

# Lower Lodge



## Jack's\* story

\*Jack had been in care since the age of eight and throughout his life had become involved in substance misuse and wasn't attending school. At the age of 15, his behaviour spiralled out of control – he was behaving violently towards other young people, as was potentially involved in County Lines activities.

The separation of his foster parents and introduction of a new foster sibling seemed to have a negative impact on Jack's behaviour, leading to an incident that involved the police. His foster carers were unable to manage and sought additional help to meet his needs.

It was at this point that Jack was referred to Lower Lodge House, where the manager insisted that on his arrival Jack begin with a clean slate; handing in his phone, tobacco and cutting contact with people and materials that had influenced his behaviour in the past.

Staff worked to build trust with Jack. One way they did this was by taking him to the gym and introducing him to boxing. Activities like these helped him focus and he continued to work on building a new life.

Jack had never admitted being involved in County Lines activities but he would often talk about the past, giving staff an insight into his experiences. A turning point for Jack came when Steve Challinor, Keys Group's National Specialist Advisor Police Liaison, visited Lower Lodge and ran a workshop on County Lines. This session helped Jack to reflect on his experiences, which he discussed openly for the first time.

Jack became close with staff who continued to provide him with the support, stability and the home life he craved. This support helped Jack to become a figure of guidance and support for other young people in the home, looking after them and helping them develop when they came to him for support.

Jack also became adamant that he wanted to get back into education but was concerned about coping at school.

To support his needs, he worked with a tutor to increase his confidence and has been able to enjoy learning again.

After just over a year at Lower Lodge Jack began building a relationship with his mother again. He has since moved in with his mum and sibling and is really enjoying his new life.

He said: "I don't know where I'd be without the staff and support from Lower Lodge."



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