

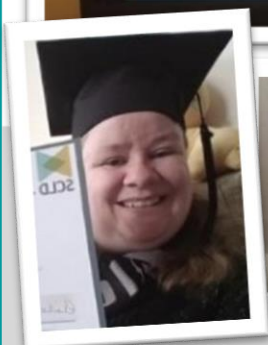
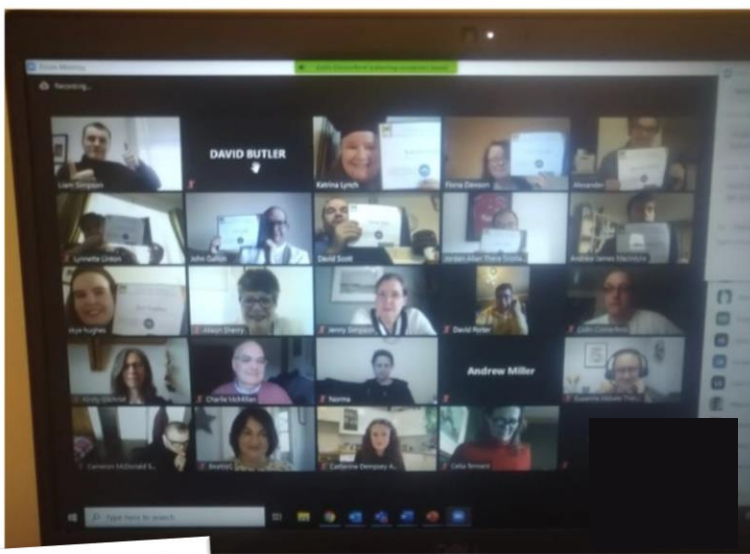
The Action Group Community Newsletter

Edition N°3 - February 2021

- Story of the month -

Congratulations

A big congratulations to **Katrina Lynch, Colin Comerford & Lynnette Linton** who have graduated from their leadership programme by the Scottish Commission for Learning Disability. 🍷🎓



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Congratulations

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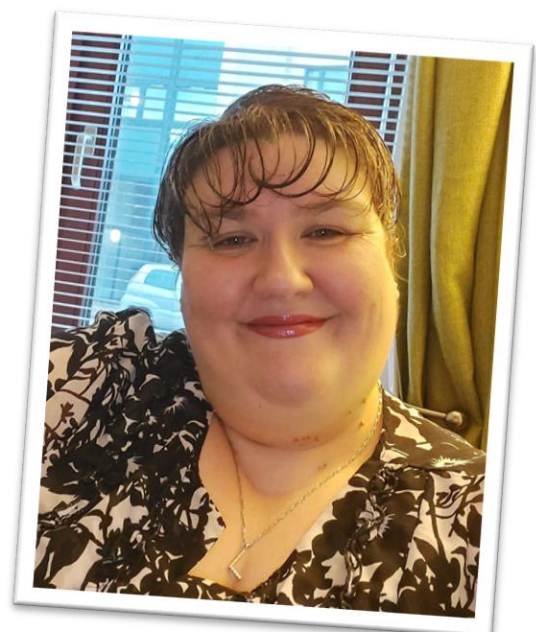


"My graduation 🎓 photos after 5 long hard months I did it. Along with getting married and getting my 1st paid job at get2gether, this is another huge achievement right up there for me. My mum and dad would be looking down on me being proud. I am so proud of myself well done to you too Lynnette Linton - we both supported each other 😊 "

- Katrina Lynch

"Ready for my online leadership course graduation 🎓 I cannot believe how far I have come, I am proud of myself and my friends and family helping me to achieve my goals. Thank you all from the bottom of my heart. Xxx"

