

Annual Report 2022-23



Get
autism
working

CareTrade Charitable Trust Registered Charity 1127890

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Introduction



This was another fantastic year for The Autism Project work experience placements. We have worked with **more employers than ever before** and have increased the variety of placements we offer our learners.

Our band **UnTapped** continued to entertain us this year performing at several of our events as well as at Club Soda's Soda Beat event in February. **[Click here](#)** to watch their performance.



We held our first ever **TAP's Got Talent** show and saw just how talented our learners really are. Learners showcased a diverse range of talents including **stand up comedy, drawing, acting, singing, beatboxing and dancing**.

Congratulations to our winner Keron!


Staff and friends of CareTrade ran the **Hackney Half Marathon** in May to raise money to further support the autistic adults that access CareTrade's projects, support or services .

Mark, Sam, Jack, Marlee and Tim did a fantastic job and raised **£1,297.00 + gift aid**.

Well done team!



Placements

Guy's and St Thomas' 
NHS Foundation Trust


Whittington Health
NHS Trust

As always, **thanks to the NHS and all our employers** for their continued support in hosting and supporting our learners. With your assistance, our learners have learnt and discovered new skills which will enhance and support their continued work and personal development. We worked with **39 employers** this year and have established a new working relationships with some exciting new employers.

We have been fortunate enough to have learners in several departments at **H10 Hotel, Waterloo.**

H10 london waterloo

★★★★

We have continued our relationships with community-based projects and employers such as **Peckham Pelican, Canvas and Cream, Horniman Museum and Gardens, Age UK and Table 13.**

We are also excited to have been able to secure placements with **Abellio Bus Company!** We have two learners across two South London depots and are hoping to further this relationship and offer our learners more placements within the world of public transport, which is a special interest for many of them.

"I really liked the Ipsos Insight Day - I would like to work there".

This year learners have had amazing opportunities to visit different organisations for 'a day in the life' experiences. These 'insight days' have allowed learners to learn more about roles that would be of interest to them. Learners visited **IPSOS, DNEG animation studios and Old Kent Road Fire Station** where they toured the building and learnt about the different roles within the organisations.


DNEG
ANIMATION



Tutorial (Personal & Social Development)

Tutorial

The aim of our Tutorial sessions are to give learners the **knowledge and skills to lead healthy, independent, and engaged lives**. The sessions have been designed to explore the following key themes: **health, wellbeing, safety, relationships and engagement with the wider world**.

The sessions were delivered with an emphasis on developing social skills via group discussions and encouraging learners to share their own views and real-life examples; learners also had the opportunity to suggest lesson topics they believed would be beneficial.

Topics covered throughout the academic year have included:

Safeguarding, autism and neurodiversity, mental health, personal safety/online safety, British values, prevent, gangs, grooming, sex and relationships, healthy lifestyles, First Aid, money management, and payslips.

Highlights:

- Learners participated in various **First Aid** activities and one of the learners put it into practice by helping with a real life emergency out in the public.
- Learners participated in a **confidence workshop** delivered by a creative encouragement expert.
- Learners took part in a **gang prevention workshop** delivered by **St. Giles** where they discussed safety when out in the community.
- Learners had a workshop on how **drugs and alcohol** impacts mental health delivered by **The Nest Southwark**.
- Some learners attended **LSBU Active Gym** on a few occasions. They were shown how to use some of the equipment and participated in a gym session.



Functional Skills

English

Learners made excellent progress in their **communication skills** this year. They engaged in group discussions every week which allowed them to **express their opinions, share ideas and consider different perspectives**.

Learners engaged in reading a variety of texts which exposed them to a wide range of vocabulary, sentence structures and overall improved their comprehension skills. Their favourite thing to read this year was **'Horrible Histories'**! The combination of history and humour as well as funny illustrations captured learners' attention and kept them engaged throughout the reading.

