

# DERVENTIO HOUSING TRUST ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25



Devan is looking forward to settling into his new home after being supported by Derventio

**Derventio**  
People Really Do Matter

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR MANAGING DIRECTOR

It is a sobering reality that in 2025, homelessness remains a significant and growing issue in our communities.

People lose their homes for many reasons, often due to a complex mix of poverty, unemployment, family breakdown, poor mental health or issues with drugs or alcohol. These are not isolated problems - they are often interlinked, and together they can push people into crisis.

Homelessness is not just the absence of a roof over someone's head. It can have a devastating impact on every part of a person's life - damaging their physical and mental health, cutting them off from support networks and making it harder to access work or education. Without a safe place to live, people are left exposed and vulnerable to further harm.

At Derventio Housing Trust, we provide a vital stepping

stone between homelessness and independent living. Our approach combines secure accommodation, personalised support and meaningful opportunities to develop skills and confidence. This year, we were proud to work with more than 1,000 people, supporting them to rebuild their lives.

I would like to thank everyone who has been part of this work - our dedicated staff, our valued partners and funders, and the many supporters who make what we do possible. As more people face homelessness and housing insecurity, our work has never been more vital. Together, we are providing a lifeline and creating lasting change in people's lives.



*Sarah Hernandez*

**Sarah Hernandez**  
Managing Director

# WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

Derventio Housing Trust began as a small night shelter. Today, we work across the Midlands and South West, with around 80 staff supporting people facing homelessness and related challenges:

- ▶ Supported Housing offering safety, stability and one-to-one support for people facing homelessness
- ▶ Home4Me and The Bridge for people at risk of rough sleeping in Derby
- ▶ Healthy Futures for people leaving hospital in Chesterfield
- ▶ Sylvester's Fund for essentials like furnishings and travel
- ▶ Multiply supports everyday maths and budgeting
- ▶ Growing Lives offers activities to boost wellbeing and reduce isolation

*At Derventio Housing Trust we respect everyone who comes to us for help – and many are working toward a fresh start in life. So while all the stories in this report are true, some names and images may have been changed to protect their privacy. Thank you for understanding.*

