



Rebuilding lives in challenging times

Annual Report 2023



LATCH TENANT
LAUREN AT HOME
WITH HER CHILDREN

We rebuild lives

We take empty and derelict properties in Leeds and transform them into quality homes for people in urgent housing need.

It's a shocking fact that 26,000 people in Leeds have some level of housing need whilst an estimated 4,000 houses* lie cold and empty.

Proud to be recognised as a Big Issue Change Maker of 2023, we go well beyond just bricks and mortar. We're dedicated to helping our tenants rebuild their lives - supporting them along the path to new, positive futures. Every individual receives a bespoke package of training, support, counselling and coaching for as long as they need us.

Not only that, we also help tackle local unemployment by providing traineeships working on our renovation projects. Latch trainees gain vital skills and experience working alongside our staff team on a wide range of construction tasks. We aim for them to leave us with greatly enhanced employment prospects and qualifications, along with

improved interpersonal skills.

Our track record is phenomenal - we've created over 107 quality homes and helped over 600 people in the most deprived areas of the city over the past 3 decades.

But times are tough and getting even tougher. The cost of living crisis has hit everyone hard but particularly those at the very bottom end of the income scale. There's never been a greater need for our work. Increasing costs including the escalating cost of building materials, higher interest rates on loans and a challenging fundraising climate also make our work harder.

We need your support more than ever to help us to help others in need. This report provides a snapshot of our work and highlights the vital difference we make to real lives.



JAMES
HARTLEY,
AT LATCH
HEADQUARTERS

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Latch Annual Report 2023 Rebuilding lives in challenging times



Beyond bricks and mortar

At the heart of our work is providing comfortable, safe homes whilst we support our tenants to get back on their feet and eventually move on to independent living.

Every tenant is unique and each person has a different story to tell about how they have come to us.

The support we provide is as unique as they are. It could be counselling to help them recover from trauma, support with addiction, courses on managing on a low income or skills training to get them back into education and work. Many of those we help are women and children fleeing domestic violence and living in B&Bs and women's refuges. We also support vital resettlement work with Afghan and Syrian refugees.

We are so proud of the 35 tenants and their 23 children who moved on from Latch to new futures during the last 12 months. We form really strong bonds with our tenants over the time they are with us. We wish them all the best for the future and hope they will keep in touch.

"Our tenants are at the heart of everything we do. From welcoming them when they join us, through to doing everything we can to help and support whilst with us and finally helping them to move on from Latch to independent living in their new homes."

James Hartley, Latch CEO.

LATCH RESIDENT
SOPHIE GREY OUTSIDE
HER HOME



Homes to feel proud of

Many of the people we support have previously been living in cramped, low quality, sometimes even dangerous, accommodation. Others are part of the 'hidden homeless', forced to sofa surf or lives in cars with nowhere permanent to call home.

A quality, safe home that they can feel proud of provides an essential foundation as they begin to rebuild their lives.

In 2023, we had a total of 107 properties available to tenants and 41 of these properties were prepared for let to new tenants. More homes mean a constantly increasing workload for our small and dedicated team of staff – who between them have over 24 years of experience.

Everyone works really hard to ensure that repairs and maintenance are undertaken promptly and to keep ahead of statutory compliance tasks, such as gas and electrical safety certificates.

We are thrilled with the very high level of positive feedback from our tenants. New tenants are asked to rate their impressions of the service they have received so far and all gave us a 'good' or 'very good' rating. 80% of tenants who had been with us for over 6 months 'agreed or strongly agreed' that they were impressed when asked and 20% 'neither agreed or disagreed'.



LATCH RESIDENT
JESSICA SORENSON
STANDS AT THE DOOR
OF HER LATCH HOME

Here are some of the wonderful recent comments from our survey asking tenants how we are doing:

"You have done MORE than ENOUGH for me and I couldn't be more grateful :) I'm glad I came here."

"I am very happy as a client with Latch. They are really so kind and helpful."

"Quick response. Given date for the interview 2 weeks after applying online."

"Latch they are so amazing, kind, co-operative, caring."

"The property looks great and I've had nothing but compliments from anyone who has been in. Everything has been perfect for me since moving in apart from a couple of minor blips which were sorted very promptly. After contacting my worker the repairs were carried out next day".

