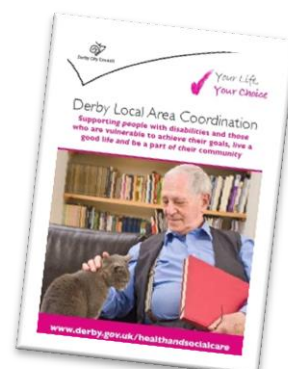


Local Area Coordination Ethel's Story

Ethel made contact with her Local Area Coordinator, Simran, after finding a leaflet at the GP surgery. Ethel's original request was for some support to deal with some big metal doors she had in her garden that needed scrapping. As the conversation developed Ethel talked about the fact that she had recently lost her husband of many years to cancer and was struggling to cope with life by herself. After a long conversation over the phone they agreed that Simran should visit Ethel at home to talk about the things that she could help her with.



On meeting Ethel, it was evident that she was a very sharp articulate lady who was struggling to manage life on her own. Ethel was dealing with a number of physical health issues on top of her bereavement and as a result her concerns about her garden had tipped the balance. This had resulted in Ethel making weekly contact with her GP surgery through anxiety related issues and a significant drop in her self-confidence.

From a Local Area Coordination point of view it is really important to be able to demonstrate that we will follow through on actions agreed with the people we support as this builds trust and a sense of moving forward. Therefore that week Simran arranged to have the iron gates removed from the property and supported Ethel to manage this removal.

Simran then spent a number of visits helping Ethel to think about prioritising things that would help her feel more in control of her life. Ethel's husband had been a very practical man and the garden had been their pride and joy, therefore getting the garden back into some sort of order became the priority for Ethel and Simran.

Simran and Ethel made contact with the Council who came and cleared her garden of bulky waste. They also worked together to sell some of the highly specialist tools that lay unused in her garage, tools that could be sold and the money put to good use by her.



They then began to think about how Ethel could begin to feel less isolated. Ethel is not a coffee mornings sort of person, gardening is her passion and she is quite knowledgeable about flora and fauna, however given her mobility issues managing her garden had become increasingly difficult to manage.

Simran decided to introduce Ethel to one of the other people she had been supporting, a man called Phil in his mid-thirties who was looking for opportunities to volunteer in his local area.

Simran talked about this opportunity with Ethel and Phil and introduced the two one day over a coffee in the local library. At this meeting it was agreed that Phil would be more than willing



to give some of his time in helping Ethel with her garden as he felt it was quite therapeutic for him.

During his first few visits, Simran spent time with both Phil and Ethel in the garden to check that all was well and then slowly left them to it. They got on like a house on fire with Phil happily chipping away at Ethel's garden whilst Ethel had some good company, and was able to pass on her knowledge of plants.

Some weeks on Simran popped round to see Ethel and Phil when they were in the garden together and it was clear this introduction has proved to be a real win for both parties. Phil has an outlet for his excess energy and Ethel has some company plus the benefit of having her garden cleared at no more a cost than a few cups of coffee and a few biscuits.

