



Staying Well Personalised Cancer Support can help with:

- Support during treatment
- Feeling less lonely or isolated
- Finding local wellbeing groups and activities
- Making new friends
- Referrals to specialist support services
- Living with and after cancer
- General advice & help

Case Study: Personalised Cancer Support – Staying Well Project

Summary

- **Delivery Area:** Community & Wellbeing
- **Project:** Staying Well Personalised Cancer Support
- **Values:** We Care

Silvie Jones is a Russian national who has been residing in the UK for several years. She is a pensioner in receipt of housing benefit and pension and has no known family support in either the UK or Russia. Living alone, Silvie was experiencing significant social isolation and had very limited support networks.

In July 2021, Silvie was diagnosed with Stage A B-cell Chronic Lymphocytic Leukaemia. She is currently on a “watch and wait” treatment plan, with regular reviews every six months. Her condition affects her immunity, requiring her to carefully manage her exposure to potential sources of infection and avoid crowded places. Recently she experienced fatigue and a chest infection, which required antibiotic treatment.

 Staying Well

**MACMILLAN
CANCER SUPPORT**

community & wellbeing

Health and Well-being

Silvie was referred to the Staying Well service due to concerns around social isolation and her unsuitable housing conditions. She reported feeling lonely, unsupported, and increasingly anxious about her health and living situation, with her main priority being to secure more appropriate accommodation. Her housing at the time was unsafe and unfit for her needs. She was living in a property with shared kitchen and bathroom facilities, which posed a high infection risk given her compromised immune system. Rat poison was present in communal areas, creating additional concerns about contamination.

On occasions, Silvie had no choice but to use a bucket due to the shared toilets being located on the ground floor and not always accessible in time. She also reported poor responsiveness from her landlord and limited action from environmental health services. The property was situated on the third floor, which created further barriers, as Silvie recognised that during future treatment, such as chemotherapy, she would not be physically able to manage the stairs. Taken together, these conditions posed serious risks to her health, wellbeing, and independence, making rehousing an urgent priority.



Life Changing Outcomes

Through the support of Staying Well, Silvie was provided with a detailed housing support letter advocating for urgent rehousing due to the medical unsuitability of her accommodation. Liaison with Happy Days was made to explore supported housing options, and she was encouraged to continue bidding through Together Housing and private landlords. With consistent advocacy, reassurance, and practical support, Silvie successfully secured a property with Together Housing. This was a life changing outcome that provided her with a safe and suitable home, greater stability, and improved independence.

*name changed for anonymity

community & wellbeing

Financial Well-being



In addition to housing support, practical assistance was offered to help Silvie settle into her new property. Home visits were arranged to support the move, including help with setting up essential utilities such as gas and electricity with Octopus Energy. She was reassured that she would not be liable for inherited utility debts, reducing her financial worries. Silvie was also supported with tenancy forms and referred to a Community Support Worker specialising in housing and welfare benefits. This practical guidance eased the stress of moving and gave her confidence in managing her new home.

Financial wellbeing was another area of support. Silvie was initially unaware of any benefits beyond her pension, so Attendance Allowance was discussed as a possible source of additional help. Following a referral to the community worker, an appointment was arranged and Silvie was supported with her application. She was later awarded Attendance Allowance, improving her financial independence and enabling her to better meet her health-related needs.

A sense of Belonging

Regular welfare check-ins were conducted to monitor Silvie's physical and emotional wellbeing, building a trusting rapport over time. She expressed gratitude for the ongoing support and felt reassured knowing there was always someone to contact. To reduce her isolation, social prescribing was introduced, and groups such as Arts & Crafts and Chat and Chai were suggested. Silvie was accompanied to some of these groups to encourage her engagement, and she attended sessions where she enjoyed making jewellery, meeting others, and building her confidence in social settings. These activities gave her a sense of belonging and significantly reduced her loneliness.

Overall, the comprehensive support provided by Staying Well covering housing, practical assistance, financial guidance, and social and emotional wellbeing—has been transformative for Silvie. She has gained safe and secure housing, increased independence, improved financial stability, and meaningful social connections. With this holistic support, Silvie now feels safer, more supported, and more confident about her future.

*name changed for anonymity

community & wellbeing