

# CHANGING FUTURES

## Spring newsletter 2023

### PHOENIX HOSTS HOUSING TENANCY SUPPORT SERVICE:

We are really pleased to be able to share details with partners regarding a new housing project taking place in North East Essex.

Working in close partnership with Colchester Borough Homes who own the accommodation, we have been provided with a unique opportunity to identify clients who are homeless and support them into one of 6 self-contained flats.

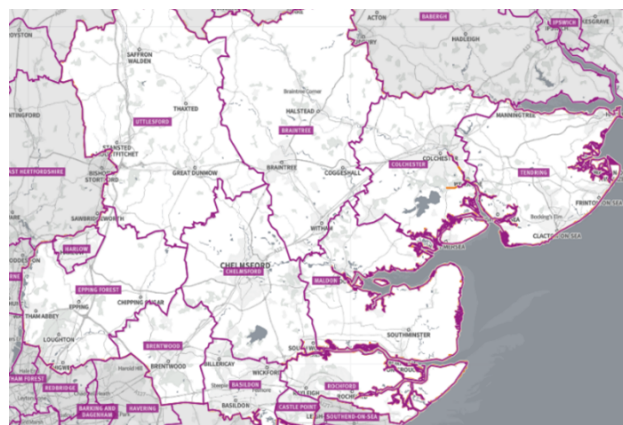
As part of this, Phoenix Futures have recruited two dedicated housing support link workers who are on site to provide 'wrap around' support, including developing life skills such as cooking, budgeting, and other activities which are intended to ensure they are able to sustain their tenancies. Our Futures in Mind Coordinator is also supporting with developing on site activities including arts and crafts as well as development of the communal garden.

Since Phoenix HoSTS commenced in early December 2022, we have already been successful in placing 3 clients who had until this point been homeless for a long time, and all of whom have settled well and making really good progress. The plan is that over time they will be able to manage their tenancies independently and be able to remain in the accommodation permanently.

By being able to evidence the positive outcomes from this project, our aim is that over time there will be opportunities to identify other potential sites across the County to develop similar housing initiatives.

### LOCAL INITIATIVES TAKING PLACE THROUGH CHANGING FUTURES:

As many of you will already be aware, early on in the programme, we invited partners from across Essex to bid for funding to develop their own local initiatives. To date, we have seen a number of projects being developed to support and improve outcomes for residents experiencing a variety of multiple and complex needs. Here is a snapshot of some of the projects currently taking place across the County:



## CASTLEPOINT, ROCHFORD

### ABBERTON RURAL TRAINING – GROWING OPPORTUNITIES:

Programme offering opportunity to learn land based skills and knowledge e.g., horticulture and conservation, delivered through weekly learning sessions. Those on the programme also have access to Information, Advice and Guidance provided by Employ-Ability.

## BRAINTREE

### COMMUNITY GARDEN:

Braintree DC are working in partnership with other organisations to develop a local community and will provide the opportunity to engage in gardening, horticulture, healthy eating etc. Development of the garden is still in the early stages due to issues around planning permission. However, it is anticipated that the garden which is to be located in Weavers Park (on the Tabor Centre site) will be open very soon

## BRAINTREE

### SOS BUS:

Valuable outreach support is now being provided through the SOS bus. Braintree DC is working in partnership with others including Phoenix Futures and Open Road to ensure that local residents experiencing a variety of multiple and complex needs are able to access the support they need and is particularly valuable for those who are living in remote parts and don't have the means to travel to services.

The bus is currently being located in the town centre every 2 weeks on a Wednesday.

## NORTH EAST ESSEX

Similarly, in North East Essex, we have been able to expand the use of the SOS bus that was already operating in Tendring and Harwich. Open Road who are overseeing delivery, are working closely with a number of partners including Phoenix Futures, SUMMIT EPUT, Beacon House and Colchester Borough Homes, to ensure that access to support is maximised.

The bus is currently operating in the following areas:

Tuesdays: Colchester Foodbank (Tollgate)

Wednesdays: Brightlingsea Community Centre

Thursdays: Highwoods Square (Near Tesco)

## CHELMSFORD AND MALDON

### MENTAL HEALTH /COMPLEX NEEDS NAVIGATOR:

Chelmsford City Council in partnership with Maldon District Council have jointly funded the post of a mental health /complex needs navigator which started operating in June 2022. They provide wide ranging support to individuals within the community, including attending GPs, making referrals to mental health services, as well as broader support such as assistance with housing applications and early intervention to prevent eviction.

