

This is the story of a young man (and his dog Banjo) and all the people who assisted him to become established in his own home.

James is a voice hearer and even on the best medication plan he is still troubled by voices that seem determined to rain on his parade. Constant put-downs and instructions to do things detrimental to his recovery are a part of James' daily life. James is remarkable in that, with all this going on, he remains an affable and mostly cheerful and positive young man.

James has been actively working on his recovery – he spent three years in residential rehabilitation programs and has been inspired by Voice Hearing and Recovery Champion workshops with Ron Coleman, and the Power to the People program.

While living at the Richmond Fellowship residential rehabilitation program James worked towards and achieved a long-held goal – purchasing and owning his own dog.

Things came a bit unstuck in June 2010 when the voices told him to stop taking his medication, and a short stint in hospital followed. James was able to see this as another life-learning opportunity, another lesson in how to keep himself well.

Then, suddenly (after a 2 year wait!) he was at the top of the list for a Housing Department unit. Although the hospital stay was quite recent James was very keen to seize this opportunity, so all of us working with him swung into action to help make that a reality.

The next few months were a whirlwind of activity involving James, his family and friends, Richmond Fellowship, Mental Health Services, the Housing Department, PHaMs, Aspire, doctors, pharmacists, neighbours the list goes on. The aim of services was to put supports and resources in place to minimise stress and to maximise the chances of James becoming happily established in his new life.

James will tell his story together with staff from the services that assisted him to fulfil his dream to have 'my own domain'.