

# News from the Jersey Employment Trust

## ‘What’s important is being seen – the support here is amazing’

By JET fundraising and relationships manager **Caroline Spencer**

FOR some, Acorn is their workplace, a safe space to learn and thrive, for Islanders who have a disability or long-term health condition. For others, it is a stepping stone back to open employment. This is the case for Cameron.

Eighteen months ago Cameron Honey was working as a software developer. However, due to his mental health and family issues, he had to leave.

“For the next few months, I became quite inward-looking. I didn’t go out much,” he said. “I was almost scared of going out and interacting with anyone. I wanted to get back into the swing of having a job, but I felt that moving into a full-time role would probably go the same way.”

Working with a JET employment co-ordinator, he was introduced to Acorn, and he started with voluntary sessions on the allotment.

“The allotment caught my eye as a way to get back into a routine and interact with more people,” he said. “I have always enjoyed the horticulture side of things. Since the age of five I helped my parents and grandparents in the garden.”

Over the course of a year, Cameron has had work experience and skills development in the metal recycling workshop and in Acorn Reuse, helping with donations and pricing. Most recently, he has been one of the paid staff in the plant nursery getting everything ready for the busy bedding season.

Cameron was diagnosed with high functioning autism at the age of 11, and with anxiety and depression some years later. He successfully got a place to study physics at the University of York, but it didn’t work out and he left after a year.

“Ever since the age of ten I knew what I wanted to do and my dream job was to become a nuclear physicist. But it didn’t go to plan,” he said. “Going to university was such a huge change in environment, and I had a bad experience which resulted in a major dip in my mental health.”

“Mental health had always been a struggle, but I had been largely able to keep on top of it,” he said.



■ Cameron Honey has worked in different areas of Acorn Enterprises

“I recommend that if anyone who has physical or mental-health issues wants to get out and interact and they don’t know where to start – it’s here at Acorn

...the fact that I’m having a worse day. “My conditions can’t be seen on the surface, and I am good at hiding the symptoms. The support here is amazing. I have never experienced any bad interaction with anyone, and that has helped

my mental health so much. “Since coming to Acorn, I have definitely noticed a huge growth in confidence and I am more comfortable interacting with others,” he said. “I recommend that if anyone who has physical or mental-health issues wants to get out and interact and they don’t know where to start – it’s here at Acorn.”

Cameron wants to get back into open employment when he is ready. “I see Acorn as a stepping stone,” he said, “and one day I can get back to being a software developer.”

### Thank you, Swimathon supporters

■ Thank you to everyone who swam, supported or sponsored the Swimathon in March. With over £75,000 raised, the Lions Club of Jersey shared funds between 17 charities, with Acorn being one who has been given £2,200 towards Acorn’s plastics workshop. As a thank-you, Acorn training and development client services manager Fiona Scott (far left) and fundraising manager Caroline Spencer handed over a gift of items repurposed from chocolate tubs. Pictured with them are chairman of the Swimathon Organising Committee Chris Palmer and Lions president Jane Rueb (far right)



## New travel partner for the Jet Jaunt

THE JET Jaunt, the charity challenge inspired by the TV programme Race Across the World, has a new travel partner.

Coop Mobile have joined as the Jaunt’s official Connectivity Partner, keeping Jaunters connected on the go with travel eSIMs and live social media coverage, bringing all the action and adventure to life with a real Race Across the World feel.

More than 20 teams have already signed up for the third JET Jaunt, sponsored by CSC, which runs from 10 to 13 September. This year participants will be working their way through challenges and checkpoints to reach Rome, using public transport.

JET fundraising and relationship lead Georgia Hodgson said: “We are delighted to have Coop Mobile on board as our Connectivity Partner.

“This adds a new dimension to the JET Jaunt, with eSIMs helping Jaunters stay connected, find their way and capture every unforgettable moment as the journey unfolds. And for the first time we have some exciting new challenges that lay ahead.”

Those challenges are staying under wraps for now.

The Jaunt, with support also from Ports of Jersey and All Island Media, raises funds for the Jersey Employment Trust, a charity which supports Islanders who have a disability or long-term health condition to secure and sustain employment.

To sign up, please go to jet.co.je and click on the pink JET Jaunt logo.



■ Jaunters Kiley and Alex from last year’s challenge

### Squirrelling away



■ The Squirrel Scurry, sponsored by TMF, was a great success, with nearly 100 people taking part. Outfits ranged from fluffy and inflatable to homemade. One of the youngest participants was just two, dressed as a Gruffalo. Funds will be shared with the Loves Legacy Fund. We would like to thank everyone who took part or supported the event

### Meet the trustee

Three new people have joined the JET board of trustees, Robyn Le Gallais, Norson Harris and Neville Benbow

#### Norson Harris

##### ■ Who are you?

I am a trustee, board member, and regulated director with a background in law, governance, and financial services. I spend most of my professional life working with complex organisations under pressure. I care about people, systems, and outcomes. I value integrity, plain speaking, and doing the work properly.

My day job sits in the trust and fiduciary sector. I work as a professional trustee and executive director, advising boards and leading regulated businesses. My focus sits on governance, risk, compliance, and decision-making in difficult or sensitive situations. Much of my work involves helping organisations balance commercial reality with human impact.

##### ■ Why did you want to be a JET trustee?

I wanted to support JET because employment changes lives. Secure work gives people dignity, structure, and independence. I bring board-level experience, regulatory awareness, and a strong sense of accountability. Also, as a father of a child who had both physical and mental-health concerns, I also bring a lived understanding of the complexity and vulnerability experienced by people with similar needs.

##### ■ What do you do in your spare time?

I keep active. Strength training and Pilates keep me grounded. I enjoy walking and time outdoors. I love cooking and enjoy nothing more than a crowded table with family and friends all enjoying my food, and sharing stories, jokes and spending time together.

##### ■ What was your very first job?

My first job was a Saturday role as a teenager, in a joke shop. The pay was terrible and the hours were never the same from one week to the other. I cannot say I learned very much, as the owner of the



“I wanted to support JET because employment changes lives”

shop was so disorganised. I did wonder from time to time whether they actually knew I worked for them. It didn’t last long!

##### ■ Best piece of advice?

Hire for values and judgment, not polish. Skills can grow. Character matters from day one.

##### ■ One quirky or fascinating fact about you

I write crime and financial thrillers in my spare time. It keeps my analytical mind sharp and reminds me why ethical choices matter when pressure rises... One day, I may even publish some of my work!



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