Individuals currently in need of support are identified and referred by a number of agencies including housing teams, community safety, police and probation, and Phoenix Futures. For further information on how they can support and make a referral, please email: [epunft.chelmsfordandmaldonsireferral@nhs.net](mailto:epunft.chelmsfordandmaldonsireferral@nhs.net)

## BASILDON AND BRENTWOOD

### MENTAL HEALTH PRACTITIONER:

Similarly, Basildon Council and Brentwood District Council have been successful in securing funding for a Mental Health Practitioner, together with a Peer Support Worker, who will work across both districts to provide early intervention support to individuals with mental ill health to prevent further deterioration and or escalation of needs including a range of other multiple and complex needs, in particular those in contact with the criminal justice system and substance misuse.

Further details regarding how to access support /make referrals will be shared with partners in due course.



# CHANGING FUTURES

## Newsletter March 2023

### FINDINGS SO FAR FROM THE CHANGING FUTURES NATIONAL DATA COLLECTION:

#### INTRODUCTION

As many of our partners will already be aware, The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) have commissioned an independent evaluation of Changing Futures. This includes gathering information which is being collected from clients (with their consent), and as part of which they are being asked to complete a questionnaire which is intended to capture their circumstances at the start of their engagement with the programme (first outcomes questionnaire) and then at further intervals throughout their time being supported.

However, it should be noted that the data may not be truly representative and should be treated with some caution for the following reasons:

- DLUHC are only able to feedback data where the individual has consented to onward sharing.
- Due to reporting period constraints, we are only able to report on Q1 and Q2 (April 22 - Oct 22) at this current stage but by the time our next edition of the Newsletter is shared with you all, we will have further data available.

Notwithstanding the above, we have endeavoured to capture a few of the key highlights so far:



### WITHIN THE 3 MONTHS PRIOR TO COMPLETING THE FIRST OUTCOMES QUESTIONNAIRE:

As many of you will already be aware, early on in the programme, we invited partners from across Essex to bid for funding to develop their own local initiatives.

To date, we have seen a number of projects being developed to support and improve outcomes for residents experiencing a variety of multiple and complex needs. Here is a snapshot of some of the projects currently taking place across the County:

- 94% had experienced difficulties with their mental health
- 53% had been in contact with homelessness services
- 17% were in stable accommodation i.e. longer term/private rented
- 47% had experienced problems with drug use
- 48% had misused alcohol
- 44% had slept rough
- 53% had been in contact with probation
- 60% were registered with a GP, while 76% were not registered with a dentist

## PEER MENTORS AND LIVED EXPERIENCE UPDATES

Phoenix Futures most recent Peer Mentor programme successfully completed in December 2022, and we are now really pleased to have 4 new peer mentors keen to be part of our work.

All have been so enthusiastic about the co-production opportunities being offered by the Changing Futures programme. The peer mentor's involvement in Changing Futures and co-production offers an amazing opportunity to have the lived experience voice heard across the System. So far, we have had a peer mentor supporting with interviews for practitioner roles within Full Circle. This is something we are keen to encourage and duplicate across all Phoenix services as having the lived experience voice present during all interviews brings co-production to the forefront whilst supporting the professional development of our peer mentors.

We have two peer mentors, along with several members of Phoenix staff with lived experience, who are supporting the People and Culture team at Phoenix in rewriting the current job description for our trainee roles. The aim of this is to increase the Peer Mentors accessibility to others with lived experience and having their input heard and valued.

Here's what one of our peer mentors, Niky, had to say about his experience of the Peer Mentor programme:

"I found the whole experience really positive, and I enjoyed it on a personal level. It was the first-time since my recovery that I had some structure in my life. I think the time frame of sessions was about right. Everyone that came in was really good and they were really good communicators.

I left feeling like I was doing something positive. My key motivation about doing the course was to give back for all the support I've had. I have a lot of experience going through services and the support I've had from professionals has been great".

## CHANGING FUTURES CLIENT ACTIVITIES

The Changing Futures activities are coming along in strides. We have the following activities planned this year:

Life Skills - the opportunity for clients to learn basic low-cost recipes, while giving them the chance to cook these together in a group. The course will enable them to learn how to budget their money efficiently.

Reading - we have teamed up with Read Easy, to give clients the opportunity of enhancing their reading skills and gain confidence in their reading ability.

Arts and Craft - mental wellbeing is important for all our clients and focusing attention on art can enable the client relief from their own mental health and everyday stresses.

Maths and English skills - building each clients confidence and self-esteem by giving them the chance to enhance their learning.

Along with these we have our digital art sessions, where clients learn to transform their physical art into digital, giving them the experience of expanding their art, by colour and dimension. Clients' responses:

One stated "he is now open to new Art"

Another client when asked, what did you enjoy about the session? The response:

"The art, the interaction with people, the time doing something and switching off to everything else".

We also gave one client the opportunity to re-discover his passion of fishing, by giving him a rod and starter box of fishing accessories.

The client stated: "it's wicked" and told us it will keep him busy, not to get bored, whilst helping his mental health from declining He loves to go out first thing in the morning as it's peaceful and said "he can't wait to do some overnight fishing".