

The Action Group Community Newsletter

Edition N°1 - November 2020

- Story of the month -

Bryce Avenue



"I tick my calendar every morning. I tick it after I've had my shower when I come out my shower. I tick it after I get dressed. I just get my pen and tick it after I get dressed. I like to see the ticks it makes me feel good because then I know I've had all my showers. I like doing my breakfast dishes and lunch and teatime dishes as well" - **Helen**

"I like to feed Tibby in the mornings after my breakfast but sometimes before. I bring my washing basket through after my shower and I put the tablet in the washing machine. I fill the machine with my clothes and press the button to start it. I take the empty basket back to my room." - **Pat**



The staff at Bryce asked the ladies from the house if they would like to share anything to the people in The Action Group, this is what they said. [Read more](#)

Services

HACCS

CAATS

Real Jobs

Staff News

Admin

Housing

Learning &
Development

Talking Mats

Advice

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Communications



“In Bryce Avenue we try to encourage independence as much as we can. We are so proud of **Pat, Helen, Ian** and **Joe** for engaging in every opportunity presented to them. As staff we have become passengers to the people we support as they take us through their day.” – Craig Anderson, ATM

Interviews performed by **Susanna Kinghorn & Patricia Murphy – Support Workers**



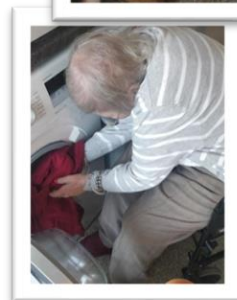
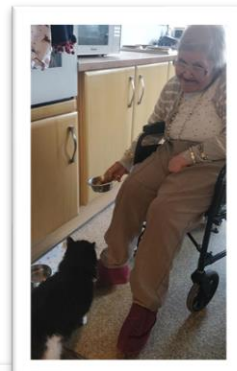
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I like doing my breakfast dishes and lunch and teatime dishes as well" - **Helen**



"I like to feed Tibby in the mornings after my breakfast but sometimes before.

I bring my washing basket through after my shower and I put the tablet in the washing machine. I fill the machine with my clothes and press the button to start it. I take the empty basket back to my room." - **Pat**



There are lots of things which make **Ian** smile, here is one of them... making his morning coffee.



Falkirk

One great news story is Jordan's, who after a visit to **Duncarron, a Medieval Village** in Carron Valley, wanted to volunteer there. With support from his ATM and Support Worker he has been able to do this during lockdown. He has been actively involved in all sorts of tasks from, digging ditches to cleaning weapons. **Jordon** loves being involved in all that goes on. During a recent open day he and his support worker were dressed as Saxon/Viking and helped out in a re-enactment of the village for the general public.

All the photos have been taken during lockdown and all rules were kept to as well each activity being risk assessed by trained staff from Duncarron.

- David Irvine





Falkirk



After 5 months of not working at **Muiravonside Farm** due to COVID restrictions, **Aaron** was finally reunited with all the animals he helps to care for. We were so pleased to see how happy the animals were to have him back. Its great to be back with Aaron doing something we both love.

- Oonagh Sear



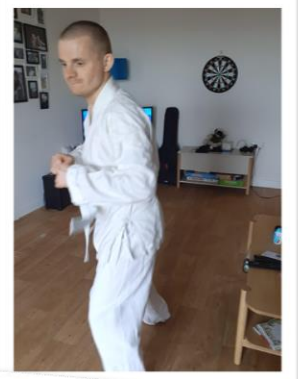
We want to share by Paul's achievements over the past couple of months:



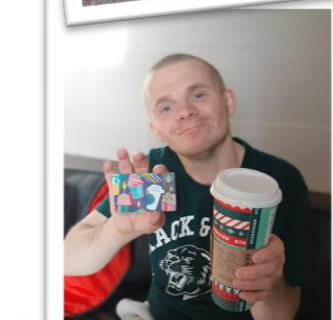
- Paul has tried the All Abilities Cycling Centre (ABC) at Saughton Park and he is really enjoying it. He's going there once a week and keeps practicing his balance with a two wheeled bike. He is now thinking to buy himself a bike as Christmas gift!



- Paul has started taking Karate lessons over Zoom. Andy, his teacher, is saying he is doing great.



