

Turning Point

The journey continues...

Jean believes getting help and finding a home has been a turning point for her son Paul.

Jean says it took Paul committing a crime before people recognised he had a problem. "When I talk about it now I say that my son had to go to jail to have the fright he needed and for the services to take his situation seriously."

Her son moved in with her when he was released from prison but finding his own house proved difficult, creating bumps on what had already been a rough ride. After being released from prison the first flat Paul moved into was right in town. He began drinking and getting into strife again, but with help from Keys, Paul is now living in his own flat within walking distance of his Mum's house. "It was a hard road to start with, but over the last month or so he has finally settled in."

Jean has been impressed with the Keys housing co-ordinator. "I didn't know where to start. I think eventually we would have got there. Using this service cut the time it took in half. It certainly more than halved the frustration we may otherwise have experienced. Paul's Keys housing co-ordinator knows how the system operates, what you can get from each agency."

Jean says both she and Paul feel comfortable working with Keys. "Paul's housing co-ordinator is absolutely brilliant. I just bless her. I would put her above anyone else in mental health. She is understanding of situations when others can be a bit patronising."

Life is now smoother for Paul. He is proud of his home and manages the bills okay. His mum believes having a flat to himself and a part-time job mowing lawns, has made Paul realise he can live independently. Jean believes one advantage of Paul being on the dole rather than a sickness benefit was that they expected him to be working. "He found a job himself by ringing around people that were mowing lawns. This guy seems really good and understanding."

At the end of the day things have worked out really well. "It is better for Paul and better for the community. We didn't want him ending up another statistic. There was a time when he felt like killing himself because he just didn't know which way to turn."

For Paul, getting help and his own home has changed his life. His own home is a haven for him. If he wants to visit people he can and then he always has his own home to go back to.

