



## Muriel given more choice than ever thanks to new eyegazing technology

Let us introduce you to Muriel. When Muriel was a small child she was diagnosed with Rett Syndrome, a rare neurological disorder that occurs almost exclusively in girls and leads to severe impairments, affecting nearly every aspect of the child's life. Up until recently, Muriel was unable to communicate her wants and needs to her loved ones and those around her. Cue Julie...

Julie, Muriel's keyworker, accompanied Muriel to a Rett activity weekend. During this break, Muriel had the opportunity to try out a Tobii eyegaze for the first time. This technology allows people to communicate by selecting icons on a screen with their eyes. Julie wasn't sure if Muriel would be able to focus on the screen as her eyes and head constantly moved from side to side.

Julie said: "I had a go first,

*while Muriel sat beside me, I played the green bottles game. After a few minutes we positioned Muriel in front of the screen, with very little input from us Muriel started to smash the bottles. Muriel played the game for about 20 minutes then turned her head away from the screen indicating she had finished.*

*Two days after we returned home, I was speaking to Muriel as she lay in her bed and she held my eye for several seconds; this was the first time I had seen this happen. Other staff started to say that they had noticed Muriel was now holding eye contact when being supported."*

These moments of significant change were the catalyst for what would follow.

After a couple of years, a number of assessments, (in which Muriel started to communicate more and more, much to everyone's delight),

a session with a Speech and Language Therapist Tracy Lazenby-Paterson, and various conversations around funding, Muriel was finally given her very own Tobii i-12 computer.

Since then, Muriel has been able to specify what she would like to eat and drink and tell her key workers when she would like to rest.

Julie said: "Muriel started by asking for food or drink when she was being supported with meals. I introduced Muriel to choices of different desserts – chocolate, fruit and yoghurt. Muriel also enjoyed the game of choosing different coloured shorts, t-shirts and shoes and dressing the on-screen characters. She was also able to let me know when she was tired and wanted to rest. The eye gazing technology has given Muriel a new lease of life and enabled her to make choices that weren't open to her before."

## A note from our chief executive



Welcome everyone to the summer edition of the Carr Gomm newspaper. As you may have noticed, we've revamped the design and layout of our pages so we'd love to know what you think.

We hope you enjoy reading through this publication as it includes inspiring stories from across the whole of Carr Gomm, news on everything that is going on – from our new strategic plan to our latest fundraising campaign – as well as a new section called 'Let's focus on...', where we'll highlight and talk about why people sometimes need support, encouraging awareness around different people's experiences.

We've had a great year so far, with the launch of our three-year strategic plan and new fundraising campaign – Team Carr Gomm. We're as keen as ever to get your support right and stomp out social isolation and loneliness in communities across Scotland, so we'll be working hard to make sure both have a huge impact.

We're also now in the process of completing our summer forum and feedback sessions. We've gathered all the data to date and laid it out here for you. Please do spend time looking through this and if you have any further comments, get in touch with Lyn our involvement manager (lynryden@carrgomm.org).

Finally, I want to thank you all for the time and input to make this newspaper happen. If you like what you're seeing and want to be part of the next issue, then please do get in touch with the marketing team (marketing@carrgomm.org).

*Lucy Wain*

With best wishes, Lucy

## Team Carr Gomm



Mandy Hay clocking up her miles

**O**ur new fundraising campaign, Team Carr Gomm, kicked off recently with the aim of raising £30,000 to stomp out loneliness across Scotland. We'd love each and every one of you to get involved!

Simply sign up by pledging a target distance and amount. It's then up to you to decide how you want to achieve the miles; you could walk, dance, swim or do leg raises whilst sitting in a wheelchair – whatever suits you best.

Your completed miles will be added to our 1,000 mile virtual tour around Scotland and, with your help, we'd love to complete the circuit more than once. Why not get your

friends and family involved and make a day of it.

As well as raising money, Team Carr Gomm is itself tackling loneliness by bringing people together to be active and be social, and enabling everyone to take part no matter their age or level of fitness and mobility. Simply put, this campaign offers something for everyone.

Team Carr Gomm follows on from the fabulous success of the CG100 Campaign in 2017, which raised an amazing £50,000, every penny of which is supporting community projects and activities around Scotland.

### Help Stomp out Loneliness Today

With 36 fantastic fundraisers having already raised £4600 we're delighted by the progress of Team Carr Gomm but we've a long way to go to reach our £30,000 target.

Sign up today by visiting [www.teamcarrgomm.org](http://www.teamcarrgomm.org) or call the fundraising team on 0131 659 4790.

## 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, noticeboard and nice to meet you 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!

