

Community Stories

Jane's Story

Inclusion Matters



“Jane thanked me, she really appreciated my help, support and time - helping her make positive changes that will improve her wellbeing and health.”

Jane's Story, is provided by Amy Osborne, Age UK Cornwall's Community Wellbeing Coach.

Jane was referred to Inclusion Matters, a partnership between [Disability Cornwall](#), [Digital Inclusion from Cornwall Council](#), and [Inclusion Cornwall & Cornwall Rural Community Charity](#). This partnership aims to improve wellbeing, keep people healthy and safe, create community connections, and offer our support to anyone in need.

Jane, was assigned to Amy after contacting the Community Gateway. This is Jane's story, provided by Amy.

Jane

Initially, I contacted Jane to introduce myself and explain my role in more detail - we talked about how she would like to make some positive changes.

Jane was feeling low, experiencing moderate anxiety and depression and had multiple health conditions. She was feeling alone and wanted to become less socially isolated. I knew this would be something I could definitely help with - together we would be able to discuss new possibilities and ideas.

It Starts with a Conversation

During our conversation, Jane opened up, sharing her desire to become more social. Her mother passed away a few years ago, and her sister lived in Yorkshire - Jane was feeling increasingly isolated and lonely.

We spoke about the impact of her health conditions and what types of activities she

would feel comfortable joining. Jane was already attending a Breathers group to support her COPD, which was great news, but she was eager to find another group to connect with and make more social connections.

Jane felt it was important for her wellbeing to meet people in person, therefore didn't want to pursue any online groups or support over the telephone. I encouraged Jane that it was really positive to pinpoint what was most important to her - focusing on this will help empower Jane, find the right fit and bring her the most joy.

I also asked her if she could access transport because if not, she had the option to use our fantastic [TAP \(supported transport\) service](#). However, Jane was an avid user of her bus pass, unless travelling further afield. We spoke further about what she enjoys and I researched some suitable social groups for Jane in the local community. She was overjoyed at the sound of this.

“When can we start? I like the idea of meeting people this way.”



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You Matter



Improving health and wellbeing

Jane mentioned that she struggles with her mental health and would like to find something 'in person' to help her, but didn't know where to start.

Jane had tried telephone support before but didn't find it the right fit for her needs, preferring the option of 1-1 or group support. I explained some of the current face-to-face projects I knew about - [Age UK Cornwall's Step into Wellness Service](#), The Enablement Project via Pentreath, and the [HOPE Project working with Health Works Cornwall](#). I knew this was a lot of information to digest, so I offered to send it via the post. This meant that Jane could research herself and find the best support for her.

Jane was very appreciative of this;

"I am a little nervous, but excited about the prospect of finding something that can make me feel connected and reduce my fears"

I listened and reassured her that the first step usually feels like the hardest, but the path she has just stepped onto could make a huge difference in her life - Jane was eager to get started.

I contacted Jane every couple of weeks to catch up and see how things were progressing. After a few weeks, and with her consent, I made a referral to The Enablement Project. Unfortunately, there was a waiting list, so instead of allowing this to become a barrier, we looked at other projects.

The HOPE Project was due to start soon where Jane lived. So, we made an additional referral to get Jane to Help Overcome Problems Effectively (HOPE). Jane also took a few more steps by herself and tried one of the social groups - she found it was not as scary as she had first thought.

As we approached Christmas and with the cost of living crisis getting worse, Jane mentioned she was struggling to heat her home and was finding it especially hard due to the recent cold weather to get her food shopping, keep it fresh and enjoy warm meals. Jane and I discussed options that might help - I told her about the Household Support Fund that can support those in need with the cost of food, energy (heating, cooking, lighting), water bills (including sewerage), and essentials throughout Winter.

I said that we could complete the application together, and I also informed Jane about the Warmth Hubs in her area as an additional way to keep warm and meet new people.

Positive Steps

Jane now has the resources to attend social groups and make the social connections she longed for. At first Jane was reluctant, but she felt empowered to join her first group independently, which has given her the confidence to try even more groups in future.

Jane is also enjoying her experience of the HOPE project and finding the advice and techniques helpful.

Jane also received her Household Support Fund and was able to heat her home and purchase a counter-top freezer, which she was so grateful for and has meant she can store, heat and purchase food more economically. She is also looking to try the warmth hub for the first time - which will work with Jane to develop a tailored package of support.

Her network has significantly increased, and we have been able to connect the connectors to support her social needs and mental health - this will also keep Jane physically well through Winter.

This story was published by Lee Davies, Age UK Cornwall - contact lee.davies@ageukcornwall.org.uk for enquiries