



## The Newshounds

The Newshounds have already created and published four Newspapers, and one Roxburgh Review Magazine. They have now been offered a unique opportunity as a News Team to create, compile, print, and distribute the “Burfoot is Brilliant” Flyer. This will be produced bi-monthly for the local Burnfoot Community.

For many years now Police Scotland in Hawick have been wanting to create a flyer that would serve the local community of Burnfoot. They wanted to achieve this primarily to inform residents, and ultimately to connect the Burnfoot Community in all matters concerning them. This is now the sole responsibility of the Roxburgh Newshounds.

The Hounds have achieved their first “Burnfoot is Brilliant” flyer in December 2025 and are now underway with the completion of the second edition. The flyer will be distributed at the end of February 2026.

The Hounds are now writing concise reports with support. They research their topics, gather accurate information and collate material from different agencies in Burnfoot.





## Notebooks and Pens at the Ready

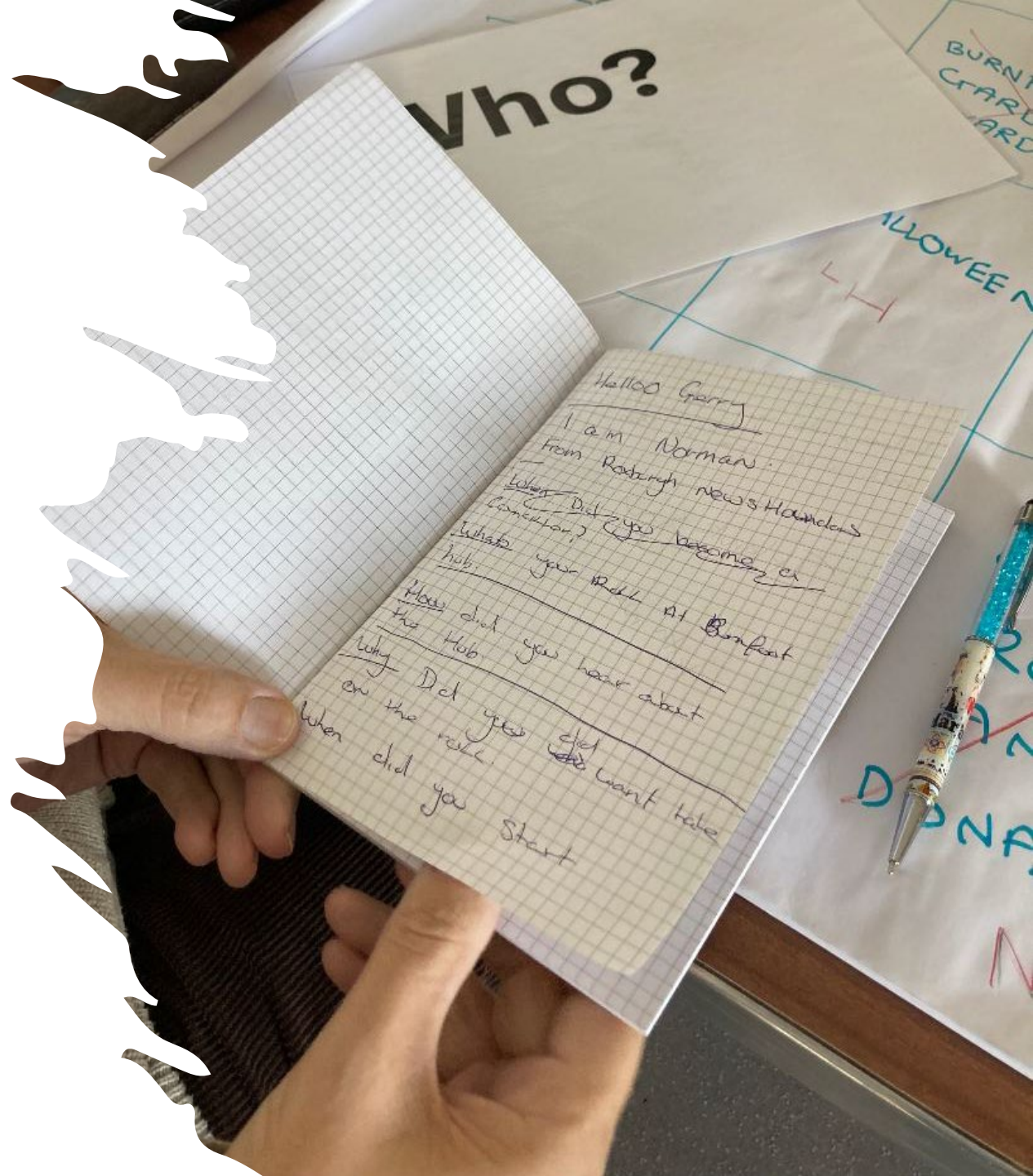
The Hounds carry their notebooks and write up tasks during sessions. They update specific jobs for the week ahead. On a larger flip chart, they are reminded of the jobs they still require to complete long-term. The Hounds are very professional and with support research, collect, and collate relevant information from all active groups in Burnfoot. Other relevant Information is also downloaded from the Dictaphone from live interviews carried out during group time.

