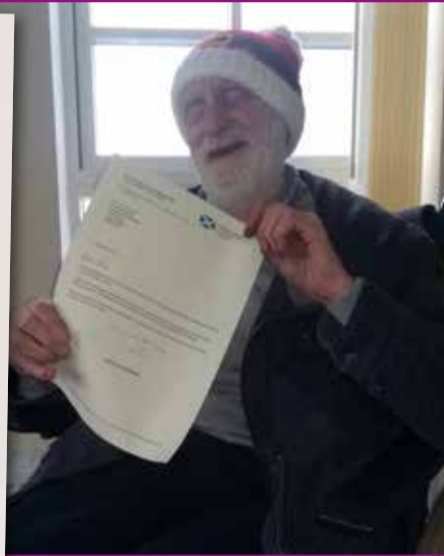


# John's letter of thanks from the First Minister



John's team put in an application which was accepted – and what's more he was to be the first resident to move in!

From this point onwards, John was included in all the big decisions relating to the property; from flooring to bathroom requirements. Due to being the first resident in the development, John was invited to officially open the property alongside the Minister for Housing, Kevin Stewart.

John took along a painted piece of woodwork that had 'Thank You' written across it and asked for Kevin to pass it along to the First Minister.

Lo and behold, the First Minister wrote to him in person thanking him for the heartwarming gift. As you can imagine, John was absolutely over the moon!

John now lives in a beautiful flat that has a spacious walk-in shower and looks right over the local harbour. A happy ending all round!

**W**hen John first found out he would be moving to a brand new housing development with a walk-in shower, he couldn't quite have imagined how things would unfold.

Fast forward...and he's sitting at home opening a letter from none other than the First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon. She had written to him to thank him for sending such a beautiful gift. So, how did this all happen?

John, from Edinburgh, previously lived in an old flat in the west of the city. As his mobility had deteriorated, the use of the bathroom was a lot

more difficult for him meaning that the safest option was to wash in bed.

Understandably, John was not comfortable with this situation and it was having a noticeable impact on his mood with his team and colleagues. To add to this, he was served an eviction notice as the property was being sold to a new owner.

It took his team six months before they could find a suitable home for John that was within his budget. They finally came across LAR Housing Trust, who were building a brand new set of flats in East Lothian.

## A note from our Chief Executive



**W**e are looking forward to a new year with lots of goals to achieve from our new three year plan and lots of excitement about new services starting.

The AGM, held on 30th November 2018, always creates the looking glass into the organisation and the progress we are making. This AGM was particularly humbling due to the exceptional nominations and award winners, in all the categories of the staff awards, which were announced on the day.

Well done to everyone who was nominated. You are demonstrating our purpose and progress every day and it is an honour to be able to tell everyone your stories.

The AGM was also particularly reflective this year as it was Richard Holloway's last year as our patron. In his usual eloquent way, he told us why he sees our work as really important to society and that we demonstrate how we all should be treating each other with care and love. I hope you enjoy reading and being inspired by his article on page 8 of this newspaper.

This newspaper gives you a flavour of what the organisation is doing on a daily basis, but I ask you to imagine the stories repeated over and over with hundreds of people. That's what people who work with Carr Gomm achieve every day. Congratulations to everyone who makes a difference on a daily basis..

With best wishes, Lucy

## Stevie scoops top Dundee community award

Stevie, one of the people we support in Dundee, picked up a top prize at the Dundee Inspire Awards for his volunteering efforts with a local social enterprise that aims to build understanding between Muslims and the wider community.



Stevie collecting his award from David Martin, Chief Executive of Dundee City Council

His work with Taught By Muhammad saw Stevie collect the 'Make a Difference Award for Communities' at the event, which took place at Dundee's Caird Hall, attended by more than 200 people.

The awards aimed to celebrate the many achievements of Dundee's young people during the 2018 Year of Young People. They were run in partnership with Dundee Youth Fund, Dundee City Council, Dundee Youth Council and Volunteer Dundee.

After his drama class in the Douglas Centre, Stevie would visit Taught By Muhammad's café. Stevie's support practitioner, Kevin, knew that Stevie was very keen to take on voluntary work so asked him if he wanted to look into possible opportunities at the café. Stevie jumped at the chance!

From there, Stevie and Kevin worked together to speak to the management and then completed the relevant paperwork. Having started at the support café in the Douglas Community Centre, Stevie now lends a hand at all four cafes in various parts of the city.

