



# New boots

**Martin's delighted with his new boots and shows them off proudly when we met recently at Second Step's housing project in Bedminster, Toll House Court. "I wanted to do more walking....purposefully. When I got them, I tried them out and got as far as the bus stop," Martin says with a wry smile.**

A proud, quiet man who has worked all his life, Martin has lived at Toll House Court for the last five months. His support worker Kat explains that Martin is used to working, running his own home and is now finding it difficult to adapt to his recent health problems, losing his flat in Bristol and dealing with the aftermath of a number of strokes. "I'm not part of anything," he says quietly.

Kat applied to Sylvia's Fund - which offers Second Step clients recovery grants of up to a maximum value of £50 - on Martin's behalf. And with the arrival of the new boots, things have been looking up. Martin is planning to see his elderly parents and also his two sons, who he hasn't seen for a long time. He's also hoping to walk out more in his boots. With Spring in the air, he says he thinks he'll do some "crocus spotting".

## Sylvia's Fund - now open to all

Launched last October, Sylvia's Fund - a wellbeing fund for Second Step clients which celebrates the little things in life - was run as a pilot in the High Support Accommodation Service. Martin's grant is one of five grants which have been issued from the fund which comprises a number of individual and one-off donations made to Second Step.

The Sylvia's Fund Board which met recently to review the first few months have decided to roll out the fund more widely to anyone currently receiving a Second Step service. To find out more about the fund and how to apply for a grant to help your or your client's recovery, please contact Jane Edmonds on **07841 777401** or email [jane.edmonds@second-step.co.uk](mailto:jane.edmonds@second-step.co.uk)

# Welcome to the Spring edition!

It's certainly being feeling more Springlike over the last few weeks and that's reflected in our stories in this issue of Second Step News, the newsletter for staff, volunteers and people using Second Step services.

Take the moving story of Martin and his new boots, which have brought him some hope as he starts to put his life back together again with the support of staff at Toll House Court.

Best wishes

Jane Edmonds

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We also have news from our super motivated new BAME Focus Group. Plus we share high hopes for a new service Second Step is going to be running with its alcohol and recovery partner ARA for people with complex needs in Somerset.

Do keep in touch with your news and views. We love to hear from you.

## Building diversity

The Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Focus Group was formed in October 2018 to provide more opportunities for staff of ethnic origin to develop their skills and progress to senior roles as well as address the issues of diversity and inclusion within the organisation.

The BAME Focus Group believe for an organisation to be successful, it must be truly diverse. Diversity is about making the most of everyone's strengths which is why the group is working with senior managers to create a diverse and inclusive workplace at Second Step.

The group is contributing to a new training plan to ensure every manager learns how to develop the potential of every member of their team. To encourage more people from diverse backgrounds to work for Second Step, the group will also be participating in a review of recruitment advertising and the organisation's 'work for us' web page.

If you'd like to find out more about the group and about how you can improve your team's equality and diversity processes, please do get in touch with BAME Focus Group by emailing: [bamefocusgroup@second-step.co.uk](mailto:bamefocusgroup@second-step.co.uk)



From left to right: Cyp Olika, Cynthia Nansimbi, Pat Rose, Trudy Tongogara, Abdi Mohamed and Teneshia Taylor. Photo by Mark Simmons.



## Moving On

This is our lovely new Move On team. From left to right we have Carmen Acosta, Leah Burt, Mary Rivers, Maria OBrien and Fiona Long.

They are a wonderful advert for successful partnership working with navigators based in four experienced organisations: Second Step, St Mungo's, Salvation Army and ARA (Action on Recovery and Alcohol).

The team is planning to run drop-in sessions for clients to explain the benefits of renting privately. These will take place at St Mungo's New Street Centre. You can find out more about the Move On service on our website.

# A day in the life of... a Hope Project worker

“The office phone rings and I take a referral from the psychiatric liaison team at the Bristol Royal Infirmary for a patient who took an overdose last night, after feeling unable to cope with his benefit sanctions. We will contact today and arrange for him to meet a project worker in a few days time.

I walk over to Brunswick for an initial assessment with another new referral. The man is shaking with nerves so I get him a cup of tea and try to speak as gently as possible. I need to jot down all the information he is telling me and at the same time show him that I am listening emphatically. I also need to be aware of my own emotional reaction as parts of his story are quite harrowing. We have a direct and frank discussion about the arrangements he has made to take his own life.

Together we make a plan so that he can keep himself safe, which involves identifying his personal reasons for living, triggers, protective factors, and how he can seek help if his situation worsens. We also talk about how he would like to be supported. He notices that he has stopped shaking and feels a little better after our talk, and we arrange to meet next week to work on his housing issues.

I meet a service user outside his home and we walk to a café together. I emphasis the progress he has made, as a few months ago he was too anxious to leave his home and we only communicated over text. Together we work on his application to access NHS-funded Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). He is grateful for the support from the Hope Project and I feel privileged to be able to assist him on his road to recovery.”

**Editor's note: Thank you so much for this personal insight into the work of the Hope male suicide prevention team. To find out more about the project, head to [www.second-step.co.uk/wellbeing-health/hope-project](http://www.second-step.co.uk/wellbeing-health/hope-project)**

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## Thinking Differently, Doing Differently in Somerset

**Second Step, in partnership with drug and alcohol organisation ARA, has been awarded a recent Somerset County Council tender, to provide a new service for people with complex needs.**

The service, which is due to start in April, will work with clients and partners to develop new and sustainable support and housing options for adults, who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, with mental health needs, drug and alcohol problems and/or have been involved in the criminal justice system.

The new service will bring together the expertise of all partners to help support everyone who uses the service to make the most of their lives and fulfil their potential. Go to the Second Step website and search for Somerset Complex Needs to find out more.



# Recovery groups

The Community Rehabilitation Service runs a range of groups for people who use the service, from getting outside in the woods on Forest Fridays to a Wellbridge House music group, currently taking place on Wednesdays. Every group welcomes new clients with open arms encouraging people to get involved at their own pace. Take a look at what's currently going on during the week:

- Monday is the Wellbridge House Walking Group for residents of the house.
- Tuesday is the Cooking Group for all users of the Community Rehabilitation Service.
- Wednesday is the Music Group for residents of Wellbridge House.
- Thursday is the Allotment Group for users of the Community Rehabilitation Service.
- Friday is Forest Friday for users of the Community Rehabilitation Service.

**If you use the Community Rehabilitation Service and want to try one of these groups, please speak to your support worker who can give you all the details and get you booked in.**



# Taking time to talk

**To mark this year's Time to Talk Day in February, teams at Second Step took up the chance to get away from work, have a coffee and cake and make time to talk. The only condition was that no one was allowed to talk about work!**

Sam, from the Golden Key Coordinators team, told us that it was a positive experience to spend time together without talking about work-related issues. "Everyone who attended bought into that idea. I learned things about colleagues, their lives and their interests. This can only be healthy and positive for team spirit, morale and wellbeing".

**That cuppa.**  
It's the small things that can make a big difference.

It's **#TimetoTalk** about mental health. [time-to-change.org.uk](http://time-to-change.org.uk)

## Taking the pledge

Second Step is one of more than a dozen organisations in Bristol who have signed the Time to Change Pledge to be an employer that works to end mental health discrimination and stigma. The Time to Change campaign are calling on all organisations across the country to join the 900 plus companies that have already signed up.

Find out more about Time to Talk Day and the Time to Change Pledge on the Time to Change website.

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