

## **Story 10: I've come on in leaps and bounds**

I was with the local Mental Health Team for a long time, and it was them that put me onto Archway. I've been with Archway now for about two years.

I meet up each fortnight in a local café with a lady called Beth. We sit and talk about my mental health and how I'm doing and this, that and the other. It's quite pleasing that I've got someone to talk to, you know what I mean?

I suffer really badly with depression and anxiety so for me to go out, even down the shops, I have to psyche myself up to go. I can't just get up and walk out. Every time I want to go out, I have this fear of someone's going to attack me or something. If it wasn't for Archway... they've brought me out of my shell a lot. Being involved with Archway has changed things; it's been massive. I've come on in leaps and bounds. Archway has helped me out a hell of a lot. For me to know once a fortnight that I have to go out, it forces me to go out into the world and engage with life. Before Archway, I'd be in my flat for two months at a time, I didn't have the willpower to go out.

And then for the first time I'm going out big time next week 'cos I'm off to Weymouth. I thought I'd treat myself to a holiday to see how that pans out. I haven't seen the sea for about nine or ten years now so I'm quite looking forward to going. I'm hoping my anxiety holds up. I mean, there's always the fear factor of going out every day. So, meeting up with Beth once a fortnight down at a local café, I look forward to it rather than staying in the black hole.

Archway has helped me so much in my life. To be involved with Archway is good. The people are lovely.