The Hounds have grown in confidence and self belief. The motto of the group is,

“Never say no, never say I cannot do. All the power is within you. You can do anything”

The Hounds interviewing skills have improved and relevant information is shared with each member. The Hounds work occasionally in pairs supporting each other with finalized reports.

The Hounds gather important Information about up-and-coming events and local groups that run in the community. This information is added to the flyer as well as interviews with Burnfoot Staff, volunteers, staff and residents that run sessions for the benefit of the community.





### Spotlight on the Hounds

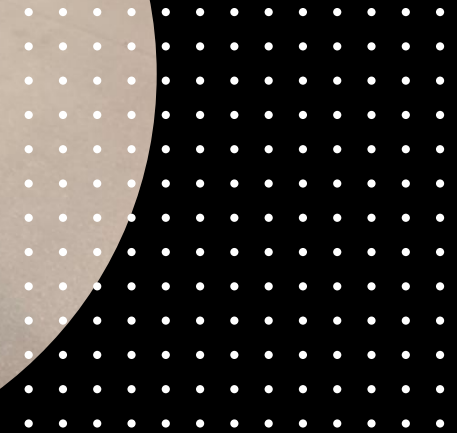
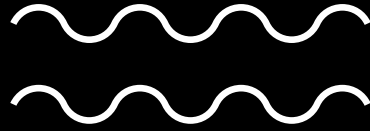
**Alison** was very unsure of herself and lacked confidence when she first started the group. Alison became anxious when asked to speak out. With support from Graham, staff and volunteers Alison has grown in confidence and now is very relaxed in everyone's company. Alison is now confident with her writing skills and finds it much easier to voice her opinion and is not scared to ask questions when she requires clarification. Other more confident Newshounds support Alison and are always on hand to congratulate her on her work and interviewing skills.



## Spotlight on the Hounds

**Norman** attends the group with carer **Carolyn** and together they make a great team. Carolyn is very much tuned into the group and is a member of the Newshounds WhatsApp Group also. Carolyn comes along with Norman to most of the sessions and supports Norman with tasks. Norman really enjoys the social aspect of the group and takes his responsibilities very seriously. Norman is growing in strength with interviewing skills and has only minimal support to write up questions.

**Louise** has been a member of the group for two years now and has become much more confident. When Louise started, she was very adamant she wouldn't be able to carry out skills that involved writing, interviewing or being assertive when asking people questions. Louise is now very assertive, thorough with her work and requires very minimal support when interviewing and using a digital Dictaphone. Louise can post her reports onto the WhatsApp platform. Louise is very confident in her abilities and is enjoying taking on several tasks for the new flyer, researching information and bringing her articles to life. Louise feels less anxious and has self belief.





### Spotlight on the Hounds

Mary Ann has added value to the group and only attended Newshounds sessions a year ago. Mary Ann has an incredible memory and is extremely tuned into local events in her community. Mary Ann is now able to focus on subject matter relevant to the local Burnfoot Community. Mary Ann independently resources the right information and shares this on the WhatsApp Group. Mary Ann is given certain tasks and like other Hounds she takes her role as a Newshound very seriously. Mary Ann asks for support with her writing and is much more confident in her abilities. Mary Ann is very knowledgeable with local transport; local knowledge comes in handy when reiterating information relevant for her report writing and subject matter for the flyer.

