



**CASE STUDY
STORIES FOR**
Beech Court...

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Tom's Success Story

Beech Court is a homely residential service close to Ashurst, near Southampton, comprising of six self-contained flats that provides support and accommodation for individuals with learning disabilities, autism, mental health issues and complex needs.

For individuals with complex needs, having their own self-contained flat means they have the space they need and environmental triggers such as noise and people, can be controlled and minimised; while living within a residential setting, provides them with the security and stability of having the support team always to hand.

At Beech Court, there are strong person-centred values with individuals placed at the heart of everything they do. The team also work closely with Behavioural

Practitioner, Jenny Hamilton, from Consensus' Positive Behaviour Intervention Team.

Jackie, Beech Court's Team Coordinator, trained by Consensus to support the PBS process, gathers critical data and helps to analyse what approaches are working or not working; this in turn helps Jenny plan and implement Positive Behaviour Strategies that help individuals to minimise any anxiety and behaviours and increase their quality of life.

Person-centred planning

Tom, aged 30, an individual with a learning disability and classic autism, has been living at Beech Court for the last nine years. Since he moved into the service, the team have involved him in planning his support and have focused on helping him to achieve greater independence and a sense of wellbeing, including supporting him to take part in a wide range of activities that provide stimulation, entertainment and socialisation.

Tom is a very active person and before the pandemic, he liked to get out and about in the community, and particularly enjoyed going to the cinema and to the local gym. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, many of the activities that Tom would usually take part in have temporarily stopped.



Lepe Beach, Hampshire

Reflecting on how the service have supported Tom, Service Manager, Andrew Duckworth says, "Tom doesn't have a full awareness of the pandemic or why these activities have stopped and because he does not cope well with anticipation, the team cannot mention these activities to him as it would cause him anxiety and he would want to do them immediately."

"To overcome this and to keep Tom active, the team are now supporting him to go on regular cycle rides, walks, either out in the woods or to the beach, as well as on regular drives to local areas of beauty. Tom has also continued to go out in the community to do his own shopping, with support."

Supporting contact with relatives

At Beech Court, the team are recognised by the families of supported individuals as having genuine care and affection for their



Jenny Hamilton - Positive Behavioural Support Practitioner

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loved ones, with many positive comments about the support and understanding they provide, as well as the positive outcomes their loved ones have achieved from having a good, outdoorsy, structured life.

During the pandemic, the team have continued to facilitate regular contact between individuals and their loved ones.

Andrew explains, “Tom’s parents have remained in good contact throughout and usually visit him at least once every three weeks. While, due to COVID-19 restrictions, they are unable to go inside his flat, they enjoy alternatives, such as spending time with Tom on a socially distanced walk.”

“For Tom’s 30th birthday this year, his mum and partner visited and bought him a birthday cake and went for a walk to celebrate. The service also has a communal summer house and three of the supported individuals who live at Beech Court (who are all part of Tom’s support bubble) came down to help him celebrate.”

First holiday experience

In November 2019, Tom attended ‘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, with the aim of providing the people we support with an opportunity to go on 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.

Tom attended the event for three days and two nights and managed very well throughout. Over the course of the three days, there were several activities that people could get involved in including, physical activities like laser tag and the 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.

Andrew says, “Because Tom does not cope well with anticipation, the team did not plan activities with him in advance, but he really



enjoyed the animal petting farm, the evening entertainment and going for walks at the nearby beach.”

“As Tom needs things to happen immediately, it was pre-arranged that he could go straight to the front of the queue at the lunch and evening buffets. Tom loves his food and he really enjoyed the range of food on offer and the whole experience.”

Future goals

Once the COVID-19 restrictions have eased and life returns closer



Andrew Duckworth - Service Manager



Beech Court's communal summer house

to normality, the team are planning to support Tom to go on an independent holiday.

Andrew explains, "Party in the Park provided a good opportunity to test run a holiday experience with Tom and to identify and model the support required for future independent holidays."

"Planning the holiday will involve choosing a resort that is close to nature, as this gives Tom greater freedom to roam ahead of the support team and enjoy his environment, which is difficult to do in crowded built-up resorts."

"It is about finding a location which can give him that space, but also with some opportunities for socialisation. It will require careful planning, due to his need for things to happen immediately. If he goes to a restaurant, food would need to be pre-ordered so that it is ready

on his arrival – these are all things that we as a team will pre-empt and plan for beforehand."

Developing greater independence

Moving forward, the team are also focused on supporting Tom to grow in independence and to make choices.

"Currently, Tom needs very familiar staff as it takes a while for him to build up confidence and to feel safe and cooperative. There is a narrow set of staff, a team of three or four, who support Tom in his flat and when he is out and about in the community. He can otherwise get very anxious and this can result in challenging behaviours," says Andrew.

Tom also struggles to understand things being his choice and when presented with a choice by the support team, he isn't quite sure

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what to do with it and will look to the support team for help in making the decision."

"Moving forward, we will be gaining further input from our Behaviour Practitioner, Jenny, on strategies and approaches we can work on with Tom to support him to make choices and to accept different people into his life."

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