Firm foundations

We bring abandoned, empty, derelict and frequently old and draughty properties back into use as cosy energy efficient homes. With more homes, we can help even more people.

Since reaching the incredible milestone of our 100th home in 2022, we've continued to grow. We've now transformed 107 buildings from empty houses into quality homes. In 2023, we purchased and refurbished 7 new homes:

The new homes we created were:

- 3 x one bedroom flats.
- 4 x two bedroom houses.

We are so proud that our tenants feel proud to call them home.

"I will always, always remember the opportunity that I got to be here – it's transformed me as a person, and my life."

Rosie, Latch tenant



BEFORE

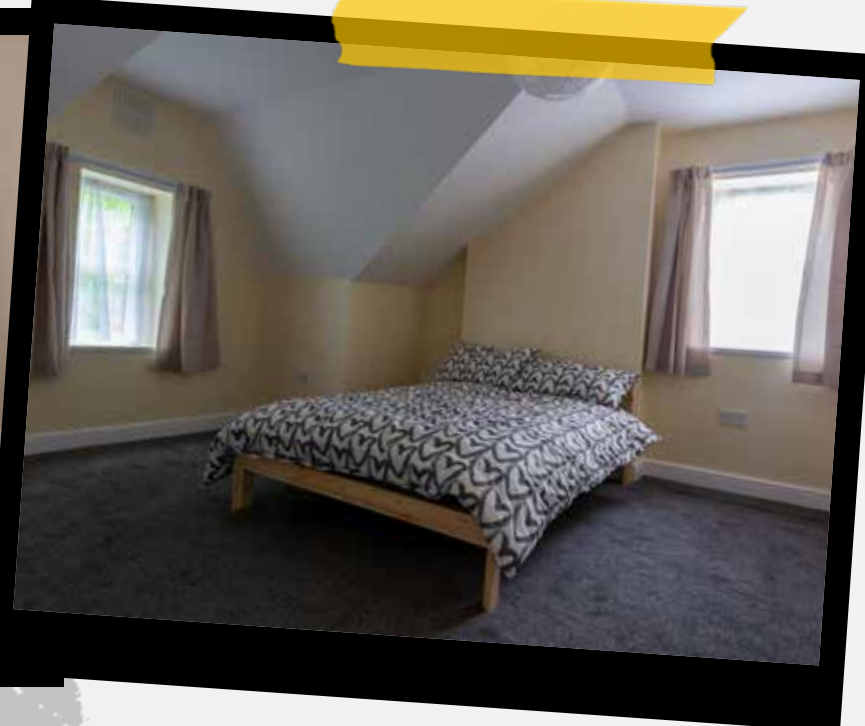
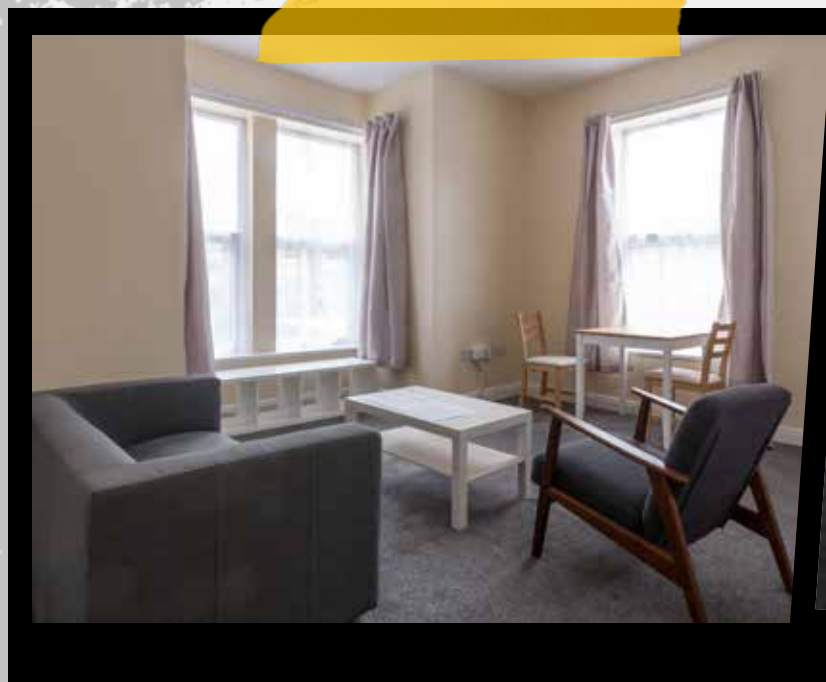


