



#### CLARE'S STORY

**'Supported Living helped me get my independence back.'**

Clare, aged 41, has been a tenant for 12 years. She lives in a supported living scheme in Lancashire and has a long term mental health condition as well as learning disability, which can make written information difficult to understand.

**Clare embraces these challenges and makes an extraordinary contribution to her local community. She inspires staff and other tenants with her 'can do' attitude and has changed people's perceptions of those who have long term mental health conditions.**

*"When I was 18, I moved into my own flat with some support. This didn't work so I then moved to a cluster house which provided more help and also company. But I didn't like living there so moved back in with my mum. Because I was now homeless, Social Services helped me find a new place to live with Progress Housing Group.*

*At first I moved into a care home where I had my own bedroom and bathroom with a shared lounge and dining room and I was really happy there. After four years in the care home, the staff asked if I would like to have a bungalow of my own in the grounds. This was a great opportunity for me. Living here has given me the confidence and courage to do things for myself. The staff are amazing as they help me with my washing, cleaning and personal hygiene. They also help me with going to appointments and planning my day. I love the community garden that I helped create and design, with help from the staff at Progress Housing Group, and I got my neighbours involved too. We had an open day and invited lots of VIPs. The garden is a great place to make friends and it also gives me a space to help me deal with the times when I feel down. I feel part of a community living here.*

*I am very involved with Progress Housing Group as a tenant representative – from being part of the Scrutiny Pool to being a mystery shopper. I attend all the events and think of my volunteering as giving back. When I first moved here I had no confidence and was very shy. But now I speak at meetings and I even talk about my condition to service users and staff to help them understand mental health. My involvement work has also helped me gain a qualification in 'tenant scrutiny', which is equivalent to a GCSE. Thanks to supported housing I now live a full life, contribute to the community and look forward to the future."*

## JAMES' STORY

**'Supported Housing helped me to get a place to live and to sustain a tenancy'.**



After a number of years in temporary accommodation, James, 19, approached a Key Unlocking Futures a charity for homeless people which is part of the Progress Housing Group, for help. Key offered him a place on its innovative 'OurPlace' house-share scheme.

The scheme helps young people secure affordable accommodation and supports them with pre-tenancy training to help them to develop the skills needed to attain and sustain their own tenancy. The scheme works to match tenants so that many of the negatives of sharing accommodation are discussed and resolved in advance.

*"I was kicked out at 16 and lived on my own for a couple of years in a Barnardo's youth hostel in Leyland. I liked it and I got on with everyone. I was able to get a flat of my own through Barnardo's but once I left college and found a full-time job, it was too expensive for me to stay.*

*Barnardo's told me about Key who could help people in my situation. I got in touch with Key and they helped me find a home with Progress Housing Group through the OurPlace scheme. The scheme helps young people who are looking for a home but don't want to live on their own or can't afford to.*

*I don't know what I would have done if Key were not able to help as I would have had to move out and I couldn't afford to rent privately and I would have been on the housing waiting list.*

*I am now house-sharing with two other young people that I get along with. We have our own rooms and Key helped us agree a rota for jobs around the house and other ground rules.*

*Before we moved in we also learned about budgeting, cooking and upkeep of the house. It's setting us up really for when we move to a place of our own. I was over the moon when I got this place. It's a nice area and it's cheap. It's ideal."*

JAMES