 **NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**  
Broxtowe

 **DERBYSHIRE**  
Amber Valley  
Chesterfield  
Derby  
Erewash  
North East Derbyshire

 **STAFFORDSHIRE**  
Cannock Chase  
East Staffordshire  
Stafford  
Tamworth

 **WARRICKSHIRE**  
Warwick

 **WILTSHIRE**  
Swindon

## OUR CORE VALUES

### INTEGRITY

Do the right things in the right way

### TRANSFORMING

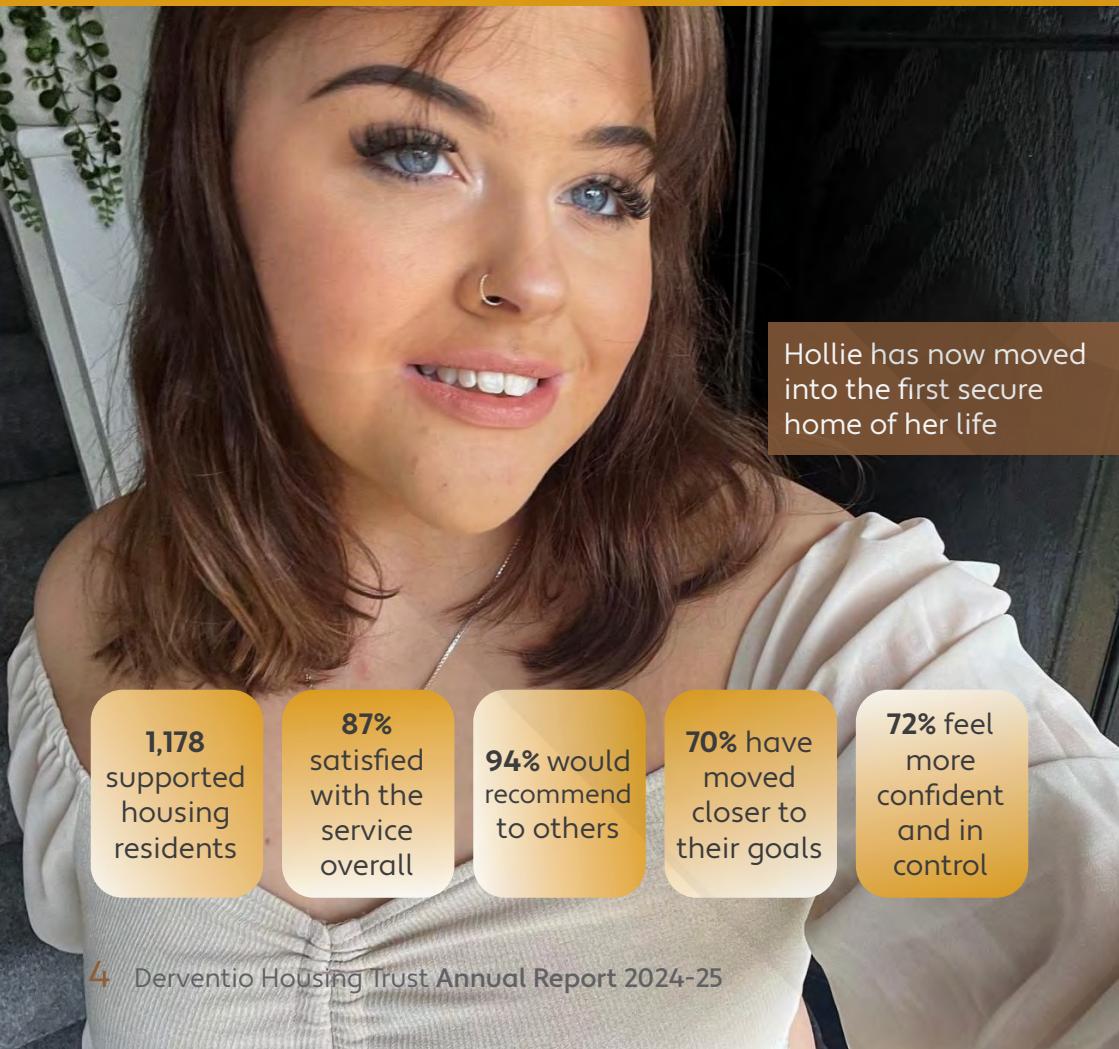
Design and try new ideas

### PROACTIVE

We get on and do more

SUPPORTED HOUSING

# A SAFE AND SECURE PLACE TO CALL HOME



Hollie has now moved into the first secure home of her life

**1,178**  
supported  
housing  
residents

**87%**  
satisfied  
with the  
service  
overall

**94%** would  
recommend  
to others

**70%** have  
moved  
closer to  
their goals

**72%** feel  
more  
confident  
and in  
control



## ► Hollie's Story

Hollie spent her childhood in and out of the care system, and cared for family through illness in a succession of insecure homes.

After being forced to leave her family

home at 19, Hollie moved into a home with Derventio. Support staff helped find her own council flat, and she is now living independently, giving her security and peace of mind for the first time in her life.

*"Derventio has been absolutely brilliant. They helped me get back on my feet and my support worker has been great - if there was anything I needed she would always be there straight away.*

*"With everything I've been through, this feels like stability in my life finally. If you've been through tough times, having somewhere to live where you feel secure is probably one of the best things you could have."*

“

*If you've been through tough times, having somewhere to live where you feel secure is probably one of the best things you could have.*

”

## ► Ash's Story

When Ash was made redundant she had nowhere to turn to, and eventually found herself sleeping on the streets.

Derventio's supported housing gave Ash the stability and security she needed to find a job and move on to independent accommodation.

*"I am beyond grateful to all the staff at Derventio. Every person does their job with passion and shows respect and dignity to all the residents.*

*"I rave about Derventio because they are worth their weight in gold."*



Everyone deserves a safe, stable place to call home. We provide secure housing and tailored support for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Our supported housing acts as a vital bridge between homelessness and independent living. Many residents face complex challenges such as poor mental health and substance use. Our dedicated Housing & Support Officers offer regular, personalised support – from a listening ear to help attending appointments or accessing specialist services.

This year, Jo Collins received a Dignity Champion Award from the Derby Safeguarding Adults Board for her exceptional work promoting kindness and respect.

We also partnered with Derby-based Colleague Box to provide Home Sweet Home boxes filled with essentials for people

moving on to independence.

Our annual satisfaction survey reflected the impact of our work, with many resident satisfaction scores well above average scores for housing associations.

In late 2024 we moved into our new purpose-built offices in Derby, marking a new chapter as we continue to meet the growing need for safe, supported housing.