AFTER

BEFORE



AFTER



"When I first went for my assessment I kept feeling like I'm never gonna get a property and when Natasha from Latch called me that same very day I cried because I truly felt like I had been given a chance and a fresh start. When I saw the flat I had been given I was shocked. It is absolutely beautiful and perfect for me I was more than happy with everything I had been given. So, I'd just like to say thank you so much to everyone at Latch who changed my life."

Latch tenant, one bedroom flat

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Helping with rising living costs

Our food bank, launched last year, has been busy distributing over £7.9K in food vouchers and welfare support. We are working hard to support our tenants as they face mounting challenges with the rising cost of living and more than 50% have used the food bank so far.

It stocks a wide range of essential food items, working in partnership with Surplus to Purpose, who provide quality fresh food that would otherwise be destined for landfill. To date, we've helped 343 individuals by distributing a remarkable 569 food parcels.

Free sanitary products are also available on site thanks to our relationship with Freedom4girls, along with a book exchange and Tenant Hub – an information point where our tenants can find out about community partners and other useful services.

These initiatives not only help to meet critical need but also have a substantial positive impact on the wellbeing of our tenants and have fostered a strong sense of unity and care within our local communities.

We couldn't run the food bank without the untiring hard work of our wonderful volunteers and we are proud that their volunteering has also helped nurture their own growth and personal development.



Investing for good

Whilst we long for a time when Latch is no longer needed, sadly housing need and the demand for quality homes continues to grow year on year. The current fundraising climate is a real challenge as the rising cost of living places more pressure on the finances of all those who support us.

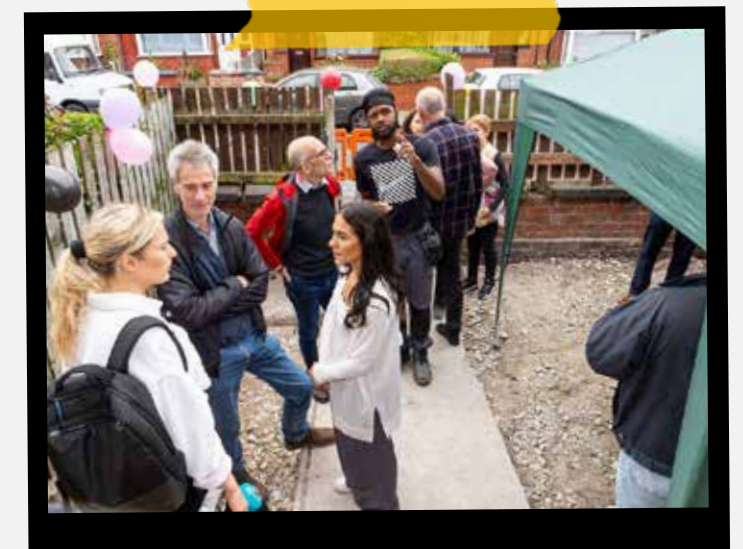
Being creative and seeking new sources of funding remains a key focus and ethical investors have continued to play a valuable role in helping us raise vital funds to create more homes.

Following the success of our previous Community Share Issue - which helped fund the purchase of nine additional properties, we launched a second share issue in June 2023. Whilst the economic climate has certainly made the task harder, we are very excited to report that we raised £600,000 of our £650,000 target to fund the purchase of six more properties. This means we can help six more adults and 3 more children on top of the 600 we have already helped over the years.

Not only is the Community Share Issue a wonderful way for individuals and local communities to give back and help transform real lives but it also has benefits for the wider communities where we work. Derelict properties tend to become hubs of antisocial activity, which is reversed when they are transformed into quality homes. We're really proud of the long legacy of positive impact we have on both individual lives and those of the communities in which we work.

