

A man with a beard and mustache, wearing a light blue and white plaid hoodie, is sitting in a black motorized wheelchair. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The wheelchair is parked on a paved path in a park-like setting with green grass and trees in the background. The lighting is bright, suggesting it's daytime.

Action For Kids

ISSUE 36

LEON'S WHEELS OF WISDOM

**“Disability only limits certain things...
focus on your strengths.”**

Leon has known Action For Kids since he was 15. From work experience to wheelchairs, Action For Kids has given him the confidence to find his path.



Graham

Graham Duncan
Chief Executive

Welcome to issue 36 of our magazine.

Thank you for taking the time to read the latest issue of the Action For Kids magazine. As we continue to grow and develop as a charity it has brought with it new opportunities to reach more people and help more lives. From Leon's amazing journey (pages 8 & 9) to our young people progressing in their work placements (page 6) and everything else in between, read the amazing stories you helped to create.

We would like to take this time to thank all of our supporters, whether it is individuals, companies or trusts. Your support has helped transform the lives of many children and young people across the UK.

Happy reading!

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for all our latest news?*



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Action For Kids' newsletter is published to keep you informed about the charity's work and developments. The views expressed are not always those of Action For Kids. If you would like further information about anything you have seen in this newsletter or would like to help us in our work, please contact us at our head office.

THE JACK PETCHEY AWARD



The Jack Petchey Foundation recently gave achievement awards to three young disabled people from AFK. For working hard, helping others, and getting jobs, Charlie (left), Siobhain and Chinaelo received certificates and £200 to spend on something that benefits all the young people at Action For Kids.

Chinaelo said “It felt good to get the award and the prize, I’m looking forward to using it on a trip as we really enjoy them.”

PEDAL POWER

A group with mixed disabilities have been discovering the joys of biking together with inclusive cycling club Pedal Power.

In a local park they used different cycles – hand-powered, two-person trikes, wheelchair clip-ons, and reclined trikes. Disabled young people who can’t normally cycle get to try them weekly in a safe and car-free environment, some of them trying a bike for the first time. Ashley said “I can’t remember the last time I used a bike! I like riding around, it’s fun”.

We could do this thanks to Community Plus London, a joint initiative between the Santander Foundation and the Mayor’s Fund for London, working together to give disabled people the chance to get fit.



THERE'S NO STOPPING US NOW!

Four-year-old Tiffany has had her life transformed with her brand new Carousel Trike. Tiffany has the rare Prader-Willi Syndrome, which is a genetic condition affecting her mobility. The trike assists her posture, helps improve her muscle development and lets her spend leisure time more easily with her family.



***“Thank you to
Action For Kids”***



***“Gareth was so happy that
he sang at the top of his
voice for the whole of his
first ride”.***

22-year-old Gareth has always been a cycling enthusiast. However as a result of his Down's Syndrome he is not able to safely ride a bicycle by himself, as he has poor danger awareness. Action For Kids, together with the ACT Foundation, helped provide a tandem bike for Gareth to use.

With a tandem Gareth can sit at the front and pedal while his brother sits behind and steers in a safe and controlled manner. The tandem plays an important role in Gareth maintaining good health, and he can do this in a fun way while being supported by a family member or socialising with friends.

