



Cross Keys Homes' approach to Community Investment

Working together to make
a positive difference

Creating opportunities to change lives for the better

We know that being happy, healthy and having opportunities to make people's lives the best that they can be, makes a difference.

Many of our residents are on low incomes, experience unemployment and, in some cases, are held back by a lack of formal skills and education. We know the potential of the people in our neighbourhoods and we know the key is to support and invest in them, so they can reach their personal goals.

We want to tackle the causes of poverty by offering opportunities

to all residents, and by treating our residents as individuals recognising the barriers to wealth, health and the happiness they experience.

Our community work focuses on creating opportunities to change lives by investing in people, places and businesses. We want everyone to recognise the impact they can make, whether that's large or small, so they can make a

difference in their community too.

We want to ensure that Cross Keys Homes' neighbourhoods are great places to live and continue to develop as well as help support the economic growth of the region.

Together, our community investment will reach every person, family, community and neighbourhood we serve and help to change lives for the better.

Poverty affects lives - spirals of unemployment, intergenerational worklessness and ill health has an impact on the whole community.



Claire Higgins

Claire Higgins,
Chief Executive

Our approach

The communities and environments in which people live have a huge influence on their health and opportunities. Providing someone with a stable home significantly increases their chances in life, but our commitment goes well beyond this.

Skills and qualifications, good health, and having aspirations at any age all play an important part in the likelihood of whether people will have the opportunity to reach their full potential. Our community investment work has already

helped to break deprivation and has supported over 1,500 people into work over the last five years alone.

This is why Cross Keys Homes takes a holistic approach of being more than just a landlord.

Over the last five years **we've supported over 1,500 people** into work and a **further 1,070** into further education or training. By working together, we can help even more people!



More than just a landlord

We create opportunities that change lives through our drive, expertise, resources and passion.

Housing

All our homes meet the Decent Homes standard and we are committed to building 400 new homes a year to help address the lack of affordable housing in Peterborough and its surrounding areas. We build and maintain sustainable homes that help our residents to reduce their household running costs to provide them with the best chance of sustaining their tenancies.

Community safety and security

Our Anti-Social Behaviour team and Neighbourhood Management team work in partnership to ensure that our communities are safe places to live. We work with partners to alleviate crime and the fear of crime starting at the lowest level.

Environment

We aim to help our residents and employees to have the best possible quality of life, and to make this happen we need thriving local economies, strong communities and a sustainable way of life. We influence this through our Environmental Sustainability Strategy and the 'One Planet' action plan. Our Area Panels, which are led by residents, also manage projects which they determine will help to improve communities and make a positive difference to local neighbourhoods.

Involvement

We have a range of networks for people to get involved in, influencing services and improving their community. We encourage residents to get involved and build confidence through volunteering. Our Residents Board shows our commitment at corporate governance level. But this can also be seen throughout the business and in the community from supporting social enterprises, and delivering employment support activity, through to our internal involved residents groups.





Sustaining tenancies

The wrap-around approach we provide enables our residents to sustain their tenancies and live active, independent lives. This includes everything from tenancy support, money advice, employment skills and training programmes. We also provide sheltered housing and temporary accommodation through to care services and emergency LifeLine alarms.

Education and skills

We provide residents with access to accredited and non-accredited training and skills. This includes formal skills such as maths, English, IT and business administration to soft skills such as communication and confidence building techniques to help residents unlock their potential and up-skill.

Employment

We work with residents and the wider community to help them increase their employability, whether this is their first step into employment or returning back to work following redundancy or ill health. We help improve people's chances of finding secure and fulfilling employment.

Inspiring the next generation

We work to break the pattern of unemployment and ensure the life chances of the young people living within our communities are improved. We provide opportunities for young people to achieve qualifications, accreditation and participate in positive activities.

Health and wellbeing

We help our residents to overcome the health related barriers that prevent them from reaching their potential and improving their life chances. We also help to create resilience in our communities.

Specialist intervention

Our Specialist Intervention team expands the support provision to families and individuals in need of extra help. We also deliver support to vulnerable individuals faced with barriers such as mental health, poor physical health and financial exclusion, helping to sustain tenancies and improve lives so that every resident has the potential to achieve and contribute to their communities.

Partnership work

We work with many local organisations and business to help us reach our community aspirations. We know that partnership working is key to breaking the pattern of inter-generational disadvantage and being able to make a positive difference to people's lives. We are also a key community player supporting many local community groups.

Case study

Kerry Mason has gained qualifications and training that landed her a job in a restaurant as a Chef after taking part in our Families Programme and Work Club.



Kerry Mason

When Kerry was made redundant in 2012, she found it hard to get back into work. As a single mum, she found it difficult to manage on benefits and started to build up debts.

"I was slowly going downhill, with no confidence or self-esteem, and with no help and support to find a job" said Kerry.