We would like to thank everyone past, current and future who have supported us to make a real difference.

LATCH COMMUNITY
GATHER FOR THE
LAUNCH OF OUR
SHARE OFFER,
SEPTEMBER 2023



Businesses join forces with Latch

We are so grateful to all the businesses that are supporting Latch as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility programmes. Optima Legal has kindly donated over £1,000 towards our Latch Education Fund.

This enables us to supply vouchers to tenants to help purchase school uniforms and educational equipment. 23 children across 14 families have already benefited from the vouchers. Optima Legal has also provided over 100 age appropriate books for the children of Latch tenants and free conveyancing services.

Hearthstone Investments, a specialist in suburban private rented housing, has named us as its Corporate Charity Partner. Their sponsored walk raised over £3,600 to support our work and the Hearthstone partners donated a further cheque for £500. Interiors specialists Dowsing & Reynolds raised over £3,200 for Latch at their epic Total Warrior event.

In addition to support from businesses, we would like to thank all those individuals, grant, trust and fund providers whose support has also been invaluable. We received over £8,400 in private donations from individuals on top of donations to our food bank. We were able to claim over £1200 in gift aid, which helped those donations go even further.

Thanks to HATCH we received £4,420 to expand our oversubscribed psychotherapy provision, helping to ensure that psychotherapy is at the core of our work with tenants.

We are delighted to announce that the Hope and Home Project will be providing £54,000 to fund the purchase of essential items like kettles, beds, white goods and carpets to help women and children who are ready to move on to independent living. The funding will also pay for 6 weeks of support for 2 hours a week as tenants they make the administrative transition from Latch to living on their own.

Stepping stones to employment

Our work goes far beyond providing quality houses that our tenants are proud to call home. Our refurbishment projects are the vital building blocks to help unemployed people gain skills to get them into long-term work.

Seven young unemployed people joined us as trainees during 2023. Their traineeships were kindly funded by a LandAid Charitable Trust project focused on helping under 25's get into careers in construction. The skills and personal confidence they gained will hopefully open the door to future employment opportunities.

These new trainees have really challenged the stereotypes people may hold about young people. They are very motivated, learn very quickly, super-fast and efficient and very keen to secure apprenticeships and careers.



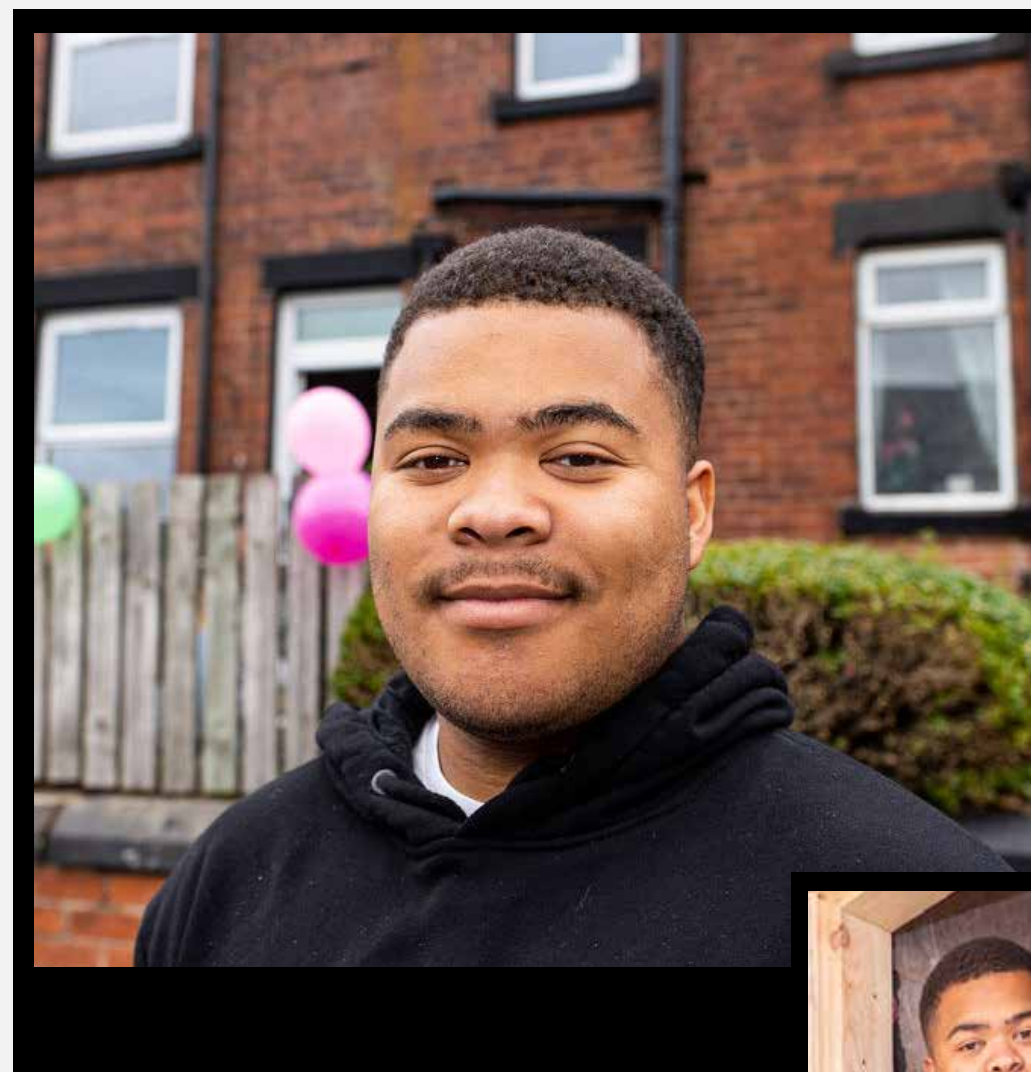
LATCH TRAINEES LUKAS AND KAI AT THE LAUNCH OF OUR SECOND SHARE OFFER, SEPTEMBER 2023