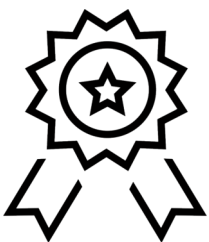
Learners also had the opportunity to write their own articles on topics of their choice and they really enjoyed the experience. This project allowed learners to **express their ideas in a creative and meaningful way** as well as improve their writing skills. Some of the topics our learners chose to write about were:

- *Top three sports*
- *History of Hip Hop*
- *A very honest review of popular restaurants*
- *Favourite movies*
- *A look back at the Coronation weekend*
- *Arsenal's history and their most successful season*
- *Why are electric vehicles good for the environment*
- *A truly fascinating story about Sonic and Crash - Chaos from the Woompa Island*



Outcomes

We are very proud of all our learners who worked hard and demonstrated good progress in English. We are thrilled to share our success stories this year:



- ◆ Five learners passed their Functional skills English Entry level assessments
- ◆ One learner achieved L1 Functional skills English qualification
- ◆ Two learners achieved L2 Functional skills English qualification



Functional Skills

Maths

In Maths, the focus this year was on **problem-solving through challenging word problems** as well as developing **essential money and time management skills**.

Additionally, learners worked hard to prepare for their Maths exams and assessments.

Applying **mathematical concepts to practical situations** can be challenging for many of our learners and so this is something they will continue to work on throughout the next year.

Learners engaged in various activities that highlight the **importance of Maths in everyday life**.



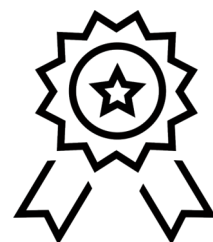
Activities included:

- *Online shopping (estimating prices, working out totals and percentage/ fractions discounts)*
- *Ordering food in a restaurants using authentic menus and splitting bills with class mates*

Outcomes

We are very proud of all our learners who worked hard and demonstrated good progress in Maths. We are thrilled to share our success stories this year:

- Five learners passed their Functional skills Maths Entry level assessments
- One learner passed their Level 1 Maths exam
- Two learners passed their Level 2 Maths exams



We are very proud to say that our learners had an overall achievement rate of **94%** for Functional Skills this year.

Congratulations to all and we look forward to next year's exciting learning opportunities and achievements!

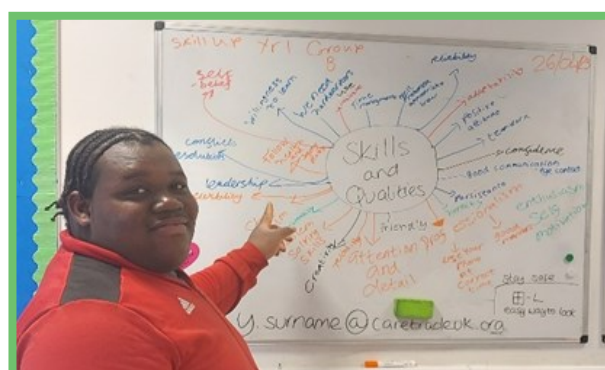


SkillUp (Skills for work)

In SkillUp, Group 1 learners worked together to design and manufacture votives and Christmas pompoms. These items were sold during a 2 day pop up event at **Made in Greenwich**. TAP sold **£508 worth of products** in December 2022 and were the top sellers! All profits went back into the learners craft fund to enable further opportunities and experiences.



We had a visit from Mel Tye who is an independent **Level 6 Careers Advisor**. Mel had 1-2-1's with all learners. Mel talked through learners **future career ideas and made them**



individual action plans to guide them on the steps required to reach their job goals.

Learners that had been identified as benefitting from having a Video CV to support them to be able to talk about their work placements and their skills. A QR code was created for each Video CV to allow them to be shared easily!

Learners in this group also created a **picture portfolio** of their work experience placements and the skills they developed to support them in explaining about their time on TAP to future



Wellbeing

This year our wellbeing programme consisted of various workshops and events that learners could get involved in.

Learners celebrated Hello Yellow Day (Mental Health Awareness), Movember (Men's Mental Health), Neurodiversity Week, Autism Acceptance Week and Pride Month by taking part in various activities including an exercise challenge, wear yellow for mental health day and talking about mental health. They also participated in quizzes and awareness walks (3k and 5k).

