

Ross took one step forward, and five steps back before settling into his new home

Health and Social care provider Cartrefi Cymru supported Ross and friends into supported living to promote their independence

Overview

The need

Ross to move out of his family home, receive support (outside of his mum) to maintain his busy lifestyle and promote his independence

The solution

Acquiring Cartrefi's services and moving into a supported living setting. Ross and family working with support staff to establish Ross' needs and wants.

The benefit

Ross continuing his busy lifestyle, and building on this to become more self sufficient, whilst maintaining a great relationship with his family.

Life hasn't always been easy for Ross Maddock, 31 who was diagnosed with Down Syndrome at birth. When Ross was 10 mum, Gina, noticed his impulsive and repetitive behavior patterns which led to an added ADHD diagnosis. Gina explains some of Ross' childhood milestones were delayed because he was born with Gastro Oesophageal Reflux Disorder, he didn't start walking until the age of 5. This has left him with specific dietary needs. Ross has also had profound hearing loss since he was 12 and visual impairment due to Keratakonus. Ross is awaiting his second cornea transplant.



Whilst living at home, Ross was heavily dependent on his mum which became heightened during the global pandemic when Ross was unable to attend day services and outside activities.

Ross frequents CanDo Hub day provision and also work development training at FForestfach ATC where he met friends Matthew and Rhiannon.

Motivated by the need for Ross to become more independent, Ross moved into supported living when he was 21 where he lived with one other person.

Unfortunately, they were not compatible, and Ross's behavior deteriorated putting him at risk of losing his work development placement. After much thought, mum decided that it was in Ross's best interest to return to the family home. After 8 years of waiting for another suitable placement, I was at the end of my tether", explains Gina "I got together with friends, who are the parents of Ross's friends Matthew and Rhiannon, and we decided to approach social services ourselves to ask whether our three children could be housed together as a friendship group. Social Services explained that there was a budget available to purchase another property to set up a new supported housing scheme, and the search began."

In preparation for the big move, Ross, Matthew and Rhiannon started to familiarise themselves with each other outside of CanDo Hub and Work Development, attending activities and going for lunch together. Cartrefi was then awarded the contract to deliver support and 'Blaencwm' was established. A detached bungalow in Swansea.

Initial meetings included discussions on what the support would look like, meeting the people behind the care provider and measuring up for furniture. Ross, Matthew and Rhiannon were involved in choosing furniture for communal areas as well as for their own rooms. Gina explains it wasn't all plain sailing, as Ross had a long list of needs to be met, but she always felt listened to by Cartrefi and problems were always overcome with good communication pathways.

"I felt excited when I moved to Blaencwm with Matthew and Rhiannon" says Ross, who was later joined by Lowri an old friend from school who became the fourth tenant in the house.



Nevertheless, whilst living with mum, Ross always had a full diary between biking, football training, drama with the Rising Stars and watching the Swans play.

Jenna Hill, assistant service manager at Blaencwm describes Ross as a ‘social butterfly’ and states that “Ross had a strong community presence when he transitioned to Cartrefi which he has managed to maintain and build on”. His most recent venture is working at Victoria Park kiosk preparing and serving lunches to the public. Ross first started this before the pandemic and is really happy to be back serving his community!

Jenna, who is motivated by making a positive change to people's life has worked with Ross for a year, and explains that “Ross has really found his feet since living at Blaencwm. He has become more proactive and has the freedom to express himself”. Ross is thankful to the staff for helping him with house chores, medication and taking him to places. He particularly enjoys one-to-one support and the fact every day is different.

When asked if there was anything Ross would like to do in the future with the help of Cartrefi, he says a Zipwire.

Like most parents, Gina was anxious that Ross would get homesick and would prefer to live surrounded by his home comforts - but she learnt that that’s exactly what Ross had created - a home away from home.

“It’s amazing” says Gina “I always feel valued in my comments, and when I visit, I am made to feel welcome. The staff are very trusting and support Ross to reach his full potential. It’s the best decision I ever made as I now have peace of mind for the future”