Stevie quickly proved to be a very hard working and dedicated volunteer. He would set up the tables and serve customers, but most importantly, he would spend time with those in the community who used the free drop-in café.

He was nominated for the award by group leader Anne Singleta who finds him an absolute joy to be around and a very worthy winner of this community award.

Kevin Hume, Stevie's support practitioner, said: *"Myself and the team are very proud of the hard work and commitment Stevie has shown to achieve his own personal goals. It's fantastic that he's been recognised in this way."*

*"Furthermore, in recognition of his hard work with Taught by Muhammad he has been selected to take part in a 12-week cooking course which will further his skills in this area, something else he is really keen to do."*

Stevie's family members have also expressed their delight at his success. They feel that prior to Carr Gomm supporting him, they could never have dreamt that he'd win an award and continue to do so well.

## James' jaunt to Dunoon

James, from Stirling, recently jumped at the chance to reunite with his old friend Dorothy, who lives in Dunoon and whom he had lost contact with over the years.

His team were aware of how much Dorothy's friendship meant to him so felt it was important to turn the visit into a well-deserved holiday.

James and his team set about organising the trip. It was a joint planning exercise as part of his support which made sure that James was involved in all the decisions relating to the itinerary. This way, he could really get excited about it and count down the days.

When the moment finally came for James and Dorothy to be reunited, James' face lit up and they embraced telling each other how long it had been.

The two friends spent the whole day catching-up and popped over to a nearby neighbour, whose dog took to James and lay on his knee for the majority of the visit.

Eager to visit the holiday caravan, Dorothy suggested she would visit James the following day. They both



James with his friend Dorothy

enjoyed a cup of tea whilst exchanging stories before heading out together for dinner. After dinner, James and Dorothy gave their goodbyes and spoke of meeting up the next day.

James spoke of how fantastic his time in Dunoon had been and how he really enjoyed not only spending time with Dorothy but with his team too.

As a result of the holiday, James' team recognised a positive change in him saying:

*"James seemed more relaxed and confident in himself. We were delighted to be able to help him rekindle his friendship with Dorothy, which was clearly very important to him."*

James is already planning his holiday for next year!

## St Stephen's Court



Before



After

**From building site to home! We're thrilled to have launched our brand new service in Edinburgh, providing intensive support to people as an alternative to hospital. We're delighted with how bright and homely the properties are. We'll be bringing you an update from the new tenants in the next issue of the newspaper, so watch this space.**

## Team Carr Gomm lives on!



Ash Denham, MSP  
for Edinburgh  
Eastern

Thanks to the effort and hard work from all our teams, the people we support across Scotland and their friends

and family, Team Carr Gomm has truly been a resounding success.

It all started with the launch event back in May, which was attended by a number of local MSPs, and over the summer people were walking, running, jumping, cycling and swimming their way to complete the miles they pledged in order to raise much needed funds to stomp out loneliness across Scotland.

We've had people

taking up all manner of endeavours; from the Kiltwalk to Tough Mudder and sponsored historic walks to cycle trips round some of Scotland's most beautiful islands.

Our very own chief executive Lucy enjoyed a glorious walk across the Forth Road Bridge raising £550.

Now that the first leg (pardon the pun) of the campaign has come to a close, we are delighted to announce that the final

total raised is a fantastic £20,620.

What's more, we achieved twice the amount of miles that we set out to do. The feedback from across the organisation has been overwhelmingly positive.

We've had a number of people saying that they'd like to repeat their challenges to raise more money for Team Carr Gomm. It's for this reason that we've decided to adopt Team Carr Gomm

as our overarching fundraising theme.

Whilst the summer campaign has well and truly come to a close - that is our 1,000 mile virtual route around Scotland, raising £30,000 - we'll keep Team Carr Gomm as our 'brand' for future fundraising activities.

So, watch this space for news and updates on how you can get involved and help us stomp out loneliness!

## Inverness charity shop jewellery sale raises £322

The team from the Carr Gomm charity shop in Inverness raised a whopping £322 from this year's jewellery sale, which will go towards supporting the work of local projects in the area.

The annual jewellery sale, which has been running for over 15 years now, took place on the first Saturday in December. This was the perfect time to set up stalls outside the shop, as the team were able to catch Christmas shoppers with their many bling bargains.

Morag McCloy, who is responsible for all the jewellery in the shop, said: "We start setting up the tables at 9am and tastefully arrange all of our pieces on stands and on the tables.

