

RELATE - SEVENOAKS CENTREA CASE REVIEW — Sept 2017 – April 2018COUNSELLOR: AWS

This case concerned a married couple with 3 children - two boys, 10 and 6 and a girl aged 3. They had known each other for 15 years and been married for 12. They were each 39 years old and the mother's ethnicity was Chinese. Overall the couple had 12 sessions at Relate.

The reason for accessing the service was the discovery by the wife (W) of a 10 month affair the husband (M) had been having with a work colleague. Although affairs in intimate relationships may be thought of as almost 'commonplace', the emotional fallout can be tremendous, especially in terms of the future mental health of any children, time taken off work and, if separation and divorce follow, the financial implications of legal issues and the dividing up of the family home and assets. Surveys of the general public show that only 33% believe a relationship could survive. When the same question was posed to relate counsellors, the answer is very different – 94% thought that not only could a relationship survive but that it could potentially thrive.

In the example above, where the affair had only been discovered 2 weeks previously, the pain, loss and betrayal felt by W was total – she did not want to hear denial, excuses or even an apology. She certainly did not want to look at or discuss what might have been happening in the relationship before the affair started – whether or not there had been arguments, disappointments, disconnection or loneliness. M was also struggling with guilt, confusion, shame and anger.

It was through a judicious mixture of individual sessions and joint sessions that the couple found the ability and commitment to try and rebuild their relationship. They began to see the affair as a 'wake-up' call and started to talk openly about how expectations, unmet needs and a fear around confronting difficult issues provided a 'context' for a sense of separateness and lack of intimacy in the relationship.

After 12 sessions they felt they were ready to take the 'tools' they had learnt to the next level – they recognised there would always be negative 'triggers' but felt a joint strength to really grow and learn together. They could always, of course, come back for a few 'top up' sessions with Relate!

West Kent Communities Case Study

Marcus (not his real name) is 10 years old and who has been attending West Kingsdown 8-12s Club since March 2017.

Marcus was referred to the 8-12s project because he has Autism Spectrum Disorder, sensory issues and struggles to communicate. Because of this he has trouble making friends and can have frequent outbursts. Since attending the 8-12s Club, Marcus has started to grow in confidence, is happy and relaxed. He participates in activities and is making new friends. He is learning how to manage his anxieties and feels more confident in asking staff for help if he feels worried.

Thriftwood

When the letters went out for the residential trip for August 2017, Marcus's Mum said it was highly unlikely he would manage being away from home for two nights. She said he had never stayed away from home and would be very anxious leaving his family. After much discussion, they decided would give the residential a try. During the residential trip, Marcus was supported by the staff and his peers to try new things. The residential supported Marcus to build friendships by sharing a room with other peers and engaging in group tasks such as go karting, problem solving and water rafting.

We returned Marcus to his mum, happy and relaxed. He was excited to tell her about all he'd been doing and let her know about the new friends he had made. His mum was so proud of Marcus and told him how independent and confident he had become.

Parent's comments

Marcus's mum said: "Marcus really enjoyed his time away with the 8-12s club. He was able to express himself and develop his creative skills. He really enjoyed the activities and was so happy to tell everyone about it." She added, "As a parent, I wrapped Marcus up to protect him with his autism. He had never been away by himself before. The West Kent staff made me feel really relaxed about letting him go and kept me updated about what was happening. They did great with Marcus by letting him know what was happening step by step so that he didn't feel lost. It's like my son had grown up when he came back! It made me realise how much more he can do. So, I want to say a big 'thank you' to all of the 8-12s staff and the funders as the trip really helped him to develop as a person."



Case Study – Family Matters

The client is a 9-year-old (white British) girl who I saw in school for 12 sessions. I also met with her Mum at the beginning, middle and end of my time with *Jane*.

Jane had been referred to us by *Early Help* (a Kent County Council run family support service) and she had accessed our Independent Sexual Violence Advisory service.

Jane had been sexually, physically and psychologically abused by her father between the ages of 5 and 7 years old.

The abuse came to light after *Jane's* parents had split up and her Mum was doing a safeguarding course at work; she was talking to *Jane* and asked her *if Daddy had ever hurt her?* *Jane* told her Mum in that moment what her father had done to her; Mum felt that *Jane* was able to open up then because the abuser was no longer in the home.

Mum reported to the police however the CPS dropped the case due to a lack of evidence.

The referral referenced *Jane's* anger; how she couldn't control her emotions at home and that she had self-harmed in a number of different ways.

On meeting with Mum: she was concerned that counselling would exacerbate *Jane's* anger, when things had been "better" of late. She was having fewer angry outbursts which Mum equated to *Jane* having not seen her father for 2 years (although he still lives close-by).

She said that *Jane* was "so closed - she won't talk" and spoke of how *Jane* had been "a Daddy's girl" and "she pinned for him when he left".

Mum also said that *Jane* "says that everything's fine - however her actions show different".

The scores on her Initial Assessment form backed this up, with a total of 21 (the minimum possible being 16 'no concern' and 64 being 'the most concern').

Mum messaged me on the day of the first session to say that *Jane* had "completely freaked out the night before".

I was unsure how many of these fears belonged to *Jane* and how many were Mum's.

I offered what I hoped was reassurance by arranging with the school for *Jane's* pastoral support worker (*Miss W*) to be on hand in case *Jane* needed a familiar face at our initial meeting.

