

# NSI E-NEWSLETTER

May 2023

## What's in this issue...

- NSI introduces Beacon View
- Charity Champs!
- NSI introduces Marden Lodge
- 'Success' stories about our young people.
- Giving our teams a voice
- Creativity in our homes
- Finance isn't just number crunching...
- Cardboard Boat Regatta
- Vacancy Updates
- Looking for quality services?

## Welcome to Next Step Independence's May 2023 e-newsletter

We are looking forward to an extra Bank Holiday this month and while the country is busy with preparations for the the King's Coronation, we have been rather busy too!

We have some fantastic news and updates to share with you, relating to the wonderful children and young people we support, our teams, our homes and our business.

Please take a moment to read what's been happening and we look forward to having the opportunity to work with you during 2023.

*"We care passionately about creating safe, nurturing home environments for our children and young people"*



## NSI introduces Beacon View!

Beacon View is our new 2 bedroom semi-independent home providing a safe and nurturing environment for two young people aged 16-18.

The home offers a warm and accepting environment that encourages our young people to settle and feel safe.

It has all the home comforts you'd hope to find in a NSI home. It is set on the outskirts of the village, but on a main bus route and within walking distance to the local shops.

It is within a 30 min bus journey to Exeter, making it an ideal base for our young people who may be seeking employment or wishing to attend Exeter College. It is also only 10 mins away from the busy market town of Cullompton.

The home is led by a highly experienced Manager, who together with a lovely, small dedicated team, will work with our young people to support them on their journey to independence.

The young people will be encouraged to find employment and explore education opportunities, as well as undertake link worker sessions and make the most of the facilities on offer in the local area.



*"Home is the starting place of hope and dreams."*

## NSI's Charity Champs!

Did you know that we have 3 members of our team doing amazing challenges to raise money for charity?

Gary LePage, a Home Manager and Christian Adams, an Assistant Manager are embarking on a 58 mile walk along the south west coast path on 16-17 June. They are planning to complete the challenge over 2 days, with an overnight camp at Kolve beach! Our colleagues from other teams are joining them as they walk the last 3 miles of the Challenge from Dunster to Minehead. They are raising money for YoungMinds.

Bridget Drew-Spyer, our Group Operations Director is currently swimming the distance of the British channel - yes all 22 miles, at her local swimming pool, which equates to 1416 lengths!

So far Bridget has completed over 16 miles and has raised nearly £700 for Diabetes UK.

We think they are true champions! Feel free to congratulate or donate to their chosen charities.

*"Challenges make you discover things about yourself that you never really knew."*





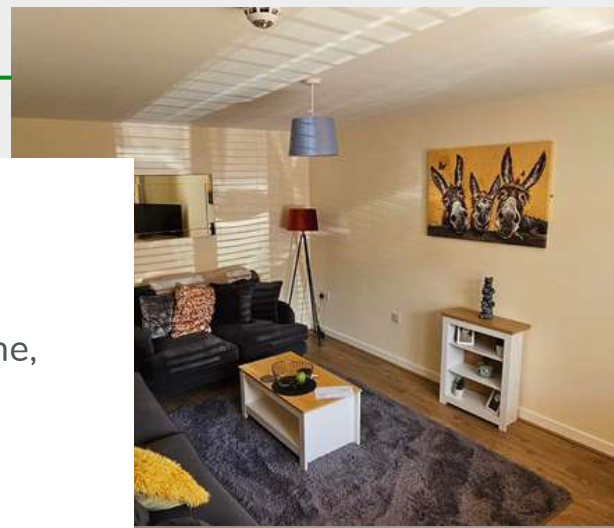
## NSI introduces Marden Lodge

Marden Lodge, is our new Children's Home in Calne, Wiltshire and is NSI's second Ofsted Registered Children's Home.

The home is being led by our highly experienced home manager, Keiran Dunn, who together with an experienced core team, are providing 1-to-1 support and encouragement to help our children to settle, develop positive and enriching routines and flourish.

