

## Learning Disability Partnership Floating Support

...offers support to people in their own homes across Stoke-on-Trent. Our customers live in a range of social housing or private rented accommodation, and some live in Brighter Futures properties in high quality furnished supported housing. The service works in partnership with other agencies to provide the support the customer needs to enable them to build their independence, skills and confidence. Over the past three years, Brighter Futures has invested £2.4m to develop flexible support and accommodation options tailored to meet the needs of



people with Learning Disabilities. Brighter Futures has worked closely with Stoke-on-Trent City Council developing and improving support and accommodation options available to people with a Learning Disability; remodelling and modernising services and ensuring customers are supported in the best way to promote their independence.

### The service

We currently support 68 people, in ordinary homes within the local community. The level of support is flexible according to customers' needs, and can 'float away' when the customer no longer needs the service, without them necessarily needing to move from their accommodation. We receive funding from Stoke-on-Trent City Council to provide housing-related support, and have achieved the 'A' standard against all five elements of the Quality Assessment Framework as a mark of excellence. We work closely with Adult Social Care to ensure that we provide the right service to meet people's needs, and are excited about continuing the developments within our Learning Disability service. The service support cost is around £45 per person per week, compared with an estimated £400-£500 per week for residential care.

### The outcomes

Of the 68 people we currently support:

- 17 people are volunteering
- 29 people are attending college or accredited training
- 4 people are in paid work
- 43 people are involved in leisure, cultural or faith activities or informal learning
- 50 people have been supported to engage with primary health services (and customers have attended a focus group held to provide feedback for the health service regarding the accessibility of services for persons with a learning disability)
- 5 customers are now receiving "low level" support
- 3 customers have moved on to fully independent living
- 2 customers have attended recruitment training and 1 customer has taken part in an interview panel
- 3 customers have participated in Brighter Futures' business group, reviewing company policies such as Health & Safety, Complaints, and the Equality Policy, and reviewing our performance as a service

- 2 customers are part of the Involvement Group, developing and reviewing customer involvement opportunities across Brighter Futures
- 10 customers are now named scheme representatives, and they support new customers during their introduction to Brighter Futures
- Customers designed the scheme Welcome Pack, and the Support Agreement



## The developments

The service started with a pilot to support up to 20 people, with the City Council housing team identifying appropriate properties to lease to Brighter Futures. Eight properties were identified, which we refurbished, decorated and furnished to a high standard. Along with a further eight properties purchased by Brighter Futures, these then became homes for customers supported in partnership with Adult Social Care, enabling them to move from higher support settings and increase their independence. In April 2011 Brighter Futures were awarded a contract to provide floating support to 60 people, including those supported by the pilot service. Floating support focusses on supporting people to develop their independence; and allows all our customers to be supported in a flexible way to meet their changing needs.

## The customers – a case study

Steven\* was referred to us by the Learning Disability Social Care team. He needed support and somewhere to live. His father had recently died, and his mother and sister had moved. His uncle was helping him apply for a council flat. They were struggling to make the flat habitable, and Steven was unable to cook or manage his day to day living. We agreed with the City Council that we would lease the flat and provide housing management and a full refurbishment. We accepted the referral for support, and agreed a support plan.

We were **creative** in the approach to accept the customer and the property, which reduced stress and worry from the customer. Steven was asked what he wants, needs and desires, and support was arranged around this. We are **passionate** in our belief in the potential of our customers. His ultimate goal was to “go it alone.” The support plans we developed together were ‘SMART’ to show this. We **empowered** Steven to achieve his goals, supporting him to identify small achievable steps to reach the final goal. This included support with learning to manage his finances and budgeting in readiness to for future. He told us when he felt ready to “run solo”. We held meetings jointly with social services and the customer to formulate his move on plan. We liaised with the City Council and negotiated that the property could return to their management, with Steven taking on the council tenancy in his own right as an **equal** and independent tenant. We ensured this was a **sustainable** outcome. Once all had being agreed and an exit plan arranged, the tenancy was transferred over to the council, Brighter Future’s support withdrew and the re-enablement team was introduced for a short period to assist with the transition to full independence. Steven now has a wide social network, good budgeting, cooking and life skills, and has felt in control of his support as it has responded to his changing needs.

\*The name has been changed to maintain confidentiality

## We are unique because...

...we recognise the importance of living in a safe and beautiful home, and provide our housing customers with the quality of accommodation that we would expect ourselves. We understand our customers’ experience of a complexity of needs, and provide simple and straightforward support solutions to empower people to make changes and increase their independence.

[www.brighter-futures.org.uk](http://www.brighter-futures.org.uk)

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