- Paul has been asking to have his own bank account for 6 YEARS! He now has it, paying with his own bank card and keeping track of the balance **by himself.**



- Paul is now a talented chef: he cooks most of his meal from scratch and he is not afraid of trying new food anymore. 😊



"I have been supporting Paul for three years now and never seen him happier!!!"
- Beatrice Bracciforti, ATM 1.4



Muirhouse



“Fred transforming Muirhouse into Santa’s grotto” 🤖

- **Carrie Elliot** ATM 1.08

Staff News

Team 1.08 – Group Living

Hi, I’m Leigh one of the Team Managers in 1.8. In our team we have more than one person living together with others.

Lockdown has been hard - so many activities and social outings had to stop. Everyone was scared, sad and bored. So much doom and gloom on the news.

What can we do? Well the amazing staff across the whole team came up with lots of ideas to keep everyone happy. From buying iPads to spa days at home and everything in between.

Here are some pictures of fun things that we have been doing.

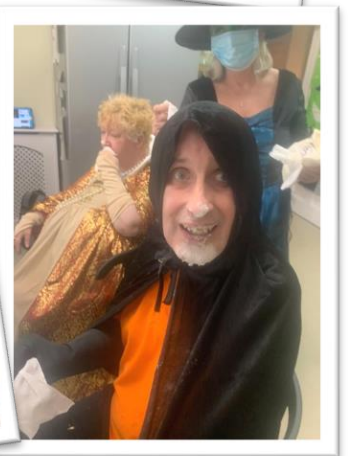
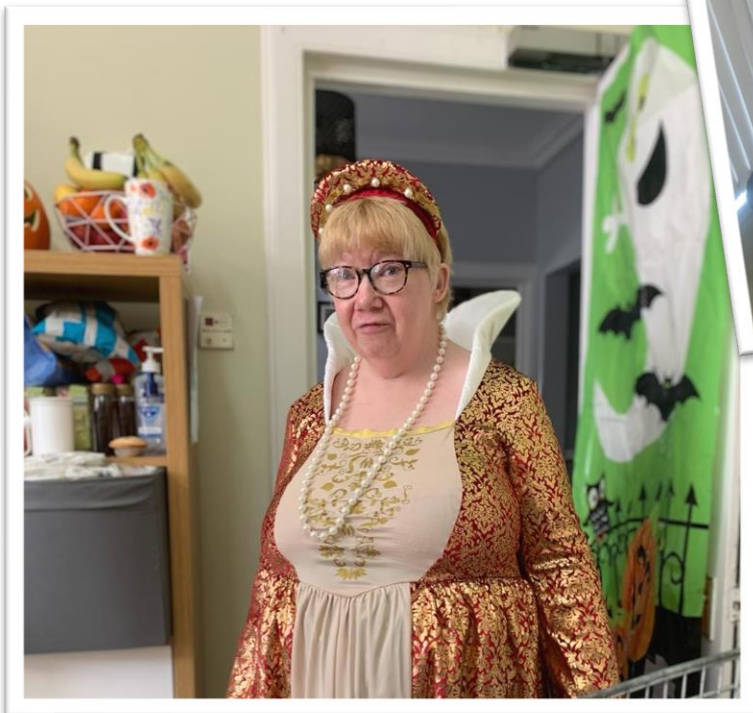
Let your imagination fly!

Leigh
- Team Managers





Cameron

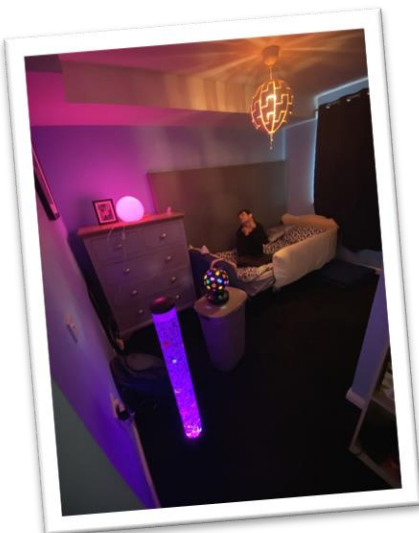


Cameron Crescent enjoying a **Royal themed afternoon tea.**

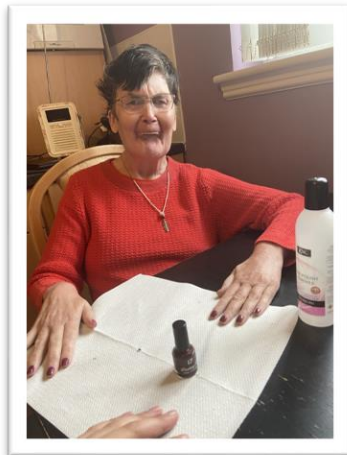
Dot M informs us she is related to royalty so we celebrated this by dressing up and getting the china out!



