

Case study: Nathaniel

Headline

This case study highlights use of trusted person approach, and the importance of having an ear to listen.

Background

Nathaniel is 29 years old, homeless and has been sleeping rough. He has experienced trauma, uses drugs and alcohol and has some mental health issues as well as epilepsy.

Who is involved?

- Change-Grow-Live (CGL)
- Fenland Rough Sleepers team
- Counting Every Adult (CEA)
- Ferry Project

What were the barriers?

Nathaniel had been homeless for about a year and had been banned from the Ferry Project. He had accepted that he would not be able to access their help. However, when Mihaela joined CEA to work in the Fenland area, she heard about Nathaniel through a conversation with CGL and wanted to get in touch with him.

How were they addressed?

Mihaela met Nathaniel and started a conversation focussing on the reality of his situation, stressing the importance of both being honest with the other.

Mihaela asked about the reality of what Nathaniel needed, and why. They talked about the consequences of his past actions at various projects – and the reasons why he'd been banned from the Ferry Project. They talked about Nathaniel's need for accommodation and why that was important to him.

They approached the conversation as if Nathaniel had a new start, not constrained by anything which had gone before. Mihaela explained that she could talk to other agencies on his behalf, which he agreed to though was sceptical about how much help they would be prepared to give.

How has partnership working helped (or hindered) the situation?

Mihaela re-opened the conversation with the Ferry Project, to discuss the current situation for Nathaniel with them. By approaching the issues as if he was turning a new page, Mihaela was able to secure the support and help of the various agencies.

Within a few hours and over the following 2 days, the partner agencies co-operated together (Ferry Project, Molly from Fenland's rough sleeper team and Lorraine from CGL) were open and flexible, and showed they "had an ear to listen" to Nathaniel's story.

A few days later Nathaniel was offered and accepted Ferry Project accommodation. He is now working with CGL again on some of his issues and is in touch with his GP for his medication needs.

What have we learned?

Nathaniel was amazed!

By having an honest discussion with Mihaela and being real about what had happened in the past, she could bring partners together to agree to treat Nathaniel as a new person; someone who was not the same as they had encountered in the past.

Good communication was essential; as was flexibility by the services. Approaching Nathaniel in a trauma informed way made all the difference.

This provided the fresh start Nathaniel needed and enabled him to make the most of a clean sheet.

To find out more about Changing Futures

You can e-mail the team at changing.futures@cambridgeshire.gov.uk or visit our [web page](#)