

# STAFF STORY



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Lia Bailey-Donnelly's career has focussed on helping others, which is why she is so passionate about her job as Project Worker at Sanctuary Supported Living's Norton Road in Stockton.

Prior to working for Sanctuary Supported Living, Lia spent 24 years working for Cleveland Police, including 10 years as Witness Care Officer, helping victims of crime. Lia then started her current role as a Project Worker at Norton Road in June 2018, as she wanted a more challenging job, and one where she could support individuals with their mental wellbeing.

Norton Road provides accommodation and a range of support for young people and adults aged 16 and over, who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Staff support residents with improving their mental health and building their self-confidence. They also help residents to gain the skills needed to be able to move on and live independently.

Lia said: "I enjoy supporting people and building a rapport with them over time. Seeing residents build their confidence and their skills, then move on to live independently in their own property is the best part of the job."

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Some residents take a while to build up a trust relationship with staff, and it can be very small steps in some cases, but it's so rewarding for me to be helping people to achieve their goals, no matter how small. I really enjoy seeing them progress as individuals and overcome their daily struggles. I feel so proud when residents successfully move into their own homes. Empowering young people to live fulfilled lives is what this job is all about."

"I was attracted to this job because of the training and support available, as well as the progression opportunities. I also wanted a role where I had the ability to make a difference to people's lives."

Outside of work, Lia remains committed to the cause of mental health. She is currently planning to take part in a skydive to raise money for Mind, a charity that provides advice and support for people with mental health needs.

Lia commented: "I was looking for a challenge outside of my comfort zone that could help in some way, especially given the effects the coronavirus pandemic is having on people's mental health. People know how much this cause means to me, especially as I don't even like flying or heights!"

