

# Annual Public Health Report 2020

## Time to Change: Working Towards Better Health For All in Suffolk

Transcript: Darren (52) and Becky (47). Unemployed and currently homeless Bury St Edmunds

### **Q: How has COVID-19 affected your life?**

**Darren:** Well I've been in hospital with pneumonia and I was on the, they put us on the- [inaudible]

**Becky:** The COVID ward.

**Darren:** The COVID ward whatever it's called. Put us in isolation for three days. Get some antibiotics into us and chuck us back out on to the streets you know what I mean?

**Becky:** There weren't beds to keep him in there, even though he's homeless with pneumonia, they still made him leave the day they gave him antibiotics he was only in there one day with pneumonia. I mean that's ridiculous and they didn't keep him in at all they knew he was going back on to the street.

**Darren:** Plus I just had an open heart surgery you know what I mean?

**Becky:** Two years ago.... Year and a half ago weren't it? Yeah [inaudible] -not well enough really to be living on the street and now we're in [sound cut] -lockdown and there's nobody about, there's nobody to help you know what I mean, these organisations that could help us, there's nobody there. Now I'm getting these letters off the government telling me that I can't. I shouldn't be really sitting next to my long term partner who I've been with eleven years. They're saying to me- I can't go out because I've been too ill, I'll find if I actually catch it, it's likely to kill me.

**Darren:** [inaudible]

**Becky:** Even though we're not living together because, we can't actually find somewhere to live together. Private housing won't house us, they won't take people on benefits. And... well getting one through the council is just not happening is it. [inaudible] Yeah, it's a bad predicament it really is at the moment, it's really desperate. There's none of the soup kitchens, the things that used to get us through the week with food.

### **Q: How has the last few months affected your physical and mental health?**

**Darren:** Depression, anxiety.



**Becky:** Deep depression as well.

**Darren:** Causing arguments between me and you all the time, never used to happen.

**Becky:** And he's drinking heavily, which he wouldn't be if he's living with me. If we were living together. He's just really depressed.

**Darren:** [inaudible]

**Becky:** I shouldn't drink and I do, not as heavily but I drink because... well we've got no life together. I have to come to a doorway to see my boyfriend.

**Darren:** This COVID carries on... it'll kill me if I catch it, you know what I mean?

**Becky:** And me, kill both of us.

**Darren:** Pneumonia... [inaudible].

**Becky:** I've got a pancreatitis, severe pancreatitis, well it's gone they took most of my pancreas out now. And... the way he's having to live... just not helping, if we had somewhere to live and you know... [groans] that's just, it'll be so you know... it'll make our lives so much, better. And the COVID has made it so much, well more difficult because... all the helps sort of gone, do you know what I mean, everybody that used to help like Sunday suppers- [inaudible/interruption]

**Becky:** The drop in, all the drop in's have been closed. Somewhere warm he could go for dinner and we could go and eat together.

**Darren:** The police keep paying us £60 every time we see them.

**Becky:** Every time because we're together.

**Darren:** On the streets, which is ridiculous.

**Becky:** They just look for us to be together and we get a fine. They don't tell us we've got a fine and we just get sent one through the post, and he gets sent one from the council people.

**Q: To what extent do you think people's health is affected by factors such as where they live, who they are or how much money they have?**

**Becky:** I think mentally, this is what's happening. It makes your life a lot harder. People are getting really depressed.

**Darren:** A lot of shops are closing down in the town.



**Becky:** We don't see our friends, we don't see our families. You know life's really miserable at the moment. But yeah I think depression is worse for everyone at the moment, so I know so many people don't we, just thinking of ending it, and it's really getting that bad.

