

Learning Disability Week Trevor's story

June 2024

Trevor, 33, has been living at Cleves Road, Sanctuary Supported Living's supported housing service for adults with learning disabilities in East Ham, since mid-2023.



He has settled well in his flat at Cleves Road, where he receives regular, tailored support from the on-site team, including regular one-to-one support from his keyworker, Rochelle. Prior to moving into Cleves Road, he was living at a service offering 24-hour support, where his lunches were provided and he often had takeaways or ready meals in the evenings, meaning that he wasn't able to develop his independent living skills. Since the move, he has received more personalised support and encouragement, which has given him a greater opportunity to work on his key skills, gain the self-confidence he needs to be able to live more independently, and in particular, learn to cook.

When Trevor mentioned to staff that he wanted to learn to cook healthy meals for himself, his keyworker supported him to attend a 10-week cooking course at the local adult learning centre, which was specifically tailored for people with learning disabilities. He now has the skills and understanding of food needed to make healthy food choices, as well as shop for ingredients, and he cooks most of his own meals.

Due to his learning disability, he can find verbal communication challenging, but the Cleves Road team have taken the time to get to know him, understand his needs, and work together with Trevor on a support plan which helps meet those needs. They have worked with him on learning positive forms of communication, and helped him to better manage his finances, as well as supporting him to access services and amenities in the local community.

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Trevor always attends the residents' house meetings, where he talks to the staff and offers suggestions for ways to improve the service. He enjoys taking part in any organised activities alongside his new Cleves Road friends, both within the service and the local area, including an annual barbecue held by Newham Council for people with learning disabilities. He also regularly meets up with family members who live nearby, which has helped him develop much closer bonds with them.

One of Trevor's personal goals was to start volunteering, and so, with support from the Cleves Road team, he attended taster sessions at the local St Joseph's Hospice charity shop, before joining as a volunteer in January 2024. Every week since, he has enjoyed sorting through the donations, building his IT skills by listing some online, and preparing others for sale in the shop.

In his spare time, Trevor is a budding artist. His keyworker supported him to take part in an acrylic painting course, where he produced some beautiful artwork and also made new friends. He is looking forward to continuing the course in the next few months, and he's aiming to participate in more courses, to continue to broaden his skills.

When he's not cooking, painting or busy volunteering, Trevor can often be found going for regular bike rides around the local area, as part of his personal goal to be healthier and exercise more – thanks to the Cleves Road team supporting him with accessing the local gym and buying a bike.

When asked how he feels about life at Cleves Road, compared to before, Trevor said: "I like living at Cleves Road, it's much better and I feel better too. I am now more independent, and I can do more things on my own, like cleaning my flat or shopping. I like going to college and working at St Joseph's Hospice. I like to relax in my flat in the evenings, playing my PlayStation or talking to my family.

"It's good here, because I can talk to the staff if I'm having any problems. They are very friendly and helpful, they support me with any letters or repairs, and they take me out to events too, so I go out a lot more now."

With all the progress he has made since he moved in, Trevor is feeling confident and looking towards a bright future, where he hopes to eventually be able to live fully independently in his own home.



NEWS story



Trevor's story has been shared to mark Learning Disability Week 2024, organised by Mencap. This year's theme is "Do you see me?", which is about people with learning disabilities being seen, heard and valued.

As well as services for people with learning disabilities, Sanctuary Supported Living also provides accommodation with personalised support for people with physical disabilities, mental health needs, and homeless young people and adults, as well as retirement communities for people over 55 or with long-term care needs. To find out more about Sanctuary Supported Living's services, see the latest news or find a service near you.

