

AUTISM FORWARD'S  
SECOND  
RECRUITMENT  
ROUNDTABLE AT  
LATHAM & WATKINS

"CAFE TRACK HACK"  
SPONSORED CYCLE  
FROM LONDON TO  
NORTHAMPTON  
30 JUNE 2019

MORE EMPLOYMENT  
SUCCESS FOR  
AUTISM FORWARD  
GRANT HOLDERS  
ACROSS THE UK

AUTISM FORWARD  
GRANT HOLDER  
LUCY DUNHILL'S  
"LIVING WALLS" FOR  
HULL CITY CENTRE

# AUTISM FORWARD NEWS

## Cafe Track Hack to Northampton

On 30 June 2019, four teams of cyclists - the Tortoises, Hares, Foxes and Hounds - raced from the Lodge Shop in East Finchley to Cafe Track in Northampton to raise funds for Autism Forward. The event was a great success, with Team Tortoise winning the coveted Prix de Tortoise, only to be outdone by four cyclists from Team Hare who cycled all the way back to London covering a remarkable 250km. All teams arrived safely and raised a fantastic amount, enabling us to support many more autistic people into employment this year.



Lunch was kindly hosted at Cafe Track by our mentor partner in Northampton, Thomas Cliffe, who provides work experience in the cafe for autistic students and job seekers, as well as mentoring Autism Forward clients, liaising with local employers and hosting local groups. Thanks to all the cyclists, their sponsors, the support team and all at the Lodge Shop and Cafe Track who made the event such a success. For anyone still wishing to sponsor the riders, the Cafe Track Hack Fundraising Page remains open for a few weeks.

## More employment success for Autism Forward grant holders

We have had great news this week with four more of our grant holders securing paid employment, including a digital apprenticeship with Siemens for one of our Matthew's Hub grant holders, visual merchandiser and IT/Web support roles for two of our Autism Bedfordshire beneficiaries and an IT apprenticeship for one of grant holders mentored by ASGMA in Manchester. Congratulations to all!

Details of our current mentor partners and our grant application procedures can be found on our website [www.autismforward.org.uk](http://www.autismforward.org.uk).

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FORWARD**

## Lucy's Living Walls

Lucy Dunhill, one of Autism Forward's grant holders mentored by Carl Cameron of [Matthew's Hub](#), and architect Chris Jones have tendered stunning plans to Hull County Council for temporary "Living Walls". These vertical gardens are designed not only to improve the appearance of vacant units in Hull City Centre, but also incorporate technology capable of recording live data, such as footfall and air quality, as well as providing interactive letting and other information about the building and its history. In an interview for [Hull Live](#), Lucy explains:

"Being autistic, I experience all the problems that come with buildings and the environment from a sensory point of view, from lighting and sounds to smells and even temperature. That got me thinking about creating a sensory solution to the empty units, rather than just window-dressing them with posters and putting a To Let sign on them."

If approved by the council, the temporary walls containing grasses, herbs and edible salad leaves will stand in front of two or three empty shops as part of an initial trial.

## Recruitment Roundtable at Latham & Watkins

Latham & Watkins hosted Autism Forward's second recruitment roundtable on 3 July 2019. The event brought together senior executives, HR teams and autistic employees and professionals to discuss how organisations can improve opportunities for autistic people by rethinking the way they recruit, assess and support employees to ensure that they are attracting and retaining the widest pool of talent. Representatives from law and accountancy firms, banks, investment banks, insurers, management consultants and other corporates attended.

The discussion focused on concrete steps organisations can take to embrace, support and maximise the talents of autistic people, including changes to recruitment processes and policies and initiatives to encourage applications from autistic candidates. Full notes from the discussion can be found [here](#).

Our next roundtable discussion will be held on 24 September 2019 at Credit Suisse and will focus on practical workplace adjustments for autistic people and the strengths they bring to the team.

Please email [jane@autismforward.org.uk](mailto:jane@autismforward.org.uk) for further details. We would particularly like to hear from autistic employees and job seekers who would like to contribute to the discussions and HR and D&I teams keen to drive change in this area. Please also get in touch if you would like to host a future roundtable event.

## The Lodge Shop

One of the aspects of the Cafe Track Hack that made it so worthwhile was the opportunity for the teams to meet Thomas Cliffe, our mentor in Northampton who runs Cafe Track, and Lynda Walker, head of Oak Lodge School and Carol Field, who runs the Lodge Shop which provides work experience for Oak Lodge pupils.



Lynda, Carol and Thomas gave our supporters a real insight into the benefits of work experience and mentoring support for autistic people when they leave education and are seeking employment.

Both ventures have also made their mark in their local communities, with the Lodge Shop winning a Barnet Youth Enterprise Award and Cafe Track recently being awarded Northampton Small Business of the Year 2019.

