

Impact Report 2024 – 2025



Making the difference



“Good quality supported housing is shown to aid its residents in building healthy relationships, higher esteem and independence, and in developing a greater sense of agency over their lives.”

Research into the supported housing sector's impact on homelessness prevention, health and wellbeing, 2023.



We are committed to:

- **Having a positive impact on the lives of our customers, both through our core services and added-value activity**
- **Creating a positive work environment where everyone feels welcome and able to thrive**
- **Contributing to creating a more inclusive society**
- **Reducing our impact on the environment**

The value of supported housing



1,952 people supported to live in the community



66 new specialist homes developed



£45m savings delivered to the public purse



Specialist housing for people with learning disabilities and mental health needs, saves the public purse approximately £12–15k per person per year.

House of Commons Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee (2022). Longterm funding of adult social care – Second Report of Session 2022–23.



Services that
transform
lives...

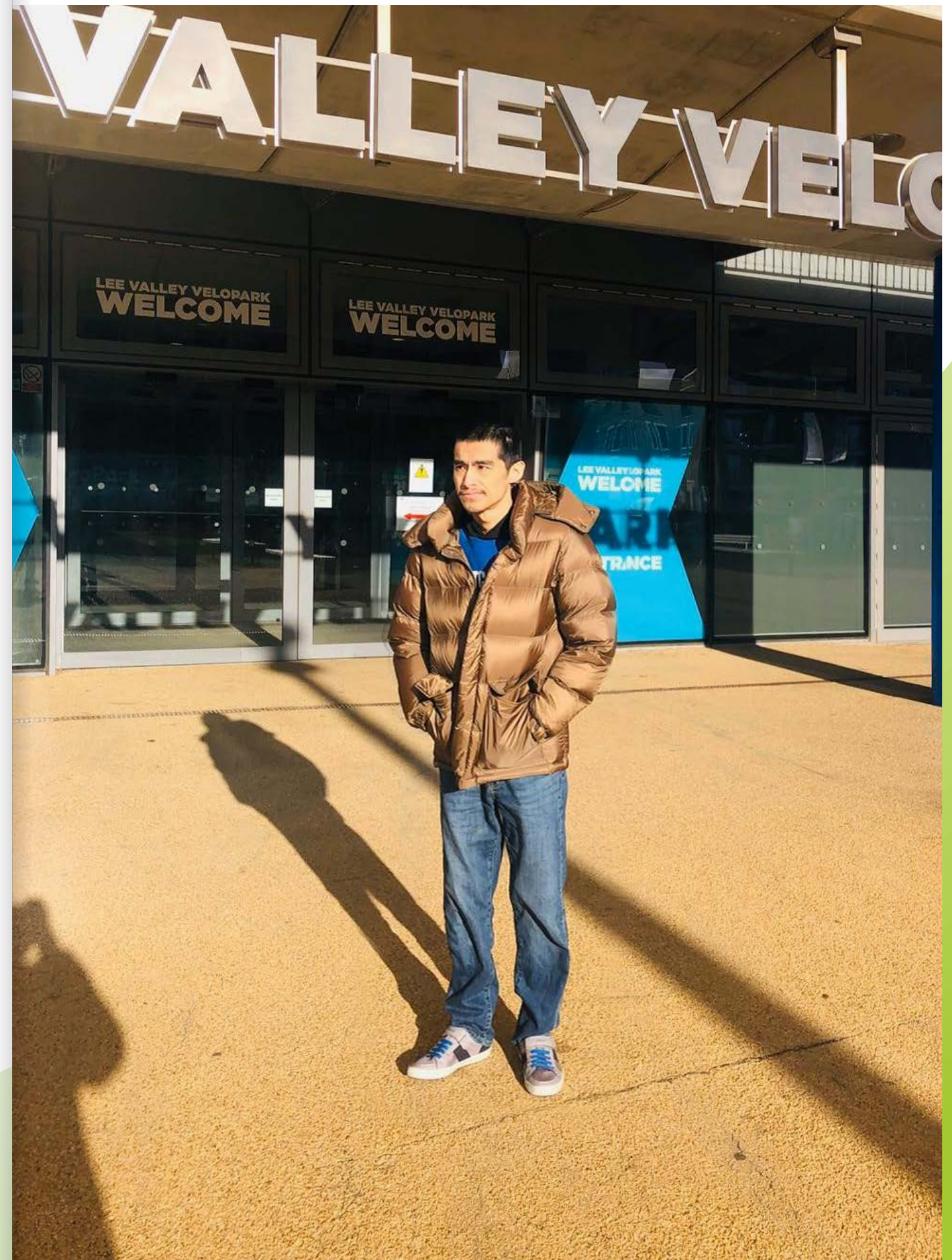
Jason's story

When Jason moved into his flat with Advance, he weighed just 35kg, had limited speech and difficulties in expressing his needs. His severe vomiting disorder and his behaviour had deteriorated following an illness which saw him hospitalised for months. Before Advance stepped in, Jason didn't know where he would live; he couldn't return home to his elderly parents and there seemed to be few options open to him.

We helped Jason move into a self-contained flat, providing round the clock support for day to day living. And today, Jason is thriving.

With his health disorders under control, he is a healthy 52kg and he has become an active member of his community, getting involved in Advance events and parties and participating in local sports and community groups. Trust in his support workers, and the stability of having his own home has enabled him to develop his communication skills and ability to express his needs, to grow in confidence and to become less reliant on care.

Jason's father, Shaoxiong Lui , said ***"The [supported housing] staff have become his family, and he's happy now. If [it wasn't for Advance], I don't know what we would do."***





Kieron's story

Hackney customer Kieron wrote, directed and starred in his very own pantomime, *Little Red Riding Hood and Friends*, raising £480 for the Huddlestone Centre; a community group for young people with disabilities and learning difficulties that he attended growing up.



"I've always been creative. I was very proud to see my story come to life. My family, friends and fellow stage stars were all fantastic, it was a real team effort and made me really happy."

Kieron

Zeena's story

Hampshire customer Zeena achieved her long-held ambition of owning a car. She is delighted with her new wheels which will give her greater freedom, independence and access to the wider community, opening up a whole new world for her.