"The more expensive pieces are placed in boxes, which is ideal for shoppers who are looking for a special



Morag and Janice

*Christmas gift.*

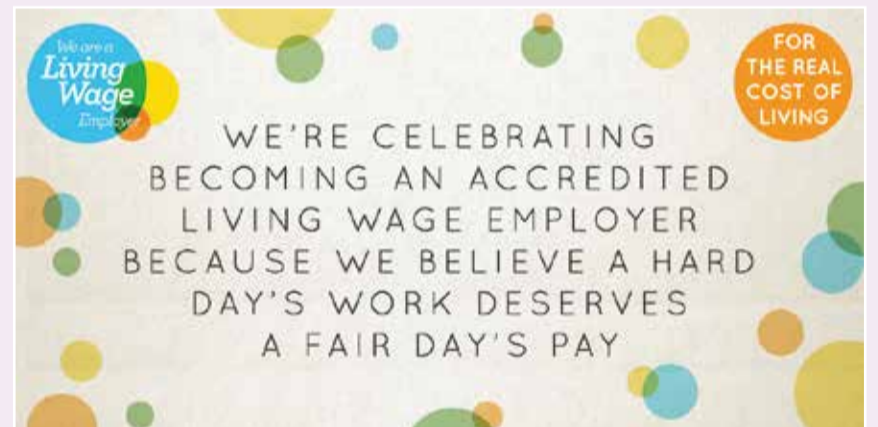
*"All of our jewellery is donated to the shop with some new goods. I start to think about the sale around the end of October and lay aside pieces for the sale.*

*A lot of work goes into the preparation of the sale with each piece having to be individually priced.*

*I'm very grateful to the team, especially Janice, Amy and our other volunteers who make the day possible.*

*"We always do very well on the day so we'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone who donated goods this year. I love running the jewellery sale and look forward to doing it all over again next year."*

## Carr Gomm is now a living wage employer



We are delighted to announce that Carr Gomm is now an accredited Living Wage Employer!

We are committed to rewarding the efforts of our staff as well as supporting their career development. This means that every member of staff earns at least the Scottish Living Wage.

The real Living Wage is higher than the government's minimum, or National Living Wage, and is recalculated each year based on the actual cost of living. It is a symbol of responsible business practice and celebrates employers that choose to go further than the government minimum.

Over 4,000 organisations, including Carr Gomm, have voluntarily chosen to pay the real Living Wage because we believe that a hard day's work deserves a fair day's pay.

Michael Catlin, senior human resources officer, said: "We believe that all Carr Gomm workers deserve a fair day's pay, as well as the best terms and conditions that we can offer.

*"This certification demonstrates how committed Carr Gomm is to ensuring that we are offering our teams the very best place to work and enjoy a career, which in turn allows us to continue to deliver high quality supports."*

## What is an SVQ and what does it mean for Carr Gomm?

An SVQ is a Scottish Vocational Qualification. It is based on national standards and provides evidence that the learner (i.e. the support practitioner) can do their job well.

In keeping with new guidelines from the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), all support practitioners are to be SVQ qualified within five years.

At Carr Gomm, we are embarking on an ambitious programme to encourage staff to complete their SVQ in Scotland within two years.

The reason for this is so we can guarantee that the people we support receive the best quality of support from the best quality of workers.

As encouragement we are offering a pay rise to staff in line with length of service and qualifications achieved.

To be awarded an SVQ, candidates have to demonstrate that they understand and can adhere to five main principles: Interdependence, Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Communication and Practice Development.

It is crucial that teams across the organisation are not just aware of these principles but practice them in a professional manner every day they are at work.