If you'd like to feature in the newspaper or if you have any suggestions for how we can make the paper better, please do get in touch.

@ 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](http://www.facebook.com/CarrGomm)

## Glasgow tea dance is a huge hit

**T**he team at the Gorbals service in Glasgow are hosting tea dances in an effort to tackle social isolation and.

The idea for a tea dance came out of a weekly social that the service used to run. At weekends, staff would invite people supported to the staff flat for social gatherings. Staff bought snacks and brought in CDs of music throughout the eras.

After the team outgrew the venue, Rosie, one of the staff members, arranged access to a community room within the flats. The whole team then organised a tea dance and advertised this within the two blocks of high rise flats at Gorbals. They invited not only people supported by Carr Gomm but also other people from the neighbourhood. There have been three tea dances held so far and the team now plan to run them every four weeks.



Our tea dancers

After the second tea dance, the team were approached by Joanne Spiers, who works for New Gorbals Housing Association, and were encouraged to apply for funding to continue with the tea dance. The service should know in August if they have been successful or not. Funding will allow the team to arrange additional entertainment, which in turn could attract more people to attend the tea dance, helping more people have

meaningful activity and avoid becoming lonely.

Alison, Gorbals service manager, says: "As the service manager I am extremely proud of the drive and dedication of the Gorbals team to enable people to be socially active. They are a team who show that it's not just about carrying out the day-to-day living tasks that social workers ask us to do, but think about the overall well-being of individuals."

## Setting out our plan for the next three years

This year marks the start of a new chapter for Carr Gomm. We've successfully achieved everything we set out to do in the 2015 - 2018 strategic plan, so we're now turning our attention to the next three years.

The 2018 - 2021 plan has been created with you in mind. It sets out to enable you to have more of a voice in the organisation. We want to hear your thoughts

on everything and anything to do with your support so that we can influence change, resulting in the best possible service delivery.

We're also looking at investing in our technology so that we can put systems in place that help you to be more in control of how you receive your support from us. Watch this space...

As an organisation, we want to be the best we can be so that you receive the right support at the right time. We believe that as part of achieving this, we need to invest even more in our workforce.

It's for this reason that we've put a strong emphasis on valuing and supporting our staff. We want to attract the right people and encourage them to do their

job to the best of their ability so we are introducing a new job role (support practitioner), a staff welfare programme and a young workers scheme.

We're looking forward to seeing exactly what the next three years has in store for us and we'll be sure to keep you updated along the way.

## Introducing the 'support practitioner'

At Carr Gomm, we want to do everything we can to ensure that you have the right people supporting you. We are working alongside the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC), the regulator for the social service workforce in Scotland, to ensure this happens.

The SSSC now demands that all social care workers are formally registered and have, or are working towards, a social care qualification. So, from now on, everyone that works with you will be registered with the SSSC and will be undertaking additional training to ensure they provide quality and professional support throughout their career.

To complement these requirements, and



in consultation with our workers, we've introduced a new role into the organisation - the support practitioner.

This new role aims to reward those workers who are qualified and commit their enthusiasm and energy to supporting people to achieve positive outcomes in their life. This is an exciting and innovative development in Carr Gomm's history and has been implemented with the people we support front of mind.

Alongside this new role, we are also developing additional

opportunities for workers to become champions in different areas of expertise, we're implementing new training to support professionalism, and launching a new young-worker programme to nurture and support Carr Gomm's leaders of tomorrow.

Successful workers come from different backgrounds and experiences, and we want to ensure that all workers have opportunities to learn, develop and flourish in their career with Carr Gomm.

## The new Health & Social Care Standards: Q&A

### What are the new Health and Social Care Standards?

The new standards state that everyone should receive high quality support that meets their needs and choices. They tell us how we can best support you to understand your rights and make choices to get the support that you want. There are five key principles that go with the standards, such as dignity and respect, which you should experience every time you receive support. The new standards also let your family and friends know exactly how we are working and how we are regulated.

### Why have they been introduced?

The new standards replace ones that were created in 2002. The way support is provided has changed a lot since then, so it was time to update them and introduce a much stronger focus on human rights and wellbeing. They also introduce a change in the way services are inspected. There is now a greater focus on what it's like to experience support: so, how does it feel for you to receive our support, and are you given choice in what your support looks like.

### Who have the standards been designed for?

You! They have been created with you in mind; every citizen who requires any form of support at any point in their lives. They focus on

your rights and set out to ensure that you are treated with the dignity and respect that we are all entitled to.

