



PARTY IN THE PARK

Bryan and Robbie - De Parys

In November 2019, Consensus held 'Party in the Park' a company-wide event whereby colleagues and supported individuals from across the organisation were invited to attend a three-day event at Golden Sands Caravan Park in Lincolnshire in celebration of Consensus, our colleagues and the people we support. In total 81 of our 90 services, over 150 supported individuals and over 350 support staff attended.

The aim of the event was to live our values of opportunity, choice and success for the people we support by providing them with an opportunity to go on a holiday, try new activities and experiences and meet and make new friends in a social environment where they are free to be themselves and have fun.

One of the services that attended was De Parys. Based in Bedford, the service provides residential accommodation and support for individuals with learning disabilities, autism and complex needs.

At De Parys, individuals are supported to enjoy greater independence through the development of daily living skills and through activities out in the community and regularly engage in a variety of their own hobbies and interests, including going to music concerts and working out at the gym.

While they all have independent lives, they are all good friends and enjoy each other's company; taking it in turns to cook for each other at home and going out for meals and nights out together.

One of the things that can be more challenging for individuals at De Parys is saving for a holiday of one or more days because often their weekly allowance isn't enough to save for the cost of additional support hours.

For this reason, Party in the Park provided a great opportunity for two of the individuals supported at De Parys to have the chance to go on holiday. The two supported individuals who attended were Bryan and Robbie. Bryan is very independent and outgoing and while Robbie needs a bit more support, he enjoys being

out and about and loves getting involved in different activities and having new experiences.

To decide which members of the support team would best support Bryan and Robbie during the holiday, Registered Manager, Bruno Barbosa first looked at which support members were interested in attending and used a Positive Behaviour Support tool which helps match people based on their shared interests. He also looked at who gets on well with and has a good rapport with the guys. Using this approach, the support workers who went with Bruno were Yvonne, Elaine and Rachel.

Activities

There was a whole range of activities on offer over the course of the two days, including physical activities like laser tag and spinner, creative pursuits such as tie-dye t-shirt and Christmas decoration making as well as a Brazilian percussion workshop, petting farm and a range of games and activities in the arcade.

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For both Bryan and Robbie the petting farm was a favourite activity. It was a new experience for the guys and they both found spending time with the animals therapeutic. Bryan enjoyed throwing the ball back and forth to the dog and loved holding and feeding the rabbit. Robbie also enjoyed holding and feeding

the guinea pigs. The positive experience and positive outcomes the guys enjoyed as a result of spending time with the animals was a good discovery for the support team who were delighted to find out the petting farm are based in their local area. In the summer, the service is looking to organise a visit from the petting farm so that Bryan, Robbie and the other individuals living at De Parys can spend time with the animals.



Being a part of an experience where they felt completely accepted, included and embraced for who they are has really helped them to grow in self-confidence and self-esteem and supported them to have a positive image of themselves.



The arcade area was also a big hit. Both guys are very good pool players and they enjoyed relaxing and playing a game of pool together. They also spent time and a lot of concentration making their own tie-dye t-shirts.

For both Bryan and Robbie who love to go out and social, the evening entertainment was a lot of fun. On the first evening, they enjoyed playing bingo and were straight on the dancefloor when the live band came on, dancing the night away with everyone and having a great time.

On the second night, there was an Awards Gala night and Bryan enjoyed getting dressed up in a tuxedo for the occasion. There was a very positive atmosphere and everyone was relaxed and happy. They enjoyed meeting and interacting with people from different services and felt a sense of belonging to the wider Consensus community.

Reflecting on the experience, Bruno Barbosa, Service Manager at De Parys said, "Bryan and Robbie really loved the Party in the Park experience. Going on a holiday in itself was a very positive outcome for them both. In the run up to the event it had a positive impact on their well-being as it gave them something to look forward to.

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