

Perennial Christmas Cards

Perennial Christmas cards are again on sale across the UK at Cards for Good Causes pop up shops.

Visit cardsforcharity.co.uk to find your nearest one. You can also buy Perennial Christmas cards and gifts online at perennial.org.uk/shop, including the Great British Card Company's (GBCC) Floreo Range, from which they donate 10p per card each to Perennial and Greenfingers. Since their launch last year GBCC has donated over £20,000 to each

charity, for which Perennial is extremely grateful.

Thanks to our supporters choosing to send Perennial branded Christmas Cards, over 500,000 people have received information about the charity.

Perennial also offers a personalised Christmas card service to our supporters. Call Sunita Firrell on **01372 384 049** to order and spread the word this festive season.

Fill in the form below (enclosing a cheque made payable to Perennial), or telephone with your credit/debit card details: 0800 093 8792

YPNEWS

Gifts that Transform Lives

Perennial's virtual gifts make a life-changing difference to people they help and make a thoughtful Christmas present.

What do you buy for somebody who seems to have everything? Why not give a Christmas gift that supports Perennial's work in caring for those who need support?

Perennial's virtual gifts were introduced four years ago and have raised over £15,500, supplying essential items such as winter coats, microwaves, Christmas food vouchers or paying for heating and fuel bills for those who could not otherwise afford them.

Make a difference by giving a present that supports horticulturists and their families. Purchase one of these virtual gifts and you will receive a greetings card with details of the gift which you may keep or give to your friend or family. The money paid will go into Perennial's Good Samaritan Fund which provides grants to individuals. Alternatively you may like to help with a donation.

See the full range on the website at:

www.perennial.org.uk/VirtualGifts

Title: First Name: Surname:

Home Address:

Postcode: Home Tel: Mobile:

Date of Birth: Personal Email:

To join Friends of Perennial or become a friend of one of our gardens telephone 0800 093 8792.

Please tick this box if you **WOULD** like to receive a donation acknowledgement letter.

Are you a UK Tax Payer? Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year.

I would like to Gift Aid all donations I make to Perennial in the future, or have made in the past four years, until I notify you otherwise. I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

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Signature:


Date:


We would like to keep you in touch with the work we are doing by sending you a limited number of marketing communications. Should you change your mind in the future it's very simple to opt out. We do not sell your information to any third parties and your data is kept in strict accordance with our Privacy Policy which is available on www.perennial.org.uk. If you DO NOT wish to receive communications from us, please tick one or all of the following boxes: Post Email Phone SMS .

Please return to: Perennial, 115-117 Kingston Road, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 7SU

A company limited by guarantee. Registered in England & Wales no: 8828584 | Charity no: 1155156. Registered in Scotland | Charity no: SC040180. Perennial's Debt Advice Service is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

£15  Your gift could buy a Christmas present for a child. Christmas Present for a Child YG1503GS

£50  Your support could help someone with a Perennial Caseworker visit. Caseworker Visit YG1501GS

£100  This gift could help pay heating fuel bills for a Perennial client in need. Heating Fuel Bills YG1410GS

I would like to help with a donation of:

Enter your own chosen amount

Issue 34 Winter 2017

Perennial News

Keeping you in touch with Perennial



How we're helping Billy
See page 7

Special Events booking now for 2018
See page 3



A dream team triumphs at Hampton Court

Exhibiting at flower shows is an important part of keeping Perennial's services visible to horticulturists and raising much needed awareness and funds. But it can be tricky to balance the time and financial commitment a show garden demands, with the ongoing day-to-day work of the team.

However, when the charity was given the opportunity to support a show garden at the RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show this year, designed by award-winning garden designer Tom Massey, there was little hesitation in taking it on and The Perennial Sanctuary Garden was born. Anita Bates, Director of Marketing & Development at Perennial, says:

"Show Gardens are a superb way to attract people's attention and introduce them to the work of Perennial. When we saw Tom's design we knew we had to make it work. We have some brilliant friends and supporters across the industry and were sure that by working together we could greatly increase awareness of Perennial so more people needing our help would hear of us, and bring Tom's design to life."

Tom and the Perennial team worked with Hortus Loci on the plants and Landform Consultants on the construction of the garden, with further support from London Stone, The Pot Company, Allgreen Group and Lindum Turf. The donation of time and materials from the trade was incredible and simply made the project possible.