“

*Deb stood out with her dedication and kindness. She is not only professional but also truly cares about vulnerable individuals. Under her care, I received more than just a home.*

”

Michael is delighted with his Home Sweet Home box, which will help him settle into his new home



## ► Malik's Story

*“I am a refugee who has recently received leave to remain in the UK. When I was facing homelessness, Derventio reached out to me promptly and compassionately. Thanks to them, I was able to secure a new place to live in a very short period of time.*



*“Deb stood out with her dedication and kindness. She is not only professional but also truly cares about vulnerable individuals. Under her care, I received more than just a home. She offered food support when I had none, helped me assemble a bicycle to restore my mobility, accompanied me to mental health services, and provided genuine emotional support that helped me begin reconnecting with society.*

*“I am extremely satisfied with the way Derventio delivers support - responsive, respectful, and humane. Your work is not only practical - it makes this society a better, more compassionate place.”*

# FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP

Don used Sylvester's Fund to buy household essentials when he moved on from Derventio into rented housing



Staffordshire

**183** people supported during the year

**31%** supported with household items

**20%** items to improve mental health

**12%** supported with digital inclusion

**£13,464** total spend

Set up with a donation from a former resident, Sylvester's Fund helps people across our services buy essential items that support their goals and build confidence.

From ID documents and clothing to bike locks, haircuts and boxing classes, these small, one-off grants provide practical help where it's most needed. Several people have also used the fund to buy basic items when moving on to independent living.

Sylvester was supported by our Healthy Futures service in 2017. When he became seriously ill, we helped him move into a care home with Polish-speaking staff, where he felt at home. Before he passed away, he chose to leave his money to Derventio – a lasting gift that became Sylvester's Fund.

Thanks to ongoing support from grants and donations, we awarded grants to 183 people in 2024-25, totalling £13,463.

## ► Frank's Story

Frank lives in Derventio's supported housing in Staffordshire. Every day, he walks to the local library to search for jobs and stay motivated in his efforts to move forward.

During a support session, Frank mentioned that his shoes were falling apart. The soles were worn thin from his daily walks, and they were no longer providing the comfort or support he needed. Recognising how important these walks were to Frank's wellbeing and job search, his support worker applied to Sylvester's Fund for a new pair of shoes.

Frank chose a pair he liked, and as soon as they arrived, he put them on with a smile. This small but meaningful purchase will make a big difference to his daily routine, helping him stay comfortable and confident as he works towards a brighter future.



# PERSONALISED SUPPORT FOR COMPLEX NEEDS



Home4Me and The Bridge offer highly supported accommodation to people who would otherwise be sleeping rough in Derby.

Together they offer a vital lifeline for people with multiple and complex needs, including those leaving prison or hospital, and individuals who have been sectioned under the Mental Health Act.

Home4Me offers 24 units and was shortlisted for Homelessness Project of the Year at the UK Housing Awards. This year we expanded it with six additional units.

The Bridge supports people with more complex needs, including six rooms for prison leavers to trial supported housing. Both projects offer intensive, person-centred support to help people take positive steps forward.

They are funded by Derby Homes using government homelessness monies.

## ► Gavin's Story

Gavin has been a familiar face in Derby's homeless community for 20 years, with a history of rough sleeping, substance use, prison sentences and evictions from supported housing. When referred to us, he was homeless and recovering from a life-threatening infection after three months in hospital.

With ADHD, anxiety, depression and a long history of class A drug use, Gavin faced multiple barriers. But he had reached a turning point and was ready to engage with support.

At The Bridge, he got a second chance. We helped him sort benefits, provided food parcels, and used Sylvester's Fund to buy a TV, helping him avoid negative influences. He now pays his service charge, attends appointments, takes part in Growing Lives and is reconnecting with family.



Gavin is reducing his methadone prescription and preparing for a new start through our Home4Me scheme.

# BETTER HEALTH, WELLBEING AND HOUSING



Violet, Theresa and Kelly (pictured with staff member Paul) are grateful for the support they've received through Healthy Futures

**20** people  
worked  
with this  
year

**71%** saving  
to the  
health  
community

**71%**  
reduction  
in hospital  
admissions

**78%**  
reduction  
in 999 use

**61%**  
reduction  
in visits to  
A&E

**Healthy Futures** supports people at risk of homelessness when leaving hospital, providing housing and tailored support focused on health and wellbeing.

Funded by Chesterfield Borough Council, the project helps people in extremely vulnerable situations, many of whom would otherwise frequently use emergency services. Once stabilised, we help residents plan for the future and move on to long-term housing.

Since launching in 2013, Healthy Futures has helped people with complex needs avoid repeat hospital stays, saving the NHS significant costs.

In 2024–25, we supported 20 people with overlapping challenges including poor mental health, substance use and serious physical illness – resulting in a reduction in emergency healthcare use and NHS savings of £80,942.

## ► **Theresa, Kelsey and Violet's Stories**

Theresa was sleeping rough for months due to her drug use. After being referred to Derventio, she got clean within weeks.