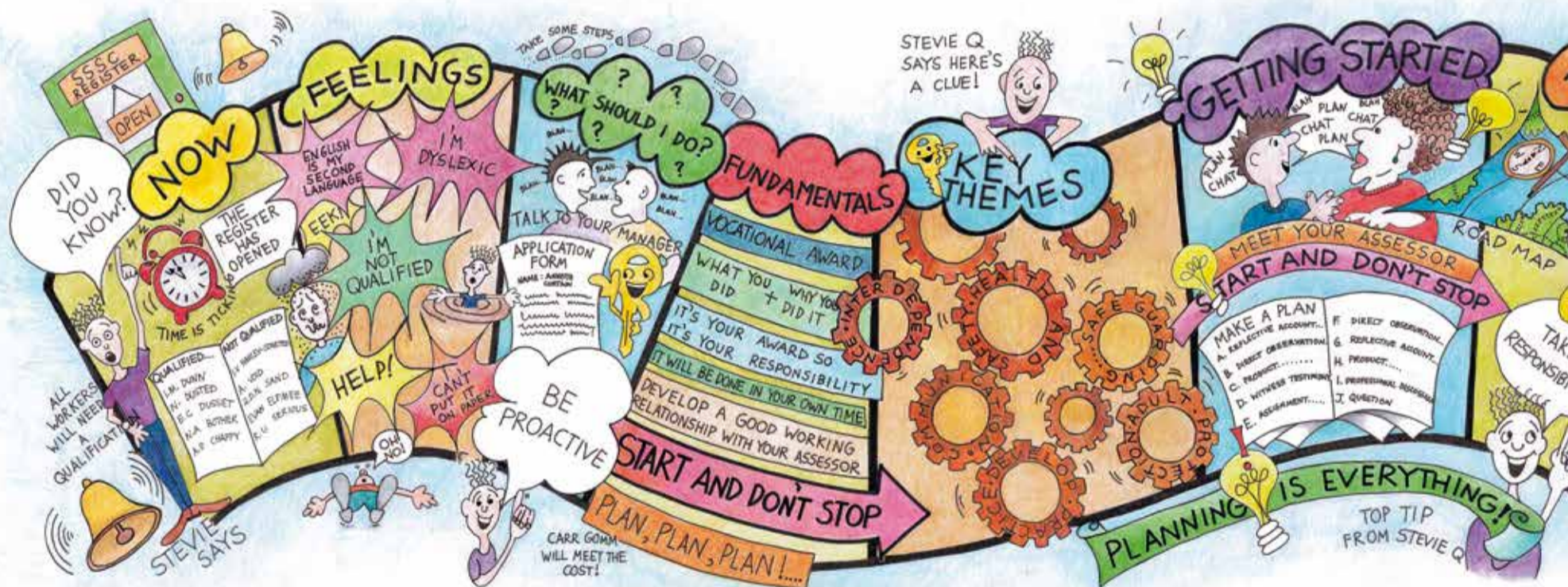
We want to foster an organisation that adheres to the five main principles as well as our own values of choice, control, respect, interdependence and openness and honesty.

This way we can be sure that we are delivering first-class support to everyone we are privileged to work with.

Carr Gomm supports our practitioners to complete the SVQ award and we are an Approved SVQ Centre meaning we put candidates through their award according to the quality assurance criteria set by SVQ.

We are committed to investing in training and development so that each individual's experience of Carr Gomm is positive and makes a difference in their life.

Stevie Q illustration created by Shirley Gatt, SVQ and Training Manager at Carr Gomm



**FEELINGS** - "It was a long time since I had left school so I had mixed feelings about doing my SVQ. After chatting with my assessor, I started believing that I could do it."

**GETTING STARTED** - "My colleagues rallied round me and were a great support. Once I got started, I felt a lot better about everything."

## Introducing Stevie Q

Stevie Q is Carr Gomm's 'go-to-guy' for everything related to the SVQ qualification. He was created to add a bit of fun to the process and is there to walk support practitioners through their award, from start to finish.