Highlights:

- ◆ Our wellbeing lead organised visits to learners on placement and facilitated a **wellbeing lunch hour** to discuss healthy eating, confidence and self-esteem building.
- ◆ Our wellbeing lead provided **1:1 support** to the learners who needed it.
- ◆ 40% of learners participated in the TAP's Got Talent event in December 2022.
- ◆ 20% of learners participated in newly set up and optional **Art & Mindfulness** sessions led by our wellbeing lead.
- ◆ 20% of learners participated in organising **mental health event** and winning a grant from the Proud To Be Me organisation. The mental health event took place in July 2023 and was very successful.
- ◆ 20% of learners participated in football sessions led by LSBU Active.
- ◆ Our wellbeing lead won a grant for a **wellbeing room for learners to relax**.
- ◆ Our **Mental Health Ambassador Keron** supported our wellbeing lead in preparing wellbeing surveys and organising a mental health event.



"I liked doing some chemistry art and making toys out of clay. Art and mindfulness sessions made me happy and alive."

"Mental health day was good. I enjoyed it because I loved making the mug and doing yoga. It was my first-time doing yoga ever".

**The
Autism
Project**

Independence

This year in Travel Independence we had a variety of **sessions including small group, 2:1 and 1:1**. Learners were able to plan journeys using apps and maps, identifying, and selecting the best option to get to a destination (i.e. bus, train, tube, walking).



We had an **interactive bus travel training session** developed by Southwark Highways, Transport The Metropolitan Police Safer Transport Team, Arriva, TfL Travel Mentoring Service and Parent Partnership. This session allowed learners to witness safety and problem solving scenarios in a safe, controlled environment.

We also had a special visit from **London Metropolitan Police** to have a talk with our learners about road and personal safety.

It been a busy year and thanks to all of our guest speakers and contributors for the fantastic opportunities you have given our learners!

Highlights:

- ♦ All learners can now use Google Maps to plan a journey.
- ♦ We are very proud that one of our learner's is now an **independent traveller** (tube, overground, bus and walking to destinations)
- ♦ Two of our learners are now **travelling independently on trains**.
- ♦ This year we delivered over **75 travel training sessions**
- ♦ All learners now have increased safety awareness
- ♦ We attended a **BMX session** to encourage learners to be more confident in riding a bike.
- ♦ Some learner's (40%) had a chance to use the Uber **river boat** for the first time after suggesting they would like to try it.
- ♦ 100% of learners said they **enjoyed travel training** this year.



BIG news!

We have recently heard that, after lots of hard work, we now have a **TfL STARs Travel for Life Gold Accreditation**.



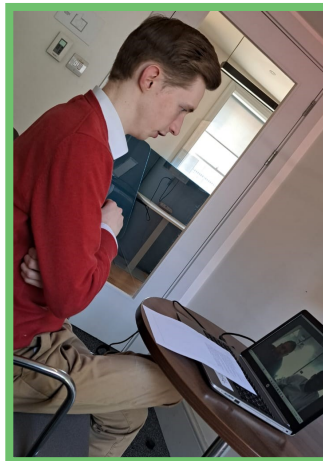
Careers

Careers sessions at The Autism Project (TAP) this year have supported our group 2 learners to pursue their chosen career path and to allow them to make informed decisions about the next step for them following completion of TAP.

Group 2 learners have covered a variety of topics including learning about the options available in their **local labour market** and **sectors of work**, the **skills, qualities**, and **qualifications** needed to transition into a chosen path and **the application process** for jobs or training programmes of their choice. Learners made their own **CVs**, and **cover letters** and worked on developing their **interview skills**. Learners also looked at understanding the **key terminology on job adverts**, how to **job search**, as well as getting to grips with **reasonable adjustments** and how to ask for the right support for

