



COMMUNITY TRUST
At The Heart Of The Community

NEXT STEPS RESIDENTIAL 2023



Principal Partner



Introduction

The Next Steps Residential is a five-day trip delivered as part of the Early Intervention into Psychosis (EIP) programme which provides clients, at an advanced stage in their recovery from psychosis, the opportunity to take part in coastal activities and educational trips in Cornwall.

Alongside peers and NHS staff, clients gain confidence and self-esteem, with the aim that they are ready to return to education, work, and any mainstream setting after completing the programme.

Clients are first referred to the Charlton Athletic Community Trust (CACT) EIP service by our programme partners, Kent and Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust (KMPT) and Oxleas NHS Foundation Trust. The programme hosts a variety of inclusive activities, including but not limited to golf, horse riding, water sports, summer social BBQ's, ceramic pottery and canvas painting, outdoor sports, and archery. The programme's overall aim is to provide a knowledge-based programme that further supports our clients on the

road to recovery from episodes of psychosis and mental ill health. This is important as it is known that increased opportunities in physical and mentally stimulating activities are fundamental aspects in improving mental health and wellbeing.

Having the opportunity to attend a Next Steps Residential can be life changing for our clients. It is a residential that CACT enjoys providing as added value to our EIP programme and we would love to continue to be able to provide such an important component to participants recovery in future years.



The impact of your funding

Alongside income from an online fundraising campaign, funding from Faithorn Farrell Timms (FFT) helped CACT to deliver a total of three Next Steps Residentials in Cornwall during the months of May and September of 2023. This funding allowed clients to experience Cornwall with their peers, providing them opportunities to socialise, experience new things and get away from their comfort zone whilst gaining independence, thus improving their mental wellbeing, and building lasting friendships.

Clients are hosted in communal apartments which are shared by the other participants, and with support staff close by in their own communal apartments. This style of accommodation creates the space for clients to build on their confidence as well as their ability to live independently. Removing the direct assistance from family and support workers in this environment allows them to confidently put their growing independence into practice.

Funding allows for activities that participants would otherwise not experience to take place over five days. These activities include coasteering, educational coastal walks, and a bespoke tour of the Eden Project with a zip wire experience. Naturally, initially clients are anxious as the experience is out of their routine and rebuilt comfort zones. As such, the right conditions are required to effectively push boundaries to aid recovery, whilst boosting resilience, confidence, and independence. These factors are vital for the clients next steps on their road to recovery and reintegration to mainstream society.

“This was a once in a lifetime trip, the group was absolutely wonderful. We all bonded, and the activities were absolutely out of this world. I cannot thank the organisers enough for such a gorgeous week.”

- Next Steps Participant



Client Breakdown

A combined total of 18 clients attended the Next Steps residentials in 2023. This consisted of 11 males and 7 females, with an age range of 20 to 48 with the average age being 28. The ethnicities represented were Black African, Black British, White/Black Caribbean, White British and White Other; all from different areas in South East England. The clients were accompanied by two KMPT staff and two CACT delivery staff, on each iteration of the residential.

With the knowledge of the diverse demographics and abilities of the clients, CACT is mindful to ensure that delivered sessions are inclusive and engaging for all clients. To further encourage social mixing, relationship and social developments, activity groups are reshuffled for each session. In doing so we aim to reduce isolation and loneliness amongst participants.

