

## Saving up to go to the seaside

How one woman found safety and stability with Second Step as part of our new **My Support service**.

“My Dad was an alcoholic. When he was away trying to detox, my mum told me all these things about him, how he had mistreated her, how he kicked her downstairs when she was carrying me.”

“So when he returned I had lost all my respect for him. Before, when he had said jump, I had asked how high. Now I didn't care. He had been raised in a children's home and so his answer to me not behaving or doing what he said was to send me into care.”

### Rollercoaster

Jade (not her real name) was in care from 13. Ever since her life has been a rollercoaster of trauma, violence and homelessness. Diagnosed with borderline personality disorder at 17, she spent three years in hospital. She has longed for a second opinion as her struggle to keep her head above water continued – unable to keep a flat, homeless for years at a time, angry, chaotic, alone.

Six months ago she was seen by another psychiatrist who put her on anti-psychotic drugs. She has had better times since then. But the real turning point was 18 months earlier when her Dad died. “I stopped being scared,” she said.

### Settled at last

For the last five years Jade has kept her flat in central Bristol – the longest time she has ever stayed in one place.

“Of all the agencies I have been with over the last 10 years, Second Step is the only one that has managed to help me keep my tenancy.”

“Second Step support has been great and still is great. At first they stayed over with me overnight – every night for six months. Then it went to two hours in the morning and two hours at night. Then one hour and telephone throughout the night.”

“Now I have three hours of support a day on weekdays and two hours a day at the weekend. At the moment I am having two hours a day for one week – to save up time in the bank so I can go for a day out. Recently I went to Weston for the day, we went on the pier and on the beach.”

### New service

My Support is a new service at Second Step offering people individual tailored support using personal budgets via local authorities or the client themselves. The people using the service are at its centre – shaping the support they need. This can vary in type and in time from support with bills and finances to regular support for an hour every day. The service operates 24/7 every day of the year and currently has clients in North Somerset, South Gloucestershire and Bristol.

# Welcome to SecondStep news



Welcome to Second Step News - the newsletter for staff, volunteers and people who use our services.

This October issue opens with a story from one woman who has been supported by Second Step for many years. She is now with our new My Support service and says she is now experiencing the most stable time of her life because of the dedication of the staff who have worked with her.

We also shine our spotlight on one of our smaller services, Health Link, part of Compass Health, based at the Compass Centre in Stokes Croft, Bristol. Championing the needs of homeless people, a survey earlier this year revealed that 75% of clients said Health Link had helped them reduce their likely visits to A&E.

We are also keen for staff, volunteers, people who use our services and others to send through their selfies to see if we can create the ultimate group photo - entirely composed of selfies.... watch this space.

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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## Spotlight on: Health Link



**Our Health Link team provide specialist advice, guidance and support to homeless people.**

Health Link, part of Compass Health, was set up to provide homeless people with a drop-in health service to treat their physical and mental health needs. The nursing team support clients who are dealing with severe health problems due to homelessness, and often treat people who find it difficult to access other health services. Many are at high risk or in a health crisis and use A&E repeatedly.

The aim of the Health Link team is to champion the needs of homeless people, seeing everyone as an individual and working with people sensitively to encourage them to engage with the service. Once engaged, everyone is given an assessment. There is also support to refer to other health, housing and support agencies.

In a client survey conducted in March 2015, 92% of Health Link clients agreed or strongly agreed that they have taken more control over their health and wellbeing and are better able to engage with services. And 75% said the support they had received at Health Link had reduced their likely visits to A&E.

Health Link works closely with other services offered as part of Compass Health and is based at the Compass Centre in Stokes Croft, Bristol. To find out more about the service visit [www.compasshealthbristol.co.uk](http://www.compasshealthbristol.co.uk)

In the photo: Maxine Williams and Sara Wheeler from Health Link





## Golden Key listens to frontline voices

Golden Key, the citywide partnership led by Second Step, recently held its first learning forum to gather expertise from those working directly with clients on how the partnership can best achieve lasting change for Bristol. The event, which was attended by 41 people representing 16 different Bristol agencies, was an opportunity for staff to use their voice as a tool to influence change as their feedback will help shape the Golden Key's future direction.

Welcoming attendees to the event Hannah Mahoney, Golden Key Programme Manager highlighted why frontline expertise is so important: "We can't address the challenges in Bristol for our clients, we can't address the challenges you face as frontline staff, without listening to you. What we need is your voice. We need the knowledge and understanding born from your collective experience to understand the nature of the solution for Bristol."

