



KEYRING
living support networks

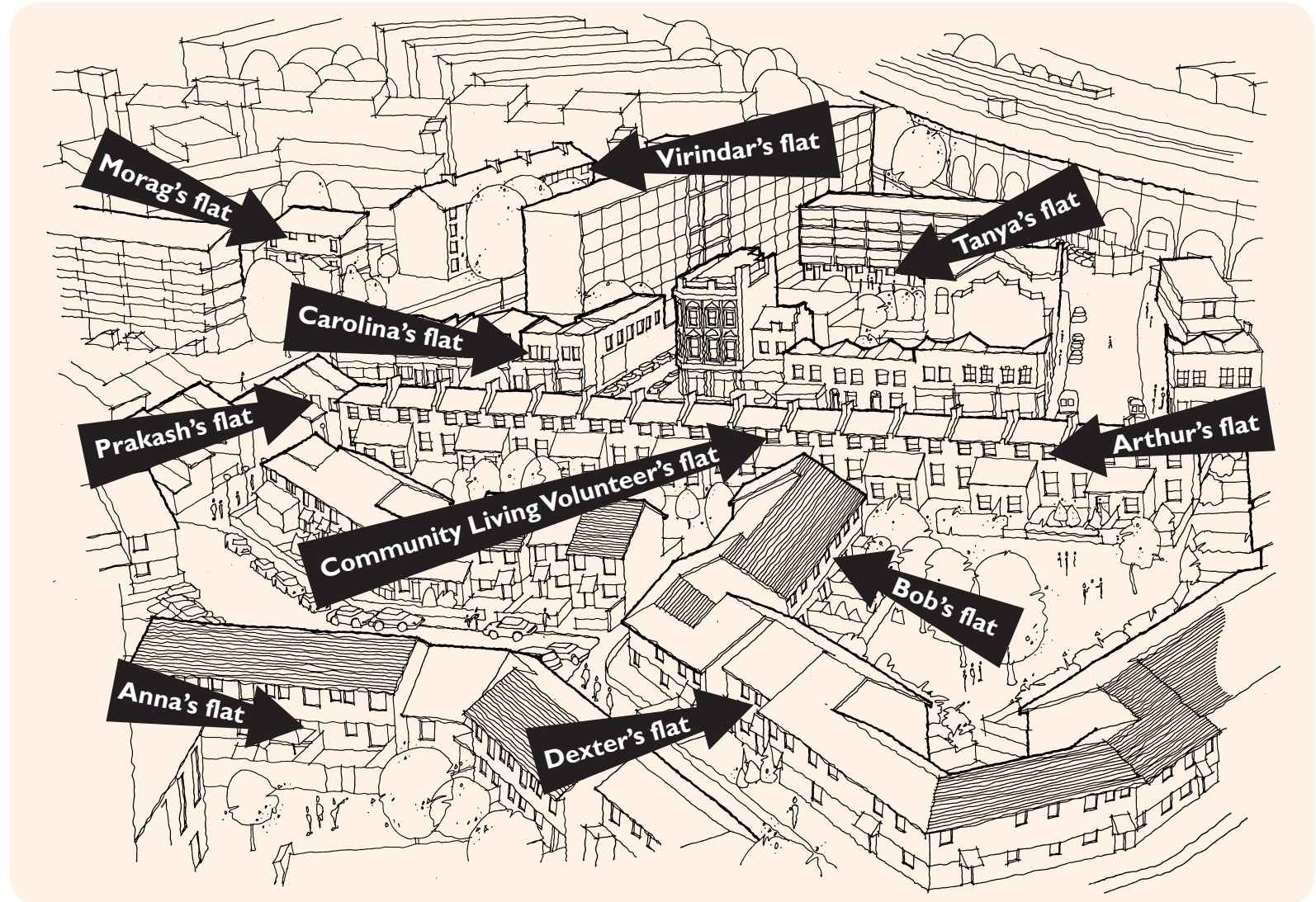
How KeyRing works

A unique system of support

KeyRing's unique system of support is designed to make the best use of Network Members' own abilities. Ten ordinary properties are scattered around a small neighbourhood. You can walk easily from one property to another. Nine flats or houses belong to vulnerable or excluded people.

They have assured tenancies or own their property like anyone else. The tenth property is occupied by KeyRing's Community Living Volunteer (CLV) who supports Members on a flexible basis. This arrangement enables KeyRing to build layers of support around the Network Members.

Turn over to see how this arrangement facilitates KeyRing's unique system of support.



The Living Support Network

Help is literally 'around the corner'

People sometimes need practical and emotional support to deal with the many challenges of taking responsibility for a flat or a house and living in an ordinary community. KeyRing provides the direct, structured support that Network Members need to meet those challenges. A healthy level of risk-taking is encouraged without compromising a Network Members' safety.

More than this, KeyRing has become expert in releasing other resources: the skills available in the people we support, the resources present in the community and generic services, the specialist skills held by statutory and voluntary agencies, the support of family, friends and carers.

With KeyRing's multiple levels of support, Network Members are assured of help at all times:

- KeyRing's Volunteer lives nearby and is available on a flexible basis to carry out planned support and to respond quickly to problems before they develop into full-blown crises. For example, a Community Living Volunteer was able to notify the Community Social Work Team at the first sign of a Network Member's deteriorating mental health.



- KeyRing values Network Members' skills. Part of their deal with KeyRing is that they share these skills with their KeyRing neighbours. The Volunteer facilitates a mutual support Network. In one Network a Network Member had to go to hospital. All other eight Network Members visited her. In another Network, a Network Member, tells how '**Albert, one of the others, puts my plugs on for me. I helped Tina and Charlie put curtains up.**' In KeyRing there are thousands of such examples of how 'empowerment' can be more than just a word.
- KeyRing Networks are in ordinary communities and the Volunteer supports Network Members to build healthy links with neighbours, community organisations and agencies like the Police, the CAB and local community centres.

- a KeyRing Supported Living Manager supports the Community Living Volunteer and gives direct support to Network Members around more difficult issues. Some Networks have a paid Community Support Worker to assist in the support of Members. For example, paid staff are successful in untangling benefit problems and maximising benefits.

- Community Living Volunteers get to know the Network Members very well and can advocate quickly and effectively to get targeted input for Network Members around issues needing specialist support. KeyRing has a good record of getting Network Members support around everything from sexual abuse counselling to finding a job.
- if a Network Member has a problem when the Community Living Volunteer is out, they know they can get help from other Network Members or by calling KeyRing's out-of-hours line.

As Network Members experience the robust strength of this Network of support, they can become less dependent on workers and more confident in using their own resources and those of their neighbours and the wider community. In this way KeyRing achieves truly empowering outcomes and at a cost to commissioners that is affordable even in times of financial constraint.

My house is very nice and I am getting to know people in the area. I'm helping a new Member move into their new flat in the Network now.

Robert, Newcastle Network (Name has been changed)



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