

# NSI E-NEWSLETTER

September 2023

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

It's been a busy Summer for our teams and our children and young people - as this newsletter shows!

This edition is jammed-packed with uplifting news and stories that feature our amazing children and young people across all of our homes.

We've also got lots of news to share about our business, our homes and our plans for 2024.

So, pop the kettle on and take a moment out of your busy day, to read what's been happening and be prepared to smile...

As always, we look forward to having the opportunity to work with you.

Enjoy!

*"Smiling makes you feel happy, good news makes you feel better."*



## Our new home: Pheasants Corner

Pheasants Corner is our newest home and it will soon be opening its front door as our first Ofsted Registered Children's Home in Bridgwater, Somerset.

With 3 established Ofsted Registered Children's Homes in the Swindon area, this new home represents an exciting step forward for us. Fulfilling our ongoing growth ambitions and sending a clear, strong message to you, our stakeholders, that we want to be your 'Provider of Choice' for children and young people in the SouthWest.

At the moment the house is being revamped and turned into an NSI home and will be led by our new highly experienced Registered Home Manager, Lucy Yard.

Lucy, together with her dedicated team, bring together a host of skills and experience to provide 1-1 support to the children living at the new home. They will encourage the children to settle, develop positive and enriching routines and flourish.

The children living at Pheasant's Corner, will 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.

Our services will cover all aspects of their life and we will ensure our children are able to play, to learn, to have fun, to feel valued, loved and to grow in self-confidence and to be happy.

*"A house is made of bricks and beams.  
A home is made of hopes and dreams."*



# Stories about our amazing children and young people!

It's been a busy Summer for all our young people and they have all achieved something we are proud of!

## Successes from our South Devon homes

One young person last month headed off to go ridge climbing for the day and had a brilliant time clambering up a ridge on Dartmoor, and then descending into a gorge to go wild water swimming! This amazing event was specifically organised for young people in care, by Devon County Council!

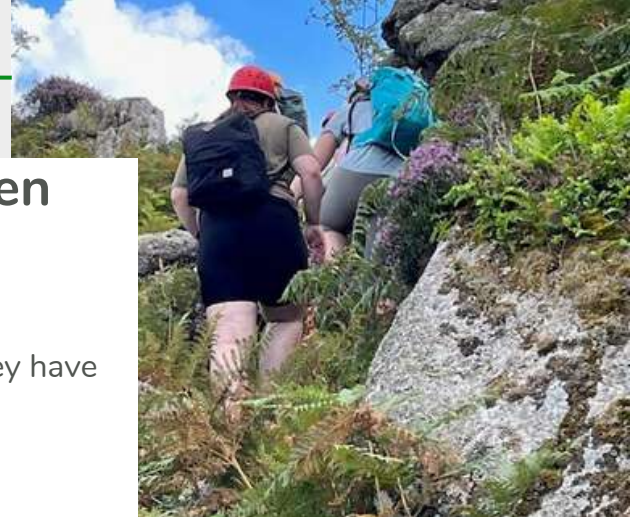
One of our young people visited the beach and overcame a fear she had and braved the sea for a paddle with members of the home team and one of the other young people.

Another one of our young people has been busy in the garden this Summer, growing tomatoes and strawberries and from the photo you can see it looks like there will be plenty for everyone to enjoy!

One of our other young people has just turned 18. She came to NSI 15 months ago as a young girl and is now ready to leave us as a bright, strong independent young lady! The team are so proud of how far this young person has come and her successes include distinctions in college and applying for a apprenticeship for social care to become a social worker!

As a farewell activity and her 18th birthday celebration of choice, two members of the home team took both young people to complete The Bear Trail Obstacle course in the rain!

As you can see it was a very mucky event!



*"If you can dream it, you can do it."*

## Successes from our Mid Devon homes

One of our home and their young person enjoyed a camping activity at Darts County Park during the warm weather earlier this month. This enabled our team to bring the young person and his family together whilst camping for one of the days. Our young person had also never been camping before so we made this possible for him. Here's the team cooling off and enjoying one of the many water activities on offer!