After spotting a poster at one of our Community Hubs, Kerry signed up to our **Families Programme** and **Work Club**. She put together an action plan for her future, including ideas to establish her own wedding and events business, which saw

her join an 11-week **Enterprise Cube** course. Kerry then pitched to our '**Dragons' Den**', and was awarded a grant to set up her own business.

Realising that this new venture would not pay a living wage straightaway, Kerry decided to put her passion for food and cooking to use and boost her skills and qualifications. Through our Academy, she gained qualifications in food hygiene, customer service, health and safety and catering, while also work shadowing and improving her CV and job search skills.

All this opened the door for Kerry to apply for a restaurant Chef position at our Kingfisher Court, an extra care scheme for older people.

"I was at rock bottom when I was made redundant, but now I know I can succeed," she said.

Kerry now gives up her time to promote the benefits of employment support at local events; inspiring others to change their lives.

Our intentions moving forward



We want to focus on the key issues facing our residents, including tackling deprivation by raising skill levels for employment, supporting partners in addressing health inequalities, and inspiring young people to achieve success.

Over the next three years we will co-ordinate and implement programmes of support with the help of our partners and residents under the three areas that feature within our Community Strategy:

- **Employment, enterprise and skills** - supporting residents aged 16-65 to gain and sustain employment, unlocking potential and up-skilling those out of work to increase life chances.

- **Inspiring the next generation** - inspiring and supporting young people to expect a positive future.
- **Health and wellbeing** - working to improve health outcomes for individuals and to create resilience in communities.



Partnership working

The nature and scale of the barriers that prevent residents and communities from reaching their potential can be successfully overcome through a multi-partner approach.

We make best use of limited public and private sector resources by collaboratively designing, co-ordinating and implementing programmes of support with our partners and residents.

We are always on the lookout for new partners and community groups who we can work with who share the same aspirations and truly want to make a difference.

We will work with partners who are committed to:

- Listening and involving our communities when developing and delivering services.
- Working together to ensure the best use of resources - including sharing resources and trying out new ways of doing things.
- Being open and honest.
- Targeting resources where there is most identified need.
- Being accountable to each other and to the community.

Joined-up planning and action with partners lies at the heart of our work.



Case study

Working together with City College Peterborough

Many of the customers who we support do not have the skills required to be able to move into employment, or have been out of employment for some time and need to refresh their skills.

To help support these residents, we partnered with City College Peterborough and regularly meet to look at how we can work together to deliver the courses to meet our customers' needs.

Thanks to this partnership since April 2016 we have jointly funded and run:

- 11 skills based courses
- 7 confidence courses
- 31 basic IT sessions
- 17 work clubs
- A speed interview event for young people
- 6 basic cooking courses

Over **200** local people have engaged with one of these courses or activities which has helped them to move forward with their lives, gain confidence and enhance their skills and opportunities.



Belinda Parrot, one of the customers who has taken part in our confidence building course and an upskilling course, said:

"If I didn't attend the courses I would still be signing on twice a week and would have no confidence or skills to move out of the hole I had found myself in. I was at an all time low. Since going on the courses I have built up my confidence, learnt new skills and now have two different jobs that I love. I no longer have to sign on and I am able to pay my bills myself. This has helped to give me a different outlook on life and I am so much happier in myself now. I also volunteer at the

CKH Community Hub to try and give back as my way of thanks for helping me to move forward with my life."



Sarah Mitchel, Funding and Contracts Manager at City College

Peterborough, said: "Our partnership has proved to be a really valuable resource where we have been able to support so many people in the local community and help them gain employability skills and get back into work. The courses offered build confidence in individuals and inspire real change, which has provided excellent results. I am looking forward to continuing to work closely with Cross Keys Homes in the future."

Empowering the community

The community as a whole have a vital part to play in creating and maintaining neighbourhoods where people can be proud to live and work.

We will work with communities and groups who:

- Will be actively involved in deciding, designing and delivering the services they need.
- Are empowered to take control and responsibility for their own lives.
- Feel connected to their local area and are proud to be so.
- Recognise the need to protect the most vulnerable.
- Are vibrant and diverse, but remain inclusive to all.

We are dedicated to partnership working and know that the key to helping those who need us most is through a multi-partners approach. By doing this, we can help achieve so much more and make a huge difference to even more people's lives going forward.

You can also find more information about our community work on our website www.crosskeyshomes.co.uk

If you meet this criteria, then get in touch with us. **Together we can change lives for the better** and help break the pattern of intergenerational disadvantage and deprivation.



If you have the same aims and aspirations as us, then **we want to work with you.**

**Just call us on
01733 396404 or email
community@crosskeyshomes.co.uk.**

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More information can be found on our website www.crosskeyshomes.co.uk