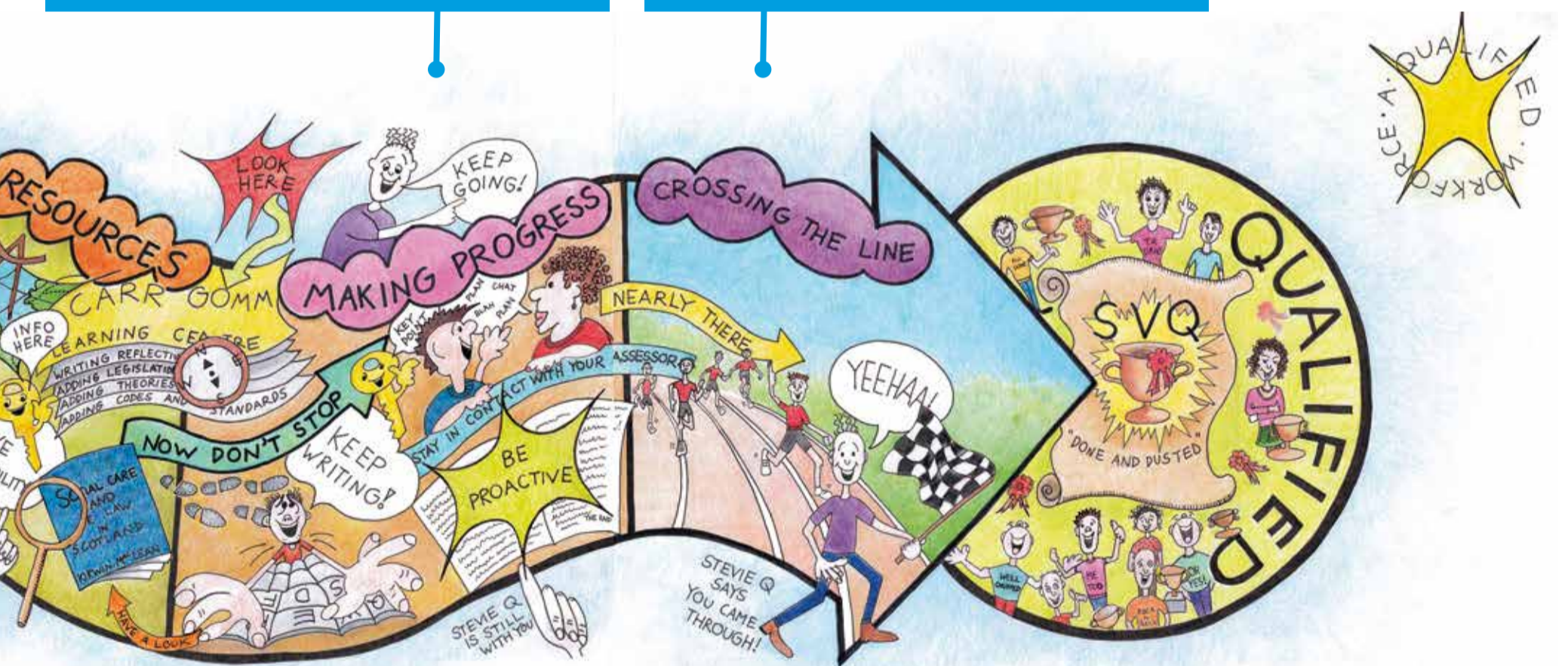
We've also created a fantastic illustration of the SVQ journey, which you can see on this double page.

It's there to help our practitioners understand the process and hopefully lets them see that it is not a scary or overwhelming task to undertake.

There is lots of help along the way, both from teams and online resources.

**MAKING PROGRESS - "I started to realise that I knew more than I thought and that I was more than capable of furthering my career with Carr Gomm."**

**CROSSING THE LINE - "I'd encourage everyone to do their SVQ. It's not as hard or as scary as it might seem in the beginning."**



**RESOURCES - "I worked closely with my assessor who was fantastic. Their positive feedback on all aspects of my work gave me a huge confidence boost."**

**Congratulations to our 72 colleagues who have achieved their SVQ qualification within the last year. We're delighted that so many of our team members have successfully completed the process and look forward to many more joining them!**

# NOTICEBOARD

## Send us your stories

Do you have a great story that we can shout about? We're always looking for content for our star story and noticeboard pages.

If there's anything you'd like to share, from a heart-warming story to a recent outing or even a recipe, poem or fun fact about yourself then we'd love to hear from you!

### @ Send us an email

[marketing@carrgomm.org](mailto:marketing@carrgomm.org)

### 📞 Pick up the phone

0131 659 4734

### ✉ Write us a letter

Marketing Team, Carr Gomm, SPACE, 11 Harewood Road, Edinburgh EH16 4NT

We can even come to you. Just get in touch and we'll arrange a time to meet.

Thank you.

🐦 @CG\_CarrGomm

📘 [www.facebook.com/CarrGomm](https://www.facebook.com/CarrGomm)



## Margaret's 80th birthday

The Edinburgh Visiting team held a little tea party for Margaret to celebrate her 80th birthday. All managers and staff who either know or support Margaret were invited along. She was absolutely delighted and taken aback by it. As a keepsake, she was gifted a beautiful photo book made by her support staff of memories they had shared together.



## Merkinch knitters

Our Inverness shop volunteers have raised over £10,000 since 2011 from the sale of their knitted items, which are currently being worn around the world. They donate the hand knits, mainly jumpers and cardigans for babies and children, to our charity shop in the Victorian Market. We'd like to say a huge thank you to them for giving up countless number of hours to knit these beautiful pieces.

## Poem

by Lotty

For years and years, I've wandered through the dark and winding cold forest trying to find out who I really want to be

Now the answer has finally become clear to me

I should stop giving a damn and cast off the shackles because

At last it seems that I've finally won the battle





## Handbells and Christmas Carols

Fukimo, from our Oban service, organised a successful Handbells & Christmas Carol Concert, raising £345 for Carr Gomm. The concert took place at Oban Parish Church and included singing and readings to spread the Christmas cheer. We thank her and everyone who took part in the concert for supporting our work to stomp our loneliness in communities across Scotland.



