

CAFE TRACK OPENS IN  
NORTHAMPTON  
PROVIDING  
EMPLOYMENT  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR  
AUTISTIC PEOPLE

OVER 50 ANNUAL  
MENTORING GRANTS  
AWARDED AND TEN  
GRANT APPLICANTS  
HAVE SECURED  
PAID EMPLOYMENT

DISABILITY AND  
DIVERSITY AT DAVOS  
AS THE VALUE 500  
LAUNCH THEIR  
#DIVERSISH  
CAMPAIGN

GOOD LUCK TO  
RACHEL PEARSON &  
TEAM RUNNING THE  
SURREY HALF  
MARATHON TO RAISE  
FUNDS FOR AUTISM  
FORWARD

# AUTISM FORWARD NEWS

Our next event will be a roundtable discussion on 1 May 2019 at Herbert Smith Freehills to discuss ways to improve recruitment and workplaces to benefit autistic people. Email [jane@autismforward.org.uk](mailto:jane@autismforward.org.uk) for details.

## Cafe Track

Cafe Track is a fantastic new venture recently launched by Thomas Cliffe of Track, our mentor partner in Northampton. The attractive cafe in the town's central market square provides employment opportunities for autistic people and an inclusive environment, complete with a sensory and visual guide to enable customers to familiarise themselves with the venue and plan their visit. The cafe is also a meeting point for local groups and clubs. Local businesses are encouraged to join Friends of Track to show their support and work in partnership with Track to help autistic people access employment. The cafe has already succeeded in forging new connections among autistic people and the local community. Every town should have one! For further details email [thomas@track.org.uk](mailto:thomas@track.org.uk) or visit [www.track.org.uk/cafe](http://www.track.org.uk/cafe).



## Over 50 annual mentoring grants awarded

We have now awarded over fifty annual grants for specialist employment-focused mentoring to autistic adults across the country. Fourteen of our clients have secured paid employment across a range of sectors and many others have taken up voluntary roles and participated in training and placements. We are very grateful to all our donors, fundraisers and supporters who have enabled so many autistic people to access the support they need to fulfil their potential. We have also expanded our network of mentor partners to include Autism East Midlands, extending the availability of our support. Details of our current mentor partners and our grant application procedures are on our website [www.autismforward.org.uk](http://www.autismforward.org.uk)

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FORWARD**

## The A Day

The team behind Place with Purpose are putting together the “A Day” - an event led by autistic people and professionals for autistic adults, employers and others interested in improving opportunities for the autistic community which is to be held in London later this year. They would like as many people as possible to complete the following [online survey](#) to help shape the event and maximise the benefit for everyone attending. You can sign up to an email list for further details when completing the survey.

## Diversity, Disability & Davos

For the first time ever, disability’s place within diversity was discussed on the main stage at the World Economic Forum in Davos. The Valuable 500 initiative seized this opportunity to launch the #Diversish campaign, which challenges leaders to include disability in their diversity commitments, launching an ad by AMV BBDO which takes a satirical look at business leaders who claim to champion diversity, then ignore anything to do with disability: [The Diversish 100](#). We very much welcome this initiative and the growth of recruiters such as [Evenbreak](#), [Aspирations](#), [EmployAbility](#) and [The Ability People](#) who specialise in the recruitment of autistic and disabled candidates for firms committed to diversity and disability inclusion.

## Valuing Neurodiversity

The Reasons to be Cheerful podcast [Valuing Neurodiversity](#) featuring Georgia Harper and Penny Andrews in conversation with Ed Miliband is a thought provoking discussion about the growing neurodiversity movement and the strengths and challenges of being autistic and goes on to consider how society, employers and all of us can learn to value neurodiversity. Well worth a listen.

## Fundraising for Autism Forward

Good luck and thanks to Rachel Pearson and the NAS Surrey branch team who are taking part in the Surrey Half Marathon on 10 March 2019 to raise money for Autism Forward and Surrey NAS - you can sponsor them here: [MyDonate](#). If you are interested in holding a fundraising event, donating or supporting us in any other way, please contact [jane@autismforward.org.uk](mailto:jane@autismforward.org.uk), we’d love to hear from you.

MyDonate is due to close in June 2019, so future donations can be made via our [Virgin Money Giving Online Account](#).

## Changing Communities

Congratulations to Anna Farley for winning the Changing Communities Category of the Dimensions Autism Leaders List for her work on projects for the neurodiverse community including Place with Purpose which we were pleased to support.



Congratulations also to Ros Evans, our mentor partner in Surrey, who won the Coaching for a Cause category at the International Coaching Awards for her coaching and mentoring work supporting autistic people into employment.