Christopher's story

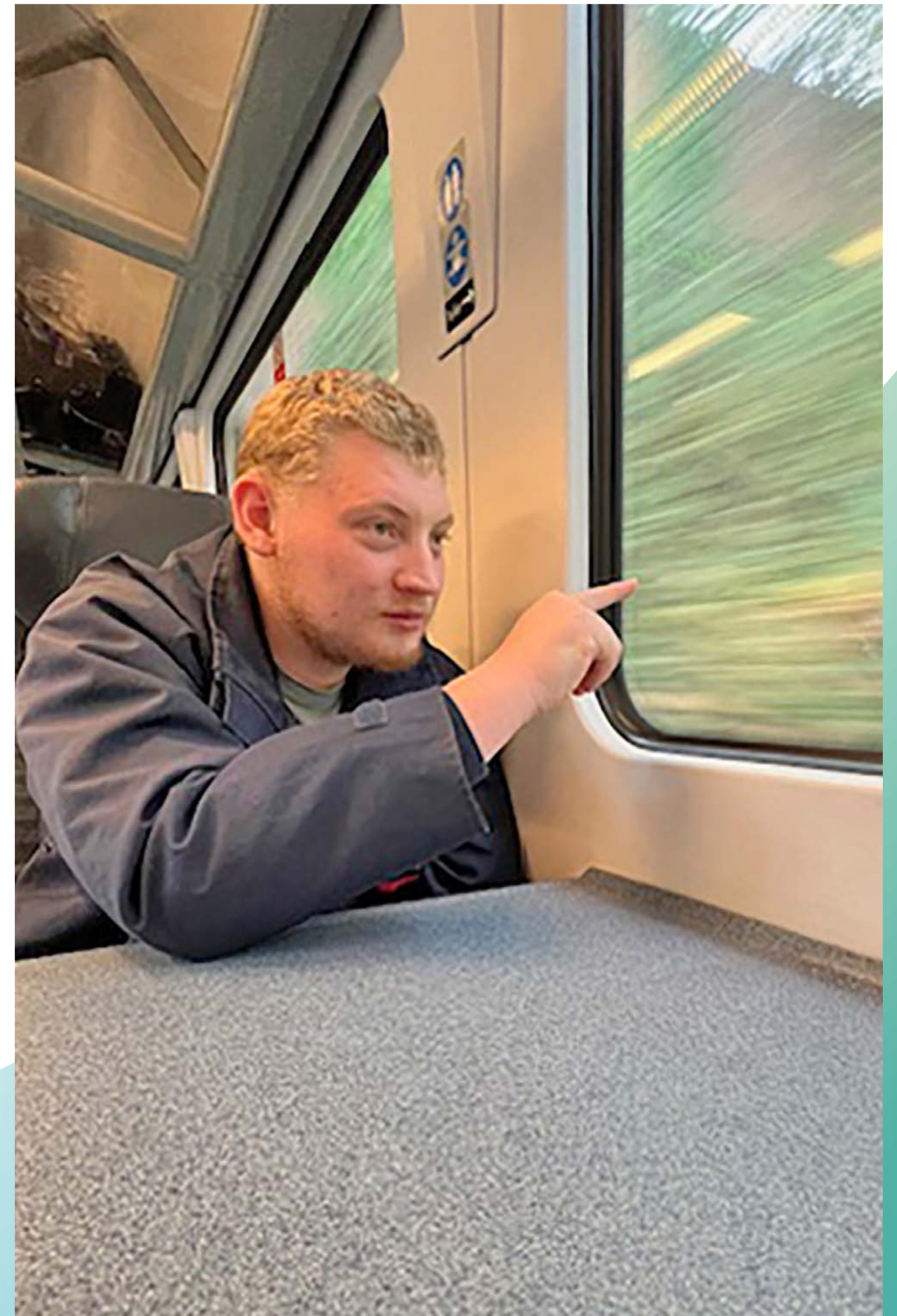
After 24 years of searching, Christopher was reunited with extended family members from Poland! In January they flew in to visit him from Poland, bringing him a mobile phone so they can FaceTime and stay in touch more regularly.



Keiran's story

Dorset customer Keiran is a huge train fan and runs his own YouTube channel on the subject.

In October he got some great content during his visit to Westbury.