## Congratulations Rebecca

We'd like to say a huge congratulations to Rebecca Rae, from Forth Valley, who has not only succeeded in achieving her SVQ but also recently won the award for 'Modern Apprentice of the Year' at Forth Valley College.

On winning her award, Rebecca said: "It took a while to sink it, I was definitely in shock at first, but I felt proud to receive the award after a lot of hard work." We look forward to seeing where Rebecca's career with Carr Gomm takes her.



## Nice to meet you... Britney Turner

In this edition, we meet Britney Turner. Britney recently worked alongside our Learning & Development team to create an LGBT awareness module for all the staff at Carr Gomm. Here she tells us why this was so important to her:

*"Introducing an LGBT awareness module was really important to me because I wanted everyone at Carr Gomm to understand how lonely transitioning can be, if you don't have people who understand to talk to."*

*"There is also a lot of hate crime surrounding LGBT issues in the UK at the moment, so it wasn't about making the module difficult or too in depth, but giving people an awareness of what it is like to change gender identity from male to female or female to male."*

*"Another reason for introducing the module was that I wanted the whole of Carr Gomm to learn about transitioning - not just my own team. It's a difficult thing to discuss so I wanted to do something that would open up a conversation and let staff know how transgender people are feeling as they go through the different stages of transitioning."*

# AGM AND RICHARD HOLLOWAY

## AGM introduction

This year's AGM was a rather special one. Not only did we recognise the amazing achievements of teams and individuals across the organisation, but we said a fond farewell to Richard Holloway who has

served as our patron for 20 years. We would like to say a huge thank you to him for all his hard work and dedication over the years.

He's written a farewell message for us, which you can read below. You can also find

out who took home the awards for Most Inspirational Individual, Team of the Year, Partnership of the Year, Carr Gomm Futures and Involvement.

## Carr Gomm and my reflections

*By Richard Holloway*

Looking back on my long life, there are many things I regret, and most of them are committees I agreed to sit on. I wonder what good all those hours spent in stuffy rooms going over minutes and matters arising did for anyone. I suspect that a lot of committees and boards are a kind of displacement activity: we can't do much about anything, but let us at least show willing by talking about it.

But I knew as soon as I was invited to be involved in Carr

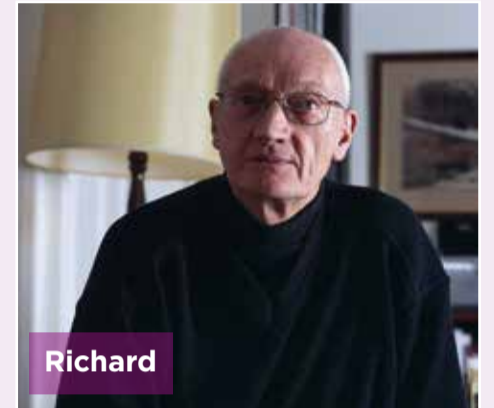
Gomm that this would be different. I wasn't asked to do much. Lend my name - whatever that was worth - chair the AGM and take a general interest in the work. What was different about Carr Gomm was that it didn't just talk. It did something. And it did it with joy and love.

The world has always been a dark and tragic place. There's a lot of suffering out there. Some of it hard to explain. Some of it due to human selfishness and greed. But down the years good people have never just wrung their hands and asked

why something isn't being done about it. They've responded. They've acted. That's what I love about Carr Gomm. It has made a difference by the way it cares.

And those AGMs I chaired captured the spirit of Carr Gomm perfectly. They were well organised. They were fun - probably the only AGMs anywhere on earth that end with a whisky toast - and they reminded me what love could accomplish in our divided world.

So, thank you Carr Gomm for being you, for all the loving and laughing you do, and for



Richard

allowing me to play a tiny part in your great work. I raise my glass to you with heartfelt gratitude.

*Richard Holloway, Patron for Carr Gomm, from 1998 - 2018*

## 2018 Time to shine award winners & runners-up



Team of the Year

Award Winner: Rian Beagley's Team (Midlothian Visiting Service)



Partnership of the Year

Award Winner: Finance Team



Carr Gomm Futures

Award Winner: Barbara Rush, Firrhill Service



Most Inspiration Individual

Award Winner: David Halfpenny, Stirling Visiting Team

Involvement - Award Winner: Susan Anderson, The Crescent, Dundee