The result was a stunning garden. Approximately 50,000 visitors walked through the garden over the course of the week and learned more about how Perennial supports horticulturists and the effect this help can have on people's lives. With a striking planting scheme, a tranquil central haven, and a powerful message behind it, there was plenty to inspire and take home.

Tom says:

"It was an honour to create a garden for Perennial at Hampton Court. The spiralling walk-through scheme, with its changing colour palette of plants, communicated the journey a Perennial client takes from difficult circumstances to safety with Perennial's help. Visitors really connected with the garden, and I thoroughly enjoyed talking about the design and hearing comments as people walked through the planting. It was very well received with lots of positive feedback. I am proud to have been able to help raise awareness of Perennial and the important work that the charity does."

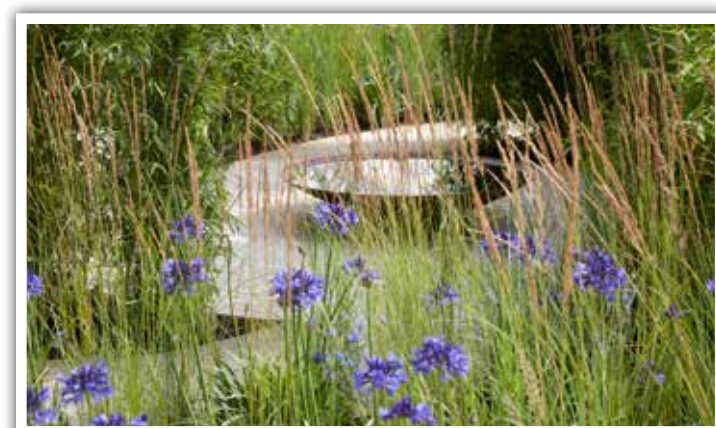
Anita Bates continues:

"We simply couldn't have taken this garden on without the incredible support we received from the companies involved in building it and the volunteers who helped show people around it during show week. We are so fortunate to have such a strong network of support and on behalf of everyone here at Perennial I'd like to thank you once again."



Find out more about The Perennial Sanctuary Garden at perennial.org.uk/sanctuarygarden

Read more about how volunteers made a difference at the show on pages 4 and 5.



Photos © Britt Willoughby Dyer

We hope you never need to contact us ...
...but we're here if you do.

General Advice Line: 0800 093 8543
Debt Advice Line: 0800 093 8546
services@perennial.org.uk

PERENNIAL
GARDENERS' ROYAL BENEVOLENT SOCIETY
Helping Horticulturists In Need Since 1839

If you, or someone you know, has been affected by changes in working benefits or need help managing finances, please contact Perennial in confidence. Perennial's services are free to all horticulturists.

www.perennial.org.uk/help or call 0800 093 8543

From Peter Newman, CEO

Since I joined Perennial in May I have been struck by the generosity and loyalty of our supporters. We simply couldn't provide the vital services that are a lifeline to horticulturists in need without you.

A very important and growing source of revenue for the charity is via our commercial arm. One of the busiest times of year for this is during the run up to Christmas.

The Perennial on-line shop and Christmas catalogue is packed with gift ideas for friends and family.

Every purchase from it raises funds that make a real difference to the lives of the people we help, so when you have finished with your catalogue please pass it on to a friend and we hope they will be tempted to buy from it too.

On the subject of Christmas, our range of Christmas cards not only raises money for us but also helps raise awareness of the help we can offer.

Every recipient will be able to read about the services we provide on the back of their card and pass on information to people they know who may need help at some stage in their life.



The cards are available online, via the catalogue and also through Cards for Good Causes, which runs a network of more than 300 pop-up charity Christmas card shops across the UK.

We are also offering the over-printing service again this year for businesses and individuals who would like a personalised message printed inside their cards.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of Perennial News and, on behalf of Perennial, thank you for your support.

Peter Newman

Delivering one-to-one help to those who need it most

As the government's welfare reforms continue to affect families in work across the UK, Sheila Thomson, Director of Services at Perennial, talks about how her team of trained, professional caseworkers and debt advisers deliver one-to-one help, advice and support to clients.



