



## Volunteers' week and sports day



Our volunteers are the heart of our support, and we always love to shout out about how important they are at Equal Futures.

As part of Volunteer week 2022 we invited our volunteers to take part in a team building **retro** school sports day - with a lovely treat of an afternoon tea held at The House for an Art Lover, in Glasgow.

We took part in lots of games within house the grounds on a beautiful sunny afternoon. It was a great chance for our volunteers to have fun and bond as a team. Then we all enjoyed a cool down, natter, and refreshments inside.







One of the many benefits of volunteering with Equal Futures are the social opportunities it can provide our volunteers too. Not only does volunteering have a positive impact on the families we support, but it can also have huge benefits for those giving their time too, These include: feeling part of a team, improving confidence and learning new skills.

Volunteers are not unpaid because they are worthless, they are unpaid because the work they do is **priceless**.

**Thank you** to everyone who attended, you are all **fabulous!**



## Alistair's Stornoway holiday story

This is Alistair, an Equal Futures member who lives in Ayrshire. He would like to share his story about his recent holiday to Stornoway.

“My mum was born in Stornoway and has a cottage up there and we regularly travel up North for holidays. Mum had left a week or so before and I travelled up later with a family friend in her campervan along with her wee dog Brambles. It is quite a long journey but we stop regularly for some comfort breaks.

The cottage is very close to Stornoway harbour and I really enjoy watching the ferry coming in, unfortunately when we arrived the hedge was very high which was blocking the view so I helped mum trim it down so we could see better.

We enjoyed walks around Stornoway, we went to Lews Castle and walked around the grounds and also went to the Callanish Stones. We also visited a small croft near the stones and I enjoyed meeting the animals which included alpacas, pigs, ducks, chickens and a peacock which was very tame and let me stroke it.

We also went out for a meal to The Crown Inn which isn't too far from the cottage. I travelled back home by bus on my own, it was a very long journey and I needed to change a few times but I felt a great sense of achievement being able to do that alone.”





## Jason's 30th birthday celebrations

Equal Futures member Jason turned the big **30** early in July.

Jason's parents Trisha and Bernie threw a party for disco loving Jason where over 100 guests came to celebrate his milestone birthday. Family and friends were joined by two of Jason's old school teachers to enjoy the festivities of the evening. Everyone was so pleased to catch up with Jason after so long. Other guests included S who was a young gentleman when he looked after Jason over 20 years ago when he attended the Autistic Society Playscheme. S was joined at the party by his wife and 3 lovely children. What a special time for everyone, a great time was had by all and the dancefloor was hardly empty all night!

Jason gets to carry on the party at home after being gifted a fabulous Jukebox filled with all this favourite music.

We want to wish you a very happy 30th Birthday from everyone at Equal Futures.



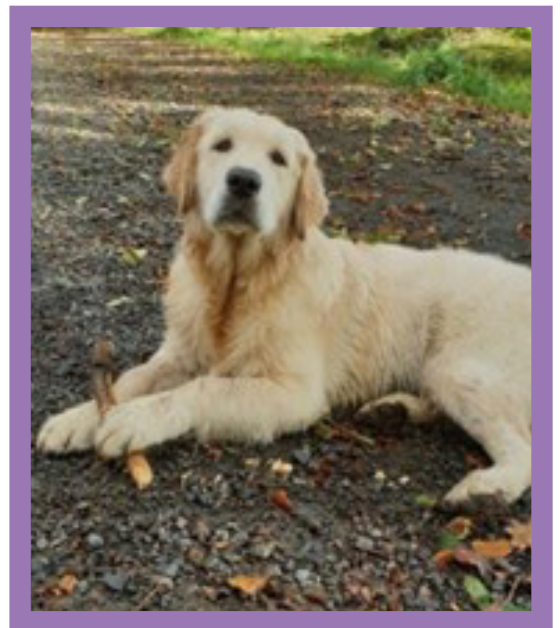




## Pet of the Newsletter

Everyone, please meet Harper! Harper is the pet of our PA/ Ayrshire Project Co-ordinator Shona.

Harper is a 3-year-old Golden Retriever with a smile that would melt your heart. Harper is a bundle of fun and energy and will love you endlessly.



### Likes:

Food (any kind)  
Cuddles  
Walks

### Dislikes:

Baths  
Fireworks  
Being Alone

If you would like your pet shared in the next edition of **In the Loop**, please send a photo and some information to your project coordinator.

