

Stephen Burden Interview: February 23rd 2016

Interview at a project drop in at The North West Self Advocates Conference, Hilton Hotel, Blackpool.

With Nigel Ingham (and Stephen's support worker – Barry Hills)

N: (0:00:39.6) You discharged yourself voluntarily did you?

S: Yeah.

N: And do you remember which wards you were on Stephen.

S: Can't remember the wards names. I was on the first one, then where I was staying, there's a blind day centre I used to go to, a blind place. And it's not far from that... I can't remember what ward. It was Ward 5 or Ward 6 'cause they're long names, numbers.

N: And what was the ward like that you were on Stephen.

S: It was on the second - It was the first floor. The bedrooms were like side rooms. You had your own key to your room.

N: And did you have your own room or where there other people - ?

S: I had my own room.

N: Do you remember the food?

S: The food wasn't very nice. The food was not as good as it used to be!

N: What sort of food would you have there Stephen?

S: It's usually chips. Cottage pie. Or rice pudding. You name it they made all sorts.

B: Was there anything you really didn't like what they used to give you?

S: Rice pudding. That's certain. I didn't like that. I didn't like their cakes anyway.

N: And you were saying there was a place for blind -

S: Yeah. It's like a day centre for blind people.

N: And what would you do in there Stephen?

S: We just chatted. And then we'd go out for walks.

N: And when we were talking before you mentioned - was it Arthur Benn?

S: Yeah.

N: So who was Arthur Benn?

S: Arthur used to work on the ward.

N: So he was a member of staff there?

S: Yeah.

N: So you went when you were 16 and left what about 4 years later?

S: Yeah.

N: So why did you leave?

S: I didn't like to stay that long. If you were not sectioned you were allowed to leave when you're ready. If you feel you want to go you can go when you want. You just sign - you don't have to. But you felt - I was there too long.

N: And where did you go when you left?

S: (0:03:22.3) I lived in - I come back to Manchester. I was homeless in Manchester. Then I went to my mum's, close to my mum's house - she brought me in.

N: So when you came to leave - Did you have any support when you left?

S: No.

N: That sounds quite hard.

S: Well it is, But it's just the way that - I had to go back for my clothes. They offered me to stay over night and I chose not to.

N: Do you remember the day that you left?

S: It was on a Tuesday. And that was in the morning between 10 and 11 o'clock.

N: And how did you leave the hospital?

S: Through the gate. I went to the main office and signed a book, where you sign yourself out.

N: And then you walked out?

S: Yeah.

N: So was there anybody walking out with you?

S: (0:04:28.6) No. Just me.(...?) myself.

N: And where do you go after you'd walked out the gates?

S: I got a bus from down the road. It's called Whalley, where the bus stops are and go the bus into Ch - into the bus station. I got a train back to Manchester.

N: That sounds really well done. Sounds such a hard thing to do.

B: Very much.

S: Well it is. But -

N: And you were mentioning there about clothes. Do you remember the clothes that you used to wear when you were in the hospital?

S: (0:05:12.8) I was wearing trousers. Shoes that didn't fit! (I had a?) pair of their shoes, their shoes not like your own shoes are they?

N: They weren't your own shoes?

S: No they bought them for me but they were too small. They were too tight.

N: That sounds really uncomfortable.

S: They were.

N: And what about - you were saying about your trousers.

S: They were too tight. But when I went to my mum's she said they were too small.

N: So what happened when you went to your mum's?

S: She bought new clothes for me.

N: And how did that feel?

S: I was fine - I was happy when she bought them but I had no money, nothing. I had to do all the arrangements, get forms - to stay at mum's house we had to do all the forms. Well it's a big job, isn't it?

N: It is a big job Stephen, yeah.

S: (0:06:24.0) And they had a club there which I enjoyed. When you were in the club, it's like a club you just go in and get to meet other people. And they had pictures. They have a singer. And that's really good with all the music on.

N: And how often would you go to the club Stephen?

S: Everyday... You had a machine to get your drinks. It was only 20 pence for a cup of coffee. For a pie it's one pound eighty in the same building.

N: Did the club have a name?

S: No I can't remember the name of it.

N: And were there dances in the club?

S: They had pictures and they have shows.

N: (0:07:30.2) It sounds like when you were talking about the clothes that you didn't have a choice about what clothes you had.

S: Yeah.

N: So they were hospital clothes were they?

S: Yeah.

N: And when you were there Stephen, would you have visitors?

S: Yeah - well they only come when - My mum lives in Manchester so they're only allowed to come once a fortnight 'cause they come by coach. They bring by minibus. So they had a certain date when they can go and pick them up.

N: So your mum would come every fortnight, would she?

S: Yeah.

N: Would anybody else visit you?

S: No. Nobody else come after that.

N: And when your mum came to visit you, where would you meet your mum in the hospital?

S: On the ward.

N: So she'd come to the ward.

S: And she was uncomfortable really.

N: How do you know she was uncomfortable?

S: Because she told me... She said she didn't like - ... Someone sitting there, if discuss anything bad they'll know what's being said.

N: So it wasn't very private.

S: No it wasn't. I think that's just so there's no - I think there must be a reason for that. It might be in case you bring anything you shouldn't be bringing in.

N: (0:09:03.6) Did anybody say that to you?

S: Well no. But you could tell - My mum, 'cause she rang me up and said she wasn't comfortable with it.

N: Could you use the telephone when ever you wanted to?

S: No. You had to ask for it.

N: And where was the telephone?

S: In their office. So you had to pay. You had to pay a pound to use their phone. You had to pay for that to make a phone call.

N: And when you were making a phone call, would you be in the office on your own?

S: No. That's the problem we had. It wasn't private that. I'm afraid that's the way it is.

N: Stephen thank you so much for sharing some of these... You said the staff were very good. So what did you like about the staff there?

S: ... They make sure - if you go into the bathroom or in a bedroom make sure you're not, make sure you need help... like getting out the bath. Like support - that's what you need isn't it?

N: Some of things you're talking about sound quite hard for you.

S: It is.

N: Well Stephen thank you very much. Thank you for that.

S: OK.

(0:10:43.9) (Discuss permissions form)