

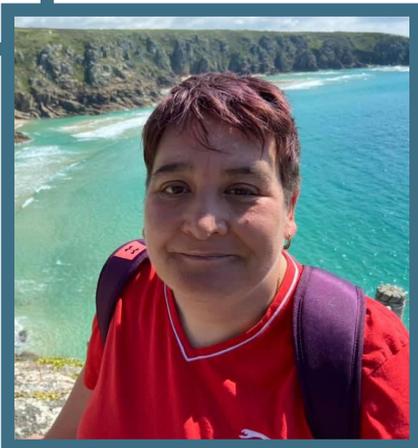
# Good News Stories

## Donna's Story



jobs

Thera East Anglia's supported employment programme aims to find enriching and meaningful employment opportunities across all sectors for people with a learning disability that have been recognised as ready to work. Our three Job Coaches – Terri, Rick and Eloise, are extremely dedicated and passionate about helping individuals build on their social network and transferable skills to ensure they can be a valued member of any working team. Here, we want to offer a spotlight feature for trail-blazing job seekers who have successfully landed work through the programme.



As an assistant at Addenbrookes Hospital, Donna has truly found herself at the heart of a rewarding and prosperous career. Having caught meningitis in 2013, she wound up on a ventilator in the intensive care unit at that very hospital, meaning her path to working within this field held an extremely poignant backstory - "I nearly died. But it made me realise that I wanted a job where I could give something back to the doctors and nurses who really helped me and be in a role where I can

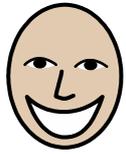
contribute back to society."



CV

It was with the help of Terri Dumont at Thera East Anglia that Donna was able to climb the first rungs of the employment ladder in 2019. "Terri helped me to create and write up a CV, and she came to the interviews with me which was really helpful for moral support.

I wasn't sure if I answered the questions well enough and there were a lot of other people there, but then a week later they emailed me and offered me a volunteer post. It made me feel really good and I was so excited to start".



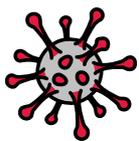
happy

Having asked whether Donna was nervous for her first day, she laughed, "I was a bit, yeah! I had a mentor show me what to do though and I was really happy and eager to learn". The hospital was also able to accommodate a member of Thera staff to support Donna until she was able to find her feet.



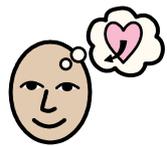
tasks

Donna had the important task of collecting wheelchairs around the site and ensuring they were stored away safely. "I also helped to give visitors directions as the hospital is so big!" With such a valuable position within the hospital, I asked Donna what about the role she enjoyed the most – "I loved it all. I liked meeting new people and being productive. I really enjoyed making friendships and it made me feel good to help other people".



coronavirus

Unfortunately, the pandemic breakout in March 2020 has meant that Donna has been unable to continue with her role due to working in such a high-risk environment, "I've now been off work for a year and a half due to the lockdown. They do call me once a month to check in, as they know I am really eager to go back in once it is safe to do so".



hopes

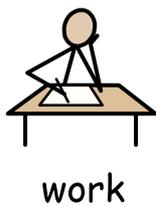
So, what are Donna's big plans for the future? "I hope one day I could perhaps get a job as a Porter at Addenbrookes, or in a role where I can work alongside patients properly. I am really looking forward to a new challenge."

We are right there with you Donna!

## Nat's Story



Being in a role where you can fully enjoy the sunshine (British weather dependant of course), is one that Nat has been fortunate to have. With the help from Terri, she successfully landed the important position of a leaflet distributor, "I really liked the idea of being a postwoman, and so Terri helped me to write my CV and understand what I wanted to do for work".



work

Nat was able to undergo a work trial with the company before she took on the role. At Thera, work trials are always fully encouraged and recommended by their Job Coaches. “We always want to work around what is best for the individual and sometimes a job interview may not be suitable in certain circumstances”, mentioned Terri. “In these instances, work trials provide a fantastic opportunity to see whether the role will be a good fit for those we support, as well as to see what measures the company can put in place to be able to fully accommodate their needs.”



enjoy

What did Nat enjoy the most? “I liked getting out and exercising. It was nice to go to different places and meet new people, but sometimes it was difficult to get the leaflets through the door!”



office

Nat is now looking to work in a different role for the future – “hopefully in an office with something more structured to do. Having a job made me feel good about myself so I am excited!”.

## Bernie's Story



As a cleaner at a Pets at Home store, Bernie has truly found himself at the heart of a sparkling career journey. With the help from his job coach Eloise, he successfully landed the central role as a morning cleaner - “I met Eloise at the end of July, and we started off by filling out a Vocational Profile together, which I thought was really helpful. Eloise then came to see me once a week and we completed my CV and started looking for jobs and any additional courses based on what I was interested in”.



job

“Filling out a Vocational Profile is a fantastic opportunity for us at Thera to ensure we are working in a person-centred way”, mentioned Eloise. “It allows the people we support to help us as job coaches understand their interests, likes and dislikes, in addition to what support they may need within a workplace setting. We can then use this information as a guide to fully identify what employment may be ideal for them”.

Within three weeks, Bernie managed to successfully secure a part time cleaning position at a Pets at Home store. “I felt really happy to start my new role. I had been a cleaner for two years at a college before which stopped because of lockdown, so it felt good to get back on the ladder. I had a telephone interview which was fairly easy as I’ve had a few before, as well as training on interview techniques, so I was confident in how to answer the questions and didn’t need much guidance from Eloise there”.



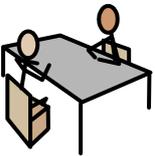
confident

It wasn’t long before his first day arrived - “I was quite excited. Eloise came to work with me on my first week, so that together we could learn what the tasks were that were expected of me. As my confidence grew quite quickly, she then made me a to do list that I can tick off every day which I found really easy to follow”.



favourite

“My favourite part about the job is being able to work in the mornings and being part of a good staff team that understand me and my needs. If I get stuck on things, my manager Karl is helpful in telling me what to do. I don’t like cleaning up after the animals though, even though some are cleaner than humans!”



interview

Having seen Bernie’s confidence flourish in a small matter of time, I asked whether he could share any advice to others who would like to take their first steps into the world of work? “When you go for your interview, make sure you look professional and dress appropriately, even if it’s online!”

Great advice Bernie, you really have swept us away with your brushed up skills!