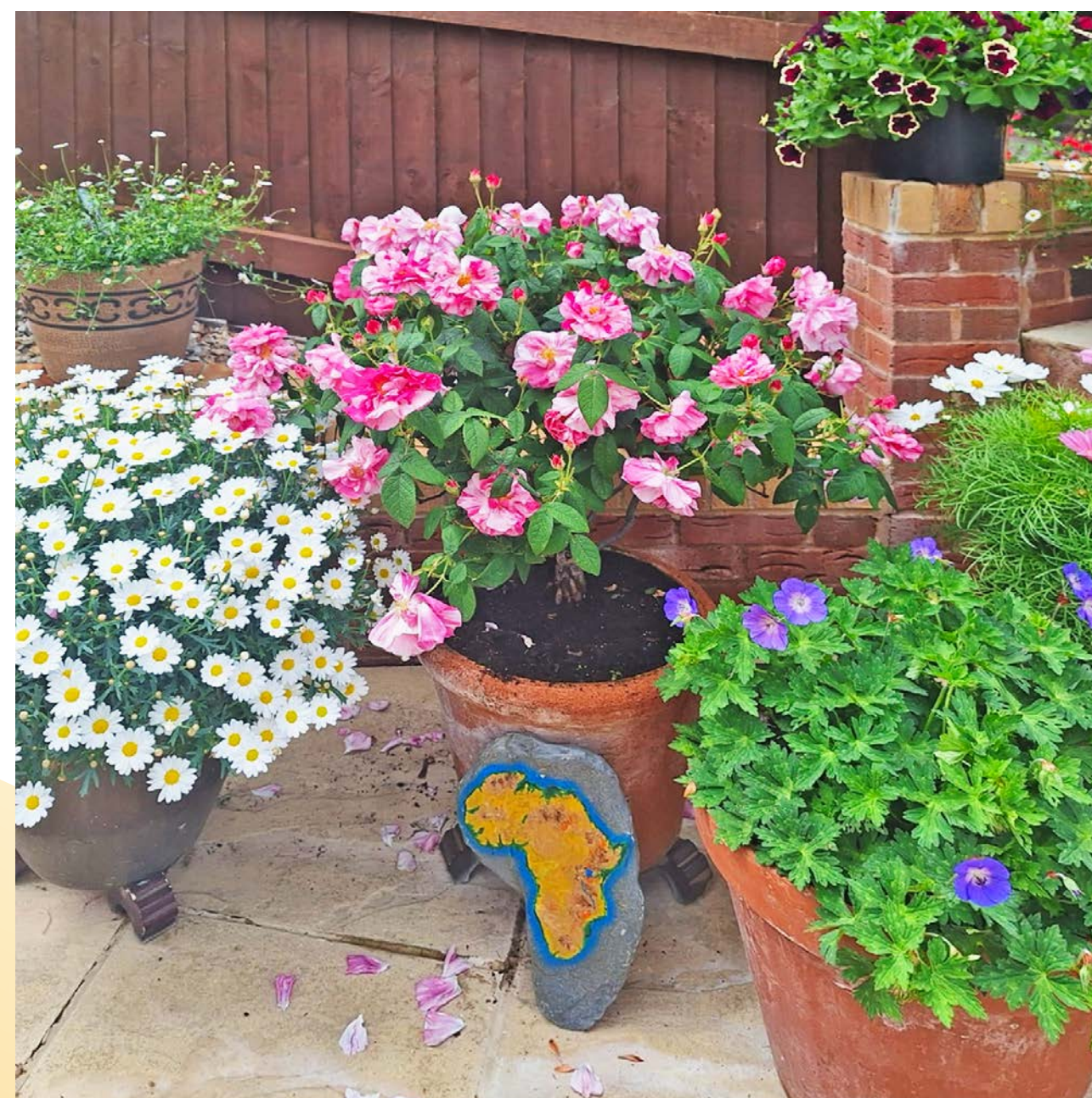


Avril's story

Fearless Dorset customer, Avril, took part in a sponsored skydive to raise money for Lewis Manning Hospice care.

Just Add Water

During our 50th Anniversary celebrations, customers have been making improvements to their gardens and outdoor spaces as part of our Just Add Water initiative.



International Dance Day

Advance has made free weekly dance classes available for Hackney customers.

Regulars at the class, Yasmin and Daniel spoke about the difference it makes to them. Daniel said that he *“likes to communicate with the dance teacher through music”*, While Yasmin said: *“Everyone’s happy when they’re dancing”*.





Mount Pleasant

At Mount Pleasant in Cornwall, colleagues and customers have been working hard in the back garden.