CASE STUDY

Kai's story

Kai joined us as an 18 year old unemployed dyslexic trainee from Osmonthorpe. He has gained a vast range of skills during his time with us - including fitting insulation, plasterboarding, plastering, joinery and decorating.

His experience fitting a kitchen with Latch helped him pass his Level 2 in Joinery at Leeds College of Building and he recently re-sat his GCSE's in Maths and English. He is hoping to get his CSCS card through his work us, enabling him to secure future work in construction. He will return to the building college in 2024.



LATCH TRAINEE KAI AT THE
LAUNCH OF OUR SHARE OFFER.
SEPTEMBER 2023

CASE STUDY

Lukas's story

Lukas is an 18 year old unemployed trainee from a deprived background, who has also successfully completed his Level 2 qualification in Joinery at Leeds College of Building.

Like Kai, he has taken the opportunity of working towards his CSCS card during his time with Latch, whilst also retaking GCSE Maths and English. Since completing his traineeship, he has secured work with Network Rail on train maintenance.

LATCH TRAINEE
LUCAS AT THE
LAUNCH OF OUR
SHARE OFFER.
SEPTEMBER
2023

"At Latch, you get better experience than college, more hands on and more like a real job."

Lukas, Latch Trainee



CASE STUDY

Tyrese's story

Tyrese is an unemployed 21 year old college graduate who has been working with us as a trainee whilst seeking an apprenticeship.

His role as a carer for his mother and financial hardship have made it challenging for him to find opportunities.

Tyrese completed his Level 3 plumbing qualifications last Summer and did exceptional work plumbing the bathroom with Latch at our renovated property. He has a wonderful calm and methodical approach, plus loves to sing whilst he works! He has starred alongside Kai in media activity to help Latch raise our profile.

We look forward to helping many more trainees get back into work over the coming year.



LATCH TRAINEE TYRESE AT THE LAUNCH OF OUR SHARE OFFER. SEPTEMBER 2023



The Coach House continues to grow

Latch is embedded right in the heart of our local Leeds communities. We are so happy that our holistic and creative community hub, The Coach House, continues to go from strength to strength.

The welcoming space offers a diverse mix of community groups and services including Bike Fix Sunday, psychotherapy, the women's group Calm and Centred, Black History Circle, Freedom4Girls plus meditation and yoga groups. The space is also used by our Personal Coach, Mark, to deliver individually tailored support for tenants.