Q: Why do so many working clients need financial help?

A: "Horticulture, in all its branches, is generally a low-paid, seasonal profession which is prone to job insecurity and which often carries considerable risk of injury. Together with the risk of illness, family breakdown, bereavement and other life challenges common among the general population, it is easy to see how our services are needed now more than ever. Most of our clients are already managing strict monthly budgets to try to cope with low incomes but when the unexpected happens, for example an essential car repair or boiler breakdown, there often isn't a cushion to fall back on. It can be difficult to put anything aside for emergencies when your income only just covers your essential outgoings. A large part of our job is helping people access additional financial support in these 'emergency' situations."

Q: How do you prioritise clients and ensure Perennial's help is reaching those who need it most?

A: "Our telephone helpline and online help form act as a crude triage system. Urgent cases are quickly flagged, but everyone who contacts us receives an initial phone call within 3 working days and a home visit within 10 working days. We visit people at home for several reasons, but the main one is that people often call us about their most pressing and urgent need e.g. a final demand letter or a missed mortgage payment, but we need to understand the whole situation to ensure we're helping in the most appropriate way. People usually come to us as a last resort and their needs are often the most basic requirements to survive; food, warmth and shelter. We address those needs as a priority and do so as quickly as possible, especially in the case of the elderly and those with young families."

Q: What do you foresee as the challenges for people working in this profession over the next few years?

A: "It seems likely that ongoing welfare reforms will continue to affect all those both in work on low incomes and out of work due to redundancy or seasonal working patterns. We expect a continued rise in the need for crisis grants (vouchers to cover food as costs rise but salaries don't) and a rise in debt management cases. Horticulture is an industry that is often seen as a 'nice to have' rather than a necessity and as budgets are squeezed generally we also predict further job insecurity. We will continue to offer our free and confidential services to all those who contact us and we will continue to raise awareness of Perennial amongst those working in horticulture across the UK in order to reach more people each year."

Read the full interview online at perennial.org.uk/sheila-thomson

Leave a lasting legacy to Perennial

A gift in your will can make a huge difference to horticulturists and their families who are facing difficult times.

By leaving a legacy to Perennial, you will be making an impact for years to come, providing the funds so that we can respond quickly to a request for help, whilst also being able to offer the ongoing support which can be so essential to our clients. All gifts are important to us regardless of size – each gift allows us to help someone who really needs our support.

Find out more about the difference a gift in your will can make by requesting a copy of our Legacy Information Pack. This pack contains examples of how your gift can make a difference, and the steps needed to put Perennial in your will. To request your copy today, please call **01372 384044** or email legacies@perennial.org.uk



Anniversary woodland opens in Tunbridge Wells

A native woodland of 175 trees, planted in Dunorlan Park in March 2014 by Sodexo Horticulture Services to mark Perennial's 175th anniversary, was officially opened in September by the Deputy Mayor of Tunbridge Wells.



The informal ceremony marked the unveiling of a new interpretation board for the woodland listing all those who have trees dedicated to them, many of which were purchased in memory of loved ones, making this woodland a truly personal place for the people of Tunbridge Wells.

Peter Newman, CEO of Perennial, was on hand to thank all those present for their support. He said:

"Although this project began before my time here at Perennial I can see today that a lot of love and dedication has made it happen. A huge thank you must go to Sodexo Horticulture Services who initiated it, donated and planted the trees and who continue to care for them for us all to enjoy. Thanks too of course go to all those who have purchased trees in memory of loved ones. Perennial exists to look after the people who care for our parks, trees, gardens and green spaces. We hope none of you ever need us, but rest assured that we are ready to help you if you ever do".

A vintage year for Special Events

Perennial's roots lie in the great gardens and estates of Britain and so it is fitting that its annual programme of exclusive garden tours and events is supported by the owners of exquisite gardens across the UK.

In 2017 visitors enjoyed a guided tour of the renowned garden designer Arne Maynard's Monmouthshire garden led by Arne himself; a horticultural and gastronomic feast at Belmond Le Manoir Aux Quat'Saisons; a tour of a wonderful private garden in West Sussex with head gardener and seasoned Perennial supporter Ben Pope; a fabulous visit to Mount St John with breath-taking views across the Vale of York and an inspiring evening in Nigel Watts' small but perfectly formed city garden in London.