James is new to the group. James is extremely knowledgeable about local farming, politics, and other interesting information relating to farming and sustainability. James was socially isolated before attending the Newshounds Group as he always worked on his father's farm and had no opportunity to have any meaningful social connections. The Newshounds have provided the perfect, safe and social setting for James to grow in confidence, learn journalism and media skills and connect with friends. James is extremely good at IT Skills and has been a great asset to the team. James is a whiz with the new digital Dictaphone and can pop his interviews and reports from the device to the WhatsApp Group. James is now a fully fledged member and Newshound and has three tasks that he is ultimately responsible for the second edition of Burnfoot is Brilliant Flyer.

## Spotlight on the Hounds

**Sian** is the most experienced Hound and brought with her a skill and love for creative writing . Her skillset includes collating accurate information from interviews, researching subject matter meticulously and then relaying the information about local events into captivating reports. They are always factual, and accurate.

She is now able to effectively gather and analyze information and write up reports for the flyer that go directly to the public.

Graham encourages her to build on her confidence. A WhatsApp Chat provides a platform where Sian`s work can be posted.

Sian is a very popular member and is very giving with her time and is very patient with others. Sian always finds the time to praise her fellow Hounds.



## Graham, The Reporter and Inspirational Leader

Our Tutor Graham is extremely versatile. Not only does he run our “Newshounds” sessions but writes scripts for the YPS Group. The YPS Group have had many productive years performing Panto’s and Summer Shows. When not dressing up and taking part in our Youth Productions, Graham is a Newspaper Reporter by day with the Hawick Paper. This qualifies him to take the lead and run our Newshounds Group with Interest Link Roxburgh.

Graham supports our members to learn more about the world of journalism, including investigative journalism, interviewing techniques, writing, editing and report writing.

As the group progresses, the quality of work progresses, and the Hounds are challenged more. Graham is an advocate of technological tools when required if they don’t interfere with the basic skills of report writing and interviewing techniques. The purchase of I Pads from relevant Funders will enable the Hounds to become more accurate with their report writing and have access to spell checkers, tools that correct grammatical errors, and improve sentence's structure.

Collaboration tools such as platforms like Google, and Co Pilot allow our members to edit documents and reports more efficiently. Technology always has a place especially as our members are constantly challenged in many areas such as processing of information, writing and negotiating grammar.



Journalism requires a combination of skills for example being good at research, proficient on digital platforms and much more. The Hounds are learning all the time, and their goal is to effectively engage the reader with their written reports, accurate articles, interesting interviews and accurately shared information. Graham has taught the Hounds the importance of sticking to the 5-word principles, Where, When, How, Why, and What when interviewing and writing a story.

Graham, staff and volunteers support our members by offering unique opportunities to put theory into practice. The “Burnfoot Flyer” has allowed our members to resonate and engage with the Burnfoot Community.

The Hounds have learnt to work effectively together as a team, leading to higher quality content. The group will have the opportunity to attend a question-and-answer session with third sector Employability Lead, Ryan Martin from Community Borders Action in March.

The Hounds will also have a training session on how to effectively utilize and add advertising space to flyers and gain insight into “Travel Matters Magazine” a travel focused global magazine that supports local economies which have a beneficial contribution on host communities.

It is hoped that by introducing the Hounds to the outside world of journalism, this will inspire them and give them the confidence to apply for work experience, work and voluntary placements and perhaps employment opportunities.



## Support Staff

Carolyn is a member of staff from Streets Ahead, a local Outreach Service. Carolyn is crucial as she supports member Norman to attend the Newshounds Group. Carolyn is part of the team and supports Norman to fulfil his responsibilities as a Newshound. It is important that this support is consistent and regular. Carolyn ensures that her shifts as much as she can fall on Newshound Thursday.

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Carolyn has been instrumental in supporting Norman to become the best Newshound he can be. This includes allowing Norman the freedom to set questions that are suitable for people in the community that are responsible for the delivery of sessions, events, classes and important informative funded sessions that support educate, advise and provide unique opportunities for the local community of Burnfoot.

