

Stories help describe what services do.

Every-day and ordinary, or life changing and extraordinary?

David's story March 2024

Service name: Strength and Conditioning Class

Main purpose of service: The class is run by Locala's Cardiology team. The aim of the class is to increase the strength of the main muscle groups, so that daily activities may become easier and that participants can become more active. The class also provides peer support, as all those who attend are living with a heart condition. Exercise Physiologist Emma introduced David to Joanne from Locala's Engagement team.



About the person:

David is 81 years old and took part in the Strength and Conditioning class at Mill Hill Health Centre. He has enjoyed exercise all his life and played football – as a centre half - into his 40's. In fact, football has played a huge part in David's life. Starting work in 1958 for sport equipment firm, Mitre, then based in Huddersfield, he initially learnt the trade of making footballs. **“When footballs were leather and hand stitched!”** His career progressed and he travelled all over the UK and beyond, visiting topflight football clubs as a 'Field Director' for the company. Health issues limit what David can do now, but he still really enjoys trips away with his wife and they are both looking forward to visiting Norfolk and Eastbourne later this year. David says, **“I do the best I can.”**

Health:

David explains his health has deteriorated in recent years. **“I got asbestosis in my 20's and it stayed dormant until I was in my 60's. I've also had open heart surgery to replace valves. I've got a leaky valve now. I've got arthritis in both knees, and I soon struggle breathing when I walk. My lungs have got slowly worse.”** David is positive about the support he receives from his GP, the hospital, and Locala's Cardiology Nurses. **“They're all doing the best they can for me.”** He continues, **“Michelle, one of the nurses came to see me at home. She was excellent and we talked about all sorts of things. I was asked if I would like to go to the exercise class to help my walking and I said I'd be pleased to go. She set up a place for me.”**

Class:

With David's wife encouraging him, he joined the Strengthening and Conditioning class at Mill Hill Health Centre. David explains, **“I wasn't nervous. I trusted it would be OK. I felt at ease – they were brilliant. They talk you through it.”** He continues, **“Emma, and the other people there were wonderful. You get to know people – people who understand. It was good to have different company.”** David looked forward to going to the sessions and was disappointed to miss some weeks as he was unwell. He has continued the exercises at home. **“It's made my thighs a lot stronger. I can walk better. It's an excellent service.”**

Recommendation:

David says he can highly recommend the class for people who have similar health needs. **“You have to listen and do what they say – you've got to want to be able to do it.”**

David spoke with Jo Vaughan on 12 February 2024 and gives consent to share his story widely.