Another one of our young people has done really well in gaining full-time employment in a 'Customer Care' role with McDonalds in Exeter. She has been setting an example for others to follow.

Earlier this month, one of our long-standing young people moved out, after living with us for 18 months. With our support she has been able move into her own home - a truly fantastic outcome for her!

A new young person who moved in only a couple of weeks ago, has already got herself enrolled into college, and is proactively looking towards the future and what she would like out of it!

## Successes from our Somerset homes

We recently welcomed a new young person into one of our Bridgwater homes. He has settled in really well and the team have been supporting him to explore the local area. He is very interested in buses and the team have sought out some local places of interest relating to all things transport.

He has been enjoying those activities and been spending a large amount of this time on the buses, getting to know the local routes and surrounding areas. His knowledge is immense and the team are learning a thing or two from him! He is looking forward to joining College locally and is actively looking for voluntary work relating to anything with transport!

*"Real change, enduring change, happens one step at a time."*



## Successes from our Wiltshire Homes

One of our young people has recently begun to train and play football with a new local club. After his first match of the season with his new team, he was awarded 'Player of the Match'. He was given a trophy and the football he played with. Our team are thrilled about this achievement and will continue to support him to attend football training and matches.

One of our newer homes now has two young people and they are both settling in really well.

Our newest young person has been able to spend time with her family and meet up with her best friend. She is getting ready for school, but is understandably a little nervous. Our team are all supporting her every step of the way.

Our other young person has had a fun filled Summer. Along with continuing with her education for the entire time, she has also made time to see her friends and sisters.

She has been out for many days which have included beach trips, shopping, visiting the funfair and a trip to Bristol aquarium. She is also nervous but excited at the same time about going to school. The team have visited the school a few times and met most of her teachers. She has said they all seem nice, and they are already talking about college!

One of our other young people enjoyed an outing this Summer to PC World to buy some IT accessories to upgrade his 'gaming setup' in his bedroom. He then enjoyed a takeaway of his choice, a stuffed crust pizza - yum! This is a massive achievement for a young person who had previously been highly isolated.

The team are beginning to see a cheeky personality emerge as he loves to perform 'jump scares' on different team members! He is showing interest in history and a love of creatures and recently made a little home for a baby frog!

*"Determination is the key to unlocking achievement."*



# New Training Platform

Earlier this month we introduced a new Training Platform; Myrus which is hosted by CareShield. Having used a mix of resources for our team's e-learning and excel spreadsheets for our training matrix, we decided it was time to upgrade to a system that meets the needs of our growing business.

The Myrus Training Platform records all our training activities in one place.

**E-learning:** we have access to CareShield's extensive CYP e-learning directory. This ensures our team's training remains fresh and up to date with the latest regulations and we can keep our children, young people and team safe at all times.

**Face-2-Face learning:** we can schedule our bespoke classroom training via Myrus. It sends out training invites and records attendance and certificates. Our Face-2-Face training provides additional and practical scenario based knowledge, to our e-learning topics such as Safeguarding, Managing Challenging Behaviour, PACE, First Aid and Fire Awareness.

**Professional and Personal Development:** we can record our team's professional and personal development activities on the Myrus Training Platform; including NVQs and other professional qualifications.

**Library Resource:** the library resource gives us a central place to store useful resources, new training and development links, PDFs and links to key organisations. An idea tool to use during supervisions and appraisals, and to share best practice.

**Reporting:** the Myrus Training Platform provides us with accurate training reports. We can audit our training activities with just a few clicks. We are also able to create bespoke reports by course topic, home location or region - based on requirements set by our business, stakeholders and Ofsted.

*"Develop a passion for learning.  
If you do, you will never cease to grow".*



## News from across our business...

### Summer fun!

We held our first Summer Event in August and over 40 team members and young people joined us to eat pizza and play games in the sunshine!

Our event was held at the lovely rural venue; Huntstile Organic Farm near Bridgwater. We created an 'Appreciation Station' filled with sweets, goodies and little motivational cards and everyone was encouraged to fill a bag for themselves and for colleagues, children and young people who couldn't attend.

