

## Fay's Story

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**Local Area Coordinator: Rachael Cole**

**Date story written: 15/11/2021**

### **Introduction:**

Fay was introduced to Rachael in July 2021 by Katie Ruddy, a councillor. Due to Fay's anxiety, Rachael initially conversed with Fay's niece to explain how Local Area Coordination could support her.

### **Situation:**

Rachael contacted Fay's niece as requested and explained how Local Area Coordination could be there for her. A visit was arranged to meet with Fay and her niece, and time was spent getting to know more about her. She was open and honest that she wanted things to change and to be able to go out, be social and make friends. On our initial visit Fay expressed her goal was to be able to deliver Christmas cards to her neighbours' door.

Fay is a 50-year-old lady living in a rented house in Gorseinon with her cat Ralph. Fay has lived in Swansea for 4 years, having moved here from Bristol to be closer to her niece for support. She originally lived in Cockett but then moved property recently to be closer again and now lives 2 streets away from her.

Fay has struggled with her mental health for many years and as a result of suffering with anxiety in social situations, feels unable to leave the house. Fay's anxiety is often so high that she was not able to step outside to read the gas meter. She had not been out for around 4 years bar a few months where she owned a dog which she would walk extremely early to avoid people. This wasn't sustainable and she felt the dog needed more, so with much heartache Fay had to rehome the dog.

Fay has her food shop delivered and has relied on her niece to make telephone calls for her. She has not seen the doctor for years and has been waiting 3 years to be seen by the Community Mental Health Team which her GP referred her too. She was having online therapy which lasted 6 weeks. Fay's days are

spent gaming, watching TV and sleeping, as her sleep schedule is out of rhythm.

The relationship between Fay and her niece has been strained at times, and this along with her poor mental health has led to Fay having suicidal thoughts.

**What happened:**

Following on from the initial visit, Fay felt able to meet Rachael on her own. Subsequent visits were spent getting to know each other, exploring hopes and what mattered to her.

- *The Local Area Coordinator **takes time to get to know people**, listening to what matters to them and **building a trusting relationship**.*

After some time together and developing trust, Fay felt comfortable to tell Rachael that she had been experiencing suicidal thoughts. Fay knew that she needed to speak to her GP as she was concerned about her mental and physical health. Rachael knew that Fay would find it very challenging to ring her GP so sat with Fay and supported her to be able to make the call to the GP herself. After a few failed attempts for various reasons, Rachael was thrilled when she received a text from Fay to say that she had contacted and spoken to the GP.

- *The individual or family leads but the Local Area Coordinator **supports people to strengthen their voice***

During discussions Rachael also explored Fays past interests. Fay spoke how she used to enjoy art but lost the interest over the years. Following these conversations, Rachael informed Fay of an online course that she may find suitable to her current needs as she would be able to be sociable with others online whilst together they worked on building her confidence to go outside. As a result, Fay is now signed up to the HARBWR art on prescription course, and has also researched into signing up to an art prescription to have materials delivered monthly so she can spend her time being creative.

- *The Local Area Coordinator **takes time to get know people, their strengths, skills and interests and helps them** to think about and aim for their idea of a good life.*

Finally, Rachael and Fay spoke about the benefit of a plan to develop her confidence outside of the home. Rachael ensured that this plan was written by Fay as it was a plan about her life, and she had the ownership of this, however Rachael was there to support her. Fay identified that she would like to be able to walk to the local shop, as she currently relies on her niece to get milk for her when she runs out. A 4-week plan was put together which involved walking to the local shop, walking to the local shop and going in, walking to her niece's house, and meeting Rachael away from the house and walking to the shop. Fay is currently on week 3 of the plan and has had a huge sense of achievement that not only has she stuck to her plan but has also stretched the walk further and sat with Rachael outdoors enjoying the Autumnal sunshine. Although Fay can find it hard to give herself praise, Rachael has been able to draw out Fay's strengths and to get Fay to reflect on her amazing achievements that she has made over these months.

- *Local Area Coordination focusses on leadership – **the right to plan, choose and control your own life and support***

#### **What's next:**

Fay and Rachael will continue with Fay's plan and then discuss the next steps with this after week 4. Fay has a lot of aspirations for the future and hopes to build on her confidence and one day make it to a group to meet new people and develop friendships. She also loves animals and would love to volunteer.

However, the focus in the coming weeks is Fay having the confidence and self-belief that she will be able to deliver her Christmas cards to her neighbours and end the year 2021 having made a great accomplishment.

*"My isolation and the small world that my illness has created for me, left me without hope for the future. In having the support from Rachael, I can finally see a way forward. Now I have hope."*

**Has the story been approved by the individual/s to be shared with outside agencies?**

**Yes**

No

TBC

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