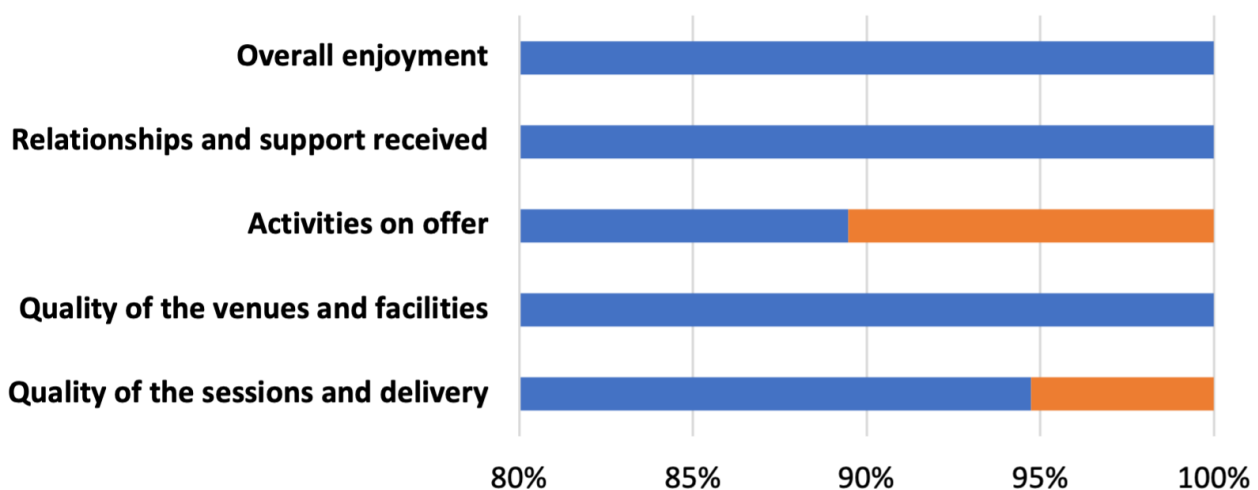
Feedback

Clients and NHS staff members were asked a series of questions, giving their own thoughts on the programme, allowing for quantifiable feedback. Questions included qualitative and quantitative measures, where the latter required rating of experiences from a pool of five answers: 'Excellent', 'Good', 'Satisfactory', 'Less than satisfactory', and 'Poor'.

Quantitative results from the surveys collected showed 100% of positive feedback (either 'Good' or 'Excellent') on each aspect within the question 'Thinking about your experience how would you rate the following...', as shown in the graph below:

Thinking about your experience, how would you rate the following...

■ Excellent ■ Good ■ Satisfactory ■ Less Than Satisfactory ■ Poor



For the open-ended questions, the consensus was that there was not a “least favourite part” as all attendees thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Besides the social aspects, highlighted in client quotes, the coasteering activity was by far the most mentioned and favoured, closely followed by the Eden Project, by clients and staff combined. This year participants unexpectedly swam alongside seals, a once in a lifetime experience. The majority stated that the coasteering experience was “challenging but fun” and “pushed everyone to their limits” and “it was good to see people strive forward and achieve their goals.”. Staff further stated that “it was exhilarating and used teamwork where everyone played their part supporting others. It was great fun and we got to see some amazing views and caves.”. One tangible/physical outcome of this “new experience” was the instilled passion within

a client who went on to buy a paddle board to use over the summer.

It is clear from the feedback received that the Next Steps Residential provided the platform for the pivotal development of interpersonal skills and ability to conduct day-to-day actions to lead a fulfilling life. Strong bonds and the sense of community belonging were built over these five days. Each evening consisted of social dinners as a group where clients and staff took the time to reminisce and celebrate daily achievements, solidifying the group dynamic.

A resounding outcome from clients, put quite simply is “friendship”. The Next Steps Residential in and out of the activities has led to a community/collective “meeting and bonding with new like-minded people”.

Outcomes

Clients shed light on their thoughts and feelings of the Next Steps Residential, from what it means to them to the impact it has had. Below is a summary of quotes from attendees highlighting the themed outcomes of increased independence, mental health, key life skills and strengthened relationships:



Quotes from attendees highlighting the main outcomes

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Increased Mental Health and Resilience

“ *I have built more resilience*

“ *I have become mentally well*

“ *I feel stronger*

“ *Very blessed to have had this opportunity*

Increased Confidence and Independence

“ *Great memories, new friendships, the ability to travel by myself.*

“ *I would go on holiday again and go further in the sea.*

“ *I was anxious before but feeling exhilarated now.*

“ *I was nervous and to a certain degree scared, how I feel now is incredibly proud of myself for coming on this trip and very grateful for being given this opportunity to come on the residential*

Quotes from attendees highlighting the main outcomes

Strengthened Relationships and Support Network

“

Community entitlement, understanding, qualities and viewpoints

“

I have pushed myself through some of my fears, i.e.: heights, sea water, anxiety. I made some very good friends

“

New friends and attending different locations

“

We have a group chat with the people on the trip, so we have a new group

“

Favourite part was eating the pizzas round the table together on our last night

“

The staff are fantastic, clients also appreciated being part of the community, I can tell

“

When I got asked to do this trip, I was honoured to do it this experience have been amazing and great meet new people and do things I haven't done before so thank you

“

I had several but sitting down as a group was the best part and the enthusiasm from staff was enlightening. I struggle with holidays because I haven't had good experiences, but this holiday has really made me rethink and want to do it again!

“

To me, it meant, connecting with other people who have gone through similar things and having a peaceful environment to think and enjoy the here and now, and the activities were amazing. Something that I'm gonna cherish for the rest of my life. The people and staff were so kind and made me feel welcome. and I loved every minute of this trip.

