

IN THE LOOP

We're back with what's happening at Assert

Welcome to the Assert newsletter! We are pleased to publish our June edition of the newsletter. This newsletter contains information about how our staff are providing support through different services, our upcoming activities and events and member stories. We hope you enjoy reading it, as much as we did writing it!

I AM A VERBALISER

By Mary L Murphy

I am a verbaliser by the name of Pure Mary

Here today to deliver my thoughts to you in spoken wordery

Here today to share with you the inner workings of my mind

Here today to show you the convolutions and the revolutions

I'm giving you a snap snapshot of my brain

As electrical impulses shoot across synaptic spaces and through the neural pathways like some crazed light show bouncing around in my cranium

I'm inviting you to come on in, to take a seat, to feel the heat as the ideas sizzle and pop,

To watch my mind as it converts that electrical light show into shapes and marks on paper placed there via the power of a pen

Doing that only when that machine that is my brain sends those signals to my tissues and my sinews and my muscles, messages to hustle to translate those marks, those shapes into letters that form words and those words into lines and those lines into poems like this with sounds that rhyme, with nuances and subtlety, with bright originality

So yeah come on in take a seat feel the sizzle get the heat and welcome to my mind

Because I am your verbaliser sent to you to help you realise the power of the spoken word, to transform the sounds that you just heard into light waves in your brains, triggering all kinds of who knows what, only you know what, because each of you will have your own translation of the sound vibrations from my mouth to your ears, from your ears into your brains and back out again via all those neural pathways shooting electrical signals across synaptic spaces and as I stand here watching you I get to see the result of me being here bringing you Pure Mary
Its showing up upon your faces and it's looking good

You can check out Mary's Facebook Page to read more of her poetry:
www.facebook.com/spokenwordery

ADHOC AUTISTICS – SOCIAL GROUP, PEER LED WALKS AND COFFEE MEETUPS.

By Kat & Kev

Hi all, a few of us Assert users have decided to start a social group for walks and meetups. This is peer led and we encourage all to participate in whatever way they see fit. This is not a formal service, it's just a way to meet up. We are also open to more adhoc events throughout the year such as picnics, beach meetups, games, barbecues etc.

Coffee morning meetups

We meet up every other Wednesday at the Ledward centre 11am-1pm. We meet on the opposite week to the Assert coffee morning. See Telegram group for details and updates.

Weekend walks

The plan is to go for a walk most weekends and maybe the odd weekday walk. Walks may be cancelled at the last minute by consensus due to bad weather. See the Telegram group for details and updates.

We are late-diagnosed autistic/ADHD individuals who are keen on walks in nature, we believe social walks are good for the well-being of neurodivergent people and a good way to meet others with similar experiences. We welcome autistic people, formally or self-diagnosed.

Suggestions for future walks are welcome, the whole idea is that we are peer-led.

These walks are organised and led by Kevin (he/him) and Kat (she /her). We are in our late 30's-late 40s, but we invite people of any age.

Safety info

It is solely the attendees' responsibility to provide items such as: Sunscreens, hats, water, snack, and packed lunch, and suitable footwear in case of muddy areas.

Terrain

We tend to go off-road, not always sticking to pathways, so bare this in mind when considering accessibility.

Disclaimer

We are not clinically trained in any way, we of course, will look out for each other, but we cannot be responsible for individuals' emotional, physical, or sensory needs. Please consider this before attending a walk. We cannot guarantee attending numbers for any given walk.

If you have any questions, please contact us before attending the walk.

- Friendly dogs welcome
- All walks will encounter dogs

Telegram

Telegram is a messaging app that is a bit similar to WhatsApp. It can be installed on a smart phone, mac or PC.

<https://telegram.org/apps>

We have two Telegram group chats. Feel free to join either or both, by following the links below:

This one is for discussion around organising events:

<https://t.me/adhocautistics>

This one is for event announcements and updates only:

<https://t.me/+wowdyLzASY83ODQ0>

Kat and Kev

Assert's disclaimer

Please also note that as these activities aren't organised directly by Assert, there will not be a member of staff present nor can Assert take any responsibility for anything that happens during the activities.

By joining the Telegram group, you are choosing to share your phone number with the rest of the participants of the peer-led group. While you have the right to 'opt out' at any time, this would rely on others on the group removing your contact details from their information. Assert could make this request but would be unable to enforce this or take any further responsibility.

ASSERT OPERATIONS

By Debbie Taylor

Hi everyone,

We hope you are enjoying the sunshine.

The staff team are doing their very best to meet the growing demand on Assert services, this has resulted in the regrettable decision to pause our waiting list for new registrations currently. This is to allow time for some important strategic and developmental fundraising to take place.

