

DJ Steve mixes it up for World Down's Syndrome Day

March 2023

Becoming more independent has been the key achievement for Stephen Sharp since moving into supported housing.



Thanks to staff at Sanctuary Supported Living's Cleves Road, Steve Sharp, who has a learning disability and autism, is fulfilling his ambition to make a splash on the airwaves. Through supported housing, the East Ham resident has a personal support plan, and staff worked with him to gain essential life skills, learn to manage his own tenancy and live as independently as possible.

When the Cleves Road team discovered he had a passion for music, they encouraged him to develop his interest further by enrolling on a music course, and when Steve told them that he would like to become a DJ, they were keen to support him to build his confidence and achieve his goal.

His first official booking was for a local World Down's Syndrome Day event in 2020, which was unfortunately cancelled due to Covid-19. Despite the restrictions of the pandemic, Steve used it as an opportunity to build up his music collection and essential DJ equipment, while honing his mixing skills whenever he got the chance, including by playing for his housemates after their resident house meetings.

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He finally got the chance to play for the World Down's Syndrome Day event when it returned in 2022, which marked the official launch of his DJing business - and it has since gone from strength to strength - with him being chosen by Newham London Borough Council to DJ at the same event this year, which was held on Tuesday 21 March at East Ham Leisure Centre.

World Down's Syndrome Day is a global annual event, designed to amplify the voices of people who have Down's syndrome, highlighting their vital role in our communities and calling for their full participation in anything that affects their lives.

Steve said: "The staff have been very supportive in helping me start my new business and I really enjoyed DJing for the council's World Down's Syndrome Day this year - it was a brilliant opportunity to showcase my skills. I also loved meeting all the different people, some of whom I had previously met at last year's event. It was really nice catching up with them again." Joyce Baker, Local Service Manager at Cleves Road, added: "All the team at Cleves Road are so proud of Steve. It's clear how much his confidence has grown since he started DJing and he has never let his disability define him or hold him back from achieving his dream. For him to be asked to perform at the council's special World Down's Syndrome Day event this year is just the icing on the cake."