Staff Feedback

The results of the survey highlight the added value the Next Steps Residential provides the NHS staff too. The trip not only benefits staff on a personal front but also in relation to their job role and future interactions with their clients. The relaxed informal setting offers differing perspectives of their respective clients whilst offering respite to staff. The latter contributing to improved work performance going forward. Below are comments from the NHS supporting staff on their thoughts of and benefits from the trip:

“ The trip exceeded my expectations; my clients thoroughly enjoyed every aspect of the activities provided

“ I enjoyed all of it. Spending time with other people, supporting people. Being told by a vulnerable person that they felt safe for the first time in years.

“ I feel privileged to be able to attend the Charlton trip to Cornwall. It is amazing to see our clients overcome their fears and challenge themselves to overcome their fears. I also believe that it is a great opportunity for our clients to forge new and stronger relationships with their peers.

“ I have been able to spend quality time with my clients to enable me to develop a constructive relationship with my clients. I feel that I have achieved a sense of togetherness with my clients

“ I have been able to maintain organisation and be of support to clients for any issues they had, enabling them to feel comfortable. I have been working with EIP for less than a year, so this was a great opportunity to develop my skills and test myself in relation to responsibilities.”

“ New meaningful relationships. As well as coasteering, dealing with small anxieties to be able to support those with bigger anxieties to achieve

“ Watching my clients forge new relationships with their peers. And enabling my clients to overcome their fears, to participate in the challenging activities!!

“ To see my clients have new valuable experiences and grow in confidence. Some had never been out of their home county, it's a fantastic opportunity to see different parts of the country, socialise with peers and challenge themselves! I find it a very rewarding experience both personally and professionally.”

Success story

This years CACT Awards 2023 saw the Mental Health provision win the Programme of the Year award. During the ceremony, over 130 attendees were privileged to hear an EIP client's success story, who attended the Next Steps Residential.

"I feel honoured to have been invited to open the Awards this year because CACT has personally touched my life.

At the beginning of 2020 I suffered an emotional trauma. Not knowing how to deal with this grief I shut down, I stopped sleeping, eating, and drinking water. My mental health declined rapidly, I was diagnosed with non-organic psychosis, and I ended up in hospital for five weeks. Luckily, I was discharged the day the hospitals were just being locked down due to COVID.

However, leaving Bluebell ward, I walked away with this shame due to social stigmas and what little confidence I had before I went in, was gone. If this had been a broken leg or a cancer diagnosis anyone would have shared the news, and people would send well wishes, but admitting you've had a mental illness never seems to be received well. I was broken. Thankfully, I was handed over to a wonderful team of EIP doctors, therapists, and nurses, who I'm

so grateful for, and they in turn got me in contact with Terry, Bob, Carl and the CACT mental health provision team.

Through attending these amazing activities, I met fellow patients, going through similar things, symptoms, and treatments as myself. I pushed myself to try new things, face fears, and ultimately faced the tough journey to get better. Because of the work of my EIP and the CACT team, I regained my balance and have come out stronger and more confident than I ever was before, with new techniques on how to cope with loss, and anxiety. I have done things since that I would never have dreamt of before, like confidently walking up to someone first to strike up a conversation, make a friend and ask for a number.

I've since been discharged, I'm no longer on medication and have taken on and completed a master's degree, I also recently learnt that I achieved a Distinction, which I still disbelieve.

Anyway, no matter the outcome of tonight's awards, I want to say to Terry and his team, you're already in first place to me. I think I can safely speak for all the people you help; we will be forever grateful for all that you have done for us. So, thank you."

Conclusion

The Next Steps residentials are a vital component of our EIP Programme because they allow participants the opportunity to further develop the strengths and skills that they have built over the two years that they have engaged with CACT's mental health programmes.

Each participant suffered an episode of psychosis, or serious mental health issue, in their past and to travel away from home for an extended period and take part in demanding activities that test them both physically and mentally is hugely important in their recovery. The aim at the end of these trips is for clients to be ready to be reintegrated into society. This aim was a long way off when participants entered our EIP programme and highlights the positive impact that the mental health activities have had on their lives.

On behalf of our staff, participants, and partners, CACT would like to say a heartfelt thank you to all of our funders, including everyone at Faithorn Farrell Timms for your support of this year's Next Steps programme. Without your funding this year's programme would not have been possible, and your support has therefore directly helped to improve the mental health and wellbeing of the clients that took part, changing their lives for the better.

"It means everything, the Charlton project overall has been the most important thing for my recovery and feel blessed to be a part of the experience and grateful for the opportunity. Thank you."

- Next Steps Participant