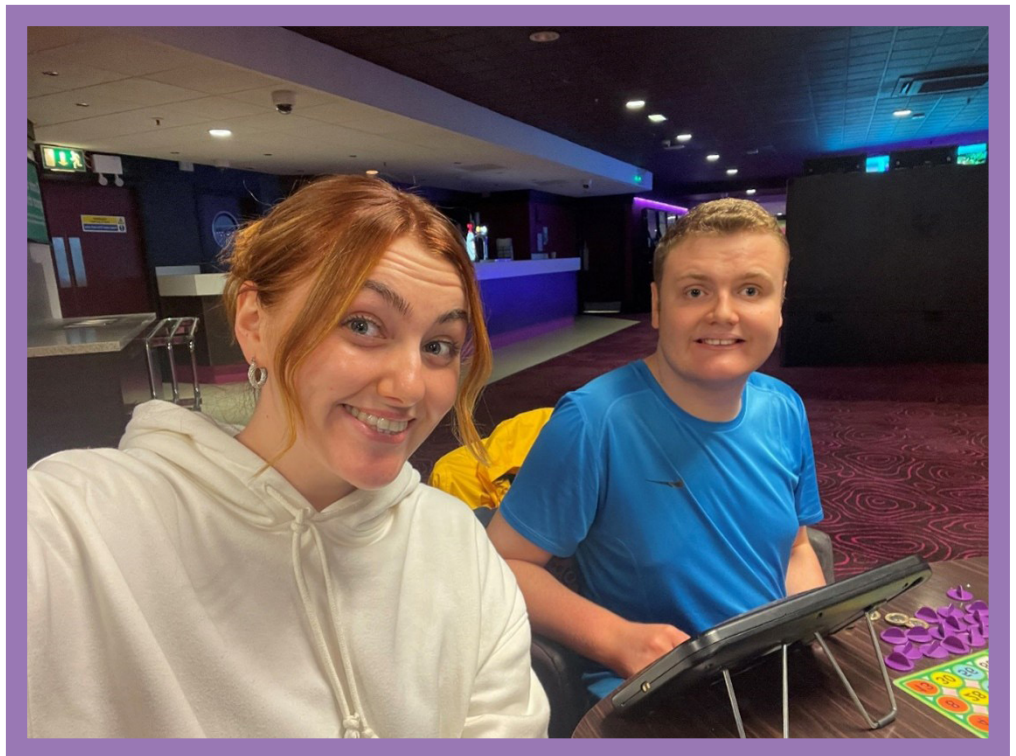


## Befriending success story

Andrew and his befriender Jemma met in March 2022. They have been spending time getting to know each other and working on Andrew's goals. Here is a little update from them:

“From our first initial meeting Andrew I and got on very well. We seem to have very similar personalities and enjoy doing the same things, this has made going on days out together extremely easy.

Andrew and I have built a good relationship with one another. In the picture we are at the bingo, this is one of our favourite activities to do together. However, Andrew tends to be luckier than I am!



On our days out we have been going on public transport as Andrew didn't feel confident using it alone and this is one of his goals. In a short couple of weeks Andrew said he feels his confidence has increased tenfold, he believes he is much more comfortable now using public transport alone and going routes that he maybe would not have ventured before.

To elaborate further, Andrew believes that incorporating the use of public transport more into events would be beneficial

for not only him but others who too feel daunted by the thought of using it.

Additionally, another one of the goals Andrew he wishes to achieve through Equal Futures is to build social connections. To help him achieve this he has signed up for one of the Edinburgh community events, and although I am unable to make this one, Andrew is still keen to go. He feels this is a step in the right direction in terms of creating a social circle.”

## Edinburgh and Lothian June Event: **Rescheduled**

Look out for an update on the rescheduled date from your project coordinator.





## Call for family carers and volunteers!

Hello, my name is Lisa Paul, I am a Geography and Social Policy student at Glasgow University and have been volunteering with Equal Futures for just short of a year now.

I am currently carrying out questionnaires and interviews to collect data for my dissertation research. I am researching how the Scottish learning disability support sector has been impacted by the combination of COVID-19 and austerity. I would be extremely grateful if you could take part in a 10-minute survey which is trying to find out more about the following:

- The social impact of successive lockdowns on adults with learning disabilities and autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in Scotland.
- How have disability/ASD support services, volunteers and family carers responded to the combined challenge of COVID-19 and social care cuts?
- How have both social care cuts and COVID-19 jeopardised the independence, resilience and community involvement of adults with learning disabilities/ASD in Scotland?

Your participation would be much appreciated if you are over the age of 18 and support someone with a learning disability, whether this be professionally, voluntarily, through supporting a family member or providing kinship support.