- Lynnette Linton



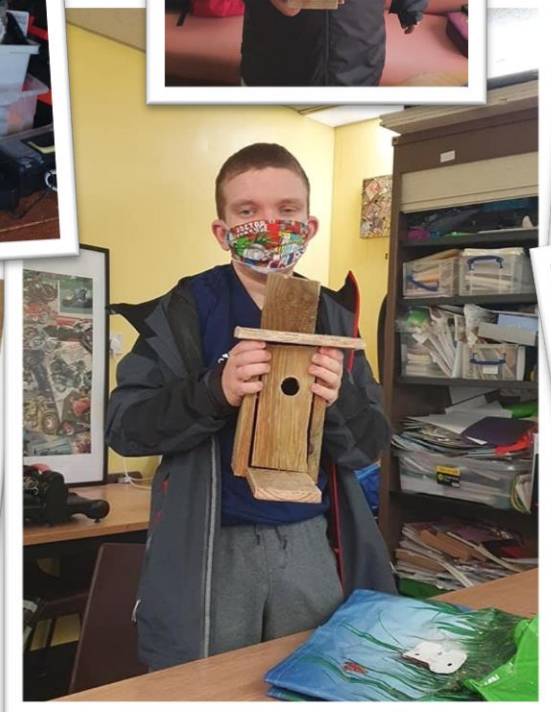


HACCS

1.17

Falkirk

During January **David** has been working on woodwork and making wonky bird boxes, he is learning loads of new skills. We have even had requests for them!





HACCS

1.11



Paul has been keeping himself busy and active during lockdown. He's been doing daily exercises with his personal trainer and he recently got a static bike that he rides every day, challenging himself all the way through.

We are all very proud of him, well done!

Melanie Caplan – Team Manager



Sandilands

Marian enjoyed watching the magic show, it really got her attention, and she also liked the magician's glasses! 🧙



Marian loves to have her hair and nails done, since hairdressers are closed Marian has been having "lockdown haircuts" at home 🧑🏻💇🏻‍♀️ 🐱



Angus has now an Amazon card so he has been able to get things online like this projector, new toys and musical instruments.



Here is a photo of Angus room using his new light projector

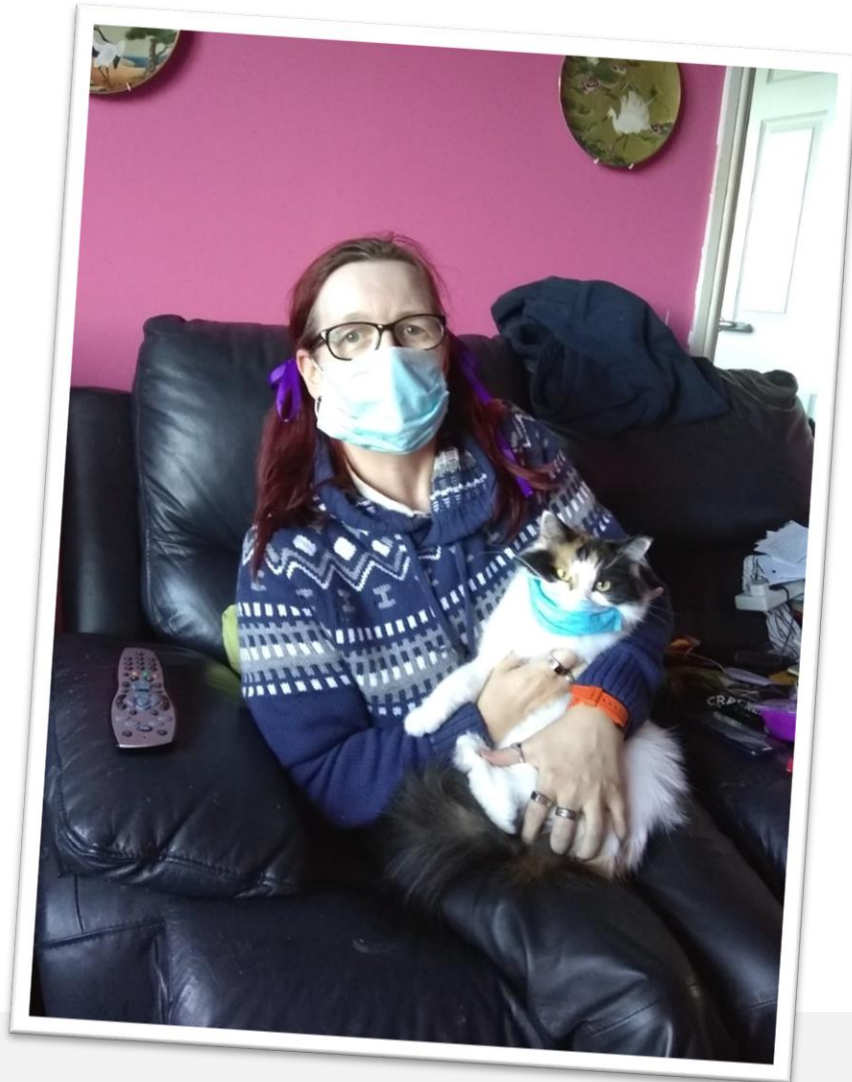


Angus playing with his new piano mat, he loves it!

