

NEW HOPE CHURCH FOODBANK EXPERIENCE

Ivan's Experience

Ivan* is a **determined** and **sociable man** who regularly attends New Hope Cafe. Unfortunately, in August 2024, Ivan was **at risk of homelessness** after staying with a friend. Ivan is Bulgarian and has limited confidence with speaking English.

August 2024

Ivan* presented to the council as homeless, however **found it challenging to navigate the housing team, the housing application process, and his responsibilities, as all communication was in English.** While a translator was provided in the meetings he had with the council, he also needed to make phone calls and to communicate via email. Not only was there a language barrier, but Ivan's health continued to deteriorate while he slept in his car. During this time Your Own Place Facilitator, Emily, began with **referrals to housing specialists, such as Shelter**, however they felt unable to support at this time.

September - November 2024

Ivan* visited Emily at New Hope cafe weekly for regular support with **translating and responding to money or housing related emails, and to phone housing providers** to check where he was on the waiting list. He remained motivated and driven. At one point, the Housing Officer assigned to Ivan's application left, and with no handover contact, Ivan felt he was at square one again.

December 2024

Finally, after perseverance and regular visits to Norwich City Council, in December **Ivan received confirmation of the council's duty to relieve homelessness** and was given access to the Home Options Gateway. Unfortunately the username he was given was incorrect, which meant another call to the council to resolve - which wasn't easy with the language barrier. All the same, this was a huge relief for Ivan and **he could finally bid on properties, which Emily supported with.**

January 2025



At Emily's first visit to New Hope cafe and food bank in 2025, **Ivan shared that he now has a flat through Home Options!** He started working with Emily and Chris at British Red Cross to source furniture and essentials for his new place. Ivan now proudly talks about his furnished new home and is looking into options for work.

8 hours spent together



9 financial conversations at New Hope



Partnership working