### How will they make a difference to the support I receive?

They encourage you to be proactive in engaging with your support, because they emphasise your rights and your choices. We already involve people in every aspect of their support, but there is always room for improvement. So, for example, we have added the standards to our support plans to ensure they are upheld as we co-create your support with you; and not because we think it's a good idea, but because you have a right to be supported in this way.



# INVOLVEMENT & FEEDBACK

## When we talk about involvement, what does this actually mean?

Involvement is one of those words that is hard to define and is perhaps best explained by way of some examples.

Involvement means that everyone who gets support should be at the heart of any plans made about their lives. As someone supported by Carr Gomm, you can expect to be listened to and respected. You can say how you would like to be supported and what's important to you. You and/or your family are included in decisions about your life. Your support is planned with you at the centre.

Is this your experience with Carr Gomm? Do you feel that your views have been taken into account? If you would like to talk to someone about this, speak to your key worker, manager or Lyn, whose contact details are at the bottom of this article.

Some people supported by Carr Gomm have taken part in interviewing for new members of staff. It's very important to get your perspective on potential new staff as these are people who will be coming into your home and perhaps helping you with quite personal matters. Therefore, having the chance to ask questions at interviews and to be part of the decision about who should get the job helps to ensure that the right people are appointed to work with Carr Gomm. People we support who have been involved in interviews find it very rewarding, interesting and worthwhile.

Does this sound like something you would be interested in? To find out more, speak to your key worker, manager or Lyn.

It's often said that people are experts because of their life experience. As someone who receives support, you know a lot about what works or what doesn't help. If you have a particular condition, for example hearing loss, you probably know more about this than someone who hasn't experienced this. With this in mind, people we support have offered to share their experiences at team meetings, to help team members know how to support them most effectively. This has included issues such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), LGBT awareness and deaf/blind communication. These are examples where people we support have been involved in training the staff who work with them.

The people who work with me understand my needs



92%  
agreed

93%  
agreed



I am satisfied with the service I receive

If I had staff who work with me

# INVOLVEMENT & FEEDBACK

**My support is making a positive difference in my life**

**I am involved in decisions about my support**



**90% agreed**

**87% agreed**

**90% agreed**

**89% agreed**



**a concern, would listen**

**My service is well organised and managed**

Do you have knowledge about an issue that affects you that you would like to share? If so, speak to your key worker, manager or Lyn so that we can help support you better. If so, speak to your key worker, manager or Lyn.

For all enquiries about involvement contact Lyn Ryden by email: [lynryden@carrgomm.org](mailto:lynryden@carrgomm.org) or phone 07739 976350

# LET'S TALK ABOUT...AUTISM

## What is Autism?

**A**utism is a lifelong condition that affects how people perceive and interact with the world. Some people say that the world can feel overwhelming and so causes considerable anxiety, but that a known structure and routine help reduce this anxiety. Autism is more common than many people realise, as in fact more than 1 in every 100 people in the UK have autism. People

from all nationalities and cultural, religious and social backgrounds can have autism, although it appears to affect more men than women.

Autism is a spectrum condition, which means that although people with autism share certain difficulties, they will all experience autism in different ways and to

differing extents. Autism is also present alongside other conditions, for example a learning disability or a mental health problem.

Each person's experience of autism is unique. Carr Gomm ensures that each person's support is as unique as they are by providing the right support, at the right time.

## Our approach

**A**ll too often, people focus on the challenges that are faced by people with autism, such as difficulty socialising and experiencing sensory overload. This is not how we see people.

We see how amazing each person is and want to help the world to see this too. We always focus on the positives, whilst assisting with the difficulties, to allow each person's true potential to shine through.

People with autism are often fantastic with precision tasks: maths, drawing, making replica models, reciting books or films, recalling dates and facts from memory, or completing jigsaws without looking at the pictures. We encourage people with autism, and those around them, to focus on these strengths in order to lead a fulfilling life.

We also support many of our own colleagues who have autism. At times, employees may require more support than others from their managers and colleagues, which requires patience and understanding, but there are many areas in which they can excel above and beyond those around them. We encourage everyone to maximise these



opportunities to learn from one another.

One of our colleagues was experiencing extreme anxiety due to her autism; by putting in additional support and supervision and

adopting a patient and encouraging approach, our colleague is now flourishing within her role; she is an excellent role model and is well-liked by the people we support.

## Innovative ways of working

**A**ll of our support is person centred. We put the person first, customising everything to their needs, wishes and desires. We ensure this happens when supporting people with autism by...

- writing clear and precise support plans that detail each person's structure and routines
- using each person's preferred

communication method, including Talking Mats and Storyboards

- running an autism focus group where the people we support can tell us how we can improve their support
- organising autism-friendly outings and film showings
- making use of sensory rooms

## An example of our work

**W**e supported Sam\* to move into his own tenancy in the same city as his family. We made sure the right support was in place so that Sam could live independently and engage with his local community.

