

Maddie was referred to Direction by an Approved Premises (AP) officer. Maddie was released following an IPP sentence for a serious violent offence committed under the influence of alcohol.

Maddie had engaged with treatment providers. She had some skills and qualifications but was struggling to find employment. She also wanted to do some voluntary work to help others with addiction that she felt she had overcome.

Direction engaged with Maddie and it became clear that living at the AP, away from her family support network resulted in Maddie being socially isolated and in need of positive activity to maintain her abstinence from alcohol.

Direction worked with Maddie, setting realistic goals to find a pathway to future employment and developing her personal resilience to cope with challenges on return to the community. This included encouraging her to engage in daily exercise to improve her wellbeing which she reported really helped her to stay positive and focus her mind.

Direction supported Maddie to apply to become a peer support volunteer helping others who are recovering from addiction. This gave Maddie the opportunity to train and develop her skills to help others, and to improve her social network, meeting other volunteer staff, so reducing her own isolation.

Maddie was also interested in improving her IT skills to help her ultimately find a job, and Direction was able to refer her to an adult education provider. Direction advocated on her behalf to find the appropriate level IT course.

Direction seeks to support offenders into work through making best use of community services.

Peter presented himself to us at a community drop-in-session in a small rural market town. He had just finished a community order with BeNCH CRC where he had received some mentoring but was frustrated with lack of practical and emotional support to enable him to attain work.

While engaging with Peter we found that he lacked confidence and emotional resilience to complete a CV, application form and present himself at interview. He needed some 'hand holding' through the process of applying for work and he agreed to us providing him with support and guidance. Peter agreed he needed to grow his social skills to improve his chances of meeting people and discussing work options.

Direction arranged for Peter initially to meet with the Prince's Trust to discuss working with young people. We also arranged for a social enterprise in Luton, Att10tive, to meet him. They helped him with his CV and discussed whether Peter could help them in their work. Following on from his meetings with the Prince's Trust and Att10tive, we also approached GreenHouse mentoring and Groundwork. Direction supported Peter to complete an application form and other documentation and he subsequently gained a place working with young people as a volunteer.

Peter expressed his gratitude to Direction for our support and advocacy which helped him through the process to get this volunteering position and the first step towards paid employment.

Direction received a referral from Children's Services with regard to Ben. Ben had a history of domestic abuse as a perpetrator, which led to his children being removed. Ben was aware that if he wanted to resume relationships with his children then he needed to address his anger and emotional management.

Direction identified a specialist third sector agency, The Change Project, that works specifically with perpetrators of domestic violence. Direction made an initial enquiry with The Change Project explaining Ben's situation and assessing his suitability for the programme. Through engagement with Ben by supporting and empowering him, he agreed to attend the project.

Direction explained to Ben how the Domestic Violence Prevention Group was for men who wanted to stop their abusive behaviour, and therefore he would have to accept that his previous actions were abusive, in order to fully engage with the programme. Direction supported Ben to engage with The Change Project ensuring Ben understood the purpose of the programme and the end goals.

Direction also provided advice and support to other specialist services such as the Respect Helpline and email service supporting those who are concerned about their violent behaviour towards a loved one. This self-help tool enhances the skills learnt in the weekly programme, so Ben could develop and sustain positive intimate relationships.

Direction empowered Ben to evidence that he was making the changes required to address his behaviour in order to have contact with his children.

Names have been changed

May, a single mother with no support system was concerned her son Jake had become friends with people who were a bad influence on him. Jake has ADHD and his behaviour both in school and at home was poor. They had recently moved to a new area as May was keen for him to move schools and to find new friends.

Jake had run away twice and she had reported him missing. On both occasions he was found to have returned to his old friends. May was concerned that an older 'friend' was exploiting him for criminality to sell drugs. Jake was found in possession of cannabis and given a warning by the Police.

May contacted Direction for support and advocacy to assist with her situation. May explained that lots of people had tried to engage with Jake at school but that nobody had managed to get through to him.

May said Jake was better in a one to one situation rather than a group where he tended to show off and exhibit poor behaviour. After establishing her concerns, we discussed the options for Jake to engage in some positive activities to try and draw him away from the negative influences of his old friends.

Direction supported and empowered May and Jake to engage with a local youth service that provide mentoring and coaching to young people. The project focused on behaviour management, re-engaging with education, building positive relationships, and one to one mentoring.

Direction received a referral from the Learning Disability Team with regard to Tim who has a learning disability and was alcohol dependent.

Tim was self-neglecting, his alcohol dependency resulted in him often not eating as he was prioritising the purchase of alcohol. Tim was also putting himself at risk by associating with others who were financially exploiting him while he was drinking, leading to a safeguarding referral.

Direction worked with Tim and identified the need for and him to have further support with his alcohol dependency. He also needed more positive social outlets to engage with a different pro social network. Tim very much enjoyed arts and crafts and loved working in a group being able to chat to everyone.

Direction provided support and advocacy referring Tim to 'Walk to Freedom' which built on the alcohol treatment support he was receiving from statutory services. This is a peer-led support programme which would support Tim to ask the tough questions of why he continues to use alcohol when he says he doesn't want to and explore the issues underpinning his dependency.

Direction also referred Tim to a number of different community groups to make positive use of his time and avoid risky situation. This included The Enable Project that run inclusion programmes for individuals with learning difficulties, an art class at the Luton Irish Forum, and art therapy groups at the Disability Recourse Centre building his resilience and confidence.