Jane attended session 1 with *Miss W*; I explained my role to *Jane*; when I would be coming to see her; how confidentiality works in counselling and the exceptions to it; I also made it clear that she had a choice to attend and that next time it would need to be just the two of us.

I showed her the contents of my "creative bag" and suggested other things I could bring with me which might interest her whilst she was here.

She didn't give me a definitive answer as to whether she would return next week, but I was hopeful that I had paced the beginning appropriately.

Pacing the work is key for me and varies from client to client; people need to feel safe if they then choose to express themselves. The working relationship that forms over time is in itself therapeutic as it can teach the client to learn to trust again, which in turn empowers them to stop the past claiming both their present and future.

Jane attended on her own for the rest of her sessions.

She responded enthusiastically to creative work; decorating a butterfly mask with such perfectionism that it led us to talk about 'appearances' and how things are not always as they seem. We talked about times when we might 'mask' our emotions and the reasons for that.

Jane also drew her friends and family support network for me and she talked about the people in her life.

By session 4 I was trying to help her link her emotions with experiences in her life; using the *Blob Tree*, a set of gender non-specific characters who portray different emotions as they *sit on* - or *fall from* - their tree.

I asked *Jane* to pick one for 'the past' (she chose a character who was clinging onto the tree, looking distressed); 'the present' (one halfway up the tree looking content) and 'the future' (one at the very top of the tree looking relaxed and happy). I asked her for a word or two to describe each one, for the past; "scared/frightened", the present; "happy" and the future; "excellent".

It felt like the real work had begun, as I asked her more about the past Blob and she spoke about her father. I next introduced 'The Suitcase' to her; a metaphor for the brain and how we store facts, memories and the emotions we attach to them. I spoke about things that we don't understand and how those feelings can worry us and cause the 'suitcase' to burst open of its own accord if we don't feel in control of it.

Jane understood the metaphor straightaway, as I find many youngsters do, and she was keen to draw her suitcase. We focused on the issues that cause her suitcase to spring open and worry her (remembering what her father did and the fear of bumping into him in the local supermarket) and what she does to cope in these moments of stress.

Over the next few sessions we role-played scenarios set in the supermarket with puppets she assigned to her (a unicorn), Mum (a seal), brother (a dog) and father (a snake). We talked about the significance of her character choices and the puppets helped her to see that her Mum would never leave her vulnerable to her father in any given situation.

A sense of empowerment was gained over those weeks of puppet work.

We explored the secret that she had carried for years through the aid of the book *Whisper*; which uses a small monster (who represents an unknown secret) who grows in size and becomes smellier and more uncontrollable as time goes on.

Again, the metaphor was instantaneously understood by *Jane* and I asked if she would like to story-board or write her own story. She was particularly taken with the idea of a story-board.

Our remaining sessions saw her drawing the same puppet characters from her role-plays, as she talked through the emotions she felt when her father was in her life (*upset, disturbed, scared, angry and 'mixed emotions linked to sadness'*). She talked about the events that these emotions were linked to and it became apparent that many of them were also linked to her parent's divorce and the upset this had caused her.

The division was quite clear, what her father had done to her - versus - the loss of the *Dad* she had once known and loved.

We looked at her coping strategies surrounding these emotions and worked a lot with different stress toys to help her to talk through and express her anger and upset without damaging herself and her surroundings.

Over our final 2 weeks I explained the impact of trauma on the brain; how the trauma gets stuck in the amygdala before it's processed in counselling and then moved across to the hippocampus for a deeper level of storage - not dissimilar to her suitcase metaphor.

When I had encountered this brain explanation on a course before I doubted that children would follow it, especially using the specific names for the different parts of the brain. I was wrong; *Jane* seemed thrilled to be learning 'science' in counselling and said the unusual names over and over, adding her own soundtrack for them to boot!

I always take my travelling shredder with me to final sessions now, for child and adult clients alike, in case the client doesn't want to keep their work.

Jane relished the shredding of all *but* her butterfly; which seemed a symbolic description of her journey from caterpillar, chrysalis and now butterfly over the course of our 12 sessions.

I asked if she would like to take a stress toy with her at the end; she selected a small unicorn, echoing her chosen character throughout the role-plays and her storyboard.

By session 12 her initial assessment score had reduced to the bare minimum of 16.

She wrote that counselling had helped her "*because I can talk about how I feel and express my feelings and let it out*" and, she felt different now "*because I have no more worries and don't have any more things to be frightened of*".

Mum was very pleased with the progress that *Jane* had made, and she acknowledged at the concluding parental session that she "*now has a greater understanding of how to react when Jane shows anger and up set, as well as an understanding of how the brain processes trauma*".

I had explained what I had educated *Jane* in; so, Mum had a parallel explanation in case *Jane* had any questions in future.

Mum also wrote that "*it has helped a lot knowing that my daughter has got the help and support she needed*". Mum acknowledged that she had felt "*worried*" and "*nervous*" before the start of *Jane's* counselling but now felt "*very pleased I got this for Jane; it's been a positive experience*".

She felt that there were no improvements that could have been made to the service they received, as "*it's great as it is*"; she "*would contact us in future if needed again*" and she "*would recommend Family Matters to others*".