Here is a photo of Steven seeing the snow through his window.



Steven likes to go out for walks, but he also enjoys watching people outside through the window from the comfort and cosiness of his chair.



'During lockdown I must say I miss going out to groups like the disco and the walking group. I keep busy with playing games on my phone and on my PS4. I watch Tenable and The Chase on TV and I also enjoy watching the rugby 6 nations when it is on. During support I have been cooking risotto and trying new recipes like pork ribs. Thanks to my little princess Gizmo I do not feel too lonely. I can't wait to go out again.'

- Sharon & Gizmo



Duncan Sheppard's Hobby interview:

- **Why are you interested in fishing?** It is a good sport, keeps you fit and helps you with your mind frame, helps with mental health.
- **Did someone teach?** No, I learnt it myself.
- **What is your favourite part?** Every part, the excitement of catching a fish.
- **Do you put them back in the water?** I usually put them back in the water.
- **What fish have you caught?** Flounders, cod, mackerel, baby pollock.
- **Which has been the biggest you have caught?** Dog fish is the biggest fish I have caught.
- **What has been the longest he waited to catch anything?** It depends on the weather how long I fish for, but if it is nice weather I will fish all day, if it is windy/raining I will only stay a couple of hours.





CAATS

2.3



Girls Group

"I enjoy catching up with my friends and the crazy staff. We all have a good laugh."

I look forward to being back on a Friday night. I love some of the games that we do on Zoom but it will be better when we are back in the Mecca again doing proper things"

- Jodie Lavin



Saturday Group

Joseph Reilly's Interview

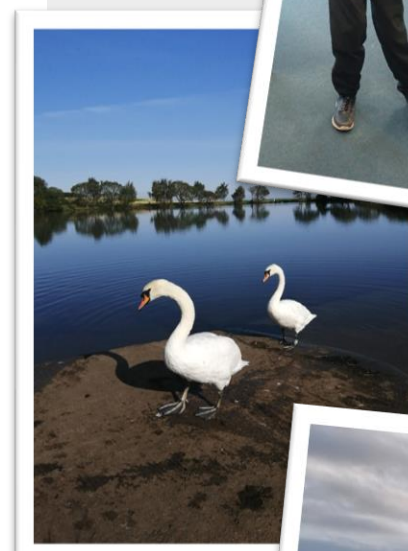
• **What have you enjoyed doing at the Hub?** Going for walks around Musselburgh Lagoons and seeing the swans. Also walking around the racecourse when the races are on! When out walking I love playing "Yellow Car"!

I have enjoyed playing basketball in the hall, doing lots of sums on the whiteboard (which I always get right!) and helping Rachel with all her lists.

- **What do you always ask Kathleen?** How many steps has she done!
- **What do we always have at the Hub?** Fun!!!!
- **What's the worst thing about the Hub?** Going home!

While the Hub is not running, Joseph joins the Saturday Group Zoom call every Saturday morning.

- **How do you help us on the Zoom call every week?** I play "Guess the tune" at the end of every session
- **Can you name all the staff on the Zoom calls?** Yes! Hilary, Leesa, Belinda, Claire, Susie and Rachel
- **What exciting thing did you see today?** I love trains and I saw a freight train and a passenger pass each other and there were double sirens going off at the level crossing!
- **What has changed in your life recently?** My big brother Daniel has moved out and now lives in Musselburgh. I enjoy having my mum and dad to myself but still see Daniel on the Saturday Group Zoom calls.





Real Jobs



We are very excited to offer these **fully funded** taster sessions to **employers about employing people with learning disabilities**. If you would like to create a more diverse workforce, this training is for you!

These 2.5 hour sessions will look at **Learning Disability, Autism and Mental ill Health**. Talking about these issues can be sometimes difficult. We aim to support employers through their journey towards better understanding of disabilities. We will happily answer any questions.

We hope you can come away with more confidence in employing and retaining disabled employees. And if you would like further help, we will point you in the right direction.

Get your tickets



For more information on what we do, please visit our website: <https://actiongroup.org.uk/real-jobs/>



Congratulations!

Digital Literacy



Gareth's role is to look at digital learning within the Action Group to look at how we can best support staff to access the digital world. Up to now people have largely been self-taught. We now want to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to feel more comfortable in the digital world and to support people to gain new knowledge and skills.

