



David's Story

David's Journey: Connecting Links and Fostering Community Support

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David's Story

David contacted the Community Gateway for help earlier this year. David is 63 and from East Cornwall. He shared with the Helpline team that he was socially isolated, struggling financially, and that his only support came from his niece who lived out of county. **Initially, David was referred to Inclusion Matters for information and support regarding a Personal Independence Payment (PIP) application. However, during the first home visit, it became clear that David required more support than what was outlined in the original referral.**

For over two years, David had been living with Parkinson's, which has caused considerable frustration for him. In recent months, David's tremors, rigidity, and slow movement have made basic tasks increasingly challenging. He lives primarily out of one room, which is cluttered with stacked hoarded items. When we moved around his house, we noted that other areas of the house were also filled with hoarded materials and presented a higher risk of injury for David.

During our first visit, we noted that access to the bathroom and kitchen was still unobstructed, and although the bathroom itself was cluttered and in need of a spring clean, David appeared to be relatively content. However, once we sat down and listened to David's story, it became clear that David needed support in other areas. Together, we outlined several key actions; David told us that he would like:

- **Support to apply for his PIP.**
- **Help to improve his home and living conditions.**
- **To reduce the risk of injury and create safe spaces for visitors.**
- **To keep his niece involved throughout this process, as she was distressed and unsure how to help.**
- **To create a network of social links in his local community.**



“Thank you for your assistance and encouragement. You appear to be the only ones who truly cared for David; he seems to listen to you and embrace your support, unlike before when I felt I was making no progress.” — **David’s niece**

During our second visit, the PIP application and eligibility checks proved extremely challenging. David was struggling with his speech, and the difficult access/living conditions had become worse. Working with David, we helped clear any high-risk areas to improve access to his home – we also contacted Adult Social Care to raise our concerns.

By the third visit, David’s situation had sadly become unsustainable. David was now living, eating, and sleeping in one room, and he couldn’t move around freely. Our team escalated the situation and asked for more help from Adult Social Care, who coordinated a declutter and arranged for a Parkinson’s Nurse Specialist to check his health and wellbeing. David’s niece was rightly worried about how he was doing and stayed in touch with us throughout, helping to look after David. A local Community Hub reacted quickly to the situation and provided telephone support and regular welfare check-ins. It was also decided that David’s niece would help with the PIP application since she knew about his medical history.

Thankfully, a few weeks later, David was offered a private flat closer to his niece, presenting an opportunity for a safer living environment, reduced risk, and more social connection. We also developed a package of support that included cleaning his old property to go on the market and help fund future care.

Moving forward

David’s PIP application has now been submitted, supported by a letter from Inclusion Matters outreach team. Adult Social Care has escalated David’s case, arranged for a regular Homecare; and strategies to improve his quality of life and wellbeing.

This quick reaction by Age UK Cornwall, Inclusion Matters, and Adult Social Care has helped stabilise a situation that was becoming increasingly unsafe. It also helped David’s niece become more involved in a way that David was willing to accept – this was particularly important because she had previously struggled to support him, despite being very concerned about his wellbeing.

Once David is settled in his new property, Inclusion Matters will continue supporting him and his niece to identify safe, appropriate social opportunities that help strengthen David’s confidence, wellbeing, and inclusion.