

Helen fulfils her dream to walk again

Within three years Helen has gained the confidence to talk and walk again.



Mandy Lashbrook, Service Manager at our Whitegates View service in Hampshire, told us about Helen's journey onto her feet.

“Helen is in her 20's with young person's Parkinson's. When she first came to FitzRoy she would only communicate using communication software and she was using a wheelchair. Over time she started to trust us more and gain confidence. She now prefers to talk.

Two of Helen's housemates walk independently around their home and Helen started to tell us of her dream to walk again, because she wanted the same independence that they have.

We got in touch with the Hampshire County Council learning disability team and a physiotherapist gave Helen some

exercises to try and strengthen her muscles. She had been doing this for a little while before we tried her in a hydrotherapy pool.

Every time we talk about walking Helen's face lights up. She doesn't need to say a word to tell us how much this is enhancing her life. She is now going to visit the hydrotherapy pool fortnightly, and the learning disability team are looking at equipment that will allow Helen to walk in her own home one day. They have already introduced a new wheelchair, which Helen can propel herself from and is already enhancing her independence. ”

“Helen's muscles were strong enough in the water to walk the entire length of the pool with just a few floatation aids. She was absolutely over the moon. Helen couldn't believe after all this time she was able to walk again and she was beaming from ear to ear. ”



It's all about teamwork

Karen Stanislaus, Deputy Manager at Silver Birches, tells us why she loves working at FitzRoy



"Every day at work is different. You never know what challenges you are going to face. When the people we support are happy to see me it makes me feel great.

I enjoy looking after our staff as well - if you have happy staff you have a happy home. I always ask how they are and say 'have a good shift.' It's about our staff achieving goals as well as the people we support.

Out of the FitzRoy values, 'We are Brave' resonates the most with me because I think it's brave to help somebody else make decisions. Sometimes we may see the things

people want to do for themselves as a risk but it's really important we go above and beyond to help them explore and have a rich and fulfilling life."

“ At FitzRoy I have such a network of people around me supporting me to do my job to the best of my ability. It is all about teamwork - everybody is a piece of a jigsaw, regardless of their job position, we all come together. ”

A very special Royal visit

This summer, Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra, our Royal Patron, visited FitzRoy's Stepping Stones service in Suffolk.

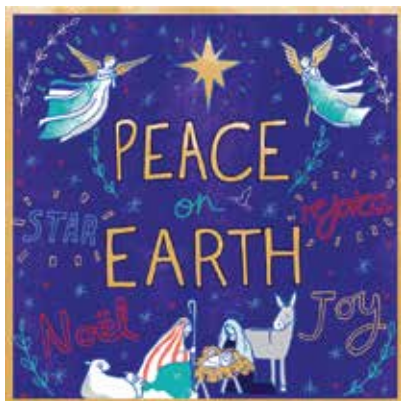
Stepping Stones is home to four young women we support who've been friends from a young age. Alice, Alison, Tess and Izzy went to school together and their families always planned for them to live together one day so it's wonderful that this dream has now been realised. Her Royal Highness met with the women, their families and staff, and was given a tour of their bungalow. The women really enjoyed showing off their new home to the Princess.



“ We are delighted that Her Royal Highness could come and meet the women and see their wonderful new home. It is inspiring to see four women who have chosen to live together leading full and active lives just like all 20 somethings should. ”

Anna Galliford,
FitzRoy Chief Executive

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The chance to be truly understood

When people with learning disabilities are given the technology to communicate their thoughts and feelings it can make such a huge difference to their lives.

Everyone is unique in how they express themselves, and many of the people we support communicate in different ways.

We have been using an app, called MyChoicePad, which uses 4000 Makaton (universal sign language) signs and pictures to help people to communicate and express their feelings clearly and make choices.

MyChoicePad is being used on iPads in our services and we are seeing remarkable results, with people having meaningful two-way

conversations with their carers and are visibly happier, more engaged and calmer as a result.

Our Big Give appeal, which runs from Tuesday 27th November to Tuesday 4th December, is raising money to buy many more iPads for our services and an unlimited licence for the MyChoicePad app.

Ange Kinder volunteers at our Trafford Day and Community Service in Manchester. She helps support two people who regularly sign and has been using MyChoicePad. She said:

Our Big Give appeal this year is to fund iPads and a communications app to help the people we support to have a voice and be understood.



“Technology expands communications choices for the people we support. This freedom, along with learning new skills, all helps build their self-esteem. They’re able to get across what they need to say. It’s the most rewarding part of my job to see the smiles on their faces as they achieve new goals.”

Karen Bannister, Deputy Manager at Malvern



“It has been great for me to learn more Makaton and see how pleased they are to have quality communication with me, rather than me guessing at what they are signing which is incredibly frustrating for both of us. One lady has taken great pleasure in showing me the signs and correcting me when her version of the sign is slightly different.”

At our Malvern residential home many of the people we support have complex learning and physical disabilities, and one young lady, Bex usually communicates through finger gestures and facial expressions. She has begun using MyChoicePad and was absolutely beaming when she pressed the button for ‘mum’ and the app voice spoke the word.

It was the first time she could express what she wanted to say using spoken words.

Just a simple item like an iPad can give people like Bex an amazing amount of freedom, choice and control over their daily lives.

By supporting our Big Give appeal this Christmas you could help to give people with learning disabilities the chance to be understood and to have meaningful conversations.

For one week only, starting from midday on Tuesday 27th November, every donation that is made to our appeal will be doubled.

Find out more at www.fitzroy.org/BigGive

Donation Form

Help us transform lives. Your donation, large or small, will support someone with a learning disability to live more independently.

Thank you.

Online donations visit www.fitzroy.org/donate

Cheque Donations please make your cheque payable to **FitzRoy Support** and return it to FREEPOST RLTB-UUSU-LCKT, FitzRoy House, 8 Hylton Road, Petersfield, GU32 3JY

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Thank you

A special thank you to all our fundraisers this year who have helped us transform lives.

From the Santander Rough Runners and Dragon Boat Slayers to David Ritchie and friends, who completed a 400 mile East to West coast cycle ride.

We mustn't forget amazing Grace and the Donec Mews Sky Divers, and all of you who've climbed mountains, taken part in fun runs, sponsored walks, yoga, the Buster Challenge and the Great South Run.

Whether you had a full body wax, shaved your dreads or made us charity of the year, we thank you all.

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