

Case study: Haverhill LifeLink – one year on

In August 2017, the two year pilot for the Haverhill LifeLink project began. The project, run by St Edmundsbury Borough Council and ONE Haverhill Partnership, has already seen small successes, which can be demonstrated by the stories of the two participants below:

Bob's story

Bob was visiting his GP on a frequent basis with feelings of depression and anxiety. He felt that things were out of his control and found himself becoming more and more anxious. His GP spoke to him about Haverhill LifeLink and explained how it could potentially help him. Although Bob felt anxious about meeting his co-ordinator the first time, he attended and talked through his current situation. Through this process, he identified what his goals and aspirations were. This proved useful for Bob as he was able to explore different coping methods for his anxiety and also provided him with someone he could turn to if he felt overwhelmed. After several appointments with LifeLink, Bob began implementing different coping mechanisms and found that his days were more structured. This made him feel much better about his life and gave him a clearer sense of how he could move forward to reach his goals. Bob is still engaging with the LifeLink project and is exploring his next goals around meeting new people and volunteering.

John's story

John was referred by his GP to Haverhill LifeLink because he wanted to see what was available in the town to help with his feelings of boredom and low mood. After speaking to John to understand his situation, his LifeLink coordinator provided him with signposting to Citizens Advice so that he could get advice on benefits relating to his disability. LifeLink also introduced him to a lunch group that meets on a weekly basis. Due to John's disability, he struggled to get out and about so LifeLink organised community transport which allowed John to attend the weekly lunch group. John was delighted to feel part of his community and asked his coordinator what else he could do within the town. He now attends two community groups in Haverhill and is enjoying being more active within his community.

John said; *"LifeLink has made a difference to my life because I have met new people, got out of the house and overall feel more positive. I feel brighter and more upbeat since starting Haverhill LifeLink."*