Please find a short case study from one of our new volunteers Brian (section 1), and in some informal feedback received by email from other volunteers attending the task days.

1. Volunteer Case Study

"I live in Sevenoaks and having left my job in January was looking for a useful way to occupy my spare time.

I found a volunteer day for [walking trails maintenance day](#) noted on the Bore Place website, I was aware of the organisation from a contact back in the 1990's.

It is both enjoyable and beneficial to do physical work with others outdoors, the tasks are varied to suit different abilities. Being able to contribute practically with a diverse mix of other folk to a project that brings benefit to both the participants and the wider community is rewarding. Installing the information board made of oak from the estate contributed to a sense of being part of a circle of sustainability.

Since joining in with volunteer days I have made the effort to walk the routes. It is delightful to progress through field and woodland habitats with the opportunity to observe the variety of nature which is prolific. I enjoy seeing the deer, a range of woodland and field birds, and the ever changing flora. It is an easily accessible but peaceful location close to the urban influences of Sevenoaks and the M25.

I would happily contribute further to work days and bigger projects."

Brian R Osborne

Pictured here





2. Other volunteer feedback

"Hi Tom, yes I had a really great day, doing all I love being outdoors in the mud, and trying to keep a fire going! It was great to learn your techniques as to keeping a fire started and going as it has been a number of years since I did!! Really enjoyed myself and expect me to be there on all your next trail etc dates. And please do let me know any other times I can help? Hope all is going well with your project and see you on the next day." **Fiona**

"I had a great day helping out today. It was a beautiful day and such a fantastic setting and a great bunch of volunteers and staff, I really enjoyed myself. I hope to be available to help out on future days. Please feel free to let me know if and when I am required and I will be there if my day job allows.... Once again, thank you for allowing me to help today, I really enjoyed myself and the company of the group. Bore place is a beautiful place and I have posted my experience on Facebook. I will be returning as a volunteer (if required) and definitely as a visitor with my nature loving daughter." **Tim**

"The volunteers and I really enjoyed the work at Bore Place last week." **Sara**

Walkers enjoying the Bore Place Walks trail on a bright February day.



Robin and Susan

Robin and Susan live in Sevenoaks. They were referred to Age UK's Information & Advice service by the Alzheimer's Society. They had identified that they needed help with benefits.

Robin is an 83-year old being cared for by his wife Susan who is 78. Robin has dementia and his behaviour can be challenging. Susan has Parkinson's and is quite frail. They own their own home.

Our Information & Advice service visited them on several occasions to try to improve their situation. First of all we carried out a benefit check. Robin was already claiming Disability Living Allowance but Susan was not claiming any disability benefits in her own right. We helped Susan to claim Attendance Allowance and she was awarded higher rate. At this stage they were not eligible for Pension Credit or any other means-tested benefits and therefore Susan had no underlying entitlement to Carer's Allowance.

We put Susan in touch with Crossroads to help with caring for her husband and Robin tried going to our day centre but this did not work as he was prone to wandering. For the same reason, our Independent Living Support service were unable to take him out. We also tried a befriender but this did not work either as he was prone to becoming short-tempered. Subsequently Robin started wandering in the street and was picked up by the police. They referred him to Social Services who asked us to look at their situation again.

We visited them again with the One You Project. They identified a need for an extra rail in their living room which would help both of them, especially Susan. The One You Project arranged for the rail to be fitted by SDC's HERO Team.

We applied for Council Tax reductions on the grounds of severe mental impairment. Susan was turned down as her Parkinson's is not impairing her mental faculties but Robin was given a reduction.

We applied for a Blue Badge for Robin so his family to use disabled parking spaces. This was awarded by Kent County Council.

We carried out another benefit check using Age UK's benefits calculator which suggested that their circumstances had changed and they were now eligible for Pension Credit. We applied and they were turned down by the Department of Work & Pensions. We double-checked this using the Turn2Us benefits calculator which confirmed they ought to be eligible and we applied again. The Department for Work & Pensions agreed they had made a mistake and awarded them Pension Credit Guarantee Credit.

Susan gave us authority to discuss their Council Tax with SDC's Benefits Section and they were awarded a further reduction in Council Tax on the grounds of income and savings as they were now receiving Pension Credit.

They were sent a lot of confusing letters which we helped them to understand. The current situation is that although we have not been able to improve their practical circumstances, we have managed to make a significant difference to their financial situation. For the time being, they have had enough of forms!

CASE STUDY FOR SDC MONITORING, 12 Months to 31 March 2018

Mary is a fictional character based on examples from real life.

Mary is 17 and came for counselling as she was extremely anxious, had self-harmed in the past, and was not sleeping. Her mother was present for part of the initial assessment to deal with practicalities such as payment and appointment times.

Mary was an articulate young person, who was feeling very stressed. The self-harm had been shared with her mother and precipitated coming to Sevenoaks Counselling. As a result of sharing with her mother she had already stopped cutting, but wanted to stop feeling the need to do so.

As we met over a number of weeks we worked on the current situation and also looked at her family history and who else carried anxiety within the family.

Regarding self harm, we looked at alternative ways of reducing stress, and I asked her not to go on any self-harm websites, which she agreed to. She also started to practise relaxation techniques. Her father had had anxiety issues as a teenager, so I suggested she asked him how he had managed, and that produced some useful conversations.