One guest said of her garden visit this summer:

"We have visited many gardens over the years and rate this visit as outstanding. From the welcome cup of coffee on arrival to the farewell on departure, the organisation was superb."



Chris Crooker, Events Manager at Perennial, is busy confirming the full 2018 programme and can't wait to tell supporters more about it. She says:

"We have a super calendar of garden tours and special events lined up again for the coming season. Friends of Perennial and of our gardens have already received our preview brochure with opportunities to visit Bath Priory with its Michelin starred garden restaurant in May; a double garden tour of the perennially popular Laskett Gardens and The Old Rectory in June; the extensive formal gardens of the spectacular double moated Birtsmorton Court, and a visit to the Roof Gardens in Kensington and a tour of one of London's largest garden squares. I enjoy seeing our 'regulars' each year who always support our special events and I am looking forward to welcoming new guests in 2018."

For further details, to book onto the tours mentioned above and to find out more about the 2018 programme visit perennial.org.uk/events



Perennial,
your horticultural trade charity

www.perennial.org.uk
01372 373962

Find us on Facebook: **Perennial GRBS**
and Twitter: **@PerennialGRBS**

Head Office: 115-117 Kingston Road,
Leatherhead, Surrey, KT22 7SU

Registered Charity Nos: England & Wales 1155156 | Scotland SC040180
Perennial's Debt Advice Service is authorised and regulated by
the Financial Conduct Authority.

Simply cut out this Perennial services information card and keep it safe in your wallet or purse. Pass it on to someone you know or meet who works in horticulture and explain that Perennial is their trade charity should they ever need help or advice. Thank you.

The people behind the pounds

Volunteers are the lifeblood of Perennial and their help comes in many different forms. From helping at the flower shows, taking part in fundraising, assisting at head office or getting involved at our gardens, we could not do what we do without them.

Help at Hampton

There were over 300 Perennial volunteers at the RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show in July, running the two plant crèches, where generous donations from visitors totalled over £6,000, and selling our new product ranges on the trade stand. They also stood in the hot sun tirelessly welcoming visitors onto the Perennial Sanctuary Garden, making sure all were told about the services Perennial provides and the importance of passing information about the charity onto gardeners, tree surgeons and all horticulturists they know, as well as providing information on the stunning planting. Thanks also go to Hortus Loci, which hosted a warmly received pre-show briefing event for our volunteers.

"I love helping out when I can - it is great to feel as a volunteer that I can make a small contribution towards the amazing work you all do at Perennial."

"I found that many of the visitors had never heard of Perennial, so I was delighted to be able to help spread the word"

"I felt very involved from the first contact and I feel very positive about the organisation. Great garden and excellent benefits for the volunteers too."



Fundraising feats

Our fantastic fundraisers have been hard at work in recent months undertaking some exciting challenges to raise money. Brave thrill-seekers, Manoj Malde, Gillian Goodson and Kenny Raybould jumped out of a plane at 15,000ft in skydives raising more than £3,000.

Brian Hawtin set out to walk 100km from Canterbury to Crawley in under 24 hours. In fact he finished the gruelling walk in less than 23 hours which was an amazing achievement and raised £700. Other energetic endeavours include James Robbins' extended triathlon, which included the Reading Half Marathon, Great Swim London in the Royal Docks and the London to Brighton bike ride. Sarah Daniel raised over £500 taking part in the British 10k race in July and a team also participated in the Royal Parks Half Marathon. All of these fantastic achievements have contributed to the running total for HortAid 2017 currently standing at over £66,000. Our Grubby Gardeners volunteer team has once again dared to bare all for Perennial. They have kindly organised a Naked Gardeners Calendar 2018 which is on sale now via our website, with all profits going towards helping horticulturists. Their last calendar in 2015 raised almost £10,000 to help those in need!



Trade tournament

Strengthening our partnerships with the trade is a key focus for Perennial and we are always looking to develop creative and different ways to engage with businesses in the industry.

A brilliant example of a trade partnership took place back in May with the Play the Pitch tournament at Leicester City's King Power Stadium. Sixteen teams from across the horticulture industry participated in a nail-biting competition, which combined a fun filled event with fundraising, networking and raising awareness of Perennial.