New developments in 2023 included a successful grant bid to develop our psychotherapy service to offer 7 hours a week. This is such a unique resource with incredible benefits for the individuals we support and means we can ensure that a psychologically informed approach is at the heart of everything we do.

We also introduced a Breathwork workshop. Breathwork has a proven positive impact on wellbeing and we are already starting to see its benefits for our participating tenants. Our Menopause café opened recently and is run by Louise, helping to raise awareness and facilitate vital support in the community.

Bike Fix Sunday is one of our longest running projects and is hugely valued by the local community. It's a real joy to see local residents getting back on their bikes. We're thrilled that one of our tenants, Kevin, has recently been recruited to join our team of volunteer mechanics.

Finally, we continue to support Freedom4girls to host workshops in their mission to address period poverty. They are an essential resource for so many women and girls, not only our own tenants and the local community but also globally.

We are looking forward to the impact of The Coach House

Louise says:

"We filled the place! So many women came from the local community. There was a lot of tears, a lot of sharing, it's helped so many women".

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Our Tenants' Stories

ROSIE



NATHANIEL



COUN



SHARON



latch
creating homes
changing lives

OUR TENANTS' STORIES

Rosie's story

Rosie joined us from a women's hostel where she lived after fleeing an abusive relationship. She describes the support she has received from Latch over the past 18 months as being her 'saving grace'.

She has worked hard to transform her mental and physical wellbeing. This has included reviewing her diet, going to the gym, taking up the couch to 5km programme and working on her mental health through our psychotherapy service. We have also worked with Rosie to introduce meditation and breathwork to her daily routine.

Rosie has already taken positive steps towards building a positive new future including finding work in the hospitality industry. She started a University course in Philosophy this Autumn.

She explains how the new techniques she has learnt have helped her:

"They ground me and help me find the state of mind to develop perspective and deal with past issues in a much better way."

ROSIE RELAXES
AT HOME, 2023



OUR TENANTS' STORIES

Colin's story

Colin was referred to Latch through the Assertive Outreach Team. He is well known in the local Chapeltown community including for his skills and talent as a saxophonist.

Sadly, Colin was involved in a traumatic incident 10 years ago which had many negative consequences including leaving him unable to play the saxophone. Music is fundamental to his identity and this had a deep impact on his wellbeing.

We've been working with Colin to help him get back into music and find meaningful activity in his life after he had dentures fitted. We pursued many options, including an opportunity to try different saxophones in soundproof studio spaces at the Geraldine Conner Foundation and Leeds College of Music.

This was a success and after securing funds to purchase a sax and following a 10 year absence, Colin is now back playing music on daily basis. He has spoken about the positive impact this has made on his mental health, confidence and meaning in his life. He will hopefully be back out playing live again soon!



COLIN PLAYS SAXOPHONE AT
LEEDS COLLEGE OF MUSIC

OUR TENANTS' STORIES

Sharon's story

Sharon became a Latch tenant last Summer and wanted to find meaningful activity to help develop her confidence and ultimately find work.

Sharon now manages our food bank and attends weekly yoga and meditation at The Coach House, as well as benefiting from our psychotherapy service. She cycles regularly after she was given a bike from our Bike Fix Sunday project. All these activities have had a really positive impact on her mental wellbeing and she is applying for jobs, undertaking training opportunities and studying to pass her driving theory. She has also kindly helped Latch with lots of media opportunities. Sharon has been a star!



"Latch has given me a solid and supportive foundation to rebuild my life. After many difficult years, my life now feels as though it has purpose and is finally heading in the right direction."