We then focused on the stress linked to school work and high expectations from her parents and the school. As we talked about this she was able to gain a different perspective and to take time out from school work to relax and also have some exercise. In addition we worked on her self-esteem, her skills and gifts, who she was, and what her hopes and dreams were for the future.

Regarding sleep, this did gradually improve and she chose a different bedtime routine, taking time to relax, switching off electronic devices, and going to bed earlier.

After three months of weekly meetings, she now has some coping strategies to use when life is difficult. We have ended our work together, but she can return if she feels she needs to.

Counsellor at Sevenoaks Counselling

May 2018



Providing services to people with learning disabilities and their families

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Kent Friendz
Tel: 01732 838183
Email: info@kentfriendz.org.uk
Website: www.kentfriendz.org.uk

**Sevenoaks District Council
Community Grants Scheme 2017-18
Monitoring & Evaluation Case Study**

**Organisation Name: Kent Friendz
Ref: 344**

'Our son N_ has attended the Saturday clubs for several years now. This has given N_ a much needed opportunity to socialise with peers in a safe, fun and caring environment. Furthermore, it has given us parents a much needed break which again has enabled us to be able to continue caring for our son who has very complex needs. Kent Friendz and its lovely staff and volunteers have honestly been a life-saver for us as a family!'

Mrs B. T_ - Mother of N

Sevenoaks District Arts Council Case Study

CASE STUDY

SLOG [Swanley Light Opera Group] performed for years at Woodlands, Swanley. [Capacity as a theatre of about 150].

Ralph Gutteridge, who sadly is no longer with us, represented them on the SDAC Committee.

Woodlands Management decided to concentrate on letting their facilities for Weddings only in 2014. SLOG therefore had to leave the venue.

In 2016 Woodlands closed and is now boarded up.

SLOG had to perform at village Halls, one being Darenth Village Hall. Obviously their audiences were limited [down by over a half] and they went through some tough times.

However this year they performed at the Howard Centre, Hextable.

The Howard Centre was originally South East Dance Studios, a purpose built ballet school built in the ground of the local school. The school was closed and the studio was not used.

Enthusiasts have been extremely pro active and are making it into a vibrant Community Arts Centre.

SLOG decided to hire this Hall for their production of "Rock of Ages" at the beginning of the Year [capacity over 120]. So the two organisations, SLOG and the Howard Centre have benefitted as well as Hextable itself.

Long may it continue.

WEST KENT MEDIATION CASE STUDY FOR SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COUNCIL

Jan 2018

This case has involved 2 groups of residents (15 households) that live in a retirement housing block.

Mediators initially went to see every single resident that was involved in the dispute individually in order to understand their issues. These appeared to be mainly around use of communal lounge and kitchen area.

After discussion with the residents it was agreed that they would have a spokesperson as a point of contact for each group. West Kent Mediation have spent over 33 hours in talking to all residents in person, over the telephone and by emails, as well as liaising on a regular basis with the Housing Association.

We have made a lot of progress in resolving many of the issues that were presented to us. Due to the complexities of the issues and the vulnerability of some of the residents this case has taken much time and is still ongoing. We are hopeful of a full mediated agreement at the conclusion.

Amanda Bell

Chief Executive Officer
West Kent Mediation

May 2018

CASE STUDY - ANDREA

(not her real name)

Andrea was referred to DAVSS by her Health Visitor for support as a High Risk case, particularly as she was about to give birth. She reported that she had experienced domestic abuse for a number of years by her ex husband from whom she was divorced. Although he was no longer there, she was still experiencing emotional abuse regarding outstanding issues in connection with child arrangements and contact for her older two children – a girl and a boy.

This situation was complicated as she had subsequently met a new partner, the father of her third child, who was reported to be exerting coercive and controlling behavior. He constantly texted and messaged her wanting to know where she was, who she was with and what she was doing. He tried to prevent her from leaving the house. Andrea and her partner were from different faith communities and this made the situation more difficult. This escalated to threats to kill and following a final incident of physical violence when she was threatened with a knife, she reported him to the Police.

The Police attended at once and were very helpful. They made him leave the house, and bailed him not to return. When he wanted to come back to collect his goods, they provided Andrea with excellent advice and offered to be present when he arrived. In the event he did not return and his whereabouts are not now known. During this time, she gave birth to a baby daughter.

The police advised her to get a Protective Order against her ex partner but because English is not her first language, she did not feel able to go ahead herself and apply for an immediate Emergency Non Molestation Order even with DAVSS support. DAVSS then supported Andrea to find a Solicitor willing to take on a Legal Aid case and she was assisted to make the necessary application. For bureaucracy reasons which were not clear at the time, the legal aid certificate was delayed by several weeks and the Solicitor felt that it was then too late then to apply for a Protective Order particularly as the domestic abuse had ceased for the time being because of the Police bail conditions.

However, the solicitor also applied for a separate Legal Aid Certificate to represent Andrea regarding a Child Arrangements Order in respect of the ex husband who was using the situation for renewed emotional abuse. This was approved and a Child Arrangements Order was agreed with provision for a safe child handover in a public place so that her ex husband did not have to come to the house.

