

Welcome to the latest quarterly update from Gloucestershire Mentoring Programme. This time we're pleased to introduce Tracy, the newest member of our team. And we're sharing the mentoring experience of one of our young people, and the impact it's had. As ever, demand for our service remains high. So, we'd like to say a big thank you to the wonderful and ever-growing team of volunteer mentors who provide the support our young people need.



Introducing...



We're thrilled to have welcomed Tracy Bedford who joined us in February and is based at Young Gloucestershire. Tracy has taken on a new role with specific responsibility for the most vulnerable young people on the Programme. She'll be providing individual support and working with the wider team to meet the 'higher risk' needs these young people bring. And she, herself, brings a wealth of relevant skills and experience to the team.

Volunteer Recruitment

Over recent months we've been busy recruiting and training more volunteer mentors. It's a continuous process as we always have a waiting list of young people ready to begin mentoring. We've plenty of training courses in the pipeline and would love to hear from anyone interested in joining us. Email: info@gloucestershirementoringprogramme.co.uk

"Offering this safe space to encourage and support my young person has brought a real sense of hope for the future".

GMP Mentor



Andrew's Story

At age 24, Andrew, a care-experienced young person, was living independently in his own flat but struggling with accumulated rubbish, lack of cleaning and hygiene. He had been affected by Covid and the lockdowns, and was experiencing significant social anxiety and depression. In his younger years, he'd had a number of adverse childhood experiences and been removed from his family home at a young age. He had been, and still was, at risk of exploitation.

Andrew was interested in having a mentor so he could try new things, build his confidence, and get out into the community more. He was matched with Mary, a retired medical professional.

Initially, Andrew and Mary met regularly for refreshments in a local cafe, and Mary sensitively supported Andrew to speak with the staff and order drinks. This was a significant step forward for him as he'd been finding social settings difficult, regularly leaving queues in GP surgeries, pharmacies and so on because he felt unable to talk to staff.

Over time, and as trust continued to build, Andrew and Mary began to venture further afield for some of their meet-ups. They visited a local museum as Andrew was fascinated by science. Then agreed on a big day out to the Science Museum in London. And with Mary's support and encouragement, Andrew purchased online bus tickets, used the Underground ticket machines, and paid for their refreshments.

Andrew expressed a growing feeling of confidence and, in time, felt able to attend a Prince's Trust course. By then, he and Mary had already been discussing the ending of their mentoring relationship. They decided their final meeting should be another big day out and, inspired by a model making activity they'd done together, they went the Tank Museum in Dorset and both really enjoyed it.

In her final meeting log Mary, who is still a GMP mentor, finished with, "Overall, Andrew has improved his interpersonal and relationships skills. He is happier to go out now and has more confidence than when we first met. He is travelling with his friends to an exhibition (Comic con) soon, which includes a 2-day stopover in a hotel in London!"



Thank you!

A huge thank you to Annie Blick who volunteered her time and skills for our most recent photo shoot. We're delighted with the results! Her fantastic photos are already helping us promote the service.