



**MYSPACE**  
HOUSING SOLUTIONS

ANNUAL REPORT  
2016-17



DOING THINGS  
**DIFFERENTLY...**

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# FROM OUR STRATEGIC DIRECTOR

2016/17 was a year of growth for My Space, taking us to just under 600 tenants in more than 450 community properties and a growing number of developments. This was reflected in a corresponding increase in our staff, expanding our team to around 100. This expansion means we are in a stronger position than ever to embed our mission statement into the heart of everything we do:

**“WE ARE COMMITTED TO THE PROVISION OF GOOD QUALITY HOUSING, CARE AND SUPPORT SERVICES TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS AND TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES.”**

These numbers tell me that this is the ideal time to produce My Space’s first Annual Report, to showcase both the amazing work our staff carry out on a daily basis, the contribution made by our tenants as well as the strong financial position we find ourselves in as we move forward.

In line with this period of growth, we have invested heavily in our organisation’s infrastructure, expanding our team of field-based staff, improving our systems and processes as well as streamlining operations by establishing offices in Cumbria and the East Midlands.

This year also brings change to our Senior Leadership Team, with the appointment of Andrew Goodson as Chief Executive Officer, Gill Cook as Head of Operations and Aneeq Qureshi as Finance Director. These key appointments further strengthen our position as we move forward, and I’m confident that My Space is in safe hands.

The future is looking bright for My Space, with more developments, a further geographical reach, an increasing number of rewarding partnerships but, most importantly, the ability to support even more of the most vulnerable adults in our communities who need help – and housing – the most.

*Peter Lynch*

**Peter Lynch** Strategic Director

# WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

My Space’s primary aim is to provide good quality housing; we are unique in that we provide housing when there are no other forms of accommodation available. We provide homes within communities, with an emphasis on creating safe and secure environments for vulnerable adults. We have properties across the North West and North East of England as well as the East Midlands and parts of Surrey, offering a range of accommodation. Each property is sourced taking into account the wants and needs of tenants to make sure it is suitable, and we provide intensive housing support to all our tenants to support them to maintain successful tenancies.

We were recently honoured to be placed 37th on the top 100 Sunday Times Best Not for Profit Companies to Work For and named as 13th Best Housing Association to Work For. We were also finalists at the Northern Housing Awards in the Sheltered and Supported Housing category.

**WE PRIDE OURSELVES ON DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY – AND THIS APPROACH IS THE CORNERSTONE OF OUR CULTURE.**

Because our approach is to match properties to people, it means vulnerable people can live in good homes with the housing support they need, but also puts them on the path to improving their wellbeing, integrating into their communities and living independently.