Sandilands



Keith chilling in his room with sensory stuff



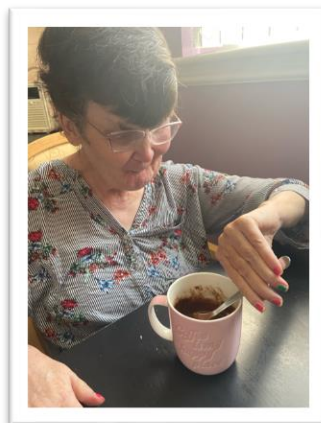
Marian getting her nails done



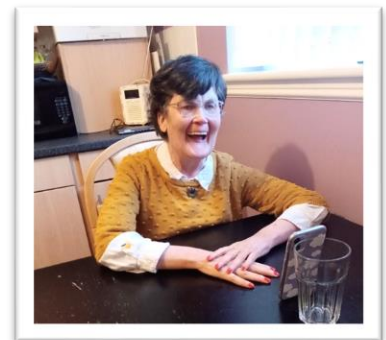
Marian & Angus at Calton Hill



Happy Angus 😊



Marian making a mug cake! 🍰



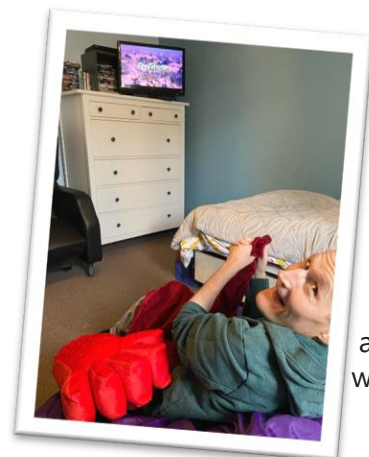
Marian facetimeing her mum and sister



Marian playing with her laptop



Angus playing with his toys in the water



Angus about to watch the Grinch

The Action Group

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HACCS

Day Service



Over a year ago, we were excited to be able to start providing a Day Service through four different venues across Edinburgh. Unfortunately, **during the pandemic the centres all had to close.** We continued to provide support to families in the community where possible, but many were missing the venue-based activities they love, as well as missing their friends. As restrictions lifted slightly, we were able to slowly start to open our **Drylaw** and **Bellvue** Centres. Sadly, two of the venues that the groups used were not able to reopen, so the search began to find alternatives. Through this we were delighted to find **St Peter's Church** and **Oxgangs Neighbourhood Centre** who have been very welcoming, and we now have **four venues running again!**

The people who can attend the centres are enjoying being able to participate again in many of their favourite activities including - arts and crafts, playing games, music groups, bowling and dancing. We also continue to provide support in the community for those who can't attend and look forward to one day soon welcoming everyone back, and hopefully more joining us in the future!

- **Lorna Patton**
Team Manager



CAATS

2.1

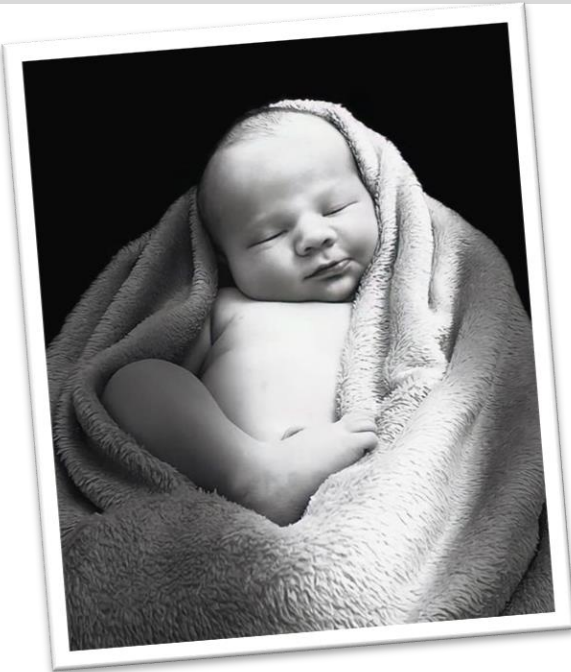
We want to share the photos of twins **Colin & Danny** who we have supported since they left school at 16 years old. We have been on a fantastic journey with these young men and they have amazed us with the progress that they have made and continue to make. Colin & Danny celebrated their special **30th birthday** on Friday with a special visit from Donald & Mickey, pass the parcel, cake decorating and wonderful birthday cake. Colin & Danny were super excited all day and had great time. 😊





