



NEWSLETTER

Hi everyone...

As usual we have been busy with our activities; This November we did a pottery painting session which was really lovely where everyone bought a range of ideas and with loads of creativity!

December is going to be a busy month with our **monthly drop in**, our **festive film evening** and our **Christmas meal!** Remember if you are attending the film evening you are very welcome to wear a Christmas jumper!

Our **cookery and art sessions** have been really popular and more dates will be out for these soon. Please see the dates below the drop in sessions for 2016!

Assert Drop in dates 2016	Tuesday 14 th June
7.30pm-9.30pm	Tuesday 12 th July
Tuesday 12th January	Tuesday 9 th August
Tuesday 9th February	Tuesday 13 th September
Tuesday 8 th March	Tuesday 11 th October
Tuesday 12 th April	Tuesday 8 th November
Tuesday 10 th May	Tuesday 13 th December

Assert Facebook Page

Assert now has a facebook page. You can find it on [www.facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com/assertbhorguk). You can find us on facebook by searching for 'Assert Brighton and Hove'.

Here you can see latest news, up and coming events and comment on a post or post your own news on the page. It's a great way to keep up with what happening in the Assert Community.



Individual Care passport Assert

What are Care Passports?

Care Passports are a quick and easy way of you telling organisations about your needs. It will describe your differences to the person reading it and so can help with stressful situations. It could be a visit to your GP, the hospital or when you are out and about in the community.

If you would like one please contact Assert on 01273 234850 or email benefits@assertbh.org.uk. We would be happy to send you one.





Festive Cheer

Christmas is a fun time for some people, but if you have autism, it can be a difficult time. After all, the festive period is change and change is difficult for those on the autistic spectrum. Routines are put on hold and the environment may look very different.

Here are some tips on how to cope:

- Use a visual timetable to prepare for specific events so that you know what to expect and when.
- If you have family and friends and they have expectations which will be hard for you to meet – you could try talking to them and explaining that things are different for you.
- Keep your routine the same as far as possible, including on Christmas Day.
- If you want to do something ‘festive’ you could try doing an activity that you will enjoy such as opening the advent calendar or switching on the tree lights.
- You could plan some Christmas-free time.
- If you are spending time with family and friends who are keen on traditional Christmas celebrations, you could give yourself quiet time in a Christmas-free zone during difficult moments.
- If you choose to decorate, you could consider doing this gradually. For example, you could put the Christmas tree in position but decorate it the next day.
- If gift-giving and/or receiving feels difficult then you could let your family and friends know. You could set a limit on the number of presents which will be exchanged.

Tips created with assistance from the NAS

Free things to do this Christmas

Beach Hut Advent Calendar, Hove Lawns - 1st to 25th December

Looking for something a little different? Well, every evening during Christmas Advent the beach huts along

Hove Lawns will in turn be opened to reveal a festive installation.

Santa Dash : Hove Lawns - 13th December

Always wondered how Santa gets around everyone so quickly in one night? It's all about the training and all this training can be seen along the seafront, as 100's of runners partake in the annual Santa Dash. All dressed in the famous red and white suit in aid of charity.

Make It At The Market, The Open Market - 13th December

If you're still in need of that illusive Christmas gift, then why not give a gift that has been lovingly hand-made by you! As the artists and craftspeople who normally sell at The Open Market will be showing you their skills, helping you to create the perfect, personalised and unique Christmas gifts.

Artists Open Houses, Various Brighton Locations - 14th December

Now in its 12th year and even bigger than ever, join local artists in the comfort of their own home with a wealth of wonderful things for you to view. With many offering mince pies and mulled wine, it's a great opportunity to browse some original and exceptional work including jewellery, ceramics, textiles, paintings and sculpture.

Christmas Pudding Race, New Road, Brighton - 14th December

The Great Christmas Pudding race is sure to be the strangest race you have ever seen. Teams of 5, in fancy dress battle it out to run an obstacle course of general silliness whilst balancing a Christmas Pudding. If the taking part is not your thing, don't worry - it's much more fun watching the wacky event! All in the aid of charity, it's a great way to kick off the festive season.