As well as eating lots of delicious pizza, we also played games... Giant Jenga, Boules, Hula Hoops, Connect 4, Tug of War and Rounders. It was a wonderful event with lots of fun and laughter.

### Christmas Lunch and Inspire Awards

Plans for our Christmas Lunch and Inspire Awards are underway and we are hosting this years festive event at The Castle Hotel in Taunton!

We love bringing our team and young people together at Christmas and this year everyone will be enjoying a 2 course lunch cooked by an award winning chef!

This event provides the perfect opportunity to celebrate the winners of our Inspire Awards. Now in its 3rd year, the awards give everyone in the business a chance to nominate someone they feel should be recognised and rewarded for their efforts.

It is a joy to watch the reactions of the winners being announced and to hear about the achievements behind their nominations.



*"follow us on [Facebook](#) to see our latest stories!*

## Ofsted news

Last week our Registered Children's Home, Marden Lodge had its first Ofsted Inspection, after only being open for five months! We are delighted to say the home received a 'Good' rating across all areas and we are incredibly proud of what Keiran and the team have achieved in this short time.

As a provider of 16+ Supported Accommodation and Registered Children's Homes, we welcome the new standards and regulations coming in for Supported Accommodation and we have completed our registration submission for all our 16+ homes with Ofsted.

We want to be able to continue to meet the needs of the children and young people we support, whilst giving our stakeholders the assurance that we are providing the highest quality services across all our homes.

## Wellbeing and Mindfulness

Last month on **World Suicide Prevention Day**, we shared information about the importance of the language we use when talking about suicide, especially when we ask someone that you're worried about, if they are feeling suicidal. Mental health and wellbeing is extremely important to us and we have introduced a number of additional resources to support our teams, children and young people.

**For our teams;** we have a dedicated Employee Assistance Programme with Health Assured that can support our teams and promote ways to achieve good mental health and wellness.

**For our children and young people;** we also have our membership with **Mind Of My Own** which can help our children and young people open up and talk about their feelings through using the MOMO apps.

**For all;** we have launched a monthly '**Mindfulness Challenge**' and October's activity is walking in nature - encouraging everyone to enjoy at least 15 minutes a day. Winners of the challenge will receive a box of mindfulness goodies!

*"The mind that opens to a new idea never returns to its original size."*





## Vacancies across our homes

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.

We have no vacancies in our Registered Children's Homes at the moment.

We have the following vacancies in our Semi-Independent homes for 16-18 year olds.

### **Cherry Tree, Tiverton in Mid Devon**

**1 vacancy: immediately available and suitable for any gender**

This is a large, comfortable home that can support up to 4 young people aged 16-18 and whilst it's our most rural home, that is surrounded by stunning countryside, it is still accessible to nearby towns such as Tiverton and Wellington for educational and employment opportunities and many of our young people have found employment in Tiverton or attended Petroc College.

*"Home is a shelter from storms — all sorts of storms".*



### **Beacon View, Bradninch, Mid Devon**

#### **1 vacancy: immediately available and suitable for any gender**

This is our newest semi-independent home but has quickly become a very calm and settled home for one young person.

Beacon View's home team possess a wealth of experience working with more vulnerable young people, particularly those with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), communication and behavioural needs.

### **Victoria House, Torquay, South Devon.**

#### **1 vacancy: immediately available and suitable for any gender**

This is our most established home and it's location is in the heart of Torquay, making it ideal for a young person, who is seeking employment opportunities or wishing to attend South Devon College.

### **Perinville – Babbacombe, South Devon**

#### **1 vacancy: immediately available and suitable for any gender**

This is large, bright home that is close to all local amenities in Torquay. It's location makes it an ideal place if a young person is seeking employment opportunities. It's also within a quick walk of the beach!

All our home teams have a wealth of experience and have helped many young people gain their independence, find employment and move into their own homes. Our fantastic teams are ready and eager to help a new young person do the same!

Please call Judith Beaumont on 07387 416924 for more information about our vacancies.

*"Home is where our story begins..."*



## 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) or follow us on our social media pages.



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

