



C4WS HOMELESS PROJECT

A Place To Call Home Roger's Story



Home From Home

It was coming to the end of my stay at the shelter. The C4WS team told me I wouldn't go back to the streets but I wasn't sure where I'd move to. Then my Welfare Worker told me about Home From Home. I was nervous at first but thought I might as well hear more.

I asked who my host would be and was told it would be Andrew, who volunteered at the shelter. So I'd met him and thought he was nice. Then we had a meeting, Andrew, me and Rachel (my Welfare Worker). I was a bit nervous, and I think Andrew was as well. But the meeting relayed all of our fears. I could see kindness in Andrew's face. Andrew said there would be no problems and that I'd be well looked after. One of my concerns with it was how much it would cost, but Andrew covered my food which meant I could start saving some money. After that first meeting, I was less nervous about staying at his house, so I said yes. We agreed that we'd try it for 4 weeks and in the end it was extended to 6 weeks in total.

On the day I moved there, we got an uber with all of my things from the shelter. Once we arrived, I walked into the bedroom and there was fresh linen there, and a pile of towels. There was a vase of daffodils on the table that were about to bloom. We then went through the House Rules altogether (Andrew, myself and Rachel) to clarify the details of the hosting placement. We read it over tea and cake.

On the first evening, we had a spinach souffle. It was perfect, and I said it was to Andrew. It was amazing, the flavour was immense. Next came the pheasant. A bowl of roast potatoes,

and vegetables. Then for pudding, we had fruit and cream. Right at the end of it, we had cheese! We talked about all sorts that first night and got to know each other.

After a while, the ice broke. It was a bit sticky at first but after a couple of days, I felt completely settled. We'd have breakfast together and go about our day separately, then we'd meet for lunch and dinner. We did our own thing throughout the day, which was helpful because at that time, I was busy with my job search and my flat search. I had a desk in my room, and an electronic tablet from C4WS so it was a good set up.

We had dinner together in the evening. I always did the washing up, even though he often didn't want me to. But I always wanted to. I wanted to clean it thoroughly and show that I cared about his home. I also wanted to keep it clean because we were in the middle of a lockdown.

Home From Home gave me more time to sort everything out. Everything takes a certain amount of time to get going – getting universal credit takes 5 weeks, opening a bank account took time, finding accommodation took time. Staying with Andrew gave me more time to sort it all - without spending money. It gives you a chance to save and get some money under your belt for whatever your next step is.