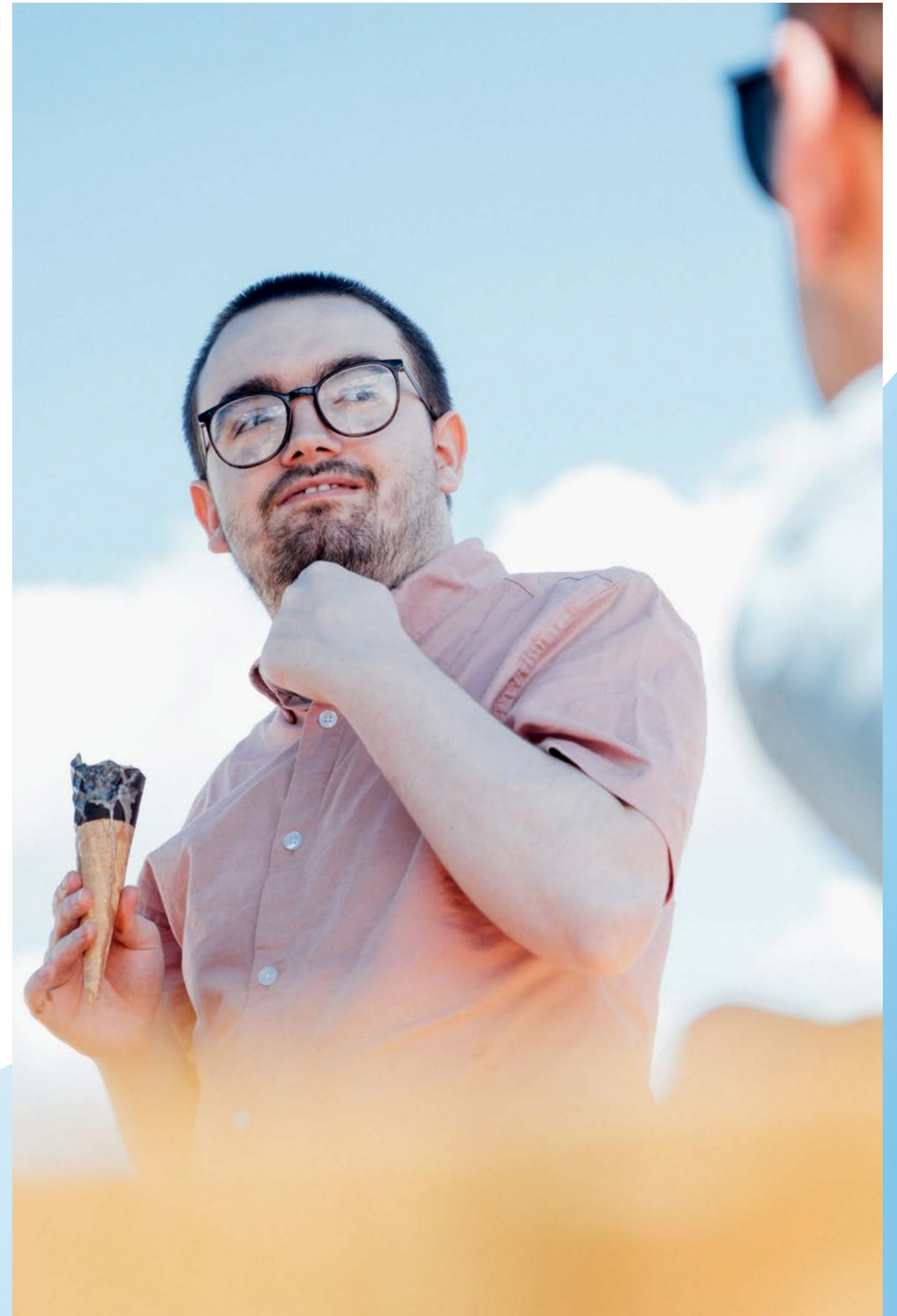
The bench was built as a joint project between a staff member and a customer, then painted in Advance colours.

Other customers got involved in planting up the hand-built flower bed and hanging baskets.



Adding value

- **65%** of customers had at least one annual visit from their housing officer
- **88%** of schemes were visited by their housing officer
- **721** customers gave feedback through surveys
- **100s** of customers were involved in added value activities



Support from Advance recoups £147,000 for customers

Our housing officers and outreach workers have worked with 28 customers to help them recoup over £147,000 in stopped, unpaid and unclaimed benefits.

One customer had his benefits cancelled while he was in hospital, meaning he was unable to pay his rent. His Housing Officer helped him re-coup £7,000 which meant he could clear his rent arrears and restore stability to him and his family.

Another customer was struggling to keep on top of his finances due to a combination of issues. His Housing Officer helped him to understand the seriousness of his situation and supported him to take the necessary steps to resolve it. With help, he has managed to start paying off some of his debt, while a proportion has been written off and £4,000 claimed back.

“Financial difficulties and debt can be a huge burden, especially for people with learning disabilities or mental ill health. This kind of support is really beneficial in helping people maintain their tenancies and in supporting their wellbeing.”