A TRIP TO THE SEASIDE

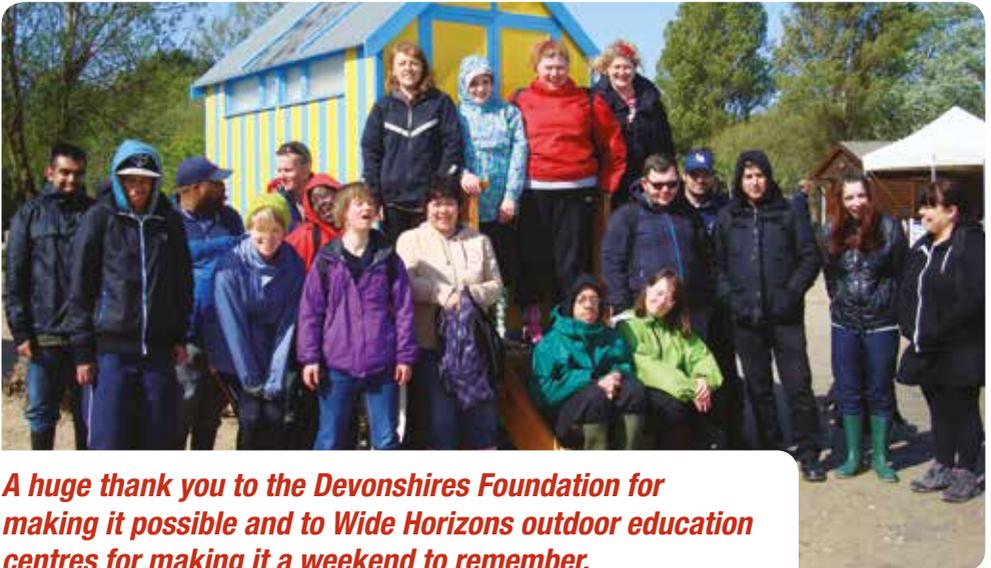
In April Action For Kids took a dozen young people with learning disabilities to Dorset, on a weekend of fun activities to help develop their teamwork skills.



Day one was spent looking at geography and the environment on Studland beach, and solving problems together to find buried treasure!

On the second day everyone explored Corfe Castle and its history, and tried archery at the foot of the castle. The young people heard all about medieval society, and through role play tried to imagine what life was like.

One of the young people, Daniel, told us “I had a really good time, and enjoyed all of it”. Giulia added “I liked going out walking together through the woods, and then the picnic that we had by the beach”. Everyone agreed that they’d love to go on another trip.



A huge thank you to the Devonshires Foundation for making it possible and to Wide Horizons outdoor education centres for making it a weekend to remember.



ACTION FOR KIDS YOUNG PEOPLE GET BUSY WORKING!

Young people from Action For Kids continue to take on new work placements, getting real experience. Young people have placements in local cafés, a hotel, supermarkets, schools, a builder's merchants and a sorting office. Marc (above) went to east London's Hackney City Farm, and here's what his supervisor Sarla (below with Marc) had to say;

Marc has tried out new tasks with enthusiasm and energy. Working under supervision and assisted by support workers, Marc carried out jobs such as handling the small animals, mucking out the donkeys, preparing feeds and waters for the animals, bottle feeding a lamb, collecting eggs, and walking and grooming the goats.

At every session Marc has tried out something new. I have enjoyed having him working on the farm and it has been great to see his confidence grow over such a short time.



Mum Jane says he looks forward to it each week and his support workers continue to say how happy he is there, especially when handling the animals.

Getting into work is the one thing that we keep hearing disabled young people say that they want more than anything else. Action For Kids is proud to be bringing so many young people and employers together.

GREGGS AND ACTION FOR KIDS

At Action For Kids we pride ourselves on forging long-running partnerships with companies. High street bakery chain Greggs have supported the charity since 2000. Greggs has made grants for equipment, and donated goods for events and fundraising. They regularly volunteer at the charity, with the HR team providing interview training to long-term unemployed disabled young people, and a store team got digging to help set up the Action For Kids gardening project.

Greggs and its corporate foundation, the Greggs Foundation, has donated over £50,000 to provide vital and life-changing mobility equipment for children, and have regularly supported us with their time and expertise – Greggs' Chris Jordan (bottom right) even ran the London Marathon in 2005 wearing an eye-catching, oversized model of a wheelchair and raised over £2,500!

We can't thank Greggs enough for their long-term continued support. It means a great deal to everyone here at Action For Kids to work together to make a real difference to young disabled lives across the UK.

If you or your company would like to support AFK then please contact Lyn Prodger on 020 8347 8111 or email partnerships@actionforkids.org



AN INTERVIEW with LEON BROWN

Leon Brown is a self-employed IT technician from Tottenham who loves carnivals, has travelled to America and France, and wants to learn Japanese and go to Japan.

Action For Kids remembers Leon being quite shy when he first came to visit. We encouraged him to widen his horizons, challenge himself, and he developed the self-belief to become more confident. Last year he presented for AFK at a national conference to 300 people!

How did you first meet Action For Kids?