Until Alex Little returns to Assert in August, following her period of maternity leave we are currently signposting all new Benefits enquiries to:

- St. Luke's Advice Service 01272-549203 by calling <https://www.stlukesadvice.org.uk/>
- Possability People - <https://possabilitypeople.org.uk/>
- Citizen's Advice - <https://www.cabrightonhove.org/>

Drop In

The Assert Drop-In is held on the second Tuesday evening of each month, in the Conference Room at Community Base at 7.00pm. If you are interested in attending or would like to know more about this activity, please do get in touch. Look out for the regular mail chimp flyer which will be circulated by e-mail or by post. Do give the office a call and someone should be able to give you more details. 01273-234850 or 01273-234853.

A big apology to those in attendance on 13th June. Both the Conference Room clock and a member of staff's watch were wrongly set, resulting in confusion and an unintentional slightly earlier closing of the session. We are very sorry this may have felt a rather abrupt to the evening, and apologise for any inconvenience caused, but assure we will better synchronise in future.

PPC (Parents, Partners, Carers Group)

We currently meet on the 4th Tuesday of the month, 7.00pm upstairs at the Earth and Stars pub in Church Street, Brighton. If you haven't been along before, you would be very welcome to attend. It's very informal and friendly and most attendees report it is really helpful to have a space where you don't have to explain yourself, don't feel judged and may even have a bit of fun....but crying is fine too. As a parent, this group was my first introduction to Assert well over 12 years ago and I have met some very lovely, caring people as a result.

Although I will be leaving Assert, there will be an automated monthly reminder for PPC, but always remember it's the 4th Tuesday of the month... not necessarily the last Tuesday...

I will likely continue to attend as a parent, as I do currently. A parent has started the process of setting up a Whatsapp group for PPC to maintain regular contact. If you have attended and would like to be added, please let me know your details and I will pass on.

In the short term I can be contacted debbiet@assertbh.org.uk

Autism Caseworker

I wanted to again update you regarding Assert's Wellbeing Programme.

Some of you may be aware that Riley-Fynn Morrell has sadly been suffering significant health issues and has recently been away from work for further medical reasons. Riley-Fynn has made the decision that ongoing it will be beneficial to give himself time to focus on improving his health, but mostly he felt it would be better for Assert and the programme for him to leave his role at this time. We wish him all the best in his recovery.

This does mean that 1-1 casework will necessarily be on hold currently.

Coffee Club

Coffee Club will however continue twice monthly as usual, usually with Debbie Caulfield, one of Assert's Trustees and member in attendance.

Please note while the weather is good there has been a request to meet again during the summer months in the Café area of Pavilion Gardens.

If it rains during the session, we will likely de-camp to the Ledward Centre again, just along the road in Jubilee Street, where we were meeting previously.

For anyone thinking of coming along to Coffee Club, there are usually approx. 6-12 in attendance.

You can purchase refreshments from the café. If the group is small enough, usually we all engage in the same conversation, whereas when there are more people, there might be two or three smaller conversations going on. You can participate as much or as little as you like; there is no pressure, and plenty of people simply like to sit and listen.

Coffee Club continues to meet every fortnight, on Wednesdays from 11-1.

BENEFITS SERVICE

By Megan Archer

Hello everyone,

I will be leaving Assert completely this month, Alex is due to return from maternity leave at the beginning of August.

I'll still be available to answer questions via email, where possible, while I am working a few hours weekly, until I finish. If you have emailed with a new query and want support with your benefits from August onwards, I will place you on a waiting list for when the service resumes in August. If you need support with new applications or appeals, please contact either of the following organisations:

Possability People: <https://possabilitypeople.org.uk/about/contact-us/> or on 01273 89 40 40

St Lukes: <https://www.stlukesadviceservice.org.uk/> or on 01273 54 92 03

I have really enjoyed working with you all, and wish everyone all the benefits, enough money to live on, and total peace and quiet from the DWP forever and ever. All very best, Megan.

LIFE SKILLS COURSES

By Maria Riaza Fernandez

Hi All!

The Life Skills project funding is coming to an end in March 2024 and I am now gathering information to propose an improved project to carry on offering updated and relevant courses free of charge.

It would be extremely helpful if you could fill in this short survey to help me (and the possible funders) understand the demand for the possible courses, learning resources and the preferred form of delivery. This would give me an idea of how many courses of each block to offer a year and see if we could expand the team to be able to shorten the waiting time for courses with lots of interest.

Please bear in mind that this is only a consultation phase and we can't guarantee the delivery of the project, this will depend on securing the appropriate funding for which your input is key.

The survey only has 7 questions and shouldn't take more than 5-10 minutes to complete.

Here is the link for the google form:

<https://forms.gle/sutoE4UcCWZ9DKnKA>

Thank you beforehand for your help.

Kind regards,

Maria
Adult Learning Coordinator

AUTISM SUPPORT ADVISOR / STRATEGY LEAD

By Alex Barbuti

Hi everyone,

It's an exciting month in the city – Saturday 15th July saw the [Trans Pride Parade](#) and the 10th anniversary of this event. A celebration of trans lives and gender diversity, with over 10,000 people attending, it was the first and is the largest Trans Pride event outside of America.

And then in August, of course, it's the annual [Pride](#) parade. This year on Saturday 5th of August, 300,000 people will join together under this year's theme **“Dare to Be Different”**.