Additionally, she also applied for a Special Issues Order in respect of a passport for the baby so that she could return to her country of origin with all three children to visit her elderly relatives who were unwell. This was fraught with difficulty as the Order which was granted could not be served on her ex partner as his whereabouts was not known. The Order was therefore withdrawn. DAVSS then supported her to make a special request giving reasons why she needed the passport and the very considerable efforts she had made to find his address. This was accepted by the Solicitor who then obtained the Order. Unfortunately the name of the child was spelt wrongly by the court staff which rendered it invalid for passport usage. Finally a correctly spelt Order has now been received and Andrea can proceed to apply for the necessary passport.

During this period, she also reported an incident of sexual abuse towards her son by her ex partner and this was reported to Social Services. She was then referred with her son to Family Matters (who specialise in cases of sexual abuse) for counselling.

Whilst this situation was being resolved, Andrea and her older two children were subjected to racial abuse within their neighbourhood. This was reported to the Police who again were most helpful. This was also reported to the Housing Association who agreed that together with the background of domestic abuse, she needed to be moved to a safe and confidential address. The Housing Association kept in touch regularly with DAVSS and organised her move to a very suitable house which Andrea is very happy with. The address is being kept confidential for safety.

DAVSS applied to two local charities for necessary kitchen equipment and for Christmas presents for the children which were warmly received by Andrea and appreciated by them all.

Andrea and her children are now settled, the older two children are at new schools where the Family Liaison Officer has also been most supportive.

During this period, Andrea has worked very hard to make the best of her situation, take up all the help offered and prepare herself to return to work when the baby is old enough by undertaking relevant training courses. She has now started to attend the local Support Plus Drop In for ongoing support.

Purpose

- To ensure the safety of the client and her children
- To support the client to report any domestic abuse incidents to the Police
- To support the client to report neighbourhood racial abuse to the Police
- To support the client in accessing a Lawyer, assist her application for legal aid and support her to court
- To work with Social Services to safeguard the children
- To work with the Housing Association to support her to find new accommodation
- To support the client to take positive steps regarding training to enable her to access work opportunities when appropriate.

Action taken

- CAADA/DASH checklist assessed as High Risk
- A Personal Safety Plan was completed and reviewed as necessary
- MARAC referral was made
- Child Protection Referral was made
- The client was supported to Solicitors meetings and supported to Court
- The client was supported to make an application for a change of Social Housing following racial abuse from neighbours as well as domestic abuse
- Family Matters referral was made

- Freedom Programme referral was made
- Recovery Toolkit referral was made at the conclusion of the Freedom Programme
- Referral to the Support Plus Drop In was made
- Referral to the Support Plus Virtual Support Group was made
- Funding provided by 2 charities for kitchen equipment at her new house, and Christmas presents for the children

Successful Outcomes

- Andrea and her children are doing well and rehoused as the result of excellent partnership working with the Housing Association who also assisted in keeping her new address confidential and ensuring that it was in her sole name.
- The court case for the Child Arrangements Order regarding her ex husband was successfully completed with agreement that hand over of the children should be in a safe public place with no access to her house
- The court case for a Special Issues Order in respect of her ex partner has now been concluded satisfactorily
- Andrea has attended the Freedom Programme and found it very helpful, she also attended Family Matters for counselling
- The Police responded swiftly to her call for assistance regarding her ex partner and also assisted when she reported receiving racial abuse.
- Her children are now at new schools and happily settled and she is attending training courses as set out below. She has also offered to volunteer for DAVSS via translating when needed.

Unexpected difficulties

- .The delay in receipt of the original Legal Aid Certificate prevented her from obtaining a Non Molestation Order. However, in the event her ex partner moved away and his whereabouts is not known. If he returns and renews his abusive behaviour she will immediately contact the Police, DAVSS and her Solicitor with a view to obtaining an early Protective Order.
- The delays in obtaining the Special Issues Order were complicated but DAVSS assisted her to make a special case which was accepted by the court and this has now been resolved satisfactorily

Unexpected benefits

Andrea was delighted with the Christmas presents she received. She said

'It was truly wonderful to have these toys. They were just right for their ages. We had three really happy days over Christmas saving different toys for each of the three days. We were

there alone and very happy. One day we played with the Lego bricks all day. Thank you so so much.'

She could hardly believe that it was possible for her to receive new and fully working kitchen equipment and was so appreciative that two charities had provided for her needs.

On case closure Andrea reported a number of significant improvements (where (1) is the worst and (10) is the best.) as follows:

- Her feeling of safety has improved from (1) to (10)
- Her quality of life has improved from being very poor (1) to being greatly improved (10)
- Her physical health has improved from (1) to (9)
- Her mental health/stress/anxiety has improved from (1) to (9)
- Her housing situation has improved from (1) to (10)
- Her economic situation has improved from (2) to (10)
- Her prospects for being able to return to work are looking good as she is taking the opportunity to undertake a variety of training courses until her youngest child is eligible for a free nursery place. The training courses are listed below.
- She felt that her children's health and wellbeing, and being settled at school has improved from (1) to (10) and she says she is very happy about this.

Andrea is attending English classes, IT classes, has already achieved Catering Level 2, and Safety, health and hygiene Level 2. She is due to start a customer service course and training for online working shortly. As her first language is not English, she is also going on a translating course as she feels this is another possible avenue for employment. Additionally she has already offered her translating skills to DAVSS on a voluntary basis if needed.