The team from Gavin Jones was crowned champions following a fiercely fought penalty shoot-out and the event raised over £15,000. Thanks go to John Ledwidge, Grounds Manager at Leicester City, as well as headline sponsors ICL, for making it all possible.

To find out more about trade partnerships and how your business or organisation could work more closely with Perennial, contact Laura Garnett, Senior Development Manager: lgarnett@perennial.org.uk



Garden volunteers

Our garden volunteers at York Gate and Fullers Mill Garden provide the head gardeners with support in keeping the gardens at an impeccable standard, turning out in all weather.

Fullers Mill Garden has 26 volunteers helping out in the garden and the bothy, meeting and greeting visitors and would welcome more. See page 6 for an update on how York Gate volunteers are getting on with their heritage project, archiving the history of the arts & crafts garden.



Tribute to trustees

We are pleased to welcome two new trustees Cindy Peck and Maureen Hart.

Cindy is a solicitor and a member of the Court of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners. Maureen is a social worker, Vice Chair of Sefton Adoption Panel and Justice of the Peace and has joined our Policy & Services Committee. Our trustees play a very important role in helping steer Perennial and we are grateful to them for giving their time and expertise.

Thanking those that help

During August our volunteers were treated to some special gardens visits as a thank you for giving their time to Perennial this year.

Groups of volunteers visited gardens in London, Oxfordshire, Surrey, Cornwall and Suffolk, where they had a warm welcome and the chance to relax with other volunteers in a beautiful setting. Thanks go to the NGS for organising these visits to gardens that are not usually open to the public, as part of its campaign to promote the positive effects of gardens on health and well-being.



Volunteer in 2018

If you are interested in getting involved as a volunteer, please get in touch.

Email: volunteer@perennial.org.uk or call Sue Brinsden on **01372 869 937**.

- 26-29 April | **Harrogate Spring Flower Show**
- 10-13 May | **RHS Malvern Spring Festival**
- 22-26 May | **RHS Chelsea Flower Show**
- 2-8 July | **RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show**
- 14-16 Sept | **Harrogate Autumn Flower Show**
- 29-30 Sept | **Malvern Autumn Show**

From the Gardens ...

As the open season at our gardens draws to a close for another year, we reflect on some of the 2017 highlights:

Fullers Mill Garden, Suffolk

- Visit England awarded the garden its coveted Rose Marque in June
- Bernard Tickner, who created the garden and continues to fund it, was awarded an MBE for services to horticulture and conservation in The Queen's birthday honours.
- Two new apprenticeships have been confirmed at the garden – Gary Bean and Lily Pardon will spend two years training under Head Gardener Annie Dellbridge, working towards a Level 2 horticulture qualification.



York Gate, Leeds

- This 20th century garden, full of detailed craftsmanship, was placed 7th in the 20 great gardens to visit this summer, in The Times 2017 Summer Special supplement.
- A new Head Gardener, Ben Preston, has been appointed.
- Christmas is Coming! The garden, tearoom and gift shop will be open on Friday 24 and Saturday 25 November and Saturday 2 December (11am – 3pm) for Christmas gifts, decorations, cards and wrapping. Enjoy a homemade mince pie and warming glass of mulled wine while you shop and stroll around the garden in winter.



Party for Perennial

Put the date in your diary for the 2018 Party for Perennial, which will take place on Thursday 18th January at the Flamingo Room at O'Neills in central London.

The event has become a highlight of the industry calendar and a great evening of fun and fundraising. Fabulous raffle prizes will be on offer as well as good food, live music and a free glass of bubbly.

Tickets cost £25 and are available now by ordering from the Christmas catalogue or online via www.perennial.org.uk/events. If you would like to make a group booking or make this your company's Christmas party and need an invoice, please contact **Sunita Firrell** on **01372 384 049** or email sfirrell@perennial.org.uk



York Gate Heritage Project

In 2016, York Gate was awarded a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to capture the unique history of the house and garden.

A team of 36 trained volunteers is collecting oral histories and pictures of the Spencer family and the development of the site from a farmyard to one of the best Arts & Crafts style gardens in the country.

There is now a timeline and pictorial display around the walls of the excellent tea room.

A permanent exhibition is being prepared for the visitor area in the 300 year old former stables (now gift shop).