Norman with support enjoys interviewing staff, and Board Members. It is important that the local community know more about local staff on the ground, committee and board members.





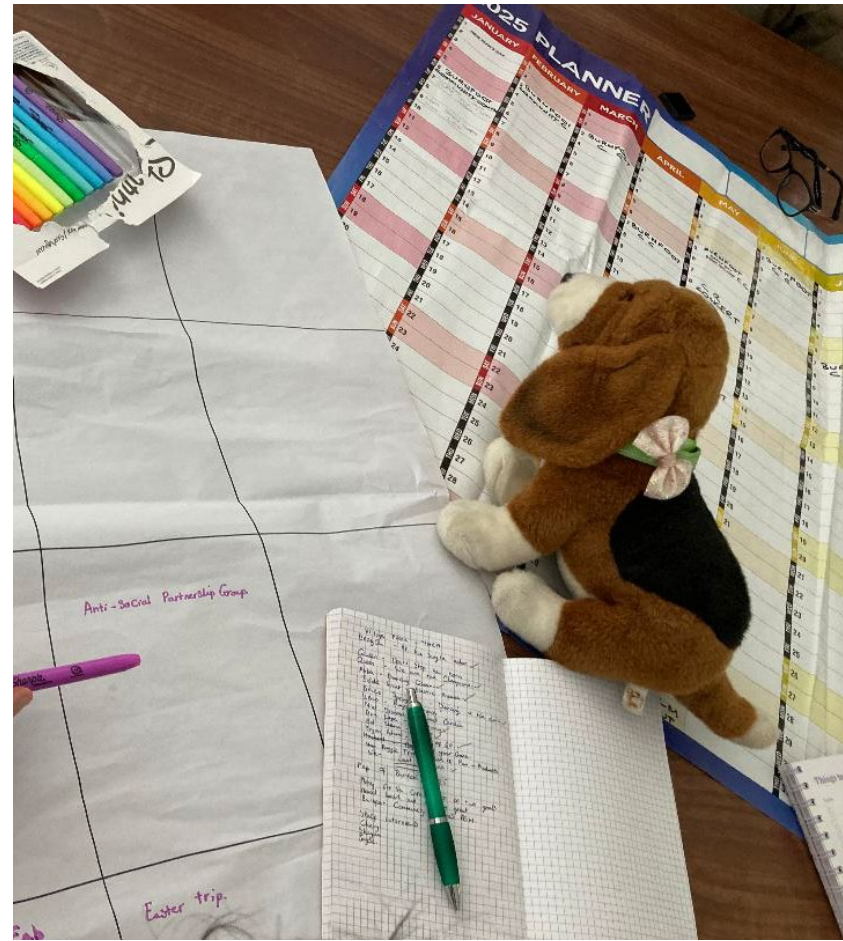
## “NEWS”

“News” has been with the Newshounds from the beginning and not only serves as a visual element for our group, but his presence provides an opportunity for our members to talk about him and his adventures. He is a firm favourite with parents, carers, pets and family members. On his return from excursions the members thoroughly enjoy engaging with each other about what he has been up to and sharing photos.

“News” is everyone’s favourite furry friend and provides entertainment for our group members. He has been staying overnight locally on many occasions and even been as far as Fife where Sian resides with her elderly parents.

“News” is loyal and connects with our members on many different levels. He is part of the brand and everyone who meets him, falls in love with him.

He sits proudly on the desk during sessions and inspires and keeps everyone motivated. He connects the Hounds and watches over them. He is a popular member of the group, well fed, and a very well looked after hound.





