



Mark Schofield

Gloucestershire Fire & Rescue

“The Charity helped me put my demons to rest and made me feel like my old self again”



Mark Schofield has enjoyed his career, reflecting fondly on 30 years as a Gloucestershire retained firefighter. But he also freely admits the cumulative effect of incidents over the years has had an impact on his mental health and wellbeing. An impact he is still experiencing today.

“As a firefighter you have a good idea of what you’re going to go to but what you can’t always be prepared for is how it will affect you,” he explains. “Whenever you go to an incident involving a person it affects you.”

In 2017, three years of trying to live with the memories of these incidents while balancing firefighter duties with other commitments took its toll. A suspected heart attack brought him to his GP, who said his chest was fine, but instead asked about his general wellbeing. It was at this point Mark broke down, and was eventually diagnosed with post-traumatic stress. Seeking an alternative to his prescribed medication, he got in touch with The Fire Fighters Charity.

“I went to Harcombe house for two, week-long stays, tailored to meet my needs,” he says. “During psychological sessions, my anxiety levels started to decrease. I’m not sure how it works but it does. It was also suggested I take up running, which has made me feel so much better, releasing endorphins and clearing my mind.”

“It isn’t just about counselling and therapy sessions. They provide you with loads of great health information and advice on topics like exercise, nutrition, sleep and day to day stress. I cannot thank all the staff at the Charity enough for their fantastic help and support. They helped me put my demons to rest and made me feel like my old self again.”

www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/mark-schofield

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