Join us for a choral celebration

The Brandenburg Choral Festival of London is the capital's biggest and broadest choral event, bringing amateur choirs together from across the UK.



This year Perennial has partnered one of the concerts to offer supporters the chance to enjoy a magical evening of music and singing in central London with proceeds being donated to Perennial.

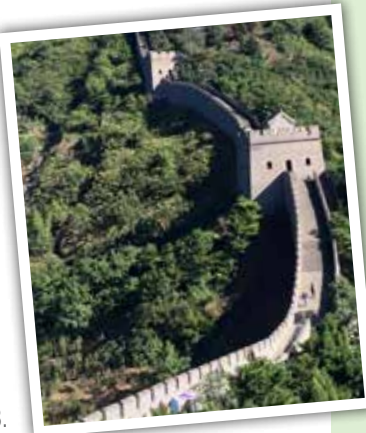
To find out more and to book tickets visit perennial.org.uk/Brandenburg

Take a challenge in 2018

Two adventures of a lifetime are on offer as part of next year's HortAid, so why not set yourself a challenge while raising money for Perennial?

There are still places available to join the team trekking along the Great Wall of China in September 2018 or you could take part in the six-day cycling challenge through Andalusia in Spain in October 2018.

Even our own Director of Marketing & Development, Anita Bates, and Senior Development Manager, Laura Garnett, are putting their best foot forward and fundraising to take part in the China trip. If you are ready for an adventure and want to join them, then find out more at: www.perennial.org.uk/events



We need to talk about mental health

The importance of recognising and talking about mental health continues to gather momentum but there is still reticence among those working in horticulture to acknowledge poor mental health and to seek help. Perennial's trained caseworkers and debt advisers are ready to help with any issue someone might be facing, including poor mental health.

Sheila Thomson, Director of Services at Perennial, says:

"Despite being over 175 years old we are still hampered by low awareness among those within the industry facing difficulties. We are often contacted when someone is already at crisis point, with multiple issues affecting them; illness, injury, debt, unemployment, family breakdown and associated mental health issues that have manifested themselves as a result."

"Our team is trained to recognise and deal with a whole range of issues, and can signpost and refer to other agencies if we feel additional help is required."

"The sooner we can start working with people, the better and we would urge anyone who feels that things are getting too much to contact us as soon as possible."



If you, or someone you know, needs help, contact Perennial by phone or email as soon as possible.

www.perennial.org.uk/help

Tel: 0800 093 8543

Email: services@perennial.org.uk

Billy's story

Billy* first contacted Perennial in 2010. He had worked as a groundsman for 10 years since being discharged from the army with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder due to his experiences whilst serving his country.

He and his wife were both on low wages and having problems paying the bills. They then borrowed money from doorstep lenders without realising the impact of these high interest rates and as a result were in serious debt. This was having a severe impact on Billy's mental health, which was already in a fragile state. Perennial's debt advice team immediately helped with his rent and council tax arrears.

Grants were given for a new bed, mattress and bedding for his two-year old son who had outgrown his cot. So that Billy could seek better paid work, a further grant paid for a new driving licence and a retraining programme was organised and funded. Unluckily Billy's home was badly hit by floods in 2012 and most of the family's possessions were lost, including his car. Although the property owner had buildings insurance, the family did not have contents insurance, which is not unusual for those on low incomes.

Perennial stepped in and replaced his cooker and washer-drier and contacted SSAFA, the armed forces charity, which helped with grants for other essential items. Billy contacted Perennial again in 2014 after his mental health had taken a turn for the worse. He had been made redundant and his wife was pregnant with their second child. Their claims for benefits had failed and they were facing bailiffs. After conversations with one of Perennial's debt advisers, Billy accepted the extent of his debt problem and Perennial helped him obtain a Debt Relief Order. Sadly life has continued to be very tough for Billy. His relationship broke down, which led to a major setback in his mental health.

Throughout all of this his Perennial caseworker liaised with the mental health crisis team, helped him apply for relevant benefits and accompanied him to medical examinations. Billy is now on the road to recovery and is hoping to find suitable employment. He knows he can contact his Perennial caseworker whenever he wants.

** (Names have been changed to protect identities and photo posed by a model.)*