We had to think outside the box to adapt Sam's house to his needs; making sure that the bathroom was fit for purpose and all fittings and fixtures were safe and secure.

One of the main challenges facing Sam was that he didn't like anything to be in his bedroom or on the

walls, and he would communicate this by pulling things down. This meant that we had to find an alternative to curtains or blinds so that Sam could get a good night's sleep. We managed to source and fit external shutters, with the controls installed in a separate room so they wouldn't become a source of distraction for him. This meant that Sam could sleep peacefully.

In just over three months, Sam has settled into his new home and is thriving living on his own for the first time.

\*name changed to protect confidentiality

## Keys

by Esther

**Keys:** I am letting go of.

For now I have my own little flat.

I am sad to be leaving my little home at Firrhill,

But when I look at the other side of the coin,

I am moving to a place where I'll have everything I have ever wanted.

So now I've told my story.

So long, farewell!

I'll carry on with my new life.

I hope you have a good life.

Whoever takes my place.

## I'm flying like an eagle

by Robert

I'm flying

I'm flying

I'm flying like an eagle

The fish in the sea

Pacific ocean

I'm flying

I'm flying

I'm flying like an eagle

I'm swimming with dolphins

Chasing sharks in the sea

I'm flying

I'm flying

I'm flying like an eagle

The birds in the sky

They fly real high

I'm flying

I'm flying

I'm flying like an eagle

The flowers blossoming

They blossom in the spring

## A day in the life of... Freya, Carr Gomm board member



Freya

Reflections on the Board Room: My Journey with Carr Gomm by Freya Sewell

Walking into the board room for the first time I wasn't sure what to expect. Having worked at the frontline of support I was curious, does strategic level decision-making truly connect with the experiences of people who provide and use services? The answer at Carr Gomm is a resounding yes. People, the desire to protect and promote their interests, feature strongly throughout board discussions. Upholding the organisation's core aims feels like a very present and foundational force.

Understanding this connection between strategic and frontline levels has, for me, been the most inspirational part of my journey with Carr Gomm. Appreciating their inter-relatedness has brought home to me the importance not only of those at "the top", but of every individual in contributing to the organisation's success.

As part of the Get on Board programme administered by RSM and Santander, aimed at encouraging young people to gain experience of charity governance, I attended the finance committee, board induction and development days, as well as a formal board meeting, giving me a sense of the wide-ranging and dynamic stewardship required of the board. A highlight was attending the launch of the new strategic plan where the executive team spoke enthusiastically about the next steps for Carr Gomm.

It's been a brilliant journey so far. The more I do with Carr Gomm, the more I want to do! There's still so much to learn about the organisation, its services and people. It's fantastic to have the opportunity to be involved and make a contribution.

