

Room for Life: Case Study



Muriel was our second volunteer to take part in Room for Life and since taking part the project team have remained in contact to follow up on what has changed for Muriel.

Initially Muriel volunteered to take part in the project after it was recommended to her by a friend, Muriel was interested and wanted to find out more and it was a good opportunity for a change of scenery. Muriel wanted to use the time to find out more about the project and to see if there were any aspects of her life that she might want to change.



Following her stay Muriel identified two areas of her life that she felt needed some changes these were in relation to her social life and also physical fitness and abilities. During the stay Muriel enjoyed and found being around younger people to be mentally stimulating as on reflection a lot of the people in her community are older. Since taking part in the project she has joined a local art and a history club but this was not easy and is still mostly with older people but has made contact with other likeminded people.

In relation to her physical abilities Muriel felt there was a gap in her life and decided this was something she wanted to change. Muriel attended a stability course once a week but unfortunately at the end of the course there was nowhere for her to continue and maintain the work she had done. Muriel decided to look for exercise classes in the area and researched gyms, she found navigating around services and organisations difficult as no one suggested referrals to leisure centres where classes exist with the right people who can maintain the physical abilities of older people.



Muriel decided to join a gym and spoke up about her experience at the stability course to the gym supervisor and is now using the machines to maintain her results from the stability classes. After speaking with Muriel the gym supervisor also attended a Patient Participation Group to inform the group about what is on offer at the gym for older people. Muriel feels that since taking part in the Room for Life Project she has been able to “stir the pot to get a few things going”

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Muriel felt the RFL experience had benefited her in a number of ways, it encouraged her to start looking at physical exercise, finding groups where she could mix with younger people and broadening the search to join groups that are outside of the village, she has also considered and made contact about becoming involved in cat socialising and joining a book club.

When thinking about the future and accessing services Muriel would like to have the consistency of having one or two named people in an organisation in a role similar to the personalisation development officer, giving her advice, listening and signposting her to services. She felt that it would be important for her to have this consistency where she can talk things through with someone who knows her personally. Currently there seems to be a lack of consistency and is an issue across both health and social care services. Muriel feels empowered to speak up and escalate when more help is needed. Through having one or two named contacts trust is built up over time, they can also be the people who keep you informed of how progress is being made and gives a sense of security and reassurance that something is being done. In the past Muriel felt that once contact is made there is very little guidance on time frames of when things will happen and you often feel left in the dark and spend a lot of time chasing and seeking answers. The relationship between the person and the key worker has to be fair, equal and work both ways.

Overall Muriel found the experience to be a positive one and has looked at recommending to others in her community, when asked to describe her experience in three words Muriel said “pleasant, stimulating and increasing self-knowledge”.

For more information on Room & Home for Life please visit our website:
<http://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/care-and-support/room-for-life>

