

## An overview of the project

Discovery Quest is a unique, innovative, goal orientated walking therapy programme, for young adults who are at risk of developing serious mental illness (SMI) or who are already being treated for SMI.

Discovery Quest has developed a specific training programme that involves participants completing over 350 miles in 5 months within a defined geographical location. Then in the sixth month walking the West Highland Way and Ben Nevis in the Scottish highlands.

An essential intervention of Discovery Quest is to ensure that participants undertake various educational activities, such as outdoor first aid, navigational training, outdoor personal care, benefits of healthy eating, via formal and informal discussion sessions.

Paul Lefever, (a trained mental health nurse & and ex British Army soldier) has developed this specific training programme, which will work in partnership with Julian Housing Support (JHS) and Norfolk and Waveney Mental Health Partnership.

## Who are Julian Housing Support?

JHS works throughout Norfolk, in partnership with Norfolk Social Services, Norfolk Health and all the major housing providers, to assist people with mental health problems lead an independent life in their community. JHS aims to: Enable people with severe and enduring mental health problems to live within the community in accommodation suited to their needs. Build on peoples existing strengths and skills in order for them to live as independently as they wish. Improve the quality of peoples lives by focusing on what they feel are their housing and support needs and by accessing appropriate resources to help meet their needs

## Discovery Quest's central aim is to reduce social exclusion, this will be achieved by:

- Enabling participants to explore and challenge their own mental and physical boundaries in a safe and supportive group environment
- Giving participants the opportunity to develop and enhance their psychological and social recovery through their own achievements (using physical activity as the primary focus)
- Supporting participants in developing a healthier lifestyle through walking and appropriate health education
- Increasing participants self esteem by encouraging and enhancing hope and purpose through the restorative power of walking therapy
- Empowering participants to learn and develop new skills which will be transferable to everyday life
- Participants will be encouraged to link to other non specialist walking/outdoor activity groups.

## Who are the intended beneficiaries of the project?

Adults aged between 18 and 65 years of age. Referrals will come from secondary mental health services within the Norwich city locality. In addition, referrals will also come via JHS Active Outreach Team and City Team.

## How is this an enterprising solution to a social problem, and what is the major social impact that Discovery Quest hopes to achieve?

This project targets a very specific and hard to reach section of the community. The walking programme is likely to be a very real but achievable challenge. There are already a number of other local walking groups within the Norfolk area, but my project seeks to work with adults with SMI, a particular group who are unlikely to have participated in such activities before. Having a diagnosis of SMI has been shown to be the most socially excluded diagnosis any adult in the UK can have, (Social Inclusion Unit 2005). Proven evidence has shown that walking has tremendous beneficial affect on mental and physical well-being, (NICE 2006).

## How do you know there is a need for your project?

People with SMI are a vulnerable and health disadvantaged group. Many exist on low incomes, have low self-esteem and confidence, and lack drive. Brown (1999) states: People with SMI can have an unhealthy life style, which contributes to the excess mortality. They are therefore an appropriate target group for health promotion interventions, with mortality rates some 1.5 times higher than the rest of the population.

Research suggests that the underlying causes of excess mortality in SMI may be due to a number of factors relating to the lifestyles that many people with SMI lead. Government policies National Institute of Clinical Excellence (2006), National Service Framework for Mental Health (1999) and Chief Nursing Officer's review (2006) have all stated that physical health is a major intervention that should be encouraged by all mental health workers.

# Discovery Quest



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## Main objectives

- 6 month walking programme
- Walk over 350 miles in 5 months
- Walk the West Highland Way & Walk Ben Nevis in the sixth month

## Develop skills in:

- Navigation Skills
- Outdoor First Aid
- General Knowledge for Walking
- Health Education
- Nutritional Advice
- Becoming part of Team
- Build Confidence

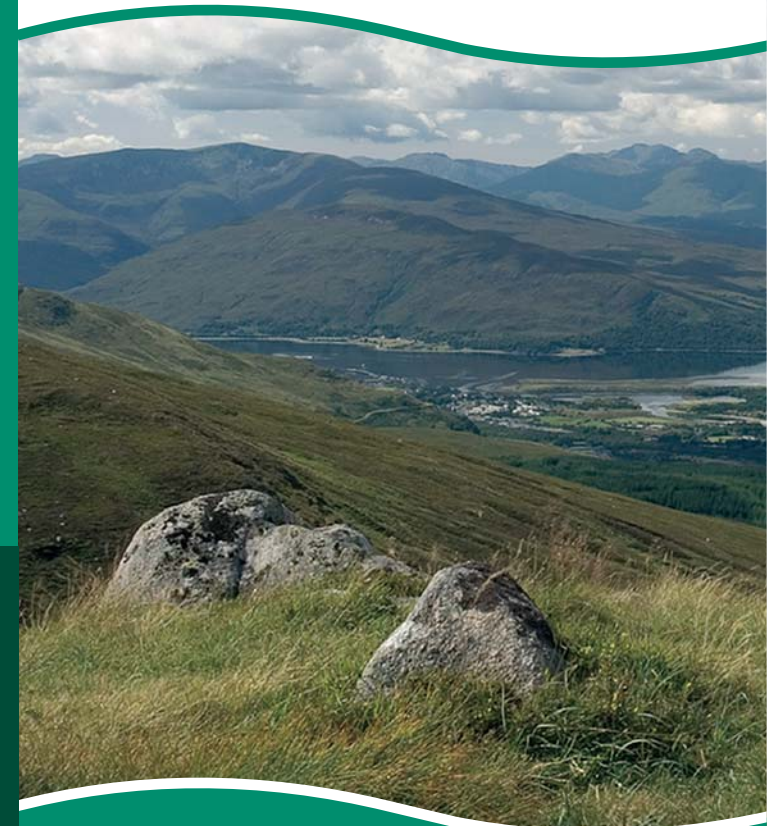
## Personal background and rationale for project.

In April 2006 I started to reflect on my three years Mental Health Nurse (Degree level) training and how best I could adapt the skills and knowledge gained to offer appropriate meaningful interventions/activities when in practice. I wanted to incorporate the social inclusion paradigm and my own personal philosophy/beliefs about care provision, into an innovative project that not only benefits the client on a short term basis, but gives them life-skills and self reliance/worth for the future.

In addition, previous experience which has led me to setting up Discovery Quest: 4 years service in the British Army, Trustee of a local charity, and finally, my enjoyment of the countryside.

# Discovery Quest

An innovative approach to promoting health and well being



## Supporters

Venturesport



NORWICH  
City Council



mountainWISE



COUNTRY  
WALKING

## Contact Details

[www.discoveryquest.org](http://www.discoveryquest.org)

### Paul Lefever

Project Manager

Email: [paul@discoveryquest.org](mailto:paul@discoveryquest.org)

Website: [www.discoveryquest.org](http://www.discoveryquest.org)

### c/o: Julian Housing Support Trust Limited

Janet Rowe House

1A Oak Street

Norwich NR3 3AE

Charity Number: 1067883

Tel: 01603 767718

Email: [info@julianhousing.org](mailto:info@julianhousing.org)

Website: [www.julianhousing.org](http://www.julianhousing.org)

## Walking Therapy Project

Exploring Mental and Physical Boundaries

In Partnership with



Norfolk and Waveney  
Mental Health Partnership  
NHS Trust