Staff News

Real Jobs have a great news to share.



We are delighted to introduce
Jackson James Bertram
Steven 's new baby!!

Steven and his partner are delighted
to introduce the of their baby boy.

Real Jobs

Despite a challenging job market, the Real Jobs team are still helping people get new jobs throughout Covid-19. Over November we have helped **four people start new roles**, and over December we look forward to another four new people. We are also helping people gain confidence, skills and experience through assisting to develop CV's, attend mock interviews and also formal interviews. We have built up a growing network of referrer services who we often work closely with to ensure that the needs of people we support are being met.

If you live in Edinburgh with a health condition or a disability and are looking for a job or are at risk of losing your job, please contact us! We can assist you every step of the way into employment or to retain your job.

If you would like to know more please send us a message or email us at
realjobs@actiongroup.org.uk



Admin

“Fiona is now participating with staff interviews. Fiona has had nothing but positive feedback from Managers and the DM’s” 😊 – Lisa Bailie, Business Support Officer

Helping with Interviews:

I am a member of Staff I work in the Admin Team and I am someone supported by The Action Group. I was asked to help out with interviewing for new Support Workers which made me feel apprehensive, I felt valued, and excited as it is important to help the Action Group to get the right Support Worker for the individual using our services. I help with interviews on Thursday from 9:00am-11:00am.



Preparation for the Interview:

I read through and study the appropriate paper work for each candidate.

My Role/ First time I started to help with Interviews:

I introduced myself the first time then I started to ask one question then I asked two questions from a person using the Action Group's services point of view. This was very nerve wracking for me but it was great to see I can believe in myself. Confidence is not easy for me. The interview lasts 50-60 minutes. There are two candidates each time to be interviewed.

It is important to get the right, nice people who have a good understanding of Individual Support Needs and who demonstrate a caring attitude towards the people we support. When the interview is finished I click on the button to hang up on Teams.

Chat after the interview and how I feel after my morning:

We all discuss how we felt the interview went and we get each other points of view. It is tiring but very rewarding to help the Action Group.

- Fiona Lindsay
Admin Assistant



Housing

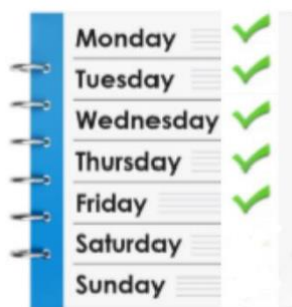
Some people that the Action Group support can often find it difficult to get suitable housing and speak with housing providers.

Housing providers may nominate a small number of properties to organisations like the Action Group if a **Furnishing and Management Charge (Renewals)** is attached to the property as part of the let.

This agreement provides extra assurance that tenants will have access to any support that they might need with their tenancies.

The Action Group's Housing Service was set up in 1981 to provide this support. It gives people support and assistance with all aspects of their tenancies.

The Housing Service is entirely funded by **Furnishing and Management Charges** paid for through additional **Housing Benefit**.



Daily Tasks:

- Coordination of repairs and renewals
- Coordination and help with moves
- Tenancy issues
- Housing Benefit and Council Tax reductions and exemptions
- Energy efficiency advice
- General housing advice and problem solving
- Property inspections



Annual Tasks:

- Licensing of Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO)
- Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)
- Housing Benefit Changes
- Overseeing management agreements with housing providers
- Setting some charges and rents
- Reviewing contractor agreements

How to Contact Us:

- **Phone:** 0131 475 2315
- **Email:** housing@actiongroup.org.uk

Housing Service Staff work, **Monday to Friday from 9am –5pm**. For evening or weekend housing emergencies, please contact the Housing Association.



