

# Life & Progress

Tenant Support &  
Wellbeing Service (TSWS)

Case Study:

## Bereavement Support and Emotional Reassurance During Later-Life Loss

**Peter (not his real name)** is a 71-year-old tenant living alone in a housing association property. He and his wife lived in their home together for over 20 years before she passed away from cancer two years ago. Since her death, Peter's world has gradually narrowed, and he has found it increasingly difficult to imagine life without her.

Throughout their marriage, Peter and his wife shared their home with their beloved cat, who became a source of comfort and routine, particularly during his wife's illness and after her passing. Now, as the cat reaches the end of its long life, Peter is facing the prospect of losing the last constant connection to the life he once shared.

Peter finds himself feeling overwhelmed with sadness, fear, and uncertainty. The thought of being completely alone frightens him, and he worries about how he will cope emotionally once his companion is gone. Unsure where to turn, Peter contacts his Housing Association's free **Tenant Support & Wellbeing Service (TSWS)** for emotional support during this deeply challenging time.



## The Call

Helpline Operator (James): James is an emotional support counsellor experienced in supporting individuals through bereavement, grief, and later-life transitions. He provides a calm, compassionate presence, allowing Peter the space to talk openly about his fears.

*James:*

"Hello, thank you for calling Life & Progress today. My name is James. I'm here to listen and support you. What's been on your mind today?"

*Peter:*

"I lost my wife a couple of years ago, and I've just about managed to keep going... but now my cat is very unwell. We had him together for years. When he goes, I don't know how I'll manage. It feels like I'm losing everything all over again."

*James:*

"I'm really sorry, Peter. Losing your wife was a huge loss, and it sounds like your cat has been a real source of comfort since then. Facing another goodbye can bring all those feelings back — it's completely understandable that this feels frightening."

*Peter:*

"He's been my reason to get up some days. When he's gone, I'll just be on my own. That thought scares me."

## Life & Progress

### Key Themes Identified

#### **Bereavement and Compounded Loss:**

Peter is experiencing renewed grief following the loss of his wife, now compounded by the anticipated loss of his long-term companion.

#### **Fear of Loneliness:**

The prospect of living entirely alone is creating significant anxiety and emotional distress.

#### **Emotional Attachment and Routine:**

The shared routines and emotional bond with his cat have provided stability, purpose, and comfort.

#### **Uncertainty About the Future:**

Peter feels unsure about how he will cope once his companion is gone and struggles to picture a meaningful future on his own.





## Life & Progress

### Support and Guidance Provided

*James:*

"What you're going through is incredibly hard, Peter. You don't have to face this on your own, and there's no 'right' way to feel during times like this."

James focuses on being emotionally present rather than rushing to solutions, helping Peter feel supported in the moment. Together, they explore:

- Allowing space to grieve both past and anticipated losses
- Recognising the importance of the bond Peter shared with his wife and cat
- Finding ways to feel supported and less alone during this transition
- Identifying gentle sources of comfort and reassurance

*Peter:*

"It helps just having someone listen. I don't feel so panicked when I talk it through."

## Practical Support Offered

### **Compassionate Emotional Support:**

James provides reassurance, empathy, and validation, helping Peter feel less isolated with his thoughts and fears.

### **Holding Space During Anticipatory Grief:**

Rather than minimising Peter's worries, James acknowledges the emotional impact of facing loss before it happens, helping him feel understood.

### **Reassurance of Ongoing Support:**

James reminds Peter that TSWS is available not just today, but throughout this period — before and after his loss.

### **Gentle Future Thinking:**

At Peter's pace, James helps him consider small, supportive steps that might help when the time comes, without pressure or expectation.

### **Follow-Up and Continuity:**

A follow-up call is arranged, offering continuity of care and a familiar voice during an emotionally vulnerable time.

## Outcome

By the end of the call, Peter feels calmer and less alone. While his situation remains emotionally difficult, he takes comfort in knowing he has someone to talk to who understands what he is going through.

The reassurance that TSWS will continue to support him — “holding his hand” through this period — helps Peter feel steadier and more able to face the coming weeks with compassion for himself.

# Key takeaways

This case study demonstrates how the Tenant Support & Wellbeing Service (TSWS) supports older tenants by:

- Providing compassionate bereavement support
- Supporting tenants through anticipatory grief and loss
- Reducing fear and emotional isolation
- Offering continuity and reassurance during life-changing transitions
- Helping tenants feel supported, not abandoned, as they age

# Life & Progress

Tenant Support &  
Wellbeing Service (TSWS)