# MY SPACE IN NUMBERS – MORE THAN JUST A LANDLORD



50 TAILOR-MADE DEVELOPMENTS



30 Hours  
of Training per HSO



8 Key Partners



13th Best  
Housing  
Association  
To Work For



37th Best  
Not-For-Profit  
Organisation  
To Work For



4 ENGAGING  
TENANT  
FORUMS  
A YEAR



125  
Committed  
Employees



730  
Safe and  
Secure  
Tenants

3  
Regional  
Offices



460  
HIGH-QUALITY  
COMMUNITY  
PROPERTIES

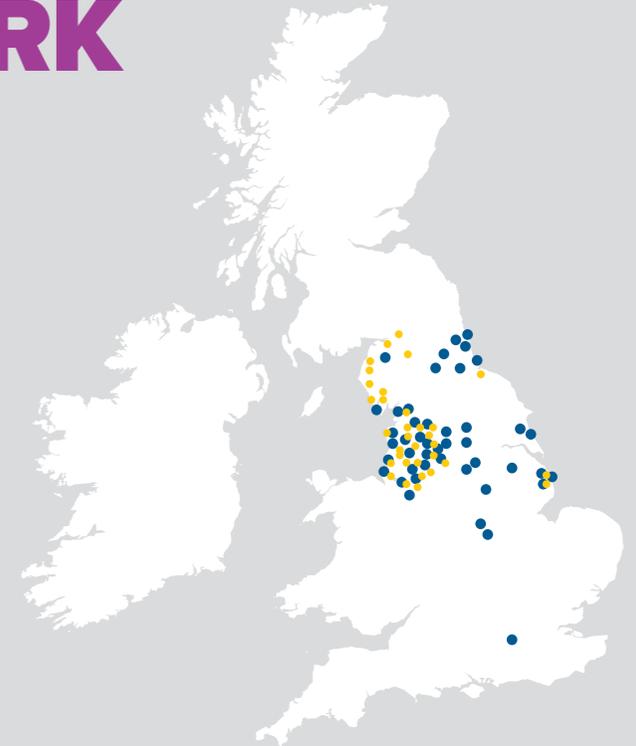


# WHERE WE WORK

We currently manage around 500 community and residential properties, providing homes for more than 700 vulnerable adults. Over the last year, we have forged valuable partnerships in an increasing number of locations across the UK, including the North West, North East, the East Midlands and Surrey. This means that we can support more people to live more independently in more safe, secure accommodation.

We are planning further growth and an expansion of our geographical reach. Our aim is to support as many vulnerable adults in areas of need as possible and we have the strategic plans in place to achieve this.

● Developments ● Community Properties



# OUR PARTNERS

We work with partners to create commercially productive relationships which never compromise on quality. These partnerships mean we can deliver the best value for money in our sector.

Working together helps us set new standards in specialist supported living but, ultimately, and most importantly, enhances the quality of life for our tenants.

We collaborate with our partners to ensure tenants are fully supported in all aspects of their home life. This approach helps vulnerable people to maintain a tenancy, get the right support to manage their own money and make sure they can budget for bills and food – all of which helps develop a more independent lifestyle and ultimately creates healthy, sustainable communities.

Our partners include...



# MEET OUR TENANTS

## There is no better illustration of the work we do than success stories like these...

Bev has been with My Space since August 2017. Prior to that she had been in social housing but felt she wasn't getting the right support for the depression and anxiety she's suffered from all her life. She's now happy and in a place where she's getting the help she needs. "It's having someone there," she says. "Someone to listen and give me advice."

Bev has found that her Housing Support Officer is easy to talk to and has given her the support she needs to start getting out and about: "I have extreme anxiety about going out, but she has helped me plan things, like appointments or going to the doctor's – she gives me that little extra helping hand."

Bev plans to stay with My Space, because with our support her quality of life is improving all the time, and she feels she's getting back to normal.

**"I CAN'T IMAGINE THIS SUPPORT BEING TAKEN AWAY."**



**BEV**

Paul, 48, didn't have the best start in life. He told us: "I had a bad upbringing. Since I was 11 my life's been chaos, I was sniffing glue and taking drugs, and I've been in and out of prison."

"I was drinking just to function. I didn't even grieve properly when my mum died, I drank to numb the pain. You're selfish when you're an addict – I was in self-destruct mode, self-pity mode, always trying to justify my addiction and making excuses."

Paul says the best thing he's ever done was checking into rehab. He detoxed for six days, and is now sober. "I've turned my life right around, I won't ever turn to drink again, no matter what life throws at me. It's been a roller-coaster but I need to take charge and stand on my own two feet. I'm getting there."

Paul is now hoping to get some voluntary work, and he'd be happy to do anything to occupy his time. He feels that none of this would have been possible without the support of My Space and his Housing Support Officer.

**"MY SPACE HAVE GIVEN ME A CHANCE, I'VE GOT A LOVELY HOME IN A NICE AREA WITH GOOD NEIGHBOURS, AND I TREAT IT WITH RESPECT. I KEEP IT NICE. I'VE NEVER BEEN GIVEN A CHANCE BEFORE."**



**PAUL**

Laura, 30, was one of My Space's first tenants. Before coming to us: "I don't know where I was – I was out of control, I couldn't pay my bills, I was very much off track," she told us. "I was in a destructive, controlling relationship and using a lot of cannabis."

"I needed to build trust and relationships before I could start to address my problems. I was very resistant to change – now I realise I needed consistency and stability." Getting the right Housing Support Officer in place was important, and the process itself helped Laura get used to change. Help with budgeting, healthy eating and how to save money meant Laura's journey was ultimately a successful one.