## Marvelous Mel

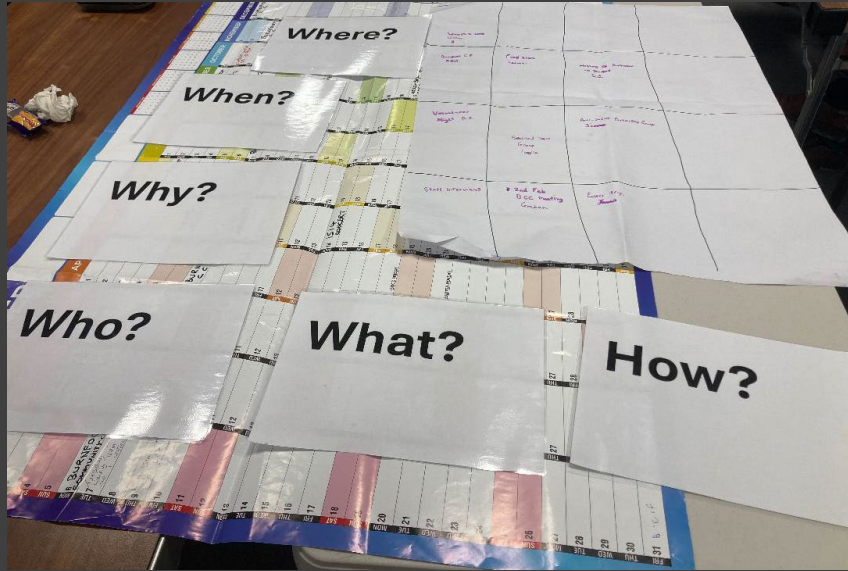
Mel is our amazing volunteer and always supports the group members to achieve things that they thought they would never be able to do. Mel embodies key qualities that contribute to the success of the group. Mel not only commits to our hounds but engages with each group member as they work towards common goals .

Mel is a great listener and always allows and supports our members to be as independent as they can be. Mel adapts to new challenges and supports members that require more time to meet objectives.

Mel ensures we all have coffee and biscuits to keep us going especially when tasks are challenging and the group have deadlines to adhere to. Mel has the right personality and has empathy. Mel has a great “ lets get it done” attitude, is reliable and always supports our members to enhance their skills.

Without volunteers like Mel the group would not function effectively. Some of our members struggle to work on their own. Mel supports our members to keep going and encourages them to believe in themselves. Mel is responsible with other staff and carers to motivate, encourage and have confidence in our Newshounds abilities, and supporting their potential for success.





## Burnfoot is Brilliant Flyer

The Hounds created their first flyer in December 2025 and was extremely successful. 200 copies were printed and picked up personally by local people. The Hounds are currently working towards completing the second flyer in February 2026.

On a bimonthly basis the flyer will be available for all residents in the Burnfoot community. The flyer is supported by board and committee members, staff at Burnfoot hub, local police, and councillors.

The flyer is an effective way to support engagement and connection with the local community. It serves as a tangible and direct way to communicate important information, such as events, new businesses and community initiatives. It is a cost-effective way to reach a community.

The flyer is printed locally, and funders are sourced from the Burnfoot Committee to cover printing costs.



# £38k funding for new cafe

By HILARY MACTAGGART  
news@thehawickpaper.co.uk

A £38,000 Scottish Government grant is set to pave the way for a new cafe at the Burnfoot Community Hub.

Funding has been secured through her great efforts.



Burnfoot Community Hub  
"It will be a community..."

this space for, and we have piloted the lunch club and warm spaces.

"It shows there is certainly a need for it."

He went on: "The community is looking for something to be happy in here every single day."

"With this funding we can start to build three..."

...and as well as... the cafe and the Tuesday... she can be found helping out at... wherever she is needed.

Lisa's involvement with the Hub began as a child orientated thing." She wanted to get involved in something positive and she has seen the Hub blossom since joining. I asked Lisa what the best part of her volunteering role is. "This community is the best part of volunteering," she told me, "seeing people come in and making friends."

I also asked Lisa about the future of the Hub and what she would like to see. The cafe currently only opens a few days a week. Lisa said she would like to see the cafe open more when it is open, the cafe...



## Sharing Special Time Together.

Sharing lunch with each other at a one table is a powerful way to create and strengthen bonds. It allows special time for connection, conversation and enjoyment of both food and company.

The members bring along their lunch and also utilize the “Warm Space” downstairs at the Burnfoot Hub. Members have access for a small donation to a bowl of homemade soup. As well as enjoying a tasty hearty meal the Hounds are supporting a wonderful campaign.

This campaign is part of what is good about what is happening in the local community of Burnfoot. It addresses the cost-of-living crisis and turns poverty and isolation into warmth and local connection.