Taking a solutions focused approach, attendees discussed what a perfect service would look like and what is currently working well. The group also provided suggestions for improving specific areas of work including; how to increase client participation, information sharing and ideas to address structural imperfections. One specific requirement highlighted from the day was the need for greater understanding of Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE) among frontline staff. As a result Golden Key has offered all attendees free PIE and KUF (Knowledge Understanding Framework) Personality Disorder Training.

To keep up-to-date with Golden Key news follow [@GoldKeyBristol](https://twitter.com/GoldKeyBristol)

To sign up for regular newsletters go to [www.goldenkeybristol.org.uk/join-our-mailing-list](http://www.goldenkeybristol.org.uk/join-our-mailing-list)

The forum was also an opportunity for staff to meet Golden Key Partnership Board Chair, John Simpson and Rob Fenwick, Custodial Commissioning Senior for South West, NOMS, who is a Partnership Board member.

## You can never have enough selfies!

A quick update on the biggest selfie project ever undertaken...

More and more people are sending through their selfies – so thank you very much. The idea is to show the strength and depth of the people who work for and are involved in Second Step – bringing together everyone's selfies to create the Ultimate Group Photo.

If you still haven't sent through your selfie (head and shoulders please!) then there is still time. Just email to [jane.edmonds@second-step.co.uk](mailto:jane.edmonds@second-step.co.uk)

Thank you.

# Hours to suit

An interview with Marie Karlsson, Secretary of the Stepping Forward Group



## Q | Marie, who are the Stepping Forward Group?

We are a group of Second Step service users, who meet monthly. We work with members of staff to review policies and improve various aspects of the work of Second Step. Recently we have been reviewing and re-writing the Service User Involvement Policy and deciding how we can have regular contact with the Board. I'm also spending time writing a training course.

## Q | You sound busy: what's the training course about?

It is service user involvement training (we refer to it as SUI). The aim of the course is to help team managers, and other key staff, learn how to successfully involve service users in the work they do. This means service users helping to make decisions about how services are designed and improved.

## Q | Are you writing the course on your own?

No, thankfully. I'm doing it with Justine, who is also a member of the Stepping Forward Group, and Giz – he works for Second Step and is their lead for service user involvement. We are aiming to deliver the training twice in October. We will sit down after the second day and agree any changes to improve the course.

## Q | How long have you been a member of the Stepping Forward Group?

Since January 2014. It gives me a sense of achievement; it feels like we are really listened to and that things get done as a result. I'm learning new skills and getting a chance to use and improve existing ones. Being in the group has also helped me to meet and get to know a lot of new people; both service users and people working for Second Step. I feel part of something and like I'm giving something back to the organisation.

## Q | So, would you recommend getting involved to others?

Yes definitely, if you read this and think it could be for you. It is not for everyone though; it's hard work at times, but enjoyable.

If you are interested in finding out more about service user involvement in Second Step, either ask your worker, or phone Giz Thomas on **0117 9145493**.

# Volunteer Services continues to grow

Highlights over the last few months include:

- The team has started recruiting for some of its new roles supporting Bristol Mental Health services
- Welcome to Sophie Wainwright, our new Senior Volunteer Co-ordinator working to Positive Step in Weston-super-Mare and Supported Housing.
- Two new communications volunteers have been recruited and are expected to start work in Second Step's PR department soon
- Our Peer Mentoring Project in North Somerset now has nine fully trained peer mentors eager to start work as part of the Support Alliance partnership
- The High Support Accommodation Service has four volunteers supporting three groups including a successful art group, coffee group and social group.

## Rebranding underway

A six-month process to refresh the Second Step brand and design and build a new website for the organisation has begun. We will begin to work with our chosen design agency from October looking first at the organisation's values and aims. This work is part of a larger piece of work which will see the organisation develop and adapt to the changing environment – embracing new services and new ways of working.

A working party of staff and people who use our services has been set up and will be involved at every stage from choosing the agency to setting out our expectations and requirements for a new website.

The branding work will be done during the latter part of this year and will be signed off by Second Step's Board in January. It is likely the new look and feel will include a new strapline, a new look for our logo and clarity around the values we wish to share with the world outside. We will be sharing our thinking early in the New Year with staff groups as work begins on designing, building and developing a new website.

**2econdStep**  
Working for Recovery and Wellbeing