*“Sleeping rough was the worst experience of my life. You always think something is going to happen to you. Having somewhere I can call home is brilliant. Otherwise I’d probably have ended up dead or locked up. It’s great just to have a space where you can lock the door at night and you know you’re going to be alright.”*

Kelsey became homeless after escaping an abusive relationship and was sofa surfing before finding sanctuary with Derventio. She now has a job in a coffee shop.

Violet became homeless in 2021. She is now housed and studying engineering.

*“Healthy Futures means safety. It means people who are welcoming.”*



**Derbyshire**

GROWING LIVES

# BOOSTING SKILLS, WELLBEING AND CONFIDENCE



Participants designed and built bat boxes for Breaston Parish Council

**50** people took part this year

**24%** went into training or work

**61%** feel less socially isolated

**56%** feel their mental health has improved

**67%** feel optimistic about their future

**Growing Lives is a safe, supportive space where people in recovery or facing other challenges can build skills, improve wellbeing and feel part of a community.**

Activities include gardening, woodwork, cooking, crafts, bike club and guided walks. It's a welcoming place to socialise, eat well, stay active and receive support.

Highlights this year included a geocaching adventure for National Recovery Month and a behind-the-scenes tour of Pride Park Stadium with Derby County Community Trust.

Participants also gave back by making handmade bat boxes for Breaston Parish Council.

To showcase the project, we created a short film featuring participants' stories – available now on our YouTube channel.

50 people took part, with outcomes including improved mental health, wellbeing and confidence.

## ► Alice's Story

Alice began struggling with alcohol use after the breakdown of a long-term relationship, which also ended her 26-year career. She had little confidence or motivation to move forward.

Her Housing & Support Officer encouraged her to try Growing Lives. From day one, Alice felt welcomed and supported by the tutors and participants. The experience helped her regain a sense of purpose.

Attending regularly gave her structure and focus. She now feels more in control and motivated to avoid alcohol. With support from the team, she is actively job hunting and working towards her first Level 2 qualification through online training.

Alice is already exploring further courses to boost her chances of finding part-time work. She says the encouragement she's received at Growing Lives has been a turning point, giving her optimism and a clear sense of direction for the future.

MULTIPLY

# BUILDING EVERYDAY MATHS SKILLS



74 people  
took part  
during the  
year

40  
budgeting  
courses  
taught

34  
budgeting  
activities  
delivered

Multiply is a creative programme that supports people to grow in confidence numeracy skills.

Funded through the Department for Education's UK Shared Prosperity Fund and delivered with Derby City Council, this was the final year of the project.

Participants planned and ran pop-up shops in Derby city centre, using real-life maths skills like pricing, measuring and managing stock. All proceeds went to good causes including the Alzheimer's Society and United Reformed Church.

We used Derbion Centre's Community Room and launched our festive shop at their Christmas Fayre.

This year we also introduced a popular course for Derventio residents, using activities like spending diaries and value-for-money challenges to help people take control of their finances in a fun, practical way.

## ► Fatima's Story

Fatima was referred to the project due to ongoing difficulties managing her service charge. Her income was sufficient, but she lacked budgeting skills and often struggled to set money aside.

Fatima, who follows a halal diet, relied heavily on takeaway food due to limited cooking skills, which had led to burns while using the hob or oven.

The Multiply worker reviewed her spending and explored

safer, more affordable food options. They found Halal ready meals that were cheaper than takeaways and could be microwaved, reducing the risk of injury. A local supplier was identified for regular deliveries.



Fatima also learned a few simple recipes she could cook and freeze. As a result, she began managing her money more effectively and now pays her service charge consistently.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

# WORKING TOGETHER TO CHANGE LIVES



Former resident Joe cycled the length of the UK to fundraise for Derventio

“

*The only organisation I wanted to raise money from was Derventio. Their support meant I could get my life back on track.*

”

We know we can't do this alone. This year, individuals, businesses and partner organisations have come together to help us provide housing, support and hope to those who need it most. Your support continues to be a lifeline for people facing homelessness and housing insecurity. Thank you.

## JOE'S EPIC BIKE RIDE

Former Derventio resident Joe Hodgkins took on an incredible challenge: cycling from Land's End to John O'Groats to raise money for Derventio.

Joe had previously experienced homelessness and financial hardship, sofa surfing and unable to afford housing. He spent five months in Derventio's supported accommodation, working with

his Housing & Support Officer to rebuild his life.

Now living with his partner and daughter, Joe wanted to give back. His 1,000-mile ride was, in his words, "the best thing I've ever done – the biggest achievement."