Andrea says 'I am very pleased to know DAVSS. I felt very calm when we first met and this was very helpful from the beginning. I trusted you, before I didn't trust anyone. You made me feel safe. I am a very shy person and I find it very hard to talk really. But I can speak to you and trust you because you keep it confidential and it makes me feel safe. DAVSS was very kind to me at court and I never imagined someone could help me like this.'

Andrea has attended the Support Plus Drop In and says that she will do so whenever she is free in the future and is pleased that this ongoing support is available. She is also considering joining the Virtual Support Group.

(Name and some details altered to preserve anonymity – client gave permission for a case study)

April 2018

CASE STUDY - Charles

Charles referred himself to DAVSS after an incident between him and his ex partner involving the Police.

Charles reported that his long term partner had been abusive towards him for many years, ranging from belittling and controlling behavior to physical assaults. Despite being separated from his ex partner for a period of 3 years he still was suffering harassment and abuse mainly due unresolved child contact issues. Charles said that his ex-partner abused alcohol and was frequently drunk, took strong prescribed medication combined with use of recreation drugs

Charles recognised that his children were also mirroring some of the abusive behavior they had witnessed and their attitude towards him was deteriorating. Charles is now seeking counselling for his children in an attempt to minimize the impact on their long term development of living in a home environment where they were exposed to domestic abuse.

The catalyst for Charles finally deciding to leave his partner was when one of the violent attacks was witnessed by one of his children (under 10 years). He said that this was the wakeup call that he needed to help him realise that he could not continue this relationship. Even today he finds it hard to accept that he has been a victim of domestic abuse despite now being fully aware that this was the situation. Due to the abuse he had lost all of his self-esteem and confidence and this contributed to his lack of recognition that he was a victim of domestic abuse.

Charles was residing outside Kent when he first had contact with the Police. Despite them dealing with the immediate situation he did not receive advice, guidance or signposting to other services that might have assisted him. He subsequently moved to West Kent and after the most recent incident when West Kent Police were called, he was given information from the attending police officers. They told him about DAVSS, what support the organisation could offer and how he could contact them. Initially Charles was concerned that DAVSS might be affiliated directly to the Police, but when the officers explained that DAVSS was an independent charity he was more confident and made contact via the Helpline.

Charles has acted on the information he was given during telephone support and this has greatly assisted him in determining a way forward. He has commenced formal Child Arrangements proceedings via his solicitor to resolve some of the outstanding issues regarding his children.

Charles is very grateful for the support he has received and knows that that he can make contact with DAVSS at any time via the Helpline should he require further advice or support. He now considers himself to be a survivor rather than a victim.

During the many years of abuse he had sought assistance from his GP. Despite disclosing the abusive situation to his GP he was not offered any practical advice or guidance around other services that may have been available.

He also disclosed the situation to his employee and whilst his Manager was very supportive Charles was not provided with any direct support or signposting despite being employed by a large professional company.

Purpose

- To ensure the safety of the client and his children
- To support the client to report any domestic abuse incidents to the Police
- To ensure the client explores any legal options which might be open to him.

Action taken

- A Personal Safety Plan was completed and reviewed as necessary
- A Child Protection referral was completed and forwarded to Specialist Children Services.
- He was given details of other partner organisations that would be in a position to offer additional assistance.

Successful Outcomes

- Charles was appreciative that DAVSS was an independent charity and was available to listen to his issues and not be judgmental whilst providing sound practical advice.
- Charles appreciated that his situation was taken seriously and that he had been encouraged to contact the Helpline at any time should he feel the need to do so in the future.
- Charles has moved away from his ex-partner and is obtaining legal advice to pursue a Child Arrangements Order through his own Solicitor.

Unexpected difficulties

- The fact that when Charles first involved the Police outside of Kent regarding the ongoing domestic abuse he was suffering, he was not offered any additional support or signposting information that may have allowed him to break the cycle of abuse at an earlier stage. This was resolved when he received appropriate support and information from Kent Police.
- Despite Charles disclosing to his GP that he was experiencing domestic abuse his GP failed to refer or sign post Charles to other organisations or services that may have been able to advise and assist Charles.
- For many years Charles was not able to recognise that he was actually a male victim of domestic abuse. This may have been a factor in the lack of support and assistance that he was offered and this has now been addressed. *'Did I realise I was a victim of domestic abuse? No. Even saying that now after all of these years seems strange'*.

Unexpected benefits

- Charles strongly believes that more should be done to raise the public awareness regarding men also being victims of domestic abuse. He feels that DAVSS publicity initiative with male orientated establishments such as gyms, pubs, sports clubs should continue. He also feels that increased use of social media to link with other men in a similar situation would help them to recognise that what they were experiencing would classify as domestic abuse and therefore could be encouraged to seek support.

- DAVSS already recognises that further work nationally is required to raise awareness of GPs and Charles' story will be a helpful example in providing training locally to health professionals about how to identify victims of domestic abuse and then provide information about services available for direct or self-referral.
- The knowledge of West Kent police officers who recognised immediately that Charles was a victim of domestic abuse and provided him with information about additional services available where he could get further advice and support.

Charles was appreciative of the service provided and said *"I was impressed with the sympathy, understanding and advice I received from DAVSS"* and added *"It's amazing how support can have a positive impact on your life and give you the help you need to make the next step and for you to realise you are not alone"*.

