

Case Study: AS
Date: 07/11/16
Project: ESS/IOM

A.S is 47 years old he was referred to YSS on the ESS Project by the CRC in July 2016 when he was serving a Community Order for Shop Lifting.

In 1988/89 A.S served with the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, he served in Litchfield, Berlin, Londonderry and Tidworth. A.S reached the rank of Grade 1 Standard RRU Fusilier and left the service around 1994/95 as he wanted to pursue a relationship outside of the forces.

Since release from custody A.S was living with his partner H in temporary Council accommodation, they lost this accommodation as H's son was taken into care leaving them both non priority. Due to further issues in and around the property they were quickly evicted leaving them both street homeless, living in a tent and begging on the streets.

A.S has a long history of substance misuse both alcohol and class A drugs and is medicated for Depression, he has a long list of untreated medical issues that needs attention however due to his lifestyle he has found it difficult to prioritise his health or register with a GP. A.S spends the majority of his time begging on the street with a sign informing the public that he is an ex service man.

AS informed me that he had been approached by RWF Des Williams and Malcolm Ball (RWF Comrades Association), I spoke with Des Williams who informed me that AS been known to them since 2009 and they are willing to support him where possible however they have had difficulties as they cannot meet the needs of both AS, H and their two dogs. They were willing to accommodate just AS in the Wrexham area in a hostel, AS is insisted he needs to remain with the dogs as they made a promise to H's son they would look after them for him. Des also informed me that when Malcolm had been out on the street to speak with AS he has not always been in a position to hold a conversation making it difficult to communicate and offer assistance due to possibly being under the influence of a substance.

A.S has several barriers to face to get back into accommodation, both he and his partner have been evicted from their properties therefore they had made themselves intentionally homeless. They also have two dogs which are often difficult to be accommodated. A.S has been getting support from Tim from The Ark (homeless support service) who is assisting him and H with housing applications.

I contacted the Soldiers on the Street who said they could assist financially into accommodation however AS would need to be down to around 30 ml of Methadone (AS is currently on 100 ml) another option would be to accommodate both AS and H in Telford however they would have to be in separate houses which could be near each other but no dogs.

Betel for both AS and H could also be an option but they would both need to be substance free and they would be accommodated in separate locations.

Salvation Army Shrewsbury provided three numbers for hostels out of the area. I contacted Birmingham Salvation Army Hostel, Edward Dixon informed me that they do help people with substance misuse issues however they are not specialists in this area, to make a referral would require contacting the single point of access, however it is unlikely they will be successful as they need a local connection to the area and if they are on Probation for a current offence in one area they are not keen to accept these cases in another area and they will not be a priority.

SSAFA informed me they do not accommodate individuals and if A.S was to call them they would signpost him to C.A.B for housing advice.

AS was begging daily in town and making a significant amount of money to feed himself and his dog and also funding both their substance misuse. A.S has talked about throughout the referral the difficulty he has faced to get help for himself as he also feels responsible to help H. As a result of this it has been very difficult to help A.S move forward.

IOM Co-ordinator Sarah Allan and I started to work united in supporting A.S. We discussed with AS about the option of going into Detox and into a Dry House. This option would appear in principle to be the best option for A.S and would enable him to have a better future however this would not be achievable if H is not accessing suitable support herself as A.S would instinctively return to H once detox is completed.

A.S approached Yellow Ribbon and asked if they would accommodate him, he had been told by a friend that a room had come available. I informed Yellow Ribbon Rita of what work had been done by myself and Sarah and up to this point and that we had been liaising with Probation, SRP and A Better Tomorrow and arranged a plan that would have met all his needs to get on the road to recovery and for reasons mainly linked to his relationship with H the dog and that he is just not ready to make such a commitment he has not taken the offer of this package

I explained what I believed were the Pros and Cons of Andrew residing in Yellow Ribbon. One benefit to him being in Shrewsbury is that he will have continued support from SRP, YSS and IOM and we could continue to engage with him and work on his motivation to engage with SRP and forward into Detox however I would have concerns about him residing with certain tenants currently in the property and if he were to go back into the Yellow Ribbon Property after Detox as it is likely to increase his risk of drinking and using drugs.

Yellow Ribbon decided they could accommodate AS.

AS has been in the Yellow Ribbon property around two months now, this has come with its challenges as he has not been able to be accommodated with H so he spends around 4 nights on the streets with her and 3 nights in the property. In this time other services have been supporting H. AS has nearly been evicted from this property due to lack of engagement with the housing support worker and a breakdown in the relationship is forming. AS continues to beg and has been issued a Community Protection Notice to prevent him from begging this is having very little effect at present as his benefits are still yet to start. Since being at the Yellow Ribbon Property after several attempts we (through a multi-agency effort) have finally managed to get him to register with a GP, have his sick note backdated and got him to the job centre to submit the sick note so hopefully he will have his benefits soon and there will be less need to beg.

IOM helped facilitate a professionals meeting in relation to AS, as there are so many agencies involved with supporting him and H, I felt it would be better if we were all able to have a discussion around the difficulties each agency were facing in supporting the couple and how we could work more effectively. YSS, Police, IOM, Probation, Yellow Ribbon and Drugs Services SRP attended (The Ark was invited but unable to attend) The outcome from this is that AS remains in the accommodation and we are better aware of what is happening with both individuals, thus allowing us to work with our own client but also have an insight into the all of the issues. The Police are better aware of what YSS are doing to try and support AS to remain in his accommodation and move towards Detox, YSS have a better awareness of what the Police on the street and The Ark are doing to assist both individuals.

Work continues to with AS on a weekly basis the progress is slow but as H is now on script, she has just had contact with her son and plans to stay with family to enable A.S to go into Detox. AS is now accommodated, benefits are hopefully to be reassigned any day and appears more focused to go into Detox now H is on a script, it is hoped that with all the services talking to each other we can continue to assist both individuals and their dogs.