*"The only organisation I wanted to raise money for was Derventio. Their support meant I could get my life back on track."*

Joe raised funds for Sylvester's Fund, helping others get the essentials they need to move forward.

## HOME SWEET HOME BOXES

Residents moving on from Derventio Housing Trust are now receiving a thoughtful boost, thanks to our partnership with Colleague Box. Together we created Home Sweet Home boxes – practical starter packs for people settling into new private rented homes.

Each box includes essentials like a mug, tea, bodywash, laundry tablets and a multi-

tool, along with a handwritten card and personal touches such as a keyring and pen. These gifts help mark a new chapter and show that people are supported as they move into independence.

## PARTNERING WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF DERBY

This year we partnered with the University of Derby, becoming a case study for second-year business students learning about how organisations operate.

Dr Bruno Gallotta, Lecturer in Operations Management, said:

*“Working with a social housing company gives our students a deeper appreciation of the social issues related to housing. It’s also sparked*

*interest in careers that create social value.”*

## FANTASTIC SUPPORT FOR OUR CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Thanks to the generosity of our community, every resident received a festive hamper in time for Christmas Day. Our annual appeal brings a sense of celebration to people in supported housing at what can be a difficult time.

We are especially grateful to Shacklocks Solicitors, The Ripley Academy, NFU Mutual and Colleague Box for their support. Nearly £5,000 was raised, along with donations of food and gifts. Thank you for making the season brighter.



Every resident received a Christmas gift thanks to your support!

# Thank You

Amber Valley Borough Council ● Aldi Leamington Spa ● Asda Leamington Spa Superstore ● British Heart Foundation ● Broxtowe Borough Council ● Cannock Chase District Council ● Chesterfield Borough Council ● Colleague Box ● Community Foundation of Staffordshire ● Derbion ● Derby City Council ● Derby Food 4 Thought Alliance ● Derby Homes ● Derbyshire County Council ● Derbyshire Cricket Foundation ● East Staffordshire Borough Council ● easyfundraising ● Erewash Borough Council ● Good Things Foundation ● H2O ● Kings Office Supplies ● Lennox Hannay Charitable Trust ● Midland Lead ● Morrisons Leamington Spa ● North East Derbyshire District Council ● NFU Mutual ● Ripley Academy ● Shacklocks LLP ● Shipley Community Garden ● Sport England ● Stafford Borough Council ● Swindon Borough Council ● Tamworth Borough Council ● Tesco Extra Ilkeston Chalon's Way ● The Prince's Trust ● The Welcombe Hotel ● Warwick District Council ● Warwickshire County Council ● Wickes Community Programme ● Plus the many wonderful individuals who give things or money



Derventio staff took part in the Derbyshire Cricket Foundation's T20 Walkathon to raise money for charity and get involved in our community

## OUR FINANCES



Derventio's income, outgoings, surplus and reserves all continue to remain strong.

Our focus continues to be on generating social value and investing in communities, on streamlining and improving how we deliver services to make a real difference.

## COMPLAINTS

Derventio Housing Trust is a registered social landlord. We are members of the Housing Ombudsman Service and have a robust complaints and feedback policy.

As required by the Regulator of Social Housing, under the Complaint Handling Code, we completed our annual self-assessment.

It highlighted some changes, including adding specific information on how to make a complaint to our website. There were also some minor changes to the policy.

If you would like a copy of our self-assessment or policies, please contact us on 01332 292776 or [info@derventiohousing.com](mailto:info@derventiohousing.com).

## LOOKING AHEAD

We remain committed to providing supported housing and related services that help people move towards brighter, more secure futures.

A key focus in 2025 will be the introduction of the Supported Housing (Regulatory Oversight) Act. We welcome this renewed commitment to improving standards in supported exempt accommodation. Over the coming year, we will work closely with stakeholders and partner agencies to assess the potential impact on our services and contribute to the national consultation.

We are also excited to grow our work with the wider community. Plans are underway to develop our corporate partnerships, including a closer collaboration with Mount Cook Adventure Centre to create fundraising initiatives and new opportunities for the people we support.

As long as homelessness and housing insecurity persist, there will be a need for our services. We will continue to work alongside local authorities to respond to local need, and we recognise that our staff are central to delivering high-quality housing and support. We will continue to invest in training and development, ensuring our team is equipped to offer the best possible service to people facing homelessness, hardship and disadvantage.



Derventio's senior management team is focused on improving standards, strengthening partnerships and creating new opportunities for the people we support

# Derventio

People Really **Do** Matter



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