

# Resident story

## Dana

Dana came to the UK alone as an asylum seeker from Iraq. With the support of Sanctuary Supported Living's Homelessness Supported Housing in Ipswich, he put down roots, regained his independence and is looking forward to the future. Here, Dana shares his story of how supported housing services have changed his life.



"I came to England in 2002 from Iraq and applied for asylum in the UK due to my country being at war. I arrived in the country alone and without any family.

In 2020, I was referred to Sanctuary Supported Living's homelessness service in Ipswich by a friend that I knew who was already living in one of the shared flats there. I was overjoyed when I got the phone call to come in for an assessment and even happier when I was offered the accommodation where I was able to share with someone that I already knew. We had the same religion and spoke the same language.

From my first night with Sanctuary Supported Living, I was able to sleep easily for the first time in many years. And, for the first time in a long time, I had hope and a feeling that everything was going to be ok.

I'm so extremely happy that I have been able to achieve this even through Covid and despite a very difficult time where I thought that I wouldn't. With the support from the amazing staff team that initially made me feel so comfortable, I could actually open up about my situation without feeling judged. They supported me to create a support plan and broke this down to now what are achieved goals.

Since living at Berners Street, all my life outstanding goals have been achieved with the main one being that I'm no longer homeless and I have settled status in the country and a British passport. The other is me being able to eventually secure my own independent accommodation. Both of these things have always caused me great anxiety.

"I'm so thankful for all these things and having a place to call my own for the last year. I'm now moving on to live independently and I will never forget the support I have received. It seemed as if everything fell in to place at the right time with the right people behind me and now I can see a hopeful future."