

SUPPORTED
LIVES



and



No. 18, Mar

Three Stars!

SUPPORTED LIVES was inspected by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) in January, and as a result they have awarded us **three stars** for **excellent service**, the highest award.

Not only that but there were no recommendations for us to make any changes to the way we operate, which was also a first! This is the highest award given, and we have achieved it after four years and in only our third inspection.

Forgive me for going all Kate Winslet for a moment, but gratitude is due to lots of people:

- All the staff who daily provide such excellent personalised support to our clients
- The management team for making sure everyone knows what they are doing (most of the time!)

Five years old

In October 2009 **Supported Lives** will be five years old (I know, where did all that time go!) We would like to do something as an entire staff team to celebrate this.

Does anyone have any thoughts, suggestions, or plain daft ideas on what we could do that would celebrate the occasion and thank the staff team for their support over the years?

Email any ideas you have to jon@supportedlives.co.uk. (And if it's going to cost money, make sure you include a rough cost!)

Jon Wright

- The finance and administrative teams for designing systems that work properly
- Our clients and their carers, who gave us such wonderful feedback in the CSCI inspection.

Thank you, everyone.

Jon Wright

A Grand Day Out The Great Northern Railway Trail

We've featured the first section of this walk (Cullingworth to Hewenden) in an earlier *B&T*. There's now a second short section, at Thornton.



If you follow a snicket by the side of Thornton Primary School you come to a well-surfaced, wheelchair accessible pathway. Turn right for a half-mile walk up the valley with wonderful views; turn left to walk over the viaduct. As you walk over the viaduct you'll also get some spectacular views, as long as you're tall enough to see over the parapet!

Brett

Financial position

I thought it would be helpful to give an update on the current financial situation in **Supported Lives** given all the doom and gloom in the news at the moment.

Our levels of support work took a dip in August and September, but thanks to a number of new referrals we are now back to the levels of early last year, which means we are financially OK. We are still carrying a large overdraft, which means we are having to pay high bank charges and there isn't any spare money available in case of 'emergencies' (such as the snowfall in February which cost us about £4000 in unfulfilled work). Therefore we have had to make some very hard decisions (for example reducing sick leave entitlements to try and reduce the annual bill of £25,000) in order to relieve the pressure on the finances.

We are unlikely to be able to increase our charges this year either. In previous years we have usually put charges up in line with inflation (a figure is usually defined by the local authority) which has been running at about 2.9%. This year we do not expect to be able to make any increase whatsoever and I do not expect the local authority to agree to any future rises. In future years we may even see local authorities reducing the rates they are prepared to pay.

Some agencies (e.g. Mencap) have actually reduced mileage payments to staff as petrol has become cheaper but we are not planning to do this.

Unfortunately I can't see the likelihood of an inflation linked pay rise this April as we made last year. We will keep this under review, but unless our charges rise, we would simply not have any spare money to pay this.

The good news is, we still have plenty of work, we are still getting new referrals to replace the worked that has ended, plus our recent three star award from CSCI for excellent services will stand us in good

stead with our funders. I think with all this in place we are well placed to meet the financial challenges that are likely to come over the next few years. In fact I think with all the savings and tightening up we have done, jobs here are safer now than they have at any time since we began the company. So thank you for bearing with us, and all being well, we will all still be here for many years to come.

Jon Wright

Who Am I? Adam Foster



I'm Adam Foster, 32 years old born and raised down in sunny Harlow Town in Essex, moving to Bradford around seven years ago.

Best described as quiet, I enjoy watching football matches involving Tottenham Hotspur, and listening to Rock music (Queen, Quo, Meatloaf, Bon Jovi, Bryan Adams to name a few artists I enjoy).

I've worked at **Supported Lives** since late September, assisting Eileen with wages and fuel expenses.

Home is on the outskirts of Holmewood, living with my flatmate, her dog Dec, and my rabbit Chloe.

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