"People like us, we get left behind, we struggle. I'm in a completely different mindset now," she says. "I'd recommend My Space to anyone – they have allowed me to be me. I'm allowed to have bad days as well as good days, they understand and let me have those feelings."

Laura is feeling positive about the future – situations that would have once daunted her she now finds exciting. "I'm excited by where the journey is taking me. I used to think of my mistakes as failures, but now I view them as lessons – I'm always thinking positively."

**"I'M LEARNING LIFE AGAIN – IT'S MADE ME FEEL WHOLE!"**



**LAURA**

Phil, 35, is a real My Space success story. He's been with us for three years, in the same property and with the same Housing Support Officer, with whom he's built up a strong relationship.

Before coming to My Space Phil had been tackling drug and addiction problems. He had been in and out of hospital and prison and was living in a care home. Our Housing Support Officer worked with Phil to maintain his tenancy, supporting him with sorting out his benefits and bills, and he has also benefited from help from our repairs and maintenance team.

Phil had been helping out at a foodbank, but it was at an open day at his former care home that another volunteering opportunity came up: helping people with learning disabilities. Phil now volunteers to support residents with their planners, organise outings, run meetings and is basically there to lend an ear. "It's hard work, but very rewarding," Phil told us. "It's different every day. There's some challenging behaviour but I've had the right training to deal with it." Phil now has a 36-hour-a-week position as a Project Worker. He says: "It's a good company to work for, there are some good opportunities."

**AS WELL AS HIS JOB, PHIL IS ALSO GETTING READY TO MOVE ON FROM MY SPACE AND TAKE ON HIS OWN TENANCY.**

Phil's hard work has recently been rewarded with an invitation to the House of Lords to receive an award from one of Langley House Trust's patrons, Lord Ramsbotham, in recognition of how far he's come – an amazing achievement!



**PHIL**

# OUR PEOPLE

## MEET HOUSING SUPPORT OFFICER, EMILY BROWN...

Before joining My Space, Emily had been involved in the rehabilitation of ex-offenders, supporting them into housing, education and employment. “Basically back into a normal life,” she says. It was while working as a Police Community Support Officer that she realised she would rather be helping people than locking them up – and meeting one of our existing Housing Officers when supporting a mutual client provided the opportunity she needed to do just that.

So what does a typical day look like for a My Space Housing Support Officer? “I’ll visit my tenants in their homes,” Emily tells us. “I’ll ask how their week’s been and how they’re getting on with their goals – these are tailor-made for each tenant, giving them structure and motivating them to get things done, things like doing the cleaning, or dealing with debts and banking. Goals also give me a good idea of how much support a tenant needs, and where they are on their journey with us.”

Emily also reports and chases up any maintenance issues and links in with other services the tenant may be accessing, for example drug and alcohol support or mental health services. “It’s a real multi-agency approach.”

A lack of engagement can be something that’s difficult to tackle, “When a person doesn’t even meet you halfway and needs a warning, I take a firm but fair approach,” she says. “And of course having to sometimes accept that someone has chosen a certain path and you can’t do anything about it.”

And the best things about the job? “There are loads!” Emily says, “You’re trusted to manage your own workload and there’s plenty of flexibility as long as you’re doing the job right. It really helps having a good Manager, one who is supportive towards their staff. My team are also great; we all help each other out when necessary and are definitely team players. This makes a huge difference, especially in this line of work!”

“Helping tenants towards a better life is so rewarding. Seeing them on that journey and being able to tell them I’m proud – a lot of them have never heard that before.”

**“ULTIMATELY, I FEEL  
I’M TEACHING PEOPLE  
HOW TO LIVE A  
NORMAL LIFE IN A  
SAFE ENVIRONMENT.”**



## INVOLVING OUR TENANTS...

Our tenants are at the heart of everything we do, so we value their input and feedback on the way we work as an organisation - what we are getting right and ways we could improve.