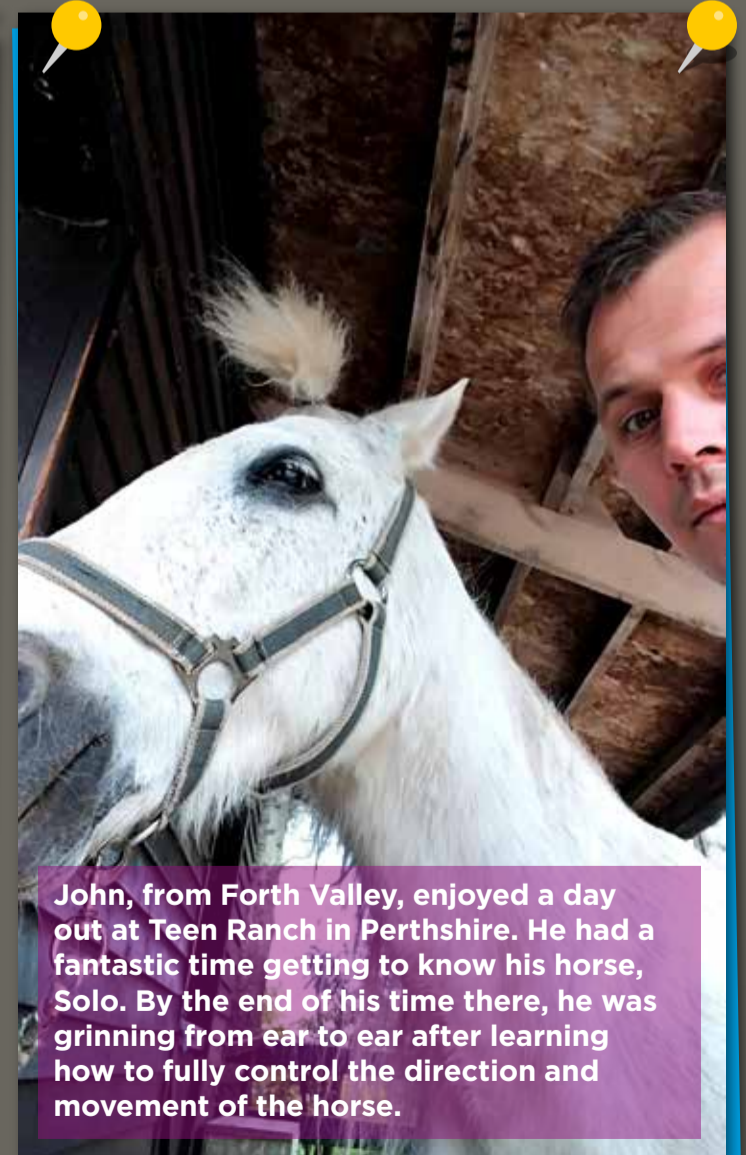
## SSS Awards



Julie, Bronwyn, Naomi and Ellie

We would like to say a huge congratulations to Julie, Bronwyn, Naomi and Ellie, from the Corstorphine team in Edinburgh, for reaching the final of the Scottish Social Services Awards in the Living the Codes category. Thank you for everything you do and for being a committed and dedicated team, determined to go above and beyond to make a difference.

Attracting more than 100 entries nationwide, the awards recognise services, individuals and teams making a positive difference to people's lives.



John, from Forth Valley, enjoyed a day out at Teen Ranch in Perthshire. He had a fantastic time getting to know his horse, Solo. By the end of his time there, he was grinning from ear to ear after learning how to fully control the direction and movement of the horse.

# NICE TO MEET YOU



Stephen

## Tell us more about yourself?

*I'm roughly 52 years old. I live in a small village in Dunbartonshire and was supported by Carr Gomm for nearly two years.*

## What is your experience of Carr Gomm?

*Carr Gomm has been of great help to me over the last couple of years,*

*especially when I had some problems with my landlord. With support from Carr Gomm, I was able to achieve a very positive outcome.. The workers have always been friendly and lateral thinkers, just the sort of people you need on your side in a crisis. My thanks to them.*

## My favourite book is...

*Surface Detail by Iain Banks*

## My favourite film is...

*The Blues Brothers*

## My favourite song is...

*I'll Be Back, The Beatles*

## My favourite food is...

*Homemade Stir Fry*

## In my spare time, I like to...

*look after my dog, play my musical instruments, potter about in my garden*

## I can't live without...

*Pet, my rescue dog*

## If I won the lottery, I would...

*get some of the older buses at Glasgow Vintage Vehicle Trust professionally restored and running again*

## My favourite place in the world is...

*Cardross, Dunbartonshire*

## I've always wanted to...

*learn to drive*

## My party trick is...

*singing La Bamba in English translation, mashing up Monster Mash / Stand By Me, accompanied by my acoustic guitar.*

## In the next 5 - 10 years, I would like to...

*have a permanent job so I can put by enough to have a comfortable retirement and the odd holiday.*

# George Sparrow

## Tell us more about yourself?

*I'm a support practitioner with Carr Gomm's Midlothian Visiting Service.*

## You recently had an idea to improve an aspect of Carr Gomm, tell us more about this...

*My idea stemmed from when I started in Midlothian. I asked where the recycling bin was and the reply was that it didn't exist. This played on my mind for a while as I thought it was absurd that an office space in 2016 didn't have any recycling facilities.*

*When I found out about Carr Gomm Futures, an online portal where employees can make suggestions for change, I thought that this was the perfect opportunity to bring the environmental issue to light and see if there was something that could be done. I understand that different councils have different*

*rules and regulations for recycling but even if our staff are aware of it then we are making a difference.*

## What's the best thing about working with Carr Gomm?

*Knowing that my work is enabling people to live their own lives and that we are making a lasting impact is the best thing. It's something quite special.*

## My favourite book is...

*The Alchemist, Paulo Coelho*

## My favourite film is...

*The Grand Budapest Hotel*

## My favourite song is...

*Potato Head Blues by Louis Armstrong*

## My favourite TV show is...

*Better Call Saul*



George

## In my spare time, I like to...

*go dancing*

## I can't live without...

*dogs*

## My favourite place in the world is...

*Melbourne, Australia*

## I've always wanted to...

*fly a plane*

## My party trick is...

*coin magic*