

How the new Community Rehabilitation Service helped one young man find hope



Tom has had a torrid 12 months - dropping out of school, turning to drugs for solace, falling out with his family, lurching between violent episodes and complete withdrawal, and finally ending up in a secure mental health unit far from home. Finally he was moved to Bristol's new Community Rehabilitation Service.

(We have changed names to protect identities)

When Tom started taking drugs with his friends, refused to do his school work and became increasingly angry and violent at home, his mum Kate was at her wits' end.

A shy boy Tom did well at school and always had a best friend. However things changed in his late teens when his family became concerned about his behaviour.

Violent episodes

He withdrew from the family and grew very angry – his anger spilling over into violent episodes. He then fell into periods of self-hatred and depression when all he wanted to do was end his life. Tom blamed his parents for it all, particularly his mum.

Hospital admission

Despite asking for help from the family doctor and other professionals, it wasn't until things got really bad and the police were called that anything was done. The police advised Tom go into hospital for an assessment and while there he was seen by the children and young people's mental health service, CAMHS, who said Tom was suffering with psychosis and admitted him to hospital.

New support and consistency

However even though Tom was now in the system, he was treated in secure units far away from the family – which he hated. After eight months, he was transferred to Callington Road Hospital in Bristol where he was put on different and more successful medication. And the staff and doctors worked with the family to give him consistent support and advice. Kate explains: "Decisions were made and stuck

to – we were all saying the same thing. This made such a difference. Both he and we knew what was happening, why and when."

Life at Wellbridge

Once Tom was discharged from the acute ward, he became one of the first clients of Bristol's new Community Rehabilitation Service. Within days of joining the small community at Wellbridge House, the accommodation part of the service, it was clear Tom, who had been extremely shy and disengaged while on the hospital wards, was ready to join in.

"The staff here remind you about your medication, they don't tell you to take it. It is freer, and we can do our own thing."

Talking live on the radio

Tom was then invited by one of the staff to join the Second Step Radio Group talking about mental health services in Bristol live on community radio station Ujima Radio. Tom jumped at the chance. "I really enjoyed going into the studio and want to continue to be part of the group which put on the programme." Kate said she was in tears when she heard the broadcast. "It was amazing what he did, talking live on air like that. I was so proud."

Welcome to SecondStep news



Welcome to Second Step News - the newsletter for staff and people who use our services. The last few months have been a time of change at Second Step and this issue looks at some of the new things that have been going on.

We take a look at the new Community Rehabilitation Service through the eyes of one of its first clients, a young man determined to change his life. And we take a look around Second Step at some of the changes taking place from launching our new 'spot service' to relaunching our Supported Housing services.

Do get in touch if you would like to share your story or your experience with others at Second Step. We'd love to hear from you.

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STOP PRESS

The Community Rehabilitation Service will have its official launch on Thursday 4 June at The Station in Bristol. Guests will hear from people who have helped shape the new service, staff who have their own lived experience of mental health problems, as well as people currently using the service. The guest speaker is the Chief Officer of Bristol's Clinical Commissioning Group Jill Shepherd.



Spotlight on: Second Step in BANES

From cooking to tai chi, recovery education to innovative technology, the floating support team based in Bath punches well above its weight.

“We are a small, perfectly formed team based in the South Vaults at Green Park Station near Sainsbury's. Our service covers the whole geographical area of BANES and we often work collaboratively with other agencies, for example AWP, Reach and Rural Floating Support.

“Last year we worked co-creatively with service users to create and then present Recovery Education Taster Sessions to members of the public.

“The team were also involved in co-creating Kitchen Creations, a series of cookery workshops for creating seasonal healthy meals on a budget. For the last two years we have been working with St Mungo's Broadway and others to put together the New Hope Guide for support groups and activities in the area.

“The team have been involved in The Wellbeing Options Pilot Project, funded by a council Health Inequalities Grant since September. The project, which is led by Second Step, combines assistive technology, social support and social prescribing using Wi-Fi web access and information sources such as the council's website and the Wellbeing College prospectus. The aim is to help link people in better to their communities by improving their access to people and places across a large rural area. Recently we have been developing the project to encompass peer working with former service users.

“More recently team members have been looking after their own wellbeing by meeting at the Roman Baths for Tai Chi Taster sessions on Tuesday mornings, encouraging other staff members and service users to attend as well!”

For more information visit
<http://visitbath.co.uk/whats-on/tai-chi-on-the-terrace-p1656143>

Coming together at Wellbridge House

Clients and staff worked hard planting new plants and herbs in the garden at Wellbridge House in the sun recently. The gardening tidy up and get together was one of the activities planned by the new community at Wellbridge, the accommodation part of the new Community Rehabilitation Service. The sun shone on the afternoon's hard work which was finished off with a barbecue meal for everyone.

The new service, which is part of Bristol Mental Health, is led by Second Step in partnership with AWP and Missing Link. The service provides a high level of support for people who need skilled rehabilitation expertise as part of their recovery. The ten-bed accommodation hub of the service is based in Wellbridge House in Brentry, north Bristol.

The focus of the service is to help people gain the skills and confidence to live as independently as possible in the community. This is done by providing specialist assessment, treatment and interventions. The service takes a co-production approach; with people who use the service and their carers helping to shape the service at every step. All the service's work takes place in the community focusing on reconnecting people back into their communities.

