

James Thorpe

London Fire Brigade

“You never know what’s going to happen to you. You don’t think you’ll ever need help. I certainly never thought I would”



Like many firefighters, James never thought he would need help from The Fire Fighters Charity. Then in 2016, on the first day of his stag do in Magaluf, he ran into the sea, tripped and fell, and broke his neck, becoming paralysed from the chest down. In just a few seconds, the former London and Norfolk firefighter's life was altered forever.

“The Charity got involved really quickly,” he says. “I spent three months in hospital, and was invited to visit Jubilee House a month after I got out. Everyone made me feel so welcome, and having the nursing staff was a great bonus, as well as having the psychological and physical support.”

As well as having to build up his physical strength to adjust to life in a wheelchair, he also felt the psychological impact of knowing his was a life-changing injury: “It definitely hit me hard,” he says. “I had tried to be quite positive, determined not to let it beat me, but then at the back of my mind was always the thought that I’d never be a firefighter again.”

James continues to be a regular visitor at Jubilee House every few months, and says he has seen a significant improvement in his mental state, and generally sees the positives now.

“When you make donations to the Charity, you think you’re helping someone else, and when money is a bit tight, you might not think to donate. But when you’re faced with a situation where you yourself need them, if you could, you’d go back in time and pay in every month and raise as much money as possible.” “The facilities that are available are life-changing; it doesn’t matter if it’s an injury like mine or a shoulder that is playing up and stopping you from working, the Charity changes people’s lives. You don’t think you’ll ever need it, but when you do, you’re so grateful it’s there.”

www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/james-thorpe

Need help?

Call our Support Line today on 0800 389 8820 or visit www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/support