

A sample of case studies received from organisations funded during 2016/2017

Oxford City Councils funding contributes to life changing situations like those described below.

Case Study from the Thrive Project – a mentoring programme operating in Barton

A is a very active participant in our young leaders programme and has just finished year 11 but did not find school very easy to engage with and struggled to behave there. As a result, A was always in trouble and had been moved onto a reduced timetable which meant that A was excluded from school completely on Wednesdays.

We found out that no alternative activity had been arranged and consequently A spent the day hanging around not doing much. We therefore offered A the chance to do work experience with us on Wednesdays instead. A was very keen to do this and his school and mum readily agreed, pleased that A had a productive alternative.

We discussed behaviour expectations and set objectives with A. This person behaved impeccably and met their objectives, carrying out some excellent work – including helping to prepare some of the young leader’s sessions - whilst also bringing a lovely atmosphere to the team. During their time with us A discovered that they actually quite liked the world of work but told us they hadn’t thought at all about what they would do after school and finished their GCSE’s. We therefore encouraged A to think about this and with encouragement and some practical help from us with things like a CV and talked about what A was interested in A wanted to look at accounting apprenticeships. A passed their first stage interview for this and not content with just this, A also found two jobs for the summer period; and will be working in a B&B and a restaurant.

Case Study from Leys CDI Clock House Project –a project providing activities for older people living on Blackbird & Greater Leys.

B lives alone on The Leys and started going to the Clockhouse project 18 months ago and said “I started to come to bingo and quiz nights due to the organiser who lives close by. Then a friend mentioned about yoga and from yoga I progressed to tai chi.”

B has severe osteoarthritis of the lower spine and has found that both yoga and tai chi have help with this problem. Both forms of exercise have improved B’s balance and strength.

Our grant subsidises these activities which makes them affordable for older people to attend.

B has made friends with a lot of the other users and the project has given B a new lease of life.

Case study from Barton Advice Centre

Our client was caught up in the well-publicised issues with HMRC and Concentrix. She had been accused by them of living with someone and her Child Tax Credits had been stopped.

Client was a widow with two children. Child Tax Credit represented about half of her income which meant she was left in severe financial difficulties for approximately three months.

She had not received the original enquiry letter from Concentrix about the allegation (failure to issue letters was a recurrent issue with Concentrix).

Client had not been issued with a legally valid decision notice by HMRC and, therefore had been denied her right to appeal. In the absence of a decision notice it was not possible to identify the legal basis for the decision under the Tax Credits legislation.

Concentrix had advised our client they had evidence she was living with someone who was actually a neighbour who lived a few doors along. The decision to stop her tax credits had been solely because the wrong address for that couple had been recorded on a credit reference agency record that Concentrix had used to justify the decision to stop her tax credits.

We issued a legal challenge against HMRC / Concentrix for a failure to issue a legally valid decision notice and apply any of the relevant legislation. As a result her Child Tax Credits were re-instated within two weeks.