

## Beer Harris 6 Month Report September 2022-March 2023

### Introduction

It has been a busy 6 months for the Social Connection Project (SCP). As outlined in our funding application, the SCP plays a key role in connecting clients who have experienced homelessness, to activities and interests to help build social networks in Brighton and Hove, These connections are helping clients improve their physical and mental health, their resilience and reducing the risk of becoming or returning to homelessness.

### Our Progress/Achievements

In the past 6 months, 71 people in temporary accommodation have been supported to engage positively with their local community through the Social Connections Project in Brighton. The project has been found to achieve the following outcomes for beneficiaries:

- 85% built a stronger social network
- 74% improved their confidence
- 70% improved their mental health
- 70% felt less socially isolated
- 65% improved their motivation
- 60% improved their resilience.

The positive impact on clients lives is clear: “The Social Connections project has been life changing. The fact my befriender is willing to take time out of her week every week makes me feel worth something”, “It’s brought sunshine into my life. It’s connected me to other people”. This project is having such a positive impact, we have just secured funding from the Nationwide Foundation to replicate this project in Manchester, which we will start doing in the coming year. We have also received a multi-year grant to grow/develop the Social Connections Project in Brighton over the next 3 years.

### Activities in the last 6 months

In the past 6 months, there has been a number of activities, both vocational or recreational and 33 clients have attended.

In September 2022 we ran an Empowerment workshop whose purpose was to look at how clients can become more confident and able to advocate for themselves. In October we ran a popular Songwriting Workshop which the clients all collaborated to write a song which was then recorded at a professional studio in Brighton.

We ran a SCP Event in December where clients, potential volunteers and voluntary services came together to learn more about the project and how they can get involved.

In January 2023, we hosted, every Saturday a “Gentle mind & body class” which is meditation class and clients had the option of attending one or all of them. We ran a Creative Writing class which explored a mixture of creative writing styles with each session having a different theme such as poetry or fiction. We also put on on a “Coping with low mood” workshop which sort to share experiences people had with their mental health and find out what helps others.

We are currently putting together another programme of activities and workshops for the spring and summer period.

**Hopefully this report provides all the information you need, but please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or need any further information. Thank you once again for your continuing support of our vital work, it really is much appreciated.**