(Name and some details altered to preserve anonymity – client gave permission for a case study)

Case study for BRIDGES' Creative Café and T@2

Mr. A is in his early 70s. He is struggling with coming to terms with his failing memory, attributed to Alzheimer's disease, and a recent diagnosis of Parkinson's disease. He is an active intelligent man who has travelled the world in the Navy, and lived for a period of his life in Africa. His wife goes out to work, so he disciplines himself to go out for a walk round a familiar town centre route every day, which enables him to meet friends in passing. The opportunity to join a social group engaging with different creative art activities has been a challenge to him, particularly when it has brought deep and sometimes painful memories to the surface. The Therapist has been able to take time aside with him to focus on resolving this pain, and the support of the group has been particularly nourishing with its mix of banter, compassion, and admiration of each other's art work. Each member of the group is dealing with some major life-changing issue and the peer-support created within the group is particularly life-enhancing, continuing as it does beyond the 2hr session, into ongoing friendships and encouragement when participants happen to meet in the town.

Mrs. B. lives in a local residential home. She wants to maintain her activities in the outside community, and welcomed the chance to join in discussions on a variety of topics offered in the T@2 sessions. Mrs. B is in her early 70s. She has a warm, outgoing personality but she is losing the power to express herself due to the progress of Alzheimer's disease. These sessions gave her opportunities to contribute to conversations, focus her thoughts, and share her experiences, which she said made her feel very much 'a person' again. She particularly enjoyed the two sessions led by Eden Songsters, and expressed a wish to join this group, a request which will be followed up if a carer can be found to accompany her.

Mr. C. is a quiet gentleman in his late-80s, who recently moved to a Residential Home in Edenbridge, wanting to take part in the life of his new community. He does not seem to find conversation easy, but he took a genuine interest in all the topics that the T@2 speakers talked about, asking pertinent questions and taking leaflets back for the benefit of friends at the Care home. He valued being out of the Residential Care environment, away from the TV, and having the opportunity to talk about something that stimulated his thoughts, with people who could engage in intelligent conversation.

Miss D is a young woman in her 20's who was recommended to come to T@2 and the Creative Café by the Parish Nurse. D said she'd come from Swanley only a few months before, and was living alone in a WKHA flat. She didn't know anyone, and she barely went out except by taxi to do her shopping in the evening when few people were around. Although clearly withdrawn, and probably suffering from depression and very low self-esteem, D engaged with the conversations at T@2, bringing a young person's perspective which was informative for the older people present. She came to two sessions, and it was at least good that she discovered that BRIDGES was a welcoming place where she could find company if she wished.

Miss D joined in with one session at the Creative Café, which was a big step for her, and she responded warmly to members of the group who were nearer her age, some of whom had experiences similar difficulties. Choosing to work with mainly black paint, she found the messiness unsettling, as the paint took its own course on the tile. This frustrated her, and she chose not to return to collect her finished tile, which, to the onlooker, was as appealingly dramatic and unique as any of the others.

The sadness of her isolation was heightened by not knowing her address, so the groups which had welcomed her were not able to keep in touch, though we have heard that other services are aware of her existence and needs.

Sevenoaks Kent Karrier case study

Mrs. W lives in Heaverham and has been using the Sevenoaks Kent Karrier service since the death of her partner, who drove her everywhere. She initially used the local bus service this was withdrawn, and after relying on family and friends for a while she heard about the KK service that could help her get to town and to the local Age UK centre.

She found the service to be very reliable and punctual and excellent value for money with very friendly helpful drivers who always carried her shopping bags to her back door without her having to ask. She found the booking system very easy and was never told that she could not travel.

Mrs. W likes the idea that the service can be used five days a week and that you could go anywhere in the Sevenoaks area and not be restricted to certain times of the day. Her confidence, independence and social life has improved as she has made new friends and regularly meets up with them all thanks to the outings she has booked with the Sevenoaks Kent Karrier. She would be devastated if the service was withdrawn as this is the only reliable transport she can count on and life without it would be very depressing to say the least.

Edenbridge Voluntary Transport Service

17 April 2018

Case study 1

An elderly couple both with extensive medical problems and requiring walking aids, require our assistance to access local medical facilities and more distant hospitals [Maidstone, Pembury, East Grinstead]. There is no way either could use public transport, the only alternative would be the use of ambulances, which do not offer the bespoke service that we can provide with our voluntary drivers. We are happy to assist them several times a month.

Case study 2

A person with a mental disability which means they are unable to travel safely on public transport, needs to visit a facility which provides craft training at least twice a week. The trip is a round journey of 30 miles twice a day. The family which unfortunately have other medical issues is unable to cover all the journeys involved. We are happy to provide a voluntary driver to transport the client several times a week.

Case Study 1

.....has profound multiple learning disabilities,he has to wear a helmet at all times to protect himself from injury. He is wheelchair bound, non-verbal and can at times display challenging behaviour. He is a regular attendee at our half term, main school holiday and after school clubs, we also provide home support (not included in grant application) to give his main carer respite.

When he first joined our activities he was very withdrawn, lacked any confidence and was uncommunicative.

