

Case Study Glow Mental Health

Glow's Changing Futures Case Co-ordinator Kath has supported Susan* since the start of the Changing Futures project last year. Susan is a 48-year-old woman who experiences poor mental health and substance misuse.

She had been part of a typical family unit, living with her long-term partner and children, until her partner sadly passed away. She worked with support services and relocated to a flat. However while living there she was introduced to monkey dust and abused and exploited by different men.

Susan began rough sleeping and this is when Kath first met her. Her home had been cuckooed, taken over by other people, so she couldn't stay there anymore. She had been offered accommodation at 90 Hope Street, but was unable to take her dog, who had become like family to her.

Unfortunately, due to the circumstances, the dog was taken by the RSPCA, so Susan moved into 90 Hope Street. Here she began taking more monkey dust alongside not being properly medicated for her mental health issues. Her mental and physical health began to really suffer as she grieved her dog and didn't take care of herself.

She was ultimately given notice by 90 Hope Street to leave and started rough sleeping again. She was aggressive and became high-risk due to her drug use so Kath was unable to work alone with her. Despite this, Kath worked hard to gain her trust and build up a positive relationship. She helped her access support services and get to appointments.

Kath worked well with Susan until she was arrested and charged with assault in October 2022. This resulted in her serving a three-month custodial sentence.

At the time of her arrest, Kath pushed for Susan to have a mental health assessment. Local authorities saw Susan as a danger to others due to her substance misuse, but Kath knew that she was a danger to herself. This was not only due to substance misuse, but her mental health problems and trauma she had faced. Unfortunately this assessment did not take place at the time.

Susan was released from prison in January and was picked up by Kath. A real positive about this release day was the effective multi-agency working. Thanks to Changing Futures and its strong partnerships, everything was ready for Susan when she was released. Kath described everyone coming together as 'perfect.'

Kath secured Susan a hotel for the night and longer-term accommodation was arranged for the following day. Her benefits were ready to be sorted out and she had a CDAS appointment booked. Local healthcare services were also made aware of her release.

Kath said it really helped having Changing Futures in place to make sure that everything went as smoothly as possible for Susan on that day. According to Kath, 'everyone worked together,' and the outcome was positive.

When Kath returned to Stoke-on-Trent with Susan on her release day, she was having delusions and acting strangely. Previously her delusional behaviour had been blamed on her substance misuse, but Kath knew that after leaving prison she was clean and this was therefore down to her mental health.

Kath tried to get Susan to go to the Harplands Hospital, but when Susan realised she disappeared for the night. The following morning, she presented herself at Changing Lives to get her benefits sorted and resumed her substance misuse.

Four days later she was arrested and taken to the Crisis Centre for a mental health assessment. She was then placed on a ward at the Harplands for a few days.

The hospital team said that she was experiencing drug-induced psychosis and were planning to discharge her. Kath strongly advocated for Susan and persuaded the team to keep her in for a week. Kath said that she knew if they had some time with her they'd see that she wasn't under the influence and this was all actually due to her mental health problems.

This was the best decision for Susan. She's currently still in the Harplands receiving treatment and undergoing assessments. Her medication is being sorted out and she's having weekly discharge meetings.

Susan is in contact with Kath and regularly speaks to her on the phone. Susan now realises that she needs to be receiving treatment and the Harplands is the best place for her. She accepts this and is keen to be properly medicated and move on with her life.

When Susan leaves the hospital she'll have a big team around her. She has a place at Concrete's female service, who are also part of Changing Futures, so her accommodation is sorted. She'll also have support from Kath and the wider Changing Futures team.

Kath believes that this is the best chance for Susan and she is happy to see the hard work she put in last year pay off. Susan trusts Kath and works well with her. Now she wants to move forwards with her life and start a new chapter with the support of Changing Futures.

*name changed