

Karl

To mark this year's Starts at Home Day, Sanctuary Supported Living resident Karl Stephenson celebrates the positive impact of supported housing, and how it's helped him turn his life around.



Karl, 33, has lived at Sanctuary Supported Living's [Glamis Walk](#) in Hartlepool since early 2023. Glamis Walk is a supported housing service which offers accommodation and support for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

He was initially supported by [Cornerstone](#), a local independent homelessness charity, when he was homeless, had poor mental health and was battling with addiction. Cornerstone's outreach team provided him with the essentials he needed and supported him with his housing application. He was then referred to Glamis Walk by [Hartlepool Borough Council](#), where he moved into one of the two emergency crash pad bedrooms. When a flat at Glamis Walk subsequently became available, he moved in, and he hasn't looked back since.

Karl regularly meets with his keyworkers, who provide essential support, advice and assistance, to help him achieve his personal goals. Working in partnership with Karl, the Glamis Walk team created a tailored support plan for him, which includes working on regaining his self-confidence and resilience, as well as building the skills he needs to be able to manage his own tenancy and live independently.

As part of his plan to manage his addiction, Karl began working with [START](#) (Supporting Treatment and Recovery Together), Hartlepool's integrated substance misuse treatment service, and he is now on the road to recovery. As well as working on his personal development, Karl has been giving his time to volunteer at Cornerstone twice a week.

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He provides new service users with a warm welcome and a hot cup of tea, and uses his own lived experience to give peer support. He has also been involved in staff meetings, which gives him a huge sense of satisfaction and wellbeing.

Karl said: “I’m so grateful to the teams at Sanctuary Supported Living and Cornerstone for everything they’ve done for me. Without their support, I wouldn’t be where I am now, and my life would look very different. I was homeless, and struggling with addiction and poor mental health, and now I’ve got my own home and I’m getting the right support for my physical and mental health.

“I’m also considering peer mentoring or community social outreach as possible future career choices, so that I can help others. I think it’s really important to share my experiences with people who are going through what I went through – they know that I really understand them, and I can show them that things can and do get better.”

Heather Davies, Local Service Manager at Glamis Walk, said: “At Sanctuary Supported Living, we’re passionate about combating addiction stigma, to make it easier for people to ask for support and receive the help that they need.

“Karl has progressed so much since living here – you can really see the difference in him. He has great leadership skills and compassion for others, he’s chatty and friendly with everyone, and very supportive of the other clients, helping them to maintain their tenancies. Karl has also taken on the responsibility for keeping the service’s communal areas nice, so that it’s a positive environment for everyone else who lives and works here. He has a bright future ahead of him, and his journey shows what a difference having a safe and secure place to call home can make to people’s lives.”

[Starts at Home Day](#), which this year is being held on Friday 1 September, is a campaign supported by the [National Housing Federation](#), which aims to raise awareness of the importance of having great-quality housing, care and support, to ensure that people who live in supported housing can live independent and fulfilling lives.

For more information about Sanctuary Supported Living’s accommodation and support for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness, visit our [homelessness page](#), read our [latest news](#) from our homelessness services, or [find a homelessness support service](#) near you.

