

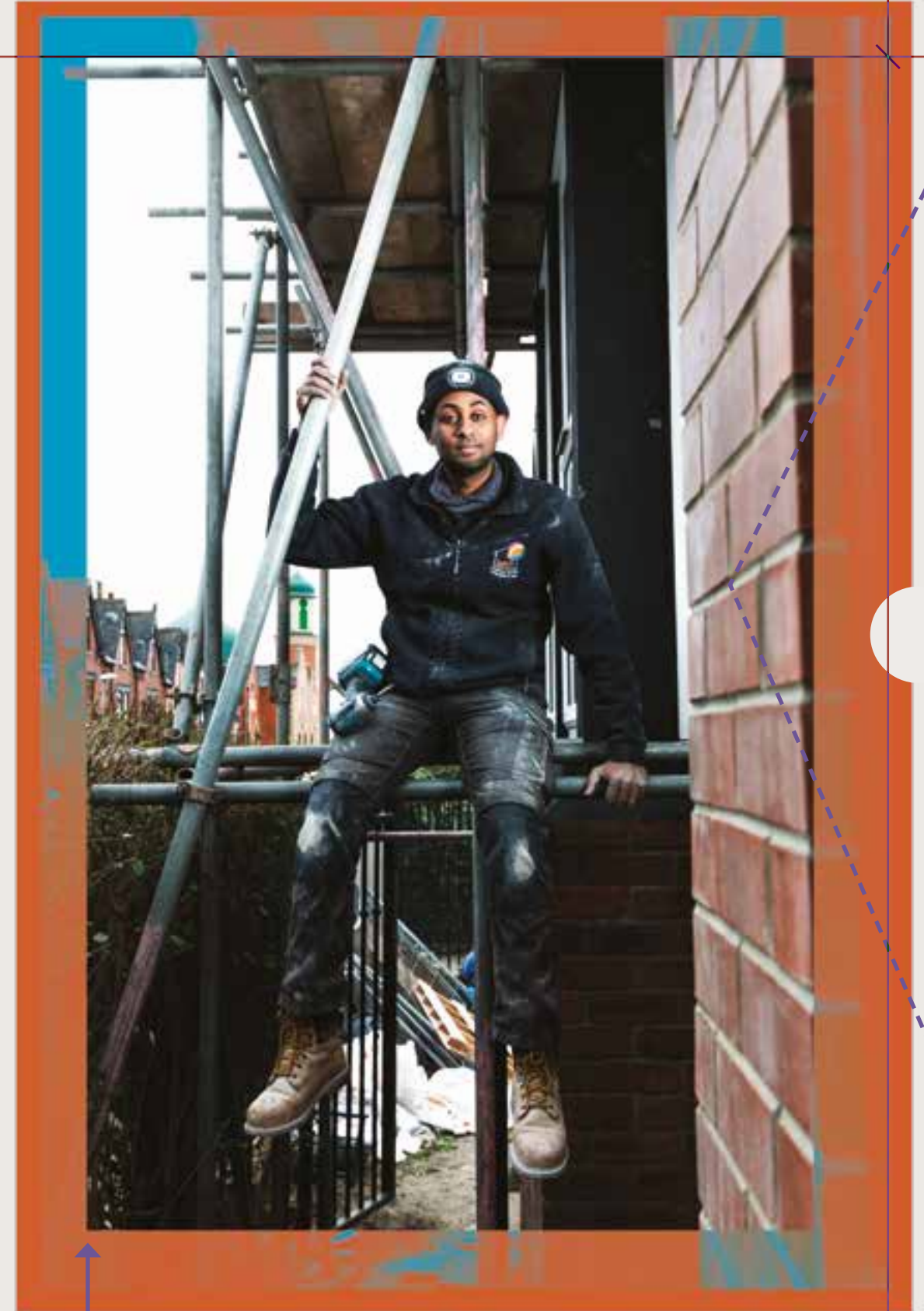


Annual report 2021

What we do

Leeds Action to Create Homes (Latch) has been transforming the lives of homeless people in Leeds for over 30 years.

We refurbish derelict houses that are lying empty and transform them into quality homes for people who are homeless or in housing need. We proactively build positive futures through support, volunteering and training opportunities to help our tenants make a fresh start. Unemployed people also gain vital construction skills by working alongside our staff as trainees on property refurbishments.