I first came to Action For Kids when I was about 15 from school on work experience. I learnt how to write memos, letters and sort out letterheads; it was really basic stuff back then. But I gained confidence – I learnt how to talk to people who were older than me, and to understand how an office works. Action For Kids has been helping me out ever since.

What's it like now?

I love the staff, it's a nice place. You always meet new people and I love making people happy! I like to share the happiness around – I say give out what you'd like to get back. When you see the newer people, you remember you were there once, and it's good to realise how far you've come.

How's the new powerchair?

I'm very blessed with the wheelchair I was given by Action For Kids and I am using it to the full, I love it. I was stuck indoors without a wheelchair once and it was horrible, like being in prison. When you are limited, that's when depression could set in.

This is an amazing chair. I'd had my old chair for eight years and it was getting to the point where repairs were becoming very expensive. They cost around £3,000 and even then, might not have lasted.

The special features on this chair make it rise up, the back rest reclines, the lights go on – it's pretty much a car, with a dentist's seat on it. I had other chairs which went high but not like this – it is good to see what everyone else's world is like.



"I am so thankful to Action For Kids for giving me continued assistance".

What's the most important thing in your life?

Independence is the number one thing for me, so I am so thankful to Action For Kids for giving me continued assistance to achieve. Disability only limits certain things, as long as you know what your limits are and what your skills are, then you can achieve anything. Focus on your strengths.

I would say to others, focus on you and find out who you are. What do you enjoy doing? Find out what makes you happy and inspires you. Once you understand yourself, even if you are timid, that's when you find inner confidence.

A photograph showing Sally Bishop, a woman with blonde hair wearing a white jacket and a colorful patterned skirt, receiving an OBE award from Prince Charles. Prince Charles is in a dark naval uniform with gold epaulettes and is shaking her hand. Another man in a similar uniform stands to the right. The scene is set on a red carpet in a grand, ornate hall.

SALLY BISHOP – OBE!

In March 2014 Action For Kids founder Sally Bishop was awarded an OBE for services to children and young people. Starting Action For Kids in 1991 in her front room, she helped to run it for over 20 years, changing the lives of thousands of disabled young people over that time.

Invited to Buckingham Palace to receive her award, Sally bumped into opera star Katherine Jenkins and long-term Action For Kids supporter Lynda Bellingham from TV's Loose Women, there to pick up their own OBEs. After a quick briefing on what to expect, Sally was given her gong in the palace's

Great Hall by Prince Charles.

Sally told us about her day. "I absolutely enjoyed every single minute, especially having my family right there to share the moment with me. It really brought home what this all meant not only to me, but to the many lives we've touched and to the wonderful people I've met along this amazing journey".

Action For Kids would like to congratulate Sally on receiving recognition for her years of dedication and hard work, helping disabled children all over the UK and making Action For Kids the charity it is today.

MEET HANNAH D'AGUIAR

our new Education and Training Manager, learn a little about her job and how Action For Kids aims to reach new people.

Hi Hannah,

So what do you do for Action For Kids?

My responsibilities are to create relationships with schools and colleges, introducing new people to Action For Kids and what we do. I also bring young people to do work experience with us.

What has been your best experience working for Action For Kids so far?

I can't think of a single best experience because all of it has been really great! I really like the atmosphere at Action For Kids, I've never experienced anything like it. I'm very happy when inviting guests to visit us as I can show them all the different things that make this charity unique and special. It's so welcoming, it feels like a big family.

What are you most looking forward to in your job?

It's hard to say, but after the great positive start I've had things can only get better. A key part of my job is going to be expanding our work experience and volunteering. The future is looking really good - at the moment I'm sowing the seeds and they're budding. We're just helping things to blossom!



"It's so welcoming, it feels like a big family."



THE HUSKY TRAIL

If you set yourself one goal in life, make sure it's the Husky Trail. Six magical days will see you sledge across the breathtaking, untouched highlands and forests of Lapland as you travel 250km with feisty, furry companions from Norway to Sweden! Leave civilisation behind and finish in the world famous original Ice Hotel at Jukkasjarvi.

Dates are available in April 2015 but filling up fast so get in touch with our Events Team to hear more!