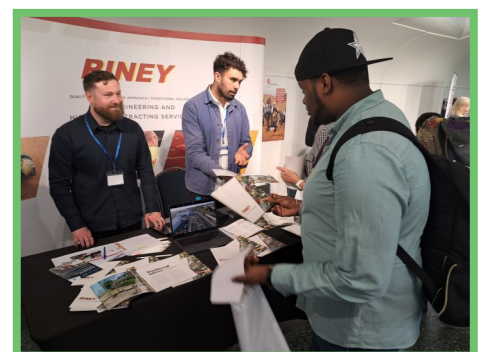
Highlights :

All learners had 2 **mock interviews**. These were with **Guy's & St. Thomas' Hospital** and **Barclays Bank**. Learners worked together in class to prepare for these by practicing greeting one another and answering questions, including how to answer using the **S.T.A.R.** method



Important careers calendar events were celebrated including **National Apprenticeship Week**, **National Careers Week**, **Neurodiversity Week** and **World Autism Acceptance Week**. Learners took part in different activities to celebrate these weeks related to finding work including **a talk from an autistic employee in work** and his journey to finding employment, **a talk from an autistic peer in an apprenticeship programme**, and a workshop on future support available to neurodiverse employees through the **'Access to Work'** scheme.

Learners also attended several **jobs and careers fairs** to talk to employers and training providers.



Outcomes

We are also **very proud** to announce that **89% of TAP graduates have progressed into work or further education**, 56% of those gained paid employment.

56% of TAP graduates this year gained paid employment this was **100% of those that had paid employment as their primary goal** (5 leavers).

The remaining learners chose to move onto other training courses/college programmes.

Leavers this year have moved into a variety of different industries. Of the 5 who found paid work; two have moved into hospital services (medical records, portering), one into housekeeping and two into catering roles. Of those who went onto training programmes/further education, two moved into café training programmes, one into a mail out/warehouse training programme, one into a horticulture training programme and one on to a hospitality course.

All leavers will now be invited to join our **alumni** which includes being invited to regular socials and events. Some will also receive continued job coaching support from CareTrade at their new workplace through the **Access to Work** scheme.

2023 - TAP graduate destinations

INTO PAID EMPLOYMENT

- 2 Full Time
- 2 Part Time
- 1 Bank Work

5

INTO EDUCATION

- 2 Training Programmes
- 1 Further Education

3

1

1 continuing job/course searching

9 leavers in total



A Message from our CEO, Karen Edwards

At CareTrade we believe with a passion that autistic adults have the right to work, to a career and to lead the lives they want.

The Autism Project (TAP), one of seven CareTrade programmes, remains our flagship. Started in 2010 in partnership with GSTT (Guys & St Thomas' NHS Foundation) it was the first autism specific supported internship in the UK.

Back then TAP supported 8 young people all at GSTT and today it supports 30 across many employers. We are proud to say that we are still working with GSTT and at the Whittington Hospitals. We are now a specialised two-year supported employment programme. TAP became a college in 2018 and last year (Nov 2021) received a rating of Good from Ofsted.



The results TAP achieve have been consistent over the years and this is tribute to the ethos, values and dedication of our staff and the determination of those we help support.

Consistently between 50 and 60% of TAP leavers move into paid employment. This is more than double the ONS (Office of National Statistics) figure of just 22%.

The Autism Project proves that with the right support, autistic young people want to work and that the national statistic can be changed.



A message from Head of Education, Mark Finch

Another successful year for The Autism Project with an increase in extra curricular activities.

This year, 56% of our leavers have moved into paid employment and 33% into Further Education or training. We have one learner who continues to seek work through our Job Club. Job Club is open to all our alumni TAP learners to help them move successfully into employment.

For those moving into work, CareTrade can help with reasonable adjustments and continue to provide support in the workplace through Access to Work, as needed, helping to ensure employment is successful and sustainable.

We provide person-centred support, building on individual strengths, increasing skills and confidence and work experience to enable young people to decide on the direction for their next steps and supporting them to take that step.



If you are considering what to do next, please give us a call, come to an information session or open day ...we would be happy to answer any questions you may have.



www.care-trade.org/the-autism-project/



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