

Activities Agreements Opportunities for All



Small Achievable Steps

Jake was badly bullied at school. This had left him anxious in group situations and unable to use public transport. He had also disengaged from school without any qualifications. Since leaving school Jake had become even more socially isolated and had been unable to overcome his difficulties to move on with his life.

Jake was referred to the Activity Agreements team in Shetland by Skills Development Scotland. He was assigned a Trusted Professional who met with him several times a week at a local venue within walking distance of his home. Jake's Trusted Professional spent time building up his trust and finding out what his interests were. Jake was wary of re-engaging with learning and it was three months before he finally accepted the offer of an Activity Agreement.

Once Jake was ready, his Trusted Professional helped him to compile a personal learning plan with short-term goals he had identified himself as achievable. His first goal was to be able to travel independently. His Trusted Professional supported him to achieve this, showing him how to use a local bus timetable and taking him to where he could catch the bus from his home. She arranged for a youth worker to accompany him on the bus until he felt able to manage it independently. For the first time Jake felt independent.

Jake's other short-term goals were to achieve qualifications, increase his self-confidence and be able to interact with new peers. He began gradually, participating over one or two days a week, in small, supported group activities such as sports and cooking. He then attended courses through Shetland College and the Bridges Project where, for the first time, he achieved qualifications.

Jake slowly added new things to his weekly timetable and met with his Trusted Professional weekly to review his progress. Around six months into his Agreement, Jake felt ready to tackle his social skills and agreed to participate in the Land Rover Project. He worked alongside other young people and qualified mechanics to re-build a Land Rover. The young people then had the opportunity to drive the vehicle in the Shetland Land Rover trials. Jake was awarded the trophy for best driver, which had a huge impact on his confidence and his ability to feel part of the group. He became enthusiastic about the future and built up his Activity Agreement programme to include the development of employability skills. He participated in a Construction Skills for Work course through Shetland College where he completed modules in painting, brick building and joinery, electrical and plumbing. He was keen to use the skills he had

learned on the construction course in a work environment, so participated in two volunteer placements; one in a community woodland and the other in a local school. Jake was able to use his volunteer hours to register with the Saltire Awards scheme and achieve recognition for his commitment.

During his Activity Agreement Jake asked for help to move out of his family home and secure his own tenancy. His Trusted Professional worked in partnership with other agencies to enable him to manage his tenancy independently. Jake's housing and benefits appointments were included in his Activity Agreement timetable to help him manage his diary.

Jake's main interest was computer gaming and his long-term goal was to achieve qualifications in this area. He had been on his Activity Agreement for 15 months when he felt that achieving this was a real possibility. This was a subject not offered at Shetland College but Jake now had the confidence and ability to actively look at college courses on the mainland for the first time. His Trusted Professional supported Jake through the transition process and he is now attending college on the mainland.

Additionally, he is also now able to interact socially, making new friends, something he had never done before.