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Learning & Development

We have many people to say **Congratulations to...**



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.

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

Microcredentials

Our casual support workers have been busy working on SSSC Badges and Microcredential University Courses! These bite size courses focus on everything from Medication Handling to the Impact of Trauma on Mental Health. There are massive benefits, including electronic badges to prove learning and/or credits from the University of Glasgow. We've had at least three of our CSW's complete the Glasgow Uni Trauma and Mental Health course, and we even had one CSW gain a bursary to a CPD course at Edinburgh University!

The Learning and Development team are here to provide people with access to enriching learning environments, so they may channel their own potential for the benefit of themselves and, ultimately the people we support.



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



Fay Richards - Shaun Paul Connell - Claire Houston - Gayle Forsyth -
Aimee Young - Chistine Wood, Eddie Burns, Vikki Hyndman, Maciej
Mulak - Juan Sanchez Lopez - Kirsty Pike -

Allan Lees - Chloe McHarrie - Sue McLernon - Claire Scott - Rebecca
Wilkie - Camilla Castillo - Lisa Casey - Zoi Zompopoulou - Leanne Black -
Chloe Patterson

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

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Talking Mats

We want to encourage **everyone who has done training in Talking Mats** to do **This** mat with **One** person you support. The topic is: **Lockdown.**

Here are all the cards you might need:



This is your chance to put it into practice and **share your experience with us.**

For more information or share your experience,
Please email ElizabethTaylor@actiongroup.org.uk or gayleforsyth@actiongroup.org.uk



Advice



in The Action Group we want to help you stay!

Stay in Scotland

Scotland wants EU citizens to stay here after the transition period for Brexit. So, do not put it off, get help to stay now at mygov.scot/stayinScotland. You will find clear, step-by-step advice and all the support you need.

- Following decisions by the UK Government the **UK has now left the EU**.
- EU citizens and their families will have to apply to the UK Government's EU Settlement Scheme **by 30 June 2021** in order to continue living, working and studying in the UK after that date.
- The Scottish Government launched the **Stay in Scotland campaign** in April 2019 to raise awareness of the need for EU citizens to apply to the UK Government's EU Settlement Scheme, and to provide the necessary support to allow people to make their application.
- EU citizens who have been in the UK **for five continuous** years will be able to apply for **settled status**. EU citizens who have been in the UK **less than five years** can apply for **presettled status**. After five years continuous residency they can then apply for settled status. For further information please visit: www.mygov.scot/stayinScotland
- The Scottish Government has produced a package of support to help EU citizens stay in Scotland. This package of support includes: guide for EU citizens; guide for employers of EU citizens; factsheet and leaflets. You can download this at www.gov.scot/stayinScotland
- The Scottish Government has worked with JustRight Scotland to publish a number of factsheets explaining EU citizens' rights in Scotland. The factsheets provide information on EU citizens' rights to vote, work and access healthcare, education, housing and benefits. <https://justcitizens.scot/EU>

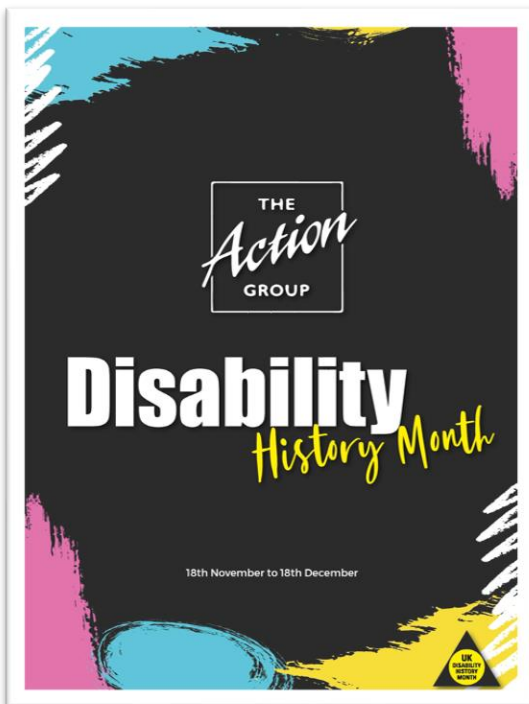


You can also call the national Citizens Advice Scotland helpline **FREE** on **0800 916 9847**.