SHARON SITS ON THE STEP OF HER HOME, 2023

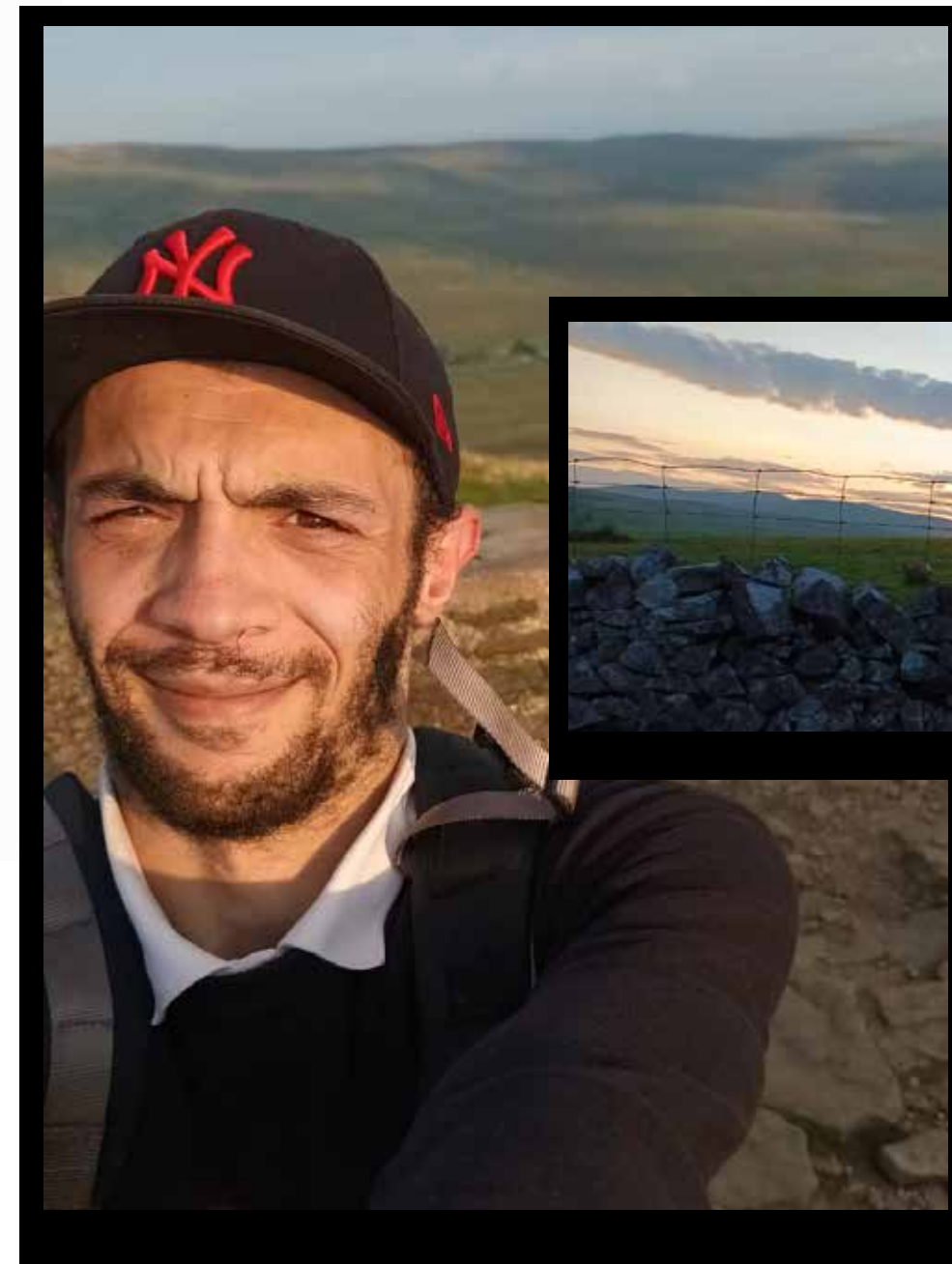
OUR TENANTS' STORIES

Nathaniel's story

Nathaniel came to Latch in early 2023. He had been struggling with his mental health and has been working with the Personal Coach to find activities to impact positively on his wellbeing.

He loves the great outdoors and has strong memories of feeling connected to nature and feeling positive being in the countryside. He talked about his goal to walk the Yorkshire Three Peaks and the coach has helped him pull a plan together to achieve his ambition. He took a significant step forward when we helped him borrow equipment and funded his transport to the Yorkshire Dales. He walked up Pen-y-ghent and, after his descent, he camped overnight in the valley at Horton in Ribblesdale. The trip has really helped his wellbeing and confidence and he says:

**"I am absolutely buzzing,
I can't wait to get out there
and do it again."**



NATHANIEL DURING
HIS THREE PEAKS
WALK 2023

We continue to support Nathaniel in other ways, including helping him acquire a bike through the Bike Fix Project to facilitate long-distance rides. He is keen to find employment relating to his outdoor passion and has a long-term aspiration to move from the city to a quieter, rural location.

