

# GOOD NEWS STORIES

Prevention and Promotion Fund for Better Mental Health – Rotherham

## Reconnecting with fishing, friendship and community following the loss of a partner

Albert (name changed) is a 76 years old man living in the south of Rotherham. Albert has recently become widowed. He was hit hard emotionally after losing his wife on Valentines Day and having spent a lifetime doing everything together, he thought his social life was going to stop.

Albert has a passion for fishing but has not been able to get back to this since before the loss of his wife. Age UK Rotherham's Wellbeing Officer contacted him to see if he would be interested in exploring local community groups as a first step. Albert resisted this stating adamantly that this was a big NO THANKYOU. However he agreed to further conversations with us to help find a way forward but he wasn't going to budge.

Our Wellbeing Officer sat with Albert and listened to what he said mattered most to him and was able to offer him some choices. This included talking about the different community groups in his area. In the end he slightly reluctantly Albert opted for Chatterbox, "just to keep me quiet", because he likes a game of cards and said he would give it a whirl. He repeatedly said "It's not my cup of tea though" but "anything to shut me up".

The following week we accompanied Albert on his first visit to the Chatterbox group, meeting at Swallownest Methodist Church. Chatterbox is a well established social group run by older people for older people with a range of activities that build connections and strengthen a sense of wellbeing in those who attend. On this first trip having helped Albert to get over the threshold, he straight away saw an old friend. And went off to chat. Returning after the session, Albert said he enjoyed the whole morning, especially catching up with his old mate and said he would go every week. And he has.

**Rotherham Federation of Communities Ltd** Charity no: 5913521, Company no: 1158600, **Voluntary Action Rotherham (VAR)** Charity no: 1075995, Company no: 2222190, **YAWR Services** Charity no: 1192406, **Rotherham Ethnic Minority Alliance** Charity no: 1140365, Company no: 04730630, **Age UK Rotherham** Charity no: 1039771, Company no: 1927474, **Rotherham Parents & Carers Forum** Charity no: 1147969, Company no: 07719951, **Live Inclusive** Charity no: 1065630, Company no: 3126759



This was a breakthrough and with our help Albert now also attends Dinnington Resource Centres' Lunch Club and goes every week and even plays bingo after him quoting "It's a load of old cobblers and for purple rinses".

Albert is now also fishing again and starting Heighton View lunch club in nearby Aughton. Albert is thankful that our Wellbeing Officer was so insistent and is getting his life back to some sort of reality which is better than watching "garbage on the box" he says.

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