Gareth's new role will be to create and find resources to help us all do this.

Human resources

Davina & Pilar started last year a part time HR qualification (CIPD) and we are so happy to share they have both completed the course. Pilar & Davina worked very hard to manage their work commitments whilst studying at the same time. The qualification is very well deserved. We hope you both enjoy the extra time on your hands now that studying is over. **Well done!**





March 2021



Dear everyone,

I hope you agree that the “light” is changing, as we start to move out of winter and have a plan in Scotland for *“cautiously easing restrictions and restoring greater normality to our lives, just as quickly as it is safe and sustainable to do so.”* (Nicola Sturgeon, 23rd Feb 2021.)

We will update the staff pack, Covid policy and lockdown easing plan etc. in line with the Government plans. We will also put resources in place to support your well-being and safety, as we move forward.

Vaccines, testing, etc.

I am delighted that even more colleagues and people we support have had their first vaccination and many have dates for their second. For those we support with Learning disabilities, I am delighted that you have finally been given more priority for your vaccine. I look forward to everyone in TAG being vaccinated. Proactive testing is now rolled out to all our brilliant key worker colleagues too. This helps us all be safer.

BUT, I know that the system is not working as it should and some of you are not managing to get appointments. Please keep checking your emails; looking at TAG Facebook, Teams, and reading the Covid/Staff pack, as we put out information about vaccine appointment systems when we get this. We are also continuing to raise these issues, via CCPS, to the Scottish Government as it is not good enough that everyone who is a key worker has not been vaccinated. People are still becoming sick and are losing their lives to this virus. So, your safety is our priority. Please keep following our rules and the FACTS.

£500 (pro rata) Scottish Government Bonus for those who are eligible

Some of you have been asking questions about the Bonus. NHS staff got their bonus in their Feb Salaries as the NHS was given the money directly. Social care organisations are in a different context. We pass information to Scotland Excel, one Local Authority we work with will be picked to get the money **it is decided** we are due, for an agreed number of staff. Our colleagues Susan and Linda, from the Payroll team, worked hard to get our information return in, 3 days before the Feb 12th deadline.

Susan: *“Unlike previous TAG thank you payments, not all staff will receive the full £500 as the payment is based on an average of hours worked during a period set by the Scottish Government. (Previous information in the Staff pack etc has more detail on this). We will pay out the bonus to staff as soon as we can, once we receive the funds.”*

Our view is that everyone at TAG should be **eligible**. However, who gets it is not within our control. Therefore, as soon as we know more, we will communicate this to you.

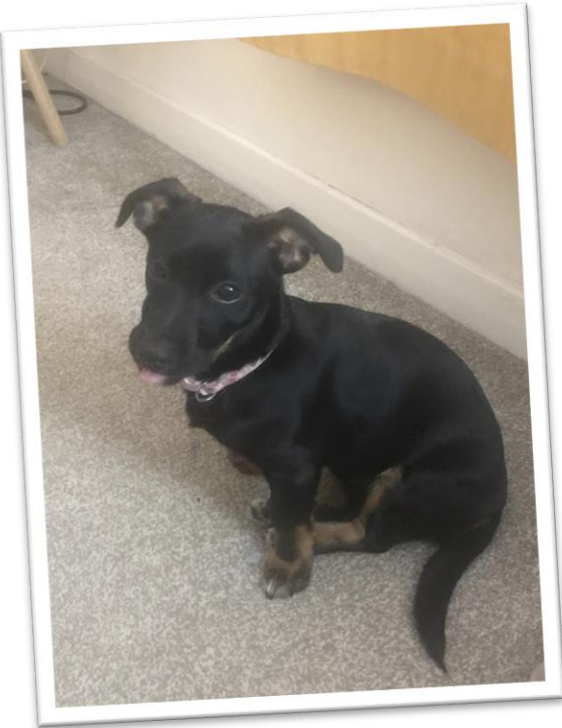
As always, thank you for all that you do to keep yourself and others safe and for keeping The Action Group strong.

Linda Tuthill CEO
Lindatuthill@actiongroup.org.uk





Furry Friends



Skye

My name is Skye. I am five months old and live with my brother Freddie and Sister Fluff. Fluff does not like Freddie or me as we are too playful for her.

We live with our human mum and daddy plus an older brother called Archie.