I also wanted to take this opportunity to let you know that Community Base, where the Assert office is, along with the Ledward Centre on Jubilee Street and Montague House on Montague Place, is a confidential safe space for reporting any hate incidents.

We hope you all have a wonderful pride month.

Thank YOU

A heartfelt thank you to all those of you who took the time to complete the recent Autism Strategy Survey. And an extra big thank you from me to those of you who came along to our focus groups and shared your experiences. Your insights and recommendations have helped shape Assert's response to the consultation and the Board's understanding of what must change. Assert is also listening to all feedback on our services from the survey, good and bad.

Debbie and I recently attended a meeting of the Autism Partnership Board where initial results of the survey were presented by the autism commissioner. Your voices have been heard. There is a lot of work to do to bring improvements to autistic people in Brighton and Hove and we are pleased to have a role in shaping the discussions and actions that will be needed. Through this Board and others, we will continue to advocate for the autistic community, and we will keep you updated on the progress of the strategy.

Right to Choose

I attended a meeting of the Neurodevelopmental Pathway Operational Delivery Group. I raised the lack of clear information for charities and individuals on the NHS Right to Choose scheme and private autism and ADHD assessments. The NHS will be producing clearer guidelines on patients' rights and choices, including any pros and cons of private assessment and diagnosis, which we will share with you as soon as we can.

DIGITAL AND MARKETING ASSISTANT

By Prachi Pal

Dear all,

I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude for your ongoing contributions to the newsletter; your inputs are invaluable to us at Assert. **Your voices are at the core of this monthly newsletter!**

We constantly strive to enhance the newsletter's appeal by incorporating new elements like embedded links, icons, pictures, and theme-based designs, with the aim of making it more engaging for you. We truly value your feedback and encourage you to share your thoughts.

If there are specific features or content you would like to see in the newsletter, kindly reach out to me at supporters@assertbh.org.uk with your suggestions! We are eager to tailor the newsletter to your preferences and interests.

Thank you once again for your active involvement in shaping this newsletter.

ASSERT CHAMPIONS SCHEME



We are excited to have our Assert Champions Scheme with monthly giving to Assert. We have a vision to achieve 25% of our income from individual giving in the future. We are asking if people would consider signing up to monthly giving for Assert and set up a regular standing order or by making an annual donation of £30 or more.

WHY BECOME AN ASSERT CHAMPION?



Contribute to maintaining current services at Assert

Your monthly contributions will help to positively impact the lives of autistic adults in Brighton and Hove. It enables us to have the confidence to plan for the future of our services



To help increase our impact

There are 2734 people on the autistic spectrum in Brighton and Hove, which is estimated to increase by 8.6% by 2030. With your monthly support, we can expand our reach



To make a difference

Every autistic adult deserves happiness and a healthy life. Your monthly donations to Assert can help make a difference to the people we support free of charge



Be an essential part of ensuring Assert's sustainability in the future

You will be contributing to supporting the sustainability and security of Assert and our services both now and in years to come



To help us continue to offer our services

5% of the biggest national charities receive 85% of funding for all registered charities. Right now supporting grassroots, local charities has never been more essential



To inspire the community

Giving is a great way to inspire our friends and family towards the importance of helping others. It makes one feel positive, and motivates others to contribute towards the betterment of the world

If you are interested in becoming an Assert Champion and supporting our work and services in future please get in touch. We would hugely appreciate your support in helping Assert to maintain its services. For a registration pack, please contact alexb@assertbh.org.uk or call 01273 234853.



SHARE YOUR VOICE AND FEEDBACK IN THE ASSERT NEWSLETTER

Assert would love to hear more from you!

Your voice and feedback are important to us and this newsletter is a space to amplify your voices, experiences, opinions and contributions. We would love to receive your write ups, drawings, puzzles, poems, photographs, articles etc. on topics that interest you and which can benefit other clients too. If you would like to be anonymous, we will respect your decision. Please email your submissions at supporters@assertbh.org.uk.

DONATE



DONATE TO ASSERT: YOUR SUPPORT IS VITAL TO US

Donations to Assert are vital in keeping the charity operational and free at the point of service. We are incredibly grateful for any donations received. You can donate to us through PayPal or the 'donate' button on our Facebook page. You could also make donations in cash, via cheque or bank transfer, host your own fundraiser or use the link below:

<https://www.paypal.com/uk/fundraiser/charity/2333838>

**FOR MORE INFORMATION AND REGULAR UPDATES, FOLLOW US
ON OUR SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS:**



/ASSERTBANDH



@ASSERT_BH



**UPCOMING ACTIVITIES
CALENDAR - WATCH OUT
FOR EMAILS!**

DROP IN

EVERY 2ND TUESDAY EVENING

**PARENT, PARTNERS AND CARERS
GROUP**

EVERY 4TH TUESDAY OF THE MONTH

COFFEE CLUB

EVERY FORTNIGHT - WEDNESDAY 11 AM
-1 PM

**PLEASE FEEL FREE TO
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