FRIGHT HIKE



We are calling all brave walkers and thrillseekers to put your nerve and stamina to the test with this hair-raising challenge. Trekkers are invited to forests in four spooky locations to tackle a 30km course in one nail-biting, moonlit night! Do you dare find a Fright Hike near you?!

Sherwood Forest, Nottinghamshire and Queen Elizabeth Forest Park in Stirling are luring ghostbusters a-plenty on the 25th October 2014. Epping Forest in London and the Forest of Dean in Gloucestershire are expecting a scarefest on 1st November!

Registration fee £29, fundraising target £140 if you're brave enough!

Visit our Events Pages at actionforkids.org, call us on 020 8347 8111 or email the Events Team events@actionforkids.org

HANNAH'S CYCLE CHALLENGE

Hannah White – sailor, cyclist, runner, and broadcaster, is taking part in the Etape du Tour Cycle Challenge for Action For Kids. We invited Hannah to come to Pedal Power, and meet the disabled young people who were discovering the joy of cycling.

What do you think of Pedal Power?

What I love about AFK is that they're so grassroots - what we're doing here today, getting people with learning disabilities out in the fresh air, in the sunshine, on bicycles.

Just getting outside, learning a new skill, and getting those feelings of independence and accomplishment is so important.

Why are you supporting Action For Kids?

You can see the benefit that it's giving every day. Every pound you can see helping and making a massive difference and putting a smile on the faces of these young people.

They're such wonderfully cheerful, excited, enthusiastic youngsters and it just puts a massive smile on my face.

What challenge are you doing?

For Action For Kids I'm doing this huge cycling challenge, it's 148km on a bicycle in one day. It's up enormous mountains in the Pyrenees on the borders of France and Spain. It's the same route as one stage of the Tour de France. It's going to be one of the biggest cycling things I've ever done.



You can support Hannah at her online Justgiving page:
[justgiving.com/hannahwhite2014](https://www.justgiving.com/hannahwhite2014)

CAVENDISH HOTEL

The Cavendish London is a four-star hotel situated in the heart of London's Mayfair that has been supporting Action For Kids since 2010. They are the only hotel in the Sunday Times 100 Best Small Companies to work for, hold a TripAdvisor certificate of excellence and have been awarded sustainability awards for their high environmental standards. Their employees take part in fundraising events and volunteer regularly at the charity, and thanks to their customers the AFK collection tins in reception fill up extremely quickly.

Disabled young people on our supported employment programme recently took



part in a new training project. They visited the hotel with job coaches for a work shadowing day to learn more about careers in the hospitality industry. They took a tour of all back office and “front of house” departments including the luxurious penthouse suites, heard about the roles of employees there and left with a lovely goody bag each. We can't thank the team there enough for all their valuable support.

SAINSBURY'S MUSWELL HILL



If you're interested in supporting disabled young people, contact Lyn on partnerships@actionforkids.org

The two-year partnership with north London's Sainsbury's Muswell Hill is sadly coming to an end. This year they overshot their target and raised a superb £5,221, after holding sponsored walks, cake sales, raffles, and hosting the Action For Kids Christmas Choir Singers. Catherine from the store said; “It is with a sad heart that Sainsbury's sponsorship has had to come to an end. I have been blessed to receive inspiration from both the wonderful volunteers and amazing children and young people”.

Lyn Prodger said “Everyone at AFK has really enjoyed working with Sainsbury's Muswell Hill. We can't thank the staff and customers enough for all the time and enthusiasm they have put into supporting the charity.”



YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE...



Uplifting - Rewarding - Learn new skills - Make friends - Be supportive

CAN YOU VOLUNTEER FOR A FEW HOURS PER WEEK?

- Accompanying a young person to and from their work placement and coaching them with their work tasks
 - Supporting young people at the charity's office
- Supporting our fundraising and fun charity events throughout the year

For more information on our volunteer programme contact Fareeda Southworth:

Tel: 020 8347 8111

Email: fsouthworth@actionforkids.org

www.actionforkids.org

If you would like to make a donation, please complete this form and return it to:

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 Freepost LON23001
 London
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 Please tick here if you do not wish us to exchange your details with other organisations.

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 Or please debit £ _____ from my Amex/Visa/Mastercard/Delta/Maestro/CAF (delete as appropriate).

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Thank you for supporting the work of Action For Kids

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