I like to play with my toys and run around the back garden. I love going exploring on long walks especially in the snow!

I am always very happy to see any visitors to the house and love to have cuddles.

I would be more than happy to come and visit anyone who would like a cuddle once lockdown is over. Please speak to my human mummy her name is **Leigh Baird**, she is a Manager in the Action Group.

Freddie

My name is Freddie, I am a male cat who had just turned 1 year old. I was a gift for my owners birthday. His name is Archie.

This is my new friend Skye she is only a little puppy called a Lancashire Heeler. Skye is only 18 weeks old. Although I like to cuddle in with Skye, she is usually chasing me around the house. Thank goodness I go out to party at night. Skye belongs to my owner's mum her name is **Leigh Baird** and she is a Team Manager in the Action Group.

Once the restrictions are lifted Skye would be happy to come and meet you and go for a walk. I will just play away myself outdoors and get some peace!





Events

The poster features a blue background with a white sunburst pattern. At the top left is the 'THE Action GROUP' logo. In the center, the text 'TAG Talks For Everyone' is displayed in large, bold letters. To the right is a calendar icon for 2021 with a yellow highlight on '25th March - 6 pm -'. Below the main title, it says 'Open to ALL staff and people we support'. At the bottom, there is a yellow banner with a Zoom icon and registration information.

THE Action GROUP

TAG Talks
For Everyone

Open to **ALL** staff and people we support

Tell us some news
Ask as a question
Give us a suggestion

To register your interest, please email justynakubicka@actiongroup.org.uk
ZOOM details will be sent to you closer to the meeting

This year's **TAG talks** will be for all staff and for people we support and will be delivered via Zoom. This space is for you to talk about The Action Group and what you think we should be doing to improve.

**Dates and times: Thu 25th March 6pm - Tues 1st June 5pm -
Tues 20th July 6pm - Wed 27th Oct 6pm - Tues 23rd Nov 1pm**

To register your interest, please email Justyna Kubicka at justynakubicka@actiongroup.org.uk



Learning & Development



Sharon Yeoman, Elizabeth Taylor, Maureen Kilgour, Norah McGowan, Stijn Baecke and Nadia Taylor completed foundation level training in Signalong. Sharon and Liz then completed additional Signalong training and are now accredited **Signalong Tutors**.

This means we are one of very few organisations that can deliver workshops and foundation courses in Signalong to our staff. If we can learn to communicate with people in different ways we remove some of the barriers that exist. The aim is to build a signing community and to ensure that we all can communicate. Signalong is for everyone.

SING AND SIGN
Group

Thursday 25th March
1.30 p.m. to 3 p.m
Via Zoom

This group will meet monthly and **is open to everyone**, no need to be able to sing or to sign, you just need a willing attitude!

Join us for a fun afternoon

"Sweet Caroline"
- Neil Diamond -

"Chitty Chitty Bang Bang"

To register your interest Please email justynakubicka@actiongroup.org.uk

For more information, please email Sharonyeoman@actiongroup.org.uk or ElizabethTaylor@actiongroup.org.uk

Lots of people pass SVQ since lockdown and we want to say... **Congratulations!**



Richard McGill - Xesco Teruel Cubi - Walaa Alrasbi
Rebekah Beattie - Jody Hally - Margot Johnston - Neshier
Lee-Anne Hunter - Kristyn Hmarastie - Nicole Scott
Mariola Mollar - Tracy Higginson - Beth Greenhorn

For more information about your SVQ, please email louisebrunton@actiongroup.org.uk

The Action Group
Community Newsletter



Edition N° 3 - February 2021

Activities

We are very excited to announce that the winner of the Disney Arts & Crafts Competition is **Katrina Lynch** with her **Mickey and Minnie plates!**

THE Action GROUP DISNEY ARTS & CRAFTS COMPETITION

You still have a chance to win:

Disney+
Disney + PIXAR + MARVEL + STAR WARS + NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

1 year subscription to Disney Plus

We have extended the closing date to 19th February

You can submit any kind of art, as long as it's Disney themed! It can be a picture, a painting or even a model of the Disney castle!

Chirnear

THE Action GROUP CONGRATULATIONS Katrina Lynch Winner of Disney Competition

Barbara Young 11.02.2021

Thank you so much for all those who entered. Lots of wonderful art was produced! So many fantastic artists within The Action Group.