Ermias takes a break on site
Latch Creates project, Leeds 2021

Year in Review

We are proud to have achieved so much during a uniquely challenging and difficult year.

Latch Creates Project: four new quality homes

We overcame significant obstacles to complete the conversion of a five-bedroom Victorian property into four spacious and modern flats. Four new tenants have moved in and are already enjoying their fully-furnished new homes. Undertaken during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, we worked exceptionally hard to complete the project and tackle problems with obtaining materials, unavailability of contactors, illness and self-isolation requirements.

We are very grateful to our project funders, **Leeds City Council, Power to Change, Clothworkers' Foundation** and **Land Aid** who were flexible and supportive when deadlines and costs had to change at short notice.

Our commitment to providing much needed properties for our tenants also continued with the Move-On project. Delivered in partnership with Connect Housing, we created three one-bedroom flats and one two-bedroom flat.



Latch team member Ryan takes a break Leeds 2021



Delivering quality support and quality homes

The 24 people who left Latch tenancies over the year have all moved on to independent living. We are really pleased to have played our role in helping them to start their new futures. Thanks to our support services, the additional skills they have gained including money management and applying for jobs, will also help them moving forwards.

Our supported housing service has needed to be flexible this year to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic. We've adapted to accommodate remote working and assessment interviews and work to support our tenants has taken place remotely online or by phone. Whilst everyone has risen to this challenge, it has been difficult to develop and nurture the same level of support relationships. We look forward to being able to return to providing more face-to-face support again.

Demand for our homes remains very high. We are committed to providing as many bed spaces as we possibly can and to increasing our stock of properties. The number of people in Leeds needing help with housing remains a major cause of concern and there is no sign of this diminishing.

Our property management service also faced and overcame delivery challenges. The Covid-19 pandemic posed some unique safety concerns around entering tenanted properties. The need to ensure Covid-secure working meant we unfortunately saw an accumulation of non-priority repairs. We have tackled this backlog and had 14 open repairs in August 2021 compared with 55 back in February.

We are thrilled to report that 95% of tenants declared themselves as satisfied or very satisfied with our service.

Year in Review

The launch of our Community Share Issue at our Conway Terrace property



Community Share Issue: financing homes for the future

Creating more homes to help meet high demand is a key focus for Latch. In July 2021 we launched our first Community Share Issue with the aim of raising investment funds to purchase six more properties in Leeds.

The share issue, launched on the Ethex platform, raised an incredible £550,000 in less than a month and will enable us to deliver an even greater impact on the lives of homeless people and deprived communities in Leeds.

We are looking forward to welcoming our 134 new members and investors to Latch and hopefully building a long term relationship with them. We aim to purchase the properties in the Autumn and to let the homes to new tenants in early 2022.

The Coach House interior



The Coach House: Latch's community hub opens to rave reviews

We continue to add to our unique range of services and opened up our new holistic and creative hub, the Coach House, in July. The community hub supports our tenants and is also open to members of the local Leeds community. It aims to build skills and develop confidence through finding meaningful activity and supporting people to achieve their personal goals. Our first services include a psychotherapy service, Sunday Bike Fix and women's wellbeing workshop. The bike workshop is run in partnership with local volunteer bike mechanics and focuses on helping people to repair their own bikes. More than 30 bikes have been repaired so far. We have received fantastic feedback on all these services. Latch tenant Aishah comments:

"I look forward to the group so much. The women there are so supportive. Going has really helped with my confidence and my mental health has improved loads."

Future plans include a men's wellbeing group, a Black history youth group and Latch facilitated IT training, health and fitness groups, cooking and baking skills, and music and art sessions.

Outcomes

- 103 adults and 47 children housed
- 53 people newly housed
- 10 new 1-bedroom homes and 1 2-bedroom home created
- 24 tenants successfully moved on to independent living
- £550K raised for new property developments
- 134 new members and investors
- 14 trainees gained construction skills
- 2 trainees gained temporary or permanent employment



Latch tenant Lauren outside her home
Leeds 2021

Finance report

The Covid-19 pandemic had a big impact on our financial performance for the year.