The home is a detached house, located within a modern estate and within walking distance of Calne town centre. It is close to all local amenities including excellent transport links and a variety of mainstream and alternative education providers.

The children living in our home, can aspire to a positive future, and we will support them to become confident and valued members of their local community and to have access to enriching and inspiring education and social opportunities.



*"It's all about creating a home environment where our children can have fun, grow in self-confidence and be happy."*

## 'Success' stories about our wonderful children and young people!

### In our Devon homes...

One of our young people has recently completed the first part of his CSCS card (Construction Skills Certification Scheme) course passing, with flying colours which is a huge achievement for him and he was thrilled. He has made huge improvements lately so this is the cherry on the cake!

One of our young people has been working in a local hotel, originally part-time, but he was enjoying the work so much that he requested extra hours. They were so impressed with him they have offered him a full time role!

Another one of our young people in South Devon has been attending a course with Young Devon. She began in February and has not missed a single session - which is awesome!

*"Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated."*





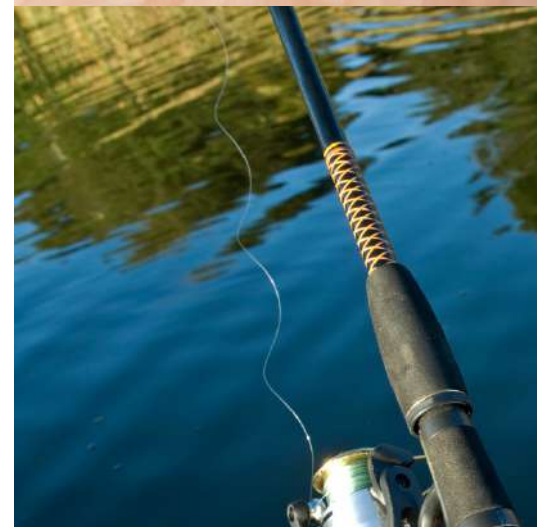
### **In our Somerset homes...**

Our young people in our Somerset homes are also thriving. One young person is focussing on passing his exams and is enjoying his college course on Web Design at Bridgwater College,

Another one of our young people is looking for work and likes to go fishing. A few weeks ago he helped the home plant up the garden pots with seeds. They sowed sunflowers, strawberries, corn on the cob, tomatoes and cucumbers - how veg-tastic is that!

### **In our Wiltshire homes...**

One of our young people has recently celebrated his birthday. He went for a day out to Thorpe Park with a few friends. Unfortunately, this turned out to be a short trip as shortly after arriving, the park was closed due to bad weather. Our young person was determined for this not to ruin his birthday and had his friends over for some dinner and some games instead. As the park had to close, Thorpe Park have given the group free tickets to return in the summer, which he is very happy about, as it's like a second birthday!



*"It's not what happens to you, but how you react to it that matters."*

## Giving our teams a voice...

In our last newsletter we mentioned about the new Staff Forum we have launched to ensure our team members views are part of NSI's future.

We had our first meeting last month with representatives, in person and online, from each area of the business, including every home.

The group agreed how often they should meet (quarterly), what their role will be as a representative, and what the focus and immediate priorities should be of the forum. There was lots of positive interactions and conversations about building on what we already have to make working at NSI even better.

The atmosphere was buzzing!

As Claire Parker, our new HR Manager said afterwards;

*"I was blown away by the input, positivity and engagement from all who attended. I can't wait to really start to bring those ideas and suggestions into a tangible fruition and for all our voices to be heard".*

*"All employees have an innate desire to contribute to something bigger than themselves."*





## Creativity in our homes...

Our dedicated team of support workers are always thinking about ways to encourage our children and young people to be creative.

**Eat what you grow...** Many of our homes grow veggies and our Cherry Tree home team have begun to plant kale seedlings that are growing well and the home will be able to enjoy them later this year!

One of our Bridgwater homes and their young person have planted up the garden pots with all their favourite veggies to be enjoyed during the summer.

**Mental health and wellbeing in the home...** In our new home Beacon View, the team have created a wellbeing bookcase in the lounge. Full of books, ideas and games to support and promote wellness in the home.

