to five years.
- ▶ This scheme is designed to provide 'next stage medium stay' accommodation for single people in housing need.
- ▶ Along with investment from YMCA London South West, the Mitcham scheme was funded with a grant of £337,000 from the Mayor of London's Building the Pipeline scheme alongside a 'social' investment from Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, Trust for London, the Tudor Trust and the City of London Trust.

What are the benefits of Y:Cube?

- ▶ Y:Cube schemes build costs are less than other traditional forms of construction (typically 25%) thus the schemes can be built without capital grant where LHA rates allow, where market rents are lower schemes are eligible for HCA (or GLA) development funding.
- ▶ The construction and development costs are cheaper than traditional forms of housing construction and development, resulting in schemes requiring from as little as ten years to repay any debt funding.
- ▶ Y:Cube provides a genuine alternative to the private sector rented market for single people in housing need. The primary aim is to provide good quality, secure accommodation.
- ▶ Schemes can be opened in as little as five months following completion of a successful planning process.
- ▶ Due to its high quality of design and off-site manufacture the energy costs of running a Y: Cube are kept to a minimum.
- ▶ The Y:Cube properties provide a stable environment for individuals to be able to secure and maintain work, training or education opportunities, thereby improving their personal skills and earning potential in order to secure their own move-on opportunity.

- ▶ Y:Cube schemes can make use of challenging brownfield sites that are either too small, have challenging ground conditions or unsuitable to support more traditional construction methods. They can also bring into use sites which have a longer term development aspiration.
- ▶ Y:Cube is a scalable solution, creating clusters of units that can be quickly developed and meeting a range of needs that can work at sites across the country.

How are Y:Cube schemes financed?

- ▶ Y:Cube has been designed so that capital grant is not necessarily required. However for permanent schemes, development grant can be secured where required.
- ▶ Each scheme can be funded by bank finance, reserves, private or corporate investors or social investment by a charitable trust or foundation.
- ▶ All capital costs can be recovered from the rental stream with a payback period on average between 10 to 15 years.
- ▶ A funder may secure an interest in the scheme and/or land.

What is the approach to planning?

- ▶ As Y:Cube is designed to be a medium stay home (and not long term) it is therefore exempt from local authority housing space standards.
- ▶ Y:Cube has been included in the Mayor of London housing strategy.
- ▶ Y:Cube is fully deployable and designed to last up to 60 years. Once the scheme's capital is repaid there are two options: 1) The units are removed and the site is returned to the owner. The local provider can then relocate or sell the units. 2) Keep the units in the current location and maintain its use in providing affordable housing.

Technical information about Y:Cube units

- ▶ Y:Cube is constructed using an innovative (SIG patented) Panelised Wall & Roof System. The Y:Cube project adopts a modern means of construction that means the highest building thermal fabric standards can be achieved in a cost effective way.

- ▶ The use of offsite manufacturing means that a level of precision and quality control can be achieved that is often impossible with traditional construction.
- ▶ The units are designed to enable Y:Cube schemes to meet Building Regulations and Code Level 4 for Sustainable Homes or equivalent standards.
- ▶ Y:Cube has a design life of 60 years +.

What's next for Y:Cube?

- ▶ YMCA London South West are working with their partners, RSH+P, AECOM and SIG, to develop a venture which will be able to offer Y:Cube developments to the other YMCA's, local authorities and the wider market. This venture and the opportunities for further Y:Cube developments have already provoked considerable interest.

About YMCA London South West

- ▶ YMCA London South West is the largest YMCA in England, working across the London Boroughs of Merton, Kingston, Richmond, Wandsworth and Hammersmith and Fulham, as well as Elmbridge in Surrey.
- ▶ YMCA LSW is a registered charity that works across South West London providing a range of services including supported housing; children's work; sports, health, exercise and fitness; youth work; catering services and conference facilities; short stay hostel accommodation and community programmes.
- ▶ Every year, YMCA London South West house over 600 homeless people, supporting them with a wide range of interventions including life skills training, literacy and numeracy courses as well as access to counselling services in order to equip them with the skills and confidence to lead successful independent lives once they move on from the hostel.
- ▶ For further information please visit www.ymcalsw.org

More about the YMCA

- ▶ Founded in 1844, YMCA in England is made up of 113 member YMCAs working to ensure that young people have opportunities to thrive and

YMCA London South West



YMCA

contribute positively to their communities.

- ▶ YMCA operates in over 530 different communities in England impacting upon the lives of over 600,000 people every year.
- ▶ YMCAs provide almost 10,000 beds for young people every night. YMCA is the largest voluntary sector provider of safe, supported accommodation for young men and women.
- ▶ YMCAs in England enable nearly 43,000 people every year to engage in education, skills and training to enable them to improve their opportunities in the job market.
- ▶ YMCA is the largest voluntary sector provider of health and wellbeing services promoting physical activity.
- ▶ For further information please visit www.ymca.org.uk