We hold quarterly Tenants' Forums, which give all our tenants the chance to get together, share their views and experiences as well as give us their feedback on our service. Lunch is always provided, and everyone enjoys a prize quiz or raffle. We also invite speakers along to offer information and advice, such as Community Police Officers, Benefits Advisors and staff from partner agencies. Senior My Space staff are always on hand too, to listen and have a chat.

Tenants tell us they really enjoy the forums, because they get to know new people, meet My Space face-to-face and feel that their opinions are valued. The events give us the chance to get a deeper understanding of the challenges our tenants face and help them address the causes. Many of them struggle to maintain a tenancy and would be at risk of homelessness without our support, so this first-hand contact is a vital tool in keeping channels of communication open with those who need it most.

# OUR DEVELOPMENTS

My Space Housing Solutions is undertaking a wide-ranging programme of development, providing tailor-made supported living for the most vulnerable adults, in the communities where they want to live.

Over the last year we have worked further towards our goal of creating sustainable communities through good-quality housing, care and support; we are committed to building for the future.

Current developments include:

*“My Space have given me the foundations to change my life and help me become me.”*



**ST PAUL'S COURT**  
Bury



**THE VAULTS**  
Eccles



**WIGAN ROAD**  
Westhoughton



**FELL VIEW**  
Brampton, Cumbria



**BUTTERMARKE STREET**  
Warrington



**HUNTERS COURT**  
Heckmondwike, Yorkshire



**SHERRIFF'S HIGHWAY**  
Gateshead



**RIVIERA COURT**  
Preston



**WATERFOOT**  
Rossendale



**KING EDWARD ROAD**  
Doncaster



**KINSLEY CHURCH**  
Pontefract



**WELLINGTON STREET**  
Accrington



**CASTLETON BOULEVARD**  
Skegness



**PEAR TREE DRIVE**  
Mansfield



**FIRBECK AVENUE**  
Skegness

# OUR FINANCES

Why is our Value for Money approach so important to us? The housing sector is facing huge challenges. We will maximise our potential to produce affordable homes for people to live in, whilst maintaining quality management and maintenance services. VFM is pivotal to this. Likewise, our objective is to create more homes and places in which people can thrive. To achieve this we have to invest in our existing communities, new homes and our staff, so that they can provide a service to be proud of. In order to achieve this we are prepared to be innovative, to create new structures and take a more commercial approach to our business.

## STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 OCTOBER 2017

	Unrestricted funds £	Total 2017 £
Turnover	5,406,428	5,406,428
Operating costs	(6,347,896)	(6,347,896)
Other income	1,296,219	1,296,219
Operating surplus	354,751	354,751
Interest and financial costs	(93,192)	(93,192)
<b>Surplus and total comprehensive income for the year</b>	<b>261,559</b>	<b>261,559</b>

### STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN RESERVES

Total funds brought forward	551,650	551,650
Prior year adjustment	93,542	93,542
Surplus and total comprehensive income for the year	261,559	261,559
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>906,751</b>	<b>906,751</b>

	Unrestricted funds £	Total 2016 £
Turnover	3,170,219	3,170,219
Operating costs	(3,010,376)	(3,019,956)
Other income	573,282	582,862
Operating surplus	733,125	733,125
Interest and financial costs	(44,046)	(44,046)
<b>Surplus and total comprehensive income for the year</b>	<b>689,079</b>	<b>689,079</b>

### STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN RESERVES

Total funds brought forward	(43,887)	(43,887)
Surplus and total comprehensive income for the year	689,079	689,079
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>645,192</b>	<b>645,192</b>

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 OCTOBER 2017

	2017 £	2016 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>		
Tangible assets	881,758	343,296
Investment properties*	8,707,715	-
	<b>9,589,473</b>	<b>343,296</b>
<b>Current assets</b>		
Stocks	1000	1000
Debtors	1,657,088	744,615
Cash in bank and at hand	41,937	56,348
	<b>1,700,025</b>	<b>801,963</b>

Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(1,898,068)	(458,911)
Net current (liabilities)/assets	(198,043)	343,052
Total assets less current liabilities	9,391,430	686,348
Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year	(8,443,523)	-
Provision for liabilities	(41,156)	(41,156)
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>906,751</b>	<b>645,192</b>