**Art and drawing...** Owen, one of our support workers is also a talented artist and has created a beautiful, bespoke painting for our new home; Beacon View.

Our Registered Children's home, The Elms has a craft room dedicated for the children in the home.



*"Look out for more photos and updates in the next newsletter or follow NSI on [Facebook](#)"*

for what is the  
to be best in a  
point of view.  
**Creativity**  
ability to cre  
creates som  
using creat  
for what is



## Finance isn't just about number crunching...

Last month our lovely finance team launched a new 'finance' roadtrip with the aim of visiting all our homes in Devon, Somerset and Wiltshire to help our teams and young people with any finance questions they may have.

Diana and Lulu, our finance team, have a wealth of experience between them, and know how daunting finance can be! Setting up a new bank account, or understanding tax codes or even what is on a payslip can be very confusing - especially for our young people who have recently found employment.

Together, they are around the homes to answer any finance questions and so far the feedback has been extremely positive - in fact, when I spoke to Diana recently I asked how long is this roadshow running?

*"This isn't a one-off roadshow; Lulu and I are planning to visit all the homes on a regular basis, and we are very happy to arrange a special visit if the team or if a young person in the home would like some finance advice. I've been working with NSI for more than 2 and half years, but I have over 30 years banking and finance experience and I am more than happy to help our young people to understand how to manage their banking and budgeting."*

*"An investment in knowledge pays the best interest."*



## Cardboard Boat Regatta!

NSI are once again taking part in the Cardboard Boat Regatta and Water Festival. This year it is being held on Sunday, 11th June, and the theme is 'A Right Royal Celebration'. This is to celebrate the 450th anniversary of Bideford being granted a Charter by Queen Elizabeth 1st and the coronation of a new King!

Some of our homes will be building boats and competing to win one of the coveted award trophies...

- Fastest Boat
- Completion of course!
- Best Capsize
- Best Original Design
- Best Construction
- Best Theme
- Best Team Effort
- Most Entertaining!

Let's see if we can bring home more than the Best Capsize which was awarded to our very own Mat Foley from our Estates team!

If you are interested in attending or even building and entering a boat, visit the organiser's [website](#).

*"Opportunities don't happen, you create them."*



## Vacancy Updates

Each week we send out an email with our current vacancies, where the home is located and any specific information about the type of young people we can match to ensure our existing young people remain settled. If you are not receiving these updates or if you have other colleagues who should be receiving them, please email [louise.barrett@nextstepindependence.co.uk](mailto:louise.barrett@nextstepindependence.co.uk) and we can add these email addresses to our distribution list.

### **Blakes Road, Bridgwater, Somerset (1 vacancy: immediately available)**

Blakes Road is a 2-bedroom home that can support 2 young people aged 16-18. We have a room available now that would suit a boy.

The home is in a quiet location, but close to all local amenities, so the young people can access an array of educational and vocational courses. This home has access to Bridgwater College, a highly regarded further education provision in the local area.

### **Cherry Tree (1 vacancy: coming up soon)**

Cherry Tree is a spacious home and can support up to 4 young people aged 16-18. We will have a room available that would suit any gender.

This is our most rural home, surrounded by stunning countryside, but still accessible to nearby towns such as Tiverton and Wellington for educational and employment opportunities.

*"Home is the  
comfiest  
place to be."*





## Are you looking for new quality services in your area?

At NSI, we have built our reputation on delivering quality services for children and young people aged 8-18 years throughout Devon, Somerset and Wiltshire and we are still expanding further afield.

Through ongoing collaboration with our local authority commissioning colleagues we continue to identify areas in which to develop our offering further.

If you are looking to develop services within your own area then we would like to speak with you.

Please contact Judith Beaumont on 07387 416924 or email her at [judith.beaumont@nextstepindependence.co.uk](mailto:judith.beaumont@nextstepindependence.co.uk)

For our latest news and stories visit [www.nextstepindependence.co.uk](http://www.nextstepindependence.co.uk)

*"Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success"*