After spending considerable time with..... building up a rapport we introduced him to various sensory activities and to animals at various wildlife centres. The reaction we received from..... was immense. As you are aware children with learning disabilities respond well to sensory activities and animals. This gave us an idea and with the help of our local disabled horse-riding centre..... is now able to sit on a horse (supported at all times by several support workers). He has an expression of sheer joy whenever he attends and is constantly asking his carer when can he go to Kent Friendz and go horse-riding. His confidence and independence has grown so much that when on one occasion the horse raised its leg over a small pebble he smiled even more.

His mother said 'Kent Friendz has made a much more confident, independent and communicative child. He always comes home with a big smile when he comes back from Kent Friendz'.

Case Study 2

.....has profound multiple learning disabilities,and behavioural disabilities, in addition he suffers from epileptic seizure (symptomatic focal epilepsy) and his left side hemiplegia, which means that he loses his sense of balance and is wheelchair bound. He also has challenging behaviour. Despite his disabilities he is a regular attendee at the Kent Friendz activities. Because of his disabilities he required 2:1 care at all times, which is costly in terms of staff cost but we are able to provide this level of care because of the funding we receive from grant providers. When he first came to our activities he was very withdrawn, uncommunicative and lacked any form of confidence. We spent a great deal of time with him, building up a rapport and gave him confidence in our staff, we always used the same staff with him. Although his disabilities remain he has made significant progress in terms of communication and confidence.

This had been achieved by introducing him to various sensory activities, he loves animals (as you know children with learning disabilities respond well to sensory stimulus), we have taken him to local parks and wildlife centres where he can meet the animals.

His mother said 'Thank you Kent Friendz for all you do for, you have an excellent team who work so hard providing all the activities and for what you achieved for'.

Sevenoaks Community First Responders



In Partnership with
South East Coast Ambulance Service 
NHS Foundation Trust

Rosie Withenshaw - Case Study

Rosie saw an article in Kemsing Parish Magazine 'The Well' suggesting that Sevenoaks Community First Responders were looking for new volunteers. She emailed Tim Hall, CFR Team Leader on 15 September 2015 and he directed Rosie to the web site and also invited her to come along to a group meeting. Rosie's first group meeting was on 29 October 2015. Tim talked her through what was involved in the role and invited her to stay and listen at the meeting.

Rosie began to help at Fundraising Events, her first being 7 November 2015 helping the team run the stall at Sevenoaks Fireworks, a fundraiser at Sevenoaks leisure Centre, as well as attending the team meeting on 26 November. This showed the Sevenoaks CFR team that Rosie was serious about joining the Responders so later that day Rosie was sent an application form to join Sevenoaks CFR.

Rosie returned the form to Tim on 28 January 2016, she then attended an interview with South East Coast Ambulance Service on 31 March 2016, and by April 2016 had received some additional forms from South East Coast Ambulance Service to complete including Disclosure and Barring Service Certificate.

Rosie's two Referees had been approached and replied by early May 2016, and she had been contacted by Team Prevent to start her course of Hepatitis injections, her first being on 7 June 2016. Rosie carried on attending team meetings every month and helping out at fundraising and training session including but not limited to Kemsing Guides on 15 April 2016 and Otford Village Fete on 30 May 16. Rosie then attended the day course at Paddock Wood on 25 June 2016 which included training in how to use a Defibrillator and how to administer Oxygen which she passed.

It was now that, thanks to the grant given by Sevenoak Council, that we were able to supply Rosie with her Responder Kit and get her actively responding out on the road.

Rosie clocked on for the first time as a Responder on Sunday 17 July. Four hours in she was called by the Control Desk to assist another Sevenoaks First Responder help an elderly gentleman who had cut his leg badly and lost a couple of cups of blood. The CFR's were first on scene and Rosie began to control the bleeding and the other CFR gave the gentleman oxygen. The Ambulance Crew arrived and took the gentleman to hospital.

Rosie plans to continue attending training courses so that she can increase her scope of practice and respond to a wider scope of calls.

Imago Case Studies

Please provide at least three case studies related to the services for which funding has been provided

CVS

Supajam is an organisation that was previously based in Tunbridge Wells and is now in Swanley. Its aim is to work with young adults who are Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEETs) and provide them with education in music and media as a way to engage them. They were given help to complete their online Charity Commission application form. Supajam was also given advice about finance including recommended banking services.

Dial 2 Drive

Our Dial 2 Drive service originated in Sevenoaks and this area remains our largest service. One of our Rockdale clients wanted to go to a school reunion at Thorseby Hall, Ollerton, Northamptonshire (pictured below) which is 180 miles away. He asked for a driver to take him there on the Friday and collect him again on the Monday. This would have meant 720 miles for a driver to take him there, return home, and the same for the Monday collection. One kind volunteer came back with an offer - that if the client was prepared to pay the £40 for a camping site to pitch his tent up, he would stay nearby for the weekend and then drive him home on the Monday! This saved the client £288 pounds on wasted mileage and he had a delightful time at the reunion.

Volunteering

As well as the individuals we have registered as a result of phone calls, emails and visits to our office we have also promoted volunteering at events. We attended a Health and Wellbeing Show at the Stag Theatre in May and a jobs fair at the Hope Church in September. We also attended West Kent College Fresher's Fair in September. A variety of organisations were there including the police, college careers, Mind, Carers First, CAB and others. We spoke to 48 young people about volunteering opportunities and left material to hand out to those students who had been unable to attend.