One of the residents said he was settling in well at Wellbridge. "We all have our own rooms with ensuite bathrooms. We like it here, we have freedom to do what we want. The staff help us when we want help. I hope to be able to learn to be more independent and leave to go to my own place."

To find out more click visit www.bristolmentalhealth.org/services/community-rehabilitation-service/

Supported Housing re-launches



Following the successful tender for the Bristol medium support housing contract, the Supported Housing team has re-launched the service to provide housing to 61 people across Bristol as part of the city council's homeless prevention programme. This is an increase of 12 bed spaces on our previous provision including taking on two new schemes from Rethink and Missing Link. The accommodation is provided to people with complex needs (and this includes supporting people with mental health needs) for up to nine months in properties across Bristol. The service will be extended to include some weekend and evening cover, and will include access to groups and peer/volunteer support to help people gain the confidence and skills to live more independently. The team also manages a further five projects of longer term accommodation.

For more information on the service visit www.second-step.co.uk/supported-housing.html

Support us to grow!

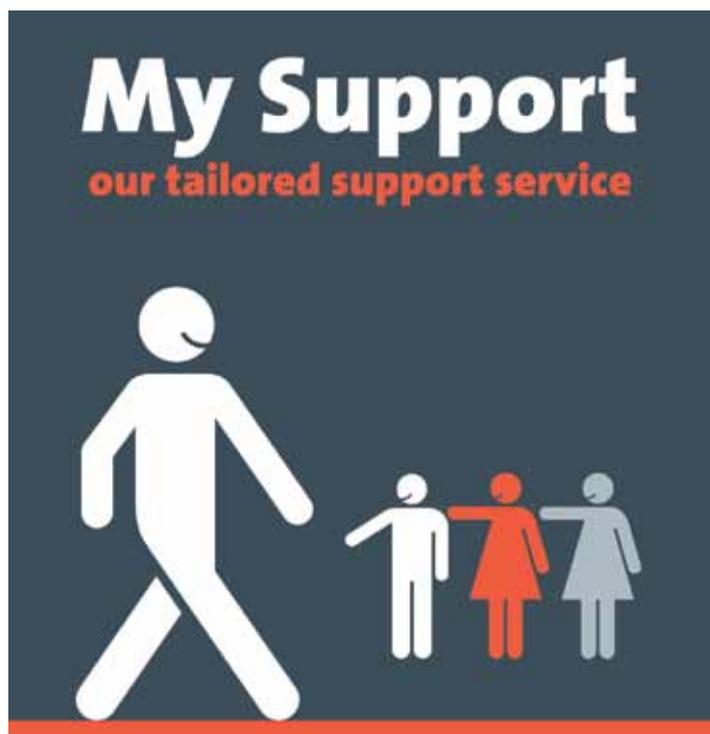
Volunteer services at Second Step are growing. Not only are we looking for more volunteers to work with us in our existing services such as Supported Housing and the High Support Accommodation Service – we also need volunteers to help with our work delivering new services for Bristol Mental Health. You could be involved in many ways including helping to run an art class, lead a walk, co-facilitating a course, supporting a gardening project, provide reassurance to service users to attend important appointments and encouragement to them to engage with the service, work with the communications team, or provide befriending and access to social activities to reduce isolation.



Contact Volunteer Services to find out more about how to get involved at: volunteering@second-step.co.uk
Hoping to hear from you soon!

My Support - a service dedicated to you

Second Step has launched its new spot contract service offering people individual tailored support using personal budgets via local authorities or the client themselves. The service is to be called My Support emphasising the importance of the people using the service - they shape the support they need. The service has clients in North Somerset, South Gloucestershire and Bristol and has high hopes of moving into new local authority areas in the months ahead.



Service user involvement update

"I'm lucky enough to be doing some really exciting work with service users at the moment. The Service Improvement Group and I have just read through all the exit questionnaires that people completed last year (April 2014 – March 2015). We have analysed what people said about their experience of services, and are now putting the final touches to our report. We'll let you know our main findings and what our recommendations to Second Step are, in the next edition of this newsletter.

"The Stepping Forward Group is busy writing a training course with me, to help improve Second Step Managers' skills in service user involvement. We hope this training will act as a springboard for more involvement opportunities being created across the organisation. Barring any late hitches, we hope to run the course, for the first time, in July. We'll let you know how we get on in the next edition.

"Finally from me, by the time you read this, another group of service users will have been trained in the art of interviewing, and will soon be helping Second Step to recruit new staff. If you are interested in doing this training when it's run again, please contact me on 0117 914 5493.

"As you can probably tell from this short update, there are lots of ways to get involved in Second Step; some people do so to meet new people, others to learn new skills or to rediscover old ones. Whatever the reason, what's important is that their involvement helps improve Second Step services – and that benefits us all. If you want to know more about involvement opportunities please ask your worker."

Giz Thomas



Mindfulness in the madness

Lisa Newman, a member of the IF Group which advises the Golden Key Programme, writes about the role of mindfulness in mental health recovery as part of Mental Health Awareness Week (11 - 15 May).

Mindfulness was the theme for the week and Lisa makes the point that you have to be relatively well for mindfulness to be a useful tool. Her blog, which was published on both the Golden Key website and also on Second Step's website, was picked up by Bristol Post.

Read Lisa's blog online at:

www.goldenkeybristol.org.uk/news/mindfulness-madness-blog-lisa-newman-if-group-member