Delays and increased costs meant that our property development project went over budget and completed behind schedule. This reduced the rental income we had predicted for the year but, despite this, our core rental income actually increased by approximately £90,000. This helped to offset the impact of lost rental income from the new development but we still ended the year with a small deficit of -£15,179.

Key Figures

Income:	£1,020,084
Expenditure:	£1,035,269
Net Income:	-£15,179
Total Funds:	£3,540,360
Assets:	£6,170,979
Free Reserves:	£130,928



How we've helped

These are just a few of the many people whose lives we have helped turn around in the past year.





Ryan at work on our Latch Creates project



Ryan's story

Ryan initially joined Latch as a trainee and has since secured employment with our property refurbishment team.

Ryan is a 27 year old who was long term unemployed. He wanted to use the traineeship to turn his life around, starting by getting a trade. One of his hobbies is weightlifting (he holds a Yorkshire record for dead lifting over a quarter of a ton) and his impressive strength has been a huge help on site. He was able to carry in 75 acoustic boards at 6 stone each!

Ryan went from strength to strength during his traineeship, learning a wide range of skills including ground works, building metal stud walls, insulating, plaster boarding, plastering, building door cases and hanging doors, plying floors, tiling and assisting with fitting a kitchen.

“You would have to pay a lot of money to go to college and learn these kind of skills and here I am getting paid to learn them.”

Ryan
Latch team member

Indiana's story

Indiana is a tenant who was housed by Latch after she started a relationship with a non-traveller, which was against the culture of her travelling community.

Although she was not technically homeless, she suffered verbal and other emotional abuse that led to her feeling very low and suffered a miscarriage.

Housed in a new area of Leeds, she was able to start to feel safe and to receive support with her mental health. Latch is currently helping Indiana to consider training opportunities and new skills to learn, such as baking.



Indiana is represented by a model

“I feel I can live life again... Latch has been really supportive and helped me to get back on track with my money and sorting out my health because I was feeling really, really rubbish at one point. They just get it and help me to understand what changes I need to make.”

Indiana
Latch tenant

“I am very happy with Latch and am grateful for all the help from my support worker and the personal coach... Thank you for everything from the bottom of my heart.”

Ibrahima
Latch tenant



Ibrahima's story

Ibrahima was living in a shared house before being housed by us. He was experiencing many problems with his housemates. His housing situation was unsettling and really affecting his mental health.

He now has his own space and help from a Latch support worker. He has started going to the gym and running and is keen to start employment and gain his driving licence, which we are helping him with.



Ibrahima outside his Latch home



Thank you.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who has helped Latch in our mission to create homes and change lives, especially during this particularly challenging year.

This includes all our hardworking staff, volunteers and trainees, our donors, contractors, suppliers, funders, partners and investors.



In memory

Remembering our tenant Rowan who passed away in Summer 2021. He is sorely missed by everyone at Latch. We grieve his sad loss but remember his wonderful talent and all the special memories he left us.

Our Funders:

Leeds City Council
Power to Change:
Homes in Communities' Hands
Power to Change:
Community Business Fund
Leeds Quakers
Clothworkers' Foundation
Big Lottery Community Fund
ESF Community Grants
Land Aid
Homeless Link
Co-operatives UK

Management Committee members:

Stephen Boyle
Maggie Gjessing
Kat Donegan
Carol White
Keith Gibson
David Clarke
Dennis Bernard
Stephen Oxley
Samia Hussain
Nic Crocker
Manjeet Gahir

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Martyn Broadest - Connect Housing
Sue Sheard - HR Success
Christine Mclean - CMC Consulting
Johnathan Kendall - Vitamin K Design
Geraldine Conner Foundation
Matthew Nice - St George's Crypt
Audrey and Babs - Women's Group
100% Digital Leeds
Janet Spencer
Wayne Noteman
Simeon Perry
Matt Boggan - Triodos Bank
Ethex Investment Partners



Leeds Action to Create Homes
176 Chapeltown Road
Leeds LS7 4HP

Email: info@latch.org.uk
Visit: www.latch.org.uk
Facebook: LatchLeeds
Twitter: @LatchLeeds



Latch tenant Shaun outside his home
Leeds 2021