If you are a family carer, and would like to take part in the questionnaire, please click this link: <https://forms.office.com/r/XhwUgrNdbP>

If you are a volunteer for Equal Futures please take this survey: <https://forms.office.com/r/kVU3d13pTS>

If you work as a support worker or carer please take this survey: <https://forms.office.com/r/XhwUgrNdbP>

If you are interested in taking part in an interview, please contact me here: [2449810p@student.gla.ac.uk](mailto:2449810p@student.gla.ac.uk)

Enjoy the summer,

Lisa 😊



## What's on in Edinburgh and the Lothians

Some great support is available from our friends at the Speech and Language Communication Company and Pasda.



### **Pasda Dunbar Area Coffee Morning**

10:00 am - 12:00 pm

This Coffee Morning is held every 2nd Thursday of the month for carers of autistic adults in the Dunbar area of East Lothian

It is held in collaboration with The Ridge.

Please register your interest by emailing [info@pasda.org.uk](mailto:info@pasda.org.uk)

**Pasda.org.uk**

### **Supporting families of autistic adults**

Pasda offers support to parents, partners, siblings, and carers of autistic adults (over 16) who live in Edinburgh and the Lothians.

**NEW CLUB**  
**AGE 16-25**

DO YOU STRUGGLE WITH  
SPEECH, LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION?  
JOIN US AND MAKE NEW FRIENDS!



## EDINBURGH CHILL YOUTH CLUB

IS A SUPPORTIVE AND CREATIVE SOCIAL CLUB TO BOOST  
SELF-CONFIDENCE AND BUILD LIFE SKILLS.

**Thursday 4th August, 7-9pm**

**Fetlor Youth Club, 122 Crewe Road South,  
Edinburgh EH4 2NY**

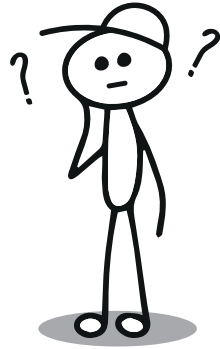
**A parent/carer support group will run  
at the same time as the Chill Youth Club**

Contact Judith for more details on **07507 535857**



# MENTAL HEALTH, WELLBEING, BUT WHAT DO THE WORDS REALLY MEAN?

IT COMES DOWN TO ONE THING



HAPPINESS

## HOW HAPPY DO YOU FEEL?

Everyone wants to be happy, to feel good about themselves.

That is different for each and every one of us.

There are some things that people take for granted like friends, family, being able to go out and share in hobbies and activities.

## IT'S EASY TO FORGET THAT FOR SOME OF US, THAT ISN'T ALWAYS EASY.

Feeling isolated can make us feel sad, excluded, and affect us in all sorts of ways.

*Chill* is a network of support for anyone who feels they need people to talk to, to do things with, and be part of a group of friends.



WE WANT TO HEAR ABOUT WHAT WE CAN DO TO MAKE YOU FEEL GOOD



SLCo

The Speech Language Communication Company  
Registered Charity No. SC 046297



**For more information please contact us**

**T: 07507 535857 / E: [families@s-l-co.uk](mailto:families@s-l-co.uk)**



**OUR CLUBS ARE DESIGNED FOR KIDS AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO EXPERIENCE COMMUNICATION BARRIERS**

## How to contact us

Your first point of contact is the Project Co-ordinator for your area, and you can reach them by email or telephone as follows:

Jane Mcallister (Edinburgh and Lothians):

[Jane.Mcallister@equalfutures.org.uk](mailto:Jane.Mcallister@equalfutures.org.uk)

0771 334 2311

Donna McCallum (Greater Glasgow):

[Donna.McCallum@equalfutures.org.uk](mailto:Donna.McCallum@equalfutures.org.uk)

0792 139 7615

Shona Fleming (Ayrshire):

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07787516597

Jayne Laidlaw (Managing Director):

[Jayne.Laidlaw@equalfutures.org.uk](mailto:Jayne.Laidlaw@equalfutures.org.uk)

Shona Fleming (Personal Assistant to Managing Director):

[Shona.Fleming@equalfutures.org.uk](mailto:Shona.Fleming@equalfutures.org.uk)

Please note that all Equal Futures staff are home-based and don't have an office. If you no longer wish to receive **In the Loop**, please contact Shona Fleming.

Our members are at the heart of everything we do. If you have a good news story or something to celebrate, please let us know we would love to hear it!

Contact your project coordinator to be involved.

Till next time...