The Hounds are now well-known faces in the Hub and local community, They are sharing time with locals as they freely move about the building, attend meetings , interview staff and board members and attend committee and council meetings.



Police Scotland -

“ I just wanted to say thanks very much for sending through a copy of the “Burnfoot is Brilliant” Newsletter from last month. You’ve done a great job - its fantastic to finally have something specific for the Burnfoot Community”.

“ I have grown in confidence and have made more good friends.”  
Newshound Louise

“Your Burnfoot Newsletter is brilliant. I am on the Anti Poverty Reference group and I was highlighting your great work to other elected members. Gillian Jardine (SBC) was there (online) and sent a copy to the group. Jim (husband) was reading it and agreed that it is outstanding and suggested adding letters as well. I thought that was a great idea and said I would pass it on. Have a great Christmas and again well done”

Hawick Provost.

“Being involved with the Newshounds is a great privilege. The group members are so respectful and supportive of each other. It is fantastic to see how their confidence is growing as they achieve goals. Thank you, Newshounds,”  
Mel, Volunteer

“Since joining the group, I have found that my confidence has grown. I really enjoy meeting new people and enjoy new challenges.”

Member Alison

“Like Louise says, Newshounds has allowed me to make good friends. I also get to use my writing skills in a way that is helping others and appreciated by people through out the Hub Newsletter.”

Member Sian

“So pleased Mary Anne now is mixing with peers and making new friends and new interests. She is enjoying every aspect of her time at the hub”.

Mary Ann member`s  
Gran

“The members of the Newshounds group have grown in confidence as the project has now evolved into a bi-monthly newsletter serving the people of Burnfoot. Each member has been supported to progress at their pace but are collectively contributing to the newsletter through their constantly improving interviewing skills. The group members have also developed a strong bond and are now regularly meeting up socially to work on projects or to simply catch-up”.

Graham Ford, Tutor

“What a joy to watch all the Hounds grow in confidence. Their writing, reporting and interview skills have improved immensely. What a lovely group of people who really are so kind and giving to each other”.

Val, Branch Coordinator

“My sister really enjoys Newshounds and the Caledonian groups. She really enjoys the sense of achievement and purpose she gets from the Newshounds group. It has helped her to socialise more, build friendships and develop her confidence. It has had such a positive influence on her life- it’s the highlight of her week.”

**Rhian, Sian`s sister**

“James is a 28-year-old man who is partially sighted. He comes across as upbeat and very talkative. However, he lives in an isolated rural situation and is lonely. As Newshounds approaches his mood lifts and he looks forward to his session which he attends twice a month. He meets other young people and because he is being taught professionally to interview, he is learning to have a two-way conversation. James is able to access the group between sessions on WhatsApp. I feel Newshounds has been a totally positive experience”.

**Vada, James`s Mum**

“Norman`s confidence has grown since he started attending the News Group. He has made lifelong friends. As his support worker see such a change in him, he really enjoys interviewing people. I personally enjoy going to the Newshounds. I enjoy seeing the change and confidence that has grown in all the group members”.

**Carolyn, Norman`s Support Worker**

“I`m happy and please to have joined the group and met some really nice people”.

**Mary Ann, member**

## The Dream Team

The News Hounds have achieved differences to their lives. This has involved recognizing and embracing unique qualities and experiences that everyone has brought to the table. Together they have become creative and strong. They are more confident and have a strong sense of connection.

Building a team wasn't simple, initially it required planning, nurturing relationships and offering unique opportunities for our members to grow. When members trust each other they not only feel safe to share ideas, but feel free to voice opinions without the fear of being judged. Any opinions contributed have always been important, productive, positive and accepted there are never right and wrong answers we have created an atmosphere at Interest Link that have supported our members to thrive.

We now have members who are truly passionate about what they are achieving. They are now working towards goals together as a team.

We have created a safe and nurturing environment where the team have faced challenges, whether individually or as a team. They have faced them together..





## Sharing Ideas

It is also important for tutors, staff, volunteers, and sessional workers to share experiences.

Graham got to meet up with tutor Liz from our Life Skills Group to share ideas.



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