

Case Study

A 73 year old council resident living in general needs accommodation, with no living relatives was experiencing multiple physical and mental health problems through poor lifestyle choices. These included diabetes, high blood pressure and arthritis.

In January 2014 she was depressed and anxious, lonely and isolated to the point of being virtually housebound, reliant on mobility aids, carers and neighbours to assist with even simple, everyday household and personal tasks. She was fearful of accessing and receiving any medical treatments, and had resigned herself to a reclusive lifestyle. She was in a vicious circle where her weight, low mood and joint pain made her unable to join in with the very activities that would help those issues.

With the support and encouragement of the CBH Housing Support Officer, this resident has attended the Wallace House community hub. By January 2015, she has now lost over a stone in weight, has managed to use the stairs and climb the steps onto a minibus for the first time in 7 years which has enabled her to reintegrate back into her community.

A regular attendee at the hub, she has attended Diabetes Awareness sessions and Healthy Eating talks, completed the Expert Patient's Programme and Let's Talk Emotional Wellbeing for Older Adults psycho-educational courses (offered in partnership with NHS together) , signed up with a Community Health Trainer to look at healthy eating and physical activity, and attends weekly seated physical activity sessions such as tai chi, yoga and relaxation, Move It Or Lose It and Pilates.

Her joint pain, anxiety, blood pressure and blood sugar have dramatically reduced and her confidence, mobility and mood have significantly increased. She is now regularly attending a variety of activities at the hub, where she feels she is cared about and makes a valuable contribution (even acting as a mentor for another participant with very similar health problems), and she is independently enjoying more community-based and social activities now she is physically able to get out of the house. With consistent health promotion messages, she has accepted that she is still on her journey to improved health, but that it is her responsibility to take control of her own wellbeing.

Caroline Walker, Community Services Manager

Cheltenham Borough Homes