For more activities, please visit <https://www.actiongroupactivities.com/>



Advice



TAG Advice Team

"Ongoing advice for however long is needed until the correct outcome is achieved."

Stewart has advised one of the people we support through a long journey to finally get his correct Personal Independence Payment (PIP) entitlement. Here are all the steps that were needed:

- 1 Identifying that the person we support would be better off on PIP than his DLA claim.
- 2 Assisting him to make a new claim for PIP.
- 3 Asking for a reconsideration of the initial decision.
- 4 Lodging an appeal – the DWP then increased the award in response so the appeal did not go ahead.
- 5 Lodging another appeal as the award was still not correct.
- 6 Representing at a telephone hearing this month where the tribunal finally awarded the correct rate and also extended the award length. The person we support had their support worker with them for the hearing who was particularly helpful in providing information to the tribunal.

This work shows how The Action Group's services work well together for the people we support. It is also an endorsement of the way the Advice Service is set up; ongoing advice for however long is needed until the correct outcome is achieved.

The Action Group - Advice Team has also been getting to grips with video appeal hearings. Jo represented at a video hearing for a Disability Living Allowance (DLA) appeal for a client's son. The Tribunal increased the persons award to the highest rate of both DLA components without needing to speak to the client, based on Jo's written submission and the extra evidence she gathered. It meant that the client did not have to face lots of questions about her son and the care she provides. She said: *"I trust in you because you have been helpful in the whole procedure"*.

Advice Team staff have also received some fantastic evaluation comments this month:



"Louise was extremely helpful. My son is receiving DLA now, thanks to her help."

"Louise was very friendly, patient, and approachable. She persevered for many months giving options to the person we support along the way and doing everything she possibly could do to get the result we had hoped for. Louise took time to explain things, always ensuring we understood before moving on. The outcome was very favourable and helped to relieve a lot of anxiety."

"I couldn't fault the Service in any way. Diane listened to exactly what I needed help with and understood how to help. There was no judgement; it was about helping, listening, and understanding the needs and resolving the initial reason I made the call."

The Action Group
Community Newsletter



Edition N°3 - February 2021

Equality Network

1st February 2021 – 28th February 2021

Jordy Deelight

Young Scot Awards 2020 winner, Jordy Deelight, will be joining us to talk about Disability, Drag, and Being Part of the LGBT+ Community

Friday 26th Feb at 2pm



This year to celebrate **LGBT+ History Month 2021** we had a very special guest... a Young Scot Awards 2020 winner, **Jordy Deelight**.

Jordy Deelight told us their story about being an LGBT drag artist, educator and entertainer while living with cystic fibrosis. They also gave us some tips on how to unlock your inner diva!

If you missed Jordy's session, do not worry you still have the chance to watch it, just [click here](#).

Watch Jordy's session

If you would like to get involved with the **Equality Network** you're more than welcome! You can email us at equality@actiongroup.org.uk We have monthly meetings and we are a place where you can learn more about Equalities, how to be an ally and seek support if you have any issues at work surrounding equalities. **The Equality Network Working Group** is also working behind the scenes to improve equalities at The Action Group in terms of our policies, processes and training.

The Action Group Community Newsletter



Edition N°3 - February 2021

Communications

To our readers,
We hope you enjoy our
Third edition of **TAG
Community Newsletter.**

A special **thanks** to
everyone who
contributed with their
stories and information.

If you or the person you
support would like to
share a story and
pictures, please email it
to your **Team Manager**
and they will pass it on
to us.

I hope you have an
amazing month, full of
great stories to share.

Kind regards,

JohannaMR
Communications Officer

The screenshot shows the newsletter's website layout. At the top is the header with 'The Action Group Community Newsletter' and 'Edition N°3 - February 2021'. Below the header is a dark blue banner with the text '- Story of the month -'. Underneath this is a 'Congratulations' section with a teal border. It contains a text block: 'A big congratulations to Katrina Lynch, Colin Comerford & Lynnette Linton who have graduated from their leadership programme by the Scottish Commission for Learning Disability. 🎓👏'. Below the text is a large image of a Zoom meeting grid, and at the bottom of the congratulatory section are three small portrait photos of the graduates. To the right of the main content is a vertical sidebar menu with colored buttons for: Services, HACCS, CAATS, Real Jobs, Staff News, Furry Friends, Events, Learning & Development, Activities, Advice, Equality Network, and Communications.