Burning The Clocks, Madeira Drive - 21st December

Join the people of Brighton & Hove for a celebration of the winter solstice and to usher in the coming of the sun. This much loved winter event sees a parade of paper and willow lanterns, lead by Our Lady of Light as she heads for the beach to split the tides and the sun is reborn. It's a spectacular event to watch from the city, before their final destination on the beach. Here a fire and fireworks show begin, with tradition being for lantern bearers to throw your lantern into the fire along with their hopes and fears and a wish for the year ahead.

Christmas Day Swim, Brighton Beach - 25th December

Christmas Day in Brighton sees the annual Christmas Day Swim. Where crazy, (sorry, “brave”) participants venture into the sea off Brighton beach for a quick (very quick) dip. Take a break from opening presents and come and cheer these poor souls on. If you're feeling adventurous then why not have a go - but be warned the sea gets very cold at this time of year - Goose fat anyone?



New Years Resolution - Some benefits which might help!



Access to Work

An Access to Work grant can pay for practical support if you have a disability, health or mental health condition to help you:

- start working
- stay in work
- move into self-employment or start a business

The grant is not for business start-up costs.

How much you get depends on your circumstances.

The money doesn't have to be paid back and will not affect your other benefits.

For more information please contact

benefits@assertbh.org.uk

Benefits Drop-in /Skype Appointments

Assert now offers a benefit drop in session once a week. These drop-ins are either on a Tuesday evening from 5-7pm or on a Friday morning 10-12pm. If you require some support from Joe please call **01273 234850** or email

benefits@assertbh.org.uk to make an

appointment. The evening appointments are designed to help people that can't make it to the office in the day but these must be booked in advance as reception is closed.

Skype Appointments

Just a reminder that Assert are also offering Skype appointments. Skype is a video call service. You don't need a lot of equipment and the software is user friendly, enabling you to make video calls within minutes of downloading it. If you would like to try this or for more information please email benefits@assertbh.org.uk

New Enterprise Allowance

New Enterprise Allowance can provide money and support to help you start your own business if you're getting certain benefits.

Eligibility

You must be aged 18 or over, have a business idea and **get one of the following benefits:**

- Jobseeker's Allowance (or your partner does)
- Employment and Support Allowance (or your partner does)
- Income Support, if you're a lone parent or you're sick
- You may also be eligible if you get Universal Credit.

Your Jobcentre Plus work coach can check if you qualify and refer you to the scheme.

Help you can get

You could:

- get a weekly allowance paid for up to 26 weeks (up to a total of £1,274)
- apply for a loan to help with start-up costs
- The loan has to be paid back, the allowance doesn't. Any money you get doesn't affect your Housing Benefit, tax credits, Income Tax, Universal Credit or Access to Work grant.

You could get a business mentor who will:

- help you develop your business idea and support you to start trading.

How it works

A specialist will assess your business idea. If it has potential you'll be signed up to the scheme and get business mentor.

You'll be able to claim financial support if:

- your business plan is approved you start working at your business for 16 hours or more per week

For more information please contact

benefits@assertbh.org.uk

Mural Artwork by Debbie

During this Summer in my new flat that I had moved to on the 10th painting murals in my living room and both my bedrooms. The theme is the Dyke sea view with a small collection of buildings that I like and a family enjoying the park.



When it's wet, windy and dark outside, I can enjoy a dry, warm and sunny day inside. I love blue sky and when I can't always see it, I can at least see and enjoy it inside and every-day of the year. I feel I have created my own planet and it feels like I am looking out of windows to another beautiful world that has come alive where I feel I'm there.



Decorative bowls and other stuff—Catherine 's Art Group



Digital art by Lydia Fuller

Please support Assert to raise funds by using 'Give As You Live' when you shop online at thousands of retailers.

What is Give as you Live?

Give as you Live is a shopping and price comparison website. You can shop for products from thousands of leading online retailers; use the price comparison tool to ensure you get the best price and even save money by using the exclusive offers and deals available on the site. Don't forget, a percentage of every purchase you make will be donated to Assert.

Register an account and choose Assert as your nominated charity to start fundraising for Assert

Go to <https://www.giveasyoulive.com/>

Either sign up with a new account or log in using your facebook details or ring Assert for more information on 01273 234850

Select a cause and search for Assert and nominate us as your chosen charity!