



## Mark Fussell

Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue

**“I find it hard to get my head around the fact the Charity can still support me, even though I'd left the fire service so long ago”**



While driving down a country lane in 2017, former Oxfordshire firefighter Mark Fussell momentarily took his eyes off the road. Before he knew it, he had crashed and rolled into a field. He broke both wrists, several ribs and his sternum, as well as puncturing both lungs and suffering whiplash and serious muscle damage.

When a former colleague suggested Mark reach out to The Fire Fighters Charity with post-surgery recovery, he was sceptical: “I'd been out of the fire service since 1992, and I thought they had better things to do than spend time with this silly idiot who'd gotten distracted looking at the view. I thought it was a nice offer, but other people are still serving and deserve it more. But then I came around to it, and thought, you've got nothing to lose.”

Within a few weeks, Mark was offered a place at Marine Court, our centre in Littlehampton. “It was all so supportive and such a morale boost, not to mention the progress I made. I was wary not to overdo it, but everyone there gave you the courage to do the exercises, to know when to rest and know when to push yourself.

“It was great for putting your head in the right place because everyone was so positive and upbeat the whole time. I was pretty badly damaged, but there was no ‘we can't do anything about that’ attitude from anyone. The attitude was to crack on and see what you can do. I just can't think of a single negative about the whole experience of being supported by them.”

“I find it hard to get my head around the fact The Fire Fighters Charity can still support me today; I wasn't in the service for that long and I'd left so long ago. I'd never been somebody who had to ask for help, and it felt a little uncomfortable. But instead of dwelling on that, I thought I just had to plough on and concentrate on getting better and working hard to get my independence back.”

[www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/mark-fussell](http://www.firefighterscharity.org.uk/mark-fussell)

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