Louise Chester
Advance Housing Officer

Protecting the environment

Advance aims to upgrade all its homes to at least EPC band C by 2030.

We have been:

- Upgrading energy efficiency measures in existing homes (e.g. roof and all insulation, new boilers, new windows and doors)
- Ensuring all new build properties are EPC B rated
- Ensuring all new purchased properties are already or can be refurbished to EPC C rating
- Ensuring all properties we acquire for Shared Ownership are at least EPC D rated



71% of homes are EPC C or above

Further boost for energy efficiency drive



Advance was awarded a further £980,000 by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) to improve the energy efficiency of our homes across England.

This is the second amount of DESNZ funding Advance has received. The new programme of work will follow on from improvements that were made to 23 properties across Leicestershire in 2024.

Shelia, an Advance customer from Leicester, is one of the customers who has benefitted from new insulation in her property.

She said: *“It’s like living in a new house – it is beautiful. The house is very warm and I’m saving a lot on the heating bills. It’s absolutely fabulous.”*

Everyone Valued: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Closing the pay gap

Advance has made further strides to close its gender pay gap.

Over the past five years, Advance's pay gap has reduced from 13.6% in 2020 to 2.73% in 2024, comparing favourably with the national average of 13.1%.

The gender pay gap shows the differences in the average earnings between men and women regardless of their position.

This is different from equal pay which requires that men and women who carry out the same jobs, similar jobs or work of equal value are paid equally.



80% of colleagues feel they can be their true selves at work and be accepted

“We are pleased to see that the gap between men and women's pay has continued to reduce. We are confident that the gender pay gap that does exist does not stem from paying men and women differently for the same or equivalent work but is driven by the structure of our workforce, and the concentration of males in more senior positions.”

Sarah Towe
Director of People and Change



78% of housing customers feel they are treated with respect

During the year, we have continued to make progress against our EDI strategy: ‘Everyone Valued’.

We have:

- Introduced new system functionality that enables us to analyse complaints against demographic data.
- Captured demographic data as part of our annual customer satisfaction survey to ensure replies are representative of our customer base.
- Worked with customers to develop a ‘Welcome to Advance’ induction session which focuses on how customers would like services delivered to them.
- Involved customers in the recruitment of 100% of senior and board posts.
- Delivered unconscious bias and preventing sexual harassment training.



96% of support customers feel they are treated with respect and dignity

- Raised awareness of EDI related issues, showcased diversity and promoted good practice through information sharing and story-telling, recognising a range of campaigns and awareness days, including Autism Awareness week, Learning Disability Week, Mental Health Awareness, LGBTQ+ pride month, Black History month, and more.
- Retained our Disability Confident Leader status.
- Partnered with Inclusive Employers to strengthen our approach to EDI.
- Got involved with national campaigns to promote the need for Supported Housing and protect benefits for people with disabilities and mental health conditions.
- Produced a Gender Pay Gap report.

Our EDI priorities for next year are:

- **Conduct an inclusive language review –**
Ensure all policies reflect inclusive and respectful language
- **Co-create a Respect Charter with customers –**
Collaborate with our community to define shared values and expectations
- **Develop a customer interview support toolkit –**
Provide resources that empower customers to actively participate in recruitment processes
- **Enhance EDI data collection and use –**
Expand the scope of our EDI data and apply insights to drive meaningful change

“A stand-out for me is the co-production work with customers and the learning and talent team in the recruitment process. It is clear from all the evidence that the story is evolving and learnings are turned readily into actions.”

Assessor's comments on our Disability Confident Leader submission

Contributing to the wider community

Colleagues from the People Team spent the day with students from Abingdon and Witney College, acting as 'Venture Specialists'. Their input formed part of induction activities for Management and Administration, and Accounting and Finance students.

Katie (left) and Evie (right) with students

The 'Venture Vortex' event was designed to develop students' communication, teamwork, and problem-solving skills, as well as the use of their initiative, independence and creativity.

Building on connections made at the event, Advance has gone on to offer a 1 year work-placement opportunity for one of the college's students.



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