Equality Network

18th November 2020 – 18th December 2020



Throughout the next month we are planning to take you on a journey from the history of The Action Group a disability charity which was founded by a group of parents and carers who were not satisfied with the support that was available for their love ones in the 70s, to key historical moments over the years of disability equality in the UK. We also will be looking the hidden, less talked aspects about disability and equality.

We will reflect and celebrate the valuable contributions and achievements of people from the disability community.

Make sure you do not miss out, join The Action Group Equality Network on Facebook and Microsoft Teams. If you have a disability and would like to feature in our videos or provide material please email equality@actiongroup.org.uk

The Equality Network marked Black History Month this year with a series of posts, activities and events throughout October. We had BHM Fact Cards, Spotlight on Black staff members who gave their thoughts on their experiences about BHM, a [Zimbabwean cooking lesson from Danny, Hamish and Logan](#), African dancing with Laura, a session on Stigma and Stereotyping from Show Racism the Red Card and an amazing [Sing and Sign](#) Video with staff and people we support to “Freedom” by Beyonce.

Thank you for everyone who worked so hard to bring Black History Month to The Action Group!

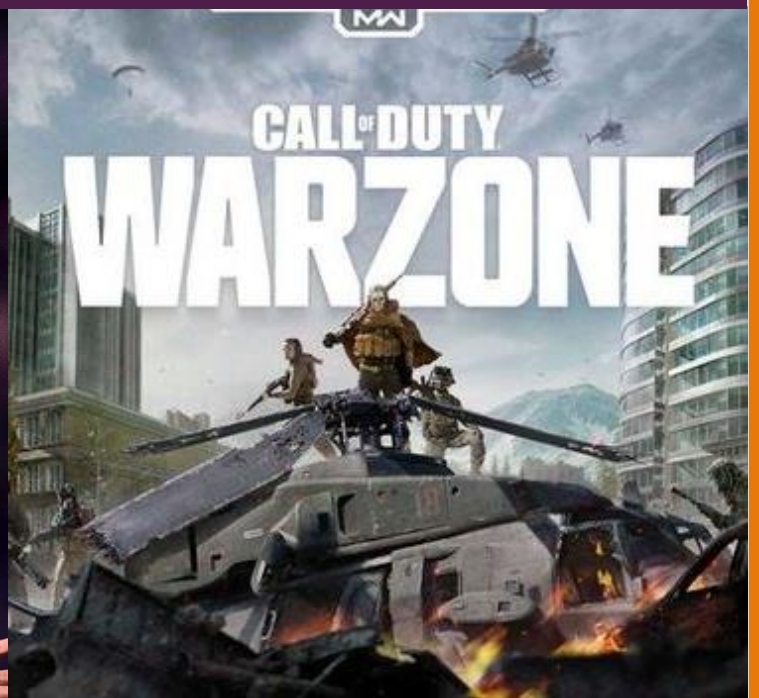


If you would like to get involved with the **Equality Network** you're more than welcome! You can email us at equality@actiongroup.org.uk We have monthly meetings and we are a place where you can learn more about Equalities, how to be an ally and seek support if you have any issues at work surrounding 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.



Communications

E-sport Tournament **January 2021**



With the excitement and buzz created around November Esports, Business Fives are excited to once again remotely host corporate charity FIFA and Call of Duty tournaments online in January.

The action starts on the evening of Tuesday 19th at 6pm culminating on Finals night on Friday 22nd January.

If you are interested, please email communications@actiongroup.org.uk with your name and the team you work with.

The Action Group Community Newsletter



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Communications

In this most difficult of years, we hope you are well, and life is as good as it can be in a pandemic. We were very happy to have you taking part in our **Digital Festival & Annual General Meeting 2020**. *If you missed it, do not worry you can still watch it.*



DIGITAL FESTIVAL 2020



Believe in yourself
We believe in you!



Dylan



[Click here](#) to watch the Digital Festival 2020



45th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Action Group
- Accounts Summary -
Year Ending 31st March 2020



Appointment of Auditors for 2020-2021

The Board recommends the Appointment of our current Auditors:



Chiene+Tait
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

[Click here](#) to watch the Annual General Meeting 2020



The Action Group Community Newsletter



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Communications

To our readers,
We hope you enjoy our
First 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


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