### RESERVES OF THE CHARITY

<b>Unrestricted income funds</b>		
Unrestricted income and expenditure fund	906,751	645,192
<b>Total reserves</b>	<b>906,751</b>	<b>645,192</b>

\*Investment properties represent communal developments being acquired under finance leases. The leases are for 40 year terms with an option to extend the lease for a further 20 years and then an option to purchase for £1. The properties have been valued on the purchase price paid by the leaseholder as representative of fair value, each property having been acquired by the leaseholder within the Charity's financial year. In assessing the fair value of each property, a comparison has been made with the present value of the minimum lease payments over to 60 year term of the full lease, on the basis that the lease extension is likely to be exercised.

# OUR VALUES

A unique provider of **high-quality homes** in sustainable communities.

**Improving services** through involving the most important people: our tenants.

We deliver **value for money** in everything we do.

**Fairness** in the way we operate, being open and accountable.

**Respect** – we are an organisation that is well-governed with inspirational leaders and an employer of choice.

## PARTICULARS OF TURNOVER

	Unrestricted funds £	Total £
Social housing lettings for vulnerable adults	5,323,009	5,323,009
Other	83,419	83,419
	<b>5,406,428</b>	<b>5,406,428</b>
Support Income	1,187,419	1,187,419
Other	108,800	108,800
	1,296,219	1,296,219
	<b>6,702,647</b>	<b>6,702,647</b>

## PARTICULARS OF COST OF SALES AND OPERATING COSTS

	Unrestricted funds £	Total £
Total Cost of Sales	4,669,804	4,669,804
Total Operating Costs	1,694,271	1,694,271

## ACCOMMODATION IN MANAGEMENT

	2017 No of Properties	2016 No of Properties
<b>Social Housing:</b>		
Social Housing Letting for Vulnerable Adults	592	299
Accommodation Managed for Others	28	18
<b>Total Social Housing Managed</b>	<b>620</b>	<b>317</b>

### Non-Social Housing:

Commercial Rentals	0	22
<b>Total Non-Social Housing Managed</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>22</b>

## ANALYSIS OF FUNDS

	Balance at 1 November 2016 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Balance at 31 October 2017 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>				
Unrestricted general funds	645,192	6,702,647	6,441,088	906,751



# PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

My Space Housing Solutions has grown significantly since its establishment in 2012. We have ambitious growth plans over the next three years and sufficient funding to fulfil those plans. The Board has approved plans to grow the tenant list as follows:

Financial Year Ended	No of Tenants
2016	299
2017	592
2018	980
2019	1568

# OUR BOARD AND SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

## BOARD



### DENIZE ALSTON

Currently working as an Internal Verifier and Lecturer, Denize is a qualified and experienced care practitioner and educator, with a background in supporting and teaching young people with a range of difficulties.



### BARRY CAMPBELL

Barry is an experienced Registered Manager working with vulnerable adults with complex needs. He has vast experience of CQC and Ofsted legislation and governance.



### ANDREW GOODSON

Andy is an experienced leader with a background in learning and development. He has worked around the world developing teaching and quality assurance approaches for the education sector.



### PETER LYNCH

Pete's background is as an operational and change leader, with vast customer service knowledge and experience of running large operations in multi-sector industries.



### CARL MCCREEDY

Carl has a wealth of experience in the social housing sector, as well as working with adults with disabilities and, more recently, the Youth Justice Board.



### ANEEQ QURESHI

With a strong background in strategic financial management, Aneeq has been responsible for leading global financial operations, strategic development and financial performance management.

## SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM



### GILL COOK

Head of Operations



### ANDREW GOODSON

Chief Executive Officer



### MIKE JOHNSTON

Property Portfolio Manager



### PETER LYNCH

Strategic Director



### ANDREW OATES

Business Development Manager



### ANEEQ QURESHI

Finance Director



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🐦 @MySpaceHousing 📘 MySpaceHousingSolutions

Registered Charity Number **1149955** Incorporation Number **08257055**

[www.myspacehousing.org](http://www.myspacehousing.org)