**Latch would like to thank the following people
for their regular donations to Latch:**

**Miss Bradfield
M Clemens
Mrs Ingleton
Mr Steele
Kapur Sunil
John Hadfield**

**Tom O Connell
Nick Ashton
Caroline Campbell
Mr Birkett
A Keeling
Christopher Gozzar
Richard Hall**

Together we're stronger

Latch has built a fantastic partnership with LandAid to help support our young people and particularly trainees. LandAid is the property industry charity working to end youth homelessness across the UK. Their Yorkshire board have been helping us to raise funds, access pro bono expertise and deliver energy efficient homes.

Katie Stephenson at LandAid explains:

"We've formed a really supportive relationship with Latch over the last 1.5 years. £83,250 of funding has been pledged and will be raised to refurbish 3 one-bed properties to accommodate young people aged 16-25 years in Leeds. In the first 8 years, more than 20 young people will be accommodated on a long-term basis (18-24 months+). A further 8 young people are benefiting from construction training during the build phase, supporting them in their journey towards long term employment."

"We believe that enabling young people to have a safe space to call home gives them the foundations to start working towards a more positive future. We're so excited to see this project develop and witness the positive impact that the properties will have on the lives of young people here."



LandAid

Financial info

Key Annual Report figures:

Rent increase in year	£97,576
Surplus for year	£123,252
Income	£1,389,742
Expenditure	£1,266,490
Net Income	£123,252
Total Funds	£4,671,825
Assets	£7,593,132

Outcomes

In 2023 we achieved:

- 213 adults and children housed.
- 58 adults and their children newly housed.
- 5 x two bedroom homes created plus 2 x two bedroom flats.
- 35 tenants successfully moved on to independent living.
- 6 trainees gained construction skills to help them into work.

In 2023:

- 74% of our tenants were female
- 63% were from minority ethnic backgrounds
- 74% were aged under 25.



Heartfelt thanks

An enormous thank you to everyone who has helped Latch to change over the past year. This includes all our hardworking staff, volunteers and trainees, our donors, contractors, suppliers, funders, partners and investors.

Our Funders:

Leeds Community Foundation
 Local Care Direct
 Land Aid Charitable Trust
 Co-operatives UK
 Leeds City Council
 Co-operative & Community Finance

Management Committee members:

Stephen Boyle
 Maggie Gjessing
 Kat Donegan
 Keith Gibson
 David Clarke
 Dennis Bernard
 Samia Hussain
 Nic Crocker
 Manjeet Gahir
 David Campbell
 Mags Shevlin

Special thanks to:

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 Sarah Parry - Leeds City Council
 David Nugent - Canopy
 Leeds Interpreting Service - Interpreters
 Natalie Moran - Simon on the Streets
 Martyn Broadest - Connect Housing
 Simon Calland – Connect Housing
 Sally Read – Therapist
 Karen Neal and Sabina Khan Leeds Building Society
 Mark Ireland – Leeds City Council
 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
 Steve Dawes
 Wayne Noteman - Unity Housing
 Simeon Perry
 Saiqa Ashraf - Gravity Insurance Brokers Ltd
 Clifton Trade Bathrooms
 Oakwood kitchens
 Manku Bros Ltd
 Ethex Investment Partners
 Cedric Bucher and Andrew Tarbit - Hearthstone
 Lucia Morales - Optima Legal
 Ruth Preston - Dowsing Reynolds
 Over 2 Hills
 HATCH
 Leeds college of Music
 Freedom4girls
 Mark Stainton -LS6 Library of Things
 Ellis Taylor- SSTL

All our 137 of our Community Share Issue investors from 2021 and the 148* 2023 investors.



Leeds Action to Create Homes

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Visit: www.latch.org.uk

Facebook: LatchLeeds

Twitter: @LatchLeeds

Community Benefit Society No. 27643R