

Report to Beer Harris Memorial Trust from Hope into Action April 2022

Beer Harris Memorial Trust granted Hope into Action £1100 on 6/1/21 and £1000 on 19/11/21 for support to two tenants to support their mental health.

Hope into Action enables churches to house the homeless. Many of our tenants suffer with their mental health and sometimes these conditions can be extreme.

The team at Hope into Action are extremely grateful for the Trust's continuing interest in their work.

This report concerns B, the second of our tenants in Cambridge who has received professional support from our Empowerment Worker and social support from our church volunteers funded by Beer Harris Memorial Trust.

B moved into to one of our homes in the summer of 2021. He had just been discharged from a mental health hospital after a recent mental health crisis which included an attempt on his life. B suffered significant childhood trauma which led to issues with anxiety and depression over most of his life to date.

A difficult childhood led him into a life of crime for many years where he was in and out of unsafe and living indoors for almost 5 years. This way of living has resulted in significant PTSD where every day is a challenge for him. Just going to the shops or walking down the road can lead to significant distress and can really trigger symptoms of his PTSD. He struggles with nightly nightmares and pain in his head, all a result of his mental health struggles.

After not having a secure home for many years, moving into one of our homes was the first 'safe' place he had lived for a long time. Though life is still very difficult, having a safe and secure place to call home has made a huge difference over the past 6 months. He has found the support of his church befrienders really encouraging and was invited to spend Christmas day with them. He finds this regular contact really encouraging and sees it as an important part of his week. He has recently started volunteering at the church, doing some gardening.

With the support of his Empowerment Worker, we managed to get the extended rate of Universal Credit as he is not able to work, which has really helped him be more independent. For many years he has struggled with reading due to his vision, so with our support he plucked up the courage to visit the opticians to get glasses to help him.

It is going to be a long journey of recovery for B and he takes each day as it comes. It is almost a year since his mental health crisis, and he has maintained stability through most of this time. He had also been alcohol dependent for many years and the time at the mental health hospital gave him a chance to detox. He is no longer alcohol dependent and is able to control this very well.

Lastly, B has taken it on himself to look after his home. He has done the garden, painted the fence and redecorated most of the house. He is always appreciative of the support and though life is not easy for him, he still counts his blessings and loves his children and grandchildren. He hopes to see them more and more and become more independent, as he continues to access our support and finds peace with his mental health.